

DEFINE  
AMERICAN



# American Dreaming

**The Roadmap to Resilience for  
Undocumented Storytelling**

The American Dreaming  
research findings act as a guide  
to better inform how we work  
with storytellers.



## Recommendations

As an outstretched hand of collaboration for a stronger movement, here is our pledge and recommendations when working with storytellers:

**We will ask:** Is now a good time to share your story? How have you been since we last connected?

- We will offer ways to scale down the work or provide a way of stepping away from the project if necessary.

**We will ask:** What do you feel comfortable sharing now?

- We will use the answer as a guide for healthy boundaries in our collaborations and will not ask for additional details or efforts.

**We will ask:** Have you shared your/this story before?

- We will facilitate training and give guidance to lay a foundation for good health and well-being in the storytelling community.

**We will offer** a scope of work, compensation, and a timeline for involvement, and ask if it feels in line with your expectations.

**We will design** ways of seeking feedback and suggestions for nurturing storytellers' mental health and well-being within our work.



## Recommendations (cont.)

**We will hold** others we work with, particularly in the media, accountable for honoring your contributions.

- For pronouncing and spelling your names correctly
- For honoring your gender identity and pronouns
- For being forthcoming and transparent about when conversations are “on the record” or “off the record”
- For including you in the decision-making process around your stories
- When possible, sending you a draft of the story write-up before it publishes or being open to edits after a story has published if you, as the storyteller, feel uneasy about story details
- For following up with a link to a written/recorded story once it is published
- For simply thanking a storyteller for their time and vulnerability when sharing their story

## Contact

To learn more, please contact Define American’s Director of Research and Impact, Sarah E. Lowe: [sarah@defineamerican.com](mailto:sarah@defineamerican.com)

