

Dear Valerie and Selectboard members:

I am writing to volunteer for ARPA Funding Committee to review and assess proposals for Bristol's allocation of this funding. This is an important investment in our town's future, and I would like to participate in ensuring that this is invested well and creates a strong foundation for future economic growth and resident wellbeing.

I have lived in Bristol since 2012, and my son attends Bristol Elementary School. I love living in this town, and have tried to be active by volunteering for a number of committees, starting with the Bristol Green playground committee, the MAUSD strategic planning committee, and leading the recent Walk/Bike safety group to suggest changes to promote safety and mobility in our town.

I am a political scientist, employed at Middlebury College, and my research focuses on citizen participation in development/governance in developing countries. I believe that citizen participation in development projects is vital to their success, and also that citizens are often a source of innovation. Ideas that might be foundational for new services or businesses frequently come from residents, and not necessarily from government officials. I would like to host a series of meetings where we could spark new ideas, along with soliciting feedback and ideas more broadly from residents with surveys. I regularly use surveys, interviews, and focus groups in my research, and believe that this information might provide new ideas and important information about problems and priorities to the Selectboard members as they allocate these funds.

Thank you for forming this committee and being willing to solicit resident feedback, and if appointed, I look forward to working with the other volunteers.

Sincerely,

Jessica C. Teets

Professor, Political Science Department
Faculty Director, Social Entrepreneurship Program
Associate Editor-in-Chief, Journal of Chinese Political Science (JCPS)