

LIVABLE LIVES INITIATIVE

St. Louis Intentional Communities: An Ethnographic Study of Livable Lives

Abstract: We will use ethnographic methods to collect baseline data aimed at understanding the demographic characteristics of intentional community members and revealing the benefits – social, economic, environmental, and well being – of intentional living arrangements in St. Louis. This research will help to define and operationalize the concept of livable lives by engaging with members of intentional communities that are, by definition, formed in the pursuit of improved lives and livelihoods. The data we collect will contribute to a broader, interdisciplinary discussion of the meaning and feasibility of livable lives in St. Louis and beyond. We will establish a foundation for longitudinal research in St. Louis communities, including an expanding group of research participants in the surrounding region. Ultimately, we plan to use our data to develop policy recommendations that aim to facilitate livable lives through intentional living arrangements.

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