

GROUNDZERO ACTION NETWORK (Pittsburgh,PA)



The GroundZero Action Network is an open network of doers, makers, and creative people who collaborate on projects focused on Pittsburgh's urban environment and culture. Blurring the boundaries of social, political, cultural, and economic agendas we seek to capture the creative energy of the City. Our means to action are all-inclusive and boundless, with the general goal of providing a creative, multi-disciplinary approach to connecting people, harnessing ideas, and generating projects. We pursue projects with three interrelated themes: projects that encourage and spawn creativity and the arts, defined in the broadest possible terms; projects that advocate for a just, democratic, open, diverse, and sustainable city, region, and society; projects that strengthen social, cultural, and physical connections—bringing people together and making things happen.

We are not an incorporated entity. We have no offices, we take no money, and we have no formal hierarchical structure. Instead we are a loose all-volunteer network run by a core group of people who create and organize projects. We have three loose levels of structure: a core group of organizers, a series of project teams, a general membership of subscribers to our email lists, and participants in our events.

The core is an evolving group of 10-to-20 people who are active organizers and project leaders. Some have participated since the beginning, others have joined recently, and some have fallen away. Internally we have no official hierarchy among the core members. Our core members are involved with one or more of our projects and often have connections to related organizations. We meet monthly to share information, discuss projects, and direct the overarching organization.

Each project team is led by a core member(s) and is generally composed of volunteers assembled to formulate and implement the project idea. The structure of our project teams ranges from very informal to semi-non-profit-status boards. Project teams are responsible for seeking and securing independent funding sources to make the project happen. Some of our oldest projects have graduated from the organization, becoming autonomous entities with a dedicated funding stream and a more organized structure than the network itself.

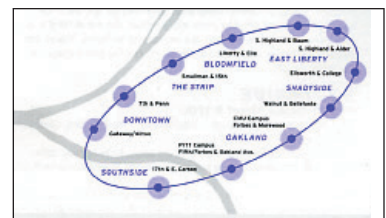
Project: ACTIVATE PITTSBURGH

Activate Pittsburgh is about making Pittsburgh better from the inside out. It is our project that seeks to capture creative energy, engage new audiences and start new projects. A few times a year we hold a session to introduce people to GroundZero, provide a forum for discussion of ideas and projects and engage people in the network.



Project: ULTRAVIOLET LOOP

The UltraViolet Loop (UV Loop) is a new bus route that circles the city. It started as a small demonstration project. Since our initial project launch it has evolved into a non-profit UltraViolet Advisory Board which collaborates with the Port Authority of Allegheny County to run the buses. The UV Loop is designed to showcase many of Pittsburgh's diverse neighborhoods and night time entertainment venues.





Project: MON-FAYETTE EXPRESSWAY

The Mon Fayette is a proposed expressway that will have a profound impact on many of the city’s most valued amenities and assets. The Ground Zero Action Network played a significant role in the creation of the Mon Fayette Alternative plan based upon upgrading existing roads, introducing new public transit and reinvesting in existing communities. The expressway project has not yet been stopped.

The lead artists from the GroundZero Action Network will be Jonathan Kline and Christine Brill. With other local artists, designers and creative professionals, Jonathan and Christine co-founded GroundZero in 2000. Their work with GroundZero has included Activate Pittsburgh, a project to engage people in creative projects, Fifth and Forbes, a project advocating for the sustainable development of Downtown Pittsburgh, The Citizen’s Plan, an alternative to the proposed Mon-Fayette expressway, Urban Hike, a series of organized group hikes through Pittsburgh’s disparate neighborhoods and communities, and ArtVotes, a project to make artists visible as a political constituency. Other GroundZero members will also participate in public, community-organizing sessions of the project.

Jonathan Kline

Born 1974 in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

Jonathan Kline is an artist, architect, teacher. He is a core group member and co-founder of the GroundZero Action Network. As an artist Jonathan works across disciplines in a variety of media, including painting, drawing, mapping, architectural sculpture, urban design and community dialog. Jonathan is an adjunct professor of Urban Design and Architecture at the Carnegie Mellon School of Architecture, where he leads design studios focused on revitalizing communities in the Pittsburgh region. Prior to teaching Jonathan spent five years in professional urban design practice working with Urban Design Associates in cities around the country. Jonathan is also currently an Associate Fellow at Carnegie Mellon’s STUDIO for Creative Inquiry where he is the Planning Coordinator for the 3 Rivers 2nd Nature project.



Christine Brill

Born 1975 in New York City, New York

Christine Brill is an architect and artist. She is a core group member and a co-founder of the GroundZero Action Network. As an artist, Christine pursues interdisciplinary projects that challenge the traditional boundaries of communities and emphasize the value of local place and culture. She works most frequently in a team environment and incorporates aspects of politics, activism, urban design, network development, community process and architecture in her work. Christine is currently a project manager with Pfaffmann + Associates, an architecture and urban design firm in Pittsburgh. Her projects with the firm include historic preservation, renovation, new construction, community planning and urban design. Christine has also taught children’s classes in architecture at Carnegie Mellon University.

