

**The Seasteading Institute
Annual Report 2008**

Letter from the Executive Director

Dear Seasteading Supporters,

From our vantage point of April, 2009, here is a look at the past and future of seasteading.

100 years ago, America was still a frontier attracting immigrants from all over the world. But the frontier became civilization, and the world moved away from freedom, federalism, and experimentation.

10 years ago, some people dreamed of a new frontier, and others for small states where they could try out new political systems. A few even looked to the oceans for both, but the proposals were marred by lack of realism, and the need was not so desperate.

Then, Wayne & I found each other online - and realized we lived in the same city. So we wrote the original seasteading book. It was a radical departure from previous work, focusing on pragmatism instead of dreams, proven technology instead of science fiction, and backed by economic theory. We put a free, commentable version online, making it not just a book but an ongoing conversation.

5 years ago, I got a job at Google, got married, and had a kid. I hated the reduction in civil liberties after 9/11, but I wasn't ready to commit my life to seasteading, so the project went into hibernation.

A year and a half ago, Jeff Lonsdale, a reader of my blog, set up some meetings between me, his brother Joe, and Ajay Royan. Excited by the idea of seasteading, they set up a dinner with libertarian philanthropist Peter Thiel. He agreed to seed a non-profit with \$500K, and one year ago, on April 15, 2008, The Seasteading Institute was born.

With that kick-start, I was able to leave Google and go full-time on seasteading. In the year since, we've accomplished a huge amount for a new institution. With minimal press outreach, we've gotten amazing media attention: Joe's appearance on CNN television, stories in Wired Magazine, The Sunday Times, and CNN.com, and my numerous interviews including BBC worldwide radio and EconTalk. We held our first conference, drawing 45 attendees from 9 countries, as well as monthly socials with 20+ people every month. We've built a mailing list of over 900 people, and our website currently serves over 90,000 visits a month, including 500 people a day who Google for some variant of "seasteading"!

On the technical front, we have finished and applied for a patent our first seasteading design, a 368K ft² spar platform resort for 200 guests at a cost of about \$300 per square foot. This confirms our initial thesis that new land can be built for less than the cost of Silicon Valley real estate. In addition, the community has experimented with smaller structure designs.

Meanwhile, the political and economic systems of the world are coming apart at the seams. As if the deepest recession since the Great Depression wasn't bad enough, the reaction of governments around the world is making things even worse. In both the US and Europe, states are eroding civil liberties while massively increasing their already unsustainable debts. It is a



dark decade, and the need for a new frontier and new ways of organizing a society has never been more urgent.

In the next year, TSI will have at least 100 paying members and new major donors to fund our research. We will hold our Second Conference and the first-of-its-kind Ephemerisle festival, showcasing unique structure designs and receiving massive media coverage. We will create more engineering designs and be ready to build a prototype, and we will work with at least one operating seasteading-relevant business. We'll also publish research on how seasteading fits into international maritime law.

5 years from now, there will be at least 10 full-time seasteadingers - perhaps as many as hundreds. Anyone ready for a pioneering lifestyle will be able to move to the ocean. Ephemerisle will have moved to international waters and be growing rapidly in length and attendance each year, drawing worldwide attention as a unique experiment in temporary self-governance. It will no longer be a question of whether seasteading will happen - just when.

25 years from now, there will be at least 100,000 seasteadingers worldwide. TSI will be acting as a central advocacy organization for existing seasteadingers, rather than trying to create a new movement. We will no longer be talking about this new way of life - we'll be living it. And during the 25th Annual Seasteading Conference, we'll be able to look back on 2008 as the year the movement really got started.

The work needed to get there is immense, but the prize of busting open the monopolistic government industry is worth it. Together, we'll create a world with diverse societies to choose from, where governments serve citizens rather than exploiting them - on both land and sea. A revolution fueled by hard work and hard cash, not blood and violence, and backed by pragmatism and openness, not idealism or the One True Way.

This is our battle, and I'm glad that you're with us. See you beyond the horizon,

Patri Friedman

Founder and Executive Director
The Seasteading Institute

The Future of Nations

"The wave of the future is not the conquest of the world by a single dogmatic creed but the liberation of the diverse energies of free nations and free men." -- John F. Kennedy

2008 was a year of firsts for The Seasteading Institute; it was the year of our inception, the year of our first conference, our first paid employees, our first patented seasteading design. 2008 was about forging new ground, taking ideas and from them creating a community, a movement, a revolution. From here, it is impossible not to marvel at the vast range of possibilities that stand open to all of us in 2009 and beyond.

This document represents yet another first; our first annual report. It is an opportunity to show what we have done and tell what we plan to do in the future. It is also an opportunity for the kind of transparency that we consider absolutely necessary to building a movement. As a result, you will find more than cheerleading in this report; you will find a careful examination of successes and failures and an outline of our plan to do better, bolder things in the future. Think of our Annual Report as a travelogue; we are inviting you to join us in our mission to change the way we think of governments and social systems, and in order to do that you must understand where we are going and where we have



been.

Government 2.0

Online, ideas are mixed and remixed with the click of a mouse. Sites like Digg, Technorati and Reddit help us filter through the massive amounts of information available to us, finding the best by means of a multitude of different technologies. Many of us use these filtering and remixing services every day without even really thinking about it. If we can remix art, information and news, why not social structures and governments? We can apply the same innovation, experimentation and constant iterating that has filled the internet with invaluable tools to build new societies; societies that are capable of real change and growth in a matter of months and years, instead of generations and centuries.

The United States was founded on the theory that all men were created equal, and more than two centuries later it still struggles to understand what equality really means. Traditional governments are by their nature slow-moving, resistant to change and conservative in their growth. If a society founded on the notion of equality cannot after two centuries even agree on what equality means, it is clear that the question of how to organize ourselves is one that deserves deeper and more radical consideration.

This notion is at the center of what TSI is doing. We believe that we can make better governments and better societies. We believe remixing and experimenting will allow us to find the best that thousands of years of human civilization has to provide. We believe that taking to the oceans to experiment with new societies is like taking to a laboratory to experiment with new cures for diseases. We believe that all that is required for what we want to do is a small group of committed citizens. We invite you to join us in making a new and better world.

Our Strategy

"To further the establishment and growth of autonomous oceanic communities; creating a diverse ecosystem of innovative political systems." -- TSI Mission Statement

A look at The Seasteading Institute's mission statement is enough to understand that our goals, and by necessity our plans, are long-ranging and large in scope. The path we have charted is one that will require the efforts of a large and dedicated community, working over many years, to achieve. Here is a look at our areas of focus, and our strategic vision for them.

Focus Areas

Though it is clear that seasteading will not happen unless someone is creating seasteads and living on them, the past history of dramatic failures in this arena tells us that more is required than a will to try and something that floats. TSI aims to take a more holistic approach to creating a future for seasteading, addressing not just the immediate question of building seasteads but also the more complex question of building a place for seasteads in the world. We have outlined four specific areas of focus that we believe will do just that.

Building Awareness and Support

By growing a dedicated community of members and volunteers, TSI will create a support network for the seasteading communities and businesses who will pioneer this new frontier. Through community outreach, PR, and events, TSI will help to introduce the concept of competitive government and oceanic communities to the world. We are sensitive to the fact that other efforts of this kind have often failed in part because they were marginalized and dismissed, and a key part of our strategy is to build the reputation of seasteading as a legitimate social experiment.

Seeding Businesses

In order to make seasteading a reality, there must be individuals who wish to live on seasteads and businesses who wish to operate them. TSI sees its role as advocacy, education and research. The big questions about how a family, community or business can grow and thrive on a seastead must be answered, and The Seasteading Institute is dedicated to finding those answers.

Engineering

Though many of the engineering questions of seasteading are answered by the existing technology of cruise ships and oil platforms, there are special requirements for building modular structures designed for long-term living and working at sea. Researching and developing solutions to these needs and making them available to anyone who wishes to use them is a key goal for TSI.

Legal

The legal and political ramifications of what TSI aims to do are significant, and many of them lie in largely uncharted waters. TSI intends to map these territories with the help of legal experts,



and begin building a legal and political support network for the seasteading businesses and communities of the future. In our role as advocates, it's important that we understand the details of what seasteads will need to do to operate autonomously, and make that information available to our community.

Most of the work we do overlaps and connects these four areas together. Engineering efforts help to define what kinds of businesses will be practical at sea, growing businesses shows us the legal requirements, developing our community and engaging in public outreach helps to attract businesses to the idea of seasteading. We endeavor to work holistically, addressing these many challenges as part of the greater whole of a seasteading future.

Strategic Paths

When we envision a future for seasteading, the possibilities are limitless. It is hard, from our current point in history, to imagine what a seasteading society will look like. In order to give some shape to our vision of the future, we have identified three key paths which we believe will be the main springboards for seasteading on a larger scale.

Seastead-based Businesses

Seasteading for profit. Profit is a fantastic incentive for growth, and we expect it to be so for seasteading. The key is finding business models which can create a competitive advantage based on the ocean's unique physical and legal properties. At our 2009 conference, many such ideas were brainstormed and evaluated in a workshop, some with great promise. Growth of the commercial sector can be a major population driver, as people will immigrate to seasteads for live-aboard jobs.

Seastead-based Homes

Seasteading for personal freedom. In the near-term, this will involve small single-family seasteads, providing a way for the first steps of the seasteading movement to be taken with personal capital. Eventually, we might see larger seasteads which communities purchase and move to as a group. We can seed the path of seastead-based homes from existing communities: live-aboard boaters, libertarians / Free State Project enthusiasts, and so on. As comfort, safety, and cost improve, this will be accessible to more and more people. Small residential seasteads have the additional benefit of risk dispersion -- there is not one big seastead for a hostile government to shut down.

Seastead-based Festivals

Seasteading for recreation. We call them "Ephemerisles." Picture a temporary festival, its spirit similar in some ways to Burning Man -- lots of people, lots of fun, creative art, and a good deal of engineering ingenuity. Ephemerisles can start in calm waters, and gradually move to international waters over the course of a few years. This path has two key advantages: First, the power of experiences to change peoples' mind is substantial -- Ephemerisles will make seasteading "real" for a large number of people who wouldn't otherwise "get it." Second, it lets us harness the community's creativity to discover and solve practical challenges about the actual, on-the-water seasteading lifestyle. In the long-term, Ephemerisle(s) could grow in duration and size until they gradually become de facto cities.

Strategic Principles

In order to better pursue our areas of focus, TSI has outlined a strategy for the coming years. Along with specific plans and milestones, we devised a list of strategic principles to use as a guide. These principles help to provide a framework for the work that we do, and ensure that our

ideals remain in line with the best possible path to a seasteading future. They are meant as a codification of the ethos that we employ to take seasteading from a dream to a reality.

Incrementalism

Much of our philosophy revolves around incrementalism -- starting small and building up over time. Unlike previous projects in this space, we aren't expecting the first seastead community to form with thousands of citizens, or to build something by securing millions of dollars in funding. We expect the movement to start small, with individuals purchasing single-family seasteads at prices comparable to San Francisco homes, and businesses investing in seastead-based business models that have already been proven on ships. We also approach our political goals incrementally. We won't start out demanding recognition from other nations, acceptance of our passports, or a seat in the UN; if this comes, it will take decades. We'll ask only to be left alone to experiment with our pioneering lifestyle in peace.

Transparency

A solid, realistic plan can stand criticism and review. It is the scams, the half-baked, the grandiose but insubstantial, which must hide behind a facade of mystery. In our experience, the less you see up front, the less there is behind. Sure, it's possible that behind the curtain lies a complex and well-considered plan which is being hidden for some legitimate reason, but the odds are heavily against it. We intend to be transparent in our plans, our successes, and our failures, both to gain our community's trust, and to benefit from their insight.

Realistic Compromise

While our goal is to change the world, we believe that compromise is an important part of the process. We accept that seasteads will not have full freedom to choose their own laws. There will be substantial limitations on what the rest of the world will tolerate. This willingness to compromise does not mean that our new way of life offers no improvements on the old, but we think it's far better to get what freedom is possible than to fail because of a refusal to compromise. In the long term, focusing our efforts on a few changes at a time is the most effective way to succeed.

Centralized and Decentralized

We think that there are significant strengths to be leveraged from both centralized and decentralized approaches to seasteading problems. To cite just one example, we think it's important to use professional marine engineers to do detailed structure design and analysis. The ocean is an unforgiving and deadly environment, and the tools to test structures that can withstand it are best left in the hands of professionals. That said, the community is driven by a passion and creativity for seasteading that professionals in established industries are unlikely to have, and this may help them find unique solutions to problems. We want to tap this creativity through programs and events like contests, Ephemerisle (described below), and so on.

Our Achievements

"The greater danger for most of us lies not in setting our aim too high and falling short; but in setting our aim too low, and achieving our mark." -- Michelangelo

Since our inception in April of 2008, TSI has enjoyed a steadily increasing pace of growth and learning. We embark on a path explored by few, and none with noteworthy successes, and so in many ways we are starting from the ground up, with no successful models to emulate.

Our need to forge a new path has created some unique challenges in our first year. We have learned from these challenges, celebrating our successes and studying our failures. This year has provided us an opportunity to learn what hurdles seasteading will face, and how we can best meet them. We are committed to examining our efforts with a critical eye, and sharing our observations with our community.

The First Annual Seasteading Conference

Our first conference was attended by 45 seasteading enthusiasts from all over the world. The event was educational for attendees, staff and volunteers alike, and was widely enjoyed. TSI will be hosting the second conference in October of 2009, and looks forward to an even larger crowd of attendees. We hope to decrease the cost of the event for attendees, while increasing the quality of the content. With more time to plan our content, and a more ambitious schedule, we believe that the second conference will represent a significant improvement over the first.

The Membership Program

Concurrent to the release of this report, TSI is announcing its new [membership program](#). This will allow supporters an opportunity to donate to TSI and to become more deeply involved in the community and the organization. We hope that the membership program will appeal to many of our community members, and provide a steady source of income for the organization. Various technical and manpower limitations delayed the release of the membership program far more than we would have preferred, but we are delighted to be announcing it in time for our one year anniversary.

ClubStead

TSI contracted a marine engineering firm (Marine Innovation and Technology) to design a structure for a large scale seastead. The resulting design has been filed as a patent with the US patent office. This design has been extremely valuable for giving people a concrete vision of what seasteading might look like, and for conferring a sense of legitimacy to our efforts. Because ClubStead is a large and expensive design, it may be some time before this structure is built, but it is of significant symbolic value. The patent and design process was more costly and time consuming than we might have hoped, but we have learned valuable information about both engineering and patent law as a result of our efforts.

Organizational Growth

Over the course of our first year, TSI has gained four paid employees, five board members and a large community of volunteers. This kind of growth is critical for a young organization, especially the volunteers who donate their skills and time, making it possible for TSI to achieve goals that would be out of reach with our small staff. Learning to manage volunteers all around the globe has been a challenge, but they have been an invaluable resource to TSI. Our board and staff have worked hard to grow the organization and the movement, laying the groundwork for the future of seasteading.

A Pioneer Profile - Vince Cate

“Nothing splendid has ever been achieved except by those who dared believe that something inside of them was superior to circumstances” -- Bruce Barton

In outlining the paths to success for seasteading, we include seasteading based homes as a key area. There are many possible ways to approach the idea of building residential seasteads,

but few are as innovative, imaginative and exciting as the single-family seasteed designs created by Vince Cate.

Vince came to the idea of seasteading over 20 years ago, when he read *Atlas Shrugged*. He was inspired by the idea of "Galt's Gulch," a small community of people working and living together in secret to form their own society, but quickly realized that building an enclave within the United States would not be practical, so he began seeking other ways to create a new society. In the meantime he attended Carnegie Mellon University, receiving a Bachelor's Degree in Electrical Engineering and Computer Science, a Master's in Computer Science, and studying for his PhD.

In 1994 he relocated to Anguilla in the Caribbean, a choice he calls "voting with his feet." He worked on several internet startups from Anguilla, as well as pursuing his interest in seasteading. Anguilla proved to be the perfect place to begin testing seasteed designs, and Vince began building seasteeds in 2005. He started with wavebreaks, structures designed to reduce the level of waves within a confined area, and moved on to other projects. He has designed and tested several scale models for single-family seasteeds including the [Water Walker](#), a tripod design that floats high above the water, and the [Tension Circle House](#), a house floating in the center of a large foam and concrete ring.



Vince's ingenuity, hard-work and rigorous testing is a perfect representation of the pioneering spirit that is at the core of seasteading. It is our hope that TSI is able to encourage more like-minded pioneers to begin conceiving, building and testing their own designs. Through the efforts of Vince and others like him, it is easy to imagine a future where single-family seasteeds dot the waves, coming together to build a shared community.

Letter from the Volunteer Coordinator

Fellow Seasteading Supporters,

As a small, new non-profit, our [volunteer program](#) is a crucial part of our success. There are only four of us employed at The Seasteading Institute; not quite a critical mass when you're trying to do as much as we are! We absolutely need volunteer help to turn our vision into a reality, and a lot of it. Fortunately, the passion of our community has led them to be generous with their time.



Over the course of our first year, volunteers have helped us accomplish a great deal that we wouldn't have been able to otherwise. Our 2008 Annual Conference would not have happened without their efforts, especially Chris Rasch and Gayle Young. Ben Lavender, Roman Hardgrave, Michael Dent, and many others have helped improve the quality and stability of our website. Several community members have offered their time as TSI Community Advisors, helping us refine our strategies and communications before we brought them to the general community for feedback. This is just a small sample; on the next page, you'll see a complete list of the myriad contributions people have made.

It's gratifying and invigorating to see the diversity of our volunteers and the enthusiasm people have to help out. We have people from around the globe and every walk of life contacting us. After our recent coverage on CNN.com, we had almost 50 volunteer offers in 24 hours -- programmers, electricians, law students, administrative assistants, filmmakers, and more. Many of them have already joined our volunteer team and started helping out. It would be great if we could take on everybody who was interested; as it is, we spend more time trying to find a fit for interested volunteers than we spend actively recruiting, which is a great problem to have!

We recognize that any time our volunteers donate is a very valuable and generous gift. It's important to us that our volunteers are getting what they want out of their experience, whether it's a chance to work with interesting people, to work on challenging problems, insight into how the seasteading movement is unfolding, or simply the opportunity to contribute to a movement which will make a massive difference to humanity. We try to be proactive about communicating and working with our volunteers to make sure their needs are being met as well as ours. Our heartfelt thanks goes out to all of you who have helped us in our first year!

Volunteering with The Seasteading Institute is a great way to contribute to the world in a unique way. It's rare to find causes where your contribution has the potential to have such a profound, long-term impact on the human condition. As if that weren't enough, volunteers get the pleasure of working with a group of smart, like-minded people from around the world.

This is only the beginning. We invite you to join us.

James Hogan

Director of Operations
The Seasteading Institute

Our Volunteers

"Never doubt that a small, committed group of citizens can change the world." - Margaret Mead.

Though many people have generously donated time to TSI, we'd like to introduce you to three of the many individuals who have made an outstanding volunteer contribution:

Lasse Birk Olesen



Lasse is the administrator of our first design contest, which is currently underway. We're excited about the contest's potential to generate exciting seasteading designs and images from the community. Lasse designed the contest rules, runs an online publicity campaign, maintains the contest webpage, and interacts with contestants to keep things running smoothly

Lasse is a 21 year-old mechanical engineering student from Copenhagen, Denmark. His spare time is spent playing ultimate frisbee, learning forex trading, and running the libertarian website Liberator.dk. *"As a market anarchist, learning about seasteading was amazing,"* says Lasse. *"Someone had actually come up with a plan for liberty in our lifetime using engineering instead of politics! It looked doable, and also*

appealed to my love of new technology and human progress. When TSI was established and received funding, I put myself on the volunteer list immediately."

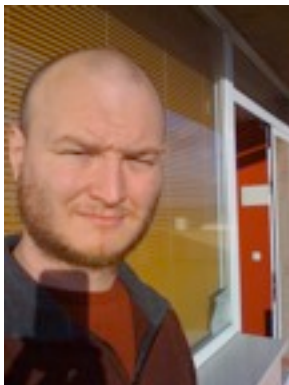
Gayle Karen Young

Gayle was one of the key organizers and facilitators for our 2008 Annual Conference, contributing a great deal of time on very short notice to help make the conference a success. She is also actively involved in planning the 2009 Conference and Ephemerisle festival, where attendees will be sure to feel the impact of her work.

Gayle is an organizational development consultant living in the San Francisco Bay Area. She particularly loves working with dynamic, innovative and exploratory leaders willing to push boundaries on behalf of humanity, on both mental and physical frontiers. What inspires her to work with the Seasteading Institute is, in her words, *"the call to adventure implicit in its mission, the intelligence and far-sightedness of the people involved, and a personal desire to support futurist endeavors that make a difference."*



Ben Lavender



Ben is our website's back-end system administrator. He digs in the technical innards of Drupal, our content management system, and keeps things running smoothly -- it's the sort of job that, when you do it well, goes entirely unnoticed (and often undervalued). Besides keeping the wheels on, he also provides support for the rest of the volunteer web development team as they work on implementing new features.

Ben is 28 years old and originally from New Orleans, but has spent the last few years split across New Orleans, Austria, Germany, and Spain. Having moved around a lot in his adult life, he explained his developing beliefs about how pervasive government is in peoples' lives. *"What good timing that The Seasteading Institute is ramping up,"* says Ben. But what

he really likes about seasteading is its political flexibility: *"While TSI's founders have political goals for seasteading, they understand that they are creating an enabling technology, and not just aiming for their personal goals. Open, enabling technologies like this have repeatedly proven that they make a field accessible and affordable. When I saw that TSI was looking for help to run their website -- more or less a smaller version of my day job -- I was happy to help."*

Our heartfelt thanks goes out to all volunteers who donated time to TSI during our first year of operation:

Michael Arnell -- TSI Community Advisor
Alexis Bright -- 2008 conference registration
Daniel Burfoot -- Seasteading book software development
Cheryl Cline -- Writer
Michael Dent -- Website Software Developer
Stephan DeWolf -- Visual design
Mike Doty -- Equipment loan for the 2008 conference
Andrea Fassina -- Website Software Developer
Chuck Grimmett -- Website Content Manager
Roman Hardgrave -- Website Product Lead
Jacob Hansen -- Assistant Contest Administrator
Pearce Holland -- Public Relations
Daniel Holt -- TSI Community Advisor
Eelco Hoogendoorn -- TSI Community Advisor & 2008 conference setup
Dheeraj Jagadev -- Grant Researcher
Jesrad -- Second Life community event assistance
Steve Kane -- Website Software Developer
Mike Katsevman -- 2008 conference setup & cleanup
Michael Keenan -- TSI Community Advisor
Matt Kennett -- 3-D modeling
Justine Lam -- Organizational outreach strategy
Ben Lavender -- Website System Administrator
Helen Lein -- Promotional material design
Tommy Liang -- Website Software Developer
Kevin Lyons -- Ephemeris planning consultation
Nathan Manousos -- Website Product Lead
Arlene Mendoza -- Website Product Lead
John Michelsen -- Seasteading book software development
Basia Montauk -- Public Relations & Online Community Relations
Na'ama Moran -- Strategy consultation
Saurabh Nirantar -- TSI Community Advisor
Lasse Birk Olesen -- Design Contest Administrator
Troy Oltmanns -- Website System Administrator
Justin Owings -- T-shirt & sign design
Carl Palsson -- TSI Community Advisor & DVD distribution
Chris Rasch -- 2008 Conference Organizer & TSI Community Advisor
Jessica Richman -- Organizational outreach strategy
Jorge Schmidt -- Legal consultation
Paul Spooner -- 3-D modeling
Kyle Taylor -- Volunteer Coordinator
Tyler Willis -- Community Relations, San Francisco Bay Area

Reichart von Wolfsheild -- DVD covers and inserts
Gayle Young -- Event planning & strategy

Our Donors

"We make a living by what we do, but we make a life by what we give." -- Winston Churchill

Our First Donor - Peter Thiel

The achievements of the past year would not have been possible without the funding The Seasteading Institute received from Peter Thiel. His generous gift allowed TSI to convert from a project in the back of Patri and Wayne's minds to an active non-profit organization with several staff members, an ever-expanding army of volunteers, and a lively and growing community.

Peter has been a libertarian and an active student of liberty and politics for the last two decades. He co-founded PayPal in part to seek new vistas for freedom on the internet, and continues to seek out and fund companies and organizations that help to promote freedom through political, social and technological advances. Through his business and philanthropic efforts, along with his political studies, Peter has come to recognize that new frontiers are required to foster new ideas. As he said in his recent post on [Cato Unbound](#):

"The critical question then becomes one of means, of how to escape not via politics but beyond it. Because there are no truly free places left in our world, I suspect that the mode for escape must involve some sort of new and hitherto untried process that leads us to some undiscovered country; and for this reason I have focused my efforts on new technologies that may create a new space for freedom."

Seasteading is one of the technologies that he believes may create a new space for freedom, and so he agreed to provide TSI with an initial grant of \$500,000. Funding is often extremely difficult for new non-profits to find, and a grant from someone with an investment resume that includes, PayPal, Facebook, LinkedIn, Yelp and various non-profit organizations provides us with more than just a financial benefit. Peter's support lends credence to the ideas and ideals of seasteading, and this is a value that extends far beyond funding.

In his Cato Unbound piece, Peter cautioned readers to consider the future, and spoke out boldly on the importance of individual efforts:

"The future of technology is not pre-determined, and we must resist the temptation of technological utopianism — the notion that technology has a momentum or will of its own, that it will guarantee a more free future, and therefore that we can ignore the terrible arc of the political in our world.

A better metaphor is that we are in a deadly race between politics and technology. The future will be much better or much worse, but the question of the future remains very open indeed. We do not know exactly how close this race is, but I suspect that it may be very close, even down to the wire. Unlike the world of politics, in the world of technology the choices of individuals may still be paramount. The fate of our world may depend on the effort of a single person who builds or propagates the machinery of freedom that makes the world safe for capitalism.

For this reason, all of us must wish Patri Friedman the very best in his extraordinary experiment."

With his contribution -- and his service on our board of directors -- Peter has become a vital part of the machinery of seasteading. Like most great efforts, it started with a single person, but has grown to include Peter; our other board members Ajay Royan, and Joe Lonsdale; our staff and volunteers; and our community of members, donors and other supporters. Please consider joining Peter in supporting The Seasteading Institute, your choices today will help to tip the balance in favor of freedom in the world.

Thank You

The work that The Seasteading Institute does is dependent on the generous support of our community. Donations from our supporters allow us to grow our organization, research and build prototypes, and bring our ideas to the world. Seasteading is an idea founded on the principle that those with a shared belief can come together and build something dynamic and new, something lasting. By contributing to TSI, our donors have proven this principle, they have invested in the future of the organization to help build a future for seasteading.

As a newly founded non-profit organization, we are enormously grateful to those who have shared our vision and made a contribution to our growth. Your dollars have helped to create the foundation on which our organization will be built. With your support, seasteading will soon be a reality.

2008 Donors

Founders - \$500,000 - \$10,000

Peter Thiel

Architects - \$9,999 - \$1,000

Daniel Holt

Builders - \$999 - \$1

Anonymous

Anonymous

Brian McGroaty

Christopher Rasch

Eric Angell

Grant Gould

Jesper Vistisen

Justin Von Keisenberg

Michael Keenan

Mikhail Yevchenko

Povilas Musteikis

Rasmus Pederson

Ryan Lackey

Sonya Sawtelle

Susan Danewitz

In 2009 we introduced our membership program, inviting our donors to become a more integral part of our organization. We hope that you will join us as a member, choose a membership level that's right for you and sign up today.

Letter from the Chairman of the Board

Fellow Seasteaders,

What an amazing first year! Our cause is surrounded by extraordinary individuals – the passion, the dedication, and the fierce intelligence that has brought to bear on our efforts in this short time has been extraordinary. As the global system is breaking down around us and crying out to be refreshed, renewed, rebuilt – it is becoming clear that we need a new frontier. So we are preparing to build it from scratch, on the ocean.



Some of us are fighting to create societies that will free modern pioneers to flourish and achieve great heights with the risk and self-reliance and charity that can be brought out in the right conditions with a government that governs least; others want to help create a government that governs best – and some would say the two tend to overlap. Many want to develop and live in far more sustainable communities, or to escape from funding violence. Some will join our cause simply to get away, or to seek out and engage the vast potential of a new frontier ... whereas many are here out of intellectual curiosity, as a forum to engage the host of fascinating challenges and philosophies that surround our efforts. Still others watch to see if these outlandish, ambitious intellectuals will actually succeed, if we will change the world. With your help, we will.

If we are to create radical change within our lifetimes or those of our children, we have no other option. Many great think tanks, scholars, authors, and politicians have set the groundwork and enabled an intellectual framework and a sympathetic climate of allies who will be critical to our success. These people and institutions will continue to play a critical role in ameliorating the response of those who doubt or fear our cause, and will continue to build support directly and indirectly for our ultimate goals, and they deserve to be honored – we are in their debt. But Patri Friedman is carrying the torch of the new generation, and we will do more than think, write, influence, and debate – we will act!

We are undaunted, even comforted by skeptics – anything new and radical enough to change the world is never appreciated by the consensus, and is looked at rather askew by most normal, right-thinking people. Having co-founded what is now becoming a successful software company, I know this all too well. But our momentum at TSI speaks for itself.

I encourage you to sign-up for our new membership program, which you can find on the site– I just signed up to be an Argonaut, and donate \$1000 a year, and I hope to give millions more if the two companies I help to run continue to succeed. Each new member of any type adds exponentially to our cause, and signing up is the most important thing we can ask of you – we must fight to continue to grow, in order to survive.

There are great new plans in motion, aided by the engineering and community work we've done so far. Over the coming months we'll be looking into a variety of business models to start operating on the ocean soon. For example, we might create a government-innovation center offshore, operating as a resort and convention center. To demonstrate the market for such a resort, we'd sign up thousands of members in non-binding commitments to travel there for at least one to three weeks a year, who would use the center for conferences, company trips, and

other meetings. These commitments would help to demonstrate that the first major seasteed -- whatever its form -- could turn a profit, and make it easier to bring on investors. This is just the beginning -- stay tuned!

Congratulations to everyone for an amazing founding year, and especially to our volunteers and donors, who make TSI possible. Please don't underestimate the power of an extraordinary individual's effort -- with your help we can change the world.

Yours truly,

Joe Lonsdale
Chairman of the Board
The Seasteading Institute