

Sweet Water Foundation



The Community Garden and Think-Do House at The Commonwealth.

Photo by Sweet Water Foundation

The side of a two-story house is painted with a large mural, showing the faces of people of various ages in profile with winding streams of red, green, and blue on their faces and Acacia-like trees in the distance. In the foreground, a raised garden bed overflows with greens and sunflowers. At left, behind the house, a small greenhouse is positioned on top of a black shipping container. On the side is a wood rendition of the Chicago flag, except with a fifth star at center.

Sweet Water Foundation is a nonprofit organization based on Chicago's South Side that practices Regenerative Neighborhood Development, a creative and regenerative social justice method, that creates safe and inspiring spaces and curates healthy, intergenerational communities that transform the ecology of so-called "blighted" neighborhoods.

Plan your visit

Visits to Sweet Water Foundation are by reservation only. Tours are available on Wednesday afternoons. [Learn more and make a reservation to visit.](#)

Íñigo Manglano-Ovalle: Hydrant, 41°47'22.662" N – 87°37'38.364" W

June 28–ongoing

Mel Chin: Safehouse Temple Door

June 28–ongoing

As part of *Toward Common Cause*, [Sweet Water Foundation](#) hosts two collaborative, site-specific projects that confront environmental pollution and its disproportionate impact on disinvested communities. [Íñigo Manglano-Ovalle's Hydrant, 41°47'22.662" N – 87°37'38.364" W](#), from the series *Well*, will be installed on the Sweet Water Foundation campus—known as The Commonwealth—as a means of drawing potable water and a site for gathering, conversation, and reflection. [Hydrant, 41°47'22.662" N – 87°37'38.364" W](#) directly engages questions of environmental racism, climate change, and the increasing scarcity of natural resources.

Nearby, [Mel Chin](#) will install *Safehouse Temple Door*, a functioning bank-vault door on Sweet Water Foundation's Civic Arts Church—a community design center, central gathering and gallery space for workshops, field lessons, and events at The Commonwealth. The site will serve as one of

several activation points for “Fundreds,” creative currency made by individuals across Chicago as part of the *Chicago Fundred Initiative: A Bill for IL*, a collaborative action focused on lead contamination in water, soil, and housing.

Make a reservation to visit Sweet Water Foundation

About

Sweet Water Foundation (SWF) utilizes a blend of urban agriculture, art, and education to transform vacant spaces and abandoned buildings into economically and ecologically productive and sustainable community assets that produce engaged youth, art, locally-grown food, and affordable housing.

Since 2014, SWF has created a series of urban acupuncture inspired installations and projects that actively re-story and re-construct a neighborhood located at the nexus of Englewood/Washington Park. Within 5 years, SWF transformed 4-contiguous city blocks into a place known as The Commonwealth—a real-word, physical manifestation of how built spaces reflect and impact understanding of the common and the collective. SWF’s practice of Regenerative Neighborhood Development, as demonstrated by The Commonwealth, offers a solution-oriented response that pushes the boundaries of blight and sheds light on the collective consciousness by making a new lived reality possible.

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Related News

[Chicago Fundred Initiative: A Bill for IL](#)

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[Safehouse Temple Door](#)

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Related Artists

[Mel Chin](#)

[Inigo Manglano-Ovalle](#)

Related Events

[Imagine a Day Without Water](#)

October 21, 2020 12:00-1:30pm

[The Fall of the House of Lead](#)

October 31, 2020 1:00-2:30pm

[Summer Teacher Institute](#)

August 16-20, 10:00am-4:00pm