In Boston’s Chinatown, the housing stock and land base of the traditionally working-class immigrant neighborhood are constantly reshaped by the influx of luxury residential developments, institutional expansions, gentrification, and short-term rental models such as Airbnb. As a result, many cultural facilities and amenities are driven out by increasing rents, leading to a loss of local identity. Rentify Chinatown researches into the vulnerable communities in Chinatown that are at risk of life and experience displacement due to gentrification. We focus our study on Chinese families under the threat of displacement and eviction in Chinatown, oftentimes identified as the elderly population, local low-income working class, and new immigrants with minimal English proficiency.

We are working with local community partners, such as the Chinatown Progressive Association and the Chinatown Community Land Trust, and building tools to visualize the gentrification issues faced by local communities, to engage low-income and aging communities in the planning and decision-making process, and to introduce the history and stories of Boston’s Chinatown to the public.