

Thrive 2026 Overview



Building Bridges for Democratic Resilience Through Cross-Sector Collaboration

Why Attend Thrive 2026?

Thrive 2026 is the essential virtual summit empowering cross-sector leaders to forge practical solutions for democratic resilience. Join us to gain actionable skills, build global partnerships, and drive real-world impact in strengthening democracy.

Key Benefits:

- **Gain transferable democratic competencies** that work across sectors
- **Build strategic partnerships** with diverse professionals worldwide
- **Access cutting-edge tools** for civic engagement and organizing
- **Connect with international practitioners** facing similar challenges
- **Create measurable impact** in your community and organization

Overview

Thrive: United for Democracy and Global Action is a virtual conference for democracy practitioners, educators, business leaders, community organizers, and anyone looking to engage more actively in efforts to preserve democracy. Over two days, participants will explore cutting-edge strategies for civic engagement, build meaningful cross-sector partnerships, and develop practical democratic competencies to advance democratic resilience.

The Critical Question We Address

How can we encourage more people to become active participants in democracies worldwide?

In an era when 72% of the world's population lives under autocratic governance, democracies face unprecedented threats. We cannot afford to leave democratic engagement to chance. **Thrive 2026 is your direct pathway to gaining the knowledge, tools, and connections needed to champion democratic participation and transform your commitment into measurable impact.**

Aligned with Global Development

Thrive recognizes that democracy is foundational to achieving UN Sustainable Development Goals. Strong democratic institutions directly support SDG 16 (Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions) while enabling progress across all 17 goals—from quality education and gender equality to climate action and global partnerships.

Cross-Sector Collaboration at the Core

Produced by [Actionable Innovations Global](#) in partnership with the [Charter for Compassion](#), **we believe democracy thrives when different sectors work together rather than in isolation.** The conference operates on the principle that activating democratic participation requires coordinated action across:

- **Educational institutions** that shape civic learning
- **Businesses** that influence community engagement
- **Nonprofit organizations** that mobilize constituencies
- **Grassroots movements** that drive social change

Transform Your Impact

This conference isn't just about learning—it's about transformation and amplification:

For Educators:

- Discover innovative civic engagement strategies
- Build partnerships for real-world student learning
- Connect with international educational democracy innovations
- Share your successful programs with practitioners who can adapt them for different contexts

For Business Leaders:

- Develop authentic corporate citizenship programs
- Connect with implementation partners
- Learn from global ESG democracy practices
- Showcase your corporate civic engagement models

For Community Organizers:

- Enhance strategies through cross-sector collaboration
- Access new resources for sustained impact
- Build international solidarity networks
- Demonstrate your organizing tools and approaches

For Nonprofit Professionals:

- Expand networks and discover funding opportunities
- Learn scaling strategies from other sectors
- Connect with global democracy support movements
- Present your programs to reach new audiences

For International Practitioners:

- Share innovations from your context
- Learn globally adaptable approaches
- Build networks that support democracy advocates facing repression
- Help everyday citizens worldwide understand how they can contribute

Building the Democracy Movement: Every participant becomes part of a growing network of democracy champions, taking practical tools and inspiration back to their communities to activate more citizens in the essential work of preserving democratic institutions and values.

Join us for two days of dynamic collaboration, practical skill-building, and strategic partnership development designed to help you advance democratic goals while building the cross-sector and international relationships essential for lasting systemic change.

Event Details

- **Dates:** January 21-22, 2026
- **Platform:** Virtual (Hosted on RingCentral Events)
- **Registration:** Includes live session access, session recordings, resource library access, and certificate of participation
- **Post-Conference Recording Access:** Available for one year after the event

Timeline

Date	Milestone
August 1, 2025	Call for Proposals Opens & Early Bird Registration Opens
August 14, 2025	Information Meeting for Potential Presenters (7 PM EST)
August 15, 2025	Rolling Acceptances Begin
November 1, 2025	Early Bird Registration Ends
December 1, 2025	Sponsorship Deadline
December 1, 2025	Proposal Submission Deadline
December 15, 2025	Video Presentation Submission Deadline & Final Program Announced

January 21-22, 2026	Conference Dates
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Conference Features

- **Cross-sector keynote speakers**
- **Interactive skill-building workshops**
- **Solution labs with mixed-sector teams**
- **Global democracy perspectives**
- **Resource library and toolkit access**
- **Year-round community platform access**

Target Audience

Primary Audiences:

- **Democracy Practitioners** - Civic educators, community organizers, advocacy professionals
- **Business Leaders** - Corporate citizenship officers, ESG professionals, social impact leaders
- **Education Professionals** - Teachers, administrators, curriculum developers
- **Nonprofit Sector Leaders** - Program managers, executive directors, capacity builders

Plus a broad array of professionals committed to democracy including government officials, foundation professionals, students and emerging leaders, international practitioners, and technology professionals focused on civic innovation.

Goals & Themes

Goals

Building Cross-Sector Democracy Competencies

Develop practical skills in coalition building, stakeholder engagement, digital literacy, and strategic communication that apply across organizational contexts.

What Are Democratic Competencies?

Democratic competencies are practical skills that enable effective civic participation and democratic governance across different organizational and community contexts. Unlike traditional civic education that focuses on knowledge about government structures, democratic competencies emphasize transferable abilities such as:

- **Facilitating inclusive dialogue** across differences
- **Building coalitions** among diverse stakeholders
- **Engaging constructively** in conflict resolution
- **Communicating effectively** about democratic values
- **Analyzing power dynamics** and developing strategic responses
- **Using digital tools responsibly** for civic engagement

These competencies are essential for strengthening democratic institutions across educational settings, corporate environments, nonprofit organizations, and community organizing contexts.

Fostering Strategic Partnerships

Create structured opportunities for relationship building and collaborative project development that extend beyond the conference.

Strategic partnerships in democracy work are intentional, sustained collaborations between organizations from different sectors that leverage each partner's unique strengths to achieve shared democratic goals. Examples include:

- **Corporate-nonprofit partnerships** combining business resources with community relationships for voter education
- **University-organizer collaborations** connecting academic research with grassroots implementation
- **International partnerships** sharing democracy innovations across political contexts while providing mutual support

Accelerating Democracy Innovation

Provide a platform for people and organizations to share innovative approaches, tools, and ideas that inspire others to develop new solutions for democratic engagement and institutional strengthening.

Democracy innovation includes:

- **Technological innovations** - Digital organizing platforms and civic engagement apps
- **Methodological innovations** - New facilitation techniques and coalition-building strategies
- **Institutional innovations** - Participatory budgeting and citizen assemblies
- **Adaptation innovations** - Successfully transferring proven approaches across

Connection to UN Sustainable Development Goals

Thrive's mission directly supports the UN Sustainable Development Goals by recognizing that democratic participation is essential for achieving global development priorities:

SDG 16 (Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions): Building effective, accountable institutions

SDG 4 (Quality Education): Promoting civic education innovation

SDG 5 (Gender Equality): Ensuring inclusive democratic processes

SDG 10 (Reduced Inequalities): Using democratic tools to address systemic inequalities

SDG 13 (Climate Action): Strengthening democratic processes for climate governance

SDG 17 (Partnerships): Building cross-sector partnerships for democratic collaboration

Conference Themes

1. Democracy Skills Across Sectors

Explore how fundamental democratic competencies adapt to different organizational contexts and constraints.

2. Digital Democracy and Civic Technology

Address technology-mediated civic engagement, AI governance, and digital equity in democracy work.

3. Corporate Citizenship and Democratic Engagement

Examine authentic business contributions to strengthening democracy beyond traditional CSR.

4. Civic Education Innovation

Transform civic learning through competency-based approaches and experiential learning methodologies.

5. Community Organizing and Coalition Building

Enhance grassroots strategies through cross-sector partnerships and innovative engagement approaches.

6. Media Literacy and Counter-Misinformation

Develop practical strategies for building information resilience and democratic critical thinking.

7. Local Democracy and Civic Infrastructure

Strengthen community-level democratic participation through improved civic systems and engagement.

8. Global Democracy Networks

Connect local work to international movements and learn from global democracy innovations.

9. Self-Care and Resilience for Democracy Advocates

Address burnout prevention, sustainable activism, and maintaining hope and effectiveness when working to preserve democracy under stress.

Call for Proposals

Who Should Present at Thrive?

Thrive 2026 welcomes presenters from all backgrounds and experience levels who are passionate about strengthening democracy and have insights, tools, or experiences to share:

Primary Presenter Categories:

- **Democracy Practitioners** - Working on democracy challenges across any sector
- **Cross-Sector Collaborators** - Experience facilitating partnerships between different organizations
- **Grassroots Organizers** - Community organizers building movements for democratic change
- **Youth Activists** - Young leaders developing innovative civic engagement approaches
- **Academic Researchers** - Scholars who can translate findings into practical applications
- **Innovation Developers** - Creators of new civic engagement approaches and tools
- **Community Leaders** - Local leaders with successful democracy strengthening experiences
- **International Perspectives** - Practitioners with democracy innovations from different contexts

Special Encouragement: Collaborative proposals involving multiple presenters from different sectors demonstrate the cross-sector collaboration that makes Thrive unique. First-time presenters and those new to democracy work are warmly welcomed alongside experienced practitioners.

Why Submit a Proposal?

Transform Your Professional Impact:

Connect Across Sectors - Build relationships with diverse professionals who can enhance your work in unexpected ways

Amplify Your Expertise - Discover how your knowledge applies across different organizational contexts

Expand Your Reach - Share your tools, programs, and organizational innovations with hundreds of engaged democracy practitioners who can adapt and implement your approaches in their own contexts

Empower Everyday Champions - Help regular citizens discover practical ways they can contribute to preserving democracy, turning conference participants into ambassadors for democratic engagement in their communities

Spark Innovation - Encounter approaches from other sectors that can transform your work

Build Strategic Partnerships - Form collaborative relationships extending your impact beyond individual efforts

Strengthen the Democracy Network - Connect with fellow democracy practitioners facing similar challenges, creating a supportive community that extends far beyond the conference dates

Establish Thought Leadership - Position yourself as an expert in cross-sector democracy work

Presenter Benefits

- **Complimentary conference admission**
- **One year's access to recordings and resources**
- **Professional development resource access**
- **Thought leadership platform and promotion**
- **Certificate of participation**
- **Session video recording with distribution rights**
- **Amplified reach for your tools and programs** - Connect with hundreds of engaged practitioners who can implement your approaches
- **Community of democracy champions** - Join an ongoing network of practitioners committed to strengthening democratic participation
- **Citizen empowerment opportunities** - Help everyday people discover concrete ways they can contribute to preserving democracy

Session Formats

Interactive Workshops (90 min) - Interactive workshops are hands-on skill-building sessions where participants learn practical democracy competencies—like facilitation, coalition building, or strategic communication—through guided exercises and activities they can immediately apply in their professional contexts.

Panel Discussions (50 min) - Panel discussions feature multiple presenters from different sectors examining democracy challenges through diverse perspectives, with significant audience interaction and practical recommendations

Solution Labs (50 min) - Solution labs are collaborative sessions where participants from different sectors—educators, business leaders, nonprofits, and organizers—work together in mixed teams to develop actionable solutions to real democracy challenges using structured problem-solving processes.

Lightning Talks (20 min) - Lightning Talks are rapid-fire presentations where practitioners share specific innovations, successful projects, or creative tools, allowing participants to encounter diverse approaches and connect with presenters for follow-up collaboration.

Resource Showcases (20 min) - Resource showcases are demonstrations where presenters share practical tools, templates, apps, or methodologies that participants can immediately download, adapt, and implement in their own democracy work.

Conference Strands and Example Topics

1. Democracy Skills Across Sectors

Develop fundamental democratic competencies that adapt across organizational contexts.

Example topics:

- Facilitation Fundamentals for Democracy Work
- Strategic Communication for Democratic Values
- Coalition Building Across Organizational Cultures
- Participatory Decision-Making for SDG Implementation

2. Digital Democracy and Civic Technology

Harness technology for democratic engagement while addressing digital equity.

Example topics:

- Building Inclusive Digital Organizing Campaigns
- AI and Democratic Decision-Making
- Cybersecurity for Democracy Organizations

3. Corporate Citizenship and Democratic Engagement

Develop authentic business strategies for democracy strengthening.

Example topics:

- Beyond Voter Registration: Comprehensive Corporate Civic Engagement
- Supply Chain Democracy and Ethical Business Practices
- ESG Integration and Democracy Impact Measurement
- Corporate SDG Implementation Through Democratic Stakeholder Engagement

4. Civic Education Innovation

Transform civic learning through competency-based, experiential approaches.

Example topics:

- Project-Based Civic Learning for Real Community Impact
- Adult Civic Education for Working Professionals

- Assessment Strategies for Democratic Competency Development

5. Community Organizing and Coalition Building

Enhance grassroots strategies through cross-sector collaboration.

Example topics:

- Power Mapping for Cross-Sector Coalitions
- Narrative Strategy for Democracy Work
- Building Lasting Partnerships Beyond Single Issues

6. Media Literacy and Counter-Misinformation

Build information resilience and democratic critical thinking.

Example topics:

- Teaching Media Literacy Across Age Groups
- Community-Based Fact-Checking Networks
- Strategic Communication to Counter Misinformation

7. Local Democracy and Civic Infrastructure

Strengthen community-level democratic participation.

Example topics:

- Participatory Budgeting Implementation
- Comprehensive Voter Education Programs
- Digital Democracy Tools for Local Government

8. Global Democracy Networks

Connect local work to international movements and innovations.

Example topics:

- Learning from Global Democracy Best Practices
- Cross-Border Resistance to Digital Authoritarianism
- International Corporate Accountability Standards

9. Self-Care and Resilience for Democracy Advocates

Address burnout prevention, sustainable activism, and maintaining hope and effectiveness when working to preserve democracy under stress.

Example topics:

- Sustainable Activism: Preventing Burnout While Fighting for Democracy
- Building Resilience in Times of Democratic Crisis
- Community Care Strategies for Democracy Organizations
- Maintaining Hope and Effectiveness During Uncertain Times

What We're Looking For

Cross-Sector Relevance: Show how your content benefits participants from different backgrounds—educators, business leaders, nonprofit professionals, community organizers, and engaged citizens.

Interactive and Practical Focus: We strongly encourage interactive experiences and resources participants can use immediately.

Actionable Resources: Provide toolkits, templates, guides, or checklists participants can implement in their work.

Accessibility and Inclusion: Address diversity, equity, and inclusion considerations in democracy work.

What to Include in Your Proposal

- Session title and brief description
- Format preference (live interactive or pre-recorded video)
- Key takeaways participants will gain
- Interactive elements or audience engagement strategies
- Resources you'll provide (toolkits, templates, etc.)
- Your background and connection to the topic
- Cross-sector applications of your content

Collaborative Proposals Encouraged: Multi-sector presenter teams demonstrate the cross-sector collaboration that makes Thrive unique.

Evaluation Focus: Proposals are evaluated based on practical value, engagement potential, resource quality, and alignment with our cross-sector democracy strengthening mission.

Resource Sharing Requirements

All accepted presenters contribute to lasting conference impact through:

1. **Comprehensive Resource Packages** - Implementation guides, templates, and reference materials
2. **Interactive Learning Tools** - Digital resources, assessments, and collaboration platforms
3. **Community Participation** - Engagement in post-conference networks and working groups

Submit your proposal at: <https://bit.ly/thrive2026cfp>

For inquiries: admin@actionableinnovations.global

Registration & Pricing

Accessible Registration Options Designed to Remove Barriers to Democratic Participation

Free Registration

- **What's Included:** Access to all live sessions during the two conference days (January 21-22, 2026)
- **Perfect For:** Anyone wanting to experience the conference and learn from live presentations

Student, Educator & Nonprofit Employee Registration

- **Who Qualifies:** Students, full-time educators (K-12, higher education, adult education), and full-time nonprofit employees
- **Early Bird (until November 1):** \$32
- **Regular Rate:** \$40
- **What's Included:** Everything in Free Registration PLUS:
 - Platform networking tools for connecting with other participants
 - One year of access to all session recordings
 - Access to our comprehensive democracy resources database
 - Participation in post-conference community platforms

Individual Registration

- **Who This Serves:** Business professionals, consultants, government employees, community leaders, and engaged citizens
- **Early Bird (until November 1):** \$64
- **Regular Rate:** \$80
- **What's Included:** Everything in Student/Educator/Nonprofit Registration

Group Registration Pricing

Make democracy strengthening a team effort with significant group discounts:

Early Bird Group Pricing (until November 1):

- **Small Team (5-9 seats):** \$52 per person (35% savings)
- **Department/Organization (10-24 seats):** \$44 per person (45% savings)
- **Large Organization (25-99 seats):** \$36 per person (55% savings)

- **Enterprise/Coalition (100+ seats):** \$28 per person (65% savings)

Regular Group Pricing:

- **Small Team (5-9 seats):** \$65 per person (19% savings)
- **Department/Organization (10-24 seats):** \$55 per person (31% savings)
- **Large Organization (25-99 seats):** \$45 per person (44% savings)
- **Enterprise/Coalition (100+ seats):** \$35 per person (56% savings)

Group Registration Benefits:

- All features of Individual Registration for each participant
 - Dedicated group coordination support
 - Custom onboarding sessions for your organization
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Sponsorship Opportunities

Why Sponsor Thrive: United for Democracy and Global Action?

Connect directly with leading democracy practitioners from around the world who are actively working to strengthen democracy in their communities. Your organization joins a movement to activate engaged citizens globally while demonstrating commitment to democratic values.

Your Sponsorship Impact:

Activate citizen engagement by making democracy strengthening tools accessible across sectors and borders

Amplify innovative work by providing platforms for organizations doing cutting-edge democracy strengthening

Build global networks connecting democracy advocates worldwide

Remove barriers through accessibility-first approach ensuring financial constraints don't prevent participation

Scale impact by enabling cross-sector collaboration no single organization could achieve alone

Strategic Partnership Benefits:

Mission alignment visibility showcasing your commitment to democratic values and civic engagement

Connect directly with engaged practitioners actively strengthening democracy in their communities

Thought leadership opportunities to share your organization's civic engagement approach

International network connections with democracy practitioners and organizations worldwide

Authentic partnership in a movement prioritizing impact over profit

Sponsorship Levels

1. Democracy Champion (\$5,000) *Co-hosting recognition with conference leadership*

- Co-branding recognition: Listed as co-host alongside organizers in all materials
- 15 complimentary registrations (Individual level features)
- One dedicated keynote presentation slot
- Three featured presentations on the featured presenters stage
- Large virtual expo booth with dedicated expo time
- Two seats on conference planning committee with programming input
- Analytics package: Event metrics, attendance data, interaction reports
- Attendee list with email addresses for follow-up outreach
- Recognition during opening and closing sessions
- Year-round recognition in Thrive community platforms

2. Civic Innovation Partner (\$2,500) *Significant visibility with substantial presentation opportunities*

- Prominent logo placement on all conference materials, website, and promotional content
- 10 complimentary registrations (Individual level features)
- Two featured presentations on the featured presenters stage
- Medium virtual expo booth with dedicated expo time
- Analytics package: Session attendance data, booth engagement metrics
- Recognition during opening and closing sessions

3. Democracy Advocate (\$1,000) *Strategic partnership for democracy strengthening*

- Logo placement on conference materials and website
- 6 complimentary registrations (Individual level features)
- One featured presentation on the featured presenters stage
- Small virtual expo booth with dedicated expo time
- Analytics package
- Recognition in conference communications

4. Community Bridge Builder (\$500) *Supporting cross-sector collaboration*

- Name and logo listing on conference website
- 3 complimentary registrations (Individual level features)
- Mini virtual expo booth with dedicated expo time
- Post-conference recognition in thank you communications

5. Media Partner (Free) *Partnership exchange for promotional support*

- Logo placement on conference website and materials
- 2 complimentary registrations (Individual level features)
- Recognition in conference communications and post-event materials
- Promotional commitment: Media partners promote conference through their networks
- Access to press materials and speaker interview opportunities

Custom Partnership Opportunities: We welcome conversations about tailored sponsorship packages that align with your organization's specific goals and our conference mission.

Sponsorship Deadline: December 1, 2025

About Us

Actionable Innovations Global

Actionable Innovations Global is a leading producer of online professional learning events that connect educators, innovators, and changemakers across sectors and borders. With a mailing list of over 20,000 engaged professionals and events that typically draw 1,000+ attendees, Actionable Innovations Global has established itself as a trusted convener of meaningful educational experiences.

Our flagship events include the **Global Learning for an Open World Conference**, which explores innovative approaches to international education and global citizenship; the **Compassionate Action Conference**, which brings together practitioners working at the intersection of compassion and social change; and the **Education Expert Exchange**, which facilitates knowledge sharing among educational innovators worldwide.

At Actionable Innovations Global, we believe that transformation happens when diverse perspectives come together around shared goals. Our events are designed to be practical, interactive, and immediately applicable, ensuring that participants leave with concrete tools and lasting connections that enhance their professional impact.

Charter for Compassion

The Charter for Compassion is a global movement that brings together individuals and organizations committed to building a more compassionate world through education, action, and collaboration. Founded on the principle that compassion is fundamental to human flourishing and peaceful coexistence, the Charter for Compassion works to make compassion a clear and luminous force in our polarized world.

Through partnerships with educational institutions, faith communities, businesses, and civic organizations, the Charter for Compassion promotes practical applications of compassion in addressing local and global challenges. Their work spans education, social justice, environmental stewardship, and community building, making them a natural partner for democracy strengthening initiatives that require both strategic thinking and compassionate action.

Partnership Vision

Together, Actionable Innovations Global and the Charter for Compassion bring complementary strengths to Thrive 2026: extensive experience in virtual event production and global community building, combined with deep commitment to compassionate action and social transformation. This partnership ensures that participants receive both

high-quality educational experiences and authentic opportunities for meaningful collaboration in service of democratic resilience.

Contact Us

For Conference Information and Registration:

Email: admin@actionableinnovations.global

For Sponsorship and Partnership Opportunities:

[Lucy Gray](#), Actionable Innovations Global

Email: lucy@lucygrayconsulting.com

Learn More About Our Organizations:

- Actionable Innovations Global: <https://linktr.ee/actionableinno>
- Charter for Compassion: <https://charterforcompassion.org/>

Connect With Us:

Follow our updates and join our community of democracy practitioners working toward a more participatory and resilient world.

Conference Committee

[Getachew Abeshu](#)

[Nancye Blair Black](#)

[Chantal Diercks](#)

[Andrea Rakushin Lee](#)

[Kathleen McClaskey](#)

[Nelly Cikala Minja](#)

[Joyce Whitby](#)

[Chuck Woolery](#)

✨ Thrive 2026 - Shorten Version

Thrive: United for Democracy and Global Action 2026

Building Bridges for Democratic Resilience Through Cross-Sector Collaboration

The Big Idea

How do we activate more people to be active participants in democracies around the world? Thrive brings together educators, business leaders, community organizers, nonprofits, and engaged citizens for two days of practical collaboration and skill-building to strengthen democracy globally.

Produced by: Actionable Innovations Global and Charter for Compassion

When: January 21-22, 2026

Where: Virtual conference (accessible worldwide)

What Makes This Different

- **Cross-sector collaboration** - Learn from people in completely different fields
- **Practical focus** - Get tools and skills you can use immediately
- **Global perspective** - Connect with democracy advocates worldwide
- **Accessible pricing** - Free and low-cost options available
- **Multiple languages** - Presentations welcome in languages other than English

Quick Facts

Registration Opens: August 1, 2025

Proposal Deadline: December 1, 2025

Video Deadline: December 15, 2025

Registration Pricing

- **Free:** Live session access
- **Students/Educators/Nonprofits:** \$32 early bird, \$40 regular
- **Individuals:** \$64 early bird, \$80 regular
- **Groups:** Significant discounts for teams (up to 65% savings)

Session Formats (All Online-Friendly)

- **Interactive Workshops (90 min):** Hands-on skill building
- **Panel Discussions (50 min):** Multiple perspectives with audience interaction
- **Solution Labs (50 min):** Cross-sector teams solving real problems
- **Lightning Talks (20 min):** Quick sharing of innovations
- **Resource Showcases (20 min):** Tool and template demonstrations

9 Conference Themes

1. **Democracy Skills Across Sectors** - Transferable civic engagement abilities
2. **Digital Democracy & Civic Technology** - AI, online organizing, digital equity
3. **Corporate Citizenship** - Business engagement in democracy work
4. **Civic Education Innovation** - New approaches to teaching civic participation
5. **Community Organizing & Coalition Building** - Grassroots strategies
6. **Media Literacy & Counter-Misinformation** - Information resilience
7. **Local Democracy & Civic Infrastructure** - Community-level participation
8. **Global Democracy Networks** - International collaboration and learning
9. **Self-Care and Resilience for Democracy Advocates** - Resilience and wellness for democracy work

Who Should Participate

Anyone passionate about strengthening democracy: educators, business leaders, community organizers, nonprofit professionals, government staff, students, activists, academics, international practitioners, engaged citizens

Who Should Present

We welcome presenters from all backgrounds and experience levels, including:

- Democracy practitioners across all sectors
- Grassroots organizers and coalition builders
- Youth activists and emerging leaders
- Academic researchers translating findings into practice
- Anyone with tools, insights, or experiences to share

Sponsorship Opportunities

Why sponsor? Join a collective effort to activate engaged citizens globally while gaining access to democracy practitioners worldwide.

- **Democracy Champion (\$5,000):** Co-branding, 15 tickets, keynote slot, featured presentations, planning committee seats, attendee list

- **Democracy Advocate (\$1,000):** Logo placement, 10 tickets, featured presentations, medium booth
- **Media Partner (Free):** Promotional exchange for access and recognition

Get Involved

- **Submit a proposal:** Share your expertise and tools
- **Register to attend:** Learn and connect with global democracy community
- **Become a sponsor:** Support accessible democracy strengthening worldwide
- **Spread the word:** Help us reach democracy advocates everywhere

Contact: admin@actionableinnovations.global

Learn more:

<https://events.ringcentral.com/events/thrive-2026-united-for-democracy-and-global-action/registration>

In a time when 72% of the world's population lives under autocratic governance, Thrive creates the cross-sector collaboration and international solidarity essential for democratic resilience in our interconnected world.

✨ Partner Letter

Invitation to Join Thrive: United for Democracy and Global Action 2026

[Date]

Dear [Organization Name] Leadership,

In a time when democratic institutions face unprecedented challenges worldwide—with 72% of the global population now living under autocratic governance—the question facing every organization committed to social impact is clear: **How do we activate more people to be active participants in democracies around the world?**

We invite your organization to be part of the answer.

An Opportunity for Collective Impact

Thrive: United for Democracy and Global Action 2026 represents a unique opportunity for companies and nonprofits to join a collective online effort to reach thousands of democracy practitioners across sectors and borders. This virtual conference, taking place January 21-22, 2026, brings together educators, business leaders, community organizers, and engaged citizens from around the world to share practical tools and build the cross-sector partnerships essential for democratic resilience.

Produced by Actionable Innovations Global in partnership with the Charter for Compassion, Thrive addresses the critical need to make democracy strengthening knowledge and strategies as accessible as possible to practitioners everywhere. Aligned with the UN Sustainable Development Goals, the conference recognizes that democratic participation is essential for achieving global development priorities—from building peaceful, just institutions (SDG 16) to ensuring quality education (SDG 4), gender equality (SDG 5), and effective climate action (SDG 13).

Why Your Organization Should Participate

Share Your Expertise: Your organization has developed approaches to civic engagement, community impact, and social responsibility that can benefit democracy practitioners in other sectors. Whether it's employee engagement strategies, community partnership models, or innovative social impact programs, your insights can help activate democratic participation across different organizational contexts.

Build Strategic Networks: Connect with democracy advocates, social impact professionals, and civic engagement practitioners from around the world. These relationships often lead to unexpected partnerships, collaborative opportunities, and innovative approaches to shared challenges.

Demonstrate Values Alignment: At a time when stakeholders increasingly expect organizations to take stands on democratic values, Thrive provides an authentic platform to demonstrate your commitment to civic engagement and global democracy strengthening.

Learn Cross-Sector Innovations: Discover how other sectors approach challenges you face in your own work—from community engagement and stakeholder communication to coalition building and impact measurement.

Flexible Ways to Participate

Present Your Innovations

We welcome presentations from organizations of all sizes and sectors. Our flexible formats make participation accessible:

- **Interactive Workshops (45 min):** Share your practical tools and methodologies
- **Panel Discussions (30 min):** Join cross-sector conversations on shared challenges
- **Solution Labs (60 min):** Collaborate on real democracy challenges with diverse teams
- **Resource Showcases (20 min):** Demonstrate tools, templates, or platforms you've developed
- **Lightning Talks (10 min):** Quick sharing of successful projects or innovations

Language Accessibility: Presentations are welcome in languages other than English, with Spanish particularly encouraged.

Proposal Deadline: December 1, 2025

Video Submission Deadline: December 15, 2025 (for recorded presentations)

Sponsorship Partnership Opportunities

Join our mission to remove barriers and activate democratic participation through strategic sponsorship:

Sponsorship Levels

1. Democracy Champion (\$5,000) *Co-hosting recognition with conference leadership*

- Co-branding recognition: Listed as co-host alongside organizers in all materials

- 15 complimentary registrations (Individual level features)
- One dedicated keynote presentation slot
- Three featured presentations on the featured presenters stage
- Large virtual expo booth with dedicated expo time
- Two seats on conference planning committee with programming input
- Analytics package: Event metrics, attendance data, interaction reports
- Attendee list with email addresses for follow-up outreach
- Recognition during opening and closing sessions
- Year-round recognition in Thrive community platforms

2. Civic Innovation Partner (\$2,500) *Significant visibility with substantial presentation opportunities*

- Prominent logo placement on all conference materials, website, and promotional content
- 10 complimentary registrations (Individual level features)
- Two featured presentations on the featured presenters stage
- Medium virtual expo booth with dedicated expo time
- Analytics package: Session attendance data, booth engagement metrics
- Recognition during opening and closing sessions

3. Democracy Advocate (\$1,000) *Strategic partnership for democracy strengthening*

- Logo placement on conference materials and website
- 6 complimentary registrations (Individual level features)
- One featured presentation on the featured presenters stage
- Small virtual expo booth with dedicated expo time
- Analytics package
- Recognition in conference communications

4. Community Bridge Builder (\$500) *Supporting cross-sector collaboration*

- Name and logo listing on conference website
- 3 complimentary registrations (Individual level features)
- Mini virtual expo booth with dedicated expo time
- Post-conference recognition in thank you communications

5. Media Partner (Free) *Partnership exchange for promotional support*

- Logo placement on conference website and materials
- 2 complimentary registrations (Individual level features)
- Recognition in conference communications and post-event materials
- Promotional commitment: Media partners promote conference through their networks

- Access to press materials and speaker interview opportunities

The Impact You'll Help Create

Your participation helps:

- **Remove financial barriers** through our accessibility-first pricing model
- **Amplify innovation** by showcasing organizations doing amazing democracy work
- **Build global networks** connecting democracy advocates facing challenges worldwide
- **Scale cross-sector collaboration** that no single organization could achieve alone
- **Activate citizen engagement** by making practical tools available to practitioners everywhere

Registration and Accessibility

We've designed pricing to ensure broad participation:

- **Free registration** for live session access
- **Reduced rates** for students, educators, and nonprofit employees (\$32-40)
- **Group discounts** up to 65% for team participation
- **Individual registration** (\$64-80) supports our accessibility mission

Next Steps

To Present: Submit your proposal at [proposal link] by December 1, 2025 **To Sponsor:** Contact us at admin@actionableinnovations.global to discuss partnership opportunities **To Register:** Visit [registration link] beginning August 1, 2025

We'd welcome the opportunity to discuss how your organization can contribute to and benefit from Thrive 2026. Please feel free to reach out with questions or to explore custom partnership arrangements that align with your specific goals and our shared mission.

In an era when democracy cannot be taken for granted, your organization has the opportunity to be part of a global movement building the knowledge, tools, and relationships essential for democratic resilience. We hope you'll join us.

Together, we can activate the democratic participation our world urgently needs.

Sincerely,

[Your Name]

[Your Title]

Thrive: United for Democracy and Global Action 2026

Contact Information:

Email: admin@actionableinnovations.global

Website: [conference website]

Conference Dates: January 21-22, 2026

Produced by Actionable Innovations Global in partnership with the Charter for Compassion

✨ Additional Partner Emails and Blurbs

Additional Partner Emails and Blurbs

Subject: Invitation to Join Thrive 2026: United for Democracy & Global Action

Dear {{FirstName}},

I'm reaching out to invite you and {{Organization}} to participate in **Thrive 2026: United for Democracy & Global Action**, a global virtual summit taking place **January 21–22, 2026**.

Thrive 2026 is designed to empower educators, community organizers, nonprofit leaders, business professionals, and citizens to collaborate on building democratic resilience. Over two days, we'll explore practical strategies for civic engagement, cross-sector collaboration, and democratic innovation.



Learn more: [Thrive 2026 Dashboard](#)



Call for Proposals: [Submit a Proposal](#) (Deadline: **Dec 1, 2025**)



Share the Flyer: [Thrive 2026 Flyer]({{Insert Link}})

Ways to Get Involved:

- **Present** your work, tools, and innovations that strengthen democracy.
- **Partner** with us as a media partner to amplify the event.
- **Sponsor** to showcase your commitment and connect with global democracy practitioners.

Why Participate?

- Gain **cross-sector democratic skills** you can apply immediately.
- Build **strategic partnerships** with diverse professionals worldwide.
- Access **cutting-edge tools** for civic engagement and organizing.
- Join a **global network** of democracy champions.

We would love to explore how you might contribute—whether as a presenter, partner, or sponsor. Please let us know a convenient time to connect, or simply reply to this email if you'd like more details.

With gratitude,
Lucy Gray
Co-Founder, Actionable Innovations Global
lucy@lucygrayconsulting.com

P.S. Please forward this invitation to colleagues or partners who might be interested.

 **Thrive 2026: United for Democracy & Global Action** (Jan 21–22, 2026) is a global virtual summit empowering educators, organizers, business leaders, and citizens to strengthen democracy together.

👉 Submit a proposal by **Dec 1, 2025**: <https://bit.ly/thrive2025cfp>
📖 Learn more: <https://bit.ly/Thrive2026dashboard>

Join us as a presenter, media partner, or sponsor to help activate global democratic participation!

Formal (LinkedIn / Email Style)

 **Thrive 2026: United for Democracy & Global Action** (Jan 21–22, 2026) is a global virtual summit bringing together educators, nonprofit leaders, business professionals, community organizers, and citizens to strengthen democracy across sectors.

✅ Submit a proposal by **Dec 1, 2025**: <https://bit.ly/thrive2025cfp>
📖 Learn more: <https://bit.ly/Thrive2026dashboard>

We welcome presenters, media partners, and sponsors to join this cross-sector movement for democratic resilience.

Casual (WhatsApp / Slack Style)

🌐 Exciting news! **Thrive 2026** is happening online Jan 21–22. It's all about sharing tools & ideas to strengthen democracy together.

📅 Proposals due Dec 1 → <https://bit.ly/thrive2025cfp>

📄 Info → <https://bit.ly/Thrive2026dashboard>

Come join as a speaker, partner, or sponsor! 🚀

✨ Proposals

Call for Proposals

Thrive: United for Democracy and Global Action 2026

How do we activate more people to be active participants in democracies around the world?

Join us January 21-22, 2026, for a virtual conference bringing together educators, business leaders, community organizers, nonprofits, and engaged citizens to share practical tools and build cross-sector partnerships for democratic resilience.

Aligned with the UN Sustainable Development Goals, Thrive recognizes that democracy is foundational to achieving global development priorities—from quality education and gender equality to climate action and peaceful societies.

Who We Are Looking For

Anyone passionate about strengthening democracy with insights, tools, or experiences to share:

- Democracy practitioners across all sectors
- Grassroots organizers and coalition builders
- Youth activists and emerging leaders
- Academic researchers translating findings into practice
- Community leaders with successful initiatives
- International practitioners with global perspectives
- **First-time presenters welcome** - all experience levels encouraged

Session Formats

Choose the format that works best for you:

- **Interactive Workshops (90 min):** Hands-on skill-building sessions
- **Panel Discussions (50 min):** Multiple perspectives with audience interaction
- **Solution Labs (50 min):** Cross-sector teams solving real democracy challenges
- **Lightning Talks (20 min):** Quick sharing of innovations or successful projects
- **Resource Showcases (20 min):** Demonstrations of practical tools and templates

- **Asynchronous Videos (15-30 min):** Pre-recorded presentations for flexible viewing

Presentation Options:

- **Live Interactive:** Present in real-time with audience engagement
- **Pre-Recorded Video:** Submit polished content by December 15, 2025

Conference Themes

1. **Democracy Skills Across Sectors** - Transferable civic engagement competencies
2. **Digital Democracy & Civic Technology** - AI, online organizing, digital equity
3. **Corporate Citizenship & Democratic Engagement** - Business roles in democracy
4. **Civic Education Innovation** - New approaches to democratic learning
5. **Community Organizing & Coalition Building** - Grassroots strategies and partnerships
6. **Media Literacy & Counter-Misinformation** - Building information resilience
7. **Local Democracy & Civic Infrastructure** - Community-level participation
8. **Global Democracy Networks** - International collaboration and solidarity
9. **Self-Care and Resilience for Democracy Advocates** - Resilience and wellness for democracy work

What We're Looking For

Cross-Sector Relevance: Show how your content benefits participants from different backgrounds—educators, business leaders, nonprofit staff, organizers, engaged citizens.

Interactive & Practical: We strongly encourage hands-on activities, discussion prompts, and resources participants can use immediately.

Actionable Resources: We strongly encourage providing toolkits, templates, guides, or other concrete materials participants can implement.

Inclusive Approach: We strongly encourage attention to diversity, equity, and inclusion in your content and presentation style.

Global Perspective: International viewpoints and collaborative approaches receive priority consideration.

Language & Accessibility

Presentations welcome in languages other than English. We particularly encourage Spanish language presentations. We do not provide translation services—participants use their own translation tools.

What to Include in Your Proposal

It may be helpful to first outline your proposal in a separate document and then transfer sections into the required form.

- **Session title and format preference** (live or recorded)
- **Brief description** of your content and approach
- **Key takeaways** participants will gain
- **Interactive elements** you'll include
- **Resources you'll provide** (toolkits, templates, etc.)
- **Your background** and connection to the topic
- **Cross-sector applications** of your content

Collaborative Proposals Encouraged: We especially welcome presentations involving multiple presenters from different sectors.

Evaluation Criteria

Proposals evaluated on:

- **Practical value** for diverse participants
- **Engagement potential** and interactive design
- **Resource quality** and immediate applicability
- **Cross-sector relevance** and adaptability
- **Alignment** with democracy strengthening mission

Important Dates

- **Proposals Open:** August 1, 2025
- **Proposal Deadline:** December 1, 2025
- **Video Submission Deadline:** December 15, 2025 (recorded presentations)
- **Conference Dates:** January 21-22, 2026

Presenter Benefits

- **Complimentary conference access** to all sessions and networking
- **Professional recording** of your session with distribution rights
- **Resource sharing platform** access for ongoing community engagement
- **Certificate of participation** available upon request
- **Global networking** opportunities with democracy practitioners worldwide

Submit Your Proposal

Ready to share your expertise? Submit at [\[proposal link\]](#)

Questions? Contact us at admin@actionableinnovations.global

Information Sessions for Potential Presenters:

- August 8, 2025, at 2 PM EST - [\[Register here\]](#)
- August 14, 2025, at 7 PM EST - [\[Register here\]](#)

Produced by Actionable Innovations Global in partnership with the Charter for Compassion

✨ Proposal Form

Call for Proposals Form

Thrive: United for Democracy and Global Action 2026

Submit your proposal to share expertise and tools for strengthening democracy globally

Presenter Information

Primary Presenter

First Name* _____
Last Name* _____
Email Address* _____
Phone Number _____
Organization/Affiliation _____
Job Title/Role _____
Country _____
Time Zone _____

Additional Presenters (if applicable)

☐ This is a collaborative presentation with multiple presenters

Co-Presenter 1:

Name: _____
Email: _____
Organization: _____

Co-Presenter 2:

Name: _____
Email: _____
Organization: _____

Add more presenters as needed

Presentation Details

Session Information

Session Title* _____

Conference Theme* (*Select one or more*) ☐ Democracy Skills Across Sectors

- ☐ Digital Democracy & Civic Technology
- ☐ Corporate Citizenship & Democratic Engagement
- ☐ Civic Education Innovation
- ☐ Community Organizing & Coalition Building
- ☐ Media Literacy & Counter-Misinformation
- ☐ Local Democracy & Civic Infrastructure
- ☐ Global Democracy Networks
- ☐ Self-Care and Resilience for Democracy Advocates

Session Format* (*Select one*) ☐ Interactive Workshop (45 min)

- ☐ Panel Discussion (30 min)
- ☐ Solution Lab (60 min)
- ☐ Lightning Talk (10 min)
- ☐ Resource Showcase (20 min)
- ☐ Asynchronous Video (15-30 min)

Presentation Preference* (*Select one*) ☐ Live Interactive Session

- ☐ Pre-Recorded Video (submit by Dec 15, 2025)

Presentation Language* (*Select one*) ☐ English

- ☐ Spanish
- ☐ Other: _____

Session Content

Session Description***

Provide a clear, engaging description of your session (250 words maximum)

[Text box for response]

Target Audience***

Who will benefit most from your session? Check all that apply ☐ Educators

- ☐ Business Leaders
- ☐ Nonprofit Professionals
- ☐ Community Organizers
- ☐ Government Employees
- ☐ Students/Emerging Leaders
- ☐ International Practitioners
- ☐ Engaged Citizens
- ☐ Other: _____

Key Takeaways***

What will participants be able to do differently after your session? List 3-5 specific outcomes

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Cross-Sector Applications***

How does your content apply across different organizational contexts? (150 words maximum)

[Text box for response]

Interactive Elements & Resources

Interactive Components***

Describe the hands-on activities, discussion prompts, or engagement strategies you'll use (150 words maximum)

[Text box for response]

Resources Provided***

What toolkits, templates, guides, or other materials will you share with participants?

[Text box for response]

Technology Requirements

What technology or platform features do you need for your presentation?

[Text box for response]

Presenter Background

Your Experience***

Briefly describe your background and connection to this topic (200 words maximum)

[Text box for response]

Previous Presentation Experience

Have you presented at virtual conferences before?

- ☐ Yes, frequently
- ☐ Yes, occasionally
- ☐ A few times
- ☐ This would be my first time

If yes, please provide 1-2 examples: [Text box for response]

Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

DEI Integration

How does your session address diversity, equity, and inclusion considerations? (Optional but encouraged)

[Text box for response]

Accessibility Considerations

What steps will you take to ensure your session is accessible to participants with different needs and abilities?

[Text box for response]

Additional Information

Global Perspective

Does your session include international viewpoints, comparative approaches, or global collaboration elements? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, please describe: [Text box for response]

Supporting Materials

Do you have any supporting materials to include with your proposal? (Links to websites, previous presentations, articles, etc.)

[Text box for response]

Special Requests or Considerations

Is there anything else we should know about your proposal or presentation needs?

[Text box for response]

Agreements & Confirmations

Presenter Commitments

- ☐ **I understand this is a virtual conference** taking place January 21-22, 2026
- ☐ **I agree to provide session resources** (toolkit, templates, handouts, etc.) to participants
- ☐ **I will attend a presenter orientation session** or watch the recording
- ☐ **I understand my session may be recorded** and made available to participants
- ☐ **I give permission** for my session recording to be shared with conference participants
- ☐ **I commit to participating** in post-conference community engagement if selected

Availability Confirmation***

- ☐ I am available January 21, 2026
- ☐ I am available January 22, 2026
- ☐ I am available both days
- ☐ I prefer specific time slots: _____

How did you hear about this conference?

- ☐ Social media
 - ☐ Email newsletter
 - ☐ Colleague/friend referral
 - ☐ Organization website
 - ☐ Previous Actionable Innovations Global event
 - ☐ Charter for Compassion network
 - ☐ Other: _____
-

Submission

Proposal Deadline: December 1, 2025

Video Submission Deadline: December 15, 2025 (for recorded presentations)

By submitting this proposal, I confirm that all information provided is accurate and I agree to the presenter commitments outlined above.

- ☐ I agree to the terms and submit my proposal

[SUBMIT BUTTON]

Questions? Contact us at admin@actionableinnovations.global

Thank you for your interest in presenting at Thrive: United for Democracy and Global Action 2026!



Previous Plans



Strategic Design Blueprint

Note: This content was generated in Claude AI referencing previous conferences organized by Actionable Innovations Global. None of this is written in stone; it is just a starting point. There are four tabs in this document containing market research, a conference overview, the call for proposals, and proposed roles for the organizing committee.

Cross-Sector Democracy Summit 2025: Strategic Design Blueprint

A significant gap exists in democracy conference programming: while numerous high-quality events serve specific sectors (government officials, academics, activists), **no major summit effectively bridges business leaders, educators, nonprofit workers, and community organizers** around practical democracy strengthening. This represents a critical opportunity to launch a differentiated cross-sector democracy summit in 2025 that combines the proven EEE and Compassionate Action conference frameworks with democracy-focused content and strategic positioning.

The research reveals a democracy conference ecosystem with strong foundations but clear limitations. Major international summits like the U.S.-hosted Summit for Democracy engage 1,000+ participants from 100+ countries but focus primarily on government officials and high-level policy commitments. [International IDEA +3](#) Academic conferences such as the Civic Learning and Democratic Engagement Conference successfully serve higher education with 1,000+ participants, [Naspa](#) while specialized events like the Copenhagen Democracy Summit target political and business elites. [Cfq](#) However, **no existing event successfully combines practical democracy education with cross-sector collaboration** at the scale and depth needed for sustainable democratic strengthening.

The democracy education revolution creates unique timing opportunities

Democracy education is experiencing a fundamental transformation from knowledge-based approaches (memorizing constitutional facts) to **skills-based competency development** focused on critical thinking, coalition building, digital literacy, and civic action. This shift aligns perfectly with cross-sector collaboration needs, as different professional communities require similar democratic competencies but through sector-specific applications. [NCBI](#)

Current democracy challenges amplify the urgency for cross-sector engagement. **Only 17% of Americans trust government** to do the right thing, while corporate leaders increasingly recognize democracy as a business imperative—81% of Americans are more likely to buy from democracy-supporting companies. [BrookingsMotivote](#) The global democracy recession, with 72% of the world's population now living under autocratic governance, [Prnewswire +3](#) creates

both moral urgency and strategic opportunity for American leadership in democratic innovation. [Freedom House](#)

Strategic positioning leverages the democracy-ESG convergence

The summit should position at the intersection of **democracy, technology, and ESG investing**—a nexus no existing conference fully addresses. Corporate leaders now rank democracy/rule of law among their top-5 ESG priorities, [The Conference Board](#) yet most democracy conferences provide limited practical guidance for business engagement beyond traditional corporate social responsibility approaches.

Optimal timing points to September-October 2025. This window avoids conflicts with major existing events (Copenhagen Democracy Summit in March, [Globaldemocracycoalition](#) American Democracy Summit in May) [International IDEA](#) [Americandemocracysummit](#) while capitalizing on post-Labor Day institutional engagement. With minimal federal elections in 2025, [Associated Press](#) [Wikipedia](#) the political environment favors focus on democracy infrastructure and institutional strengthening rather than electoral politics.

Conference structure should emphasize practical collaboration over theoretical discussion

The most successful democracy conferences combine multiple engagement formats with action-oriented outcomes. The Civic Learning and Democratic Engagement Conference achieves 94% participant satisfaction by integrating plenary sessions, concurrent workshops, site visits, and hands-on skill-building. [AASCUNaspa](#) The Frontiers of Democracy Conference at Tufts demonstrates that smaller, more intimate formats (100 participants) can generate deeper engagement and concrete collaborations. [Tufts](#)

Recommended structure: Three-day hybrid format with 500-750 participants balancing virtual accessibility with in-person relationship building. The "Democracy Ecosystem" approach should organize programming around civic challenges rather than sectoral divisions, with mandatory cross-sector collaboration sessions complemented by sector-specific tracks.

Day One should establish shared foundation with **"Democracy Fundamentals Across Sectors"**—interactive sessions where educators, business leaders, activists, and nonprofit workers identify common democratic competencies and sector-specific applications. Day Two should feature **"Innovation Labs"** where mixed-sector teams develop actionable solutions to specific democracy challenges. Day Three should focus on **"Partnership Development and Action Planning"** with concrete commitment mechanisms and 90-day accountability partnerships. [International IDEA](#)

Content strategy fills critical gaps while leveraging proven engagement methods

Research identifies four underserved content areas ripe for innovative programming:

Digital Democracy and AI Governance represents the most significant gap in current conference offerings. While most democracy events address traditional civic participation, few provide practical training for dealing with AI's impact on democratic processes, algorithmic bias, or digital rights. [AmericanprogressLowyinstitute](#) The summit should feature a "**Democracy Tech Showcase**" highlighting innovative civic engagement tools and ethical AI governance frameworks.

Cross-Sector Bridge Building addresses the demonstrated need for business-government-nonprofit collaboration models. Unlike existing conferences that serve single sectors, programming should include "**Solution Labs**" where corporate citizenship officers, community organizers, and civic educators work together on real community challenges.

Local-to-Global Democracy Connections fills the gap between hyper-local and international approaches. Sessions should focus on "**Scaling Democracy Innovation**" featuring municipal democracy pioneers sharing approaches that can be adapted globally, connected to international democracy networks through existing partnerships with organizations like the Alliance of Democracies.

Intergenerational Civic Engagement builds on proven models from organizations like Campus Compact, integrating structured age-diverse programming rather than token youth participation. [Wikipedia](#) Research shows that **dialogue across difference emerges as the strongest predictor of sustained civic engagement**, making intergenerational programming both strategic and impactful. [Umich](#)

Audience targeting should prioritize quality over quantity

Primary target audiences should include **democracy practitioners** (civic educators, organizers, advocacy professionals), **business leaders** (corporate citizenship officers, ESG professionals, executives), **higher education professionals** (faculty, administrators, student affairs staff), and **nonprofit sector leaders** (program managers, executive directors, capacity builders).

Secondary audiences should encompass **government officials** focused on democracy work, **foundation program officers** funding civic engagement, **students and emerging leaders**, and **media professionals** covering democracy issues. [International IDEAGlobaldemocracycoalition](#) This 500-750 participant scale enables meaningful networking while maintaining intimate enough settings for substantive collaboration.

Cross-sector value propositions must be clearly articulated. For business leaders: risk mitigation through stable democratic institutions, market advantages from civic engagement, employee retention benefits, and ESG compliance. For educators: professional development opportunities, student engagement benefits, community partnership development, and research collaboration. For activists and organizers: skill development, network expansion, resource connections, and strategic planning tools.

Pricing and accessibility models should maximize participation while maintaining sustainability

Successful democracy conferences use diversified pricing strategies. The recommended approach combines registration fees (40-60% of budget), foundation grants (20-30%), corporate sponsorships (15-25%), and government support (5-15% where applicable). **Sliding scale pricing based on organization size and type** ensures accessibility while maintaining financial sustainability.

Specific pricing recommendations: \$500-600 standard registration, \$250-300 for students and young professionals, \$1,000-1,500 for corporate registrations, with scholarship funds for underrepresented communities. Team discounts and local host partnerships can reduce travel costs for smaller organizations.

Universal accessibility design should be standard, including multiple language interpretation, accommodation services, mobile-first technology platforms, and diverse learning modalities. Research shows that accessibility considerations increase overall event quality and participant satisfaction. [Civiced](#)

Strategic partnerships create sustainable competitive advantages

Tier 1 strategic partners should include the Democracy Fund (\$425 million committed since 2014), [Democracy Fund](#) USAID's Bureau for Democracy, Development, and Innovation, the National Endowment for Democracy (making 2,000+ grants annually), [NedNed](#) and major foundations with democracy portfolios like Open Society Foundations [fundsforNGOs](#) and MacArthur Foundation. [Usaid](#)

Corporate partnership strategy should focus on ESG-aligned companies, particularly in technology (election security, anti-disinformation), financial services (ESG investing), and media (combating misinformation). The **Civic Alliance model** demonstrates success with 1,252+ member companies committed to democracy principles. [The Fulcrum](#)

International collaboration opportunities exist through partnerships with the Global Democracy Coalition (140+ organizations across 46 countries), [Globaldemocracycoalition](#) Alliance of

Democracies (Copenhagen Summit organizers), [Cfd](#) and International IDEA (democracy assessment organization). [GlobaldemocracycoalitionIdea](#)

Impact measurement should track both immediate outcomes and systemic change

Success metrics should extend beyond traditional conference satisfaction surveys to include **pre/post knowledge and commitment assessments, 90-day and one-year impact tracking, network analysis of new collaborations formed, and documentation of policy and practice changes.**

Immediate outcomes should measure participation diversity (geographic, sectoral, demographic), knowledge transfer and skill development, collaboration initiation, and concrete action plan development. Intermediate outcomes should track implementation rates of summit commitments, skill application in professional settings, new partnership formation, and professional development advances. Long-term impact should assess increased civic engagement, institutional changes in participating organizations, contributions to democratic resilience, and emergence of new civic leaders.

Launch strategy balances ambition with realistic execution

The **2025 launch timeline** should begin with stakeholder outreach by March 2025, secure 3-5 major institutional partners by June, announce publicly and open registration by July, and execute the summit in September-October. This schedule allows adequate preparation time while capitalizing on the strategic timing window.

Differentiation from existing summits should emphasize practical partnership development over policy declarations, cross-sector integration over single-sector programming, technology innovation showcase over traditional panels, and sustained engagement through year-round Democracy-ESG working groups rather than one-time events.

The risk mitigation strategy should address polarization through nonpartisan civic infrastructure framing, manage definitional challenges through clear shared democracy frameworks, protect credibility through diverse balanced participation, and avoid summit fatigue through unique cross-sector format and outcome focus.

Conclusion

The democracy conference landscape reveals both strong foundations and significant gaps that create a clear opportunity for strategic differentiation. By combining proven engagement models with innovative cross-sector programming, positioning at the democracy-ESG nexus, and

focusing on practical skill-building and partnership development, a new democracy summit can establish unique market position while advancing critical democratic strengthening goals.

[fundsforNGOsNonprofit Megaphone](#)

Success will depend on careful attention to accessibility and inclusion, sustainable funding models, genuine cross-sector value creation, and rigorous impact measurement. [Brookings](#) The 2025 timing environment, with minimal federal elections and growing corporate recognition of democracy as business imperative, provides optimal conditions for launching this strategic initiative. The recommended approach builds on demonstrated best practices while filling critical gaps in the current democracy conference ecosystem, positioning for both immediate impact and long-term sustainability. [Taylor & Francis](#)



Conference Overview

Democracy in Action Summit 2025

Building Bridges: Strengthening Democracy Through Cross-Sector Collaboration

Proposed Conference

The Democracy in Action Summit represents the first major conference designed specifically to bring together educators, activists, business leaders, nonprofit workers, students, and community organizers around the shared goal of strengthening democratic institutions and civic participation. Unlike existing democracy conferences that serve single sectors or focus primarily on policy discussions, this summit emphasizes practical skill-building, innovative collaboration, and actionable solutions that participants can implement in their professional and community contexts.

This virtual summit, hosted on the RingCentral Events platform, will feature three days of interactive programming designed to bridge sectors that rarely collaborate but share common democratic challenges. The conference recognizes that democracy preservation requires coordinated action across business, education, nonprofit, and community organizing sectors, yet few opportunities exist for these groups to learn from each other and develop joint strategies.

Title

Democracy in Action Summit 2025: Building Bridges for Democratic Resilience

Overview

The Democracy in Action Summit addresses a critical gap in democracy education and collaboration by creating the first major conference specifically designed for cross-sector democratic engagement. Over three days, participants will engage with cutting-edge strategies for civic participation, explore innovative democracy-strengthening tools, and build meaningful partnerships across traditional sector boundaries.

At the heart of our approach lies the understanding that democracy thrives when different sectors work together rather than in isolation. Whether you are an educator seeking to enhance civic learning, a business leader exploring corporate citizenship opportunities, an activist developing community organizing strategies, or a nonprofit worker building institutional partnerships, this summit will equip you with both the knowledge and connections necessary to advance democratic goals in your specific context.

The summit operates on the principle that democratic skills are transferable across sectors but require adaptation to different organizational cultures and constraints. A community organizer's expertise in coalition building can inform a corporate leader's approach to stakeholder engagement, while an educator's curriculum design skills can enhance a nonprofit's training programs. By facilitating these knowledge exchanges, the summit creates opportunities for innovation that would not emerge within single-sector gatherings.

This event represents more than just learning—it constitutes a strategic investment in democratic infrastructure. Participants will leave with concrete action plans, new partnerships, and enhanced capabilities to address democracy challenges ranging from voter engagement and civic education to combating misinformation and strengthening institutional accountability. The summit's emphasis on practical application ensures that the insights gained will translate into measurable improvements in democratic participation and resilience.

Rationale

The Democracy in Action Summit emerges from a comprehensive analysis of both the current democracy conference landscape and the evolving needs of democratic practitioners across sectors. Existing democracy conferences, while valuable, typically serve single constituencies—government officials, academics, or activists—missing opportunities for the cross-pollination of ideas and strategies that could significantly enhance democratic outcomes.

Research demonstrates that democratic resilience depends not on any single sector but on the quality of relationships and coordination across institutions. Corporate leaders increasingly recognize democracy as a business imperative, with 81 percent of Americans more likely to purchase from companies that support democratic values. Educators face growing demands to prepare students for civic participation in an era of digital democracy and global interconnectedness. Nonprofit organizations seek new strategies for building coalitions and influencing policy. Community organizers require tools for engaging diverse constituencies and scaling local successes.

The summit addresses these converging needs by creating structured opportunities for knowledge exchange and partnership development. Unlike theoretical academic conferences or high-level policy summits, this event focuses on practical skill development and implementable strategies. Participants will engage with democracy challenges through the lens of their professional roles while learning approaches developed in other sectors that can enhance their effectiveness.

The timing for such a summit reflects both urgent need and strategic opportunity. Global democracy faces documented challenges, with Freedom House reporting declining democratic freedoms in 77 countries over the past decade. Simultaneously, new tools and approaches for civic engagement continue to emerge, from innovative voting technologies to sophisticated community organizing platforms. The summit positions participants to navigate these challenges while capitalizing on emerging opportunities.

Furthermore, the growing recognition of democracy as an environmental, social, and governance priority creates unprecedented opportunities for business engagement in democratic strengthening. The summit provides a forum for exploring these connections while developing practical strategies for corporate civic engagement that goes beyond traditional corporate social responsibility approaches.

Timeline

The Democracy in Action Summit will take place September 23-25, 2025, strategically positioned to avoid conflicts with major existing democracy conferences while capitalizing on the post-Labor Day period when organizational planning typically occurs.

Call for Proposals Opens: May 15, 2025

Early Bird Registration Opens: May 15, 2025

Information Sessions for Potential Presenters: June 5, 2025 at 2 PM EST and June 12, 2025 at 7 PM EST

Rolling Proposal Acceptances Begin: June 20, 2025

Early Bird Registration Ends: July 31, 2025

Proposal Submission Deadline: August 15, 2025

Final Program Announced: August 31, 2025

Presenter Technical Preparation Period: September 1-20, 2025

Summit Dates: September 23-25, 2025

Post-Summit Recording Access: Available for one year following the event

90-Day Impact Assessment: December 23, 2025

This timeline allows adequate preparation time for both organizers and participants while providing sufficient lead time for organizations to plan participation and develop partnership strategies. The September timing avoids the summer vacation period and positions the summit to influence fall planning cycles across participating organizations.

Audience

The Democracy in Action Summit targets a carefully curated mix of democracy practitioners, organizational leaders, and emerging civic innovators who share a commitment to strengthening democratic institutions through collaborative action.

Primary Audience Segments include education professionals working in civic learning, from K-12 social studies teachers to university civic engagement coordinators. These participants bring expertise in curriculum development, student engagement, and institutional change within educational contexts. Business leaders focused on corporate citizenship, environmental social governance implementation, and stakeholder engagement represent another crucial segment, contributing perspectives on resource mobilization, strategic planning, and organizational change management.

Nonprofit professionals constitute a third major segment, encompassing program managers, executive directors, and capacity builders working in democracy-related fields such as voter engagement, civic education, and government accountability. Community organizers and activists bring grassroots expertise, relationship building skills, and deep understanding of how democratic theory translates into community-level practice.

Secondary Audience Segments expand the summit's reach and impact. Government officials focused on democracy-related work, particularly at local and state levels, provide insights into institutional constraints and opportunities. Foundation program officers and philanthropic advisors contribute funding perspectives and strategic guidance for sustainable democracy initiatives. Students and emerging leaders ensure intergenerational perspective while contributing energy and innovation to summit discussions.

Media professionals covering democracy, civic engagement, and social impact topics serve as both participants and multipliers, extending summit insights to broader audiences. Technology professionals working on civic engagement platforms, election security, and democracy-related innovations bring technical expertise and forward-looking perspectives on digital democracy tools.

International Participants will be actively recruited to provide global perspectives on democracy strengthening, particularly from countries with recent experience in democratic transitions or innovative civic engagement approaches. This international dimension enhances learning while building networks that support global democracy initiatives.

The summit's cross-sector design means that value propositions differ by audience segment while remaining interconnected. Educators gain exposure to real-world applications and partnership opportunities for their students. Business leaders develop strategies for meaningful civic engagement while mitigating democracy-related risks. Nonprofit workers access new tools and funding connections while expanding their networks beyond traditional advocacy circles.

Goals

The Democracy in Action Summit pursues three primary goals that reflect both immediate learning objectives and longer-term systemic change aspirations.

Building Cross-Sector Democracy Competencies represents the summit's core educational goal. Participants will develop enhanced capabilities in areas such as coalition building,

stakeholder engagement, digital literacy for civic participation, and strategic communication about democratic values. Unlike traditional civic education that focuses on knowledge acquisition, this competency-building approach emphasizes practical skills that can be applied across different organizational contexts.

The summit will provide structured opportunities for participants to assess their current democracy-related skills, identify areas for growth, and practice new approaches in safe, supportive environments. Interactive workshops will allow participants to experiment with tools and techniques developed in other sectors, adapting them to their own professional contexts through guided reflection and peer feedback.

Fostering Strategic Partnerships and Collaborations addresses the recognized need for stronger connections across sectors working on democracy-related challenges. The summit creates multiple structured opportunities for relationship building, from facilitated networking sessions to collaborative project development workshops. Rather than leaving partnership formation to chance, the summit employs research-based approaches to relationship building that increase the likelihood of sustained collaboration.

Participants will engage in partnership readiness assessments, collaboration skill development, and structured partnership planning processes. The summit includes specific mechanisms for matching participants with complementary skills and interests, facilitating the formation of working relationships that extend beyond the event itself. Post-summit support structures will help participants maintain and develop these relationships into productive long-term collaborations.

Accelerating Democracy Innovation and Implementation focuses on translating summit learning into measurable action. Participants will develop specific action plans with accountability mechanisms, implementation timelines, and success metrics. The summit emphasizes approaches that can be pilot-tested and scaled, with particular attention to innovations that can be adapted across different organizational contexts.

This goal includes supporting participants in identifying and overcoming common implementation barriers, from organizational resistance to resource constraints. The summit provides tools for change management, strategic planning, and impact measurement that enable participants to effectively introduce democracy innovations within their organizations and communities.

Themes

The Democracy in Action Summit organizes its programming around eight interconnected themes that address key challenges and opportunities in contemporary democracy work.

Democracy Skills Across Sectors explores how fundamental democratic competencies manifest differently in educational, business, nonprofit, and community organizing contexts. Sessions examine how skills such as deliberation, coalition building, and civic communication

can be adapted and enhanced through cross-sector learning. This theme includes practical workshops on facilitation, conflict resolution, and consensus building that serve participants regardless of their professional backgrounds.

Digital Democracy and Civic Technology addresses the rapidly evolving landscape of technology-mediated civic engagement. Programming covers topics ranging from digital organizing tools and online deliberation platforms to artificial intelligence governance and cybersecurity for democracy organizations. This theme emphasizes hands-on exploration of emerging tools while addressing critical questions about digital equity, privacy, and the digital divide.

Corporate Citizenship and Democratic Engagement examines how business leaders can meaningfully contribute to democracy strengthening beyond traditional corporate social responsibility approaches. Sessions explore environmental social governance frameworks, employee civic engagement programs, supply chain democracy considerations, and strategic philanthropy for democracy initiatives. This theme addresses both opportunities and challenges in business-democracy partnerships.

Civic Education Innovation focuses on transforming civic learning from knowledge-based approaches to competency-based models that prepare learners for active democratic participation. Programming includes curriculum design workshops, assessment strategy development, and exploration of experiential learning approaches such as service learning and democratic simulation exercises. This theme serves both formal educators and informal civic education practitioners.

Community Organizing and Coalition Building examines grassroots approaches to democratic change while exploring how organizing strategies can be enhanced through partnerships with other sectors. Sessions cover relationship building, power analysis, campaign strategy, and the integration of traditional organizing with digital tools and platforms. This theme emphasizes practical skill development alongside strategic thinking about social change.

Media Literacy and Counter-Misinformation Strategies addresses one of the most pressing challenges facing contemporary democracies. Programming covers identification of misinformation, development of media literacy curricula, strategic communication about democratic values, and community-based approaches to building information resilience. This theme includes hands-on workshops on fact-checking, source evaluation, and digital literacy education.

Local Democracy and Civic Infrastructure explores how democratic participation can be strengthened at the community level through improved civic infrastructure, from voter education and engagement to participatory budgeting and civic technology implementation. Sessions examine successful local democracy innovations while addressing common challenges such as low voter turnout, civic disengagement, and institutional barriers to participation.

Global Democracy Networks and International Collaboration connects local and national democracy work to international movements and partnerships. Programming includes presentations from international democracy practitioners, exploration of global democracy trends, and development of strategies for international collaboration on democracy initiatives. This theme emphasizes learning from global experience while building networks that support sustained democracy work.

Session Formats

The Democracy in Action Summit employs diverse session formats designed to accommodate different learning styles while maximizing opportunities for interaction and collaboration.

Interactive Workshops lasting 75 minutes provide deep-dive experiences in specific democracy-related skills and tools. These sessions combine brief presentations with extensive hands-on practice, allowing participants to experiment with new approaches while receiving feedback from both facilitators and peers. Workshop topics range from facilitation skills and conflict resolution to technology tool training and strategic planning methodologies.

Cross-Sector Solution Labs represent the summit's signature format, bringing together participants from different sectors to collaboratively address specific democracy challenges. These 90-minute sessions present real-world scenarios and guide mixed-sector teams through structured problem-solving processes. Solution Labs conclude with presentation of team recommendations and commitment to follow-up collaboration on promising approaches.

Panel Discussions lasting 60 minutes feature diverse practitioners discussing democracy challenges from multiple sectoral perspectives. Rather than traditional panel formats, these sessions employ interactive discussion formats that maximize audience engagement and cross-sector dialogue. Panel topics address broad themes while providing concrete examples and actionable insights.

Lightning Talks offer 15-minute presentations that allow participants to share innovative approaches, successful projects, or emerging challenges with summit participants. These rapid-fire sessions encourage broad participation while exposing attendees to a wide range of perspectives and innovations. Lightning talks are grouped thematically and include time for audience questions and connections.

Skill-Building Bootcamps provide intensive 90-minute training sessions in specific democracy-related competencies such as digital organizing, grant writing for democracy initiatives, and media relations for civic organizations. These sessions combine expert instruction with practical exercises and resource sharing, ensuring participants leave with immediately applicable capabilities.

Networking and Partnership Development Sessions employ structured approaches to relationship building that go beyond traditional networking events. These sessions include

compatibility assessments, collaboration planning workshops, and facilitated introduction processes designed to increase the likelihood of sustained post-summit partnerships.

Reflection and Action Planning Sessions provide guided opportunities for participants to process summit learning, identify key insights, and develop specific implementation plans. These sessions employ individual reflection, peer consultation, and expert guidance to help participants translate summit experiences into concrete action steps.

Session Tags

The Democracy in Action Summit employs a comprehensive tagging system that allows participants to customize their experience based on professional role, geographic focus, topical interest, and skill level.

Sector Tags include Education, Business and Corporate, Nonprofit and Advocacy, Community Organizing, Government and Public Service, Media and Communications, Technology and Innovation, and Foundation and Philanthropy. These tags help participants identify sessions most relevant to their professional contexts while encouraging cross-sector exploration.

Geographic Scope Tags encompass Local Community, State and Regional, National, and International, allowing participants to focus on democracy work at their preferred scale of impact. Sessions may carry multiple geographic tags when content applies across scales.

Topic Area Tags cover Democratic Institutions and Governance, Civic Education and Learning, Voter Engagement and Electoral Processes, Media Literacy and Misinformation, Digital Democracy and Technology, Coalition Building and Organizing, Corporate Citizenship and ESG, and International Democracy and Human Rights.

Skill Level Tags indicate whether sessions are designed for Beginners seeking foundational knowledge, Intermediate practitioners looking to enhance existing skills, or Advanced professionals exploring cutting-edge approaches and innovations.

Format Tags identify Interactive Workshop, Panel Discussion, Solution Lab, Lightning Talk, Bootcamp, Networking Session, and Reflection Session to help participants plan their summit experience based on preferred learning modalities.

Audience Size Tags indicate whether sessions are designed for Large Group participation, Small Group interaction, or Individual reflection and planning, allowing participants to choose experiences that match their comfort levels and learning preferences.

Submission Guidelines

The Democracy in Action Summit seeks proposal submissions that embody the conference's commitment to cross-sector collaboration, practical application, and innovation in democracy strengthening work.

Alignment with Summit Themes represents the primary criterion for proposal evaluation. Successful submissions will clearly connect their proposed content to one or more summit themes while demonstrating relevance for multiple participant segments. Proposals should avoid narrow, single-sector approaches in favor of content that provides value across professional contexts.

Cross-Sector Relevance and Application distinguishes summit programming from traditional democracy conferences. Proposals should explicitly address how their content applies to multiple sectors, either through direct relevance or through adaptation strategies. Submissions that include perspectives from multiple sectors or demonstrate successful cross-sector collaboration will receive priority consideration.

Interactive and Engaging Format Design reflects the summit's commitment to participant engagement over passive consumption of information. Proposals should detail specific interaction strategies, hands-on activities, and engagement mechanisms that ensure active participant involvement. Traditional lecture-based presentations will not be accepted unless they include substantial interactive components.

Practical Outcomes and Application ensures that summit programming provides immediate value to participants. Proposals should specify what participants will be able to do differently as a result of session participation, including concrete skills, tools, resources, or strategies they will acquire. Sessions should include take-away materials and implementation guidance.

Expertise and Experience Documentation requires presenters to demonstrate relevant qualifications and experience related to their proposed content. This includes professional experience, relevant projects, publications, or other credentials that establish presenter credibility. Collaborative proposals involving multiple presenters from different sectors are particularly encouraged.

Innovation and Fresh Perspectives prioritizes new approaches, emerging tools, and cutting-edge strategies over well-established content that is widely available elsewhere. Proposals should demonstrate how their content advances democracy practice beyond current standard approaches.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Integration requires explicit attention to how proposed sessions address diversity, equity, and inclusion considerations within democracy work. This includes both diverse representation in presenter teams and substantive attention to equity considerations within session content.

Resource Sharing and Community Building emphasizes the summit's goal of creating lasting value for democracy practitioners. Proposals should include plans for resource sharing, whether

through toolkits, templates, reading lists, or other materials that participants can use beyond the summit itself.

Submission Process requires completion of the online proposal form accessible through the summit website, including presenter biographies, detailed session descriptions, learning objectives, format specifications, and resource sharing plans. Multiple submissions are permitted, though presenters are limited to leading a maximum of two sessions to ensure broad participation opportunities.

Pricing Model

The Democracy in Action Summit operates on a "pay what you can" model designed to maximize accessibility while maintaining the financial sustainability necessary for high-quality programming and continued summit operation.

Accessibility and Inclusion Commitment drives the summit's approach to pricing, recognizing that financial barriers should not prevent participation in democracy strengthening work. The pay-what-you-can model ensures that individuals and organizations with varying financial capacities can participate meaningfully while contributing according to their abilities.

Suggested Contribution Levels provide guidance while maintaining flexibility for participant circumstances. The standard contribution of 150 dollars supports full summit access including live sessions, networking tools, recording access, and resource materials. The supporter contribution of 350 dollars includes all standard benefits plus recognition in summit materials and exclusive access to post-summit resource sharing networks.

Student and Emerging Professional Rates recognize the importance of developing the next generation of democracy practitioners. Students and professionals with less than three years of experience can access all summit programming for a suggested contribution of 75 dollars, with scholarship support available for those unable to meet this level.

Organizational Sponsorship Contributions encourage institutional participation while supporting summit accessibility. Organizations can sponsor team participation at 800 dollars for up to five participants, 1200 dollars for up to ten participants, or 1500 dollars for unlimited organizational access. These contributions include organizational recognition and priority access to partnership development opportunities.

Financial Assistance and Scholarship Support ensures that financial constraints do not prevent participation. Scholarship applications are reviewed on a rolling basis with priority given to participants from underrepresented communities, rural areas, and organizations with limited resources. Scholarship recipients receive full summit access while contributing at levels appropriate to their circumstances.

In-Kind Contribution Options recognize that organizations may be able to support summit goals through non-financial contributions such as marketing support, technology services,

venue access for regional gatherings, or expertise sharing. These contributions are evaluated individually and may qualify for various participation benefits.

Corporate Partnership Contributions reflect the summit's recognition that business engagement in democracy work requires meaningful investment. Corporate contributions begin at 2500 dollars and include benefits such as speaking opportunities, networking event sponsorship, and connection with implementation partners.

Transparency and Accountability guide summit financial operations, with contribution levels clearly designated and regular reporting on how participant contributions support summit goals. The summit commits to using participant contributions effectively while maintaining accessibility as a core value.

Sponsorship

The Democracy in Action Summit offers strategic sponsorship opportunities for organizations committed to strengthening democratic institutions through cross-sector collaboration and innovation.

Partnership Philosophy shapes the summit's approach to sponsorship as genuine collaboration rather than transactional support. Sponsors gain access to engaged audiences of democracy practitioners while contributing meaningfully to the summit's mission of building cross-sector partnerships and enhancing democratic capacity. Sponsorship benefits are designed to provide authentic value while maintaining the summit's educational focus and nonpartisan character.

Democracy Champion Sponsorship at the 10,000 dollar level provides the highest level of recognition and engagement opportunities. Benefits include prominent logo placement throughout summit materials and platforms, acknowledgment during opening and closing sessions, opportunity to present a featured session aligned with summit themes, large-size virtual expo booth for real-time participant interaction, 25 complimentary summit registrations for staff and partners, and exclusive access to sponsor networking events.

Civic Innovation Sponsorship at the 5,000 dollar level emphasizes sponsors' commitment to democracy innovation and collaboration. Benefits include logo placement on summit materials and website, recognition during keynote sessions, opportunity to present one featured workshop or panel discussion, medium-size virtual expo booth, 15 complimentary summit registrations, and participation in sponsor collaboration sessions.

Community Partnership Sponsorship at the 2,500 dollar level recognizes organizations supporting grassroots democracy work. Benefits include logo inclusion on summit materials and website, opportunity to present one workshop session, small-size virtual expo booth, 10 complimentary summit registrations, and access to partner resource sharing networks.

Sector Bridge Sponsorship at the 1,000 dollar level highlights organizations working to connect different sectors around democracy goals. Benefits include name listing on summit website and promotional materials, mini-size virtual expo booth, 5 complimentary summit registrations, and recognition in post-summit communications.

In-Kind Sponsorship Opportunities accommodate organizations that can provide services or resources rather than financial contributions. Technology platforms, marketing support, venue access for regional events, expert facilitators, and resource development all qualify for in-kind sponsorship recognition. Benefits are calibrated based on the estimated value and strategic importance of contributed services.

Media Partnership Opportunities engage journalism and communications organizations in amplifying summit impact. Media partners receive complimentary access for coverage purposes while providing promotional support and post-summit content development. These partnerships help extend summit insights to broader audiences while supporting media coverage of democracy issues.

International Partnership Opportunities connect the summit with global democracy organizations while supporting international participation. These partnerships may involve cross-promotion, content sharing, participant exchanges, or collaborative programming that enhances both organizations' missions.

Sponsor Benefit Package Overview ensures that all sponsors gain meaningful value from their investment. Standard benefits include brand visibility among highly engaged democracy practitioners, thought leadership opportunities through content contribution, networking access to diverse professional communities, and association with cutting-edge democracy strengthening work. Sponsors also receive detailed impact reports demonstrating how their support contributed to summit outcomes and ongoing democracy initiatives.

The Democracy in Action Summit represents a strategic opportunity for organizations to demonstrate leadership in democracy strengthening while accessing engaged communities of practitioners across sectors. Sponsorship provides authentic engagement opportunities that go beyond traditional event marketing to create lasting partnerships and collaborative relationships focused on shared democracy goals.

Call for Proposals

Democracy in Action Summit 2025: Call for Proposals

Building Bridges for Democratic Resilience Through Cross-Sector Collaboration

The Democracy in Action Summit seeks dynamic presenters who understand that strengthening democracy requires collaboration across traditional sector boundaries. This Call for Proposals represents more than an invitation to share expertise—it constitutes an opportunity to help design a new model for democracy education that bridges the gaps between educators, business leaders, activists, nonprofit professionals, and community organizers.

Who Should Present at Democracy in Action Summit?

The Democracy in Action Summit welcomes a diverse range of presenters who bring both sector-specific expertise and genuine commitment to cross-sector learning and collaboration. Understanding who should present helps potential applicants recognize whether their experience and perspectives align with the summit's unique mission.

Democracy Practitioners Across Sectors represent the summit's core presenter community. These individuals work directly on democracy-related challenges within their professional contexts, whether teaching civic engagement in educational settings, implementing corporate citizenship programs in business environments, organizing communities around democratic participation, or managing democracy-focused nonprofit initiatives. What distinguishes suitable presenters is not their specific sector but their recognition that democracy strengthening requires coordination across sectors that traditionally work in isolation.

Cross-Sector Bridge Builders have experience facilitating collaboration between different types of organizations around shared democratic goals. These presenters understand the unique languages, constraints, and motivations of multiple sectors while possessing practical experience in translating approaches across organizational boundaries. They bring valuable insights about overcoming common barriers to cross-sector partnership while demonstrating successful collaboration models that other participants can adapt to their own contexts.

Innovation Leaders in Democracy Work have developed or implemented cutting-edge approaches to civic engagement, whether through technology platforms, novel educational methodologies, innovative organizing strategies, or creative corporate engagement models. These presenters contribute fresh perspectives that challenge conventional approaches while

providing concrete examples of how democracy work can evolve to meet contemporary challenges.

Skill Development Specialists possess expertise in teaching the practical competencies that democracy work requires across sectors. These presenters focus on transferable skills such as facilitation, coalition building, strategic communication, conflict resolution, and community engagement. Their presentations emphasize hands-on learning and practical application rather than theoretical discussion, ensuring that participants leave with enhanced capabilities they can immediately implement.

Partnership Development Experts understand the practical aspects of building and maintaining collaborative relationships across organizational and sectoral boundaries. These presenters address common challenges such as aligning different organizational cultures, managing power dynamics in partnerships, developing sustainable funding models for collaborative work, and creating accountability structures that serve multiple stakeholders effectively.

Global Democracy Perspectives come from international practitioners who have experience with democracy strengthening in different political, cultural, and economic contexts. These presenters provide valuable comparative perspectives while sharing approaches that have proven successful in various international settings. Their contributions help participants understand democracy challenges as global phenomena while identifying locally adaptable solutions.

Emerging Voice Champions include both young professionals who are developing innovative approaches to democracy work and experienced practitioners who are shifting their focus toward emerging challenges such as digital democracy, climate change and democratic governance, or artificial intelligence and civic participation. These presenters ensure that summit programming addresses both established best practices and evolving frontiers in democracy work.

Why Submit a Proposal?

Presenting at the Democracy in Action Summit offers unique opportunities that extend far beyond traditional conference speaking benefits. Understanding these opportunities helps potential presenters recognize how summit participation can advance both their professional development and their democracy-related goals.

Cross-Sector Network Development represents perhaps the most distinctive benefit of summit presentation. Unlike single-sector conferences where presenters connect primarily with colleagues from similar professional backgrounds, Democracy in Action Summit presenters gain access to diverse professional networks that can enhance their work in unexpected ways. An educator presenting about civic curriculum development might connect with corporate leaders

seeking employee civic engagement strategies, creating opportunities for internship programs or community partnership development that serve both organizations' goals.

Expertise Amplification Through Sector Translation occurs when presenters discover how their specialized knowledge applies across different organizational contexts. A community organizer who presents about coalition building strategies might find that their expertise translates directly to corporate stakeholder engagement challenges, opening consulting opportunities or collaborative project possibilities. This amplification effect often leads to new professional opportunities and enhanced recognition for presenters' expertise.

Innovation Through Cross-Pollination emerges when presenters encounter approaches from other sectors that can enhance their own work. Business presenters might discover organizing strategies that improve their community engagement efforts, while nonprofit presenters might learn corporate strategic planning approaches that enhance their organizational effectiveness. This cross-sector learning often sparks innovations that would not emerge within single-sector environments.

Professional Development Through Teaching provides presenters with opportunities to refine and deepen their expertise through the process of adapting their knowledge for diverse audiences. Preparing to present complex ideas to participants from multiple sectors requires clear thinking and comprehensive understanding, often revealing new insights about presenters' own work while developing valuable communication skills.

Impact Multiplication Through Partnership Formation occurs when presenters' ideas reach implementation through partnerships formed during the summit. Rather than simply sharing knowledge, presenters often find collaboration partners who can help implement or scale their approaches, creating lasting impact that extends far beyond the summit itself.

Thought Leadership Platform Development positions presenters as experts in the emerging field of cross-sector democracy work. As organizations increasingly recognize the need for collaborative approaches to democracy challenges, presenters gain recognition as leaders in this growing field, enhancing their professional reputation and creating new opportunities for speaking, consulting, and collaboration.

Presenter Benefits

The Democracy in Action Summit provides comprehensive support and recognition for presenters that reflects the summit's commitment to genuine partnership rather than extractive relationships with content contributors.

Complimentary Summit Access includes full participation in all summit programming, networking opportunities, and resource sharing activities. This ensures that presenters can engage as learners as well as teachers, facilitating the cross-sector learning that represents the summit's core value proposition. Presenters receive the same high-quality experience as paying participants while contributing their expertise to the collective learning environment.

Extended Recording Access and Distribution Rights provides presenters with professional-quality recordings of their presentations that they can use for promotional, educational, or archival purposes. Unlike many conferences that restrict presenter access to their own content, the Democracy in Action Summit provides presenters with full distribution rights for their recorded sessions, supporting their ongoing professional development and thought leadership activities.

Cross-Sector Partnership Facilitation includes structured opportunities for presenters to connect with potential collaboration partners through facilitated networking sessions, partnership matching services, and post-summit relationship development support. The summit actively works to ensure that presenters who are interested in cross-sector collaboration have multiple opportunities to identify and develop partnership relationships.

Professional Development Resource Access provides presenters with ongoing access to summit resource libraries, continuing education opportunities, and professional development networks that extend summit value throughout the year. This includes access to webinar series, resource sharing platforms, and community discussion forums that maintain engagement between annual summit meetings.

Thought Leadership Platform and Promotion includes recognition through summit marketing materials, social media promotion, and post-summit content development that enhances presenters' professional visibility. The summit actively promotes presenter expertise through various channels while respecting presenters' preferences for how they wish to be represented and promoted.

Implementation Support and Follow-Up Consultation provides presenters with opportunities to support implementation of their approaches through consulting arrangements, follow-up workshops, or ongoing advisory relationships with interested participants. This creates revenue opportunities for presenters while ensuring that summit learning translates into practical implementation.

Session Formats and Presentation Opportunities

The Democracy in Action Summit employs diverse session formats designed to maximize cross-sector learning while accommodating different presentation styles and content types. Understanding these formats helps potential presenters identify the most appropriate way to share their expertise while contributing to the summit's collaborative learning environment.

Interactive Skills Workshops lasting seventy-five minutes provide deep engagement opportunities for hands-on learning of specific democracy-related competencies. These sessions work best for presenters who have developed practical methodologies that participants can learn through guided practice. Workshop presenters serve as facilitators rather than lecturers, guiding participants through exercises, activities, and practice sessions that build concrete capabilities. Successful workshop proposals include detailed activity descriptions, clear

learning objectives, and specific takeaway tools or resources that participants can continue using after the session ends.

The interactive workshop format particularly suits presenters who have expertise in facilitation, community organizing, strategic planning, coalition building, or other practical skills that democracy work requires. These sessions often generate the highest participant satisfaction because they provide immediate value through capability development while creating opportunities for peer learning and relationship building among participants with shared interests.

Cross-Sector Solution Labs represent the summit's signature format, bringing together participants from different sectors to collaboratively address specific democracy challenges. These ninety-minute sessions require presenters who can effectively facilitate diverse groups while providing expert guidance on complex problems. Solution Lab presenters typically introduce real-world challenges, provide relevant background information, guide participants through structured problem-solving processes, and help synthesize team recommendations into actionable insights.

This format works particularly well for presenters who have experience managing complex democracy challenges that require multi-stakeholder solutions. Examples might include voter engagement initiatives that require coordination between educational institutions, community organizations, and business partners, or media literacy programs that need support from technology companies, educational institutions, and civic groups. Solution Lab presenters should be comfortable with facilitation uncertainty and skilled at adapting to participant input while maintaining productive session flow.

Strategic Panel Discussions lasting sixty minutes feature multiple presenters examining democracy challenges from different sectoral perspectives. Unlike traditional academic panels, these sessions emphasize interactive discussion and practical insights rather than research presentations. Panel organizers should propose diverse presenter teams that represent different sectors while addressing coherent themes or challenges. Successful panels include significant audience interaction time and conclude with concrete recommendations or resources for participants.

Panel discussions work well for addressing broad topics such as corporate engagement in democracy work, innovative approaches to civic education, or strategies for combating misinformation across different organizational contexts. Panel organizers should demonstrate how their proposed discussion will provide practical value to participants from multiple sectors while avoiding abstract theoretical discussions that lack implementation guidance.

Lightning Talk Series offer fifteen-minute presentations that allow multiple presenters to share innovations, successful projects, or emerging challenges with summit participants. These rapid-fire sessions encourage broad participation while exposing attendees to diverse approaches and innovations. Lightning talk presenters should focus on concrete examples,

specific tools, or particular strategies rather than comprehensive overviews or theoretical frameworks.

This format suits presenters who have developed innovative tools, implemented successful pilot projects, or identified emerging trends that could benefit other democracy practitioners. Lightning talks work particularly well for technology innovations, creative engagement strategies, or case studies of successful cross-sector collaborations. Presenters should prepare engaging presentations that inspire further conversation and connection rather than comprehensive instruction.

Intensive Skill-Building Bootcamps provide ninety-minute training sessions in specific democracy-related competencies that participants can immediately apply in their professional contexts. These sessions combine expert instruction with practical exercises and resource sharing, ensuring participants develop functional capabilities rather than just theoretical knowledge. Bootcamp presenters should be recognized experts in their topic areas with demonstrated ability to teach practical skills to diverse professional audiences.

Bootcamp topics might include grant writing for democracy initiatives, digital organizing strategies, media relations for civic organizations, strategic planning for cross-sector partnerships, or evaluation methods for democracy programs. Successful bootcamp proposals include clear skill objectives, detailed curriculum outlines, and comprehensive resource packages that support continued learning and implementation.

Conference Themes and Example Session Topics

The Democracy in Action Summit organizes programming around eight interconnected themes that address key challenges and opportunities in contemporary democracy work. Understanding these themes helps potential presenters identify how their expertise contributes to the summit's comprehensive approach to democracy strengthening while providing concrete examples of successful session topics.

Democracy Skills Across Sectors explores how fundamental democratic competencies manifest differently across educational, business, nonprofit, and community organizing contexts. This theme examines how skills such as deliberation, coalition building, and civic communication can be enhanced through cross-sector learning while addressing the unique constraints and opportunities that different organizational contexts provide.

Example session topics include "Facilitation Fundamentals for Democracy Work: Adapting Academic Discussion Methods for Community Organizing," which might demonstrate how university seminar facilitation techniques can enhance community meeting effectiveness. Another example could be "Corporate Stakeholder Engagement Strategies for Nonprofit Advocacy," showing how business relationship management approaches can improve advocacy organizations' coalition building efforts. "Digital Communication Across Sectors: Lessons from

Corporate Marketing for Civic Engagement" could explore how business communication strategies enhance civic education and organizing efforts.

Digital Democracy and Civic Technology addresses the rapidly evolving landscape of technology-mediated civic engagement, from digital organizing tools and online deliberation platforms to artificial intelligence governance and cybersecurity for democracy organizations. This theme emphasizes practical exploration of emerging tools while addressing critical questions about digital equity, privacy, and democratic access.

Potential session topics include "Building Inclusive Digital Organizing Campaigns: Lessons from Successful Multi-Platform Strategies," which could demonstrate how different digital tools serve diverse community needs while maintaining campaign coherence. "Artificial Intelligence and Democratic Decision-Making: Opportunities and Risks for Civic Organizations" might explore practical applications of AI tools for civic engagement while addressing algorithmic bias and democratic accountability concerns. "Cybersecurity Essentials for Democracy Organizations: Protecting Voter Data and Activist Networks" could provide hands-on training for securing democratic institutions against digital threats.

Corporate Citizenship and Democratic Engagement examines how business leaders can meaningfully contribute to democracy strengthening beyond traditional corporate social responsibility approaches. This theme addresses both opportunities and challenges in business-democracy partnerships while exploring practical strategies for authentic corporate civic engagement.

Example sessions might include "Beyond Voter Registration: Comprehensive Corporate Civic Engagement Strategies," demonstrating how businesses can support democracy through employee education, community partnership, and institutional advocacy. "Supply Chain Democracy: Ensuring Democratic Values Throughout Business Operations" could explore how companies can support democracy through procurement decisions, vendor relationships, and operational practices. "ESG Integration and Democracy Metrics: Measuring Corporate Democratic Impact" might provide practical tools for assessing and reporting corporate contributions to democratic health.

Civic Education Innovation focuses on transforming civic learning from knowledge-based approaches to competency-based models that prepare learners for active democratic participation. This theme serves both formal educators and informal civic education practitioners while emphasizing experiential learning approaches that build practical civic capabilities.

Session topics could include "Project-Based Civic Learning: Engaging Students in Real Community Challenges," which might demonstrate how academic coursework can address actual community problems while building student civic skills. "Adult Civic Education: Strategies for Engaging Working Professionals in Democracy Learning" could explore how to design civic education programs that fit busy adult schedules while providing meaningful learning experiences. "Assessment Strategies for Civic Competency Development: Moving Beyond

Knowledge Testing" might provide practical tools for evaluating civic skill development and democratic engagement readiness.

Community Organizing and Coalition Building examines grassroots approaches to democratic change while exploring how organizing strategies can be enhanced through partnerships with other sectors. This theme emphasizes practical skill development alongside strategic thinking about social change and democratic participation.

Potential sessions include "Power Mapping for Cross-Sector Coalitions: Identifying Leverage Points for Democratic Change," which could teach participants how to analyze power relationships across different types of organizations while building effective advocacy strategies. "Narrative Strategy for Democracy Work: Crafting Messages That Resonate Across Sectors" might explore how to develop compelling stories about democratic values that motivate diverse audiences to engagement and action. "Building Lasting Coalitions: Sustaining Partnerships Beyond Single-Issue Campaigns" could address common challenges in maintaining cross-sector relationships while providing practical tools for partnership sustainability.

Media Literacy and Counter-Misinformation Strategies addresses one of the most pressing challenges facing contemporary democracies through practical approaches to building information resilience and democratic critical thinking capabilities. This theme includes hands-on workshops on fact-checking, source evaluation, and digital literacy education alongside strategic communication about democratic values.

Example sessions might include "Teaching Media Literacy Across Age Groups: Strategies for K-12, Higher Education, and Adult Learning Environments," which could provide age-appropriate curricula and activities for building critical information evaluation skills. "Community-Based Fact-Checking: Building Local Information Resilience Networks" might demonstrate how community organizations can develop sustainable approaches to combating misinformation while building local information literacy capacity. "Strategic Communication for Democracy: Countering Misinformation Through Positive Messaging" could explore how democracy advocates can effectively communicate democratic values while avoiding the amplification of false information.

Local Democracy and Civic Infrastructure explores how democratic participation can be strengthened at the community level through improved civic infrastructure, from voter education and engagement to participatory budgeting and civic technology implementation. This theme emphasizes practical approaches to institutional change while addressing common challenges such as low voter turnout and civic disengagement.

Session topics could include "Participatory Budgeting Implementation: Lessons from Successful Municipal Programs," which might provide step-by-step guidance for implementing community budget decision-making processes while addressing common implementation challenges. "Voter Education Beyond Registration: Building Comprehensive Civic Engagement Programs" could demonstrate how communities can support informed voting through candidate forums, issue education, and civic skill development. "Digital Democracy Tools for Local Government:

Enhancing Community Participation Through Technology" might explore platforms and strategies for increasing citizen engagement in local governance processes.

Global Democracy Networks and International Collaboration connects local and national democracy work to international movements and partnerships while emphasizing learning from global experience and building networks that support sustained democracy work across borders.

Potential sessions include "International Democracy Exchange: Learning from Global Best Practices," which could feature presenters from different countries sharing successful democracy innovations while facilitating adaptation discussions for different contexts. "Digital Authoritarianism and Cross-Border Resistance: Strategies for International Democracy Support" might explore how democracy advocates can support colleagues facing repression while building resilient international networks. "Global Corporate Accountability for Democratic Values: International Standards and Local Implementation" could examine how international frameworks for corporate democratic responsibility can be implemented through local advocacy and engagement strategies.

Proposal Submission Guidelines and Evaluation Criteria

The Democracy in Action Summit employs a comprehensive evaluation process designed to identify presentations that advance the summit's goals of cross-sector learning, practical skill development, and collaborative partnership building. Understanding these criteria helps potential presenters develop strong proposals while ensuring that accepted sessions provide maximum value to summit participants.

Cross-Sector Relevance and Adaptation Strategy represents the primary criterion for proposal evaluation because it distinguishes Democracy in Action Summit programming from traditional single-sector conferences. Successful proposals must demonstrate clear relevance for participants from multiple sectors, either through direct applicability or through specific adaptation strategies that help participants translate learning to their professional contexts.

Strong proposals explicitly address how their content serves educators, business leaders, nonprofit professionals, community organizers, and other participant segments while avoiding generic claims about broad applicability. For example, a proposal about strategic planning might specifically explain how the same planning framework addresses different constraints in corporate, nonprofit, and grassroots organizing environments. The most successful proposals include concrete examples of how their approaches have been successfully adapted across different organizational contexts.

Interactive Engagement and Hands-On Learning Design ensures that summit programming emphasizes participant engagement over passive information consumption. Successful proposals include detailed descriptions of interactive activities, hands-on exercises, and engagement strategies that require active participant involvement throughout sessions.

Traditional lecture-based presentations will not be accepted unless they include substantial interactive components that encourage cross-sector dialogue and collaborative learning.

Evaluation focuses on the creativity and effectiveness of proposed engagement strategies, with preference given to approaches that encourage participants from different sectors to learn from each other rather than simply from presenters. Strong proposals describe specific activities such as small group problem-solving exercises, role-playing scenarios that explore different sectoral perspectives, hands-on tool training with immediate practice opportunities, or structured reflection processes that help participants adapt learning to their professional contexts.

Practical Application and Implementation Focus requires presentations to provide concrete value that participants can immediately implement in their professional contexts. Successful proposals specify exactly what participants will be able to do differently as a result of session participation, including specific skills, tools, resources, or strategies they will acquire. Sessions must include takeaway materials, implementation guidance, and follow-up resources that support continued learning and application.

Strong proposals demonstrate clear understanding of common implementation barriers while providing practical strategies for overcoming typical challenges. For example, a proposal about coalition building might address how different organizational cultures affect partnership development while providing specific tools for managing these differences. The most successful proposals include comprehensive resource packages such as templates, checklists, planning guides, or other materials that support ongoing implementation.

Innovation and Fresh Perspectives prioritizes new approaches, emerging tools, and cutting-edge strategies over well-established content that is widely available through other sources. Successful proposals demonstrate how their content advances democracy practice beyond current standard approaches while providing evidence of effectiveness through pilot testing, successful implementation, or other validation methods.

Innovation can take many forms, from novel applications of established techniques to completely new approaches that address emerging challenges. Strong proposals clearly articulate what makes their approach distinctive while providing sufficient detail about implementation to help participants understand practical application requirements. The most successful proposals balance innovation with practical feasibility, ensuring that new approaches can be realistically implemented by participants with varying resource levels and organizational constraints.

Presenter Expertise and Experience Documentation requires demonstrating relevant qualifications and experience related to proposed content through professional experience, relevant projects, publications, or other credentials that establish presenter credibility. However, expertise requirements are broadly interpreted to include practitioners who have developed innovative approaches through their work rather than just academic or formal credentials.

Strong presenter teams often include multiple individuals from different sectors who can provide diverse perspectives on shared topics while demonstrating successful cross-sector collaboration. For example, a session about corporate-nonprofit partnerships might include presenters from both sectors who have worked together successfully, providing authentic insights about collaboration challenges and strategies from both organizational perspectives.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Integration requires explicit attention to how proposed sessions address diversity, equity, and inclusion considerations within democracy work. This includes both diverse representation in presenter teams and substantive attention to equity considerations within session content rather than superficial acknowledgment of diversity importance.

Successful proposals demonstrate understanding of how democracy challenges affect different communities differently while providing strategies that address these disparities rather than ignoring them. Strong proposals might address topics such as inclusive engagement strategies for communities with different cultural backgrounds, approaches for overcoming economic barriers to civic participation, or methods for ensuring that technology solutions serve diverse community needs rather than amplifying existing inequalities.

Resource Sharing and Community Building Commitment emphasizes the summit's goal of creating lasting value for democracy practitioners through comprehensive resource development and ongoing community building. Successful proposals include detailed plans for resource sharing, whether through toolkits, templates, reading lists, or other materials that participants can use beyond the summit itself.

Strong proposals demonstrate presenter commitment to ongoing engagement with summit participants through follow-up consultation availability, resource updates, or participation in post-summit community building activities. The most successful proposals include plans for collaborative resource development that encourage participants to contribute their own adaptations and innovations to shared resource libraries.

Resource Sharing and Community Building Requirements

The Democracy in Action Summit recognizes that lasting impact requires resources and connections that extend far beyond individual session presentations. All accepted presenters are expected to contribute to the summit's comprehensive resource sharing and community building efforts while gaining access to collaborative networks that support ongoing democracy work.

Comprehensive Resource Package Development requires presenters to develop substantial resource collections that support participant learning and implementation long after summit sessions conclude. These packages typically include detailed implementation guides that provide step-by-step instructions for applying session learning in different organizational

contexts, template materials such as planning documents, assessment tools, or communication frameworks that participants can adapt for their specific needs, and curated reading lists or reference materials that support continued learning and skill development.

Resource packages should address the diverse needs of cross-sector participants by providing adaptation guidance for different organizational contexts. For example, a resource package about strategic planning might include separate implementation guides for educational institutions, business organizations, nonprofit groups, and grassroots organizing efforts while maintaining coherence around core planning principles. The most valuable resource packages anticipate common implementation challenges while providing practical solutions and alternative approaches.

Interactive Learning Tool Creation extends beyond traditional handout materials to include digital tools, assessment instruments, or activity guides that facilitate ongoing learning and application. These might include online assessment tools that help participants evaluate their democracy-related skills and identify areas for development, facilitation guides that enable participants to teach session content to their colleagues or communities, digital templates that participants can customize for their specific organizational needs, or collaboration platforms that support ongoing partnership development among participants with shared interests.

Successful interactive tools are designed for ease of use and adaptation, recognizing that participants have varying levels of technical expertise and different organizational resources. The most effective tools include clear instructions, multiple format options, and ongoing support for implementation questions or technical challenges.

Ongoing Consultation and Support Commitment involves presenter agreement to provide follow-up support for participants who want to implement session learning in their professional contexts. This support typically includes limited consultation time for implementation questions, participation in follow-up webinars or discussion sessions, and contribution to online discussion forums or resource sharing platforms that maintain engagement between annual summit meetings.

Consultation commitments are designed to be manageable for presenters while providing meaningful support for participants. Typical commitments might involve two or three follow-up consultation sessions with interested participants, monthly participation in online discussion forums, or quarterly webinar presentations that address common implementation questions or share success stories from participants who have applied session learning.

Collaborative Network Participation requires presenters to engage actively in summit community building efforts that create lasting connections among democracy practitioners across sectors. This participation includes contribution to post-summit resource sharing platforms where presenters and participants continue sharing tools, strategies, and innovations, engagement in cross-sector working groups that address specific democracy challenges through sustained collaboration, and participation in annual follow-up events or regional gatherings that maintain relationships and accountability for democracy work.

Network participation helps ensure that summit impacts extend beyond individual learning to include systemic changes that result from enhanced collaboration among democracy practitioners. Presenters often find that network participation creates new professional opportunities while contributing to broader democracy strengthening efforts that no single organization could achieve independently.

Submission Process and Timeline

The Democracy in Action Summit employs a streamlined submission process designed to minimize administrative burden while ensuring comprehensive evaluation of all proposals according to summit criteria and standards.

Online Submission Platform provides user-friendly access to the complete proposal submission process through the summit website portal. The platform includes detailed guidance for each submission component while allowing presenters to save work in progress and return to complete submissions over time. Technical support is available throughout the submission period to address platform questions or technical difficulties that might prevent successful proposal submission.

The submission platform includes templates and examples that help potential presenters understand expectations while providing flexibility for different presentation approaches and content types. Successful submissions typically require several hours of preparation time, and the platform encourages early starting to allow adequate development and review time before submission deadlines.

Required Submission Components include presenter biographical information that demonstrates relevant experience and expertise, detailed session descriptions that address all evaluation criteria while providing sufficient detail for reviewer assessment, clear learning objectives that specify what participants will gain from session participation, comprehensive format specifications that describe interactive elements and engagement strategies, and detailed resource sharing plans that demonstrate commitment to ongoing participant support.

Additional components include presenter team diversity statements for multi-presenter sessions, accessibility accommodation plans that ensure sessions serve participants with varying needs and abilities, and evaluation and feedback collection strategies that contribute to ongoing summit improvement and presenter development.

Rolling Review and Acceptance Process provides feedback to presenters on an ongoing basis rather than requiring extended waiting periods for evaluation results. This approach allows accepted presenters to begin preparation and promotion activities well in advance of summit dates while providing opportunity for proposal revision and resubmission when initial submissions need strengthening.

Early submission is strongly encouraged because it provides more opportunities for revision and improvement while ensuring the best selection of presentation time slots and promotional

opportunities. Presenters who submit early in the review process typically receive more comprehensive feedback and development support than those who submit closer to final deadlines.

Post-Acceptance Support and Development includes access to presenter preparation resources such as facilitation training, technical platform orientation, and presentation skill development opportunities. Accepted presenters receive ongoing communication about summit logistics, participant preparation activities, and coordination with other presenters to ensure coherent and complementary programming.

The summit provides marketing support for accepted presenters through social media promotion, website feature opportunities, and integration with professional development and networking activities that enhance presenter visibility while contributing to summit promotion and participant recruitment efforts.

Proposal Examples

Democracy in Action Summit: Detailed Session Topic Examples

Understanding how to develop effective session topics for the Democracy in Action Summit requires seeing concrete examples that demonstrate how cross-sector learning actually works in practice. The key insight is that the most successful sessions don't just address multiple sectors—they show how different sectors can learn specific techniques from each other while adapting those techniques to their unique contexts and constraints.

Let me walk you through detailed examples that illustrate how different session formats can create meaningful cross-sector learning experiences. These examples will help you understand not just what topics work, but why they work and how you can develop similar approaches for your own expertise.

Interactive Skills Workshop Examples

Interactive workshops succeed when they teach transferable skills that solve common challenges across sectors, but the magic happens when participants discover how the same fundamental skill looks different in practice depending on their organizational context.

"Facilitation for Democratic Engagement: Techniques That Work Across Sectors"

This workshop would begin by acknowledging that educators, corporate leaders, community organizers, and nonprofit staff all need to facilitate conversations that engage diverse perspectives and build consensus, but they face very different constraints and expectations. The presenter might start with a university professor who has mastered Socratic seminar techniques that encourage critical thinking and respectful disagreement among students.

The workshop would then demonstrate how these same underlying principles—asking open-ended questions, creating psychological safety for dissent, and building on participant contributions—can be adapted for corporate team meetings where hierarchy affects participation patterns, community organizing meetings where power imbalances require careful navigation, and nonprofit board meetings where volunteer dynamics create unique challenges.

Participants would practice the same facilitation techniques in role-playing scenarios that mirror their professional contexts. The corporate participants might practice facilitating a stakeholder meeting about community investment priorities, while nonprofit participants might facilitate a donor engagement session, and educators might practice facilitating a faculty meeting about curriculum changes. The underlying facilitation principles remain consistent, but participants

learn how to adapt their approach to different power dynamics, time constraints, and organizational cultures.

The takeaway resources would include facilitation checklists adapted for different organizational contexts, question banks organized by common democratic engagement challenges, and troubleshooting guides for typical facilitation problems that emerge in different professional settings. Participants leave with both enhanced facilitation skills and concrete understanding of how their colleagues in other sectors address similar challenges with different approaches.

"Building Inclusive Coalitions: Lessons from Corporate Partnership Models for Community Organizers"

This workshop addresses one of the most common challenges in democracy work—how to build partnerships among organizations with different priorities, cultures, and resource levels. The presenter might be a corporate partnership manager who has successfully developed cross-sector collaborations, working alongside a community organizer who has applied corporate partnership strategies to grassroots coalition building.

The session would start by examining why traditional community organizing coalition models sometimes struggle with corporate partners, while corporate partnership approaches often fail to account for grassroots organization needs. Participants would learn specific techniques from corporate partnership development, such as stakeholder mapping that accounts for different organizational decision-making processes, partnership agreements that clarify roles and expectations across different organizational cultures, and communication strategies that maintain engagement across organizations with different meeting rhythms and communication preferences.

The hands-on component would involve mixed-sector teams working through real coalition-building scenarios. For example, teams might develop a coalition strategy for a voter education campaign that needs to coordinate between school districts with regulatory constraints, corporations with brand reputation concerns, nonprofit organizations with limited staff capacity, and community groups with varying technological capabilities.

Participants would practice adapting corporate partnership tools for community organizing contexts while learning how grassroots relationship-building strategies can enhance corporate community engagement efforts. The workshop would conclude with participants developing specific action plans for improving their own coalition-building work using techniques learned from other sectors.

Cross-Sector Solution Lab Examples

Solution Labs represent the summit's most innovative format because they require participants from different sectors to collaborate on solving actual democracy challenges while learning from

each other's expertise and constraints. These sessions work best when they address complex problems that no single sector can solve effectively alone.

"Combating Misinformation in Local Elections: A Cross-Sector Strategy Development Lab"

This Solution Lab would present participants with a realistic scenario based on actual local election challenges. The scenario might involve a medium-sized city facing a contested mayoral election where misinformation is spreading through social media about voting procedures, candidate positions, and election security. The challenge requires coordination among multiple types of organizations to address both the immediate misinformation problem and the underlying information literacy challenges.

The session would begin with expert presenters providing background information about how misinformation spreads, why different sectors have different capabilities for addressing it, and what successful counter-misinformation efforts have learned from previous elections. Participants would then break into mixed-sector teams that include educators with media literacy expertise, business leaders with social media and communications experience, nonprofit staff with community engagement skills, and local government representatives with election administration knowledge.

Each team would work through a structured problem-solving process that requires them to leverage each sector's unique capabilities while addressing each sector's specific constraints. For example, educators might contribute curriculum development skills for rapid media literacy training, but they face constraints around political neutrality that affect how they can address election-specific misinformation. Corporate partners might provide social media expertise and communication resources, but they need to navigate brand reputation concerns and regulatory restrictions on political engagement.

The teams would develop comprehensive strategies that coordinate multiple organizational approaches rather than expecting any single organization to address the entire challenge. Their final presentations would include specific role assignments for different types of organizations, implementation timelines that account for different organizational decision-making processes, resource requirements that distribute costs and responsibilities appropriately, and evaluation strategies that measure both immediate impact and longer-term information resilience building.

"Civic Engagement for Climate Action: Building Democracy and Environmental Resilience Together"

This Solution Lab addresses the intersection between democracy strengthening and climate action by recognizing that environmental challenges require democratic decision-making processes while climate impacts threaten democratic institutions. The challenge scenario might involve a region facing climate adaptation decisions that require extensive community input while building civic capacity for ongoing environmental governance.

Participants would work in mixed teams to develop comprehensive civic engagement strategies that simultaneously address climate adaptation needs and democracy strengthening goals. Environmental nonprofit representatives might contribute technical expertise about climate impacts and adaptation options, while bringing constraints around scientific accuracy and policy advocacy limitations. Corporate participants might provide resources and strategic planning expertise while navigating shareholder expectations and regulatory compliance requirements.

Educators would contribute curriculum development skills for community education programs while addressing institutional constraints around political neutrality and curriculum approval processes. Community organizers would provide relationship-building and engagement expertise while working within resource limitations and community capacity constraints.

The teams would develop implementation strategies that recognize how climate and democracy challenges reinforce each other while creating solutions that address both sets of issues through coordinated action. Their final recommendations would include specific strategies for engaging communities in climate decision-making processes, educational approaches that build both environmental literacy and civic capacity, corporate engagement strategies that support both climate action and democratic participation, and policy advocacy approaches that strengthen democratic institutions while advancing climate resilience.

Strategic Panel Discussion Examples

Panel discussions succeed when they feature presenters from different sectors who have wrestled with the same fundamental challenges but approached them through their unique organizational contexts and constraints. The most effective panels help audience members understand both the common underlying issues and the sector-specific strategies that different organizations have developed.

"Measuring Impact Across Sectors: How We Know When Democracy Work Actually Works"

This panel would feature four presenters from different sectors who have all struggled with the challenge of measuring and demonstrating the impact of democracy-related work. The panelists might include a corporate citizenship manager who has developed metrics for measuring employee civic engagement programs, a nonprofit program manager who has created evaluation frameworks for voter education initiatives, a university professor who has assessed the civic learning outcomes of service learning programs, and a community organizer who has tracked the democratic participation impacts of neighborhood organizing efforts.

Each panelist would present their measurement approach while explicitly discussing the organizational constraints that shaped their choices. The corporate presenter might explain how shareholder accountability requirements led to metrics that emphasize employee engagement and business outcomes, while also tracking community impact measures. The nonprofit

presenter might describe how funder requirements and limited evaluation budgets led to creative partnerships with academic researchers and simplified data collection strategies.

The panel discussion would focus on helping audience members understand how different measurement approaches serve different organizational needs while contributing to a broader understanding of democracy work effectiveness. Panelists would discuss common measurement challenges such as attribution problems when multiple organizations work in the same communities, long-term outcome tracking when organizational budgets focus on short-term results, and stakeholder communication when different audiences need different types of evidence about program effectiveness.

The session would conclude with practical guidance for audience members about adapting measurement approaches across sectors, developing collaborative evaluation strategies that serve multiple organizational needs, and communicating impact evidence to diverse stakeholder audiences who may have different priorities and evidence standards.

"Engaging Across Political Divides: Nonpartisan Strategies That Work in Polarized Times"

This panel would address one of the most challenging aspects of democracy work—how to engage people with different political perspectives in constructive civic participation without triggering partisan conflict or organizational policy violations. Panelists would include representatives from sectors that face different versions of this challenge with different constraints and opportunities.

An educator might discuss strategies for teaching civic engagement skills in classrooms that include students from politically diverse families while maintaining institutional neutrality requirements and pedagogical effectiveness. A corporate community relations manager might explain how their company engages in civic issues that affect business operations while maintaining customer relationships and brand reputation across political divides.

A nonprofit executive might describe how their organization addresses community problems that have become politically polarized while maintaining their tax-exempt status and donor relationships. A community organizer might explain how they build coalitions around local issues that connect to national political debates while maintaining focus on winnable local change and avoiding divisive national political rhetoric.

The panel discussion would explore common strategies that work across different organizational contexts, such as focusing on shared values rather than policy positions, engaging people through hands-on problem-solving rather than abstract political discussions, and building relationships through shared action on local issues before addressing broader political questions.

Panelists would also discuss how they handle common challenges such as organizational pressure to take political positions, community members who try to inject partisan politics into

nonpartisan activities, and media attention that tries to frame civic engagement work in partisan terms.

Lightning Talk Series Examples

Lightning talks work best when they showcase specific innovations, successful pilot projects, or creative solutions that other practitioners can adapt to their own contexts. The fifteen-minute format requires presenters to focus on concrete examples rather than comprehensive frameworks, making these sessions ideal for sharing practical innovations that inspire further experimentation.

"Innovation Showcase: Creative Tools for Civic Engagement"

This lightning talk series would feature multiple presenters sharing specific tools, technologies, or approaches they have developed for enhancing civic engagement in their professional contexts. The rapid-fire format allows participants to encounter diverse innovations while identifying approaches they want to explore further through follow-up conversations.

One presenter might share a mobile app developed by a nonprofit organization that helps community members track local government decisions and connect with neighbors who share similar concerns. The presenter would demonstrate the app's key features while explaining how other organizations could adapt the approach using existing platforms or different technological solutions.

Another presenter might describe a corporate employee engagement program that combines volunteer time with civic education, showing how employees learn about community challenges through hands-on service while developing civic skills they use in their personal lives. The presentation would include specific program design elements that other organizations could implement with different volunteer activities and civic education content.

A third presenter might share a classroom activity developed by an educator that helps students understand local government decision-making by simulating city council meetings with real community issues. The presentation would demonstrate key activity components while explaining how similar simulation approaches could work in corporate training programs, community workshops, or nonprofit volunteer orientation sessions.

Each lightning talk would conclude with specific contact information and resource sharing commitments, allowing interested audience members to follow up for more detailed implementation guidance and ongoing support.

"Success Stories: Cross-Sector Partnerships That Actually Work"

This series would feature presenters sharing specific examples of successful collaborations between organizations from different sectors that achieved meaningful democracy strengthening

outcomes. Each presentation would focus on one partnership while providing enough detail that audience members can understand both what made the collaboration successful and how similar approaches might work in their contexts.

One presenter might describe a partnership between a school district and local businesses that created internship opportunities focused on civic engagement, showing how students gained both professional experience and civic skills while helping businesses develop authentic community engagement strategies. The presentation would include specific partnership development steps, challenge resolution strategies, and outcome measurement approaches that other organizations could adapt.

Another presenter might share a collaboration between a community organizing group and a corporate foundation that developed a neighborhood leadership development program, explaining how the partnership leveraged both the organizing group's community relationships and the foundation's resource development expertise. The presentation would address common challenges in corporate-grassroots partnerships while providing specific tools for building trust and managing different organizational cultures.

A third presenter might describe a partnership between a nonprofit advocacy organization and a university research center that created a voter education program combining academic research with community engagement expertise. The presentation would explain how the partnership addressed academic institutional constraints around political neutrality while meeting the advocacy organization's goals for voter engagement and education.

Intensive Skill-Building Bootcamp Examples

Bootcamps provide comprehensive training in specific competencies that democracy work requires across sectors. These ninety-minute sessions combine expert instruction with practical exercises and resource sharing, ensuring participants develop functional capabilities they can immediately implement in their professional contexts.

"Grant Writing for Democracy Initiatives: Strategies That Work Across Sectors"

This bootcamp would address the reality that most democracy-related work requires external funding, but different types of organizations face different funding landscapes and requirements. The session would begin by mapping the funding ecosystem for democracy work, showing how foundation grants, corporate sponsorships, government contracts, and individual donor support serve different organizational needs and require different proposal approaches.

Participants would learn core grant writing skills that apply across funding sources, such as problem statement development that connects local challenges to broader democratic concerns, outcome measurement planning that satisfies both funder requirements and organizational

learning needs, and budget development that accurately reflects true program costs while demonstrating efficient resource use.

The hands-on component would involve participants working through actual grant writing exercises using real funding opportunities. Corporate participants might practice developing proposals for foundation grants that support employee civic engagement programs, while nonprofit participants might work on corporate sponsorship proposals that align with business community engagement goals. Educators might develop grant proposals for civic education initiatives that could be funded through education foundations or democracy-focused funders.

The session would conclude with participants receiving comprehensive resource packages including grant writing templates adapted for different funding sources, databases of democracy-focused funders organized by sector and geographic focus, and sample successful proposals from different types of organizations that demonstrate effective approaches to common grant writing challenges.

"Digital Organizing for Democracy: Tools and Strategies That Scale"

This bootcamp would teach participants how to use digital tools for civic engagement while addressing the digital divide and privacy concerns that affect democracy work. The session would start by examining how different digital organizing approaches serve different community needs and organizational capabilities, helping participants understand when digital tools enhance civic engagement and when they create barriers or additional problems.

Participants would learn hands-on skills for using common digital organizing platforms while understanding how to adapt their approach for communities with different technological access and comfort levels. The training would include practical exercises in social media strategy development that maintains authenticity while reaching diverse audiences, email campaign development that encourages civic action without overwhelming recipients, and text messaging strategies that respect privacy while facilitating rapid community communication.

The bootcamp would address sector-specific considerations such as corporate social media policies that affect employee civic engagement, educational institution technology policies that constrain classroom digital civic activities, and nonprofit technology budgets that require creative solutions for digital organizing infrastructure.

Participants would leave with specific action plans for implementing digital organizing strategies in their professional contexts, including technology platform recommendations based on organizational needs and budgets, content development templates for different types of civic engagement communication, and measurement strategies for tracking digital organizing effectiveness while respecting participant privacy concerns.

These detailed examples demonstrate how the Democracy in Action Summit creates learning experiences that go far beyond traditional conference presentations. Each session format serves specific learning objectives while ensuring that participants from different sectors can

both contribute their expertise and learn approaches they can adapt to their own organizational contexts. The key is recognizing that effective democracy work requires coordination across sectors that traditionally work in isolation, and the summit provides structured opportunities for developing the relationships and capabilities that make such coordination possible.



Organizing Committee

Democracy in Action Summit 2025: Organizing Committee Structure

Executive Leadership Committee

Conference Director Overall strategic vision and leadership. Coordinates with major partners, makes final decisions, ensures cross-sector mission remains central to all activities.

Program Committee Chair Oversees content strategy, manages call for proposals process, ensures session quality meets cross-sector learning objectives.

Operations Director Manages logistics, financial planning, vendor relationships, registration systems, and timeline coordination.

Program Development Committee

Content Strategy Coordinator Develops programming themes, coordinates session scheduling, manages presenter communications and support.

Speaker Relations Manager Recruits keynote speakers, manages presenter onboarding, coordinates presenter technical preparation and resource development.

Workshop Design Specialist Ensures interactive session formats meet cross-sector engagement goals, develops session templates and facilitation guides.

Resource Development Manager Coordinates creation of toolkits, templates, and takeaway materials. Manages post-summit resource library.

Evaluation and Assessment Coordinator Designs impact measurement strategies, manages participant feedback collection, tracks long-term outcomes.

Participant Experience Committee

Registration and Communications Manager Manages registration platform, participant communications, accessibility accommodations, and pre-summit preparation.

Networking and Engagement Coordinator Designs cross-sector networking activities, manages partnership matching services, facilitates relationship building.

Community Building Manager Develops post-summit engagement strategies, manages ongoing participant networks, coordinates regional follow-up events.

Accessibility and Inclusion Specialist Ensures universal access, manages accommodation requests, coordinates language interpretation, oversees equity initiatives.

Technology and Platform Committee

Technology Platform Manager Manages RingCentral Events platform configuration, troubleshoots technical issues, coordinates recording systems.

Digital Experience Designer Optimizes virtual environment for cross-sector engagement, manages interactive features, designs user experience flows.

Technical Support Coordinator Provides presenter and participant technical assistance, manages platform training, coordinates live event support.

Digital Resource Manager Manages online resource sharing platforms, coordinates digital toolkit distribution, maintains technology infrastructure.

Marketing and Communications Committee

Communications Director Develops messaging strategy across sectors, manages brand consistency, coordinates all external communications.

Social Media Manager Manages social media campaigns, coordinates cross-platform promotion, engages professional networks and communities.

Content Marketing Specialist Creates promotional content, manages website updates, develops success stories and case studies.

Media Relations Coordinator Manages press outreach, coordinates media partnerships, handles interview requests and media coverage.

Professional Network Liaison Coordinates promotion through professional associations, educational institutions, and sector-specific organizations.

Partnership and Development Committee

Partnership Development Director Identifies strategic partners, negotiates partnership agreements, manages ongoing organizational relationships.

Sponsorship Manager Develops sponsorship packages, manages sponsor relationships, coordinates sponsor benefits and recognition.

Foundation Relations Specialist Manages foundation partnerships, coordinates grant applications, maintains relationships with democracy-focused funders.

Corporate Engagement Coordinator Develops corporate partnerships, manages business community outreach, coordinates corporate civic engagement connections.

International Relations Manager Coordinates global partnerships, manages international participant recruitment, develops cross-border collaboration opportunities.

Logistics and Operations Committee

Event Logistics Coordinator Manages day-of-event operations, coordinates volunteer activities, handles real-time problem solving.

Financial Management Specialist Manages budget tracking, processes payments, coordinates financial reporting, ensures fiscal accountability.

Vendor Relations Manager Manages relationships with service providers, coordinates contracts, oversees vendor performance and deliverables.

Data and Analytics Coordinator Manages participant data, tracks registration metrics, analyzes engagement patterns, maintains privacy compliance.

Specialized Advisory Roles

Democracy Content Advisor Ensures programming accuracy on democracy topics, reviews content for nonpartisan balance, provides expertise on democratic principles.

Cross-Sector Strategy Advisor Guides cross-sector collaboration design, advises on partnership development, ensures authentic multi-sector engagement.

Virtual Event Experience Advisor Provides expertise on virtual event best practices, advises on engagement strategies, ensures platform optimization.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Advisor Reviews all activities for DEI considerations, advises on inclusive programming, ensures representative participation.

Volunteer Coordination Roles

Volunteer Coordinator Recruits and manages event volunteers, coordinates volunteer training, assigns volunteer responsibilities.

Session Moderator Coordinator Recruits and trains session moderators, manages moderator assignments, provides facilitation support.

Technical Assistant Coordinator Manages volunteer technical support team, coordinates training for platform assistance, assigns technical support roles.

Registration Support Coordinator Manages volunteer registration assistance, coordinates participant onboarding support, handles day-of-event help desk.

Regional and Community Outreach

Regional Outreach Coordinator Manages regional promotion strategies, coordinates local partnership development, facilitates regional networking.

Community Organization Liaison Coordinates outreach to grassroots organizations, ensures community organization participation, manages community partnerships.

Student and Emerging Professional Coordinator Manages recruitment of young participants, coordinates student organization partnerships, develops emerging leader programming.

Rural and Small Community Specialist Ensures participation from rural communities, addresses technology access challenges, coordinates small community partnerships.

Post-Summit Implementation Committee

Implementation Support Coordinator Manages post-summit consultation services, coordinates follow-up programming, tracks implementation outcomes.

Alumni Network Manager Maintains participant networks, coordinates annual reunions, manages ongoing community engagement.

Impact Documentation Specialist Documents summit outcomes, creates success stories, manages impact reporting for partners and sponsors.

Future Planning Coordinator Begins planning for following year, incorporates lessons learned, maintains institutional knowledge and continuity.



Democracy Summit Market Research Brief

Democracy Summit Market Research Brief

Executive Summary

The civics education and democracy conference landscape presents significant opportunities for innovation and expansion. While established academic conferences serve higher education well, substantial gaps exist in cross-sector collaboration, practitioner-focused programming, and accessible formats. **The market is ripe for a new democracy summit that bridges these gaps through innovative hybrid formats, cross-sector partnerships, and enhanced accessibility.**

Key findings reveal that successful events combine multi-stakeholder engagement with action-oriented programming, while the post-COVID era has permanently lowered barriers to participation through virtual accessibility. The greatest opportunities lie in serving underserved audiences including local government officials, community practitioners, and international participants through innovative formats that prioritize implementation over theory.

Major Annual Conferences and Summits

Flagship US-Based Events

National Conference on Citizenship (NCoC) stands as the premier cross-sector gathering, bringing together 75+ years of convening experience with government, business, nonprofit, and academic leaders. Their 2025 conference on "Building Civic Resilience" (September 16, Washington DC) demonstrates consistent success in attracting diverse stakeholders through congressionally chartered legitimacy and annual Civic Health Index release.

Campus Compact National Conference (Compact25, March 31-April 2, 2025, Atlanta) represents the largest higher education civic engagement gathering with 1,000+ participants. Their 40th anniversary theme "Uniting through Public Purpose" emphasizes coalition building, offering a proven model for cross-sector collaboration with strong institutional backing from major higher education associations.

Civic Learning and Democratic Engagement Conference (CLDE) positions itself as "the only conference in higher education" for democratic engagement, serving 600+ participants annually through NASPA and AASCU partnership. Their June timing and multi-stakeholder approach (students, faculty, administrators, community partners) creates a unique value proposition in higher education.

American Political Science Association (APSA) Annual Meeting brings academic rigor to civic education with 11,000+ members internationally. Their 2025 Vancouver conference on

"Reimagining Politics, Power, and Peoplehood" includes significant Teaching & Learning Conference components serving K-12 educators alongside scholars.

Specialized and Emerging Conferences

American Democracy Summit (Phoenix, May) offers a high-energy, immersive format combining entertainment with nonpartisan programming designed for current political crisis contexts. Their innovative approach includes cultural influencers and A-list entertainers alongside traditional democracy content.

Frontiers of Democracy (Tufts University, June) provides intimate, high-quality networking with ~100 participants through highly interactive panels, workshops, and trainings. Their connection to academic research institutes and mix of practitioners and scholars creates valuable cross-pollination.

iCivics events reach 145,000 teachers and 9 million students across all 50 states through professional development focused on civic education, including their annual Educator Convening and the distributed Civic Learning Week (March 10-14, 2025) which features state proclamations and Supreme Court Justice conversations.

International Democracy Conferences with US Participation

Global Democracy Summits

Summit for Democracy (led by US, with Republic of Korea hosting 2024) represents the highest-level international democracy engagement, featuring 100+ countries with extensive US government delegation and civil society participation. Their innovation in Democracy Cohorts and year-round engagement models demonstrates scaled impact potential.

Copenhagen Democracy Summit (Alliance of Democracies Foundation) attracts 300+ political, business, and media leaders with consistent high-level US participation including former presidents (Obama, Biden) and secretaries of state. Their hybrid format with winter Denver sessions shows regional adaptation success.

World Forum for Democracy (Council of Europe, Strasbourg) brings 500+ civil society leaders together annually with American participation in their innovative Labs, unconferences, and Democracy Innovation Award programs. Their 2025 theme "Democracy at risk: how can we revive it?" reflects current urgency.

Regional and Academic International Forums

Global Democracy Coalition Forum (International IDEA) operates through regional forums preceding global gatherings, with 2025 locations in Buenos Aires, Milan, and Nairobi demonstrating geographic diversity and 150+ democracy organizations worldwide participation.

International IDEA events including their 30th Anniversary celebrations and Stockholm Conference on Electoral Integrity provide technical focus on electoral management and democracy assessment with regular US civil society participation.

The **OECD Global Forum on Building Trust and Reinforcing Democracy** (Milan 2024) serves 200+ officials from OECD countries with evidence-based discussions on trust in institutions and citizen participation, showing policy-oriented approach success.

Cross-Sector Collaboration and Innovative Formats

Breakthrough Innovations

Unconferences and Open Space Technology have proven highly effective for civic engagement, with formats like EdCamps and Code for America Brigade networks demonstrating 60-80% cost reductions while maintaining high engagement. The "Law of Two Feet" principle enables organic community formation around shared interests.

21st Century Town Meetings (AmericaSpeaks legacy) demonstrated massive scale potential with 13,500 DC citizens participating across seven meetings, resulting in concrete policy outcomes including \$270M education funding and \$25M housing trust fund. Though resource-intensive, they proved large-scale deliberative democracy viability.

Civic Innovation Labs like Oakland's Civic Design Lab and Simon Fraser's programs show successful integration of design thinking with government service delivery, using human-centered design and racial equity lenses to redesign public services with measurable impact.

Successful Cross-Sector Models

Code for America's approach embeds technologists in government for year-long residencies, creating bidirectional learning between sectors. Their \$100M Safety Net Innovation Lab across 15 states demonstrates scaled impact potential through sustained multi-year commitments.

Civic Alliance brings together 1,252+ companies (BP, Microsoft, Salesforce, Starbucks) for employee civic engagement, showing business case evidence including 471% increase in employee philanthropy and 81% consumer preference for democracy-supporting brands.

Knight Foundation's Smart Cities Program invested \$37.5M+ since 2010 across 209 organizations in 11 innovation clusters, with 84% private capital leveraging for civic innovation demonstrating successful public-private partnership models.

Virtual, Hybrid, and Post-COVID Innovations

Transformational Changes

The pandemic accelerated permanent transformation toward accessibility and inclusion. **Virtual formats increased international participation by 300%** and rural access by 150%, while virtual conferences attracted participants from 167+ countries versus 59 for in-person events.

National Council for Social Studies expanded from 3-day to full week virtual format based on learning preferences, offering multiple time zones and accessibility features. Their 2020 virtual conference maintained 200+ content sessions while dramatically expanding reach.

Hybrid pricing models emerged with virtual participation at \$100-200 versus in-person \$400-600, representing 60-80% organizational cost reductions while increasing attendance 3-5x for same investment.

Technology Platform Success

Zoom dominated with 75% of virtual civic education events, offering breakout rooms for up to 50 sessions, automated transcription, and screen reader compatibility. **Cisco Webex** provided enterprise-grade solutions with real-time translation and enhanced security for government use.

Accessibility features became standard including CART services, WCAG 2.1 compliance, multi-language support, and keyboard navigation. Universal design principles shifted from accommodation to standard practice.

Engagement Innovation

Micro-learning sessions of 15-20 minutes proved optimal for virtual attention spans, with interactive elements every 10-15 minutes maintaining engagement. **Asynchronous options** increased actual content consumption by 40% through recorded access.

Global accessibility permanently reduced geographic and economic barriers, with organizations reporting 95% plan to maintain virtual components and 38% predicting hybrid as most popular format.

Organizations Hosting Recurring Events

Academic and Professional Organizations

National Council for Social Studies (NCSS) serves as the largest K-12 social studies educator gathering with several thousand annual attendees. Their December timing in major cities and "Because Democracy Depends on It" 2025 theme demonstrates consistent educational focus.

Campus Compact operates both national conferences and regional summits, with their biennial Summit of Presidents and Chancellors adding senior leadership engagement. Their 200+ sessions include pre-conference institutes and Impact Awards celebration.

iCivics provides continuous professional development through their Educator Network, reaching all 50 states with partnerships like California's Power of Democracy Initiative demonstrating state-level scaling.

Research and Policy Organizations

Kettering Foundation leads deliberative democracy research and practice with 30+ years developing forum methodology. Their International partnerships and Democratic Knowledge Project spanning K-16 education show sustained impact.

Center for Civic Education operates the premier We the People National Finals (April 9-11, 2025, Washington DC) with 48 state teams and \$7,000 per team investment, demonstrating high-value civic education competition model.

Jack Miller Center hosts National Summit on Civic Education in Philadelphia's Historic Union League with 200 civic education leaders, combining funders and practitioners in collaborative reform approach.

International Organizations

International IDEA operates multiple annual events including their 30th Anniversary and Stockholm Conference on Electoral Integrity, serving electoral management bodies globally with US civil society participation.

Alliance of Democracies Foundation runs both Copenhagen Democracy Summit and Denver winter sessions, showing geographic adaptation while maintaining high-level strategic focus.

Key Themes and Current Topics

Dominant Themes

Democratic resilience emerges as the central theme across conferences, with National Conference on Citizenship's 2025 focus on "Building Civic Resilience" and World Forum for Democracy addressing "Democracy at risk: how can we revive it?"

Cross-sector collaboration appears consistently, from Campus Compact's "Uniting through Public Purpose" to Civic Alliance's corporate engagement models. Events prioritizing multi-stakeholder participation report highest success rates.

Technology and democracy integration spans from civic hackathons to AI governance deliberation, with Meta's 6,000+ participant deliberative forums representing the largest democratic engagement exercise ever conducted.

Emerging Focus Areas

Youth civic engagement receives dedicated attention through NAIS Student Civic Leadership Summit (\$1,450 per student) and generational bridge-building programs showing 85% increase in early-career professional participation.

Local democracy gains prominence through municipal innovation labs and community conversation formats, addressing gaps in local government practitioner engagement.

Global democracy support expands through Summit for Democracy cohorts and international development funding, with US participation in Global Democracy Coalition forums across Buenos Aires, Milan, and Nairobi.

Pricing Models and Accessibility Approaches

Current Pricing Landscape

Academic conferences typically range \$400-1,500 with early bird and member discounts standard. **Campus Compact** offers 10% group discounts for 4+ registrations while **NCSS** provides tiered pricing for different educator categories.

Student events command premium pricing with **NAIS Student Civic Leadership** at \$1,450 per student and **We the People National Finals** at \$7,000 per team, reflecting intensive program delivery and outcomes.

Virtual participation settled at \$100-200 versus in-person \$400-600, with many organizations offering free access components. **iCivics** provided free premium resource access during COVID-19, demonstrating crisis-response accessibility.

Accessibility Innovation

Sliding scale pricing based on regional economics serves global participation, while **scholarship programs** remain limited across most conferences. **Community partner discounted rates** at Campus Compact and **student discounts** up to 75% show targeted accessibility efforts.

Geographic accessibility improved dramatically through virtual options, with **hybrid models** offering flexible cost options based on participation level. **Free content access** for many sessions removes initial barriers to engagement.

Success Factors Analysis

Proven Success Elements

Clear differentiation characterizes successful events, with each major conference maintaining distinct identity and target audience. **Multi-stakeholder engagement** drives highest participant satisfaction and policy impact.

Institutional backing provides stability and credibility, with **Campus Compact's** university partnerships and **National Conference on Citizenship's** congressional charter demonstrating organizational legitimacy importance.

Action orientation distinguishes successful events from academic gatherings, with **Summit for Democracy's** cohort commitments and **AmericaSpeaks'** policy outcomes showing implementation focus value.

Annual consistency builds community expectation and loyalty, while **interactive formats** through workshops, panels, and structured networking maintain engagement above traditional lecture formats.

Critical Success Factors

Sustained engagement beyond events proves essential, with successful organizations maintaining year-round community platforms and **peer learning networks**. **Skilled facilitation** enables productive multi-stakeholder dialogue and conflict management.

Technology integration when done appropriately enhances rather than replaces human interaction, with **accessibility features** as standard rather than accommodation showing inclusive design principles.

Cross-sector partnerships require genuine power-sharing and mutual benefit rather than tokenistic participation, with **clear roles** and **resource commitments** from all parties.

Market Gaps and Opportunities

Underserved Audiences

Local government officials represent the most significant gap, with minimal dedicated programming despite direct democracy impact. **Community organizers** and grassroots practitioners remain underrepresented in academic-focused events.

Business leaders beyond corporate social responsibility roles show limited engagement, missing opportunities for economic democracy integration. **Rural practitioners** face geographic and cost barriers to participation in urban-centered events.

International practitioners from developing countries lack representation in US-focused events, while **younger professionals** encounter events skewed toward academic and senior professional audiences.

Geographic and Sector Gaps

Rural and Southern/Mountain West regions show significant underrepresentation, with most conferences concentrated in expensive major cities. **Cross-sector collaboration** remains limited between public-private sectors and federal-state-local levels.

K-12 and higher education civic education communities operate in separate silos despite shared goals, while **traditional civics and emerging democracy movements** lack integration platforms.

Format and Content Opportunities

Practitioner-focused programming prioritizing implementation over theory presents major differentiation opportunity. **Skills-building workshops** on practical democracy facilitation show high demand but limited supply.

Innovation challenges and **competition-based engagement** remain underutilized, while **mobile/pop-up events** could serve underserved communities currently excluded by traditional formats.

Strategic Recommendations for New Democracy Summit

Positioning Strategy

Target local government practitioners and community organizers as primary audience, filling the most significant market gap. **Position as implementation-focused** rather than academic, emphasizing practical democracy skills and tools.

Emphasize cross-sector collaboration through structured partnership building, business-civic-government integration, and regional networking. **Leverage hybrid format** for maximum accessibility while maintaining high-quality in-person networking.

Differentiation Opportunities

Democracy Bootcamp format combining intensive skills-based training with peer learning and ongoing project collaboration. **Regional rotation model** bringing conference to underserved areas while building local capacity.

Corporate civic responsibility angle engaging business leaders in democracy strengthening, with **economic democracy** content addressing inequality and governance intersection.

International practitioner exchange components providing global perspectives while maintaining US focus, potentially through virtual Global South participation.

Implementation Recommendations

Collaborative funding approach engaging foundations, corporate sponsors, and local government co-funding. **Sliding scale accessibility pricing** with substantial scholarship program and **community partner** engagement.

Year-round community platform maintaining engagement between events, with **regional chapters** and **mentorship matching** providing ongoing value. **Action-oriented outcomes** with follow-up accountability and impact measurement.

Strategic timing avoiding overcrowded May-June period, potentially September-October for optimal participation. **Multiple format options** serving different participation preferences and accessibility needs.

The research reveals a mature but fragmented market with significant opportunities for innovation in format, audience, and accessibility. A well-positioned new democracy summit can fill critical gaps while serving underserved communities through proven engagement models adapted for contemporary challenges.



Meeting Notes

July 9

Agenda

Welcome and Purpose (5 min)

- Quick recap of the vision: a practical, cross-sector democracy summit

Updates and Recap (5 min)

- Key takeaways from prior meetings ([Meeting 1](#) & [Meeting 2](#))
- Share progress on platform planning and potential partnerships
 - <https://www.txfreedomfighters.us/home>
- Perhaps align to the UN Goals - maybe list these to emphasize global aspects of conference
 - <https://sdgs.un.org/goals>

Decision Point #1: Conference Name (10 min)

- Present 2–3 name options for discussion and decision
 - Record final choice for branding
-
- ☐ The People's Power Summit: Uniting for Democracy
 - ☐ Seeds of Democracy: A Global Summit for Civic Renewal
 - ☐ Thrive: United for Democracy and Global Action

Decision Point #2: Conference Date (10 min)

- Discuss timing options targeting **January/February 2026**
- **January 21 & 22**

- Consider alignment with major events and accessibility for sectors

Establish Conference Committees (15 min)

- Present **3 streamlined committees**:
 - Program Committee
 - Walter
 - Shelley
 - Howard
 - Outreach & Partnerships Committee
 - Walter
 - Thomas
 - Logistics & Platform Committee
 - Shelley
 -
- Brief explanation of each committee
- Invite participants to sign up

Next Steps & Assignments (10 min)

- Timeline planning for:
 - Drafting the Call for Proposals
 - August 1 - December 15
 - Developing an outreach plan
 - Setting up the platform and registration
 - August 1
- Set the next planning meeting date

Open Discussion and Questions (10 min)x

- Space for participant input, concerns, and resource sharing
- Howard's top 100 concerns

Closing (5 min)

- Confirm who will send out follow-up notes and committee sign-up links
- Next week, conference structure, themes, tags - Lucy will have a rough draft of the call for proposals
- Howard - write plan for global concerns workshop series

July 22

Agenda

Updates

- Quick recap of where we are
 - Thrive: United for Democracy and Global Action
 - January 21 & 22
- Graphics update
- Howard's top 100 concerns

Conference Committee

- Program Committee
 - Walter
 - Shelley
 - Howard
 - Nancye
- Outreach & Partnerships Committee
 - Walter
 - Thomas
- Logistics & Platform Committee
 - Shelley

Next Steps & Assignments (10 min)

- Timeline planning for:
 - Drafting the Call for Proposals
 - August 1 - December 15
 - Developing an outreach plan
 - Setting up the platform and registration
 - August 1

- Set the next planning meeting date

Open Discussion and Questions (10 min)x

- Space for participant input, concerns, and resource sharing

Closing

- Next week, conference structure, themes, tags - Lucy will have a rough draft of the call for proposals
- Howard - write plan for global concerns workshop series

July 30

Agenda

Updates

- Graphics update
- Conference will go live on August 1
- Info sessions will be scheduled for later in August
- Howard's top 100 concerns
- Adding to Notion
-

Conference Committee

- Program Committee
 - Walter
 - Shelley
 - Howard
 - Nancye
 - Chantal
 - Kathleen
 - Ann
- Outreach & Partnerships Committee
 - Walter
 - Thomas
- Logistics & Platform Committee
 - Shelley
 - Chantal (?)

Next Steps & Assignments (10 min)

- Timeline planning for:
 - Drafting the Call for Proposals

- August 1 - December 15
- Developing an outreach plan
- Setting up the platform and registration
 - August 1
- Next meeting
 - Discuss outreach plan and timeline
 -

August 6

August 6

Committee Action Items:

1. [Add your name and info here](#)
2. Start brainstorming organizations to contact to present. Bring ideas to the next meeting.
3. Start brainstorming potential keynotes or featured speakers. Bring ideas to the next meeting.
4. Start publicizing the conference. Graphics are below. Feel free to adapt as needed.
 - a. Sample social media posts are here:
<https://busy-launch-408.notion.site/Social-Media-245c5b7d30fb8065ac25c405e8530339?pvs=143>
 - b. **Conference Graphics**
 - i. Assets are in the committee Notion OR
 - ii. [Here is a square template](#) - feel free to make a copy and play with the designs
 - iii. [Here is a rectangle template](#) - feel free to make a copy and play with the designs

Links:

1. **Registration/Conference Site:** <https://ringcentr.al/45BzLb8>
2. **Register for Orientation Webinar Series:**
 - a. Overview:
<https://events.ringcentral.com/events/thrive-2026-conference-basics-and-what-you-need-to-know>
 - b. Proposals:
<https://events.ringcentral.com/events/from-idea-to-impact-crafting-winning-proposals-for-thrive-2026>
 - c. Partners:
<https://events.ringcentral.com/events/strategic-partnerships-for-democracy-media-and-sponsorship-opportunities>
 - d. Volunteers:
<https://events.ringcentral.com/events/democracy-builders-wanted-volunteer-opportunities-with-thrive-2026>
 - e. AMA:
<https://events.ringcentral.com/events/thrive-2026-uncovered-ask-the-organizers-anything>
3. **Notion for Committee Members:** <https://bit.ly/ThriveConferenceCommittee>
 - a. This contains conference information, digital media assets, our database of orgs, our database of

- b. Democracy Database:
<https://busy-launch-408.notion.site/21ac5b7d30fb806085c5fd6817c1205c?v=21ac5b7d30fb8038988a000c64adbb11>
 - c. Partner Database:
https://www.notion.so/239c5b7d30fb80f29363c0d12a698c32?v=239c5b7d30fb80ed9176000ca628a9d7&source=copy_link
4. **Notion for the Public:** <https://bit.ly/ThriveDash>
- a. This contains links to the call for proposals, sponsor info etc.

Other Links Mentioned

- [NewWorld Game](#)
- [The United States Withdraws from the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization \(UNESCO\)](#)
- [Substack sent a push alert promoting a Nazi blog](#)
- [Actionable Innovations Global](#)
- [Run For Something](#)

Key Takeaways from Thrive 2026 Committee Meeting

- Conference Website and Platform Updates
 - New conference website and Notion workspace demonstrated
 - Some technical issues with links need to be fixed
 - Moving materials into two Notion spaces - one for committee, one for public
- Democracy and Education Focus
 - Committee members expressed shared concerns about democracy and educational technology
 - Discussion of challenges expressing political opinions in professional settings
 - Emphasis on need for open dialogue in libraries and schools
- Conference Planning Details
 - Target of 1,000 registrants

- Planning for 6-8 keynote speakers across multiple stages
- Registration and proposal submission now open
- Options being developed for session recording preferences and privacy settings
- AI and Technology Integration
 - New AI chatbot tool integrated with proposal submission form
 - Discussion of privacy concerns around AI tools and data collection
 - Plans to incorporate New World Game platform for collaborative problem-solving
- Outreach and Partnership Strategy
 - Focus on building community and finding trusted voices
 - Plans to reach out to potential speakers and sponsors
 - Templates available in Notion for partner outreach
 - Emphasis on vetting potential groups carefully
- Next Steps
 - Fix broken links on conference website
 - Resolve Notion access issues for committee members
 - Create WhatsApp group for committee communication
 - Begin outreach to potential partners and speakers
 - Add SDGs alignment field to proposal form

Quick recap

The meeting began with Lucy demonstrating a new conference website and Notion workspace to the committee, addressing technical issues and encouraging committee members to request guest editor access. The group then met to introduce new members and discuss concerns about democracy and educational technology, sharing their backgrounds and expressing alarm about the current political climate. The conversation ended with discussions about upcoming informational webinars, AI tools, privacy concerns, and plans for an education and democracy conference, including registration, proposals, and sponsorship opportunities.

Next steps

- Lucy to fix broken links on the conference website
- Lucy to contact Notion support to understand guest access request functionality
- Lucy to add SDGs alignment field to the call for proposals form
- Lucy to set up option for session recording preferences in registration
- Lucy to invite committee members to the New World Game platform space for Thrive conference
- Committee members to complete and submit conference form to Lucy
- Committee members to request access to Notion workspace pages as guests
- Committee members to participate in upcoming weekly webinars
- Lucy to send out email with working links and meeting notes
- Lucy to create WhatsApp group for committee communication
- Lucy to add meeting notes to Notion

- Nancy/Committee members to reach out to potential organizations and speakers using provided partner letter template
- Committee members to fill out committee form to be listed on conference website
- Lucy to add links to partner materials in Notion
- Lucy to send out mail merge communications to potential contacts
- Lucy to correct links in the system
- Lucy to add content to databases for democratically oriented organizations
- Lucy to create social media materials for promotion
- Lucy to figure out Notion problem and show how to add content to databases next week

Summary

Conference Website and Notion Demo

Lucy demonstrated the new conference website and Notion workspace to the committee. She showed them the public-facing dashboard and registration page, which had some technical issues that needed to be fixed. Lucy explained that she was moving their materials into two different Notion spaces, one for the committee and one for the public. She encouraged committee members to request guest editor access to the Notion workspace to help with outreach efforts. Lucy noted that while they hadn't received many responses yet, it was still early in the process.

Democracy and Education Concerns

The group met to introduce new members and discuss their shared concerns about democracy and educational technology. Joyce, a consultant from New York, and Wesley, a North Carolina teacher, shared their backgrounds and expressed alarm about the current political climate. Chuck, a retired Rotary International member, emphasized the failure of peaceful movements to address global issues. The group discussed the challenges of expressing political opinions in professional settings, with Lucy and others noting the need for open dialogue in libraries and schools. The conversation ended with introductions of Shelley, a retired Montana librarian, and Walter, a retired educator who launched The Worthy Educator to support mid to late-career educators.

Notion Workspace Access Issues

Lucy and Nancye discussed difficulties accessing and sharing a Notion workspace for the Conference Committee. Lucy explored various options to add guests but encountered issues with the process, including concerns about making members instead of guests. Wesley suggested checking settings, but the group found that adding guests did not work as expected. Lucy decided to contact Notion support to resolve the problem and avoid further confusion.

AI-Driven Conference Webinar Series

Lucy presented a series of upcoming informational webinars about the conference, scheduled from August 14 to September 11, covering topics like proposals, partnerships, and volunteering.

She demonstrated a new AI chatbot tool integrated with their proposal submission form, which can conduct automated presentations and answer questions. The group discussed a platform called New World Game, which uses AI to facilitate collaborative problem-solving, and Nancy raised concerns about the US's withdrawal from UNESCO and its impact on the Sustainable Development Goals.

AI Privacy and Recording Options

The group discussed privacy concerns around AI tools and data collection, with Nancye expressing concerns about surveillance and future implications. Lucy shared her experience setting up a virtual conference platform and proposed giving attendees options to opt out of AI use and recording, while also discussing pricing and funding challenges. The group agreed that providing recording options and privacy settings would be important, with Nancye suggesting multiple recording options for different audience types. They also discussed the importance of encouraging participation from those who may be hesitant to speak out against fascism.

Education and Democracy Conference Planning

Lucy discussed plans for a conference focused on education and democracy, including registration, proposals, and sponsorship opportunities. She emphasized the importance of using modern tools and platforms like Notion, Sutra, and Rocket Reach to organize and promote the event. Lucy and others discussed the need to build community and find trusted voices, with Wesley highlighting the importance of local and digital connections. The group agreed to continue promoting the event and exploring collaboration opportunities. Lucy planned to follow up with an email containing working links and potentially create a WhatsApp group for easier communication between meetings.

Partisan Groups and Community Activism

The group discussed the inclusion of partisan groups in their organization, with Lucy emphasizing that it's about being human and an engaged citizen rather than being Republican or Democrat. They agreed to vet potential groups carefully, noting how terms like "parental choice" can be repurposed with harmful intentions. Lucy shared plans to feature Carolyn Foot, a librarian from Texas involved in book banning issues, as a keynote speaker, potentially leveraging her upcoming documentary exposure. The conversation concluded with Wesley sharing a personal story about community activism and immigration support, which led to a discussion about privacy considerations in sharing such stories.

Conference Planning and Speaker Outreach

Lucy discussed plans for an upcoming conference, aiming for 1,000 registrants and 6-8 keynotes across multiple stages. She suggested reaching out to potential speakers and sponsors, including book authors and organizations aligned with their goals, and proposed using AI tools like ChatGPT to help identify potential presenters. The team agreed to use existing templates in Notion and Google Docs for outreach, with Nancye and others taking the lead on contacting potential partners while Lucy manages the broader coordination.

August 9

August 9th

Meeting summary

Quick recap

The meeting covered updates on ongoing conference planning, including discussions about proposals, event sessions, and technical issues with platforms like LinkedIn and Notion. Lucy provided details about upcoming information sessions for the Thrive 2026 conference and addressed various technical challenges with event descriptions and sharing capabilities. The team discussed potential conference proposals, scheduling considerations, and upcoming events, with Lucy promising to share analyses and resolve platform issues while encouraging continued proposal submissions.

Next steps

- Lucy to send a follow-up email with links to the Notion pages and conference planning resources.
- Lucy to figure out the Notion access problem for committee members.
- Lucy to conduct the first conference info session webinar tomorrow.
- Lucy to update the partner letter with the revised sponsorship levels.
- Lucy to send the conference data analysis from previous GLOW conferences to the team.
- Lucy to create and send a big email blast promoting the conference.
- Nancye to check on Howard regarding the series planning leading up to the conference.
- All committee members to consider submitting their own proposals for the conference.
- All committee members to help promote the conference info sessions on social media and invite people from their networks.
- All committee members to review the Taiwan digital democracy keynote proposal and provide feedback.
- All committee members to review Ann Fox's climate simulator proposal.

Summary

Conference Series Planning and Keynote

Lucy discussed the status of a series leading up to a conference, noting that Howard had started working on a draft but had been absent from recent meetings due to computer issues. Nancye

agreed to follow up with Howard. Lucy mentioned she was working on a proposal and shared details about a book endorsed by the Dalai Lama, which could potentially feature as a keynote at an event. She sought input on whether the book's content and author would be appealing to their audience.

Climate Simulator Proposal Discussion

Lucy introduced two proposals for consideration: an open-source governance technology and a climate simulator tool. She noted that while the governance technology might be of interest from an international perspective, especially in the age of AI, the climate simulator proposal, submitted by Ann Fox, seemed more relevant to the Global Conference. Lucy expressed interest in the climate simulator, which is an online tool developed at MIT, and suggested holding off on approving proposals until August 15th when more submissions are expected.

Thrive 2026 Information Session Launch

Lucy announced an upcoming series of information sessions for the Thrive 2026 conference, starting with an overview session tomorrow at 9 AM Central Time. She explained that the sessions will be broadcast on LinkedIn, YouTube, and other platforms, with recordings to be shared with registrants and her mailing list. Lucy encouraged attendees to share the events with their networks and invited participation from Chuck and others, noting that while Chuck couldn't attend tomorrow's session, he could view the recording later.

LinkedIn Event Display Issues

Lucy and Nancye discussed issues with event descriptions and dates not displaying correctly on LinkedIn when viewed on mobile. Lucy discovered that while event descriptions appear properly on desktop, the dates and times are missing from the mobile view. Lucy agreed to add the dates and times directly to the description field to ensure visibility, as the current system was not translating the information properly.

Notion Access and Pricing Issues

Lucy discussed issues with sharing a Notion page, explaining that while public access should be available through a link, viewers are currently prompted to sign up or log in instead of being able to view the page directly. She discovered that adding users as members would require paying \$20 per person per month, and while guests can request access to individual pages, she cannot manually invite people as guests. Nancye suggested checking the settings, but Lucy confirmed that only member and owner roles are available, with guest status being automatically assigned to certain contacts.

Notion Integration and Contact Management

Lucy discussed the integration of email and other tools into Notion, highlighting its potential for organizing tasks and contacts. She mentioned resources available for learning Notion, including user groups and a Notion Academy website. Lucy also shared plans for an upcoming event in San Francisco and outlined her goals for the week, including sending out an email blast and promoting a webinar. Nancye inquired about a shared list for contacting conference partners, and Lucy guided her to the relevant Notion page where contact information is being managed. They discussed the organization of contact data and agreed on a method to avoid duplicate outreach efforts.

RingCentral Platform Sponsorship Updates

Lucy discussed updates to RingCentral's platform, which will now allow for more flexible sponsorship levels, increasing from 3 to 10. She mentioned adding social media content to the public Notion page and promised to send a follow-up email with a summary and links to relevant resources. Lucy also suggested bookmarking the conference-related tabs for easier management.

Conference Proposals on Democracy

Lucy and Chuck discussed potential proposals for an upcoming conference, focusing on democracy and related issues. Chuck shared his analysis of the U.S. Constitution and suggested a session on the history and challenges of global governance. Lucy proposed a solutions lab session where participants could brainstorm fixes for democratic issues. They also discussed the importance of submitting proposals early to secure better presentation times. Lucy mentioned her analysis of past conferences, noting that 2-5 PM Central Time was optimal for session attendance.

Event Analysis and Future Proposals

Lucy discussed lessons learned from previous events and mentioned she would share an analysis of the 3 Glow Projects with the team in a follow-up email. She encouraged everyone to make proposals for future events and promised to resolve issues with the Notion platform. Lucy also informed the team about an upcoming global read featuring Jody Williams, Stephen Goose, and Mary Wareham discussing landmines, and reminded them to check in next week.

August 20

Quick recap

The team discussed technical setup and access issues for their Notion workspace and database initiatives, including the new Democracy Database for showcasing educational resources. Lucy provided updates on various ongoing projects including website content, partner outreach efforts, and upcoming webinars, while also sharing insights from conference data analysis and school Portrait initiatives. The conversation ended with discussions about political climate challenges, voting systems across different countries, and the importance of local activism, with plans to upload meeting notes to Notion for follow-up.

Next steps

- Lucy to use a mail merge tool to personalize and send emails to her list of potential partners.
- Lucy to add everyone's bios to the conference website this week.
- Nancy and Howard to fill out the contact information form for the conference committee.
- Lucy to make a digital flyer for distribution.
- Lucy to add the webinar recording to Notion.
- Lucy to find and share the WhatsApp group link for easier communication.
- All committee members to review the Glow conference data analysis and provide feedback on what to consider for the Thrive event in January.
- All committee members to consider inviting local inspiring people who are doing grassroots democracy work to be speakers.

Summary

Notion Access and Usage Tutorial

Lucy explained to the team how to access and use Notion, addressing previous issues with access permissions. She demonstrated the process of adding team members as guests to avoid additional charges and shared a link to the Notion workspace. Lucy also mentioned that the paid version of the tool now includes meeting transcript functionality.

Conference Partnerships and Outreach Strategy

Lucy announced that she would be adding bios from the conference committee page to the website and pointed out Walter's contributions to the potential partners database. She clarified that they should not limit potential partners to those who are not overtly political, encouraging the inclusion of anyone offering valuable tools, resources, or programs. Lucy mentioned she would use a mail merge tool to personalize emails to a separate list, aiming to boost their outreach efforts.

Democracy Database Public Resource Launch

Lucy presented a new public database called the Democracy Database, which will showcase organizations doing interesting work. She demonstrated a Chrome extension tool in Notion that allows users to bookmark and add educational resources to the database. Lucy explained that the database will serve as a standing resource for the public, with information gathered from various websites using the AI-powered tool.

Project Updates and Outreach Strategies

Lucy provided an update on the project's progress, mentioning that Walter has been working on potential partnerships and that an internal project is underway. She shared that she will be done with a big project on Monday and can then dedicate more time to this project. Lucy also discussed the asset library, which contains various graphics and icons in different sizes, and mentioned that she will create a digital flyer using a school newsletter site for better distribution. She noted that there hasn't been a lot of new registrations lately, but she sent out another newsletter and conducted a webinar last week to provide an overview. Tomorrow, Lucy will host a webinar on the proposal process and what they are looking for.

Democracy and Digital Access Issues

Lucy and Howard discussed technical difficulties with accessing a shared space, with Howard unable to receive verification codes despite multiple attempts. Chuck commented on the value of democracy in deciding territorial issues, particularly in relation to Ukraine, and suggested this could be a relevant topic for their upcoming event. Lucy noted Gavin Newsom's social media strategy mimicking Trump's style and his proposal to put California's redistricting plan to a public vote, which she viewed as a fair democratic approach.

WhatsApp and Data Integration Discussion

Chuck mentioned an upcoming Zoom call at 1 PM with an organization called "Fixing Capitalism and Democracy" and promised to email Lucy with details. Lucy suggested using WhatsApp for sharing information, as it's effective for quick communications, especially with people outside the US. She explained she had created a WhatsApp group for her conferences and shared that she had integrated data from her Globe Conferences over the past three years into a chatbot using Claude, which she found promising.

Global Citizenship in School Portraits

Lucy shared her research on how schools describe their ideal graduates through "Portraits of a Graduate" initiatives, noting that while many schools mention global citizenship, only a small fraction explicitly reference digital or global competence. She found that 6 out of many schools in the Portrait gallery included global citizenship references, while 14 districts in the League of Innovative Schools had similar mentions.

Glow Conference Data Analysis Insights

Lucy presented her analysis of conference data using AI tools, highlighting insights from past Glow conferences that could inform their upcoming January event. She noted that most

engagement occurs in the first 3-4 hours, suggesting a need to structure programming accordingly. Lucy assigned homework for the team to review the Glow analysis and provide feedback on its relevance to their event planning.

Mail-in Ballot Controversies and Impacts

Lucy discussed how Putin's comments about mail-in ballots influenced Trump, noting it as evidence of efforts to dismantle democracy. Chantal explained that in Germany, mail-in voting is possible but not common, and voting is not mandatory. Kathleen pointed out that Republicans use mail-in ballots more than Democrats and highlighted concerns about its impact on military personnel and rural voters.

Political Distractions and Local Activism

Lucy and Kathleen discussed the political climate, focusing on the distraction tactics used by certain individuals to divert attention from important issues like the Epstein files. Lucy shared concerns about Texas state legislators being followed by police officers and their refusal to leave the State House, predicting similar tactics might be used in other states. They also talked about recent protests and the importance of local activism, with Lucy suggesting the need to highlight inspiring local leaders rather than relying on national figures. Lucy mentioned she would upload the meeting notes to Notion and encouraged attendees to reach out with questions.

August 27

August 27

Quick recap

The meeting focused on planning and promoting an upcoming conference, including discussions about registration processes, outreach strategies, and new proposal approval systems. The team reviewed various tools and resources for managing conference materials, including databases, forms, and social media features, while also exploring potential partnerships and speakers from diverse backgrounds. The group concluded by discussing plans for an event focused on democracy and citizen participation, with emphasis on building cross-sector competencies and fostering strategic partnerships across borders.

Next steps

- Wesley: Approach Renee about being a keynote speaker and the Media Education Lab becoming a partner
- Lucy: Send a large email blast about the conference after Labor Day
- Lucy: Work with Walter on reaching out to potential partners
- Lucy: Add partnership information to the conference flyer so people can register as endorsers/supporters
- Wesley: Connect with Indivisible Charlotte and broader Indivisible groups about partnership
- Lucy: Send out a broader mailing to potential partner groups when more details are filled in
- Chuck: Invite his media platform contact in Florida to be a media partner
- Lucy: Fix the typo in the call for proposals form that incorrectly shows December 1st, 2026 as the deadline
- Lucy: Improve the user interface for adding resources to the democracy database
- Wesley: Help Lucy map the Notion site to a custom domain for a more professional appearance
- Lucy: Add committee members to the proposal review form so they can participate in the approval process
- Lucy: Reach out to Chris Lehman and Zach Chase as potential conference speakers
- Committee members: Share the conference information in relevant Facebook groups, LinkedIn groups, and WhatsApp groups
- Committee members: Complete the Conference Committee form if not already done

Summary

Conference Promotion and Proposal Updates

Lucy discussed updates on the conference and her plans for promoting it, including a mail merge to her network and potential outreach to new contacts. She mentioned working on a system for approving proposals and planned to send a large email blast about the conference and her global Ed conference after Labor Day. Lucy also shared that she had cleaned up some processes and was working on a new proposal approval system.

Conference Planning and Registration Overview

Lucy provided an overview of the conference registration process and shared the registration link, explaining that committee members receive free admission and access to recordings. She demonstrated the conference planning site in Notion, which includes dashboards for both committee members and the public, as well as meeting notes and planning documents. Chuck inquired about inviting a media partner from Florida, and Lucy approved the idea. Wesley suggested approaching Renee about being a keynote speaker and partner, as well as connecting with Indivisible, a group he is involved with, to potentially participate in the conference.

Smore Flyer and Campaign Updates

Lucy demonstrated a new flyer created using Smore, which includes translation and accessibility features, and shared analytics from previous campaigns showing high engagement. She explained where to find the flyer in the Notion social media section and discussed plans to add partnership registration information to the flyer. The group discussed adding organizations and people they reach out to in the tracker, and Lucy shared a podcast episode featuring Chris Lehman and Zach Chase, suggesting they might be potential conference speakers.

Database and Conference Resource Updates

Lucy demonstrated a database of resources and conference information, explaining how to add new entries and access different sections of the system. She mentioned that the conference website currently uses a Bitly link and discussed the possibility of mapping it to a custom domain with Wesley's help. Joyce pointed out a typo in the call for proposals deadline, which Lucy agreed to fix. Lucy also shared that she had been conducting webinars, which were available on the public page of the site.

Curriculum Project Management Tools

Lucy discussed the progress of her curriculum project and the use of Notion and Jot Form for managing educational materials. She highlighted the benefits of Chat Form for creating and managing forms, including its integration capabilities and interactive features. Lucy also explained the process for reviewing and approving proposals for an event, using a rubric and automated email notifications. She plans to set up the proposal system for the program committee to review next week, emphasizing the importance of providing constructive feedback to proposers.

Citizen Activation and Partnership Strategies

Lucy explained that the main goal is to activate more citizens and connect them to learn from each other, with a focus on education and pro-democracy groups. She emphasized the importance of providing various tools for citizens to participate, such as Resistbot for those unable to attend protests. Howard inquired about other potential partner categories, such as social activists, economists, and health organizations, to which Lucy responded affirmatively, suggesting that these groups could also be valuable partners in their efforts.

Cross-Sector Democracy Event Goals

The group discussed the messaging and goals for an upcoming cross-sector democracy event. Lucy shared a Google Doc outlining the event's purpose and three main goals: building cross-sector democracy competencies, fostering strategic partnerships, and accelerating democracy innovation. Howard and Joyce emphasized the need to clearly articulate these goals in a concise way, with Joyce referencing a document that explained the event's mission to activate more people in democracies worldwide. Chuck provided historical context and definitions of democracy, rule of law, and factors leading to nation-state failure, suggesting a focus on the rule of law and addressing the needs of citizens.

Global Democracy Conference Planning

The group discussed the upcoming conference focused on democracy, with Lucy explaining it would likely be US-centric but would include global perspectives, including participants from Africa and Europe. Howard suggested refining the focus to connect citizens across borders rather than national governments, emphasizing citizen action and strengthening democracy for future generations. Joyce proposed adding "leaving a legacy for future generations of how to be a living part of government for the people, by the people and of the people" to the conference's messaging.

Event Planning for Diverse Dialogue

The group discussed plans for an upcoming event focused on fostering active participation and dialogue among diverse participants. Lucy suggested reviewing a document for language refinement and proposed brainstorming potential keynote and featured speakers, including Howard Gardner as a possible speaker. Joyce shared her interest in organizing a session on speaking up and being heard, and suggested involving the Dolls, a group of women in educational technology, to expand participation. The team agreed on next steps, including reviewing the document, identifying potential speakers, and filling out a form to be listed on the event website.

September 3

September 3rd

Quick recap

The meeting focused on planning upcoming events, including email outreach to potential partners and discussions about potential speakers across various categories. The team explored concerns about current political and social issues, including the deployment of National Guard troops in cities and the growing influence of Asian nations in global politics. The group concluded by discussing event logistics, including session formats, survey planning, and the identification of potential speakers for an event focused on democracy and organizing.

Next steps

- Lucy: Follow up with Howard Gardner through Andrew about interviewing him for the Thrive event
- Andrew: Check with his dad about participating in an interview for Thrive
- Lucy: Follow up with contacts from Roots and Shoots who responded to her email
- Joyce: Continue planning for the speaking spot at the DOLS meetup in October
- Lucy: Consider reaching out to the teacher featured in Jacob Soboroff's story about the deported Guatemalan student
- Ann: Email Lucy with contact information for civic education-related groups
- Joyce: Send Lucy contacts she'd like to reach out to for the event
- Lucy: Add a copy of the email she used this week to the shared document
- Lucy: Send the partner letter email to Joyce

Summary

Email Outreach and Event Planning

Lucy discussed her email outreach to a mailing list of 24,000 people about upcoming events, noting limited responses so far, with most interest coming from education organizations. She plans to send another mailing list targeting organizations focused on their event issues and mentioned Walter has a separate contact list. Lucy also mentioned she would continue working on the approval process and planned to discuss speakers and outreach strategies in the meeting.

Howard Gardner Interview Planning Discussion

Lucy discussed her connection with Andrew Gardner, who is considering interviewing his father, renowned psychologist Howard Gardner, for Thrive. Lucy explained that while Howard is active on LinkedIn and interested in AI and education, he may not be enthusiastic about webinars. She suggested a conversational format similar to a previous successful interview Andrew conducted

with his father for Lucy's Global Education Conference in 2011 or 2012. Lucy emphasized that if Howard declines, it would not be a problem, and they would simply move on to other potential interviewees.

Email Outreach and Partner Engagement

Lucy shared her progress on sending out emails to potential partners for the upcoming events using a mail merge tool. She discussed the response rates and the need to follow up with some organizations. Ann and Joyce offered to contribute contacts to the mailing list, with Joyce mentioning a potential speaking opportunity at a DOLS meetup in October. Lucy provided guidelines for sending emails to potential partners, emphasizing the use of personal relationships and the importance of adding new contacts to the list.

Global Power Shift Dynamics

Lucy shared an article about a Guatemalan high school student who was deported, highlighting the teacher's role in amplifying the story. The group discussed the growing influence of Asian nations, particularly China and India, in global politics, with Howard noting that these countries represent a significant portion of the world's population and are forming alternative governing coalitions. Howard emphasized that while democracy is not the only form of government, the United States may be losing influence as other nations, including China and African countries, gain power through investment and soft diplomacy.

Trump's Impact and Political Shifts

Lucy shared insights from conversations with Terry Moran and Michael Ludwig, a former Federal judge and Boeing general counsel, who expressed concern about the lasting damage from Trump's actions. She also highlighted a hopeful sign in Iowa's recent election of a young Democratic state senator and discussed a podcast interview with Rachel Maddow that suggested people are more upset about current events than perceived. Ann noted the significance of a new voice in Iowa politics with the election of a school board chair, while Lucy mentioned a lawyer, Skye Perman, who has been actively involved in lawsuits regarding school funding.

National Guard Deployment Concerns

The group discussed concerns about the deployment of armed National Guard troops in cities, with Kathleen expressing worry about potential tragedies similar to the Kent State shooting in 1970. Kathleen and Joyce highlighted Governor Pritzker's concerns about using the National Guard during Mexican Independence Day celebrations in Chicago, fearing immigration raids. Ann shared DC's unique situation, noting the city's complex relationship with the National Guard presence and the mayor's delicate balancing act between security and civil liberties.

National Guard Deployment Concerns

Lucy discussed the deployment of the National Guard in Chicago, highlighting concerns about the potential impact on poor and minority communities, while noting that the Guard might be

deployed in wealthier areas instead. She mentioned staying informed through local Indivisible groups and shared a Notion database for potential speakers. Joyce shared updates on Governor Pritzker's concerns about ICE targeting Mexican Independence Day events and a Navy Times article about the Guard doing landscaping in DC.

Event Speaker Diversity Brainstorming

The group brainstormed potential speakers for an event, focusing on four categories: dream keynotes, hidden gems, unsung champions, and cross-sector bridge builders. They discussed several high-profile individuals, including Rachel Maddow, Cory Booker, Nicole Wallace, Stephen Colbert, and various governors and activists. The conversation also touched on the importance of including voices from different sectors and regions, with particular attention to journalists and international figures like Maria Ressa and Dmitry Muratov.

Democracy Event Speaker Planning

The group discussed potential speakers for an event focused on democracy and organizing. They explored various categories of speakers, including keynotes, hidden gems, organization leaders, and others. Lucy suggested adding a category for local organizations to feature. The team brainstormed potential speakers, including Nita Farahany, Alope, Maria Russa, and Jeffrey Rosen. Howard suggested looking at authors with new books and checking Harvard bookstore's recommendations. The group agreed to compile a bibliography of recommended books on democracy and free speech.

Event Planning and Speaker Coordination

Lucy led a discussion about planning an upcoming event, focusing on keynote and featured speaker sessions, with 5-7 keynotes scheduled every 3 hours and featured speakers during regular sessions. The team discussed categorizing sessions into strands like democracy skills and digital democracy, with Nancye offering to reach out to potential keynote speakers including Mark Cuban's foundation. Howard and Nancye presented a plan for a pre-event survey and post-event discussions, which Lucy agreed to support by setting up a JotForm survey and sharing access with the group. The team agreed to review a document about the survey approach and continue identifying potential speakers for the event.

September 10

Quick recap

The group discussed technical tips for improving online video presence and shared experiences with various equipment and lighting setups. They explored current events and political challenges, including concerns about governance systems and the need for effective policy responses. The conversation ended with planning discussions for an upcoming conference, including session structure, community input strategies, and promotional efforts through various networks.

Next steps

- Joyce: Find and share the one-page infographic with best practices for virtual presentations that was developed during COVID.
- Lucy: Share information about the "Office Hours" Zoom community with the team, particularly with Howard.
- Lucy: Use the infographic Joyce will provide for the upcoming conference.
- Lucy: Add the "Grandparents for Vaccines" organization to their database.
- Lucy: Explore the "Office Hours" Zoom community resources for potential conference preparation.
- Team: Consider using Joyce's infographic for the upcoming conference.

Summary

Enhancing Online Video Presence

Lucy, Howard, and Joyce discussed tips for improving online video presence, focusing on camera positioning, lighting, and equipment quality. Howard shared his experience with a new monitor that significantly improved his video quality, while Lucy highlighted the importance of proper camera setup and the challenges of using computer webcams. Joyce mentioned a 1-page infographic on best practices for video calls during COVID-19, which she agreed to share for future reference. The group agreed that investing in a good webcam and following lighting and background tips could greatly enhance virtual presentations and conferences.

Zoom Community and Social Movements

Lucy shared information about a Zoom community called Office Hours, which was started during COVID-19 by Alex Lindsey and includes daily meetings and a YouTube channel focused on Zoom usage. The group meets at 5 AM Pacific time and has a dedicated day for education content. The discussion then shifted to current events, with Lucy expressing shock about Code Pink protesters getting close to Trump, while Chuck raised concerns about the progressive movement being divided into environmental, peace, and economic social justice movements, which he believes is reducing their effectiveness.

Global Governance and Systemic Flaws

Chuck expressed concerns about the flaws in the U.S. governance system, highlighting the need for justice and protection of human rights beyond mere voter participation. He emphasized the interconnectedness of global systems and the importance of a global effort to address these issues, citing a recent statement by the director of CISA. Lucy agreed that the complexity of these systems is often misunderstood, even by adults, and she expressed worry about the potential breakdown of these systems. Chuck shared his "5-word wisdoms" to simplify global challenges, focusing on keeping people and nature healthy and recognizing the illusion of independence in current systems.

Addressing Political and Social Challenges

The group discussed several political and social issues, including Supreme Court dissent, censorship at the US Open, and grandparents advocating for vaccines. They expressed concern about the lack of specificity in political messaging and the need for concrete actions to hold elected officials accountable. Lucy shared her observations about public discourse in Illinois, highlighting both the challenges of governance and the prevalence of misinformation and apathy among the public.

National Guard Deployment Concerns

The group discussed concerns about the deployment of National Guards in cities, with Kathleen expressing fears about potential violence and its impact on democracy, drawing parallels to the Kent State incident in 1970. Howard clarified that National Guard members are legally bound to follow lawful orders but can refuse orders deemed illegal, though they risk serious consequences for insubordination. Lucy proposed rescheduling a webinar to next Wednesday to allow committee members to participate in an "ask me anything" session about the conference, with Ann confirming her availability for the new date.

Conference Proposal Approval Workflow

Lucy demonstrated a new workflow system for conference proposal approvals, showing how it will send emails to program committee members for review and approval. The system requires a majority approval before proposals are accepted, with options to approve, deny, or leave comments. Lucy emphasized that proposals should have practical applications and actionable takeaways for attendees. The team discussed the process for reviewing proposals, with Lucy noting that while a detailed rubric exists, reviewers should focus on whether proposals offer practical value to participants.

Post-Trump Policy Action Plan

Howard led a discussion on developing a comprehensive list of 50-100 specific, actionable items to address post-Trump era challenges, focusing on both immediate needs and long-term solutions. The group discussed creating a platform that could inform future political party platforms, with Howard emphasizing the importance of addressing housing affordability, healthcare access, and aging population challenges. Chuck raised concerns about

distinguishing between "wants" and "needs" in policy-making, while also warning against the liberal tendency to equate comfort with effectiveness, suggesting instead that fundamental principles of survival and interdependence should guide policy decisions.

Conference Planning and Strategy Discussion

The group discussed creating a list or agenda for an upcoming conference, with Howard emphasizing the need to generate momentum before the event rather than using it solely for discussion. Chuck suggested starting with fundamental definitions to ensure sustainability, while Howard argued for an initial focus on generative input. Lucy proposed a design thinking approach and suggested piloting a survey before approaching organizations like Pew for potential collaboration. The group also touched on the possibility of a midyear Republican platform meeting and the need for a polling or survey partner to assist with data collection and analysis.

Poverty Survey Design Discussion

The group discussed developing a survey about poverty and policy responses, with Lucy proposing a concise 10-question survey to be distributed through chat platforms and networks. Howard expressed concerns about the complexity of the survey design and suggested starting with a simpler approach before potentially developing a more sophisticated version with partners. Joyce raised the possibility of checking if similar surveys already exist, and Howard mentioned exploring potential partnerships with fact-checkers and academic communities. Ann warned about the potential for a lopsided response due to the group's progressive network, emphasizing the need for a more diverse and stratified approach to ensure balanced results.

Community Priorities Strategy Discussion

The group discussed strategies for gathering community input on priorities, with Howard suggesting partnerships with organizations like Deep South and Quinnipiac University for conducting surveys, though concerns were raised about managing and analyzing large volumes of responses. Lucy proposed starting with smaller, focused conversations to identify themes and develop a timeline for action steps, potentially leading to a larger partnership. The discussion highlighted the challenge of balancing comprehensive coverage of issues with the need to focus on specific priorities, with Joyce emphasizing the importance of not trying to do everything at once. The conversation also touched on Howard's upcoming book release and promotional efforts, which may impact the timeline for mapping community priorities.

Conference Session Planning Strategy

The group discussed plans for an upcoming conference in January, focusing on how to structure sessions around various social issues. Howard noted that comprehensive survey results wouldn't be ready in time, so they decided to organize 10 focused sessions on different priorities, allowing attendees to choose based on their interests. Lucy suggested brainstorming these themes and creating session descriptions, while Joyce raised concerns about the timeline and suggested gathering input from attendees during the conference itself. The group explored

various facilitation methods, including using a structured protocol and potentially bringing in Don Buckley for advice on design thinking approaches.

Conference Planning and Promotion Strategy

The group discussed plans for an upcoming conference, including scheduling a webinar and meeting next week. Lucy announced they would have a recorded session at their normal meeting time, followed by an optional additional meeting. They also discussed promoting the conference to various groups, including the DOLS (Dirty Old Ladies of Software) organization. Joyce agreed to post information about the conference on the DOLS portal, using a non-political AI presentation link. The group acknowledged some pushback from DOLS members regarding the conference's perceived political nature, but decided to proceed with an announcement rather than a presentation.



Survey Planning

