

Tab 1

The Local Connection Crisis

New Data on What Communities Need

Nov 20, 2025, 4PM/1PM • [event page](#) • [video](#)

Our new [nationwide poll results](#) show how Americans really connect with their neighbors online – and the surprising gaps that deserve more attention. New_ Public's new app, [Roundabout](#), is about to begin its closed beta testing.

SPEAKERS

Deepti Doshi, Co-Director, New_ Public:

"We believe that just as public parks and libraries are essential offline infrastructure for civic life, the digital era requires **a new type of public infrastructure.**"

Talia Stroud, Co-Founder, New_ Public:

"It's interesting that **urban, suburban, and mixed/rural are pretty similar** ... That's not the main driver, demographics."

Eli Pariser, Co-Director, New_ Public:

"We saw some signs that **stewardship helps** ... Stewards on Facebook are constantly battling with the algorithm for what they want to highlight."

Trei Brundrett, Founder-in-Residence, New_ Public:

"Probably the most fun part of this work is working with these stewards in these local communities. Not only to operate these spaces ... but **to bring people in.**"

USEFUL LINKS: [Talia's presentation](#), [YouTube recording of the event](#), [Roundabout sign up page](#), [Deepti](#), [Talia](#), [Eli](#), [Trei](#), [New Public's newsletter](#)



QUESTIONS

1. What are some possible causes or factors that might explain this interest gap?
2. What could be different if stewardship was more central to these groups?
3. How did you select participants for the study?

KEY IDEAS/TAKEAWAYS

- People already value and use local digital spaces ... but they could be better. "Community stewards" could move the needle.
- There's an interest gap between what people are getting from their local digital spaces and what they want.
- People leave local digital spaces when they encounter toxicity, or when the groups make them feel unwelcome, annoyed, overwhelmed, or like they don't fit.
- New_ Public is building Roundabout to fill that internet gap and help people connect with their neighbors.