

BRIDGE ALLIANCE ANNUAL REPORT



A look inside the accomplishments of Bridge Alliance, Bridge Alliance Education Fund and the member organizations, strategic partners and community leaders in our network.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

We organize and coalesce a powerful and diverse cross-partisan force and voice for our country to enact a thriving, just and healthy democratic republic.

Our mission is to serve our nation through our member organizations; to recruit and mobilize at least 12 million Americans who are committed to strengthening our American republic.

Our programs and community provide integrated solutions to move our nation forward

Since 2015, Bridge Alliance has maintained a strong presence of support and innovation as a coordinating hub for healthy self-governance. Each year we take time to evaluate and make changes to our infrastructure to best fit the needs of our members and the nation. 2021 was a year of pivotal change in our organization as we added significant programs, collaborations, missions, values and people to our network and overall purpose.

Our infrastructure includes three primary program areas that are self-reinforcing; Citizen Connect, Diversity programs and The Fulcrum. Secondary programs include launching a podcast and receiving social media assets from Coffee Party USA to substantially increase our reach on behalf of our members and programs. In 2021, we grew significantly by offering public relations services to our members and further building the infrastructure needed for the movement to scale.

Everything we do is interconnected!

Here are a few highlights and intersections:

- [Member Services](#) to our ~100 members has expanded to include semi-annual member 1-1 conversations, public relations services, custom referrals and introductions between members, and a foundation research spreadsheet to assist with new funding opportunities for our members.
- [Citizen Connect](#) was created as a core component of scalable infrastructure this year that serves the entire civic renewal movement.
- [Diversity Programs](#) add value to our work by including diverse perspectives in three key areas; ideology, race/ethnicity, and generational.
- [The Fulcrum](#) is an interactive, engaging and innovative digital platform reporting on all things healthy self-governance, and a part of Bridge Alliance's interconnected strategy to support the ecosystem of our community of pro-democracy organizations, workers and engaged citizens.

- [To Build a Bridge](#) highlights the work of our member organizations by discussing important issues within the movement such as reaching diverse communities and understanding the perspectives of those with whom you disagree.
- [Coffee Party](#) has a decade's worth of experience and a large social media following - over 1 million. In 2021, we successfully merged, maintaining a volunteer base with which to amplify content and events for the Bridge Alliance members, Citizen Connect, The Fulcrum and Bridge Alliance itself. Coffee Party volunteers continue to maintain a social media environment that encourages thoughtful deliberation and debate amongst multiple perspectives.

In conclusion, Bridge Alliance grew exponentially in 2021, strengthening our community and preparing the foundation for our community to support a movement. While our country, politics and governing structures continue to grow in complexity, we have positioned ourselves to help every person, organization and community to participate in a healthy way to defend against the authoritarian tendencies that threaten our nation and the world.

For more detailed information, please continue reading!

BRIDGE ALLIANCE

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Civic Renewal for Everyday Americans

Chief Engagement Officer, Brian Clancy

Citizen Connect

General Manager, Morris Efron

Bridge Alliance created a core component of scalable infrastructure this year that serves the entire civic renewal movement. The need for an online “front door” to help everyday citizens find and engage with our community has been explored for years, but 2021 was when it finally became a reality. [Citizen Connect](#) gives all Americans easy access to civic events and initiatives being driven by hundreds of organizations across the country. Citizen Connect hosts all ~100 Bridge Alliance members plus more than 300 additional organizations (total membership is near 450) from the bridging, electoral reform, civic education and policy fields. As a community resource, we have already initiated and updated this work (TWICE!) in 2021.

- Our first release in June 2021 focused on supporting the bridging community and their landmark [America Talks/National Week of Conversation initiative](#). This allowed us to sign up hundreds of organizations, display hundreds of events and host thousands of users right out of the gate.
- In August, we enhanced our platform’s technology and design and also opened it up to all sectors of the civic renewal community.
- In November, we launched our pioneering “news integration” program with leading media company [AllSides | Balanced news via media bias ratings for an unbiased news perspective](#). This capability allows us to place events and on demand content from Citizen Connect members right next to relevant news stories on third party sites.

While Citizen Connect is off to a very strong start, we’re just beginning our journey. The priority for 2022 will be ramping up the number of ordinary Americans who utilize Citizen Connect to deeply engage with our community. This will include expanding the news integration program, scaling social media outreach and continuing to support major events in all sectors of the field. Now that Citizen Connect is operating and supporting the field, we will also establish an advisory board of members in 2022.

Coffee Party USA

Volunteer Director, Jeanene Loudon

Coffee Party launched in 2010 with a plea, "can't we talk about our issues over a friendly cup of coffee?" -- an alternative approach to the Tea Party's tactics of disruption -- in response to the U.S. Supreme Court's Citizens United v. FEC decision. Coffee Party is a grassroots, national, cross-partisan movement whose mission is to build, nurture and connect communities to reclaim our government for the people. They were a founding member of Bridge Alliance in 2015.

By 2021, Coffee Party had an established following on Facebook (1M followers), Twitter (15,000 followers), Instagram (2500 followers), and a sizable email list. As an all-volunteer organization, Coffee Party had evolved into the promoter for partner organization actions, events and campaigns.

As a successful social media promoter, Coffee Party offers a very complementary skill set for the Bridge Alliance community. The missions, visions and goals align to enhance one another. In July 2021, Coffee Party dissolved its legal entity and assigned assets to Bridge Alliance Education Fund. The Coffee Party volunteer team (about 20 people) now provides services to Bridge Alliance.

Today, the Coffee Party's role in the Bridge Alliance community is to amplify content and events for Citizen Connect, The Fulcrum and Bridge Alliance members, while maintaining a social media environment that encourages thoughtful deliberation and debate amongst multiple perspectives.

Diversity Programs

Chief Program Officer, Rev. Dr. F. Willis Johnson, Jr.

Our nation needs more accurate representation within leadership positions. We call this an operating system upgrade that adds value to our work by including diverse perspectives in three key areas; ideology, race/ethnicity and generational.

Leaders Mastermind Cohort

Bridge Alliance conducted a successful second year of the Diversity and Opportunity Leaders Mastermind Cohort program (MMC). MMC has become vital in how we introduce more diversity into the Healthy Self-Governance Movement. In six cohorts, we have had 56 participants complete the program, ~46% being of BIPOC+ identity. Ten of our participants have been eligible for seed granting, and many have either joined Bridge Alliance as member organizations or have created impactful initiatives with member organizations. Our member organizations have also benefited from MMC, as it has exposed them to resources and community leaders that expand their work. Our participants say MMC was a "valuable experience for deepening [their] own thinking and developing new relationships with deeply committed professionals in different fields." Bridge Alliance plans to continue this program with the seventh cohort commencing in late January.

Columbus Foundation Cohort Pilot

Bridge Alliance established a relationship with the Columbus Community Foundation to pilot a collaborative partnership model for local diversity. Partnering foundations agree to provide underwriting and/or matching funding for portions of programming and small project granting to strengthen BIPOC+ leadership at multiple levels. Our objective is to create a pipeline of human, monetary capital and other resources for sustainability and solvency of uniquely diverse led social enterprises. We are excited by our initial results and hope to replicate this model with foundation partners nationally across the next 12 to 18 months.

The Diversity Report

Project Director, Jeremy Garson

Bridge Alliance released its [second annual diversity report](#), measuring diversity in the Healthy Self-Governance Movement across four areas; race/ethnicity, sex, political ideology and age.

This year's report shows mixed success in our effort to diversify the field. Our member organizations still tend to be more mature, more white and more progressive than the country as a whole, and ideology was the only area that saw statistically significant change. On the other hand, the numbers are generally trending in the right direction for ideology, race/ethnicity and age.

The report shows decision makers within the field continue to lack the diversity of our nation by underrepresenting people who are:

- center-right
- Black Indigenous People of Color (BIPOC+)
- under 45

Our goal for Bridge Alliance members is to represent diverse viewpoints and backgrounds, and increase the diversity of those in the field. This report is a call to reinforce our understanding that we are a diverse nation and to thrive as a people we must provide room for more diverse perspectives. Our hope is to embed this ethos within the cross-partisan movement. Bridge Alliance will continue to offer programs to members and invitations for membership to encourage diversity among our member organizations. We will also continue to measure diversity in our network in order to hold ourselves accountable and allow us to look back on how far we have come.

Media

The Fulcrum

Co-Publishers, David L. Nevins and Debilyn Molineaux

Our movement needs a media presence to engage and involve millions of citizens in the healthy self-governance movement. The Bridge Alliance's social media and journalistic presences have increased greatly with the acquisition of [The Fulcrum](#) in the late Spring. The Fulcrum is an interactive, engaging and innovative digital platform reporting on all things healthy self-governance, and a part of Bridge Alliance's interconnected strategy to support the ecosystem of our community of pro-democracy organizations, workers and engaged citizens. The Fulcrum is committed to presenting a range of perspectives, including philosophical and ideological differences that respect conservative, moderate, and progressive principles, and do so in a non-partisan manner. As we continue to engage more and more readers, we surpassed 200,000 views for the first time since becoming the Fulcrum's publisher.

In addition to featuring thought-provoking pieces and maintaining our nonpartisan coverage of the reform movement, the Fulcrum connects the dots between joyful elements in pop culture and electoral reform. Music and the arts can help us relate to one another emotionally in ways that words cannot. This recently launched section has been very favorably received.

To Build a Bridge- A Bridge Alliance Podcast

Hosted by Deputy Chief of Staff, Shakira Mills

Bridge Alliance now has a [podcast!](#) Each month we highlight the work of our member organizations while discussing important issues within democracy reform such as reaching diverse communities and understanding the perspectives of those you disagree with. Launching in April of 2021 across three major platforms, [To Build a Bridge](#) has generated over 50 listeners a month and our plans for 2022 will ensure that this audience grows. We will be collaborating with the [Democracy Group](#), a network of podcasts united around the goal of helping listeners understand what's broken in our democracy, and how people are working together to fix it. Bridge Alliance also plans to be more interactive with our audience by creating space for feedback and possible listener interviews on their healthy self-governance perspectives. We would like to see To Build a Bridge become a major platform for organizations and community leaders in the Healthy Self-Governance movement to spread solution narratives and provide information on how listeners can support their work.

Member Services, Fundraising and Staffing

Public Relations Services - Nevins & Associates

Senior Vice President, Mitchell Schmale of Nevins & Assoc.

This year, Bridge Alliance began offering professional PR services to member organizations. The Nevins & Associates team has conducted the following scope of services on behalf of Bridge Alliance member organizations:

- Assisted Bridge Alliance members with the creation of more than 40 customized media lists, press releases and media pitches
- Participated in more than 50 introductory, strategy and planning meeting calls with Bridge Alliance members
- Secured more than 20 CityBizList video interviews with members about their various organizations, impact, etc.
- Assisted with placing video, podcast and BA member op-ed content in The Fulcrum

Noteworthy achievements by Nevins & Associates on behalf of Bridge Alliance member organizations:

- Secured a Citizen Connect mention in the Politico newsletter
- Secured a Convergence media hit in McKnight's Senior Living Magazine
- Secured Urban Rural Action features in both the Baltimore Business Journal and Herald Mail
- Assisted with America Talks/National Week of Conversation media coverage including FiveThirtyEight and other mainstream media outlets
- Secured the Project on Government Oversight's Dan Grazier an interview with the Financial Times
- Secured Maria Yuan (Issue Voter) an interview on CBS Austin

Philanthropic Funding

Led by President/CEO, Debilyn Molineaux with assistance from staff

We diversified our funding sources in 2021 and increased our donor base by 50%, going from 85 to 135 funding supporters.

<u>Source</u>	<u>Actual in 2021</u>	<u>Projected in 2022</u>
Foundations	\$333,000	\$750,000
Major Donors	\$804,000	\$500,000
Small Donors	\$98,000	\$150,000
Dues/ Fees for Services	\$47,000	\$75,000
<u>Total</u>	<u>\$1,280,000</u>	<u>\$1,475,000</u>

Friends of Bridge- Monthly Giving Program

Fund Development Coordinator, Shakira Mills

Until this year, Bridge Alliance only offered amplification and informational services only to member organizations. The Friends of Bridge monthly giving program changed that, creating a community of involved citizens, many of whom are systems thinkers. In exchange for their support, we provide:

- Detailed quarterly briefings
- Invitations to special events
- Professional learning opportunities
- Access to an exclusive e-newsletter
- Space for open dialogue about ideas
- The opportunity to exchange ideas with Bridge Alliance leaders

This program has been vital to our connection to our support network. Being able to communicate directly with those who support our mission has informed our infrastructure and has helped us better serve our members. Friends of Bridge has also provided an opportunity for supporters of the movement to become directly involved with the causes that interest them. Our very own Friend of Bridge, Morris Efron, volunteered as a co-founding partner with Brian Clancy in the creation of [Citizen Connect](#).

Staff Growth

Chief of Staff, Jeremy Garson

With increased work comes increased staff power. 2021 marked the largest staff we have had since our founding in 2015. This is a major accomplishment for us because more staff means better and more extensive efforts for our members. Demographically, our staff is ideologically and racially / ethnically diverse, which helps bring additional diverse perspectives to the Healthy Self-Governance Movement. Furthermore, there were significant internal staff changes as well. Our founder, David Nevins, retired as CEO and moved onto Chairman of the Board, and Debilyn Molineaux became the new President and CEO. Following that, Jeremy Garson, former operations manager and legal counsel, was promoted to Chief of Staff and Shakira Mills, former intern and operations assistant, was moved to Deputy Chief of Staff. We created new positions within our staff as well, with Amber Allison as our communications associate and Michelle Dickson as our development associate. Over the last year, we have also had many innovative interns and volunteers that have each brought something fresh and innovative to our work. The initiatives we plan to add in 2022 will create the need for more staff power, which means our network of democracy professionals will grow!

BRIDGE ALLIANCE

GOALS FOR 2022

For the first time in our history, as we enter a new year, financial resources for all our current programs have already been procured. We are excited about the opportunities that this affords us to scale and amplify. However, we will do so carefully, listening carefully to input from our community and employing rigorous cost-benefit analysis to ensure the most effective use of our growing resources.

Below is a listing of stretch goals that if instituted will:

- provide additional services to members
- increase diversity opportunities for our members and the movement as a whole.
- expand the reach of The Fulcrum and Citizen Connect, with the goal of amplifying opportunities for everyday Americans to join our member's work. In short, we are focused on rapidly scaling our movement.

This is a clear indication that everything we do is interconnected!

Specifically our expansion goals are:

Diversity work:

- Leaders Mastermind Cohort: recruit and introduce 40 new people to Bridge Alliance members (social entrepreneurs with national focus)
- Community Foundation Cohort: recruit and introduce 40 new people to Bridge Alliance members (social entrepreneurs with local focus)
- Place five Democracy Fellows within Bridge Alliance member organizations as an initial pipeline to increase diversity of ideology, race/ethnicity, generation and gender
- Publish The Diversity Report, measuring leadership and audience of Bridge Alliance members in Summer 2022

Citizen Connect:

- Expand beyond events to include a wide variety of "on demand" civic engagement content
- Scale the news integration program by bringing on five additional media partners
- Add 50 new member organizations from across the political spectrum
- Have at least 100,000 visits to the Citizen Connect homepage and 40,000 direct engagements with specific events, on demand content and/or member profiles

- Support major civic renewal community events including America Talks/National Week of Conversation
- Distribute and produce compelling online content that celebrates the work of our members and accelerates audience development

The Fulcrum:

- Increase readership via website by 100%
- Increase subscribers to 25,000
- Produce one investigative report
- Hire a pop culture editor to further connect democracy and culture

Coffee Party:

- Increase social media engagement by 50% to 40 million
- Develop a volunteer program that could support Trolls4Good program, when launched
- Maintain volunteer team of editors and moderators

To Build a Bridge:

- Increase production from monthly to bi-weekly
- Collaborate with fellow democracy podcasters
- Expand audience to 2,500 subscribers in 2022

The Democracy Ecosystem Leaders and Critical Connections Forum

Starting in late 2020, leaders who envisioned providing infrastructure or backbone services to other organizations were invited to participate in regular calls with Bridge Alliance to keep each other informed and abreast of our areas of work. The exponential growth of both organizations and coordinating efforts demands we support and not further stretch the capacity of the organizations we seek to serve.

Beginning in early 2022, a group of volunteers (Walt Roberts, Laura Ringell, Caleb Christen who are independent and unaffiliated with any organization, will begin working in partnership with Bridge Alliance and other infrastructure-themed organizations, to host a series of “critical connections conversations.” These conversations will be sourced from those working in the movement to address real-time issues, duplication, resource needs and coordination. In 2021, these pilot conversations resulted in collaboration between electoral reform and bridging organizations, support for a center-right coalition and more. The goal is to continually assess what resources are needed in real time to scale our efforts.

Trolls 4 Good

We would like to launch this nascent idea as a project in mid-2022 with broad collaborative partners. It would include a large-scale social media takeover that includes training for spotting problematic content, dispelling myths and increasing societal trust.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS AND GRATITUDE

Bridge Alliance would like to thank the following people for their dedication to the Healthy Self Governance Movement:

- Bridge Alliance members and their dedication to achieving a more perfect union
- The Bridge Alliance operational team, specifically:
 - David Nevins, Chairman of the Board
 - Debilyn Molineaux, President and CEO
 - Rev. Dr. F. Willis Johnson, Jr., VP of Partnerships and Programming
 - Jeremy Garson, Legal Counsel and Chief of Staff
 - Shakira Mills, Deputy Chief of Staff
 - Brian Clancy, Chief Civic Engagement Officer
 - Morris Effron, Co-Founder, Citizen Connect
 - Sara Miller, Communications Coordinator (former)
 - Amber Allison, Communications Coordinator
 - Michelle Dickson, Development Associate
 - Jeanene Loudon, Coffee Party USA President
 - Elisabeth Parker, Coffee Party USA Associate
 - Sangeeta Kurada, Healthy Self-Governance Intern
 - Ashlynn Gwen Gunn, Communications Intern
 - Matt Ouren, Healthy Self-Governance Intern
 - Wes Shannon, Former Healthy Self-Governance Intern
 - Shelli Cohen, Graduate Volunteer
 - A.J. Walts, Volunteer

- Bridge Alliance and Bridge Alliance Education Fund Board Members, specifically:
 - Brian Clancy
 - Bill Shireman
 - Carolyn Lukensmeyer
 - David Nevins
 - Francis Johnson
 - F Willis Johnson
 - Lauren Snow
 - Manu Meel
 - Maria Yuan
 - Mary Ann McDonnell
 - John and Margo Steiner
 - John Gable
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 - Joan Blades
- David H. Nevins, Mitchell Schmale and Emily Greco of Nevins PR, for your dedication to amplifying the work of us and our member organizations.
- Our Strategic Partners, for your feedback, guidance and support of our cause.
- Mastermind Cohort participants, from whom we learned much.
- Friends of Bridge, for your consistent support in promoting healthy self-governance

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MEMBER

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Civic Dialogue and Engagement Accomplishments

America Indivisible

- America Indivisible welcomed 15 leaders in the [2021 Class of Public Leaders for Inclusion Council \(PLC\)](#), a leadership development program focused on equipping future public servants with tools and skills to address anti-Muslim bigotry and build social resilience overall.
- They welcomed 7 students in the [2021 Class of Public Leaders for Inclusion Fellowship](#), focused on early career scholars interested in and working with diverse communities along with combating anti-Muslim hate and bigotry.

Braver Angels

- Braver Angels focused on outreach to blue collar Americans through their Working People's Project and Forum. Critical issues were discussed including: race, abortion, partisanship, and social problems in America.

Bridge USA

- [BridgeUSA incorporated Real Talk](#), creating BridgeUSA High School. The new program has 12 chapters across the country for high school students to engage in constructive political dialogue.
- They received increased media exposure via Cornell University Institute of Politics and Global Affairs' Bipartisan Policy Review and other outlets.

Civic Influencers (formerly Campus Election Engagement Project)

- Civic Influencers [celebrated the graduation of 85 Fellows in May 2021](#).
- They welcomed in the Fellow class of '21 to '22 [in collaboration with Tableau](#). The fellowship this year focused on working towards energy insecurity and power outages that impact BIYoC (Black Indigenous Youth of Color) populations across America.
- They rebranded and changed their name from Campus Election Engagement Project to Civic Influencers.

Civics Unplugged

- Civics Unplugged grew from 200 fellows in 2020 to welcoming in over 1,000 fellows in 2021.
- Through working on community focused projects, fellows received \$150,000 in investments that have led to over half a million people being impacted by these efforts worldwide.
- Civics Unplugged [launched Dream DAO](#) as part of the blockchain space to support civic innovators.

Common Ground Committee

- Common Ground Committee expanded their media presence by:
 - [“Let’s Find Common Ground”](#) podcast including issues focusing on but not limited to: climate change, depolarization of political viewpoints, and race.
 - Hosted [discussion webinars](#) on race and the economy in America with featured speakers Daryl Davis, Ryan Lo’Ree, John Kasich, Julian Castro and more.
 - Developed everyday explainers such as:
 - [How to have political conversations during the holidays](#)
 - [10 attributes of a Common Grounder](#)
 - [How to depolarize through conversation and dialogue](#)

Essential Partners

- Essential Partners published an [Annual Report](#)
- They worked with 62 Community and Institutional Partners; trained 1,448 facilitators in Reflective Structured Dialogue; and deployed 22 expert practitioners in the field.
- Among participants, 90% reported feeling more understood by the “other side” after an Essential Partners engagement; 87% reported that their community felt more cohesive because of their work with EP; 85% reported seeing new connections forming 6 months after the program; and 93.8% reported greater trust in people with differences as a result of the engagement.
- Essential Partners reported extraordinary gains in understanding in communities in North Carolina, including between law enforcement and the community, and among churchgoers in responding to COVID-19.

Everyday Democracy

- Everyday Democracy announced the winner and runner-ups of the [2020 Paul and Joyce Aicher Leadership in Democracy Award](#). Also announced they were accepting three total nominations for the [2021 Aicher Award](#) for individuals and community-based organizations acting as agents of change.
- They [Welcomed Parents for Public Schools and Study Circles Aurora](#) into the Everyday Democracy Anchor Network.

iCivics

- iCivics was named [one of the top five winners of the Unity and GSV Ventures EdTech Creator Challenge](#), and one of the Challenge's top 30 projects overall. The Challenge celebrates creators who leveraged 3D-powering immersive learning tools and platforms to advance and increase technological educational solutions.
- They welcomed [30 Youth Fellows](#) as part of its annual [Equity in Civics Youth Fellowship](#).

Listen First Project

- [America Talks/National Week of Conversation \(5th annual\)](#) took place June 14-20th, 2021 with new corporate and media partners, reaching over 25 million Americans.
 - [Listen First Project](#) continued the #ListenFirstFriday campaign weekly, featuring leaders' voices to provide inspiration for engaging in conversation and dialogue with a focus on listening.
-

Living Room Conversations

- Living Room Conversations provided easy to understand [blog posts](#) and [videos](#) on the methods and tools to tackle difficult conversations while considering the diversity of multiple voices. Topics of focus included: faith and religion, conservatism, marking annual American holidays and their historical significance, race/ethnicity, women, and younger leaders.
- They hosted [regular discussion and facilitation events](#) that provided training on how to host a living room conversation, how to tackle difficult topics like COVID-19, addressing youth and mental health, and how to host a conversation about sensitive topics like race.

National Institute for Civil Discourse

- National Institute for Civil Discourse continued [CommonSense American](#), which was [founded on the principle](#) that a policy supported by a broad majority across society's fault lines is usually good policy. Two of three issues that were reviewed as part of the program became federal legislation. One to end surprise medical billing and the other to pass the 2021 infrastructure bill. The third piece of legislation, to modernize Congress itself, is still pending.
- They [celebrated the 10th anniversary](#) of the organization being founded by the University of Arizona. There were three panels in the event celebrating the anniversary focused on: executive, judicial, and legislative branches and expertise from voices who carry expertise of those branches.
- [Op-Eds](#) provided by contributors were published in major publications such as [The Washington Post](#) and [The Hill](#), regular blog posts were posted on the NICD website, and they accepted contributions from other members such as [Arjun Moorthy of The Factual and Divided We Fall](#).

National Conference on Citizenship

- The [2021 Annual Conference](#) took place from November 11th-12th, 2021 and focused on [utilization of civic data](#) to help and accelerate democracy across communities in the country. The Major George A. Smith Memorial Fund also presented the [HOOAH Award](#) to Congressman Adam Kinzinger.
- National Conference on Citizenship released reports to highlight three areas of interest: [Black Women Did That](#); [Civic Health Index 2021](#); and the [2021 Veterans' Civic Health Index](#). These reports were provided to the general public via white paper and provided explanations of changes in civic health for these constituencies over the past year.

Public Agenda

- Public Agenda released four new reports as part of its [Hidden Common Ground Initiative](#).
- [Essential Educators: Teacher and Parent Views on COVID-19 found](#) general agreement between K-12 teachers and parents on the pandemic.
- [America's Hidden Common Ground on Overcoming Divisiveness](#) found that there is a powerful consensus across political affiliations that the nation needs to move beyond the destructive divisiveness that plagues our politics.
- [America's Hidden Common Ground on Renewing Democracy](#) found that most Americans believe our democracy is in trouble, and that many want ways to participate in democracy beyond voting.
- [Putting Partisan Animosity in Perspective](#) found that most Americans believe that disagreement is healthy for democracy, and that most Americans don't have strongly unfavorable feelings for people in the opposing political party. Many, however, feel strongly unfavorable feelings toward leaders in the opposing political party.

Renew Democracy Initiative

- Renew Democracy Initiative hosted [RDI's Pro-Democracy Rally](#).
- They regularly posted [videos](#) and [weekly newsletters](#) that explained multiple issue areas concerning immigration, education, civic engagement, military efforts, and international foreign policy topics.
- They hosted events regarding [resolving tensions in American democracy, foreign affairs, rallies](#) for anyone to participate in, and [happy hours](#) as well. [Events](#) about American democracy involved professional and seasoned experts who contributed to democratic dialogue in a webinar format.

Campaigns and Election Reform Accomplishments

American Promise

- The [4th Annual National Citizen Leadership Conference](#) took place from May 2nd-6th, 2021 and highlighted various American Promise leaders, including National Advisory Council member and former Massachusetts Governor Deval Patrick, and various Bridge Alliance organizations such as Millennial Action Project, IssueVoter, and Citizen University.
- American Promise launched [a series of advocacy based calls](#) focused on organizing, and action-based skills development via webinar format for supporters. American Promise also hosted [regular lobbyist focused advocacy calls](#) that anyone could participate in.
- [Virginia became the 22nd State](#) to call for the 28th Amendment to the Constitution. Also, [American Promise partnered with Protect Maine Elections](#) to mitigate corruption and foreign influence in statewide Maine elections after 2020.

FairVote

- Ranked choice voting (RCV) made major strides in the 2021 U.S. election cycle, with contributing [informative reports](#) provided by FairVote. [32 cities across 7 states](#) used RCV on Election Day 2021 and [ballot measures](#) passed in 5 cities through [legislative measures](#). FairVote provided [data](#) and [research](#) on RCV. The most high profile use of RCV was in the New York City democratic primary for mayor.
- [A report](#) provided by FairVote staff highlighted the positive impact that ranked choice voting has on communities of color in America. In this case study, multiple candidates of color in government were discussed, as well as specifically focusing on case studies of previous election cycles and the outcomes that resulted from those cycles.
- Election reform leaders in Utah, Virginia, New York City, and District of Columbia joined FairVote in discussing [“The Future of American Elections: RCV in 2021 and 2022.”](#)

Independent Voter Project

- Independent Voter Project regularly published a [podcast](#), [video explainers](#), and [blog posts](#) that highlighted the voices working on resolving the bipartisan model, state-led initiatives, the state of the Constitution, and more.
- They released a [call to action Op-Ed](#) focusing on voting rights, reform in California elections, as well as making primary elections nonpartisan in principle. This Op-Ed was published in line with CalMatters in November.

Independent Voting

- Independent Voting hosted the [20th Annual Anti-Corruption Awards on October 25th, 2021](#) and focused on the viability of independent voters in future elections. Katherine Gehl, Farhad Mohit, and Gaby Cardenas were honored as the [2021 Anti-Corruption Award Honorees](#) for their work as changemakers in election reform.
- They were featured in and published [Op-Eds](#) on platforms such as [U.S. News](#), [Times Union](#), and [The Fulcrum](#) to advocate for independent voters, and to discuss the potential of reforms such as ranked choice voting, open primaries, and independent partisanship in future elections.

Leadership Now Project

- As part of the ["Stay Awake" newsletter](#), Leadership Now Project discussed issues like the climate and voting rights, how corporate political spending impacts democratic processes, the state of affairs in Texas, and voting legislation and related systemic barriers to people of color.
- They published an [analysis](#) on business PAC funding in 2020 throughout Q1 of 2021 for House and Senate members that refused to certify the 2020 Electoral College vote. This analysis was conducted using campaign finance data, and included corporate and smaller business categories.

National Institute on Money in Politics

- Following the 2020 election cycle and January 6th, 2021, National Institute on Money in Politics was [featured for its work](#) on ballot measures, campaign finance and donations, accountability at the federal level, threats to agriculture in Sacramento, California, and COVID-19 with media outlets such as [CNN](#), [Politico](#), and [ProPublica](#).
- They are currently compiling data on [local, state, federal election campaign finances, independent spending, lobbying spending, and competitiveness indices on ballot candidates across states and at the federal level](#). It has also developed a tool called [Power Mapping](#), which attempts to use campaign finance data to predict the behavior of elected officials on issues of concern.

National Vote at Home Institute

- National Vote at Home Institute developed [Polling Place Capacity/Line Optimization Simulator](#), which estimates voting wait time based on several factors.
- Founder and CEO Amber McReynolds, National Vote at Home Institute authored an [Op-Ed for The Hill](#) about the importance of mitigating and reducing corruption at the federal level that trickles downstream to affect state-by-state elections in 2021. Ms. McReynolds also testified to legislators in Vermont regarding the [implementation of at-home ballots](#).
- NBA Coach Doc Rivers joined Amber McReynolds for an [interview](#) as part of National Voter Education Week.
- National Vote at Home Institute released its [2021 Legislative Wrap Up Report](#), which evaluated trends across the nation and in individual states, and focused on the possible impact of legislation on voter turnout, election finances, and reforms like mail-in ballots.

Open Primaries

- Open Primaries released the [2021 Maine Report](#), which explained how campaign messaging, coalition building, and reform environment all contributed to the successful effort to bring open primaries to Maine.
- They published a report [“Understanding Texas Latino Voters Through Meaningful Conversation”](#) in November regarding Latino voter turnout. It provided data from interviews with Latino voters in Texas.
- They are [currently campaigning](#) for open primaries in Pennsylvania.

RepresentUS

- RepresentUS launched a campaign focused on [passing the “Anti-Corruption Act.”](#) RepresentUS sought to bring conservative and progressive representatives together to pass this Act.
- They launched [multiple messaging and advocacy campaigns](#) with the goal of passing legislation to increase government accountability. Their campaigns featured celebrities like Jennifer Lawrence, Michael Douglas, Omar Epps, and Ed Helms.
- They [regularly published blog posts](#) to educate everyday voters on voting reform, and hosted [multiple volunteer trainings and events](#), with a focus on phone banking and petitioning.
- They helped [pass ranked choice voting initiatives](#) in Michigan, Maine, and Colorado, and additional election reform in Maine

Stand Up Republic

- Stand Up Republic published multiple informative [blog posts](#) over the course of 2021, covering issues such as [voting reform](#), [January 6th, 2021](#), and [vaccines](#).
- They published [Legislative Priorities for 2021](#), and called for action on legislation to improve election protection and voting rights.

Take Back Our Republic

- Take Back Our Republic highlighted [multiple campaign efforts at the state level](#) and worked on voting rights. Specifically, TBOR focused on ranked-choice voting advocacy for Utah, campaign finance reform for Virginia, and election security in West Virginia. Take Back Our Republic also grew its Western Region and Wyoming State chapters in 2021.
- They published multiple Op-Eds with over 70 mentions in media outlets last year. Some highlights include: the [discussion of the Federal Election Commission](#) by Business Insider, the [selection of the ambassador to Germany](#) by Newsweek, and a [special spotlight piece](#) featured by Independent Voter News.

The Center for Election Science

- The Center for Election Science helped launch an [Approval Voting ballot initiative in Seattle](#). This followed [St. Louis' use of Approval Voting](#) for its primary in March. Utah Approves also gained [significant media attention](#) after publishing an Op-Ed with the Salt Lake City Tribune, with the [Bay Area following suit](#).
- [They provided grants](#) worth \$70,000 to 6 chapters across America to help with legal research and study the viability of future Approval Voting campaigns.

Unite America

- [Unite America partnered with RepresentUS' Campaign Accelerator](#) to provide financial support and seed grants to reform campaigns across the country. A total of 25 grants were awarded to grantees representing 21 states and Washington, D.C.
- They published regular posts through their "[Three Things Thursday](#)" newsletter. This newsletter focused on issues such as [ranked choice voting](#), [voter reforms](#) in the United States, [bipartisan support](#) in favor or in opposition to ballot initiatives and measures, and [state efforts](#) to improve electoral systems.
- They announced that its state programs in Arizona, Colorado, and Virginia would now operate as the "[Voters First Project](#)."

Governance & Policy Making Accomplishments

Ballotpedia

- Ballotpedia created "[Sample Ballot Lookup](#)," which enables voters to view what they will be voting for in upcoming elections based on address.
- They provided an in-depth [analysis of the 2021 election cycle](#) at federal, state, and local levels. They also published an analysis the [39 ballot measures that were certified for ballots in 9 states in 2021](#).
- They provided comprehensive coverage of how COVID-19 affected American political and civic life through its newsletter [Documenting America's Path to Recovery](#).
- [Ballotpedia Insights](#) were provided through Q&A styled discussions with leaders in politics and government throughout the year. This year's topics of focus included: [Donor Disclosure](#), [2021 Elections Analyses](#), [competitiveness of state ballot candidates in 2021 elections](#), and [general questions](#) about the [judicial](#), [legislative](#), and [civic](#) processes of voting.

Cities of Service

- Cities of Service became a part of the newly established Bloomberg Center for Public Innovation at Johns Hopkins University in 2021. [As a part of the Bloomberg Center for Public Innovation](#), Cities of Service hopes to expand its network of practitioners working on programs like [“Love Your Block.”](#)
- They announced the winners of its [2021 Love Your Block Grants](#). Eight cities were awarded \$100,000 each to thoughtfully engage their citizens, with an emphasis on diversity, equity, and inclusion in their program design.
- In partnership with Urban Institute, Cities of Service commissioned a [new study](#), building on a 2017 study conducted by Urban Institute and the findings of the 2018-2020 “Love Your Block” program. The [program evaluation](#) found that, like the previous study in 2017, social capital and collective efficacy are key to success with city-led collaborative initiatives.
- They released [“A Practical Guide to Engaging Volunteers Aged 50+ Online.”](#) The guide was published to help cities engage with older populations during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Committee for Responsible Federal Budget

- Committee for a Responsible Federal Budget published a total of [200 analyses](#) focusing on issues like [fiscal viability and insolvency](#), conducted [215 meetings with 92 members of Congress](#) and related staff on the Hill, and were mentioned in a total of [600 news outlets through more than 1,300 news stories](#). They also saw [623,000 people use their digital tools](#), with new projects such as [“Budgeting for the Future”](#) receiving boosts through TikTok, in the classroom, by Members of Congress, and by reporters.
- They hosted the [Annual 2021 Budget Ball](#) to celebrate the work conducted by the organization up through November. The highlight of the event was a fireside chat conducted by Committee President Maya MacGuineas and Snap Inc. Co-Founder and CEO Evan Spiegel.
- They hosted [events with congressional and government leaders](#) such as [Natasha Sarin, Representative John Larson, Adele Morris](#), and many more. Topics of discussion included tax policy, Social Security and Medicare, infrastructure, healthcare, and budgeting through bills and budget reconciliation in 2021.

Congressional Management Foundation

- Congressional Management Foundation hosted the [Annual Democracy Awards, where eight members of Congress](#) (four from each party) were recognized for their achievements in public service by the Congressional Management Foundation. The Democracy Awards recognized excellence in the following categories: [Constituent Service](#), [Innovation & Modernization](#), [“Life in Congress” Workplace Environment](#), and [Transparency & Accountability](#).
- They hosted a series of trainings for members of Congress, their staff, and for advocacy groups.
- They released a [report](#) on how members of Congress communicate with their constituents, and how to improve these relationships.

Convergence Center for Policy Resolution

- Convergence Center for Policy Resolution released a [report](#) on its “[Dialogue on Guns and Suicide Prevention](#)” program, with an [accompanying report release event](#). The program highlighted the impact of gun violence, and brought attention to the effect that gun violence prevention and reform could have on current suicide prevention efforts conducted across the country. [Commentary was provided by multiple experts](#) in the fields of gun and suicide prevention reform.
- They began stakeholder interviews focused on “[Modernizing Civil Service](#)” as part of its next project. It also launched “[Convergence Dialogue on Reimagining Care for Older Adults.](#)”
- They hosted [interviews and events](#) with notable guest speakers in multiple fields, including: social justice and [bridging divides, addressing toxic polarization, and economic recovery in America](#). Convergence Center also partnered with the Common Ground Committee for a series of podcasts, including “[Long Term Care Crisis.](#)”

Davenport Institute

- Davenport Institute trained at least 100 leaders in local government on [practices to publicly engage everyday people](#) and trained at least 50 professionals on how to lead smart communities.
- They published [thought pieces, blog posts, and Op-Eds](#). ICMA published posts on [hybrid/remote work, local government, and digital public engagement in California](#).
- They [convened partnering organizations/leaders](#) through webinars for conversation on the future of public engagement and hosted a conference titled “[The Future of Public Engagement in a Hybrid World.](#)”

Future 500

- Future500 launched the [Women’s Sustainability and Corporate Impact Group](#) to provide a peer learning experience for emerging women leaders. The Group provides support to mid-career women and non-binary individuals who are sustainability practitioners working in corporate and sustainability impact roles across industries, as they advance business as a force for good.
- They released the [2021 Force for Good Forecast](#). The report detailed shifts towards racial justice, a renewed urgency for biodiversity, chemical recycling, environmental and social governance (ESG), electrification, income inequality, net zero emissions, company involvement in environmental efforts, and community relief from larger corporations.
- They hosted events on topics such as: the “[Force for Good Forecast,](#)” [Sustainability Week 2021, Materiality](#), and the [economic impact](#) of climate change efforts.

Issue One

- Issue One published multiple [reports](#) on [House and Senate campaign finance filings](#), [legitimacy of the 2020 presidential race](#), [House members that operate leadership PACs](#), and the [Save America PAC](#) founded by the Trump administration.
- Following the 2020 election, Issue One launched a video series [“Truth Tellers,”](#) which focused on disinformation in the 2020 election. They also published new episodes of the [“Swamp Stories Podcast,”](#) which features bipartisan takes on political reform in America.
- The [National Council on Election Integrity](#) was founded after the 2020 election to address the following issues: January 6th, 2021, freedom to vote, the impact of disinformation on democracy, and state bills promoting voter suppression.
- The ReFormers Caucus, consisting of nearly 200 former members of Congress, governors, and cabinet officials, penned multiple [Op-Eds](#) focused on the [2020 election](#), [gerrymandering](#), and the [impact of cross partisanship](#) on current civic efforts and elections.
- Issue One hosted two events as a part of the “Reimagining American Democracy Series,” including [Reviving Civic Engagement](#) and [Democracy in America and the World](#). Issue One also released [press releases](#) on [fixing broken systems](#), [calls for updated legislation in Congress](#), and [financing behind campaign elections](#).

National Foundation for Women Legislators

- National Foundation for Women Legislators published [newsletters](#) throughout the first half of 2021, which provided resources centered around: the digital community and upcoming events, resources for one to utilize on his/her own, policy spotlight, spotlight on staff members, and partner posts with other organizations.
- They hosted [webinars](#) on [women’s health](#), [natural gas and oil industry](#), [vaccinations](#), [the aging of Americans](#), [obesity](#), and [achieving clean energy](#).
- [The 2021 Annual Conference](#) honored contributions by members of the organization who are currently holding office. The conference gave elected women officials the opportunity to network, share policy ideas, and engage in civil discourse.

Participatory Budgeting Project

- Participatory Budgeting Project announced the winners of the [2021 Participatory Budgeting² competition](#). The PB² winners for this year were focused on opportunities to: improve the justice system and democratic processes, youth leadership, and maintaining a supportive environment and office culture through participatory budgeting.
- [Participatory Budgeting Project’s Co-Executive Director Shari Davis](#) joined NPR host Manoush Zomorodi on [TED Radio Hour](#) to talk about participatory budgeting and how to use the process.

Project on Government Oversight

- Project on Government Oversight published various [reports](#) and [policy letters](#) on the following issues: [law enforcement](#), [police reform](#), [accountability in government](#), [the powers of the federal government](#) and its [branches](#), [natural gas and oil](#), [reporting of financial information by governing bodies](#), [filibuster](#) and [legislative](#) processes, and also internal investigations into issues like [Congress surveillance](#). Overall, there were 3 reports released and 40 policy letters sent to [multiple governing bodies](#) in America.
- On [20 different occasions](#), POGO staff provided testimony on issues such as [congressional oversight](#), [federal spending](#), [accountability in the federal branches](#), [legislative reforms](#), [oil and gas industry](#), [whistleblowers](#), and [government watchdogs](#). The testimony was provided to multiple governing agencies and bodies, including the Senate Budget Committee, the House Appropriations Committee and various subcommittees of interest, and the Select Committee of the Modernization of Congress.
- As part of the [“Congressional Oversight Initiative,”](#) POGO hosted [training webinars](#) to provide information and knowledge on essential aspects of Congressional oversight and investigations.
- POGO published 139 [thought pieces, analyses, and testimonials](#) as part of the [Center for Defense Information](#) and the [Constitution Project](#).

R Street Institute

- In 2021, R Street Institute published a wide variety of materials, including [policy studies](#), [blog posts](#), and [explainers/“R Sheets,” “R Street Responds,”](#) podcast episodes, the series [“Politics in Action,”](#) [regulatory comments](#), [testimonials to various governing bodies](#), [congressional](#) and [coalition](#) letters, and [amicus briefs](#). The issues of focus for these materials included competition policy, the coronavirus policies, criminal justice, cybersecurity, energy, finance & trade, governance, harm reduction, insurance, technology & innovation, state policy, and federal government affairs.
- They provided keynote speakers and presenters at [multiple conferences and events](#) throughout the year.
- They received numerous mentions in the media on platforms like [Bloomberg](#), [Washington Post](#), [The Fulcrum](#), [Associated Press](#), [Forbes](#), and [Fox Business](#), amongst many others.
- They published Op-Eds on platforms including [Fortune](#), [National Review](#), [the Hill](#), and [Brookings Institution](#).
- They hosted webinars on topics including [climate and clean energy policy](#), [electricity markets](#), [renewable versus natural resources](#), [cybersecurity](#), [harm reduction](#), [market-based solutions](#) to multiple policy-based issues, and [healthcare](#) and [energy policy regulatory arenas](#).

State Legislative Leaders Foundation

- State Legislative Leaders Foundation provided one blog post per month discussing issues such as: caucus efforts, general self and collective governance, polarization, historical significance of founding principles, the necessity of compromise, COVID-19, bipartisanship, and January 6th, 2021.
- They hosted regular webinars on bipartisanship in America, current legislation like the American Rescue Plan, lessons from past and current leaders, how the U.S. Constitution is applied in the 21st Century, information on its Legislative Leaders Program with SLLF, the Women's Leadership Seminar, and the National Speakers Conference.
- The Leadership Summit took place in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania in September 2021. The Summit featured the following keynote speakers: Rick Atkinson, Regie Gibson, Kristen Soltis Anderson, and Jeffrey Rosen. Attendees received a tour of Philadelphia, the National Constitution Center, and the Museum of the American Revolution.
- The Annual Women's Leadership Seminar took place in September 2021 and was held at the SLLF headquarters in Cape Cod, Massachusetts.
- Hosted by Speaker Mac McCutcheon, the 29th Annual National Speakers Conference took place in October 2021 in Birmingham, Alabama and approximately two-thirds of sitting House speakers and their chiefs of staff attended the conference.

A look inside the accomplishments of Bridge Alliance, Bridge Alliance Education Fund and the member organizations, strategic partners and community leaders in our network.