



Engaging Americans & Increasing Public Trust: An Agenda for 2021 and Beyond

Academy Election 2020 Project

Working Group: Develop New Approaches to Public Governance and Engagement

Background

The United States faces a crisis of national confidence in its governance processes. Two multi-year commissions provided recommendations focusing on the citizen-government interface, reforms to political institutions and processes, and emphasis on the role of institutions of civil society as important elements of democratic life. There are currently several models for improving Citizen-Government Engagement including citizen assemblies, deliberative democracy forums, and Bloomberg's "What Works Cities." There are also several examples of practices for meaningful engagement including the National Dialogue on Mental Health and the EPA's local government strategies series.

Recommendations for 2021

1. Establish a White House Office of Public Engagement and Service
2. Update the Open Government Directive.
3. Create reusable platforms/tools for use at the local level.
4. Create platforms and tools that support real-time engagement and co-productions with those outside of government.
5. Organize citizen assemblies.
6. Sponsoring deliberative dialogue forums with members of Congress.
7. Using deliberative processes.
8. Expand use of participatory budgeting at the state and local level.
9. Encourage cross-sector engagement with civil society institutions.
10. Set up institutionalized structures for engagement across local, state, and federal levels of government—creating a "civic layer."
11. Create incentives for individual participation, such as "citizen engagement" accounts, badges, certificates, and bonds.
12. Promote civic education.

Additional Resources

These resources provide additional information and recommendations in the line with the Election 2020 paper, Engaging Americans & Increasing Public Trust: An Agenda for 2021 and Beyond.

[The Academy: Election 2020: Develop New Approaches to Public Governance and Engagement Homepage](#)

[The Academy: Roundtable on Developing Public Governance and Engagement](#)

[Developing Materials for Deliberative Forums](#)

[The Open Government Partnership: Fourth Open Government National Action Plan for the United States of America](#)

[OECD: Innovative Citizen Participation and New Democratic Institutions](#)

The Challenge: Develop New Approaches to Public Governance and Engagement

In the 21st Century, no significant public problem fits entirely within one government agency, or even one level of government, and our federal system presupposes that all levels of government have an important role to play in the democratic process. Effective problem solving usually requires federal, state, and local governments to work successfully together, and often with the private and nonprofit sectors.





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