



**List of Organizations Engaged in  
Transforming Polarization & Division by Sector  
US Focused  
November 2020**

**General Resource and Cross Disciplinary Organizations and Networks**

[America Indivisible](#) is a non-partisan, non-profit coalition effort to address rising bigotry against members of Muslim communities and those who appear to be Muslim from Black, Arab, Sikh, and South Asian communities by reinforcing the American values of equality, pluralism, and strength through diversity.

[America in One Room](#)—a groundbreaking event organized by the [Center for Deliberative Democracy](#) at Stanford University, Helena, By the People Productions, and NORC at University of Chicago—brought together 500 representative American voters for a structured examination and discussion of key political issues, as well as a discussion with political candidates around the 2019 elections. Their website offers briefing materials, an executive summary of the event and results, and a great deal of press coverage on the event.

[The Better Arguments Project](#) is a national civic initiative create to help bridge divides—not by papering over those divides but by helping Americans have better arguments. Developed through a partnership between the Aspen Institute’s [Citizenship and American Identity Program](#), [Facing History and Ourselves](#), and [Allstate](#) the Better Arguments Project works with communities and organizations to build people’s ability to have constructive arguments through a variety of engagements like events, trainings, and media campaigns.

[The Bridge Alliance](#) is a coalition of ~100 organizations working together as active stewards of our democratic republic. Bridge Alliance member organizations span the ideological spectrum, but are unified to work efficiently, outside arbitrarily defined political lines. You can see the results of their work by visiting their websites/social media pages (accessible through the [All Members page](#)). The Bridge Alliance nurtures consistent and open communications between its members, developing a foundation of trust to foster collaboration. The Bridge Alliance and Bridge Alliance Education Fund work together to cultivate a greater shared identity and spread awareness of the movement.

[Braver Angels](#) (formerly Better Angels) organizes a range of online experiences (including online [debates](#), [online](#) and [in-person workshops](#), [documentary screenings](#), [book discussions](#), and [1:1 conversations](#)), an annual [National Convention](#), [regional alliances](#), and [a library of resources](#) on a variety of polarization related topics.



[The Burke-Paine Society](#) is bringing together cross-partisan discussion groups across the nation. With 8 chapters around the nation, the mission is to 1) rebuild cross-partisan trust, 2) redefine the national identity, and 3) ignite a political renaissance.

The [Civil Conversations Project](#)—organized as part of the On Being Project with Krista Tippett—offers a range of “[Better Conversations Guides](#),” articles, interviews and other resources on their website in an effort to foster more constructive conversations on difficult issues.

The [Center for Courage and Renewal](#) offers a range of online resources and occasional programs focused on Parker Palmer’s book “[Healing the Heart of Democracy](#).” The website offers a guides for facilitating “Healing Democracy Action Circles, a discussion guide, and a range of videos that discuss concepts from the book.

[Charter for Compassion](#) is a network of networks that connects organizers and partners from around the world. They provide educational resources, organizing tools, and avenues of communication for sharing lessons, stories, and inspiration as a global movement.

[Crossing Party Lines](#) compiles online resources related to reducing political divisiveness, and provides an online platform for creating regional groups.

[Essential Partners](#)—formerly the Public Conversations Project—offers facilitation and facilitation training opportunities designed to create safe and constructive spaces to discuss divisive issues within communities and organizations. Their website also offers a [wide range of resource guides](#), including “[Fostering Dialogue Across Divides](#),” “[Moving Beyond Partisan Polarization: First Steps](#),” “[Beyond ‘Them’ and ‘Us’: The Practice and Power of Reflective Structured Dialogue](#),” and “[Eleven Tips for Making Hard Conversations Work](#).”

[Living Room Conversations](#) compiled almost 100 conversation guides on a wide range of topics based on a conversational model developed by dialogue experts. Their website also has listings of online conversation events and other articles.

[Make America Dinner Again](#) provides toolkits and an online coordinating platform for organizing small 6-10 person dinner discussions designed to start bridging partisan divides.

[More in Common](#) is an international organization that focuses on piloting efforts to bring people together across lines of difference and to promote narratives about what we have in common. They offer a great deal of [research](#), publish [reports that apply and contextualize their research](#), and partner with organizations internationally to [design and test depolarizing initiatives](#).



[National Association for Community Mediation](#) (NAFCM) supports peacemakers by being the **hub** for advancing the work of community mediation, aggregating the wisdom of community mediation and amplifying the voice of community mediators. NAFCM's purpose, as a membership association of peacemakers who employ the practices and values of community mediation, is to help these peacemakers to create safe spaces for the transformation of conflict to opportunities for engagement, resolution and partnership through the work and will of the participants and those impacted.

[National Association of Nonpartisan Reformers](#) (NANR) is a member-led Association dedicated to structural election reforms in the public interest. They provide support to their member organizations through shared resources, best practices, and regular convenings. What unites their network is being pro-voter, not anti-party. They favor a robust competition of numerous political parties and independents, and a level playing field on which that can occur.

[National Conversations Project](#) National Conversation Project—an overarching collaborative platform powered by the 300 organizations in the [#ListenFirst Coalition](#)—is designed to reach farther and impact greater than any one organization by aggregating, aligning, and amplifying the many conversation efforts already underway while welcoming more Americans into conversations. National Conversation Project promotes annual National Weeks of Conversation, #ListenFirst Fridays, Rapid Response & Featured Conversations on Major Issues, Locally-Focused #ListenFirst Movements, and any conversation creating social connection. The project has organized a specific initiative, [Weaving Community During Crisis](#), to respond to the societal shifts of COVID-19. Find a case study on the project from The Dialogue Project [here](#).

[National Coalition for Dialogue & Deliberation](#) is a network of innovators who bring people together across divides to discuss, decide, and take action together effectively on today's toughest issues. NCDD serves as a gathering place, a resource center, a news source, and a facilitative leader for this vital community of practice.

The [One America Movement](#) has chapters across the US bringing communities together across divides to work together on issues that matter to them: poverty, race relations and racism, the opioid epidemic and more. Their staff act as facilitators, supporting local chapters to build strong relationships and overcome division. They partner with experts to empower participants to understand the neuroscience and social science behind division and conflict, listen to neighbors' perspective and create shared experiences—all while working together on issues that matter to them.

[OpenMind](#) is a psychology-based educational platform designed to depolarize campuses, companies, organizations, and communities. OpenMind helps people



foster intellectual humility and mutual understanding, while equipping them with essential skills to engage constructively across differences.

[Peace Direct](#), in collaboration with the [Alliance for Peacebuilding](#), has created a mapping of US based peacebuilding efforts.

The [Pew Research Center](#) offers a variety of reports and data summaries related to Political Polarization in American politics.

[Soliya](#)'s mission is to prepare rising generations to approach differences constructively and lead with empathy, in order to thrive in an interconnected world.

[Stanford Polarizations & Social Change Lab](#) (PASCL) studies forces that unite and divide Americans. Polarization of elites and the mass public stands in the way of effective solutions to virtually all societal problems. Our research is intended to contribute to scientific understanding of these dynamics and produce practical knowledge to reduce the negative effects of political polarization.

[The Sustained Dialogue Institute](#) helps people to transform conflictual relationships and design change processes around the world. We define dialogue as “listening deeply enough to be changed by what you learn.

[UNITE](#) is began as a 24-hour global livestream event that invites people across the world to celebrate our shared humanity. Throughout the event on May 1st, 2020, global leaders joined citizens of the world in sharing practices, prayers, songs, reflections, and more to help you turn the pain of this moment into possibility for tomorrow.

[WEAVE The Social Fabric Project](#) supports those who have found a more connected way to live. Weave explores what it means to weave in our schools, our workplaces and every other part of life. Weave's mission is to invite everyone to start living like a Weaver and shift our culture from one that values achievement and individual success to one that finds value in deep relationships and community success. A project of the [Aspen Institute](#), see David Brooks', Chairperson of Weave, [TED talk about the project here](#).

[World War Zero](#) is a **coalition of people** who are committed to addressing the climate crisis – scientists, CEOs, military leaders, activists, artists, and so many others from all walks of life and every part of the political spectrum.

There are a wide range of research studies that explore the roots of political polarization and possible strategies for mitigating polarization. Some of these are summarized by [the Greater Good Magazine](#), published by UC Berkeley.

## Journalism/Media:

[Abridge News](#) tackles news echo chambers by providing our users with quick facts, an opinion spectrum, and reader reactions for trending stories.

[AllSides](#) is a media organization working to provide insights on the many sides to an issue, topic, or news story. A curated news source, they provide links to three articles on the same topic from different sides: “from the right”, “from the left”, “from the center.” They also provide analysis of [media bias ratings](#), a [Red Blue Dictionary](#), have a [civic discourse initiative](#) with a widely viewed [Ted Talk](#) (between the AllSides CEO & the co-founder of MoveOn), and work with schools and other media organizations

[The American Press Institute](#) has a number of reports and guidance on how to approach different aspects of journalistic practice in today's landscape. The political landscape is one topic being explored:

- [Truth Telling in a Time of Misinformation and Polarization](#)
- [How might we reimagine opinion journalism for our digital, polarized age? Reflections from news leaders](#)
- [Contending with Polarized Audiences](#)

[American Listening Project](#) is an effort to facilitate short conversation between Americans on different sides of the partisan divide. People are paired together and their short conversations are recorded and disseminated through social media.

[TheChisel](#) is a social media company changing the political discourse in this country. They offer a unique, proprietary online platform for nonpartisan organizations and bipartisan coalitions to post their proposals, engage the public in dialogue, refine proposals, build consensus through voting—and then send these proposals to Congress.

[Civil Squared](#) is a podcast and media organization whose purpose is to get *un*-likeminded people talking again because that's how, *together*, we'll create the most effective solutions to the challenges our communities face. Today's problems won't be solved by silencing disagreement. Civil discourse is essential to building and maintaining a free and prosperous society. A truly free society requires not just free exchanges of goods and services, but a free exchange of ideas. Through their podcast, newsletter, and events they highlight the diverse efforts of nationally recognized scholars, experts, and authors on big questions that have real-world applications for our lives and communities.

[Cortico](#) aims to foster constructive public conversation in communities and the media that improves our understanding of one another. A non-profit in cooperation



with the [MIT Media Lab](#), Cortico builds systems that bring under-heard community voices, perspectives and stories to the center of a healthier public dialogue. Cortico's [Local Voices Network \(LVN\)](#) combines in-person and digital listening to host, analyze and connect community conversations at scale. This includes: 1) Facilitating in-person community dialogue that enables participants to listen, learn, speak and be heard. 2) Building a digital network that connects facilitators and conversations across political and cultural boundaries. 3) Opening a new local listening channel for journalists, leaders and the community at large. Why is this important? Our media environment prioritizes national perspectives and our politics reinforce divisive tribalism. Local citizenries, however, share a lived community experience. Today, too many of these local voices — be they from red counties or blue cities — go unheard, drowned out by hyperpartisan noise and toxic public dialogue. Social media, designed to connect us, has also divided us into insular “tribes” hostile toward outside views and ripe for the spread of false news, hateful discourse, and extremism. We need to create a new civic space for local voices to be heard in civil, empathic public conversation that heals divisions in communities from the inside out.

[The Fulcrum](#) is a digital news organization focused exclusively on efforts to reverse the dysfunctions plaguing American democracy. They are a nonprofit and nonpartisan. Their original stories, the news they gather from across the country and their opinion forum are all tightly focused on money in politics, redistricting, voting rights, election access, government ethics, civic engagement and the imbalance of powers. Their coverage is all about efforts to make our democratic republic less partisan, our elections more competitive, our politicians less beholden to moneyed interests, our officials more attentive to real evidence in their policy-making and our Congress more effective, ethical and civil.

[The Flip Side](#) is a one-stop shop for smart, concise summaries of political analysis from both conservative and liberal media. Their goal is to become a news source for liberals, moderates, independents, conservatives, and even the apolitical.

[Journalist's Resource](#) is an open access online reference desk for journalists created by the Harvard Kennedy School Shorenstein Center on Media, Politics and Public Policy. They have a *polarization* focus area highlighting research and journalism around political polarization in the US:  
<https://journalistsresource.org/studies/politics/polarization/>

[Left, Right, and Center](#) is a podcast from KCRW in DC that features a weekly panel currently hosted by Josh Barro (center), Rich Lowry (Right, editor of National Review), and usually Elizabeth Bruenig (Left, NYT opinion columnist). They are joined by an expert or sometimes two on the major topic they are discussing each week alongside their “news round-up” style approach.



[Solutions Journalism](#) Their mission is to spread the practice of solutions journalism: rigorous reporting on responses to social problems. They seek to rebalance the news, so that every day people are exposed to stories that help them understand problems and challenges, and stories that show potential ways to respond. They have featured conflict transformation oriented approaches to covering news stories that endeavor to *complicate the narrative* in efforts to engage readers in ways that foster action, engagement, and deeper understanding with things you may disagree and be in conflict with.

[Spaceship Media](#) launched in 2016 with a mission to reduce polarization, build communities, and restore trust in journalism. Through dialogue journalism they go right to the heart of problematic situations by bringing people from communities in conflict – or that simply aren’t communicating – together into a journalism-supported dialogue. We amplify that process by working with our news partners to tell the stories that arise organically from those conversations. They work with media organizations and others on several different levels by designing and managing engagement conversations from the ground up; providing design and ongoing consulting support; and providing consulting around our engagement values and methodology and project visioning. Read a case study on their work from The Dialogue Project [here](#).

[The Transpartisan Review](#) is a non-partisan journal focused on highlighting partisan realities and bi-partisan solutions in US politics.

### **Government/Governance:**

[American Promise](#) exists to [empower, inspire, and organize](#) Americans to win the 28th Amendment to the Constitution. This lasting reform will re-balance our politics and government by putting the rights of individual citizens before the privileges of concentrated money, corporations, unions, political parties, and superPACs. American Promise assembled the first [cross-partisan Advisory Council](#) to speak out for the 28th Amendment. These American leaders represent thoughtful viewpoints from a variety of political, economic, and demographic perspectives.

[Ballotpedia](#) is the digital encyclopedia of American politics and elections. Their goal is to inform people about politics by providing accurate and objective information about politics at all levels of government. They are firmly committed to neutrality in their content.

[Big Tent Nation](#) is committed to transforming the way individual citizens, business and government communicate and collaborate on issues critical to broad-based national prosperity. The online platform they are building will give mainstream citizen the information and organizational tools they need to effect meaningful change. The platform will allow every American to build a personalized civic homepage that will



reflect your highest priority concerns and serve as a nonpartisan portal through which citizens can connect and partner with fellow citizens, thought leaders and elected officials.

[The Bipartisan Policy Center](#) is a Washington, DC-based think tank that actively foster bipartisanship by combining the best ideas from both parties to promote health, security, and opportunity for all Americans. Our policy solutions are the product of informed deliberations by former elected and appointed officials, business and labor leaders, and academics and advocates who represent both sides of the political spectrum.

[Center for the Study of the Presidency & Congress](#) has a “Commission on Civility & Effective Governance” that is focused on breaking/reforming/working through congressional deadlock and partisanship: “The initiative is being led by CSPC President and former Congressman Glenn Nye, (D-VA) and the bipartisan Commission will be chaired by two former Members of Congress who have literally written the book about these profoundly important issues, Jason Altmire (D-PA) (author of “Dead Center: How Political Polarization Divided America and What We Can Do about It”); and Tom Davis, (R-VA), (co-author of “The Partisan Divide: Congress in Crisis”).”

[Center for the Study of Liberty](#) supports the building of a free society by creating spaces for civil conversations among independent thinkers. They organize collaborative events and curate thought-provoking content so people can explore the big questions about human freedom that lie at the heart of complex social issues.

[Citizens Above Partisanship](#) (CAP) is a registered political action committee in the State of Maryland. Their membership is a diverse, nonpartisan group of Washington County, Maryland residents who are committed to working across political differences for our common good. They support candidates from across the political spectrum whose beliefs and actions align with our mission. They value unity and equity in opportunity, access, and participation for all citizens.

[The Committee for a Responsible Federal Budget](#) is committed to educating the public on issues with significant fiscal policy impact. As a source of objective policy analysis, they engage policymakers of both parties and help them develop and analyze proposals to improve the country's fiscal and economic condition.

[Common Ground Solutions](#) is a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization that helps Americans become and remain active citizens who work together across party lines. We believe that as more citizens become engaged in concrete and meaningful ways, they will find opportunities to work together and encourage their leaders to find common ground. Through events and content that explore areas of agreement, educate citizens on how to take action, and connect constituents directly to their





elected representatives, we offer an accessible entry point for Americans who want to impact public policy and need a road map for doing so.

[Common Ground of the American People](#) is an effort of [Voice of the People](#), [Common Ground Solutions](#), the [Program for Public Consultation](#) at Maryland University, and the [Center for Deliberative Democracy](#) at Stanford University that seeks to identify policy positions that have bipartisan public support. The project has so far found over 150 common ground positions on wide range of issues.

[Convergence Center for Policy Resolution](#) works on specific policy solutions utilizing dialogue leading to action with policy makers at the federal & national level. They have a relationship [providing technical support](#) to the House's Bi-partisan Working Group 28 member caucus that came out of their [Building a Better Budget](#) work where they play a neutral facilitating role between representatives.

[The Democracy Fund](#) invests in organizations working to ensure that our political system is able to withstand new challenges and deliver on its promise to the American people. It is a bipartisan foundation established by eBay founder and philanthropist Pierre Omidyar to help ensure that the American people come first in our democracy.

[FMC](#), the Association of Former Members of Congress, is a bipartisan, nonprofit, voluntary alliance of former United States Senators and Representatives standing for America's Constitutional system. FMC works to strengthen the Congress in the conduct of its Constitutional responsibility through promoting a collaborative approach to policy making. FMC seeks to deepen the understanding of our democratic system, domestically and internationally, and to engage the citizenry through civic education about Congress and public service.

The [Institute for Civility in Government](#) provides Civility Trainings, hosts Congressional Student Forums, runs Legislative Seminars, and take part in speaking engagements on reducing the polarization of the U.S.'s political and legislative processes by facilitating dialogue, teaching respect, and building civility in both the public and private spheres.

[The McCourtney Institute for Democracy](#) at Penn State draws from the humanities and social sciences to examine democracy from multiple angles. This cross-discipline collaboration is evident in their research, education, and outreach efforts. They ask what does it mean to be a partisan for democracy? They don't take sides on the political spectrum, but they do defend the rights everyone has as a democratic citizen — from voting to protesting to consuming information from a free press that serves as a check on political leaders.

[The Millennial Action Project](#) works directly with our nation's leading young policymakers on both a national and state level to spur bipartisan legislation and



innovative policy solutions. As a national, nonpartisan, nonprofit dedicated to activating millennial policymakers, MAP gives our nation's young leaders the resources and support to create, introduce, and pass legislation and forge productive partnerships on the issues affecting the youngest generation of Americans. Working in concert with lawmakers, MAP has advanced legislation on issues including entrepreneurship, technology, 21st century skills training, veterans' employment, immigration, volunteerism, and more – including the introduction of the first bipartisan legislation on ridesharing and social impact bonds.

[National Institute for Civil Discourse](#) is a multi-modal effort to promote civil discourse from local to federal politics. Works at grassroots, with faith communities, schools, state legislators, at a federal level, and has a media presence.

[Next Generation](#) works directly with state legislators to address incivility and hyper polarization at the state level. Next Generation offers an interactive, half-day workshop titled, *Building Trust through Civil Discourse*, that is designed and delivered *by* state legislators *for* state legislators. The main mission of the workshop is to provide state lawmakers with an opportunity to explore the benefits of improving the level of civil discourse in their state's legislature and more effectively work across the aisle to recover a culture where discourse and collaboration typify public policy development.

[The Niskanen Center](#), a Washington DC based think tank and policy advocacy center, are globalists who share progressives' desire to robustly address economic and social inequality, liberals' commitment to toleration and civil liberties, moderates' embrace of empiricism rather than dogma, conservatives' belief in the wealth creating power of free markets, and libertarians' skepticism about the ability of technocratic elites to solve complex economic and social problems. They have an op-ed series in partnership with the Washington Post exploring policy ideas with cross party appeal entitled "[On Common Ground](#)"

[No Labels](#) is a problem solving oriented political organization focused on fixing the partisan dysfunction of our current national politics. Through a mixture of grassroots organizing and congressional lobby and caucusing No Labels is endeavoring to bring bi-partisan, problem solving oriented solutions to a broad spectrum of political and policy issues.

[The Unite America Institute](#) is a non-profit organization that seeks to encourage broad-based, non-partisan civic engagement and political participation and engage in research and scholarly analysis on important issues of public concern, including the root causes, effects and potential solutions to political polarization and partisanship.



[Voice of the People \(VOP\)](#) is a nonpartisan organization that seeks to re-anchor our democracy in its founding principles by giving ‘We the People’ a greater role in government. VOP furthers the use of innovative methods and technology to give the American people a more effective voice in the policymaking process. VOP works with the University of Maryland’s Program for Public Consultation to develop policymaking simulations to enable individual citizens to get informed on key issues before government, to hear arguments and offer their recommendations to their Congressional representatives.

[The Volcker Alliance](#) is an organization dedicated to effective governance. They are focused on the outcomes and effectiveness of government for all citizens and. Poor outcomes can often be linked in part to polarized and partisan political dysfunction. While not explicitly focused on bridging polarization and division in politics and society, the Volcker Alliance often offers insights, research, and solutions into how good governance outcomes can be achieved even in the polarized, partisan landscapes we have. Such insights offer opportunities to build bi-partisan solutions to policy & governance issues.

### In the Climate, Environment, & Energy Space:

[Columbia SIPA Center on Global Energy Policy](#) is a thought leader and organizer in the global and domestic energy & climate space. Their podcast, [The Columbia Energy Exchange](#), features in-depth conversations with the world’s top energy and climate leaders from government, business, academia and civil society. The program explores today’s most pressing opportunities and challenges across energy sources, financial markets, geopolitics and climate change as well as their implications for both the U.S. and the world. These conversations cover a broad spectrum of political affiliations and beliefs that, in the interest of sound climate & energy policy, transcend the stereotypes of polarized politics and climate change-oriented discourse.

[The Citizen’s Climate Lobby](#) is a non-profit, nonpartisan, grassroots advocacy organization focused on national policies to address climate change. Their consistently respectful, nonpartisan approach to climate education is designed to create a broad, sustainable foundation for climate action across all geographic regions and political inclinations. By building upon shared values rather than partisan divides, and empowering their supporters to work in keeping with the concerns of their local communities, they work towards the adoption of fair, effective, and sustainable climate change solutions.

[DEPLOY/US](#) is focused on building the ecosystem of support for **bipartisan action on climate change and clean energy**, starting with amplifying right-of-center leadership on the issue. They work with **military, business, faith, investment, policy, and philanthropic leaders** to reclaim American leadership in combatting climate change by ensuring that right-of-center voices



are part of the dialogue necessary to forge cutting-edge solutions. Their ultimate goal is a body of **federal policy**, enacted with strong bipartisan support, that mitigates climate change, accelerates the transition to clean energy, and supports economic growth.

[EarthX](#) is focused on environmental education and awareness through holding the world's largest multi-disciplinary environmental conference, the [EarthXConference](#) with a tandem environmentally focused film festival and educational initiative. While not explicitly working on division and polarization, they are one of the world's largest forums for inclusive, solutions oriented environmental discourse and are explicit in their dedication to diverse approaches: "EarthX is dedicated to presenting a balanced approach and the views of persons from all walks of life including: students, families, activists, innovators, capitalists, scientists, environmentalists, business people, officials, foundations, farmers, ranchers, researchers and more. In short, **ALL of the citizens of the world.**"

[Future500](#) envisions a future in which business and civil society work as equal partners and responsible stewards of a clean, just, and prosperous world. They believe that relationships are the first step toward solving our most pressing environmental and social challenges. By helping diverse organizations step out of their echo chambers and seek common ground in uncommon places, they aim to catalyze innovative, systemic solutions that enable both our planet and society to thrive.

[The Outrider Foundation](#) believes that political and cultural division disrupts climate progress. That's why they're here to help unite parties and communities in taking responsible action. They envision a world where people live without fear of nuclear annihilation or climate-induced catastrophe. They believe that we can all make the world safer and more secure if we work together.

[Political Climate](#) is a bipartisan podcast on energy and environmental issues in America. The hosts go "beyond partisan echo chambers to bring you civil conversations, fierce debates and insiders perspectives on the most pressing energy and climate issues of our time."

[republicEn](#) is a group of conservative leaders concerned about climate change. It is headed by Bob Inglis, former republican congressman from South Carolina who lost his seat after publicly taking a stance on climate change. They are organizing and advocating for bi-partisan action on climate and energy issues.

### **Bridging Rural-Urban Division:**



[Ashoka-USA](#) works with innovators across the full spectrum of issues shaping our world, from climate solutions to radical empathy. Many of their US fellows are from rural communities and their efforts are focused on rural issues. As a network this community attempts to bridge rural and urban misunderstanding and division by being a public voice for the innovative solutions to community issues being built and implemented in rural America. See a panel discussion here with some of the rural Ashoka-USA fellow [here](#).

Minnesota based organization [Growth & Justice](#) has a project called [Thriving By Design](#) which has conducted a comprehensive "statewide gathering of Minnesota residents to begin and follow-thru on a six-month process – *Thriving by Design - Rural & Urban Together* - to create a comprehensive policy agenda and socioeconomic contract - the [Minnesota Equity Blueprint](#) - for achieving rural-urban and racial economic equity and inclusive growth." The Blueprint can be found [here](#).

[Healthy Democracy](#) is a non-profit dedicated to designing and coordinating innovative deliberative democracy programs. They have developed a program called [Community Oregon](#) that implements community immersion and dialogue efforts bringing urban and rural community members into each other's communities for multiple days at a time. Find an article about the program [here](#).

The Journal Sustainability has a special issue set for January 2022 entitled "Bridging The Rural-Urban Divide: Towards Universally Sustainable Regional Economic Development." The call for submissions is now open, learn more [here](#).

[The Nicholas Institute for Environmental Policy](#) at Duke University has a research effort focused on understanding rural attitudes toward the environment and environmental policy. Their findings suggest that "attitudes about the government are a clear dividing line between rural and urban/suburban voters, particularly regarding differences in the level of trust toward the federal government. Views toward climate change are polarized across the urban/rural divide with rural voters being more skeptical of both the science of and governmental response to climate change. Our study suggests, however, that there are opportunities to engage rural voters on climate change and environmental policies generally." Learn more about their study [here](#) and listen to a podcast with [Robert Bonnie](#) who heads this effort [here](#).

[One Montana](#) was born out of a project originally called the Rural-Urban Partnership, focused on bridging the rural-urban divide. As this project developed it became evident that, to truly support rural communities, the organization needed to build out networks among rural communities and their urban counterparts to create a resilient and vibrant state. One Montana now works to create a sustainable and resilient Montana by identifying and resolving challenging social, economic and environmental issues that impact the state's diverse communities. They work



to strengthen and unify the state's communities by preserving the values and culture of both rural and urban Montana.

[The Power of Dialogue: Deconstructing the Rural-Urban Divide](#) is a 4-week immersive dialogue experience that brings together students from Georgetown University, Radford University, Columbia University, and Indiana University of Pennsylvania to 1) build dialogue skills needed for navigating contentious issues, and 2) develop the cultural dexterity students need to serve as a bridge between rural and urban communities. Through weekly evening group dialogue sessions, 1-on-1 conversations, and short activities, students develop skills to explore complex issues like the rural-urban divide and uncover commonalities.

[St Louis Shakespeare in the Streets](#) is partnering with local rural and urban high schools in theatre productions with the intent of building bridges between communities. Read an article about their efforts [here](#).

[The Urban-Rural Ambassadors Summer Institute](#). In this 2 credit seminar, students from both Portland State University and Eastern Oregon University will join together online to learn about some of the commonalities and differences across Oregon's communities that can serve as a critical framework for serving as a leader working collaboratively across Oregon's urban-rural "divide."

### **Education:**

[All In Campus Democracy Challenge](#) believe higher education should play a role in developing an active and informed citizenry by educating students, motivating them to engage in American democracy, and instilling the value of lifelong participation. Through an intentionally designed program – which provides incentive, structure, and accountability – this national, nonpartisan initiative inspires, supports, and celebrates colleges and universities working to improve civic learning, political engagement, and voter participation.

[The American Democracy Project \(ADP\)](#), a program of the [American Association of State Colleges and Universities](#) (AASCU), is a network of more than 250 state colleges and universities focused on public higher education's role in preparing the next generation of informed, engaged citizens for our democracy. The goal of the American Democracy Project is to produce college and university graduates who are equipped with the knowledge, skills, attitudes and experiences they need to be informed, engaged members of their communities.

[BridgeUSA](#) believes that good governance starts with constructive political discussion. Their organization works with America's future leaders on college



campuses to foster spaces wherein a diverse range of ideas can engage one another through the practice of responsible discourse.

[Bridge the Divide](#) is a platform where young people in high school and college from across the United States and around the world can contribute their unique voices while engaging with their peers' diverse political convictions. It is a political initiative that seeks to promote political conversation amongst youth in a time of great divide in both American and global political affairs. They work to unite politically active students who desire to create change in the world by stimulating conversation in a productive and respectful manner. They are run solely *by* young people to work towards a more politically-prosperous, collective future *for* young people.

[The Bridging Divides Initiative](#) (BDI), based at the [Princeton School of Public and International Affairs' Liechtenstein Institute on Self-Determination](#), works to support local community resilience in the United States, building on expertise from political and elections work around the world. BDI uses different tools and methodologies to track demonstrations and political violence in real time, providing new data and risk analysis so that local communities and national organizations will be better able to address issues before they escalate. BDI also works to build an expansive picture of peacebuilding and reconciliation organizations across the country, to highlight existing work while developing new avenues for coordination and support. Their interactive map is one of the most robust and accessible mapping efforts of US based peacebuilding organizations, and is also a partnership with the [Armed Conflict Location & Event Data](#) (ACLED) Project to track political violence and protest in the US. Find their interactive map [here](#).

[Campus Election Engagement Project](#) is a nonpartisan organization committed to teaching our students to be active citizens and voters.

[The Center for the Political Future](#) (CPF) at the University of Southern California (USC) combines rigorous intellectual inquiry, teaching, and practical politics to advance civil dialogue and research that transcends partisan divisions and finds solutions to pressing national and global challenges. Our events, programs, scholarships, and internships inspire and train students for careers in public service and lifetimes of civic engagement. Read a case study on the center's efforts to engage the business community can support students commitment to bi-partisan civil discourse from The Dialogue Project [here](#).

[Etgar 36](#) runs a cross-country travel program focused on teaching participants about the culture and history of America through first-hand exposure to important cities and sites—and in turn creating more well-informed and engaged citizens.



[Facing History and Ourselves](#) provides curriculum support and training for educators designed to help them animate lessons from history to teach students about equity and justice. As part of their work, they offer an “[Explainer on Political Polarization in the United States](#),” as well as a variety of teaching ideas on relevant topics such as, “[Assessing the Strength of Democracy](#),” “[Political Debates and Cognitive Bias](#),” and “[Where Do We Get Our News and Why Does it Matter?](#)”

[NewGen Peacebuilders](#) is a youth peace education program designed for high school and university students (14 to 25). It draws on principles of peace education familiar to Rotary Peace Fellows as well as best practices in peace and global education for youth. The program was designed by Rotary Peace Fellow Patricia Shafer (US) with collaboration and input from Rotary Peace Fellows Phill Gittins (UK), Carla Lineback (US) and Pranisa Ekachote (Thailand). One of the key elements/outcomes of this youth peace education program is a team peace education project that youth complete. These projects have spanned education inequality, poverty, domestic violence, international/cultural bridgebuilding and peace conference planning and management. The program content is global/universal in nature, but also adapted/adaptable to local language, issues and cultural circumstances.

University of North Carolina (UNC) has a new [Program for Public Discourse](#) housed in the College of Arts & Sciences that includes faculty from across the University. They seek to support a culture of debate and deliberation through curricular and extracurricular programs, enabling our students to be better citizens, leaders, and stewards for our democracy. Their mission is to build their students’ capacities for debate and deliberation, enabling them to be better citizens, civic leaders, and stewards of our democracy. Read a case study of the program from The Dialogue Project [here](#).

[The Project on Civil Discourse](#) at American University encourages students to move from thinking only about what they have a right to say and consider why and how they engage in conversations as speakers, listeners, and readers. The project is based on the understanding that our choice of how to use our voices, what conversations to engage in, whether and how we listen to others, is at the core of our learning experience. It challenges students to examine their goals and be wise and mindful architects of their contributions to American University—an institution whose mission is to promote and disseminate knowledge.

[Teaching Tolerance](#) offers this feature on [teaching in polarized classrooms](#). While from 2016. it is a good exploration and resource.

[USIP](#) has [peacebuilding/peace education toolkits for educators](#) geared towards middle and high school students and teachers. The toolkits envision peace education as a tool to give students peacebuilding and conflict management tools which they can use to navigate and potentially transform polarization & division.





## **Tech & Social Media**

Graphika's CEO & Research Director [have an article in MIT Technology Review from 2018](#) that maps polarization and division on twitter. While [Graphika](#) is not necessarily *working on* divisiveness & polarization, they have partnered with folks at the [MIT Media Lab](#) and [Harvard's Berkman Klein Center](#) to map the landscape of political division on twitter.

[The Omidyar Network](#) (philanthropic effort e-bay founder Pierre Omidyar and wife Pam) has put resources towards engaging with hate speech and online forums that can drive division & polarization. In an [article](#) & [white paper](#) they point to how social media is a threat to democracy, their first point being that it fuels "Echo Chambers, Polarization and Hyper Partisanship." They [invested](#) in the Anti-Defamation League's [Center For Technology & Society](#) which states: "In a world riddled with cyberhate, online harassment, and misuses of technology, the Center for Technology and Society (CTS) serves as a resource to tech platforms and develops proactive solutions. CTS aims for global impacts and applications in an increasingly borderless space. It is a force for innovation, producing cutting-edge research to enable online civility, protect vulnerable populations, support digital citizenship, and engage youth."

The Stanford Social Science Review offers a range of resources on "[Collective Impact](#)" [initiatives](#) that seek to cultivate broad cross-sector coordination around persistent social challenges. While not directly focused on de-polarizing, their tools offer insight into how to build community collaborative across partisan divides and other lines of difference in service of addressing social issues. Other [resources on Collective Impact are shared by the Council of Nonprofits](#).

As listed in the Philanthropy section, the Hewlett Foundation has published a comprehensive literature review on [Social Media, Political Polarization, & Political Disinformation](#).

[Exposure to Social Media Can Increase Political Polarization](#) is a research effort edited by a Columbia Professor, Peter Bearman examining the nature of our social media "echo bubbles".

## **In Business, Economics, & Finance:**

[American Sustainable Business Council](#) is a network of business leaders focused on the business community's contributions to sustainability and policy interaction with government. They have a working groups focused on "[Making Capitalism Work for All](#)" and "[Diversity & Inclusion](#)" which are both policy focused but get at fairness in the economy, making things work across divisions, and advocate for bi-partisan approaches to policy making...



“At [Business for America](#) we believe that the business community can help to overcome political polarization and preserve our country’s representative democracy.” They work to “mobilize the business sector to help increase voter participation and civic engagement, put meaningful solutions on state and national agendas, and generate the support necessary to drive change.” [This is their platform](#)

General Mills has an initiative called [Courageous Conversations](#), launched in January 2016, the initiative gives employees a safe and supportive place to have candid discussions about important issues. Conversation starts with an external keynote speaker followed by an open forum discussion facilitated by trained employee volunteers. Hundreds of employees have now come together to have open and honest dialogue around important issues. Attendees have reported that they’ve come away with increased commitment to engaging different perspectives, increased levels of understanding and empathy across different communities and increased understanding of company resources. Find a case study on the program from The Dialogue Project [here](#).

[The Dialogue Project](#) is a research effort to explore what role business can play to help improve civil discourse and reduce polarization. It is supported by such companies as Google, Bristol-Myers Squibb, Chevron, Hewlett Packard Enterprise, Southwest Airlines, among others, as well as the University of Southern California. [Their report](#), based on nearly a year’s worth of research in conjunction with Morning Consult, provides disturbing new data on Americans’ deteriorating ability to debate difficult issues, as well as promising initiatives from the business world and recommendations from top CEOs. The Project and report also features case studies of efforts to transform polarization by the business community and original writings from a spectrum of leading American business figures.

[Future500](#) envisions a future in which business and civil society work as equal partners and responsible stewards of a clean, just, and prosperous world. They believe that relationships are the first step toward solving our most pressing environmental and social challenges. By helping diverse organizations step out of their echo chambers and seek common ground in uncommon places, they aim to catalyze innovative, systemic solutions that enable both our planet and society to thrive.

[The Institute for Economics & Peace](#) is the world’s leading think tank dedicated to developing metrics to analyze peace and to quantify its economic value. It does this by developing global and national indices, calculating the economic cost of violence, analyzing country level risk and understanding positive peace.



The [Leadership Now Project](#) is a membership organization of business leaders mobilized to “Fix American Democracy.” They invest in high-impact [organizations](#) and candidates ([New Leaders](#)) to advance a modern, effective democracy for all Americans. Their issue priorities for 2019-2021 are:

1. **Voter participation and protection**
2. **Competitive, fair, and secure elections, particularly through combating gerrymandering and promoting ranked choice voting**
3. **Data and transparency in politics**
4. **Innovation & ideas for a modern democracy**

Not explicitly focused on polarization or political divisiveness but they are concerned with a democracy and government that is effective and works which brings in the ability to conduct bi-partisan governance writ-large.

## In Philanthropy

[The Hewlett Foundation’s Madison Initiative](#) focuses on strengthening U.S. democracy and its institutions—especially Congress—in a time of political polarization. Launched in 2014, the initiative is nonpartisan and supports nonprofit organizations across the ideological spectrum—academic researchers, advocacy groups, think tanks, and civic leadership organizations—who seek to understand and improve the political system so that elected representatives are better equipped to solve society’s greatest problems and in turn, earn public trust and support. The Hewlett Foundation’s board has authorized the initiative to make approximately \$20 million in grants per year until 2021, for a total commitment of \$150 million. One effort out of this initiative is a literature review on [Social Media, Political Polarization, & Political Disinformation](#).

[Philanthropy in a Time of Polarization](#) is an article in Stanford Social Innovation review from 2014. It outlines polarization as a process and historical story alongside thinking on how organizations can operate effectively. It offers comments on different approaches philanthropic efforts might take: “Some of the most creative advocacy work currently under way builds cross-party coalitions that are anchored not by centrists, but by figures with unquestioned ideological credibility. We call this style of advocacy “transpartisan,” because it recognizes that the critical political gatekeepers are no longer ideologically neutral actors in the center, but the authorizers of ideological orthodoxy at the poles. The art of transpartisan policy entrepreneurship is to develop policy frameworks that can support gatekeepers who have chosen to bless certain unorthodox ideas or shifts in policy.”

[Unite America](#) is a movement of Democrats, Republicans, and independents working to bridge the growing partisan divide and foster a more representative and functional government. They are focused on scaling and accelerating the movement to put voters first and ensure that the right leaders have the right incentives to solve our country’s greatest problems. Through their Unite America Fund, they leverage



their nonpartisan donor community to invest in the reform movement like never before.

## **Home & Parenting**

[National Council on Family Relationships](#) has explored how political polarization works at the family level, they [have a webinar with Bill Doherty, Better \(now Braver\) Angels](#) founder and Director at the [Citizen Professional Center](#) in the Department of Family Social Science at the University of Minnesota

[The effect of partisanship and political advertising on close family ties](#)—research paper in the Journal Science.

## **Faith Based Initiatives:**

[Civic Spirit](#) works with diverse faith communities and faith based schools and educational institutions in particular in efforts to build robust civics education in these schools.

The [Interfaith Alliance](#) offers resources for political candidates and for voters designed to support respectful communication to diverse religious audiences, and to discourage the use of religion as a tool of politics. This includes Guides for Candidates, Guidelines for Faith Leaders Speaking on Hot Button Issues, and a Voter Registration and Mobilization program.

The [Interfaith Youth Core](#) supports high school and college on-campus groups, and offers workshops, trainings, conferences, and grant funding to support inter-faith dialogue and leadership.

[Millions of Conversations](#) is a media driven campaign designed to change existing narratives that marginalize and politicize “the other.” Starting with the predominating narrative about Muslim-Americans, their focus is on eliminating stigma in all its forms.

[The Pluralism Project](#), based at Harvard University, provides research and online resources designed to understand the conditions that promote positive interfaith interactions and to promote greater mutual respect and understanding.

[State of Formation](#) (SoF) is an online forum for emerging religious and ethical leaders. Founded as an offshoot of the Journal of Interreligious Studies, both publications are produced by the Betty Ann Greenbaum Miller Center for Interreligious Learning & Leadership at [Hebrew College](#) and [Boston University School of Theology](#). The forum is for up-and-coming religious and ethical thinkers to



draw upon the learning that is occurring in their academic and community work. They curate a [list of faith-based dialogue activities in US States](#).

### **In Healthcare:**

[The Law and Health Policy Project](#) is a collaboration between ODPHP, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the CDC Foundation, and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) that aims to improve the health of communities through sharing information about evidence-based law and policy interventions.

There are efforts underway to establish a shared vocabulary and set of goals around the “social determinants of health”—the broad range of factors that research shows influences health outcomes. There are shared definitions and resources provided by organizations including the Federal [Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion](#) (ODPHP), the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) (CDC), and the [World Health Organization](#) (WHO).

### **In Entertainment & Sports:**

[Generations for Peace](#), an international Jordanian Youth oriented Peacebuilding Organization, has opened its first US based office in the South-Side of Chicago and is [piloting youth-led peacebuilding initiatives](#) there to bridge generational divides and interrupt and prevent widespread gun violence.

[Peace Players](#) uses sports to bridge divides in communities in conflict—specifically through sports programming, peace education, and leadership development programs.

[Peace and Sport](#) provides supports for national and international peacebuilders designing and implementing programs that use sport to promote education, integration, and socialization.

[RISE](#)—the Ross Initiative in Sports for Equality—works with youth athletes, coaches and school administrators to provide educational programming and workshops about racism, prejudice, diversity and inclusion, and through awareness campaigns at sporting events.

A research paper titled [Can Celebrities Burst your Bubble?](#) About a strategy for using celebrities to overcome filters in social media as a means of mitigating polarization.



## **In the Arts:**

[A Piece of My Mind](#) is a multimedia arts project, created by award-winning photographer John Noltner, that uses portraits and personal stories to bridge divides and encourage dialogue around important issues. Through exhibits, workshops, lectures, on-site studios, and distance learning, *A Piece of My Mind* leads transformative experiences that help a polarized world rediscover the common humanity that connects us.

[The Better Angels Society](#) is dedicated to supporting the creation and dissemination of historical documentary films designed to educate, engage, and encourage discussion among people of every political persuasion and ideology.

The [Civic Life Project](#) is a non-profit focused on funding the creation of documentary films conceived of, researched directed, and produced by high school and college students. They have an annual Youth Film Challenge to fund projects and offer a toolkit to guide youth in creating films.

## **Event Based Organizations:**

[The Common Ground Committee](#) is a forum organizing events hosting high-profile leaders from diverse political backgrounds to find common ground on divisive issues like ace, taxes, healthcare, and the media.

[92<sup>nd</sup> Street Y](#) is a world-class cultural and community center in New York City where people all over the world connect through culture, arts, entertainment and conversation. As a proudly Jewish organization, 92Y enthusiastically welcomes and reaches out to people of all ages, races, faiths and backgrounds while embracing Jewish values like learning and self-improvement, the importance of family, and the joy of life.

## **In Academia:**

[Civic Health Project](#) is dedicated to reducing affective polarization and creating healthier civil discourse in our citizenry, politics, and media. They promote research and interventions that target affective polarization's causes and identify promising remedies.

[Civil Politics](#) is an organization run by academics whose expertise lies in the use of data to understand moral psychology. They regularly publish articles in scientific journals concerning the antecedents and consequences of moral views.

[Stanford Polarizations & Social Change Lab](#) (PASCL) studies forces that unite and divide Americans. Polarization of elites and the mass public stands in the way of



effective solutions to virtually all societal problems. Our research is intended to contribute to scientific understanding of these dynamics and produce practical knowledge to reduce the negative effects of political polarization.

The Stanford Social Science Review offers a range of resources on “[Collective Impact](#)” initiatives that seek to cultivate broad cross-sector coordination around persistent social challenges. While not directly focused on de-polarization, their tools offer insight into how to build community collaboration across partisan divides and other lines of difference in service of addressing social issues. Other [resources on Collective Impact are shared by the Council of Nonprofits](#).

### **Community Based Initiatives:**

The Stanford Social Science Review offers a range of resources on “[Collective Impact](#)” initiatives that seek to cultivate broad cross-sector coordination around persistent social challenges. While not directly focused on de-polarization, their tools offer insight into how to build community collaboration across partisan divides and other lines of difference in service of addressing social issues. Other [resources on Collective Impact are shared by the Council of Nonprofits](#).

[American Public Square](#) is a Kansas City-based community organization working to improve the tone and quality of public discourse by:

- **Convening** groups and creating space for respectful dialogue on important topics
- **Educating** community members about why engaging in this way is important and how to do it well
- **Engaging** diverse segments of our society to ensure that multiple perspectives are explored

[The Divided Community Project](#) hopes to synthesize insights for collaborative approaches to community division; provide counsel to local leaders based on these insights; and help local leaders translate these principles into practice in local communities throughout the nation.

[Everyday Democracy](#)'s mission is to help communities talk and work together to create communities that work for everyone. They work directly with local communities, providing advice and training and flexible how-to resources. They primarily use serial facilitated dialogue to assist communities navigating divisive decisions and circumstances.

[Hands Across the Hills](#) formed in response to the 2016 election with the goal of meeting face to face with others who voted differently than us, eliminating the voices of politicians and the media, who seek to divide us, to see us as enemies, red versus



blue. Two small groups, progressives in rural Western Massachusetts and conservative voters in Eastern Kentucky coal country, met for three immersive weekends of dialogue and cultural exchange in each other's towns, in fall 2017, spring 2018 and fall 2019.

### **Ted Talks and Other Media looking at Polarization, Division, Dialogue:**

- [Peter Coleman: Why We Are Stuck—The Attraction of a Polarized America](#)
- [Joan Blades & John Gables: Free Yourself from Your Filter Bubbles](#)
- [Jonathan Haidt: The Moral Roots of Liberals & Conservatives](#)
- [Jonathan Haidt: Can a Divided America Heal?](#)
- [Robb Willer: How to have better political conversations](#)
- [David Brooks, Gretchen Carlson: Political Common Ground in a Polarized United States](#)
- [Yuval Noah Hariri: Nationalism vs. Globalism: the new political divide](#)
- [Eve Pearlman: How to lead a conversation between people who disagree](#)
- [Arthur Brooks: A Conservative Plea: Let's Work Together](#)
- [Julia Dhar: How to disagree productively and get along](#)
- [Michael Sandell: The Lost Art of Political Debate](#)
- [Sally Kohn: Let's Try Emotional Correctness](#)
- [Jonas Gahr Store: In defense of dialogue](#)
- [Julia Galef: Why you think you're right—even if you're wrong](#)
- [Arthur Brooks: A conservative's plea: Let's work together](#)
- [Pia Mancini: How to upgrade democracy for the internet era](#)
- [Jonathan Haidt: How common threats can make common \(political\) ground](#)
- [Megan Phelps-Roper: I grew up in the Westboro Baptist Church. Here's why I left](#)
- [Celeste Headlee: 10 Ways to have a better conversation](#)
- [Özlem Cekic: Why I have coffee with people who send me hate mail](#)
- [Krista Tippett's Interview of Derek Black and Matthew Stevenson: "Befriending Radical Disagreement"](#)
- [Krista Tippett's interview of Sally Kohn and Erick Erickson: "Relationship Across Rupture," about bridging political divides](#)
- [The Reunited States Film](#)
- [To See Each Other Podcast on Misunderstandings and Division in Rural America](#)