



## ***Beyond the Deliberation: Resources for Continued Engagement on Environmental Challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century***

One of the key deliberative dispositions that the Deliberative Citizenship Initiative (DCI) has identified is an “action orientation.” While dialogue and deliberation are themselves important contributors to a healthy democracy, they become even more valuable when they lead to shared agreement on key issues and an intentional commitment to take either individual or collective action on them.

Such action can come in a range of forms and should be broadly understood. It might involve issuing a set of recommendations or deciding to support a particular policy. It might also manifest as developing a better understanding of a topic, connecting with relevant local or national organizations, participating in continued discussions, or generating new approaches to engaging with the issue.

To support such an orientation, the DCI shares a series of “action pathways” for participants to consider after each event or activity it sponsors. Please see the pathways below related to the topic of **“Environmental Challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.”** Engaging in these activities is voluntary -- participants are free to choose any of the pathways, or none. But we encourage you to at least consider them as options that can build on the conversation you just had with your fellow deliberative citizens.

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### **Get Informed**

Learn more about the history of environmental policy work:

- Read *The Atlantic's*, [“How the U.S. Protects the Environment, from Nixon to Trump,”](#) which breaks down the history and creation of the Environmental Protection Agency
- Read *Britannica's*, [“History of the Environmental Movement,”](#) for a global perspective

Explore environmental challenges and differing perspectives about them:

- Read [this climate opinion factsheet](#), which provides information about Americans’ beliefs, risk perceptions, and policy preferences about climate change for all 50 states
- Read the [Green New Deal resolution](#), brought forth during the 116<sup>th</sup> Congress, and different opinions about it:
  - [“What is the Green New Deal?”](#) a comprehensive explanation of the Green New Deal from the New York Times
  - [This 2019 podcast episode](#) from the Heritage Foundation’s *Heritage Explains*, which examines the proposal with the help of an economist who works on economic policy

- Energy
  - Watch [“After Coal: Welsh and Appalachian Mining Communities,”](#) a documentary that explores the stories of coalfield residents in Kentucky and South Wales.
  - Learn about energy use and clean energy from the [US Energy Information Administration](#) and the [Department of Energy](#)
- Water
  - Watch [“Flint: The Poisoning of an American City,”](#) a documentary that explores both the policies of environmental regulations in Flint and their implementation’s impact on the surrounding communities.
  - Read [“Water Share,”](#) a report from The Nature Conservancy on using water markets and impact investment to drive sustainability
- Pollution
  - Listen to [“The Litter Myth,”](#) an episode of NPR’s *Throughline* podcast about recycling
  - Read [“The Right Way to Ensure a Cleaner Environment,”](#) from the Heritage Foundation

### Get Connected

Join a local organization:

- Davidson College’s [Sustainability Office](#) (follow their [Instagram account](#) for more information)
- The [Davidson College Sustainability Collective](#)
- Sunrise Davidson, the Davidson College hub of the Sunrise Movement

Join a national group:

- [ConservAmerica](#), a group that educates the public and engages elected officials to promote market-based solutions to today’s environmental and energy challenges
- [Environmental Defense Fund](#), a global environmental organization that researches and advocates for solutions in climate, energy, oceans, ecosystems, health, science, and economics
- [Greenpeace](#), a global campaigning organization that uses peaceful protest and creative communication to explore global environmental problems and promote solutions
- [The Citizens’ Climate Lobby](#), a national non-partisan, grassroots effort to mobilize Democrats and Republicans to take effective action on climate change
- [The Poor People’s Campaign](#), an organization that advocates for a variety of policy reforms including climate resilience and energy efficiency
- Or one of dozens of [other organizations](#) dedicated to environmental issues

### Get Involved

- Increase your knowledge about the environment and earn badges to show your progress on [Earth Day 2020: A Guide for All Ages](#), a Davidson digital learning project
- Join a [Sierra Club campaign](#) to take action on climate

- Ask your [state](#) and [Congressional](#) representatives to support environmental policies that you care about
- Consider calculating your [Carbon Footprint](#) and taking individual action in an area that's important to you!
  - Walk, cycle, or take transit instead of driving
  - Buy secondhand items or borrow items for occasional use rather than purchasing something new as part of “reduce, reuse, recycle”
  - Reduce your consumption of meat and increase your purchases of organic and/or local food
  - Lower your energy bills by lowering your heating by a couple of degrees and turning off your air conditioner when it's not needed

## About This Guide

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**Writer:** Cadie McNaboe    **Managing Editor:** Carla Cole    **Executive Editor:** Graham Bullock

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### The Deliberative Citizenship Initiative

The Deliberative Citizenship Initiative (DCI) is dedicated to the creation of opportunities for Davidson students, faculty, staff, alumni, and members of the wider community to productively engage with one another on difficult and contentious issues facing our community and society. The DCI regularly hosts facilitated deliberations on a wide range of topics and organizes training workshops for deliberation facilitators. To learn more about these opportunities, visit [www.deliberativecitizenship.org](http://www.deliberativecitizenship.org).

### DCI Deliberation Guides

The DCI has launched this series of Deliberation Guides as a foundation for such conversations. They provide both important background information on the topics in question and a specific framework for engaging with these topics. The Guides are designed to be informative without being overwhelming and structured without being inflexible. They cover a range of topics and come in a variety of formats but share several common elements, including opportunities to commit to a shared set of Conversation Agreements, learn about diverse perspectives, and reflect together on the conversation and its yield. The DCI encourages conversations based on these guides to be moderated by a trained facilitator. After each conversation, the DCI also suggests that its associated Pathways Guide be distributed to the conversation's participants.

### DCI Pathways Guides

For every Deliberation Guide, the DCI has also developed an associated Pathways Guide, which outlines opportunities for action that participants can consider that are related to the covered topic. These Pathways Guides reinforce the DCI's commitment to an action orientation, a key deliberative disposition. While dialogue and deliberation are themselves important contributors to a healthy democracy, they become even more valuable when they lead to individual or collective action on the key issues facing society. Such action can come in a range of forms and should be broadly understood. It might involve developing a better understanding of a topic, connecting with relevant local or national organizations, generating new approaches to an issue, or deciding to support a particular policy.

If you make use of this guide in a deliberation, please provide attribution to the Deliberative Citizenship Initiative and email [dci@deliberativecitizenship.org](mailto:dci@deliberativecitizenship.org) to tell us about your event. To access more of our growing library of Deliberation Guides, Pathways Guides and other resources, visit [www.deliberativecitizenship.org/readings-and-resources](http://www.deliberativecitizenship.org/readings-and-resources).