



Beyond the Deliberation: Resources for Continued Engagement on The Future of Democracy

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 **“The Future of Democracy.”** 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.

Get informed:

- Read about the development of democracy from an international perspective in [“The Long, Hard Road to Democracy”](#) from *The Wall Street Journal*.
- Prepare for holiday conversations with family by reading [“How to Handle Difficult Conversations at Thanksgiving”](#) from *The New York Times*.
- Check out [“Our Common Purpose: Reinventing American Democracy for the 21st Century,”](#) a report from the Commission on the Practice of Democratic Citizenship.
- Learn more about institutions from across the political spectrum such as [Third Way](#), [R Street Institute](#), [New America](#), [American Enterprise Institute](#), and the [Brookings Institution](#) that are working to develop policy ideas that can bridge our political divides.
- Read [“Truth Seeking, Democracy, and Freedom of Thought and Expression,”](#) a joint statement by Robert P. George and Cornel West that has been signed by hundreds of other scholars and practitioners.

- Learn more about deliberation and inclusivity by reading “[Partnering for Inclusion: Recruitment Strategies for Deliberative Conversations](#)” by Kalie McMonagle at Center for Public Deliberation, Colorado State University.

Get connected:

- Check out one of Davidson College’s [political student organizations](#) or a local chapter of the [Democrats](#), [Republicans](#), [Libertarians](#), or [Democratic Socialists](#) to learn more about their positions and decide if you want to join their ranks.
- Connect with the [Deliberative Citizenship Initiative](#) by signing up for a D Team, attending future forums, collaborating on events, or downloading readings and resources.
- Connect with the [Center for Civic Engagement](#) through their weekly newsletter or [WildcatSync](#) Portal that highlight opportunities and events on campus and in the community.
- Join [Braver Angels](#) by becoming a member, attending local and national events, and signing their “With Malice Toward None” pledge.

Get involved:

- Find a new way to get involved with American democracy by reading “[How to Participate in Government](#)” from *The New York Times*.
- Check off democratic activities from We The Purple’s “[Bucket List for Involved Citizens](#).”
- Attend a [Moving Forward Together](#) event, an initiative by Living Room Conversation to address the hopes and concerns of Americans after the election.
- Use the [DCI’s Guide to One-on-One Conversations](#) to have a deliberative conversation with a friend or colleague who may have voted differently than you in the election.

About This Guide

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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.

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 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.