



Beyond the Deliberation: **Resources for Continued Engagement on** ***Defensive 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 **Defensive 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

- Review this [six-step playbook](#) outlining steps you can take to protect democracy.
- Explore [this list of essays](#) discussing salient defensive democracy debates in the US and Germany from Project Syndicate.
- Read this list of [eight ways to protect American democracy](#) from the Center for American Progress.
- Deepen your understanding of the [different perspectives on the prosecution](#) of Donald Trump via this article from Vox.
- Read [this statement](#) from the Heritage Foundation about the prosecution of Trump.
- Learn more about the [long history of defensive democracy](#) in the US in this article from The Atlantic.

Get Connected

- Learn more about the [Democracy Fund](#) and its initiatives.
- Review how [PERIL](#) is combatting misinformation and extremist threats to democracy.
- Explore the work of the Center for Strategic and International Studies' [‘Defending Democratic Institutions’ project](#).
- If you have a legal background or interest in law, [connect with the efforts of the American Bar Association](#) to protect election security.

Get Involved

- Support fair and transparent elections by [becoming an election official in Davidson](#) or your hometown.
- Attend or conduct educational workshops on topics like [voting rights](#), [civic engagement](#), and misinformation.
- Become a member of organizations that work to protect democratic values, such as the [ACLU](#), [Common Cause](#), [Brennan Center for Justice](#), [Federalist Society](#), or [Freedom House](#).
- Support international organizations that work to promote democracy and human rights globally, such as [Amnesty International](#) or [Human Rights Watch](#).

About This Guide

Writer: Logan Jain '26 **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.

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 dc@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.