



Why does Bridge Alliance exist?

There are myriad organizations working in the political reform and democracy revitalization space. Most of these organizations have traditionally worked independently of one another, achieving various levels of success- or too often- a frustrating lack of effectiveness creating systemic solutions. It is now widely understood that for maximum impact and productivity, these organizations must work together to boost efficiency, while leveraging funding and expertise.

The Bridge Alliance is a coalition of more than 85 organizations that works 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.

Individually, these organizations do noble work. **Together, these organizations are a *noble movement*.**

This movement is timely and crucial, if we are to successfully halt the corrosive effects and reverse the negativity of our national political antagonism.

The Bridge Alliance Infrastructure Plan

The Bridge Alliance mission is to provide backbone support and services to the political reform and civic revitalization movement in order to maximize collaborative outcomes. The Bridge Alliance nurtures consistent and open communications between the many Bridge Alliance members, developing a foundation of trust, assuring mutual objectives while creating actionable influence. With increased operational funding, the Bridge Alliance will foster an even greater shared identity, fortifying the organizations and individuals dedicated to collaborative civic problem solving and public policy innovation.

Strategic Framework Areas

1. Media - exposure and promotion through traditional and social media
2. Member convenings; fortifying community identity
3. Member education, knowledge & resource sharing, best practices
4. Signature projects
5. Financial support (collaborations)*

1. Media; traditional & social

Sharing the expertise of the leaders within Bridge Alliance.

A key ingredient to capacity building includes providing media attention highlighting the work and accomplishments of our members. Despite the many noteworthy achievements in the reformation and revitalization of our political process, too few Americans know there is a cohesive, organized **movement** in-process. **This must change, to demonstrate that there is an alternative for those who've grown weary of the party-first, establishment quo paradigm.**

A fundamental initiative for the Bridge Alliance is sharing the projects, programs and events of our members. We will effectively “bang the drum” in earnest support of the democracy landscape-changing work of our members.

Thus, in addition to financial support, back-office and administrative support, our members tell us what they need most is media exposure. In response, the Bridge Alliance invested \$60,000 in three (Mar-May, 2018) test campaigns, with impressive results.

Outcomes from campaigns 1 and 2 with such a relatively small initial investment (campaign 3 is running and not included) :

- Total online impressions- 1,371,910
- Total video views- 278,371
- 423,360 **new** people reached
- More than 13,000 active citizens engaged, providing their email addresses

This trail campaign is the basis for an intensive media campaign that will be an ongoing component of the Bridge Alliance financial support of our members, totaling roughly 20%-25% of our total budget.

What we aspire to do:

In addition to target campaigns as in the trial program the Bridge Alliance media program will include the following:

- Connect Bridge Alliance leaders and members for media appearances and speaking engagements
- Connect media who are focused on particular areas of political reform with the appropriate Bridge Alliance leaders
- Distribute up to date and regular press releases on member accomplishments, events and summits.

We seek transformational funding for our media campaign, because so much more exposure for the reform movement is critically needed.

Our targeted outcomes include crucial engagement of citizens, business leaders, mainstream journalists and funders, to highlight that there is a political movement that must be recognized, understood, and supported.

2. Member convenings; fortifying community identity

Bridge Alliance members consistently express their need and desire for focused, strategic convenings (conferences and meetings). Such meetings are important enough to warrant their own budgetary line item.

The convenings will be focused, with specific outcomes and goals. Our members don't want more "echo chambers of agreement;" they want action-oriented events at which they can truly network with other members, potential funders, thought/action leaders, and legislators. They want opportunities to be speakers and panelists to a captive audience (not a bunch of simultaneous break-out sessions).

We project ongoing meetings throughout the year- one annual "state of the Alliance" full member meeting and a TBD number of events (regionally and issues specific) attended by members working on similar issues and policies. This is a huge undertaking (and will thus require significant funding), as most organizations who conduct such meetings do so only on a once annual, or biannual basis.

The Bridge Alliance plan is audacious. Our meetings will be provocative and outcomes oriented, engineered to inspire breakthrough critical thinking leading to transformational revitalization of our democracy. We will not shy away from complex issues nor will we tread cautiously in the face of conventional wisdom that says "it cannot be done."

3. Member education, knowledge sharing, best practices

The Bridge Alliance operational strategy is focused on building and supporting a political and social reform community that did not exist before the inception of the Bridge Alliance. Our success has resulted in our members understanding more about each other, collaborating more frequently and willingly with each other, while learning what works and how to improve the collaborative methodology. Perhaps most importantly, these bonds of trust and friendship are infectious and lead to growth and expansion of the Bridge Alliance membership.

As stated by one of our leaders:

The Bridge Alliance is not just about networking and resource sharing, but fostering true collaboration among its members organizations. Established to facilitate collective action, it supports its members in coming together to more effectively and efficiently reach shared goals. A key strength of the Alliance is how it works to lift up its members"

However, simply connecting our members to each other doesn't guarantee an effective collaboration. Collaborations must be efficient, with a shared and focused mission.

While developing strong personal relationships is a key component of effective collaborations the Bridge Alliance collaborations are designed to effectively leverage the relationships.

Due to our position at the hub of the Bridge Alliance membership wheel, we are connected to and aware of the ongoing work of each of our members, in a broad range of policy and issue areas. This unique positioning allows us strategic visibility and insight into otherwise potentially unexplored collaboration opportunities between members.

Our members have specifically requested the Bridge Alliance's help in promoting individual and organizational expertise in various areas. They lament that there are far too many national events about which they are not aware; they count on the Bridge Alliance's networking and connectivity to the major groups who hold events, so that the Bridge Alliance can suggest members as expert and keynote speakers. This component differs from the events in which the Bridge Alliance is the primary planner but it is still a tangible (and oft requested) benefit to Bridge Alliance members.

Methodology:

- Share overview of national strategy that incorporates member strategies (Member summit focus)
- Peer-peer learning sessions
- Resource sharing directory (data gathering now)
- Leaders Council
- Manage portfolio of democracy revitalization and reform collaborations
- Regularly scheduled calls by the BA staff with the leaders of each Bridge Alliance organization including group calls as opportunities and synergies arise.
- Create working groups to address main areas of focus within the Bridge Alliance
- Create internal communication mechanisms for our members.

4. Signature Projects

We host and manage projects or events that require an umbrella organization to maximize collaboration. We learned valuable intel during the National Week of Conversation (NWOC) in April 2018. The one week event, while a project of the Bridge Alliance Education Fund, was a perfect example of the "New Power" that will define so much of what the Bridge Alliance does. Utilizing the Giving Tuesday Model, the Bridge Alliance served as a trusted resource, an effective connector and a powerful mobilizer. Yet NWOC developed from the bottom up; with a budget of only \$5000, NWOC was led by volunteers who engaged 130 organizations, in 120 public conversations, with countless private conversations in 32 states, plus online in Twitter and Instagram resulting in #NWOC posts being seen by 1.3 million unique users.

List of Bridge Alliance Signature Projects:

- **National Conversation Project (NCP)**- Building on the tremendous success of NWOC and the momentum and exposure it generated, we will launch in August 2018 an ongoing, monthly National Conversation Project. The **NCP** is a special project of the Bridge Alliance Education Fund offered in open-source fashion; it will engage partners and participants through synchronized monthly conversation opportunities as well as semi-annual, week-long special events. NCP seeks to mainstream conversations across divides and by combining it with the Bridge Alliance media strategy will repair a frayed social fabric, while elevating the work of all partnering organizations. NCP is the ideal vehicle to aggregate and amplify the work of many across a rapidly growing field. The impact of the broadly collaborative NCP will build on the proven success of NWOC with demonstrable outcomes that far exceed anything a single organization could achieve on its own.
- **The Civvys** celebrates partnerships that strengthen America. In its second year, the **American Civic Collaboration Awards** will continue to highlight outstanding efforts of civic collaboration making impacts in local, national and youth communities. Awardees and finalists will be celebrated at the **National Conference on Citizenship** in October 2018. The Civvys celebrate best practices in civic collaboration that put community and nation before party, ideology, and narrow political interests. Since this is an election year, the 2018 Civvys will include a new category- Political- focusing on campaigns and leaders that make collaboration and civility a core part of their message and conduct.

Civvys Award categories:

- **National:** These projects are nationwide in scope and audience.
- **Local:** These projects are designed to serve a local, state or regional community.
- **Youth:** These projects have a focus on children, teenagers or young adults.
- **Political:** These are campaigns, cases of collaborative leadership or election races.

5. Financial support (collaborations) *

As part of our integration and awareness of what our members are working on and what is happening in the reform space, the Bridge Alliance is uniquely positioned to assess where and with whom financial support can be most effectively deployed. In conjunction with our members, we have developed a diversified portfolio of social and political reform. The portfolio will be presented in appropriate venues to media, academics, business leaders and foundations for possible funding. While this is not a primary focus of 2018-2019 efforts, it is a logical step in our ongoing fundraising campaign, and is a key backbone service often requested by our members. Thus, when the Bridge Alliance is fully funded operationally, we will also be able to target and fund promising collaborations as recipients of project funding.