

Spark Community Conversations: A Selection of Dialogue Models & Resources

COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS (Central Rappahannock Regional Library): A biannual civic dialogue series with brief presentations by local experts and leaders, open dialogue with all participants, networking and information sharing. Topics have included Food and Hunger, Public Safety, Civility, Affordable Housing, Civic Participation and the Opioid Crisis. The library partners with local organizations related to each topic. <https://www.librarypoint.org/>

OTHER CIVIC DIALOGUE MODELS: There are many established models and variations adapted to local circumstances. Replicate what is tried and true or try something different.

Civic Lab (Skokie Public Library) "We help you discover and learn new things, enrich your life, and exchange ideas with our materials, technologies, and experiences." Other libraries, including the CRRL, replicate this library-based model and create their own resource materials. Find Skokie handouts at <https://skokielibRARY.info/resources/civic-lab/>

The Harwood Institute: "For 30 years, we have innovated and developed a three-part, practical approach to move communities and society forward. The Harwood Institute approach includes Civic Faith, Turn Outward Practice and How Change Happens." <https://theharwoodinstitute.org/>

"The Human Library® is a global innovative and hands on learning platform. We are embedded in high school to higher learning, medical training to civic engagement to better our understanding of diversity in order to help create more inclusive and cohesive communities across cultural, religious, social and ethnic differences." At a Human Library event, a group of diverse individuals agree to be "checked out" like a book. Participants get to "check out" or talk with people with whom they might otherwise never have crossed paths. <https://humanlibrary.org/>

National Issues Forum: "Based in Dayton, Ohio, the National Issues Forums Institute (NIFI), is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization that serves to promote public deliberation about difficult public issues. Its activities include publishing the issue guides and other materials used by local forum groups, encouraging collaboration among forum sponsors, and sharing information about current activities in the network." Issue guides are well researched and provide different viewpoints for rich and impactful local civic dialogue. <https://www.nifi.org/>

Teen Community Conversation (Sarasota County Libraries) used the Harwood Institute approach to better understand teens' aspirations and concerns for their community. The library used what they learned to assist in the development of plans creating new ways of working in the community. <https://scgovlibrary.librarymarket.com/teen-community-conversation>

FILMS AND DISCUSSIONS: Watching a film or an excerpt is a great way to spark community conversations. Follow with a discussion, talk by local experts, information sharing and/or local action planning. Double check whether public performance is free or requires a license.

"Heroin: The Hardest Hit," Virginia Office of the Attorney General's resource to fight **heroin** and prescription opioid pain pill abuse in the Commonwealth. <https://hardesthitva.com/>

Kanopy films include public performance rights. Before scheduling, contact Kanopy to verify. <https://help.kanopy.com/hc/en-us/articles/218375097-Do-Kanopy-videos-include-Public-Performance-Rights->

"Media Policy Center's award-winning television and new media productions empower audiences to build and improve their communities. MPC provides online support and outreach tools to foster change. From environmental sustainability and health care to social justice and education, MPC is dedicated to leveraging media for positive social change" (vision statement). Films distributed through Kanopy. <http://mediapolicycenter.org/>