



Organizational Profile

Mission

Citizens Project is a bold, fearless advocate, and engaging voice that challenges the Pikes Peak region to embrace equity, inclusion, and justice.

History

Organized in 1992, our founders were concerned about the increasing encroachment of overt religious influence into the public sphere and organized to ensure religious neutrality in public schools. At the same time, Colorado voters passed Amendment 2, which legalized the discrimination of LGBTIQ people in the state. These events were the catalysts of our founding.

For the past 28 years, Citizens Project has worked to build a vibrant democracy in the Pikes Peak region, ensuring that everyone in our community has the tools to have their voice heard and that equity, inclusion, and justice are championed in our community.

Organizational Goals

Citizens Project works to educate and empower people in the Pikes Peak region to embrace all members of our community, regardless of race, economic status, ethnicity, religion, national origin, gender, age, sexual orientation, or physical or mental ability. Through our outreach, we seek to promote equity in our public spaces and challenge community members to uphold this value.

Citizens Project promotes active civic engagement. A vibrant democracy requires that voters be informed, have access to elected leaders, and participate in shaping public policy. Citizens Project ensures protection of our local democracy through protecting the right to vote, hosting educational forums, publishing voter guides, and working collaboratively with the community to promote equitable and just public policy.

We envision a Pikes Peak community that is a vibrant democracy in which individual rights are protected, differences are respected, and people fully participate in civic and community life.

Capacity

Citizens Project has a budget of \$170,000 (more than half from individual donations) and is in a strong financial position with \$100,000 in financial reserves. The organization has recently been awarded the Building Bridges and Power capacity building grant from the Colorado Trust and will receive \$75K per year for the next 4.5 years, enabling significant growth opportunities.

The organization is budgeted for 2.0 FTE. Until recently, the structure has been a full-time executive director, a .5 FTE operations manager, and a .5 FTE communications manager. The operations manager

recently transitioned to a part time volunteer status, and the new executive director will have the ability to shape the new organizational structure and hire staff, if appropriate, to support the organization's multifaceted operations.

Citizens Project is governed by an engaged 11-member board of directors that meets monthly. Three board committees—fund development, governance, and policy and advocacy—also meet regularly and recommend policy to the board.

Programmatic priorities:

- Election education efforts with a focus on local elections that are least covered in traditional media and include the publication of a candidate survey voter guide in local publications and online; host issue and candidate forums
- Nonpartisan “get out the vote” work every election engaging low propensity voters through postcard writing, canvassing, and other efforts
- Host anti-racism training and small group conversations on racial issues
- Watchdog local and state government, activating the community to advocate for/against legislation and proposed policy; publish annual El Paso County Legislator Report Card
- Separation of church and state training for local educators
- Respond to incidents in the community that impact equity, inclusion, and justice
- Host community conversations and town halls on issues of the moment that are consistent with the mission of Citizens Project
- Annual Creating Community Breakfast fundraiser, our biggest fundraiser of the year, which typically attracts 500 guests