

## Tool Seven: Civic Saturdays

DIFFICULTY: ●●●○○

FOR: ORGANIZATIONS

Civic Saturdays are gatherings that bring different age groups together to nurture a sense of civic community and encourage meaningful conversations about democracy, citizenship, and civic engagement. They provide a space for different generations to connect, reflect on shared values, and recommit to their roles as active citizens.

### BASICS:

**When:** Civic Saturdays are led by various organizations and individuals and are typically held on select weekends or as scheduled by the hosting organization.

**Time Needed:** A Civic Saturday gathering can vary in length but often spans a few hours, including discussions and activities.

**Materials:** Materials may include a venue, seating arrangements, facilitation materials such as discussion prompts, and any props or visuals that enhance the theme or message of the event.

**Objective:** The objective of Civic Saturdays is to foster a sense of shared civic purpose and reflect on our role as citizens.

**Participants come together to reflect on questions like:**



- \* Why does this experiment of democracy matter to us?
- \* If democracy is an experiment that requires commitment, what does commitment actually ask of us?
- \* How can we engage others, to activate widespread citizenship in and across our community?

### STEPS:

**1. Welcome and Gathering:** Participants are welcomed to the event and encouraged to mingle with one another.

**2. Civic Ritual:** The event often starts with a civic ritual, which can be a symbolic act that reinforces the theme of the gathering.

**3. Reading of Civic Scriptures:** Key texts, essays, or speeches related to civic engagement and democracy are shared. These readings serve as conversation starters.

**4. Music and Poetry:** Civic Saturdays tap into our hearts as well as our heads, which we do through singing together and hearing powerful poetry.

**5. Civic Sermon:** Reflections on a core theme or idea

**6. Civic Circles:** Participants break into small groups to discuss the readings and their personal perspectives on civic engagement.

**7. Reflection and Commitment:** After the discussions, there is a period of reflection where participants are encouraged to think about their personal commitments to civic action.

**8. Closing:** The gatherings conclude with a closing ritual or activity that reinforces the themes discussed.

**THINGS TO CONSIDER:**

Hosting Civic Saturdays regularly can help build a sense of continuity and community.

Choose readings and themes that are relevant to the current civic context and resonate with participants.

Encourage active participation and open dialogue during small group discussions.

Think about what partners would help build a sense of trust and collaboration for your Civic Saturdays.

Provide opportunities for participants to take concrete actions or commit to local initiatives following the event.

Apply for Citizen University's Civic Saturday Fellowship to learn how to lead these gatherings yourself!

[Source: Citizen University](#)

Photo: Alan Alabastro

