

EVERYONE-IN: PATHWAYS TO DIVERSITY IN CIVIC LIFE

OVERVIEW

Cities are made up of the people who inhabit them, irrespective of nationality, religion, or ethnicity. Yet, too often the leadership and civic life in social, cultural, political, and economic institutions isn't reflective of a city's diversity and includes few, if any, voices of newcomers to the city or people of migration background. Finding ways to disrupt this pattern is critically to the inclusive development of cities. People of different background and diverse identities need to see that there is a place for them to be active and lead in the civic life of their community and city. Similarly, leaders and institutions need to come to grips with the increasing diversity of their city and understand how failing to accommodate this reality will undermine the potential of the city to thrive in the 21st century.

Communities that allow everyone to have agency and to be empowered in civic life thrive; individual and collective opportunities blossom, social cohesion is nurtured, and the roots of plural democracy are strengthened. Achieving this is not easy and it doesn't happen without deliberate and thoughtful action involving current civic and city stakeholders and leaders, as well as unrecognized or prospective ones from diverse communities.

GMF Cities will engage with different stakeholders in selected cities to develop way of improving the diversity in civic life and leadership in a place-based manner and including political, social, cultural, and economic spheres. The "Everyone In" program starts by analyzing the local context and consulting with a wide range of local cross-sector entities before convening a local seminar. The seminar will draw from innovative ideas and methodologies of transatlantic cities and works with local actors to identify and ideate pathways to leadership in civic life for diverse communities that could effectively be implemented locally.

GOALS

- Generate inspiration on strategies and tools to increase the diversity of people in civic life and disseminate examples of tools and strategies that can effectively move the needle.
- Support selected cities in developing pathways and strategies to improving diversity in civic life and leadership, by reducing the barriers to fulfilling the leadership potential of people from diverse communities.
- Build local momentum and consensus on the importance and challenge of diversity in civic life for both the local communities as well as the traditional institutions of civic life.

ACTIVITIES & WORKPLAN

1. Initial Consultation & Analysis

GMF Cities will engage key partners and stakeholders in the local city to get a better understanding of the local context and the challenges and opportunities regarding diversity of civic life in the city. Specifically, GMF Cities will engage a broad scope of entities and associations to get the perspectives of various actors. This consultation will serve to explore and get a better understanding of:

- a) who and where is the untapped potential for new and diverse leaders to join civic life;
- b) what are the barriers that distort the representativeness of diversity; and
- c) what are the social, cultural, political, and economic institutions and platforms where new city leaders could fulfill their potential and contribute to civic life (i.e. what are the “boards and commissions” in the city)?

GMF Cities will then analyze the information gathered with external expert partners. This will inform the scope and content of the local convening. This work will allow for an informed and analytical approach to the challenge and for a calibration of the transatlantic scoping of innovative ideas and mechanisms that could serve to stimulate thought or momentum in the local convening.

2. Convening Preparation and Organization

GMF Cities will consolidate the intelligence and data collected in the consultation and analysis phase above to work with local partners to calibrate the agenda, coordinate the invitation of key stakeholders, and prepare the logistics of the event.

3. Local Stakeholder Convening

Lastly, the previous two steps will culminate in the execution of a 1.5-day seminar with a broad cross-sector and diverse representation of civil society associations and groups, selected city officials and representatives from key institutions, platforms. The seminar will serve to present stimulating new ideas, highlight the importance and potential of progress in this direction, and build a solid foundation for a pathway to activating the leadership potential and engagement in civic life by diverse communities. More details of the tentative agenda for this convening is included in the “Agenda” section further below.