Hole-y mole-y!

Can someone see my vote?

No chance. Ou
afe, secure
t mark

2025
Annual Report

Center for
Civic Design

Message from our Executive Director

2025 was a big year for the Center for Civic Design. Even amid federal uncertainty, our work, and the work with our partners, helped keep democracy thriving in election offices across the country. Municipal, county, and state offices across the country reached out about working together. Their commitment to serving voters reminds us daily that election heroes are resilient, creative, and determined to safeguard our democratic process.

We doubled down on expanding voter access in 2025, working hand in hand with election offices that invited us into their systems and processes. We took on bold projects with jurisdictions that made participation easier and clearer for every voter. From voter registration materials to innovative communication strategies, we built practical, tested resources in 22 states that reduced barriers for voters of all abilities to make their voices heard in their communities.

Elections work best when every voter can understand, participate in, and trust the democratic process. Our training reached 4,000 election officials and civic leaders across the country this year, strengthening their civic design practices at a moment when clarity matters more than ever. We also deepened our expertise in plain language, multilingual access, and accessibility, consolidating bodies of knowledge from research on voter intent over the past decade and weaving them into all of our existing templates and tools.

This work continues to inform nonpartisan standards of excellence through the U.S. Alliance for Election Excellence.

As democracy's innovation lab, we have a unique function bridging the gap between the goals of election reform and the realities of election administration. This year, we tested new tactics at the cutting-edge of widening participation, from using emerging technologies for access to creating new collateral that complements emerging voting methods.

We are poised and ready for the busy election season in 2026. With internal leaders for our programs and practices, we will focus on publishing resources to address likely challenges with provisional voting and voter list maintenance across the field. We will stay nimble to directly support election offices as the general election approaches. Across all our work, we'll continue to offer a steady, strategic voice so that election officials can speak to their communities with clarity, consistency, and calm.

Our work removes barriers in the voter journey so everyone who is eligible feels invited to participate in democracy by casting their ballot as an informed voter. We love doing this work, and we are grateful for our partners and supporters as we kick off 2026!

Sean Wang,
Executive Director

Contents

By the numbers

In 2025, we worked in 22 states

Where CCD has worked
- In 2025
- Previous Work
- In the future!
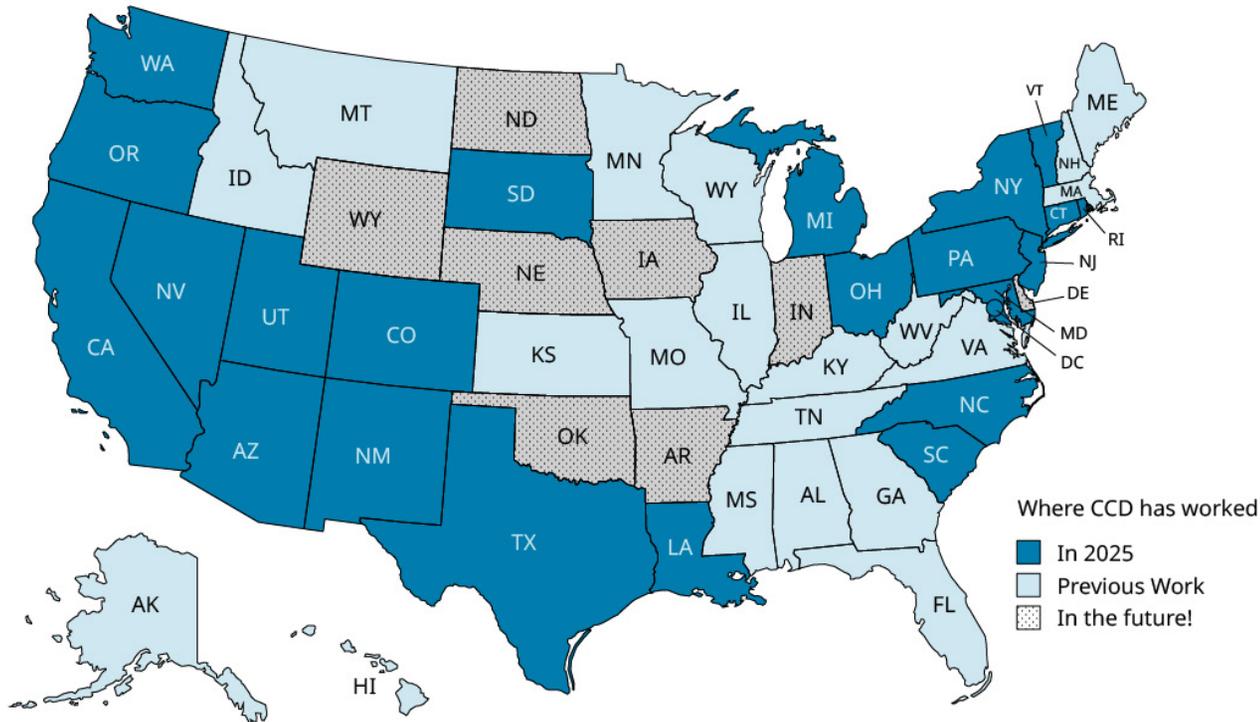
reaching 158,639,157 eligible voters.

7
new toolkits launched

1. **Setting goals in election operations**
2. **Ballot order: Randomization and rotation**
3. **Bilingual design guide for voter education**
4. **Polling signage**
5. **Public audit sign templates**
6. **Designing election websites**
7. **Creating accessible forms for print and PDF**

27
trainings delivered...

together reaching 4,000 election officials and civic leaders.

Reimagining elections

From local insight to national impact

We are helping election offices plan for future elections. By translating post-election insights into practical tools and improvements, we equipped election officials to prepare for a pivotal 2026 election year, strengthening trust in democracy.

Designing and maintaining better forms and notices

From post-election insights to achievable goals

Learning from interactions at the polling place

Designing and maintaining better forms and notices

When voters can easily register to vote and update their registration, they are more likely to participate in elections with confidence. But maintaining accurate voter registration information over time is a significant undertaking. This year, we helped election offices create an excellent voter experience throughout the voter registration process by designing better forms and notices to inform voters at every step of the process.

At the point of registration, we supported election offices in DC, New Mexico, and Oregon to implement Automatic Voter Registration (AVR). By refining forms, data flows, and procedures in AVR, we helped ensure voters enter the voter lists with clean, reliable information from the start. We also redesigned forms, envelopes, and vote by mail materials in Colorado, Louisiana, Nevada, South Dakota, and Utah.

We supported states with maintaining their voter lists over time by making clear what voters need to do to remain registered. In Rhode Island, we redesigned mailings to inform voters about a state-wide list maintenance update and steps they need to take to maintain their registration.

This redesign helped keep many voters registered: Over 30,000 voters updated their information by returning the form. It also resulted in Rhode Island's busiest week of online voter registration updates since inception in 2016, significantly reducing manual processing time.

We're also redesigning a similar notice in Michigan.

> "I cannot thank you and your team enough for your assistance with our statewide mailing. Everything went off without a hitch and we've been processing the returns for the last month. We clearly could not have done it without you all."
>
> Rob Rock
> Deputy Secretary of State, Rhode Island

When voters move across the country, the Electronic Registration Information Center (ERIC) helps states manage list maintenance. We partnered with ERIC to update their communication strategy and explainers so that interstate list updates continue to benefit both election offices and voters.

By ensuring that election offices have the necessary tools to maintain accurate voter lists and to notify voters at every step, every voter can understand their registration status and participate in our elections.

> "CCD was an absolute dream to work with – creative, collaborative, and knowledgeable. They helped us tell ERIC's story in a more effective and clear manner, which will increase public confidence in our work."
>
> Shane Hamlin
> Executive Director, ERIC

From post-election insights to achievable goals

Every election offers valuable lessons, and our Post-Election Debrief Toolkit guides election officials to document them. But without a plan, the best ideas from the debriefs may never get implemented. This year, we created the Setting Goals in Election Operations Toolkit to help election offices turn post-election insights into clear, achievable plans for improvement.

Developed for the U.S. Alliance for Election Excellence, this new toolkit teaches offices how to apply design-thinking methods — breaking down problems, centering voter needs, generating options, and evaluating feasibility — so they can move from generic observations to well-scoped, voter-focused goals.

Learning from interactions at the polling place

Polling places are important because election administration, voter experience, and community relationships all intersect there. Understanding what makes in-person voting go smoothly has long been a priority, shaping resources like our toolkit for improving poll worker manuals.

In 2024, our entire team served as poll workers in an experiential research project. Based on what we learned about polling place interactions, we updated guidance and launched 3 new tools on designing polling places that are welcoming, efficient, and centered on voters' real experiences: our polling place signage toolkit, public audit signage templates, and resources on designing effective poll worker manuals.
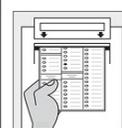
> *"CCD's planning toolkits made our internal planning process so easy. They assisted us with identifying and streamlining achievable goals in a manageable, realistic time frame while using very little or no resources."*
>
> James Eccles
>
> Elections Education Supervisor
> Portland (OR) City Auditor

Cast your ballot
Emita su boleta

Insert your ballot to cast your vote
Introduzca su boleta para votar

YourTownURL.gov/Vote | Jurisdiction Name | Seal Logo

Thank you for voting
Gracias por votar

Don't forget your "I voted" sticker!
¡No olvides su pegatina "He votado"!

YourTownURL.gov/Vote | Jurisdiction Name | Seal Logo

Downloadable templates from our Polling Place Signage toolkit

Inviting participation

Making participation easier through increased access and collaboration

This year, we took on bold projects to make participation easier for every voter. From building a body of knowledge on multilingual design to widening access for voters with disabilities, our templates and toolkits helped election offices nationwide expand access and strengthen participation.

Designing voter education for multilingual communities

Civic participation beyond voting

Access for voters with disabilities

Designing voter education for multilingual communities

Reaching eligible voters whose preferred language is not English can be challenging, especially when multilingual voter education materials are lacking. This year, we equipped both election offices and community groups with tools for planning and producing multilingual materials based on their resources and what their communities need.

In Houston, we collaborated with 16 community organizations (convened by the Houston Endowment) to develop trusted election information in multiple languages used in the community. **By developing this multilingual information together with community groups**, we learned how to adapt messaging, text, and layout of election information so that newly naturalized citizens can vote successfully. We also produced a guide for designing bilingual voter education materials.

Elsewhere, we collaborated with King County (WA) Elections (KCE) to conduct our most ambitious multilingual usability study. Together, we trained community moderators to conduct usability sessions in 7 languages.

We also designed a cross-language synthesis workshop with KCE. This community-assisted model will allow election offices—regardless of in-house language capability—to reach multilingual communities they serve.

We also practiced what we preached to support election officials and advocates with timely, accurate, and nonpartisan information during California's Special Election in November. We created **a voter messaging toolkit in 5 languages** to make it easy for election offices and community groups to encourage early ballot returns.

Together, our tools helped election offices and community groups ensure that every voter, regardless of their English ability, has access to election information they can understand and act upon.

Civic participation beyond voting

Beyond voting, a strong democracy depends on people seeing themselves as participants in civic life. This year, we applied civic design to help people better understand and engage with the programs, systems, and structures around them that support democracy.

In Connecticut, we collaborated with the Secretary of State to educate residents about the governance structure of their townships—a barrier to participation that often prevents people from even reaching the ballot box. We designed **a set of clear, visually engaging infographics** that shows residents how their local governments work and how decisions are made.

Residents can participate in local governance by voting, and they can also support candidates through public campaign finance. For New York City's Campaign Finance Board (CFB), we tested residents' awareness of its matching funds program and messaging strategies to encourage participation.

Through in-language testing in 4 languages, we measured how well residents understand **CFB's multilingual materials** and helped shift CFB's outreach strategy so that it could reach Spanish-, Mandarin-, and Cantonese-speaking communities effectively. By creating guidance that addresses confusion, our design built inclusion and showed how small donations can make a big impact in city politics.

Access for voters with disabilities

Accessibility supports every voter, and clear communication helps make it the norm. In 2025, we partnered with Charleston County, South Carolina, to design tools that make accessibility resources visible, understandable, and welcoming. **A physical "menu" of accessibility options** and signage for polling places, along with an online companion, help voters choose the accessibility supports available to them, from ballot marking devices to sensory bags.

By clearly and consistently communicating accessibility options, these menus make it easier for voters of all abilities to plan ahead before going to the polling place.

We continue to partner with Rutgers University and the National Disability Rights Network to develop innovative solutions for eliminating the barriers that over 40 million eligible voters with disabilities encounter.

Voters with disabilities, advocates, and election officials all agree that while the turnout gap persists, solutions based on universal design for voters with disabilities (like the accessibility menu in Charleston County) are a win-win because they improve usability and trust for all voters. This finding validates our approach for increasing access by ensuring usability across all of our tools and guidance for election administration.

"The VAAC, election workers, and voters responded positively to seeing accessibility visibly centered at each polling place, describing the menu as innovative and useful."

Haley Oryell

Community Engagement Manager, Charleston County Board of Voter Registration and Elections

Supporting innovation

New frontiers in election and democracy

This year, we partnered with engineers, researchers, and advocates at the cutting edge of election administration. We tested new solutions that would widen democratic participation, whether it is using emerging technologies to prototype more accessible polling places or creating new collateral that complements diverse voting methods. These experiments offered new insight into how innovations can increase civic trust with thoughtful implementation.

Research on new voting methods

Improving the physical design of polling places

Plain language makes a difference

Supporting election offices with innovative policy implementation

Research on new voting methods

When voters encounter a new voting method, communication is crucial for trust and transparency. With more jurisdictions using ranked choice voting (RCV) in open primaries to advance multiple candidates into the general election, we researched how to present results for multi-winner RCV contests so that voters can make their choices confidently and understand how their choices influence the results.

Proportional representation (PR) is another voting method increasingly discussed. Despite growing interest, there has been little research on how to design voting materials specific to PR that voters can easily understand. To inform the field, we prototyped ballot designs for PR from those used abroad and tested them with voters to examine what design elements help voters understand PR most easily.

Together, we continue to lead the field on implementing, communicating, and preparing for emerging voting methods, so that voters can participate confidently regardless of which voting method is in use where they live.

Improving the physical design of polling places

Clear, consistent signage helps voters navigate polling places with confidence and allows poll workers to focus on assisting those who need it most. This year, we launched the Polling Place Signage Toolkit so that election offices can produce bilingual signs and place them to improve flow and reduce voter confusion at the polling place.

We also partnered with the Engineering for Democracy Institute at the University of Rhode Island to pilot **how to use virtual reality (VR) to improve polling place design**. By creating a 3D polling place model in VR, complete with voting booths, furniture, and signage from our CCD toolkits, we could usability-test physical layouts much more efficiently.
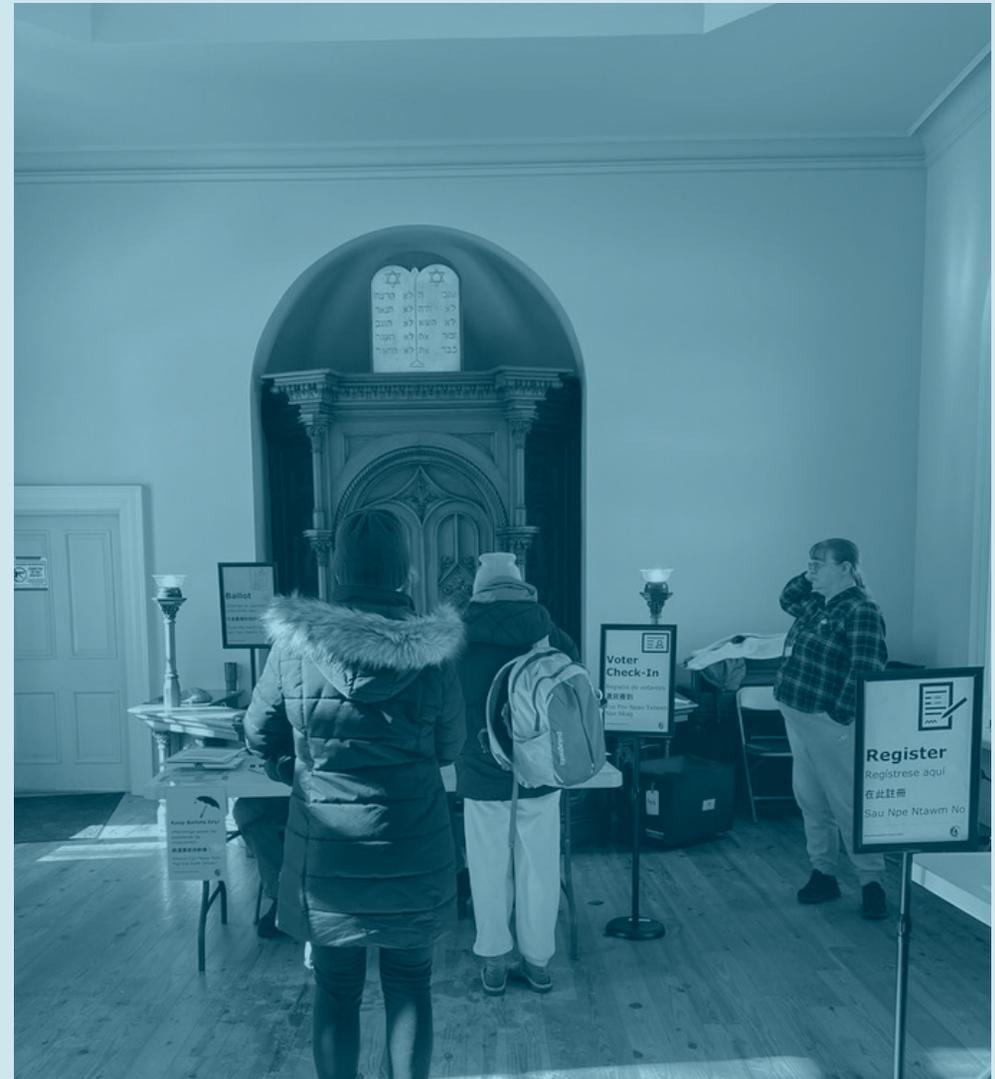
Plain language makes a difference

Plain language makes comprehension easier regardless of your language ability. This year, we continued to embed plain language principles in all of our work, helping more voters understand and act with confidence.

In Nevada, we supported the Secretary of State to rewrite 26 standard notices for voters, creating examples and a style guide to keep future messages consistent and accessible. We also reviewed, updated, and taught election offices in Maryland and North Carolina on their poll worker training manuals and job aids, so that poll workers can receive clear instructions during training and confidently assist voters.

In addition to confusing layouts, unclear text instructions on forms and envelopes also cause voters to make mistakes. We continued to develop best practices on form and envelope design (especially for vote by mail) to reduce cure rates in Rhode Island, Vermont, and Louisiana.

At a time when voter ID requirements are being updated across many states, we're advising states on how to communicate these changes effectively with voters through partnerships with the Institute for Responsive Government and VoteRiders.

We also participated in the Center for Election Innovation & Research workshop on signature verification, so that our design helps voters complete vote by mail materials successfully.

Better forms and notices are not a solution unique within elections, and we're applying civic design best practices to make every interaction with government easy, effective, and pleasant. As part of Plain Language Association International, we also participated in international efforts to codify plain language standards beyond English.

Supporting election offices with innovative policy implementation

Election officials often have to implement new policies that change election administration procedures on short notice, especially during fast-paced election cycles. This year, we supported election offices through a mix of rapid response and advisory work on implementation through our growing partnerships.

Often in collaboration with the Institute for Responsive Government, we supported states like Oregon, Nevada, and New Mexico with improving AVR, effectively registering upward of 97–99% of eligible voters during their DMV visits. AVR makes possible millions of new and updated registrations while saving offices significant time and resources. We continue to partner with organizations like The Elections Group, the Center for Tech and Civic Life, and the Partnership for Large Election Jurisdictions to support hundreds of election jurisdictions across the country, ensuring that voting by mail is safe and secure.

We also conducted cutting-edge research to advise election offices on how to implement emerging policies and laws, such as Arizona and Nevada's documentary proof of citizenship requirements. Alongside partners like the Brennan Center for Justice, we also contributed our expertise in public comments before the U.S. Election Assistance Commission (EAC).

With voting systems now being certified to EAC's Voluntary Voting System Guidelines 2.0, we returned to Pennsylvania as the accessible voting technical experts for their voting system certification testing.

Introducing best practices

Bridging design and technical skills

Election officials have many priorities: they must manage budgets and workloads during election cycles and communicate procedures confidently amidst changing voter expectations. This year, we focused on leveling up the tools and training that support them.

From building accessible forms, creating bilingual voter materials, and designing toolkits and templates, we're equipping election offices to put good design into action. Alongside direct support, we're training offices and aspiring election officials in civic design skills. We also updated and expanded many toolkits to reflect new insights from the field and to respond to emerging needs for clear, trustworthy information before 2026.

Bridging the tech gap to build accessible PDF forms

Teaching the skills that scale

Bridging the tech gap to build accessible PDF forms

Producing accessible PDF forms requires both design and technical abilities, something few resources teach together. We created a new step-by-step guide to fill that gap, bringing InDesign and accessibility best practices into one clear workflow. The toolkit helps election offices and civic designers build forms that work seamlessly with assistive technology while maintaining visual clarity and usability.

By bridging this technical divide, **we're making it easier for election offices to create forms that meet accessibility standards from the start**, avoiding time-consuming retrofit later, and ensuring a better form experience for both the election officials who make the forms and the voters who use them. We taught these skills at FormFest, a global conference with over 2,000 government decision-makers, designers and civic tech professionals in attendance.

Dept of Health and Human Services
PO Box 12345, City, ST 00000-0000

Month DD, YYYY
Name
Address
Address

If you need help reading or understanding this notice, contact the Customer Service Line at **1-xxx-275-3447 (1-xxx-ASK DHHS).**

Tiene un nuevo requisito para su cobertura de Medicaid
Tiene preguntas? También puede solicitar servicios gratuitos de un intérprete. Llama al **1-xxx-275-3447 (1-xxx-ASK DHHS)**.

You have a new requirement for your Medicaid coverage
Your Medicaid insurance through the State Advantage Health Care Program requires you to complete **100 hours** of Community Engagement activities each month.

➔ **Your status is: Mandatory Community Engagement**

Your status is based on the eligibility information you have provided:

➔ 10 hours of one activity
➔ 25 hours of another activity
➔ 35 total hours
➔ **You need 65 more hours to meet the requirement**

These hours will be automatically counted each month as long as the information remains valid.

Your next steps
To keep your Medicaid coverage, you must complete 100 hours of Community Engagement activities each month. To update or correct your information, call **1-xxx-275-3447 (1-xxx-ASK DHHS).**

You have up to **75 days from the date of this letter** to request an exemption or to start qualifying activities.

What counts as Community Engagement?
Community Engagement activities include work, school, volunteering, job training, and more. See the enclosed *Things You Need to Know* for a full list of activities that qualify for your Community Engagement requirement.

Who can request an exemption from Community Engagement?
You can request an exemption for several reasons, including if you:
- Have a disability
- Are pregnant
- Are the parent or caretaker for a child under the age of 6
- Are medically frail (as certified by a licensed medical professional)
- Are enrolled in a state-certified drug court program

See the enclosed *Things You Need to Know* for a full list of exemptions.

You can find more information about the Community Engagement requirements at www.dhhs.st.gov/eligibility

Our redesign of New Hampshire's Medicaid work requirements form was featured on Don Moynihan's Substack, Can We Still Govern?

Teaching the skills that scale

Besides supporting individual election offices, we continue to focus on building the capabilities of election officials, designers, and educators to create voter-centered systems that last. We have expanded training in accessibility and usability, embedding these skills directly into our work with election officials. Training is now a core component of our direct support for election offices, enabling them to maintain and update their own materials over time.

We also continued to lead **popular workshops on form design, ballot clarity, and accessible websites** across the country, in election offices, national conferences and to community organizations.

We're also shaping the next generation of election professionals. We taught an innovative course on Election Design at the University of Minnesota. Our team also collaborated with students and educators through Harvard Law School's Legal Innovation through Design Thinking course and Princeton University's Public Policy Lab, where civic design principles shaped class projects on topics from Medicaid work requirements to Oregon's public health communications. By teaching future administrators and setting standards, we're building a pathway for the next generation of leaders in election administration.

Through investing in education and training at every level, from classrooms to conferences to county offices, we're scaling civic design in a way that lasts.

In Portland, Oregon, we trained election staff on usability testing for effective RCV voter education and outreach material.

Expanding civic design resources for a successful election year

2026 brings another midterm election year with new election rules in over half the states. With primary elections from March to September and a hotly contested general election, it's going to be a wild ride.

We're building on our nationally recognized best practices to take significant leaps in election transparency, encourage greater participation, and foster voter trust.

Reimagining elections
Anticipating and meeting election administration challenges

New voter registration and voter ID rules will mean more provisional voting. We're creating a toolkit to train poll workers and support voters in completing the process and forms confidently and accurately.

These new rules also increase the need for clear, timely communication, whether voters are updating their registration or tracking their ballot. We'll help with a library of templates for forms and notices.

We will also be ready to support election offices facing new requirements on tight deadlines, with our library of tools and resources from the nonpartisan U.S. Alliance for Election Excellence.

Inviting participation
Creating coordinated, consistent, community-focused voter education

To help election offices and community groups connect with voters—especially those in hard-to-reach communities—we're developing outreach materials that address sudden communication problems with a calm, strategic voice. We're expanding our body of knowledge on effective voter information to include ways to tell stories with election data dashboards, making decisions about style and tone, and strategies for reassuring voters when the unexpected happens.

Supporting innovation
Exploring and implementing new policies effectively

As democracy's innovation lab, we're nationally recognized as experts in implementing new election reforms and introducing them to voters. We collaborate with both election offices and advocates to incorporate civic design principles into ideas that aim to expand democracy. We are continuing our research into accessible, plain-language approaches that make new voting methods or unfamiliar scenarios easier for voters to understand.

Introducing best practices
Creating resources that meet the moment

In the midst of a demanding election year, officials and community groups need fast, reliable support when a communication challenge emerges. Drawing on our best work from over a decade of experience, we'll introduce guidance, tools, and best practices that respond to just-in-time needs with calm and reassuring civic design.

We will continue to innovate new ways to help election offices tell clear, compelling, and effective stories about election procedures and data. Together, we'll deliver consistent, accessible communication when voters need it most.

Press

This year, we continued to introduce civic design and voter education to the general public. The coverage of our work reflects that emphasis.

LAist and **Fact Check AFP** referenced our vote by mail envelope design standards to dispel misinformation during California's special election.

"The two holes [on the envelope are] an aid for visually impaired voters... [They also] help election workers ensure they are counting all ballots."

After supporting Multnomah County, OR, with implementing its first ranked choice voting election, **the County Board praised our guidance** on voter outreach and engagement as an exemplary partnership for election offices.

The Fulcrum highlighted our best practices for creating effective and inclusive voter guides, in a roundup of tactics to bring our democracy back from the edge.

Government Technology featured our guidance for producing accessible PDFs at FormFest.

"Testing forms with a screen reader can reveal challenges specific to the user experience... Accessibility is delicate; it doesn't take much for somebody's experience to get completely derailed."
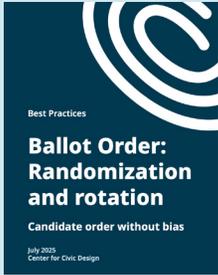

Louisiana Illuminator featured our vote by mail envelope redesign.

Projects

We engage with elections at the local, state, and national levels to tackle a wide range of challenges. Our work spans multiple aspects of the electoral process, always with the goal of expanding voter participation.

Tools

Ballot order: Randomization and rotation
Best practices for producing randomness in the ballot order to eliminate bias

📺 civicdesign.org/tools/ballot-order-randomization-and-rotation/

Creating accessible forms for print and PDF
Toolkit for election offices to build accessible forms in InDesign

📺 civicdesign.org/tools/creating-accessible-forms-for-print-and-pdf/

Designing election websites
Best practices for election website design and content so that all voters can easily locate information they need to vote confidently
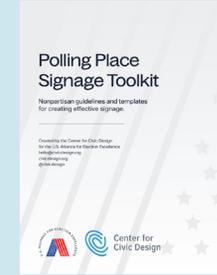
📺 civicdesign.org/tools/designing-election-websites/

Setting goals in election operations
Toolkit to guide election offices from post-election debrief to planning actionable improvements in the next election

📺 civicdesign.org/tools/setting-goals-in-election-operations/

Polling signage
Signage guidelines and ready-to-use templates that make polling places easy to navigate

📺 civicdesign.org/tools/polling-place-signage-toolkit/

Public audit sign templates
Customizable signs to guide staff, observers, and the public during a hand count audit

📺 civicdesign.org/tools/public-audit-sign-plan/

Research

Accessibility form experience
Research on the experience of people who use screen readers for PDF forms, so that we could update our toolkit for creating accessible forms

Accessibility and voting technology
Research with Rutgers University and the US Election Assistance Commission on the barriers people with disabilities face when voting and how improvements in assistive technologies impact their experience

Ballot design for proportional representation
Research on how to best design ballots so voters can understand proportional representation

Disability and voting research
Partnering with Rutgers University and the National Disability Rights Network to recommend practical solutions for improving access for voters with disabilities

How to display results for multi-winner RCV elections
Research on how to best present election results for multi-winner RCV elections to ensure voter trust and transparency

🖥 civicdesign.org/reports/multi-winner-ranked-choice-voting-elections/

Poll workers: The face of elections
An experiential research project on the polling place, where the CCD team served as poll workers on election day in 2024

🖥 civicdesign.org/reports/poll-workers-the-face-of-elections/

Small but mighty cities
Research on how civic innovations like participatory budgeting can empower engagement in smaller cities

🖥 civicdesign.org/reports/podcast-small-but-mighty-cities/

Voting in virtual reality
Partnership with Engineering for Democracy Institute to simulate polling place design and voter wayfinding using VR technologies

🖥 civicdesign.org/reports/voting-in-vr/

Running elections

Arizona
Voter registration form updates

California
A nonpartisan voter messaging toolkit about ballot returns

🖥 bit.ly/ToolkitCAProp50

Colorado
Voter registration form updates

Boulder: Vote by mail instruction updates

Connecticut
Educational resources about the local government structure of each town to encourage civic engagement

ERIC
Supported the Electronic Registration Information Center with refreshing its communication strategy and collaterals

Louisiana
UOCAVA vote by mail envelope redesigns

Maryland
Usability reviews, testing, and updates to ballot request forms, manuals, and documents

Michigan
Continued supporting the design, update, and strategy for the Michigan Voting Dashboard

🖥 michigan.gov/votingdashboard

Updated voter notices

Oregon
Consulted on the online voter registration updates with plain language and UX

Portland: Trained election staff on usability testing for developing effective outreach materials for RCV

Minnesota
Taught a course on election design principles for the University of Minnesota

Nevada
Redesigned voter registration forms and updated texts for voter notices

New Mexico
Consulted on statewide voter registration process improvements

New Jersey
Bergen County: Consulted on website refresh

New York

Supported the New York State Public Campaign Finance Board on plain language summaries of regulations

Supported the New York City Campaign Finance Board with testing its outreach messaging and strategy about the matching funds program in multilingual communities

North Carolina

Mecklenburg County: Poll worker manual review

Pennsylvania

Examined voting systems for accessibility standards

RCV Civic Roundtable for election officials

Organize and moderate an online community for election officials to facilitate knowledge and resource sharing

Rhode Island

Redesigned vote by mail materials and voter list maintenance mailers

South Carolina

Charleston County: Designed strategy and materials to communicate accessibility support options at the polling place to voters

South Dakota

Voter registration and vote by mail forms redesign

Texas

Collaborated with 16 community organizations (convened by the Houston Endowment) to develop trusted election information in multiple languages used in the community

civicdesign.org/tools/bilingual-design-guide-for-voter-education/

U.S. Alliance for Election Excellence

Served as subject matter experts to election officials on standards for election excellence, including voter communications, plain language, and information design

Utah

Vote by mail envelope updates

Training for election officials on core civic design skills

Vermont

Voter registration form and vote by mail envelope updates

Virginia

Charlottesville: Consulted on RCV voter education materials

VoteRiders

Update VoteRides' Voter ID Information Cards to communicate voting ID policy changes

Washington

Served on the Uniform Ballot Envelope Design Workgroup

King County: Co-designed a multilingual usability test on RCV materials in 7 languages and supported the office in running the test

Funders and partners

Project partners

Our partnerships make our work stronger.

- Article IV
- Asian Law Caucus
- Brennan Center for Justice
- Common Cause California
- Democracy Rising
- Disability Rights California
- Election Trust Initiative
- Electronic Registration Information Center
- Engineering for Democracy Institute, University of Rhode Island
- FairVote
- Fenton
- Harvard Law School
- Hubert H. Humphrey School of Public Affairs, University of Minnesota
- John Glenn College of Public Affairs, The Ohio State University
- League of Women Voters of California
- National Disability Rights Network
- National Institute of Standards and Technology
- New York City Campaign Finance Board
- New York State Public Campaign Finance Board
- Olene S. Walker Institute of Politics & Public Service, Weber State University
- Program for Disability Research, Rutgers University
- Ranked Choice Virginia
- Ranked Choice Voting Resource Center
- Resilient Elections Network
- The Elections Group
- U.S. Alliance for Election Excellence
- U.S. Election Assistance Commission
- VoteRiders

Election offices

We want to thank the election officials who we have partnered with and learned from this year.

States elections offices in

- Arizona
- California
- Colorado
- District of Columbia
- Connecticut
- Louisiana
- Maryland
- Michigan
- Nevada
- New Mexico
- Oregon
- Pennsylvania
- Rhode Island
- South Dakota
- Texas
- Utah
- Vermont
- Washington

Election administrators in

- Bergen County, NJ
- Boulder, CO
- Charleston County, SC
- Charlottesville, VA
- Humboldt County, CA
- King County, WA
- Mecklenburg County, NC
- Multnomah County, OR
- Portland, OR

Election associations

- California Association of Clerks and Election Officials
- Ohio Association of Election Officials
- Partnership for Large Election Jurisdictions
- Utah VOTE

Funders

We are grateful for the support of foundations and individual donors.

- Bernard and Anne Spitzer Charitable Trust
- Center for Tech and Civic Life
- Democracy Fund
- Hopewell Fund - Civic (Re)Solve
- Houston Endowment
- Institute for Responsive Government
- John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation
- Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors
- William and Flora Hewlett Foundation

Community partners

Community partnerships are an essential part of our work. This year, we completed a multi-year collaboration with community groups in the Houston, Texas, metro area. Together, we produced a guide on how to create bilingual design materials for voter education. You can find a full list of community partners from Houston there and in our 2024 Annual Report.

And thank you to all of the voters who took part in usability testing and other research.

Our team and leadership

The CCD team during our last meeting of 2025

CCD Staff

Allyson Gill
Christopher Patten
Croix Stone
Emma Werowinski
Evie Lacroix
Fernando Sánchez
Isabelle Yisak
Kimberly Gail Loseñara
Leeron Hoory

Lynn Baumeister
Misty Crooks
Randy Hadzor
Sean Isamu Johnson
Sean Wang
Tasmin Swanson
Teallary Williams
Whitney Quesenbery

Our new Executive Director

Sean Wang became CCD's new Executive Director in September 2025. Sean first joined CCD in 2024 as Deputy Director, bringing nonprofit development and operations leadership to the team. As Executive Director, Sean continues to lead CCD's development and external communications while working closely with our Board of Directors to guide our day-to-day operations.

"I'm honored to step up as CCD's next Executive Director. Together with our partners, we will continue to build best practices and support election heroes nationwide, so that every voter feels invited to participate in our democracy," said Sean.

A new role for our co-founder

Whitney Quesenbery, CCD's co-founder, has stepped into the new role of Chief Program Officer. A nationally recognized expert in civic design and elections, Whitney partners with Sean to shape our vision for CCD's programs and oversee our civic design research.

"Seeing the organization grow from just a few of us has been extremely rewarding. I am confident that with Sean as Executive Director, CCD will keep pushing the field forward with the same creativity and impact that's always been at our core," Whitney said.

About the Center for Civic Design

We strive to make every interaction with the government easy, effective, and pleasant. We work with elections offices, democracy advocates, and civic engagement organizations to make elections easier to run, support innovation, and invite participation in elections. From our practical experience and applied research, we share best practices for civic design and our core skills of plain language, accessibility, information design, and civic research.

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Center for Civic Design