NEW IN
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Your guide to being an engaged member of the St. Louis community, brought to you by the Gephardt Institute for Civic and Community Engagement

Hello!

WELCOME TO WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY IN ST. LOUIS!

We're so glad you're here. St. Louis is a vibrant region with many stories and places to explore.

We hope you take the time to learn about our community and build relationships with residents from all walks of life. Whether you've been here your whole life or are in St. Louis for the first time, and whether you're a first-year student or a PhD candidate, this guide is a resource as you navigate your surroundings and engage in our community.

So, use this booklet for reflection, to find places to get started, to discover opportunities for civic action, and to take notes as you explore the region and as your St. Louis engagement evolves and grows. And remember, the Gephardt Institute for Civic and Community Engagement is a resource for you along the way.

Now, let's explore!

Historic Stix House, at 6470 Forsyth, is the home of the Gephardt Institute for Civic and Community Engagement. You're welcome to drop in or attend one of the weekly conversation events to get connected, seek guidance on engaging with civic and community issues, meet other civic-minded people, or just to find out what the Gephardt Institute is all about!

## About the Gephardt Institute for Civic and Community Engagement

We invite you to imagine our shared civic future.

The Gephardt Institute for Civic and Community Engagement fosters a vibrant culture of civic engagement throughout Washington University by catalyzing student learning, participation, and impact in civic life.

Established in 2005, the Gephardt Institute builds mutually beneficial partnerships with the St. Louis community, creates civic engagement opportunities for students, and prepares them to lead change wherever they live and work.

Civic Engagement Values

- Inquiry
- Empathy
- Integrity
- Collaboration
- Equity
- Action
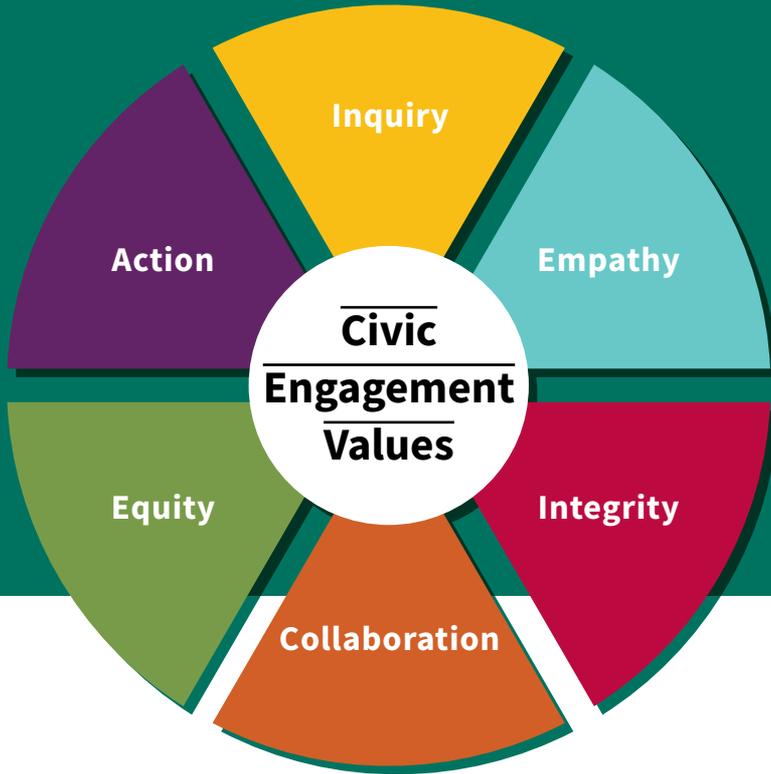
Mutually beneficial engagement in a community doesn't start—or end—with action. It's vitally important that civic engagement begins with inquiry and empathy before arriving at action, and then ensuring those actions align with the other five values at every stage. Although each value can function independently, they are intentionally organized here as a continuous cycle—mirroring the process of engagement.

What issues are important to you?

Who are your communities?

How would you like to impact them?

Regional Fast Facts

Did you know St. Louis City operates as its own county?

The city's population is about 300,000 people, and the whole metropolitan area totals about 2.8 million people.

There are 91 different municipalities in the metropolitan area, each with their own laws and challenges.

These dynamics create benefits, but also challenges that include racial, education, and wealth inequity.
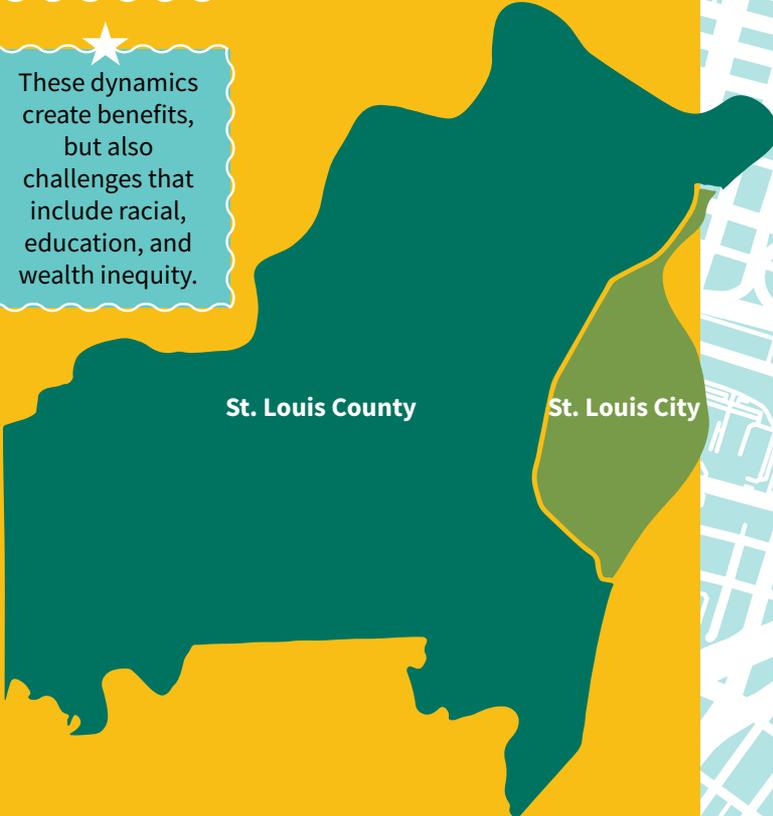
St. Louis County

St. Louis City

Considering Place

Context is a critical component to making sense of our environment. When we think about St. Louis, we need to consider the history, the culture, the experiences of people who live here, and the stories of people who once lived here.

There are many different experiences with, and countless narratives about, St. Louis. While there is no way of holding all of its histories and complexities, there are ways to deepen and strengthen our understanding.

St. Louis to me is…
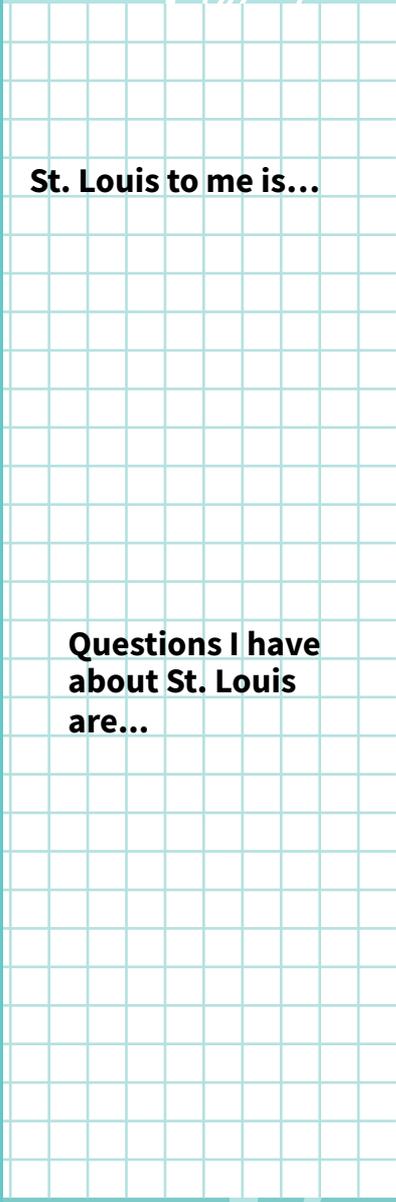
Questions I have about St. Louis are…

Resources to begin exploring St. Louis

Consider visiting...
places that tell stories about St. Louis, like the Missouri History Museum, the Historical Old Courthouse, Pillars of the Valley at CITYPARK, or the Griot Museum of Black History.

Consider listening to...
St. Louis Public Radio and podcasts like *We Live Here*, *Under the Arch*, and *The Gateway*.

Consider reading...
local publications like the *St. Louis American*, *Riverfront Times,* *St. Louis Post-Dispatch,* and *Humans of St. Louis*.

Did you know?
Most neighborhoods have a local neighborhood organization. If you live off-campus, you can look up yours:
STL City: **stlouis-mo.gov**
Clayton: **claytonmo.gov**
University City: **ucitymo.org**

What's a resource YOU recommend to learn more about St. Louis? Tell us!

My list of resources to explore

-
-
-
-
-

So... What Is Community Engagement?

☐ Relationship-based

☐ Connected to a place and context

☐ About partnership and collaboration

☐ Focused on community needs and priorities

☑ All of the above

You may have done community service in the past; volunteerism is just one form of community engagement.
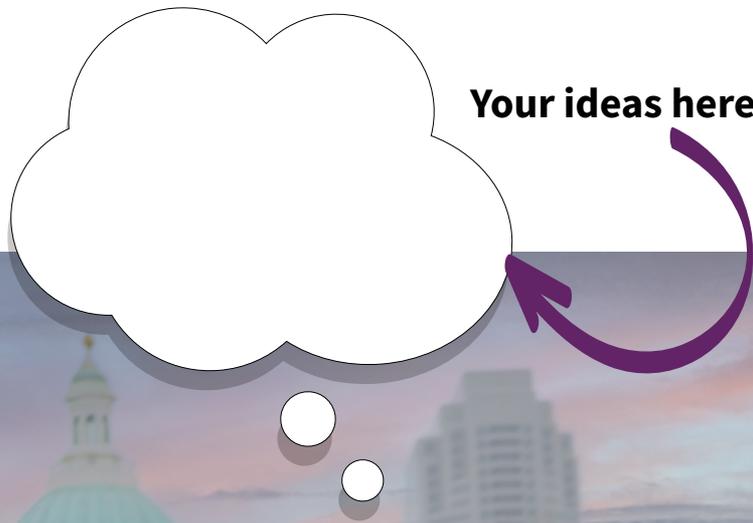
I'm curious about...

A skill I offer is...

A concern I have is...

In order to engage, I need...

Find the Right Opportunity for You

There are many ways to find opportunities for civic and community engagement at WashU and in the St. Louis region, including one-time or ongoing volunteer needs, learning resources, and co-curricular activities:

Sign up for the Gephardt Opportunities Newsletter to receive weekly opportunities straight to your inbox

Connect with campus offices like Campus Y or join a student group focused on community engagement, social action, or politics

Attend weekly civic dialogue events, such as Civic Café on Tuesdays and Food for Thought on Wednesdays

Stop by Gephardt Institute's drop-in hours for insight on civic and community engagement events and support

Everything above, and so much more, is included in our weekly Opportunities newsletter. Scan the code to sign up, and follow us on Instagram for all the latest!

@gephardtinstitute

Civic and Community Engaged Student Groups

Did you know that there are nearly 200 student groups at WashU involved with civic and community engagement? Joining a student group is a great way to deepen your engagement in subject areas that matter to you. Plus, it's a convenient way to meet peers who share a common interest.

To find a full list of civically engaged student groups, visit WUGO (Washington University Student Group Organizer) at wugo.wustl.edu.

More Ways to Engage St. Louis

The Gephardt Institute offers many programs and resources to help you engage St. Louis while at WashU. If you're not sure how or where to get started, then let us help you navigate your civic journey. Visit us during drop-in hours each week or contact us online. Remember: We're here to help you!

Civic Action Week

This weeklong initiative, held each fall, highlights civic engagement opportunities throughout WashU. All week across campus, WashU departments, students, and community partners will host events and other opportunities to engage.

Engage STL and Engage MO

Get the opportunity to explore St. Louis neighborhoods and Missouri communities with your classmates. These immersive trips include guided tours throughout the region and state to learn the history, traditions, challenges, and opportunities that shape our state and St. Louis community.

Civic Scholars and St. Louis Fellows

These Civic Leadership Programs support students in building their civic skills while learning from the community and in dialogue with their peers. Participants in both programs engage with neighborhoods, local leaders, and community events; intern with civic and nonprofit organizations (with stipends provided by the Gephardt Institute); and engage deeply with civic issues.

St. Louis Impact Fund

The Gephardt Institute offers grants for full-time undergraduate and graduate students to foster intentional community/university partnerships. With grants ranging from $500 to $10,000, the Gephardt Institute seeks to uplift mutually beneficial partnerships between students and St. Louis based organizations that advance regional priorities.

Civic Café

Civic Café is a weekly dinner and discussion event hosted every Tuesday night at Stix House. Students are invited to share a meal and dive deep into significant civic topics with community and campus experts. Come share your thoughts, connect with peers, and meet local civic leaders.

Community Engagement Workshops

Sign up or register your student group for training on Gephardt's Community Engagement Framework. The training is designed for student leaders and focuses on building sustainable partnerships, considering pitfalls of community engagement, and taking a strengths-based approach to community engagement.

✦ Participate in Our Democracy

Our democracy depends on engaged citizens who are informed, equipped with civic knowledge and skills, and compelled to take action. (Hint: that's you!) As Justice Sandra Day O'Connor said, "The practice of democracy is not passed down through the gene pool. It must be taught and learned anew by each generation of citizens." So, what does it mean to engage democracy?

- Advocacy efforts and community organizing
- Civic dialogue
- Collaborating with neighbors on a local level
- Improving information literacy skills
- Voting

When I hear the word 'democracy,' I feel...

WASHU VOTES

All Things Voting

WashU Votes is a Gephardt Institute-sponsored student group that coordinates voter registration, education, and turnout in all local and national election cycles. All students are welcome to join. For those who are eligible to vote in U.S. elections, it's good practice to update your registration address when you move to a new location, even to a new apartment in the same city. To register or update your voter registration, visit wustl.turbovote.com.

Some important voting reminders:

- Check and update your registration address if you plan to vote in Missouri.

- Ensure you have your passport or other Missouri-approved form of photo identification.

- Request an absentee ballot by the request deadline for the option to vote before Election Day in Missouri or your home state.

- Confirm when to send your absentee ballot to arrive in time to be counted. For more information on absentee voting in your state, visit Vote411.org or email us.

- Access free election-related postage that's available for WashU students at Stix House and in the South 40, Village, and Lofts mailrooms.

Visit gephardtinstitute.wustl.edu for more information about voting, or email washuvotes@wustl.edu with any questions.

There are countless ways to take civic action in St. Louis and to embrace this community as your home while at WashU. We hope this guide is a start to your engagement with our region, or wherever you live and work.

And no matter where you begin or focus your civic journey, the Gephardt Institute for Civic and Community Engagement is here for you.

Bring your questions to our drop-in hours, or contact us online for more information about how to get involved.

If you can believe it, there are even more resources available to you at WashU than there is space available to list here. Keep your eye out for the groups, programs, and resources that interest you.

More WashU resources to support your St. Louis engagement:

- Olin's Center for Experiential Learning
- Clark-Fox Policy Institute
- Institute for Public Health
- Danforth Center on Religion and Politics
- Public Service at WashULaw
- Skandalaris Center for Interdisciplinary Innovation and Entrepreneurship
- Social Policy Institute
- School of Medicine's Gateway Curriculum
- Sam Fox Office for Socially Engaged Practice

My Goals

My Notes

Connect with Gephardt

Gephardtinstitute.wustl.edu

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Washington
University in St.Louis

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