



Better Discourse

★ Listing of Bridge-Building & Civil Discourse Service Providers

[Better Discourse: A Guide for Bridging Campus Divides in Challenging Times](#) was created in an effort to quickly respond to campus needs to engage in better discourse for what many expect to be a continuously uncertain and potentially tumultuous 2024–2025 academic year. This is produced as part of the larger *Scaling Discourse in Higher Education Project*, supported by the Arthur Vining Davis Foundations.

Below, you can find a listing of national bridge-building and discourse service providers. We want to remind you that this is not a comprehensive list but rather a starting point. This list surely misses some providers, including organizations that are broadly focused on supporting institutions of higher education and may have a program devoted to dialogue and discourse, and especially those organizations doing this work outside the higher education landscape. Additionally, beyond these national providers, there may be local, state, and regional ones that can further support your institution's work. In the coming year, we will be collecting more information and fostering deeper partnerships with these and other national organizations in order to foster community campus cultures ripe for better discourse.

Braver Angels

[Braver Angels](#), launched in 2016, is leading the nation's largest cross-partisan, volunteer-led movement to bridge the partisan divide for the good of our democratic republic. By bringing Red and Blue Americans together into a working alliance, Braver Angels is building new ways to talk to one another, participate together in public life, and influence the direction of the nation. By creating opportunities for meaningful discussions, Braver Angels works to dial down the heated rhetoric that gets in the way of real conversations and an accurate understanding of our differences. The objective is not to push an agenda or change participant's minds but rather to provide a safe place for deeper understanding.

BridgeUSA

[BridgeUSA](#) is a bipartisan student movement that champions viewpoint diversity, responsible discourse, and a solution-oriented political culture. Its purpose is to build a community in which students from across the ideological spectrum can work together to understand—to bridge—the various perspectives behind the important political and social issues of our time.

Collaborative Discussion Project

[The Collaborative Discussion Project](#) is an ongoing experiment created by dialogue and deliberation experts, practitioners, and educators to explore these questions. The project includes 3 key components:

- A toolkit containing intentionally designed activities to teach collaborative discussion skills and mindsets.
- Trainings, workshops, webinars, and community of practice gatherings led by community members.
- Curated certificate programs for classrooms, communities, and workplaces.

College Debates and Discourse Alliance

[College Debates and Discourse Alliance](#) was founded in partnership with Braver Angels, the American Council of Trustees and Alumni, and BridgeUSA to teach students to honor ideological diversity, foster civil discourse on college campuses, and cultivate student and faculty leaders to carry the movement forward. These debates are not competitive or performative events separating speakers and audiences. They are immersive and highly participatory, inviting everyone in the room to express themselves freely in a collective search for truth. Conducted in a light parliamentary format and chaired by trained experts, they teach students to express their views, frame persuasive arguments, listen deeply, and engage respectfully around the most challenging political and social issues dividing our nation today.

Constructive Dialogue Institute

[The Constructive Dialogue Institute](#) (CDI) works with institutions across the education, for-profit, non-profit, and public sectors to help them communicate across differences and build inclusive cultures. CDI begins by developing educational tools based on cutting-edge behavioral science research. Then, it rigorously evaluates the effectiveness of its tools to iterate and improve them on an ongoing basis. It conducts original research to elevate the value of constructive dialogue and disseminate new insights to the public.

Essential Partners

Essential Partners (EP) believes that every community has the power to improve the way it approaches differences of values, views, and identities. For more than three decades, EP has helped civic groups, faith communities, colleges, and workplaces foster resilience, cohesion, understanding, and trust. They do this in several ways:

- By training stakeholders in their trademark approach
- Through long-term collaborations to shift community or institutional cultures
- By co-creating new proprietary programs and materials
- Through remote consultation and coaching
- By facilitating community dialogues about divisive topics

Everyday Democracy

Everyday Democracy builds capacity within individuals and groups working to strengthen local democracies through dialogue, engagement, and action with a racial equity lens. They provide facilitation, coaching, and tools to support truthful dialogue and deliberation, unleashing the power of community storytelling, remembrance, and reclamation to heal and transform our communities. Everyday Democracy is a capacity-building organization that provides technical assistance to individuals and groups working to build multiracial democracies within their local communities.

Greater Good Science Center

The Greater Good Science Center (GGSC) studies the psychology, sociology, and neuroscience of well-being and teaches skills that foster a thriving, resilient, and compassionate society. Based at the University of California, Berkeley, one of the world's leading institutions of research and higher education, the GGSC is unique in its commitment to both science and practice: Not only does the GGSC sponsor groundbreaking scientific research into social and emotional well-being, but it also helps people apply this research to their personal and professional lives.

Heterodox Academy

Heterodox Academy (HxA) is a nonpartisan, nonprofit membership organization of thousands of faculty, staff, and students committed to advancing the principles of open inquiry, viewpoint diversity, and constructive disagreement to improve higher education and academic research.

Institute for Citizens & Scholars

The Institute for Citizens & Scholars cultivates talent, ideas, and networks that develop young people into empowered, lifelong citizens. It believes today's young people are particularly poised to strengthen democracy now and for the long haul. It is cultivating a majority of young people to be civically well-informed, productively engaged, and committed to democracy. The Institute for Citizens & Scholars provides opportunities for faculty, senior administrators, and staff to increase their commitment, capacity, and comfort level for preparing students to engage in dialogue across difference.

Interfaith America

Interfaith America (IA) inspires, equips, and connects leaders and institutions to unlock the potential of America's religious diversity. Led by Founder and President Eboo Patel, Interfaith America inspires, equips, and connects leaders and institutions to unlock the potential of America's religious diversity. Utilizing a research-backed approach, IA works across higher education, racial equity, health, workplace, bridgebuilding, democracy, and technology. IA provides expert consultation, training, curricula, and resources to positively engage religious diversity. They value collaboration and developing robust institutional partnerships to leverage interfaith cooperation as a proven approach in solving challenges. Many IA initiatives are centered around bridge-building, dialogue, and discourse principles.

Living Room Conversations

Living Room Conversations (LRC) connects people within communities and across differences through dialogue to build trust and understanding. They believe belonging starts with conversation and are committed to designing the resources and opportunities that allow everyone to feel seen and heard while celebrating the differences that make us unique. LRC's four organizational pillars—respectful connection, open and curious of human experiences, building and supporting community, and fostering belonging and inclusion—help guide their work.

National Coalition for Dialogue & Deliberation

The National Coalition for Dialogue & Deliberation (NCDD) is a network of innovators who bring people together across divides to discuss, decide, and take action together effectively on today's toughest issues. NCDD serves as a gathering place, a resource center, a news source, and a facilitative leader for this vital community of practice. The NCDD website is a clearinghouse for literally thousands of resources and best practices, and their highly participatory national and regional conferences have brought together more than 3,000 practitioners, community leaders, public administrators, researchers, activists, teachers, and students since 2002.

National Issues Forums Institute

National Issues Forums Institute (NIFI) is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization that serves to promote public deliberation about difficult public issues. Its activities include publishing the issue guides and other materials used by local forum groups, encouraging collaboration among forum sponsors, and sharing information about current activities in the network. They also offer training opportunities and resources for moderating forums based on the National Issue Forums framework of deliberation.

Sustained Dialogue Institute

Sustained Dialogue Institute (SDI) is a capacity-building non-profit organization based in Washington, D.C. that helps people transform conflictual relationships and design change processes around the world. The organization teaches processes towards more equitable, less violent futures using a five-stage dialogue process for community building, diplomacy, peacemaking, conflict transformation, collaboration, and reconciliation. SDI defines dialogue as "listening deeply enough to be changed by what you learn." The Sustained Dialogue Campus Network is the campus-focused branch of their work, where thousands of students, faculty, and staff are trained each year to create dialogue-to-action initiatives.

The Better Arguments Project

The Better Arguments Project is a national civic initiative created to help bridge divides—not by papering over those divides but by helping people have better arguments. They partner with communities to bring principles of a better argument to practice. The Better Arguments Project is a collaboration by the Aspen Institute Citizenship and American Identity Program, Allstate, and Facing History and Ourselves.

The Discussion Project

The Discussion Project, designed at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, provides specialized professional learning courses to help you design and facilitate more engaging, inclusive, and intellectually rigorous discussion classrooms. The Discussion Project specializes in discussion pedagogy skill development.

Unify America

Unify America is a nonpartisan nonprofit on a mission to replace political fighting with problem-solving. They leverage technology and games to reduce political polarization and teach civic and problem-solving skills so Americans can work together to reach our shared goals. Founded in 2020, Unify America builds interactive experiences to teach and master critical civic skills across cultural, political, racial, geographic, and religious differences. Their interactive experiences help people bust out of their bubbles, build civic muscles, and work together to tackle our country's biggest challenges.

Understanding service provider audiences & resources available

To help you gain a better understanding of the landscape of bridge-building and civil discourse service providers, check out the following page to see the service providers featured on this list categorized by audience and resources offered.

This list was expanded and adapted from Interfaith America's [Bridgebuilding in Higher Education: A Landscape Analysis](#) Bridging Organizations Overview (Spring 2023).

| | Faculty | Senior Admin | Staff | Students | Community | Communities of Practice | Consulting Services | Courses or Programs of Study | Co-Curricular Activities | Course-based & Curricular Resources | Funding Opportunities | Issue Guides | Monitoring & Evaluation | Network | Reports & Whitepapers | Speaker's Bureau | Campus Chapters | Toolkits | Webinars | Workshops or Training |
|--|---------|--------------|-------|----------|-----------|-------------------------|---------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------------------|--------------|-------------------------|---------|-----------------------|------------------|-----------------|----------|----------|-----------------------|
| Braver Angels | x | x | x | x | x | | x | x | x | x | | | x | | x | | | | | x |
| BridgeUSA | x | x | | x | | | x | | | | | | x | | | x | | | | |
| Collaborative Discussion Project | x | | x | x | x | x | | x | x | x | | x | | | | | | x | | x |
| College Debates and Discourse Alliance | x | | x | x | | | | | x | x | | | | | | | | x | | |
| Constructive Dialogue Institute | x | | x | x | | x | x | | x | x | | x | | x | | | | x | x | x |
| Essential Partners | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | | x | x | x | | | | | x | x | x |
| Everyday Democracy | | | | | x | x | x | | | | | | x | | | | | | | x |
| Greater Good Science Center | x | | x | | | x | x | x | | | | | x | x | | | | x | | |
| Heterodox Academy | x | x | | | | x | x | x | | | | | x | x | x | | | | x | |
| Institute for Citizen and Scholars | x | x | x | x | | x | x | | | | | | | x | | | | | | |
| Interfaith America | x | x | x | x | x | | x | x | x | x | x | | x | x | | | | x | x | x |
| Living Room Conversations | x | | x | x | x | | x | | x | x | x | | | | | x | | x | | x |
| National Coalition for Dialogue & Deliberation | x | x | x | | x | | | | x | x | | x | | x | | | | | | x |
| National Issues Forum | x | | x | | | | | | x | x | x | | x | x | | | | x | | x |
| Sustained Dialogue Institute | x | x | x | x | | | x | x | | | | x | x | x | | x | | | | x |
| The Better Arguments Project | | | | | x | | | | x | x | | x | | x | | | | | x | x |
| The Discussion Project | x | x | x | | | | x | x | | x | | x | | | | | | | | x |
| Unify America | x | | x | x | x | | x | | x | x | | x | | | | x | | x | | x |

The information provided represents our understanding of the services and supports offered by each provider. Services may change frequently, so it is best to reach out directly to them for the most up-to-date information.

