

Citizens' Policy Juries



Citizens' juries convene panels of everyday people, who are randomly selected and representative, to help elected officials tackle tough policy questions.

Following a highly structured process, each panel conducts research, interviews experts and staff, deliberates on the reliability of facts, and recommends a course of action to decision-makers. Because the panel is a microcosm of the public – in terms of age, ethnicity, political party, gender, and other factors – its resulting report comes with an inherent legitimacy that sets it apart from conventional citizen committees.

Local governments in Canada, Australia, and across Europe regularly employ citizens' juries as public decision-making tools. In the US, Healthy Democracy uses a specialized, research-tested citizens' jury, called the Citizens' Initiative Review, to provide voters with trustworthy information about ballot measures. Oregon enshrined the CIR in law in 2011 and publishes CIR statements in the state's voters' pamphlet.

The Citizens' Jury Process



1. Study

Panelists become familiar with the process and the topic at hand.



2. Interview

Panelists question a wide variety of experts and gather additional info.



3. Deliberate

Panelists work in small groups to identify the most salient info and draft options.



4. Rank & Refine

Panelists prioritize options in multiple feedback loops and edit final report language.

Local Citizens' Jury Pilot

One or two local governments in Oregon will be selected for a special pilot project in 2019. Healthy Democracy will provide all aspects of the project, including design work, citizen outreach, professional facilitation, event coordination, and grant funding to support the pilot.

Potential pilot sites will have a well-defined but politically complex policy question, staff members who are available to collaborate on project design and logistics, and elected officials who are committed to taking the panel's results seriously.

