

**League of Women Voters Greater Cleveland and Office of Civic Engagement  
Facilitation Guide for Student Civic Engagement Dialogue**

**October 5, 2022**

**4:00 – 6:00 PM**

**Roberta Steinbacher Atrium**

This event is not an endorsement for any issue, candidate, or political party. It is meant to help participants identify actions they can take in support of issues that are important to them; understand what role local government plays in those issues; and how to work with local government.

Discussion Questions & Techniques

Each group will focus on a single issue as an example. Ideally participants will be part of a group that matches their interest, but if not, the same process can be applied to generate ideas for any issue.

Facilitators will have flip charts (or something else that the entire group can see and interact with). Participants will be provided with post-it notes and pens.

For each question, participants will write their answers on the post-it notes and place them on the flip chart. The facilitator will read each response out loud and give the participants the opportunity to clarify or elaborate on their response. Repeat this process for each set of questions.

We encourage facilitators to answer any questions they can and share relevant experience throughout the discussion.

At the end of the discussion the facilitator will summarize what the group thinks and record it on the flip chart. Suggestions for grouping responses include questions the group can't answer or need further research; actions the group thinks are constructive and why; actions the group thinks aren't effective and why; or points of disagreement.

The questions below should help kick off the conversation. Others can be added as the facilitators see fit.

1. How do you feel about this issue? What worries you about this issue? What would you like to see in a perfect world?
2. Are you doing anything to address this issue now, either personally, through another organization, or through a government entity? If you aren't doing anything, what is stopping you?
3. How do you think local government can help with this issue?

For the final part of this event, all participants will regroup, and facilitators will share the highlights of their group's conversation.

## Facilitation Tips

- Stay neutral - your role is to create conditions that enable a group to discuss, plan, & decide
- Pay attention to see if the group is repeating itself; if all members are participating, if the conversation is staying on track
- Explain what you see happening. Be factual and specific. "I see Michael and Jennifer both think that..."
- Summarize what is being said
- Check for agreement
- Use open-ended questions if the conversation seems to be getting stuck
- Use close-ended questions for summaries and reality checks
- Use flip charts to record the discussion
- Use "parking lot" for items that are off topic, need more time to flesh out; or for follow-ups after discussion

## **Ground Rules for Discussion**

| <b>OK</b>            | <b>NOT OK</b>    |
|----------------------|------------------|
| Disagree             | Interrupt        |
| Express your opinion | Personal attacks |
| Ask questions        | Name calling     |