
STRATEGIC PLAN 2017-2019

The National Constitution Center: A Unique and Essential Institution.

In America today, constitutional literacy and civic education are in a state of crisis. A third of Americans cannot name a single branch of government, and only a third can name all three branches. Moreover, at a time when populist forces on the left and the right are threatening constitutional principles around the world, this civic ignorance has grave consequences for our democracy. Citizens who have taken a class on civics or the U.S. Constitution are more likely to believe in protecting judges from popular calls for their removal in the face of unpopular rulings. Constitutional education, in other words, is crucial to creating informed citizens who are willing to preserve, protect, and defend the rights and liberties that define us as a free society.

At this moment, the National Constitution Center's mission is more urgent than ever. American democracy cannot survive both ignorant and free. For constitutional democracy to survive, citizens must know their rights and responsibilities, the sources of their liberties, and the history of the Founders' struggles to protect them.

The National Constitution Center plays a unique role in promoting constitutional education and civil dialogue in America. A private non-profit on Independence Mall in Philadelphia, the Constitution Center is the only institution in America established by Congress "to disseminate information about the United States Constitution on a non-partisan basis." Three years ago, we set out on an ambitious mission: "to be the national and international center for learning and debate about the meaning of the Constitution and the Bill of Rights." We framed this mission around three words, inspired by our congressional charter: Visit. Learn. Debate.

Three years later, we have established ourselves as a trusted source for balanced, nonpartisan content on the constitutional issues at the center of American life. As the **National Headquarters for Civic Education**, we have created the best nonpartisan Interactive Constitution on the web, co-sponsored by the heads of the conservative and libertarian Federalist Society and the progressive American Constitution Society, who have convened the leading scholars in America from all perspectives to write about every clause of the Constitution, describing areas of agreement and disagreement. The Interactive Constitution, called an "internet sensation" by *USA Today*, has already reached more than 6 million downloads since it launched in September 2015. As **America's Town Hall**, we have hosted debates and podcasts covering many critical issues and topics—from blockbuster Supreme

Court cases to constitutional issues in the news to key historical anniversaries—engaging hundreds of thousands of listeners and visitors each month. And as the **Museum of We the People** on Independence Mall, we have educated hundreds of thousands of citizens about the Constitution with our new gallery of rare founding documents, including one of the 12 surviving copies of the Bill of Rights. In short, we have established the National Constitution Center as America’s leading platform for constitutional education and debate, a convening space that brings together the best thinkers and arguments on all sides of key constitutional issues and allows citizens to explore, debate, and celebrate the greatest vision of human freedom in history, the U.S. Constitution.

Educating America: An Initiative for Constitutional Education

Over the next three years, the National Constitution Center will launch a new effort, “Educating America: An Initiative for Constitutional Education and Civil Dialogue.” We will expand our reach, restoring constitutional education to the center of American life and elevating civic discourse by hosting constitutional conversations on all media platforms across America. We will use state of the art technology – including video, audio, and animation – to create new platforms for constitutional education that will be accessible to all learners, from eight to eighty. And we will distribute our balanced, trusted content to visitors in Philadelphia and classrooms and mobile devices and other media platforms across America and around the world.

The centerpiece of this initiative will be our new Institute for Constitutional Studies—a hub within the National Constitution Center that will supervise the creation and distribution of all of our constitutional content, including the Interactive Constitution, a new video initiative for constitutional education, lesson plans for schools, our Town Hall Programs, and constitutional debates and exhibits in Philadelphia and around the country. As we adapt our content for new platforms and new audiences, the Institute will monitor it for quality and impartiality, ensuring that the Constitution Center remains the place for people of all perspectives to find balanced, nonpartisan answers to all constitutional questions.

The Institute will create new content that makes the Interactive Constitution accessible to all Americans and will supervise the distribution of the Interactive Constitution so that our balanced, trusted materials, lesson plans, debates, and constitutional conversations can educate every student in America. We will use video, music, and animation to create a Schoolhouse Rock for the Twenty-first century, a series of videos that educates all Americans about basic constitutional principles. Through a new partnership with Khan Academy, we will create a series of videos about the Bill Rights, the Structural Constitution, and landmark Supreme Court cases. We will promote civil dialogue in these polarized times, hosting programs that bring together the best thinkers on all sides of key constitutional issues to discuss the Constitution’s history and contemporary meaning. And, through our blog and podcasts, and new technologies such as Facebook Live, we will continue to bring together leading scholars

and thought leaders from across the ideological spectrum to address the crucial constitutional issues facing America.

In addition to creating new constitutional content that keeps the Interactive Constitution up-to-date and makes it accessible to all learners, the Institute will oversee the national distribution of our content to students across America, from eight to eighty. We will launch a mobile app and build a website that are state-of-the-art and user-friendly. We will convene a teacher's advisory board to supervise the creation of multiple, standards-aligned lesson plans that can be downloaded by teachers of all grade levels. And we will expand our partnership with distribution partners such as the College Board and collaborate with new partners capable of reaching millions of Americans with accessible and effective educational platforms.

Finally, we are committed to ensuring that the Museum of We the People remains a Philadelphia cultural treasure and a national leader in constitutional education, inspiring young people and visitors of all ages from Philadelphia, across the country, and around the world. We will create new educational experiences for school groups, integrating the Interactive Constitution into our live educational experiences with moderated conversations and interactive discussions for students. And we will also create fresh, constitutionally themed exhibits covering the Founding era—including a rotating display of priceless Founding-era documents—and the constitutional legacy of the Civil War and Reconstruction.

With this strategic plan, and our "Educating America" initiative, the National Constitution Center will help students and citizens understand the fundamental values enshrined in our nation's charter of freedom. In so doing, the Constitution Center will contribute to a constitutional awakening among Americans of all ages, kindling their willingness to celebrate the Constitution and the values it protects.

Headquarters for Civic Education

Our Strategic Goal: Learn

To increase constitutional literacy by educating Americans of all ages about America's Founding, the Constitution's history, and the core principles enshrined in our nation's charter, including the rule of law, the separation of powers, and American's enduring commitment to liberty and equal protection.

Key Programs:

1. Create an Institute for Constitutional Studies.

As the centerpiece of our new "Educating America" initiative, we will establish a new Institute for Constitutional Studies at the National Constitution Center. This Institute will serve as a hub within the Constitution Center, supervising the creation and distribution of all of our new constitutional content. It will expand the Interactive Constitution with new, accessible content and create lesson plans for schools. The Institute will integrate the Interactive Constitution into the rest of the Constitution Center's content and programming, establishing the Constitution Center as the place where people of all perspectives turn for balanced, nonpartisan answers to all constitutional questions.

2. Make the Interactive Constitution accessible to learners of all ages with video technology, new constitutional content and Standards-Aligned Lesson Plans.

To restore the Constitution to its rightful place at the center of American education, we will work to bring the Interactive Constitution to every student in America. We will make the Constitution accessible to learners of all ages by using video and animation to create a School House Rock for the Twenty-First Century. And with the help of a teacher's advisory board, we will develop lessons for middle and high school students that will inspire teachers across the country to use the Interactive Constitution in their classrooms.

3. Distribute the Interactive Constitution to Citizens and Classrooms Across America.

Finally, to broaden the Interactive Constitution's reach, we will develop partnerships with leading educational and media organizations throughout the country. To that end, we will look to expand our partnership with the College Board. We will work with Khan Academy to create its first series of videos about American history, which will be co-produced by the National Constitution Center. And we will explore and develop new partnerships with other education and media leaders, such as Disney, Amazon, Google, PBS, Curriki, EL Education, and Share My Lesson.

America's Town Hall

Our Strategic Goal: Debate

To restore civil dialogue in these polarized times by bringing together the best thinkers in America on all sides for conversations and debates about the Constitution's history, meaning, and contemporary relevance, including today's most pressing issues, from free speech to privacy to the role of executive power and the regulatory state.

Key Programs:

1. Expand our Reach as America's Town Hall by convening new groups of citizens and public officials for constitutional conversations in new formats

To elevate the American public's understanding of the Constitution and transform constitutional dialogue in America, our Town Hall programs and our weekly "We the People" podcasts will continue to feature constitutional debates and discussions that bring together the best thinkers from all sides of the constitutional questions at the center American life. We will expand our scope as a national convening space by bringing together ever-growing groups of public officials and citizens for constitutional conversation on a national and international scale.

2. Update the Interactive Constitution with blogs, podcasts, videos, and debates so it remains current and addresses cutting edge public issues at the center of American life.

To keep the interactive Constitution relevant to the lives of all Americans, we will add curated Town Hall content – from podcasts and blogs to historic materials such as Supreme Court cases and state constitutions – to the Interactive Constitution, so students of all ages can use the platform as a one-stop educational tool to access the best arguments on all sides of our contemporary constitutional debates.

3. Expand Digital Distribution of Town Hall Content Across All Media Platforms by Deploying Cutting Edge Technologies.

To build our national and international audience, we will expand our efforts to distribute our content digitally across all platforms. We deploy interactive technologies such as Facebook Live and Periscope to host real time discussions of constitutional issues that can be broadcast to students, citizens, and classrooms. We will also explore and expand our partnerships with America's leading broadcast media organizations to produce and distribute content associated with our Town Hall programs – including short videos and constitutional minutes.

The Museum of We the People

Our Strategic Goal: Visit

To make the Museum of We the People the leading place in America to learn about the Constitution by integrating the Interactive Constitution into the educational experience of all visitors, and developing exhibits on the Founding era and the constitutional legacy of the Civil War and Reconstruction.

Key Programs:

1. Integrate the Interactive Constitution Into the Museum Experience.

Our education and constitutional content teams will work together to integrate the Interactive Constitution into live educational experiences at the Constitution Center, including through moderated conversations and interactive demonstrations. These new experiences will allow us to combine the pedagogical expertise of our education team with the constitutional expertise of our content team and, in turn, bring the Interactive Constitution to life for student visitors.

2. Refresh the Museum's Core

To continue to inspire visitors of all ages, we will work to refresh the museum's core and improve the visitor experience. We will open a rotating display of priceless Founding-era documents. We will also look to raise funds to construct a new gallery that will tell the constitutional story of the Civil War and Reconstruction—our nation's "Second Founding." This new exhibit would teach visitors about this critical period through artifacts from the American Civil War Museum at Gettysburg and other priceless documents, including original copies of the the Thirteenth, Fourteenth, and Fifteenth Amendments.

3. Increase Group Sales and Earned Revenue.

Through a refreshed museum core, new exhibits, new Interactive Constitution demonstrations, and renewed outreach to independent schools, we will look to attract new school groups to the museum. And we will seek to increase earned revenue by exploring new revenue generating opportunities in food service and group sales.