

Eighth-grader Samantha Matzke facilitates a community discussion at a New Hampshire Listens event in Weare.



CIVIC HEALTH

Goal: Everyone in New Hampshire can participate meaningfully in community life and the democratic process and feel that they belong.

WHY IT MATTERS

Civic health — participation, belonging, trust, civility, and inclusion in democratic institutions — is the underpinning of healthy communities.

Civic health is not only about supporting reliable local journalism, or removing barriers to voting, or providing tools for civic dialogue across difference. It is also about fostering cooperation, social cohesion, sharing of resources, empathy, critical thinking, inclusion, welcoming public spaces, room for dissent and understanding of how our democratic systems work and why they matter.

While everyone has a stake in civic health, those who are most vulnerable (people with low incomes, immigrants, people of color, people with disabilities, LGBTQ+ people, youth) are the most likely to be harmed by eroding civic health.

New Hampshire has historically prided itself on a tradition of people coming together to solve shared problems. But we are becoming increasingly divided, trusting one another less, more segregated by class and subject to gerrymandered voting districts. Our legislature has passed restrictions on voting and laws that send the message to some Granite Staters that they do not belong. Teachers are getting mixed messages about whether they can teach the nuances and complexity of American history. Hate crimes have increased in the U.S. And many people who have come to this country to work hard, build better lives and contribute to community are now living in fear.

The imperative to address misinformation, polarization and other forces that threaten our democracy and civic health has never been more urgent.

BY THE NUMBERS

50

New Hampshire's rank for ease of voting, among all states.

83%

Percentage of New Hampshire 18-year-olds who, once they were registered to vote then followed through and voted in the 2022 midterms.

27.2%

Percentage of New Hampshire 18-year-olds who were registered to vote as of October 2024.

54.8%

Percentage of New Hampshire high school students who strongly agree or agree that in their community they feel like they matter to people.

Sources: 2022 Cost of Voting Index, The Civics Center, NH Youth Risk Behavior Survey, 2023

WHAT WE'RE DOING

The Foundation is supporting nonpartisan efforts to improve voting access and voter engagement; advocacy to support inclusive voting laws and policies; investigative reporting and local journalism; and efforts to help young people be heard and included in discussions and policy decisions that affect their lives.



Working to make sure eligible voters can vote

Grants are supporting nonprofits to engage in nonpartisan work pushing back against efforts that would restrict voting access; to help young people register to vote; and to plan for future efforts to advance participation and fair representation.



Promoting understanding and the importance of democracy

Support for **New Hampshire Public Radio's** award-winning Civics 101 podcast helps people in New Hampshire and across the nation understand the workings and importance of democratic institutions.



Supporting local news

Grant funding is helping the **Granite State News Collaborative** to ensure that news that is ethically and accurately reported is shared among news outlets across the state.



Helping young people engage

Investments in grassroots groups are helping young people to speak up, share what they care about, and participate meaningfully in our democracy.

SHORT-TERM GOALS

Given recent federal and state policy and budget actions, our focus for the next three to five years will be:

Help protect voting access and democratic participation

Invest in the ability of nonpartisan nonprofit organizations to respond to threats to democracy, to engage community, to educate people navigating new voting rules and to prevent further erosion of voting rights.

Support local news

Continue to support local news and investigative reporting, emphasizing collaboration and sharing of information across trusted outlets.

Respond to immediate needs

Listen to nonprofit partners and support their work to address evolving challenges and to push back against efforts to undermine inclusion and belonging.

Speak up for democracy

Use the Foundation's voice to speak on behalf of democratic norms, institutions and values.



Helping people engage in democracy

Grant funding helped support education about voter registration and the election process, in English and Spanish, to help new American citizens understand how to participate in democracy. Pictured: A voter-outreach meeting in Nashua.



LEARN MORE:

To learn more, scan the QR code or visit nhcf.org/civichealth

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT:

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ABOUT US

The New Hampshire Charitable Foundation is dedicated to making New Hampshire a more just, sustainable and vibrant community where everyone can thrive. As New Hampshire's statewide community foundation, we are the place where generosity meets the dedication and ingenuity of nonprofits and the potential of New Hampshire students. Since 1962, thousands of people have entrusted their charitable resources to the Foundation, creating a perpetual source of philanthropic capital. That generosity makes it possible for the Foundation to award more than \$70 million in grants and scholarships every year and collaborate and lead on high-impact initiatives.