

Fast Company Names *Citizen Solutions* as a World Changing Idea

The eighth annual awards honor new and inspiring solutions to the most daunting challenges of today

New York, May 14, 2024 – Today, [Citizen Solutions](#), a civic experiment that gives citizens across the ideological spectrum the power to co-create solutions to divisive issues, has been selected as part of Fast Company's [2024 World Changing Ideas Awards](#). [Starts With Us Builders](#), a nonprofit equipping citizens worldwide to overcome toxic polarization and solve our toughest problems, in partnership with [Convergence Center for Policy Resolution](#), designed *Citizen Solutions* to demonstrate that solutions, even to issues caught in hyper-partisan gridlock, are possible.

Selected by a panel of Fast Company editors and reporters, *Citizen Solutions* was named one of 11 finalists in the "Best World Changing Idea North America" category. Since [launching](#) in June 2023, this initiative has convened citizens with widely different points of views on issues such as gun rights and safety and abortion and family well-being to create consensus-based policy proposals.

In Tennessee, the "TN11" has already presented their [gun rights and safety proposals](#) to bipartisan lawmakers on a path to driving legislative change. In Wisconsin, the "WI14" proposals on abortion and family well-being are currently [open for public feedback](#), and more than 5,000 Wisconsinites have weighed in so far.

"In less than a year, eleven courageous Tennesseans, fourteen courageous Wisconsinites, and tens of thousands of citizens who gave feedback on their proposals have made *Citizen Solutions* a reality. This award is theirs," said Ashley Phillips, Head of Programs at Starts With Us Builders. "We look forward to supporting these citizens as they advance their solutions as well as any other citizens who want to bring this collaborative problem-solving process to their communities."

"I've been doing this work for a long time and am in awe of how much heart and thoughtfulness the ideologically diverse participants of *Citizens Solutions* brought with them to tackle exceptionally challenging topics. This work proves that problem solving across differences is possible, and we are honored to be a part of it," says seasoned consensus builder and Convergence CEO and President Mariah Levison.

Citizen Solutions was selected from a pool of more than 1,300 global entries and is [showcased](#) alongside pioneering organizations seeking to disrupt the status quo from AI, business, and technology to education, entertainment, politics, and health.

Says Brendan Vaughan, editor-in-chief of Fast Company, "It's endlessly inspiring to see how the world is coming together to devise inventive solutions to our most challenging problems. We need ideas from everywhere, and this year's World Changing Ideas Awards are an extraordinary encapsulation of the innovation and creativity that is so abundant around the globe."

Citizen Solutions arrives during the [biggest election year](#) in history to expose the hidden consensus that exists on our toughest issues and instill hope in citizens that solutions are possible. A poll conducted by Starts With Us Builders in partnership with [NORC at the University of Chicago](#) shows that citizens want this opportunity with 82% of Republicans and 80% of Democrats expressing their belief that it is important for citizens to be involved in finding solutions to the country's problems. Both sides, however, are skeptical that political leaders share this desire, with only 29% of Republicans and 27% of Democrats saying that addressing the needs of constituents is important to elected officials.

To learn more about *Citizen Solutions*, go to www.citizensolutions.us.

About Starts With Us Builders

[Starts With Us Builders](#) is a national, nonpartisan movement equipping Americans to overcome toxic polarization and extremist thinking to solve our toughest problems. Starts With Us Builders does this by illuminating the causes and effects of toxic polarization, demonstrating the power of citizens working together across lines of difference, and activating Americans from all walks of life with the skills to become more effective problem solvers. In addition to more than three million followers, Starts With Us Builders is supported by more than 250 ideologically diverse leaders across sectors from business, entertainment, academia, faith, sports, journalism, technology, and national defense. It is a project of Builders Network, Inc.

About Convergence Center for Policy Resolution

[Convergence](#) is the leading organization bridging divides to solve critical issues through collaborative problem-solving across ideological, political, and cultural divisions. Since 2009, Convergence has brought together leaders, doers, and experts to build trusting relationships, identify breakthrough solutions, and form unlikely alliances for constructive consensus-based change on seemingly intractable issues. Convergence's process is improving the lives of Americans and strengthening democracy for a more resilient and collaborative future. Learn more at www.ConvergencePolicy.org.

About the World Changing Idea Awards

World Changing Ideas is one of Fast Company's major annual awards programs and is focused on social good, seeking to elevate finished products and bold concepts that make the world better. Judges choose winners, finalists, and honorable mentions based on feasibility and the potential for impact. With the goals of awarding ingenuity and fostering innovation, Fast Company draws attention to ideas with great potential and helps them expand their reach to inspire more people to work on solving the problems that affect us all.

About Fast Company

Fast Company is the only media brand fully dedicated to the vital intersection of business, innovation, and design, engaging the most influential leaders, companies, and thinkers on the future of business. Headquartered in New York City, Fast Company is published by Mansueto Ventures LLC, along with our sister publication Inc., and can be found online at www.fastcompany.com.