

Build Where You Live

A Citizen Organizer's Quick Start Guide

How to start a neutral democratic assembly in your own community

1. The Principle: Democracy Begins with You

Every community already has the raw material of democracy: neighbors, challenges, and the shared desire for fairness.

You don't need permission — only process.

Where citizens gather with fairness and reason, self-government is reborn.

“Building where you live” means taking the principles of Democratic Neutrality — open inquiry, equal-value consent, and citizen accountability — and grounding them locally. It's how ideas become *institutions of trust*.

2. The Purpose: Local Neutral Assemblies

Each local assembly is a **neutral space for civic reasoning**, not a club, party, or protest group.

It exists to:

- Practice **reason over rivalry** on real local issues.
- **Document and deliver** citizen analysis to all representatives.
- Model **fairness and independence** in action, not just belief.

You're not forming a new faction — you're restoring the citizens' seat in government.

3. How to Start: Five Steps to Local Action

Step 1 — Find a Core Group (3–5 People)

Invite a few citizens who share one trait: *a commitment to fairness over faction*.

Avoid political labeling — you want *difference with goodwill*.

Meet once to define your first issue: something real, local, and solvable.

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Examples:

- “How should our county prioritize school funding?”
- “How do we make local development decisions fairer?”
- “How can our city ensure public meetings stay accessible and nonpartisan?”

Step 2 — Secure a Neutral Space

Choose a setting that feels civic, not political — libraries, churches, community centers, or even a living room.

Arrange seating in a circle, post visible rules of neutrality, and rotate facilitators.

(See *Building Neutral Space* for details.)

Neutral setting = neutral thinking.

Step 3 — Hold Your First Discussion

Keep it simple:

1. Frame the issue in **neutral, factual language**.
2. Use **The Mirror Test (EVCT Level 1)** to clear personal bias.
3. Discuss using **open inquiry** — all ideas tested, none defended.
4. Use **The Civic Test (EVCT Level 2)** to evaluate fairness.
5. Record findings and the *range* of support, not consensus.

This first session doesn’t need to solve anything — its purpose is to **prove neutrality works**.

Step 4 — Document and Deliver

Summarize your discussion in a **Citizen Analysis Package**:

- What was learned
- What citizens proposed

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- How support was distributed
- What questions remain

Deliver it to **all relevant representatives**, across parties, and post it publicly.

Request a written or public reply from politicians — that’s the accountability link.

Step 5 — Build Rhythm, Not Hierarchy

Meet regularly — even monthly — but resist the instinct to formalize too soon.

Growth comes from **credibility, not control**.

Let assemblies replicate organically.

Each group remains autonomous but guided by the same principles of neutrality, fairness, and consent.

A movement that governs itself by reason cannot be captured.

4. Common Roadblocks and How to Overcome Them

Roadblock	Why It Happens	How to Overcome It
<i>Fear of politics</i>	People associate civic work with partisanship.	Clarify that neutrality is not apathy — it’s higher fairness.
<i>Apathy or cynicism</i>	People feel their voice doesn’t matter.	Show how the assembly’s reports reach real officials.
<i>Dominant voices</i>	Old habits of debate resurface.	Rotate facilitators and apply EVCT Level 1 before discussion.
<i>Unclear purpose</i>	Citizens expect quick outcomes.	Emphasize that the process <i>is</i> the product — reasoning precedes policy.



5. The Spirit: From Thought to Action

Democracy doesn’t require unity of opinion — it requires unity of purpose. When citizens gather to reason together *without capture*, they restore the foundation of representation itself.

Build where you live, and democracy will rebuild itself around you.
Every assembly that forms is a piece of the republic made whole again.

Summary

Goal	Translate democratic philosophy into local action.
Key Rule	Start small, stay neutral, document reason.
Core Practice	Gather → Discuss → Record → Deliver → Repeat
Outcome	Independent local assemblies practicing fairness, accountability, and civic renewal.
