Our Mission
The Gephardt Institute fosters a vibrant culture of civic engagement throughout Washington University, realized by engaged citizens, scholarship, and partnerships that advance the collective good.

Our Vision
We envision civic health.
All people take responsibility to actively engage in the progress and vitality of their communities.

Our Context
Because Washington University is located in and responsible to St. Louis, the Gephardt Institute focuses on the St. Louis region. And, as the university’s reach spans from local to global, it is vital that we equip the Washington University community for life-long civic engagement at local, national, and international levels.

Our Values

Inquiry
We believe that humility, intellectual curiosity, and reasoning form the foundation of informed and responsible civic engagement.

Integrity
We believe that upholding ethical behavior, respecting others, and honoring commitments are cornerstones of trusting and reciprocal partnerships.

Empathy
We believe that seeking and considering multiple perspectives transforms how individuals and communities engage with one another.

Equity
We believe that our efforts should foster access, opportunity, and dignity for all, and should address structural and power imbalances.

Collaboration
We believe that partnerships are most impactful when rooted in shared goals and decision-making.

Action
We believe that effective civic engagement is an active process requiring courage, dedication, and participation.

Our Goals
- Educate students for life-long engaged citizenship
- Catalyze partnerships that respond to community needs and priorities
- Infuse civic engagement throughout the Washington University experience
Our Process

The Gephardt Institute’s strategic planning process lays the foundation to engage with the profound opportunities and pressing challenges before us. Central to this process has been clarity of purpose and strong guiding values that can support changes and growth in the coming years.

Through dialogue with over 250 students, faculty, staff, alumni, parents, community partners, and friends of the Gephardt Institute, we have defined a strategic framework to serve as a blueprint for our future that is adaptable to continuously changing environments within the university, St. Louis region, nation, and world. Our three priorities represent the first steps in an ongoing strategic planning process, and will be supplemented by future priorities through a dynamic and responsive strategic planning cycle.

For the next stage of our process, we will convene taskforces to recommend strategies, timelines, and key performance indicators for each strategic priority. We look forward to sharing our complete strategic plan with you by the end of 2019. We welcome your ideas and partnership as we work together to integrate civic engagement as a hallmark of Washington University and in our shared pursuit of civic health.

April 2019

Our Strategic Priorities

Academic Integration
Bolster resources for faculty and departments to integrate civic and community engagement into teaching and scholarship.

Effective Community Partnerships
Build the infrastructure to support university and regional organizations in developing and advancing effective community partnerships.

Pathways for All Students
Develop and foster pathways for civic engagement education and involvement for all Washington University students.

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