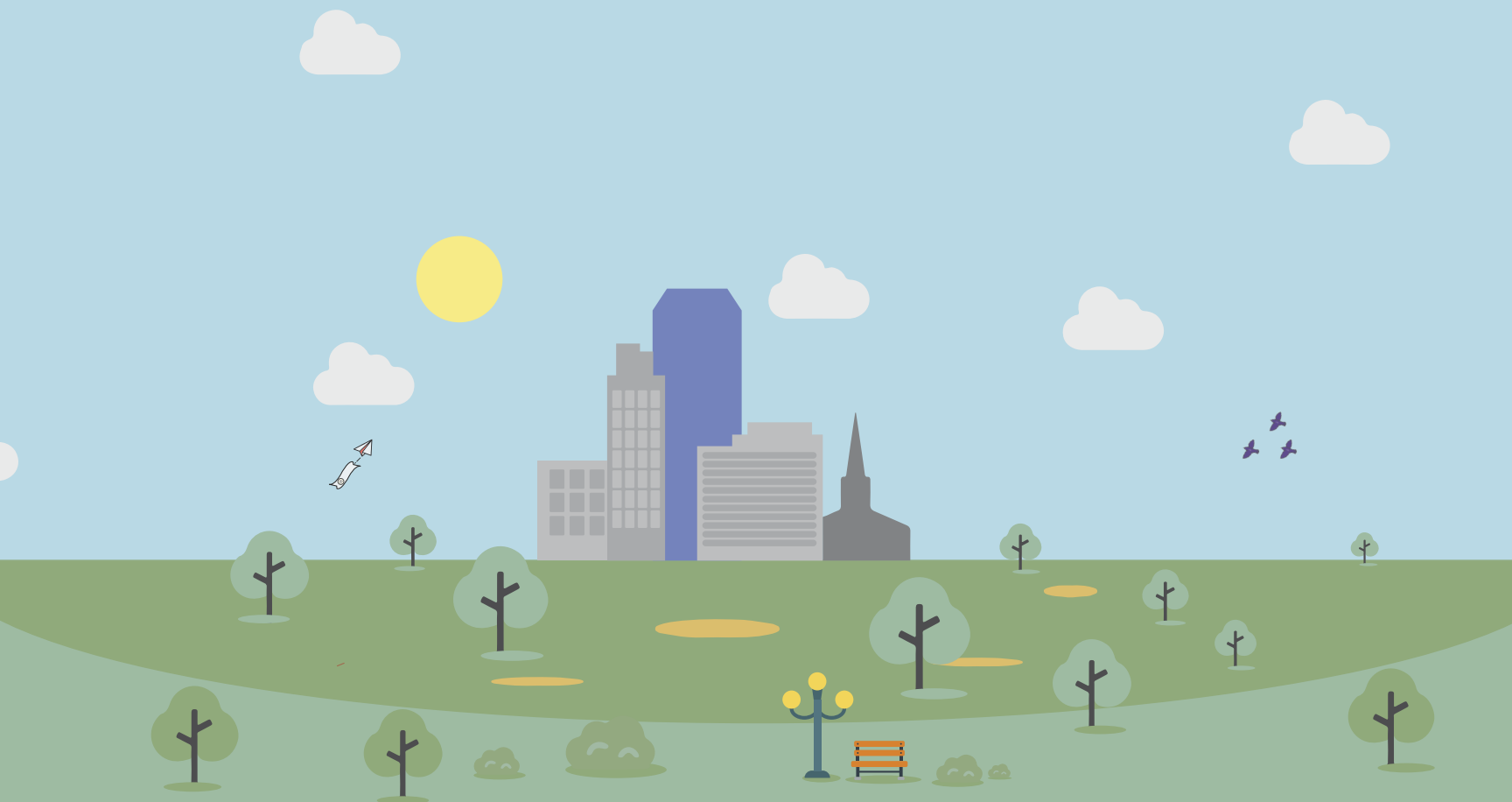


Annual Report 2020



CivicLex



CivicLex is a civic education nonprofit that brings daylight to the issues, policies, and procedures that impact Fayette County.

CivicLex envisions a Lexington in which all residents are able to participate meaningfully in the decisions that shape where they live.



Democracy is in crisis - and the solution is local.

In 1964, 74% of Americans reported trusting the government in Washington to do what is right 'just about always' or 'most of the time'. That figure is now less than 25%. It's not hard to understand why - since the 60s, widening inequality, political crises, and a more broad understanding of the impacts of systemic racism have sobered our idyllic beliefs of democratic self-governance.

The paradox of democracy tells us that a thriving democracy is one that effectively balances trust and skepticism. However, what we see in American civic life is a disproportionate amount of distrust and cynicism that threatens to undermine the very core of our civic life with apathy and anger.

If we are to rebuild our democracy we must start with trust. We must build new systems for civic engagement, participatory decision-making, and equitable representation. We must reshape our democracy into one that affirms the lived experience of those at the margins as much as it does academic expertise. We must connect with our neighbors to learn, listen, and share power.

There is no better position to start this work than at the level. Relationships are easier to build locally. Policy is easier to develop locally. Results are easier to see locally.

At CivicLex, we work every day to build a more robust and healthy democracy within the boundaries of Fayette County, Kentucky. We're excited to share with you what we have accomplished in 2020 towards this aim. We hope that CivicLex is laying the foundation for this approach to democratic practice to spread up and across our civic life.

+ Richard Young - Executive Director, CivicLex

“There’s something brilliant in what [CivicLex is doing] because they’re foregrounding the importance of relationships...”

Imagine if we could make it a basic principle that as we rebuild local journalism and information resources, we connect that to a project of relationship building on that scale.”

+ Danielle Allen, Director of the Edmond J. Safra Center for Ethics at Harvard University about CivicLex on WBUR’s “On Point”



2020 at a Glance

\$241,966

Raised to support local democracy work in 2020

400

Hours of city meetings watched, digested, & covered

20,000+

Residents reached by CivicLex programs in 2020

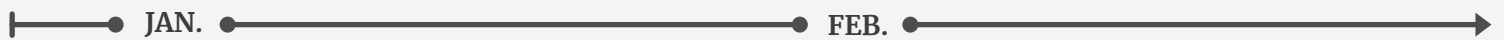
228

Individual programmatic partnerships in 2020

1,400+

Hours spent on Zoom in 2020 ☺

Milestones in 2020



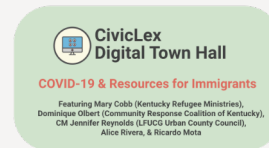
AMERICAN ACADEMY OF ARTS & SCIENCES

CivicLex and Lexington Herald-Leader receive grant from Lenfest Institute for Journalism & Facebook for community-based media.

Staff attends a convening on the future of democracy by the American Academy of Arts & Sciences.



COVID-19 hits, derailing the launch of our On the Table initiative, a \$30,000+ project with over a year of planning behind it.



Launch of our Digital Town Hall Series, bringing together hundreds to discuss and process the impacts of COVID-19.



MAY



With our partners at Fayette Alliance, we unveil a cross-sector coalition of organizations to collaborate on voter education.

JUN.



arts.gov

CivicLex receives NEA Our Town Grant for Civic Artist Residency.

JUL.



CivicLex is featured on two NPR flagship shows: WBUR's On Point and the Diane Rehm Show.

AUG.



Local Issue Explainers

Relaunch of the CivicLex website, featuring civic education micro-lessons and a focus on local issue explainers.

SEP.



Our Voices Project

Launch of Our Voices Project alongside the Herald-Leader, Key NewsJournal, and RadioLex.

OCT.



PBS NEWSHOUR

CivicLex is featured on PBS NewsHour as an example of how to reimagine American Democracy.

NOV.



Our Voices Project

First five articles of Our Voices Project launch, addressing the intersection of race, housing, & gentrification.

DEC.



CivicLex raises over \$25,000 through the GoodGiving Challenge, out-raising 2019 by over \$10,000.





COVID-19

Reacting to a public health crisis.

Like the rest of the world, COVID-19 completely altered our plans for 2020. Weeks before launching our version of the city-wide conversation series, On the Table, we decided to postpone everything based on recommendations from the Fayette County Health Department. We didn't know what would happen, how severe the virus would or wouldn't be, and if we were making the right decision. During that time, though, with misinformation spreading on social media and uncoordinated aid efforts popping up across town, we understood the community's need for accessible and accurate information.

To help, we did what we do best: provide clear and accurate information about important issues. We built a website that included regularly updated city, state, and national guidelines for safety and aid for individuals and small businesses. We compiled a COVID-19 myth-buster resource. We convened 20+ digital forums with city health and government officials and helped aid workers provide information and support to our community.

13,000+

Residents used our COVID hub to find crisis resources.

750+

Residents gathered digitally with civic leaders to discuss and process the impact of COVID-19 on our community through our workshops.

CivicLex's COVID-19 Hub Provided information on:



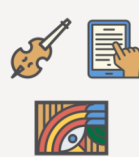
Basic Needs



Government Response



Small Biz Resources



Staying Entertained



Staying Healthy

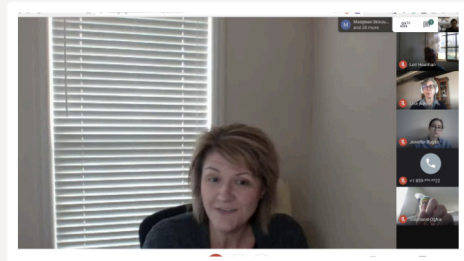
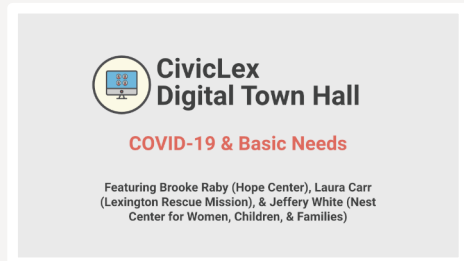
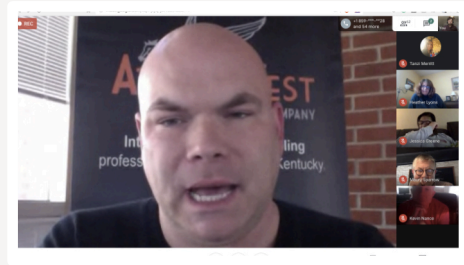


We held the following digital COVID Impact Town Halls in 2020:

Public Health Outcomes, Restaurants & Food Systems, Nonprofit Support Systems, Journalism, Arts Organizations, Basic Needs & Mutual Aid, Small Business Support, Elections, LFUCG Budget Impacts, Resources for Immigrants & Non-English Speakers, Homelessness, Housing Security & Evictions, Utility Assistance, Independent Contractors, LGBTQ Community

Our Town Halls featured facilitated community conversations with:

Lexington-Fayette County Health Department (Kevin Hall & Kacy Bryant), University of Kentucky College of Public Health (Dr. Kathleen Winter), Atomic Ramen (Dan Wu), A Cup of Common Wealth (Alexandra Canada), FoodChain (Rebecca Self), Blue Grass Community Foundation (Lisa Adkins), Kentucky Nonprofit Network (Danielle Clore), Lexington Herald-Leader (Peter Baniak & Daniel Desrochers), Lexington Philharmonic (Allison Kaiser), Athens West Theater (Bo List), Kentucky Arts Council (Emily Moses), Community Action Council (Sharon Price), God’s Pantry Foodbank (Michael Hailligan), Traditional Bank (Dan Mason), Fausto Sarmiento, Hope Center (Brooke Raby), Lexington Rescue Mission (Laura Carr), Nest Center for Women, Children, & Families (Jeffrey White), Kentucky Refugee Ministries (Mary Cobb), Community Response Coalition of Kentucky (Dominique Olbert), LFUCG Urban County Council (CMs Jennifer Reynolds & Amanda Bledsoe), Voices for Hope (Alex Elswick), Greenhouse 17 (Darlene Thomas), Mental Health America (Marcie Timmerman), Lexington Fair Housing Council (Art Crosby), Salvation Army (Jennifer Andrews), LFUCG Office of Homelessness Prevention & Intervention (Jeffery Herron), Kentucky American Water (Susan Lancho & Meriah Rose), Community Action Council (Melissa Tibbs), Minerva Financial Arts (Elaine Luttrull), Pam Miller Downtown Arts Center (Celeste Lewis), Pride Community Services Organization (Carmen Wampler-Collins), and AVOL (Jon Parker)



Images from top to bottom: Bo List in the COVID-19 & Arts Organizations Digital Town Hall, COVID-19 Basic Needs Advertisement, Danielle Clore in the COVID-19 & Nonprofit Organizations Digital Town Hall





Civic Action Education

The core of CivicLex’s work.

In 2020, CivicLex continued to provide accurate, nonpartisan information about essential city issues throughout the year in the form of our CivicLex Weekly newsletters, our budget guide and workshops, and Local Government educational resources featured on our website.

Additionally, we launched two new Civic Education initiatives:

Local Government Curriculum

We launched a local government curriculum found under the “Take Action” hub on the new CivicLex website. The curriculum features bite-sized “action civics” lessons, helping residents understand how to participate in civic life - from best practices when giving public comment before the council to a broad overview of Imagine Lexington, our city’s Comprehensive Plan.

One thing this week

A new section of our newsletter and website called “One thing this week” explains an essential item discussed before council each week. These deep dives help residents understand complex issues like the city’s approach to tackling systemic racism and LFUCG’s financial outlook - but it also touches on more mundane matters like updates to the city’s snow removal plans.

29,337

Moments of civic education* occurred from residents accessing the CivicLex Weekly

3,332

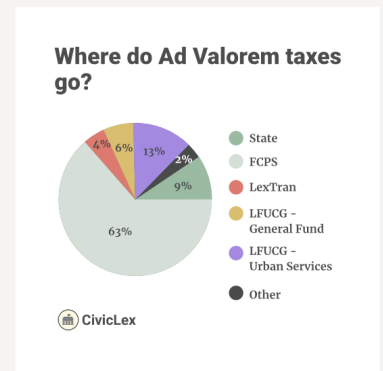
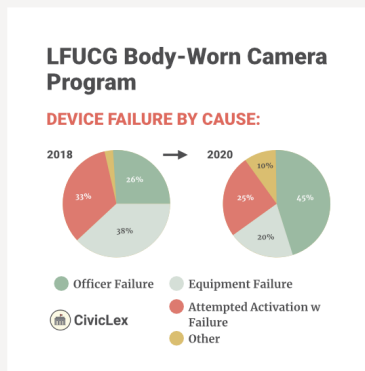
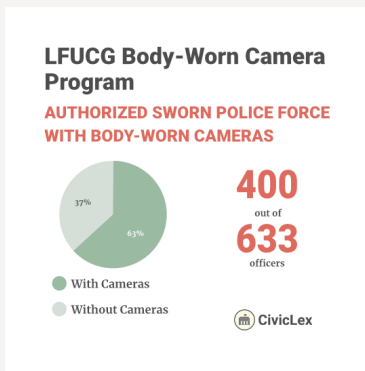
Civic actions* taken as a result of the CivicLex Weekly

46%

Increase in subscribers to the CivicLex Weekly between 2019 - 2020

* Moments of civic education are defined as instances in which direct civic education occurred via in-email issue coverage or opening of external links to educational material. Civic action includes contacting council members or city staff directly from emails, adding of city meetings to external calendars, opening of city meeting agendas or summaries, and more.



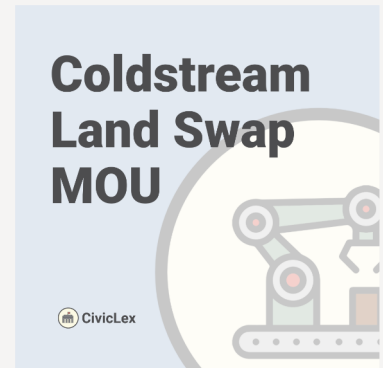


What is Council considering for Public Comment?

OPTION 2: LIVE COMMENTS WITH PRE-REGISTRATION

Commenters would pre-register to comment before the meeting, providing their name & address.

CivicLex



One thing this week information fragments, “Police body-Worn Camera Presentation, August 17; Personal Property Tax Changes, August 31; “Changes to Public Comment in City Meetings”, September 13; “Coldstream Land Swap MOU”, November 8

“CivicLex helps me to understand what happens at our local government. They provide transparency to the important inner workings of local civics. It makes it easy to be a more informed Lexingtonian.”

+ Tevin Monroe, Assistant Director of Campus & Community Engagement, Transylvania University

780

Readers of “One thing this week”, a new civic issue explainer series we started in August 2020.



Civic Action Education





Civic Artist Residency

Reimagining local government.

This type of Civic Artist in Residence program is a first for the state of Kentucky. This ambitious project seeks to embed three Fayette County-based artists of any discipline within three departments of Lexington’s city government for just over a year to reimagine how the departments work with each other and the greater community. The CAIR program is funded in part by a prestigious National Endowment for the Arts Our Town grant and made possible by the city’s generous participation.

We are currently finalizing the artist application, which will be open to artists based in Lexington, KY, in preparation for a release date in early 2021. While the core of this project is to create new approaches for how the city engages with the public, we will encourage projects that bring marginalized community voices into city decision making and find creative solutions to problems or “stuck” aspects of how the city works. We want this program to benefit the city government by celebrating city employees' labor and helping departments communicate more effectively.

Artistic & Community Advisors:

Jason Akhtarekhavari, Jessica Breen, Devine Carama, Raaziq El-Amin, Kurt Gohde, Chester Grundy, Brandy Shumake, Lakshmi Sriraman, DeBraun Thomas, & Kremena Todorova

City of Lexington Advisors:

Nancy Albright, Rob Allen, Chris Ford, Amber Luallen, Heather Lyons, Theresa Maynard, Elizabeth McGee, Angela Poe, Ashley Simpson, & Deborah Slone

Project Team:

Ashley Hanson, Mark Kidd, & CivicLex Staff

\$67,000

Allocated for training, compensating, and supporting Lexington-based civic artists

27

Community leaders have signed on to guide this project over the next two years.



CivicLex



LEXINGTON





Our Voices Project

Lifting up lived experience.

Our Voices Project is the culmination of years worth of discussion and planning for a project meant to center Black and Brown voices on Lexington's major intersectional issues.

In partnership with the Lexington Herald-Leader, Key NewsJournal, and RadioLex, we are recruiting, coaching, and compensating writers of color to write about their perspectives and experiences with the main topics of The Mayor's Commission on Racial Justice & Equality. Pieces produced through Our Voices run as a complete takeover in the Lexington Herald-Leader's Sunday Editorial Page - centering the voices of those with lived experience.

This year, we published one round of five writers and are in the process of selecting the second round. In total, the project will produce no fewer than 25 written pieces. We are also working on radio documentary additions to the project with RadioLex.

\$250

Paid per piece to writers, in addition to receiving direct coaching with editors of the Herald-Leader

15,986

Number of times the first round of Our Voices pieces were read

“The work you and your team have done is life changing for some and the push others needed... I write everyday and have so many pieces ranging in subject and views, I would love to share if you all ever find the need for new, fresh articles or voices again.”

+ Marie Emedi, Our Voices Project Round 1 Writer





Responding to an unprecedented election.

This election cycle, we built a non-partisan coalition with local nonprofits and community organizations focused on addressing the most pressing issues Lexington faces in the coming years. Our coalition, LexVote, wrote and distributed a rigorous candidate survey to every council member and council candidate during the primary and general elections and published the answers on our Lex.Vote website. We also posted accurate, up-to-date information about voting safely in a socially distanced election, which required numerous follow-ups with city and state election officials throughout the November lead-up.

Along with the website, we hosted forums with the general election council candidates and even several unchallenged incumbents, which are available on our YouTube page. We were excited to include community-submitted questions in these forums, as COVID-19 precautions have made it more difficult for residents to communicate directly with candidates and local officials overall.

8,500

Residents watched the LexVote coalition digital council forums.

3,400

Fayette County voters used the LexVote platform to plan & create their ballots for the 2020 General Election.

18

Hours of question-writing and relationship building with our LexVote coalition facilitated by the CivicLex team.

“With LexVote, voters were able to see candidates' actual positions and priorities for neighborhoods as opposed to relying on advertising. It was particularly important under COVID 19 because campaigns in 2020 involved very little physical contact.”

+ Walt Gaffield,
President, Fayette
County Neighborhood
Council



This year, CivicLex also worked to expand our electoral work by creating a local democracy fellowship program.

We created the Electoral Fellowship position to coordinate our electoral work and generate a report about Lexington's electoral participation. The Fellow and CivicLex worked together to monitor and correct misinformation about the November election, distribute informational flyers to areas with low average voter turnout, and recruit, train, and deploy Election Helpers at two voting centers in Lexington on Election Day.

In 2021, we're continuing our investment into our local democracy with our Redistricting Fellow, who will research Lexington's redistricting process and recommend best practices for future efforts.

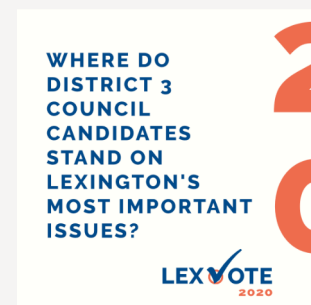
The Electoral and Redistricting Fellow's work will bookend each other as a more extensive report on Lexington's electoral participation and representation.

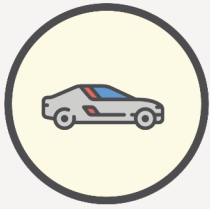
2,200

Voters in low-turnout precincts personally contacted with at-home voting information.

48

Appearances in external media to highlight election misinformation.





What's in the future for CivicLex?



Civic Action Education

We're launching a new three-year initiative to design and implement a county-wide local lived, action civics curriculum in Fayette County Public Schools in alignment with Kentucky Academic Standards.



Civic Artist Residency

2021 will bring the full rollout of our Civic Artist Residency program. Applications will launch in January, artists will be selected by May, and they'll begin working in the city in June.



Our Voices Project

Four more rounds of Our Voices Project writers will be commissioned in 2021. We're also looking forward to building a new podcast and radio component with RadioLex.



Redistricting Lexington

In January 2021, we'll hire a new Redistricting Fellow to work with us on building more equitable strategies for local redistricting in Fayette County, which will take place throughout 2021.



Public Comment

We'll conduct a comprehensive evaluation of the current council meeting public comment system and generate suggestions for making public engagement more effective and efficient.



Public Health & Democracy

In the shadow of the COVID-19 pandemic, we're undertaking a new partnership with the University of Kentucky to research the intersection of trust in democratic processes and public health outcomes.





Financial Overview

\$241,966

Total revenue raised in 2020 for CivicLex projects

\$95,782

Total 2020 operating expenses

\$79,000

Invested in the Civic Artist Residency Program for expenses in 2020 - 2022

\$70,844

Staff Expenses & Benefit cost in 2020

\$27,000

Invested in Electoral Work in 2020

\$24,938

Operational costs in 2020

\$25,000

Invested in Our Voices Project for expenses in 2020 & 2021

\$19,500

Net 2020 Revenue (Unencumbered)

\$191,034

Total assets

\$30,761

Cash on Hand

\$61,522

Operational Reserve for 2021

\$98,750

Encumbered Program Expense Reserve for 2021



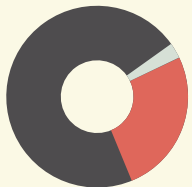
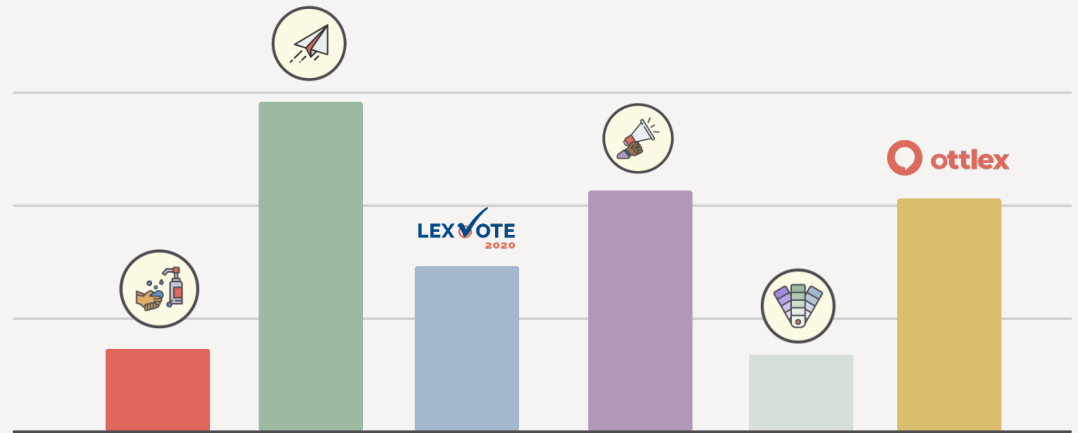


Program & Admin Expenses



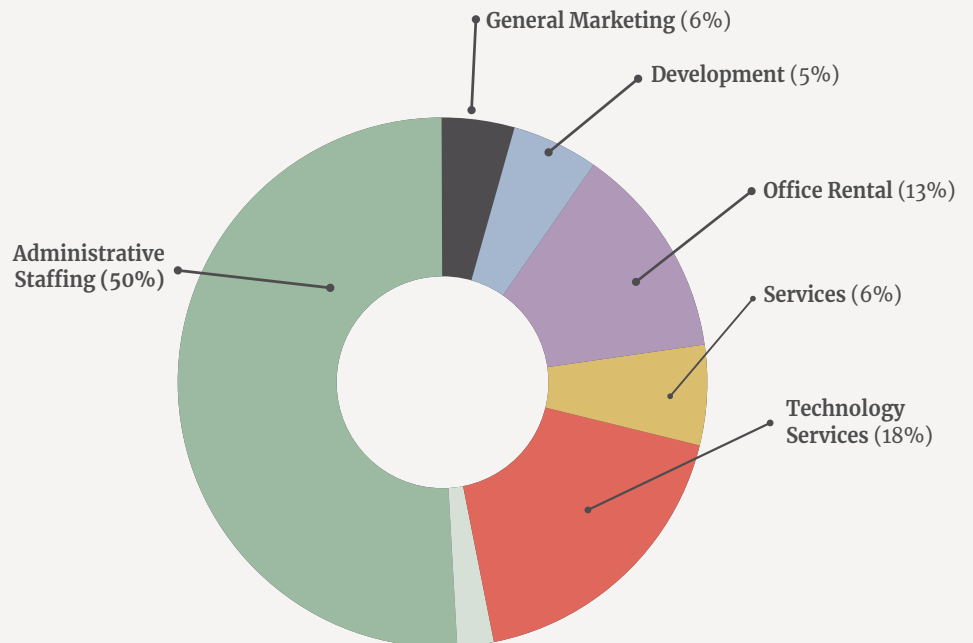
70%

of CivicLex's budget is spent on Program Expenses. Detail right.



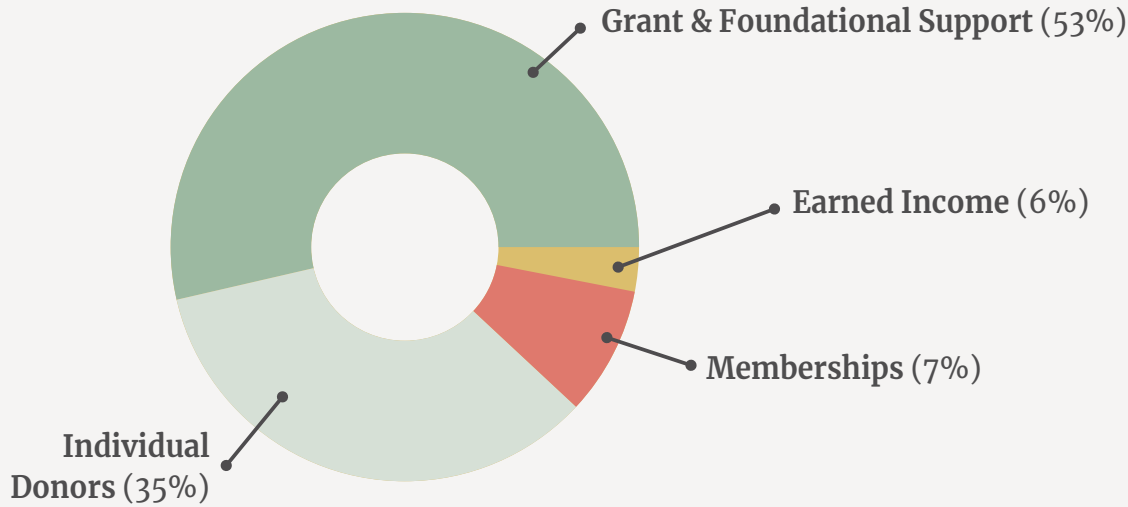
26%

of CivicLex's budget is spent on Administrative Expenses. Detail right.





Revenue & Support



\$241,966

Total revenue raised
in 2020 for CivicLex
projects

930

Unique donations to our work
in 2020

\$5.00

Median donation in 2020

2020 Grantors

National Endowment for the Arts
John S. and James L. Knight Foundation
Kentucky Civic Engagement Table
Facebook Journalism Project
Blue Grass Community Foundation

Alpenglow Foundation
Jedra Charitable Foundation
Mitchell Family Foundation
Fayette Alliance Foundation
EE Murry Foundation



Donors (> \$250)

Adkins Family Foundation, Alex Brooks, Andrea James, Anne Chestnut, Arthur Shechet, Ben Self, Blake Hall, Carol Hustedde, Christine Huskisson, Dan Rowland, Debra Hensley, Devon Pohl, Eileen Burk, Graham Pohl, Hannah LeGris, Herman and Elizabeth Playforth, Holly Hughes, Jane Jensen, Jennifer Lai-Peterson, Jordan Parker, Joshua Douglas, Julia Young, Kathy Plomin, Leah Gayle Bourne, Liz Sheehan, Mathew Ruberg, Matthew W. Wilson, Melody Flowers, Mendel Mehr, Michelle Young, Network for Good, Richard Young, Ronald Vissing, Scott Shapiro, Theodore Schatzki

Members (< \$250)

A Cup of Common Wealth Foundation, Abbie Loynachan, Aidan Hennen, Alana Schreiber, Alex Dixon, Alison Kerr, Allison Crawford, Allison Kaiser, Alma Kajtazovic, Amelia Groetsch, Amelia Sweetall, Amy Sohner, Andrea Quigley, Ann Bishop, Ann Garrity, Anne & Richie Donworth - Scarteen Stud, Arthur Salomon, Ash Hanson, Ben Haydon, Benjamin Karp, Betsy Schein, Blake Vogt, Bobbie Newman, Brendan Holly, Brian and Joy Dineen Charitable Fund, Brittany Morgan, Brittany Roethemeier, Carey Tichenor, Carly Muetterties, Carole Johnston, Carolyn and John Loeff, Catherine Savage, Chance Commodore, Chris Woolery, Christian Motley, Christine Smith, Christopher Snyder, Clifton Anderson, Colette Crown, Colin Goggin, Connie Milligan, Cory Curl, Dan Luchtefeld, Danielle Clore, Danielle Goulding, David Cooper, David Elbon, David Peterson, David Youngblood, Dean Langdon, Deborah Slone, Derek Wingfield, Diane Arnson Svarlien, Diane Parrish, Diane Peterson, Dmitry Strakovsky, Doelan Anderson, Dominique Olbert, Donald Mason, Donald Salzman, Drew Shackelford, Elena Ferrero, Eli Meiners, Eli Uttal-Veroff, Elizabeth Young, Elizabeth Crane, Emma Anderson, Eric Shelton, Erin Hathaway, Evalynne Elias, Fern Mamberg, Finkel Goldstein Family Fund, Fran Taylor, Garrett Salzman, Gary Hansen, Georgia Henkel, Gilson Capilouto, Grace Goulson, Greg Abernathy, Gregory Butler, Griffin VanMeter, Hallie Kircher-Henning, Harwell F. Smith, Heath and Allison Price, Heather Hyden,

Heather Lyons, Hollingshead Family Charitable Giving Fund, Holly Ellingson, Ian Epperson, Ian Hafley, Ivy Brashear, Jacqueline Gregoire, James Guthrie, James Howard, James Southard, Jane F Williams, Jane Shropshire, Jean Sabharwal, Jeff Fugate, Jen Algire, Jennifer Miller, Jennifer Reynolds, Jessica M Breen, Jessica Mohler, Jo Davis, Jo Wang, John Buckman, John McClain, John O'Shea, Jordan Parker, Joy Girgis, Justin Kirchner, Karissa Porter, Karyn Hinkle, Kate Savage, Katelynn Ralston, Katherine Anderson, Katie Wright, Kelly Bartley, Kenneth Cooke, Kenneth Gish, Kevin Wente, Kim Green, Krisia Rosa, Kristofer Nonn, Kurt Gohde, Kylie Russ, Lea Davis, Linda Trapp, Lisa Summers Cleveland, Lois Gillespie, Loretto Lovejoy, Lori Houlihan, Lucy Points, Marcia Hopkins, Marcie Timmerman, Marianne Hamburg Sherman, Marilyn B. Robie, Marissa Webb, Mark Davis, Mark Royse, Mark Wurth, Martha Holley-Miers, Mary A Truitt, Mary Arthur, Mary Cobb, Mary Graetz, Matthew Clarke, Matthew Cunningham, Matthew Steele, Maury Sparrow, Megan Gulla, Melinda Antonchak, Melissa Wallace, Meredith Price, Meredith Wadlington, Mia Cinelli, Michael Leland Smith, Missy Johnston, Mizari Suarez, Mollie Harris, Nicholas Covault, Noora Shalash, Nora Mendizabal, Patrice Heber, Patricia Henricksen, Patricia Whitlow, Philip George, Philis Alvic, PRP Architects, Quin Welch, Rachel Engh, Rachel Shelton, Rebecca Self, Rebecca Mullins Hanchett, Rebekah Brown, Reva Russell English, Ricardo Melara, Richard Schein, Richard Young, Rita Anderson, Robert Edwards, Rona Roberts, Ross Boggess, Ryan Koch, Samantha Morrill, Sandy Hough, Sara Trapp, Sarah F Nikirk, Sarah Thrall, Sarah Van Vooren, Savannah Barrett, Sean Gladding, Shane Tedder, Sharon Murphy, Shayla Dionne Lynch, Sheila Kenny, Stanford Harvey, Stephanie Wooten, Stephen Grossman, Steven Jay, Steven Hood, Suraya Shalash, Susan Isaacs Krauss, Susan O'Brien, Susan Roberts, Tanya Torp, Tanzi Merritt, Taryn Henning, Taylor Sterry, Teddi Hibberd, Thomas Bowne, Tiana Thé, Tim Buckingham, Tim Feld, Tim Guthrie, Tom Eblen, Toni Reiss, Tresine Logsdon, Valerie Friedmann & Tim Sundell, Victor Palomino, Wallis Miller, Wendi Keene, Will Anderson, William Alverson, William Benjamin Allen





Our Team



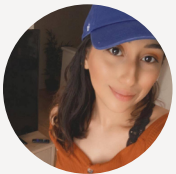
Richard Young,
Executive Director



Megan Gulla,
Director of Programs



Kit Anderson,
Evaluation Assoc.
(VISTA)



Hayley Alfaro,
Communication Assoc.
(VISTA)

Matthew Young, Electoral Fellow

Casey Lyons, UK MSW Practicum Student

Sara Trapp, UK MSW Practicum Student

Hoda Shalash, UK BSW Practicum Student



Melody Flowers
President, Governance Board



Alex Brooks
President, Programmatic Board



Dan Rowland
President Emeritus



Art Shechet
VP, Governance Board



Jordan Parker
Treasurer, Governance Board



Scott Shapiro
Secretary, Governance Board



Jessica Breen
Programmatic Board Member



Natalie Cunningham
Programmatic Board Member



Joshua Douglas
Governance Board Member



Blake Hall
Programmatic Board Member



Wendi Keene
Programmatic Board Member



Jennifer Lai-Peterson
Governance Board Member



Hannah LeGris
Governance Board Member



Tevin Monroe
Programmatic Board Member



Bevin Morgan
Programmatic Board Member



Carly Muettert
Programmatic Board Member



Sharon Murphy
Programmatic Board Member



Victor Palomino
Programmatic Board Member



Meredith Price
Programmatic Board Member



Hoda Shalash
Programmatic Board Member



Liz Sheehan
Governance Board Member



Andy Shooner
Programmatic Board Member



Christine Stanley
Programmatic Board Member



Mizari Suarez
Programmatic Board Member



Matthew Wilson
Programmatic Board Member



Dan Wu
Programmatic Board Member



