

# Democratic Action → Fund

Spring 2023

## Statement of Principles and Commitments

As a community of deliberative practitioners, academics, researchers, and advocates, we support the need to create permanent institutions that promote a more inclusive and responsive democracy. In doing so, we firmly affirm and uphold the following principles and commitments:

1. We are proud to build on the great work of deliberative peers – academics and practitioners – who have developed citizens’ juries, citizens’ initiative reviews, ad-hoc citizens’ assemblies and citizens’ chambers embedded in parliaments and city councils around the world.
2. We affirm that a new social contract between citizen and state is necessary. This renewed social contract requires that governments invest in citizen-centric mechanisms that better reflect constituent preferences and lead to stronger policy outcomes. Strong public-private partnerships are also encouraged as Democratic Action Funds are designed and implemented.
3. We stress the transformational potential of citizens assemblies to impact citizens by increasing knowledge, sense of connectedness and social cohesion, political interest and activity, enthusiasm, and a sense of consequential voice. These platforms also enhance the relationship with political institutions and reawaken a sense of citizenship.
4. We commit to the principles of inclusion, pluralism, accountability and transparency in the design and implementation of Democratic Action Funds. To the extent possible, we will co-design processes and insist on providing citizens with agenda-setting power. We will make an effort to reach marginalized communities and those who are removed from policy reform and government decision-making.
5. We are driven by the need to accelerate the number of deliberative platforms globally as well as a need to level the playing field and offer opportunities to participate to more citizens at the municipal, regional, and national levels.
6. We emphasize that it is imperative to generate strong evidence-based data. Democratic Action Funds will support the development of robust research, lessons learned and best practices.
7. We recognize that given the rise of autocratic regimes, we must be wary of the potential misuse of democratic innovations by non-democratic leaders. We will be discerning and exercise the utmost caution in the expansion of Democratic Actions Funds and will call out misuse.