Shared knowledge, stronger democracy
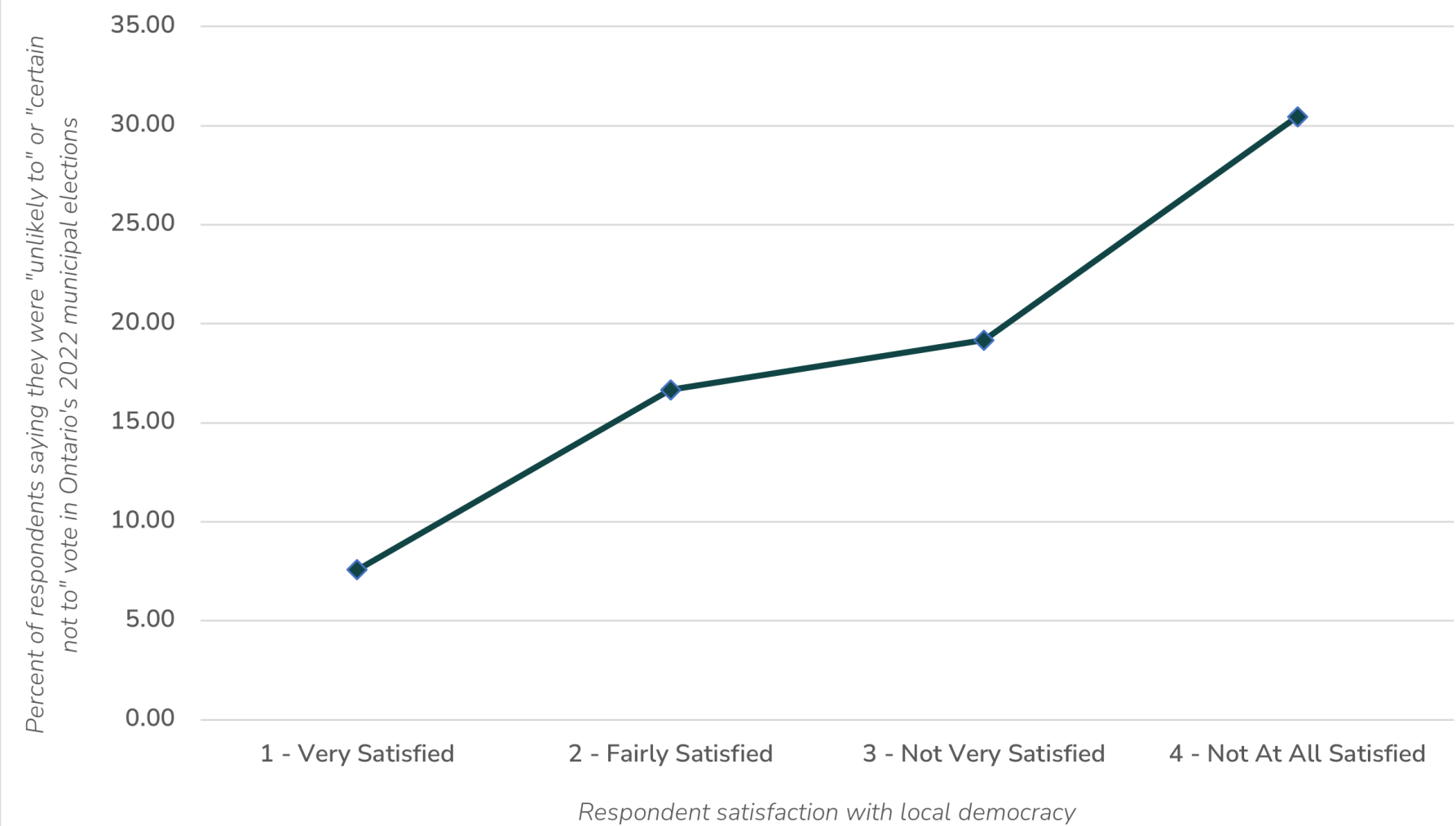
AMO Association of Municipalities of Ontario + democratic engagement exchange
at Toronto Metropolitan University
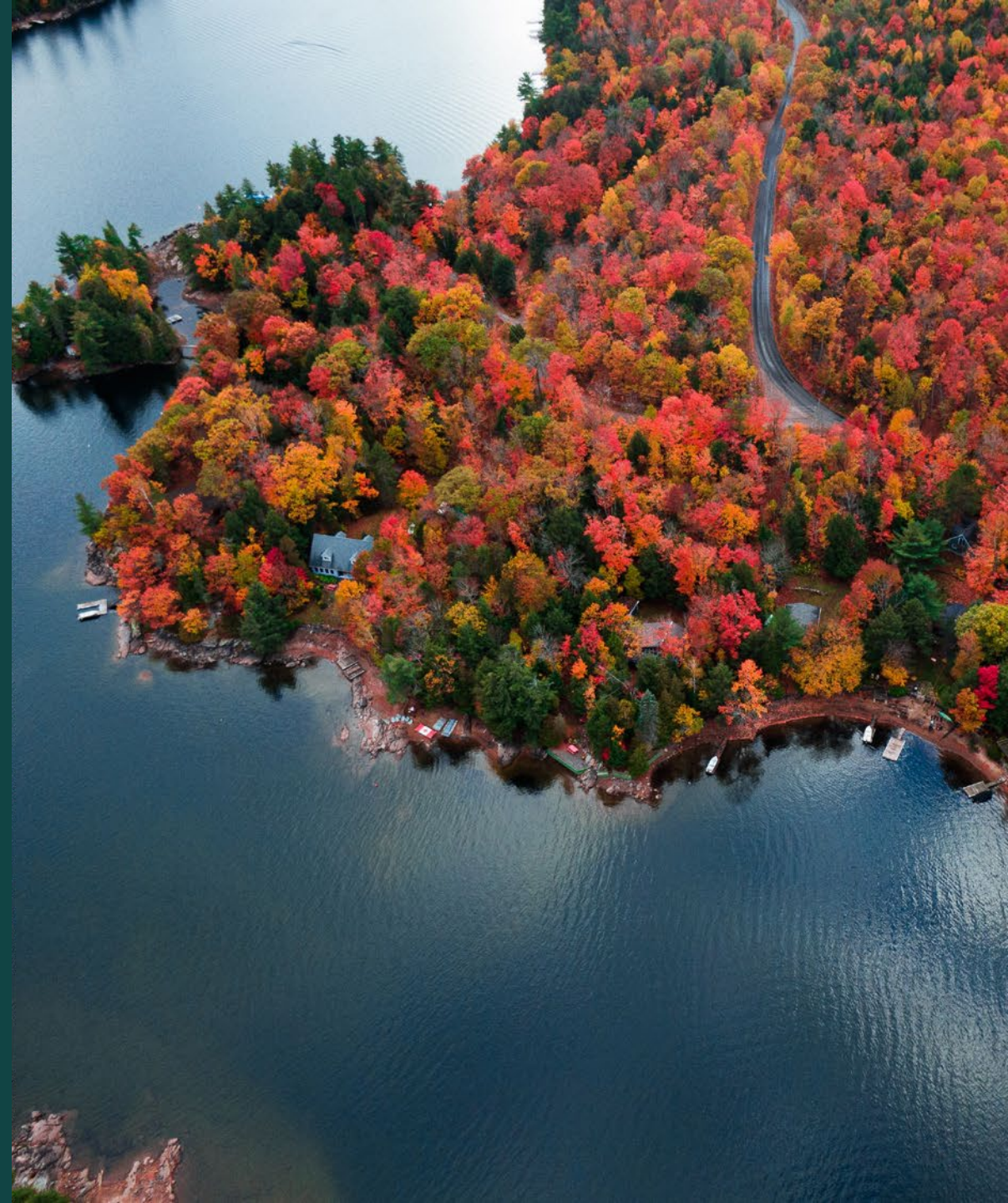
Setting the context

Disinterest in voting v. Satisfaction with local democracy

Respondent indicated they were "Likely to vote", "Certain to vote", or "Already voted"

Woman

Over 43

University degree

Immigrant

Household income over $60,000/year

Effects on question (95% confidence)

-0.5   0   0.5   1.0   1.5
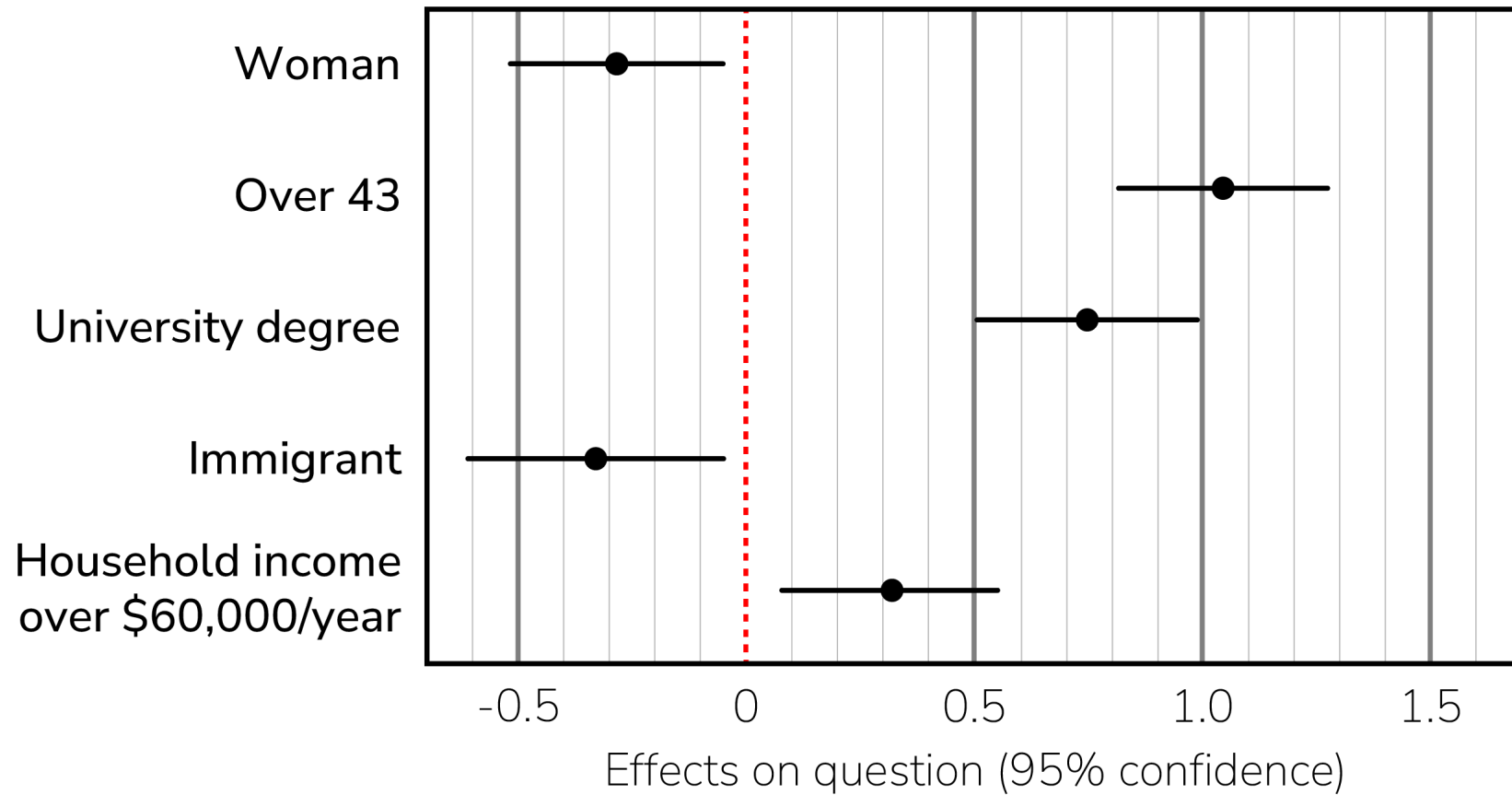
Building trust and building connections

Photo by Daniel Hodson on Unsplash

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Running for local office and navigating the first years on council can be challenging. By identifying solutions that draw on the lived experiences of other candidates and elected officials or connecting people with support networks, people with civic ambition can be paired with the support they need to run effective campaigns and hit the ground running after the election.

Photo by Rich Madonik from the Toronto Star

A strong democracy is one where people feel like participating in the electoral process is easy and accessible. These solutions focus on increasing voter turnout, improving electoral participation, and making elections accessible to everyone.

Photo by Toa Heftiba on Unsplash

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Everyone in a municipality needs a strong toolkit in order to tackle big issues. Ensuring everyone has access to the tools and information they need to advocate for their communities and future can help build vibrant and inclusive communities. These solutions will help residents, legislators, and organizations improve everyday democratic participation and help address the big issues in their communities.

A healthy local media ecosystem is important for getting information out to voters, residents, and stakeholders. These solutions aim to support local media, share information critical to democratic participation, and push back against the threats of misinformation and foreign interference.

Photo by Nina Strehl on Unsplash

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A community's strength is in its diversity. People from all walks of life have unique and important experiences to share, which can help build trust in the system, improve policy outcomes for all residents, create bonds between people, and strengthen our local democracy. These solutions aim to bring people together and ensure their valuable viewpoints are part of our civic conversation.

It can be challenging to understand what a local government does, from how municipalities raise revenue and provide services to how council functions. But it is essential that residents and community groups have the best possible information to help them be engaged, connected, and empowered citizens who are ready to advocate for issues that matter to them. These solutions aim to raise awareness about municipal government, improve civic education, build skills necessary to become community advocates, and create education and awareness campaigns.

Photo by Priscilla Du Preez on Unsplash

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Tension, toxicity, and distrust permeate too much of our politics today. Everyone — citizens, community groups, elected officials, and municipal employees — deserves to feel safe, heard, and respected when engaging with and within local institutions. These solutions aim to reduce toxicity in political interactions and promote respectful discourse between residents, elected officials, and public servants.

Learning from one another

Adaptable and targeted

Solutions need to be specific enough to meet the unique needs of each municipality or group, but adaptable enough to be applied to their unique situation.

Flexible and tested

Solutions need to have data, longevity, or a strong theoretical foundation while also not being so rigid that they cannot be altered or adapted based on each user's needs.

Unique and replicable

Solutions need to be unique, interesting, and worthwhile in order to stimulate interest in local democracy while also having an element of replicability so that they can be used over time and across many places.

Solution partners

- Governments
- Non-profits, charities, or community-based organizations
- Academic institutions
- Resident-led community-groups
- Elected officials, candidates, and campaigns
- Media institutions

Solution type

- Meetings, activities, and training
- Reports and recommendations
- Organizations, committees, and positions
- Funding
- Resources and information
- Policies and initiatives

Solution level

- National, sub-national, and/or local
- Country of origin
- Province
- Municipality
- Municipality size, form, and tier
- Municipal population

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- National, sub-national, and/or local
- Country of origin
- Province
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- Municipality size, form, and tier
- Municipal population

How long solution has been in use

How long the solution takes to enact

Which specific organizations are involved

What are the stats and analytics on the solution

Where did funding for the solution come from

Putting theory into practice

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You're an engaged citizen with a passion for helping your community. You've been elected to local office, but there's work that needs to be done to strengthen democracy in your municipality.

The Democratic Engagement Solutions Bank provides you with real-world cases that you can draw on, adapt, and implement in your community.

Type in the 🔍 Search box to search for solutions. Click on ⟺ to filter solutions by categories, types of municipalities and more.

| 🔍 youth | ✕ | ≡ Filter ⌄ |

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DEMOCRATIC PARTICIPATION,
ENGAGING DIVERSE
COMMUNITIES, IMPROVING CIVIC
EDUCATION
**Young Politicians of Canada
(YPC) - Placement Program**
Placement program for
young Canadians to be
engaged in the democratic
process

ENGAGING DIVERSE
COMMUNITIES, CIVILITY AND
RESPECT
**Tamarack Institute -
Communities
Building Youth Futures**
Supporting and advancing
community-wide initiatives
to
support youth

SUPPORTING CANDIDATES,
ELECTORAL PARTICIPATION,
DEMOCRATIC PARTICIPATION,
ENGAGING DIVERSE
COMMUNITIES, IMPROVING CIVIC
EDUCATION, CIVILITY AND
RESPECT
**Fellowship from The
Canadian Muslim Vote's
Civic Leadership Institute**
Helping historically
marginalized people
kickstart their campaigns
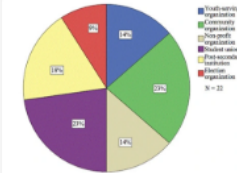
ELECTORAL PARTICIPATION,
ENGAGING DIVERSE COMMUNITIES
**Report: Youth Engagement
and Mobilization in the 2010
Toronto Municipal Election**
Mobilizing youth to
participate in local
democracy

DEMOCRATIC PARTICIPATION,
ENGAGING DIVERSE COMMUNITIES
Rep Day
Introducing youth to
politicians

ENGAGING DIVERSE COMMUNITIES
**Marathon's "Student
Councillor" program**
Providing youth a seat at the
council table

SUPPORTING CANDIDATES,
ELECTORAL PARTICIPATION,
ENGAGING DIVERSE
COMMUNITIES, IMPROVING CIVIC
EDUCATION, CIVILITY AND
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**Equal Voice's Campaign
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🔍 youth ✕   ⌑ Filter ⌄

PLACEMENT PROCESS
YOUNG POLITICIANS OF CANADA

1. APPLICATION
2. INTERVIEW #1
3. INTERVIEW #2
4. PLACEMENT

DEMOCRATIC PARTICIPATION,
ENGAGING DIVERSE
COMMUNITIES, IMPROVING CIVIC
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THE FELLOWSHIP 2024

SUPPORTING CANDIDATES,
ELECTORAL PARTICIPATION,
DEMOCRATIC PARTICIPATION,
ENGAGING DIVERSE
COMMUNITIES, IMPROVING CIVIC
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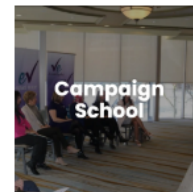kickstart their campaigns

ELECTORAL PARTICIPATION,
ENGAGING DIVERSE COMMUNITIES
**Report: Youth Engagement
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Toronto Municipal Election**
Mobilizing youth to
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democracy

REP DAY 📅❌

DEMOCRATIC PARTICIPATION,
ENGAGING DIVERSE COMMUNITIES
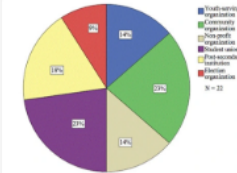**Rep Day**
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**Marathon's "Student
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Providing youth a seat at the
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Campaign School

SUPPORTING CANDIDATES,
ELECTORAL PARTICIPATION,
ENGAGING DIVERSE
COMMUNITIES, IMPROVING CIVIC
EDUCATION, CIVILITY AND
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kickstart their campaigns

CityShapers in schools

DEMOCRATIC PARTICIPATION,
ENGAGING DIVERSE
COMMUNITIES, IMPROVING CIVIC
EDUCATION
**CityHive - CityShapers in
Schools**
Introducing youth to
politicians

DEMOCRATIC PARTICIPATION, ENGAGING DIVERSE COMMUNITIES

Rep Day

Introducing youth to politicians

POSTED 2024-10-18

Rep Day is a program that brings Members of Parliament into classrooms for educational discussions with youth about how Canadian democracy works. Educators teach students about current political issues and their constituency, working with students to develop questions to ask their MP when they visit. CIVIX provides lesson plans and support tools to educators to help them prepare.

• 182 MPs (from 2020 to 2023)
• 7,700 students (2023)
• Surveys are conducted of educators and students following the event and feedback is solicited from MPs who participated

MEETINGS AND ACTIVITIES, TRAINING AND EDUCATION

Length of a typical school class (50 to 90 minutes)

↗ https://repday.ca/

Municipality Profile

National, Local or municipal

Canada

Timeline

2020 - Present

Partners

Non-profit or charity or community-based organization,
Academic institutions

• CIVIX
• Members of Parliament

Source of Funding

• CIVIX

Additional References

↗ https://repday.ca/program-info/

↗ https://civix.ca/7700-students-met-their-mps-in-2023-through-civ...

Related Solutions

Categories

Date added

Description

Quick facts

How long the solution takes to enact

Solution type

Solution level

How long solution has been in use

Which specific organizations are involved

Solution partners

Where did funding for the solution come from

DEMOCRATIC PARTICIPATION, ENGAGING DIVERSE COMMUNITIES

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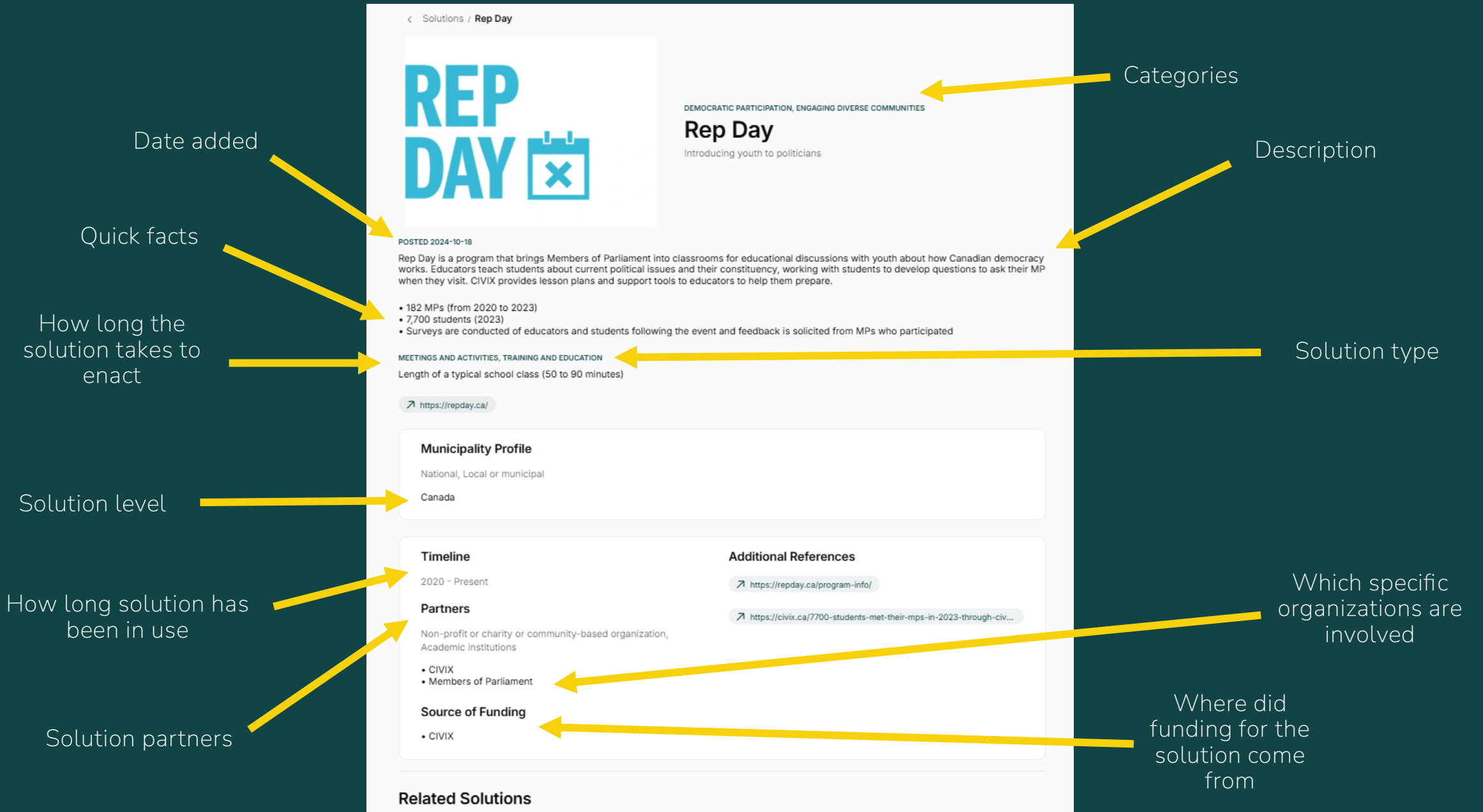
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- CIVIX

Additional References

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Related Solutions

Solutions / Rep Day

Expanding this resource for everyone

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- Nearly 70 unique projects from around the world

- Solutions that have been used for over 100 years and some that have not even been implemented yet

- Solutions that municipalities and affiliated groups can quickly implement and change to long-term, lasting solutions

Existing Bank

- Nearly 70 unique projects from around the world

- Solutions that have been used for over 100 years and some that have not even been implemented yet

- Solutions that municipalities and affiliated groups can quickly implement and change to long-term, lasting solutions

Suggested Bank

- Crowdsource solutions from across Ontario, Canada, and the world

- Update projects based on their outcomes and how they're used in new settings

- Work with researchers and municipalities to study how these solutions work once implemented

- Connect civic leaders through the Democratic Engagement Solutions Bank

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Chris Erl

Researcher with the Democratic Engagement Exchange at Toronto Metropolitan University

christopher.erl@torontomu.ca