

NON PROF-IT

Democracy Works

Democracy Works is a nonprofit corporation that promotes the use of technology to increase voter participation. The group also provides information on candidates, voting precinct locations, and means of transportation for voters who need it. The main component to Democracy Works is a project called TurboVote, which was launched in 2012. ^[1] ^[2] The groups major donors are prominent left-of-center private foundations, such as the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation (<https://www.influencewatch.org/non-profit/john-s-and-james-l-knight-foundation/>), the Democracy Fund (<https://www.influencewatch.org/non-profit/democracy-alliance-democracy-fund/>), and the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation (<https://www.influencewatch.org/non-profit/john-d-and-catherine-t-macarthur-foundation/>). ^[3]

Democracy Works is a member of Bridge Alliance (<https://www.influencewatch.org/non-profit/bridge-alliance/>), a left-leaning social welfare coalition that supports numerous left-of-center election reform policies and is partnered with the left-of-center PAC Unite America (<https://www.influencewatch.org/political-party/unite-america/>). ^[4]

TurboVote

TurboVote is project that assists various communities with voter registration. Multiple industries such as higher education, business, and social media have partnered with TurboVote.

TurboVote has partnered with universities across the United States promoting voter registration and candidate information. ^[5] ^[6] ^[7] In an email to the student body, Seton Hall University Dean of Students Karen Van Vorman stressed the importance of voting even in non-presidential elections and cautioned the students against biased media. Seton Hall University is one of many universities who have partnered with TurboVote and Van Vorman said that the student body's voting participation increased with the partnership. ^[8]

TurboVote also utilizes its social media platforms to update users and followers on voting information that may apply nationally such as voting dates, debates to watch, and changes in voting processes due to national or international conflict. In March 2020, the international pandemic Coronavirus (COVID-19) caused mass quarantines across the United States and forced citizens to alter their means of voting. ^[9] ^[10]

In 2016, Starbucks Corporation partnered with TurboVote in efforts to encourage Starbucks employees and customers to vote. In September 2016, Starbucks CEO Howard Shultz said at a "Turn Up the Vote" party in New York that America "has been built not only on our democracy, but on participation." Shultz's comments were part of his message to the crowd and online viewers that the partnership with TurboVote was meant to increase voter engagement across the United States. ^[11] Starbucks continues to partner with TurboVote while ensuring their employees are able to vote. In the past Starbucks has provided a free cup of coffee for customers who have voted on election days. ^[12] ^[13]

Facebook (<https://www.influencewatch.org/for-profit/facebook/>) and Twitter have both turned to TurboVote to lead the social media platforms' voter registration efforts. In March 2019, the National Association of Secretaries of State urged Facebook and Twitter to cease partnerships with third-party voter registration organizations. NASS claimed that third-party organizations failed to properly register their consumers and process their votes resulting in significant challenges to the election community, while not citing Facebook or Twitter specifically. NASS also claimed that Facebook and Twitter did not have sufficient safeguards in place to combat misinformation. ^[14] ^[15] In June 2019, NASS hosted TurboVote at the NASS 2019 Summer Conference where Democracy Works co-founder Kathryn Peters presented on the importance of bringing election information and voter accessibility to citizens. ^[16] ^[17]

The TurboVote challenge, adopted in 2016, is an effort to see an 80% voter turnout by 2024. The initiative includes major brands who partner with Democracy Works to increase the amount of users on TurboVote. Brand partners include Amazon, Facebook, Twitter, SNAP Inc, Google, Instagram, Microsoft, MTV, BET Network, Salesforce, Starbucks, and others. ^[18] ^[19]

Voting Information Project

Also see Voting Information Project (<https://www.influencewatch.org/non-profit/the-voting-information-project/>) (Project)

While TurboVote focuses on voter registration and participation, Democracy Works' Voting Information Project (VIP) (<https://www.influencewatch.org/non-profit/the-voting-information-project/>) provides users with locations for voting and information on their region's ballot. ^[20] VIP is included in the toolkit for the U.S. Election Assistance Commission. ^[21] The VIP was operated by Pew Charitable Trusts (<https://www.influencewatch.org/non-profit/pew-charitable-trusts/>) before becoming a project with Democracy Works.

Funding

Democracy Works' major donors include the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation (<https://www.influencewatch.org/non-profit/john-s-and-james-l-knight-foundation/>), the Democracy Fund (<https://www.influencewatch.org/non-profit/democracy->

alliance-democracy-fund/), the Rockefeller Brothers Fund (<https://www.influencewatch.org/non-profit/rockefeller-brothers-fund/>), the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation (<https://www.influencewatch.org/non-profit/john-d-and-catherine-t-macarthur-foundation/>), Pew Charitable Trusts (<https://www.influencewatch.org/non-profit/pew-charitable-trusts/>), the Quadrivium Foundation (<https://www.influencewatch.org/non-profit/quadrivium-foundation/>), and Luminate. ^[22] Other organizations that have donated to Democracy Works in the past are the Miami Foundation, the Omidyar Network Fund (<https://www.influencewatch.org/non-profit/omidyar-network/>), and Open Society Foundations (<https://www.influencewatch.org/non-profit/open-society-foundations/>). ^[23]

Leadership

Seth Flaxman is a co-founder and executive director of Democracy Works. He earned a Master of Public Policy in internet studies from Harvard University in 2011 and was selected as one of *Forbes'* "30 under 30" for law and policy in 2011. ^[24] ^[25]

Kathryn Peters is a co-founder and chief operating officer of Democracy Works and was the lead developer for TurboVote. She earned a Master of Public Policy in International and Global affairs from Harvard University in 2011. ^[26]

References



- Ballou-Aares, Daniella, and Vineeta Vijayaraghavan. "How Business Leaders Can Champion Democracy." Harvard Business Review, March 17, 2020. <https://hbr.org/2020/03/how-business-leaders-can-champion-democracy> (<https://hbr.org/2020/03/how-business-leaders-can-champion-democracy>). ^
- O'Neil, Jackie. "StanfordVotes Initiatives Increase Voting Accessibility, Engagement." The Stanford Daily, February 28, 2020. <https://www.stanforddaily.com/2020/02/27/voting-accessibility-engagement-increase-under-new-stanfordvotes-initiatives/> (<https://www.stanforddaily.com/2020/02/27/voting-accessibility-engagement-increase-under-new-stanfordvotes-initiatives/>). ^
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- Clark, Sara. "Civic Nation BrandVoice: How TurboVote Is Meeting Student Voters Where They Are." Forbes. Forbes Magazine, July 29, 2019. <https://www.forbes.com/sites/civication/2017/07/07/how-turbovote-is-meeting-student-voters-where-they-are/#78f532db11b8> (<https://www.forbes.com/sites/civication/2017/07/07/how-turbovote-is-meeting-student-voters-where-they-are/#78f532db11b8>). ^
- "Register to Vote." Seton Hall University, October 23, 2017. <https://www.shu.edu/student-government/register-to-vote.cfm> (<https://www.shu.edu/student-government/register-to-vote.cfm>). ^
- "New Partnership Allows Students to Vote in Every Election." The University of Alabama, September 24, 2018. <https://www.ua.edu/news/2018/09/new-partnership-allows-students-to-vote-in-every-election/> (<https://www.ua.edu/news/2018/09/new-partnership-allows-students-to-vote-in-every-election/>). ^
- Wells, Alexandra. "TurboVote Continues to Partner with the University of Alabama." The Setonian, September 19, 2019. <https://www.thesetonian.com/2019/09/19/turbovote-continues-to-partner-with-the-university-of-alabama/> (<https://www.thesetonian.com/2019/09/19/turbovote-continues-to-partner-with-the-university-of-alabama/>). ^

Directors, Employees & Supporters

Brady Kriss (<https://www.influencewatch.org/person/brady-kriss/>)
FORMER PARTNER SUCCESS LEAD

Child Organizations

The Voting Information Project (VIP) (Non-profit) (<https://www.influencewatch.org/non-profit/the-voting-information-project/>)

Coalition Memberships [ⓘ]

Bridge Alliance (<https://www.influencewatch.org/non-profit/bridge-alliance/>)

Donor Organizations [ⓘ]

Battery Foundation (Non-profit) (<https://www.influencewatch.org/non-profit/battery-foundation/>)

Democracy Fund (Non-profit) (<https://www.influencewatch.org/non-profit/democracy-fund/>)

John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation (Non-profit) (<https://www.influencewatch.org/non-profit/john-d-and-catherine-t-macarthur-foundation/>)

John S. and James L. Knight Foundation (Non-profit) (<https://www.influencewatch.org/non-profit/john-s-and-james-l-knight-foundation/>)

Omidyar Network Fund (Non-profit) (<https://www.influencewatch.org/non-profit/omidyar-network/>)

Open Society Foundations (OSF) (Non-profit) (<https://www.influencewatch.org/non-profit/open-society-foundations/>)

Pew Charitable Trusts (Non-profit) (<https://www.influencewatch.org/non-profit/pew-charitable-trusts/>)

Quadrivium Foundation (Non-profit) (<https://www.influencewatch.org/non-profit/quadrivium-foundation/>)

Rockefeller Brothers Fund (Non-profit) (<https://www.influencewatch.org/non-profit/rockefeller-brothers-fund/>)

 Service Employees International Union (SEIU) (Labor Union) (<https://www.influencewatch.org/labor-union/service-employees-international-union-seiu/>) (contribute-to-influencewatch/#report-error)

Nonprofit Information

- **Accounting Period:** December - November
- **Tax Exemption Received:** June 1, 2011

Available Filings

2017 Dec

Form Type	Form 990
Total revenue	\$4,091,954
Total functional expenses	\$3,798,288
Total assets (EOY)	\$930,070
Total liabilities (EOY)	\$189,296
Unrelated business income?	N
Total contributions	\$2,752,092
Program service revenue	\$1,339,136
Investment income	\$492
Comp. of current officers, directors, etc.	\$283,535
Form 990	PDF (HTTPS://PROJECTS.PROPUBLICA.ORG/NONPROFITS/DOWNLOAD-FILING?PATH=02_2019_PREFIXES_27-30%2F272460359_201712_990_2019021516101474.PDF)

2016 Dec

Form Type	Form 990
Total revenue	\$2,781,846
Total functional expenses	\$3,678,170
Total assets (EOY)	\$607,468
Total liabilities (EOY)	\$160,360

Unrelated business income?	N
Total contributions	\$955,406
Program service revenue	\$1,825,741
Investment income	\$699
Com p. of current officers, directors, etc.	\$224,090
Form 990	PDF (HTTPS://PROJECTS.PROPUBLICA.ORG/NONPROFITS/DOWNLOAD-FILING?PATH=01_2018_PREFIXES_27-27%2F272460359_201612_990_2018011915139946.PDF)

2015 Dec

Form Type	Form 990
Total revenue	\$2,057,053
Total functional expenses	\$2,518,206
Total assets (EOY)	\$1,407,082
Total liabilities (EOY)	\$43,650
Unrelated business income?	N
Total contributions	\$1,128,804
Program service revenue	\$926,726
Investment income	\$806
Com p. of current officers, directors, etc.	\$216,424
Form 990	PDF (HTTPS://PROJECTS.PROPUBLICA.ORG/NONPROFITS/DOWNLOAD-FILING?PATH=2017_03_EC%2F27-2460359_990_201512.PDF)

2014 Dec

Form Type	Form 990
Total revenue	\$2,877,027
Total functional expenses	\$2,273,576
Total assets (EOY)	\$1,830,111

Total liabilities (EOY)	\$5,526
Unrelated business income?	N
Total contributions	\$1,846,644
Program service revenue	\$1,029,833
Investment income	\$550
Comp. of current officers, directors, etc.	\$172,780
Form 990	PDF (HTTPS://PROJECTS.PROPUBLICA.ORG/NONPROFITS/DOWNLOAD-FILING?PATH=2016_01_EO%2F13-136632_11201_272460359.PDF)

2013 Dec

Form Type	Form 990
Total revenue	\$1,928,545
Total functional expenses	\$1,233,823
Total assets (EOY)	\$1,408,891
Total liabilities (EOY)	\$175,257
Unrelated business income?	N
Total contributions	\$1,492,312
Program service revenue	\$436,233
Investment income	\$0
Comp. of current officers, directors, etc.	\$150,690
Form 990	PDF (HTTPS://PROJECTS.PROPUBLICA.ORG/NONPROFITS/DOWNLOAD-FILING?PATH=2014_12_EO%2F27-2460359_990_201312.PDF)

2012 Dec

Form Type	Form 990
Total revenue	\$1,520,375
Total functional expenses	\$982,875

Total assets (EOY)	\$600,046
Total liabilities (EOY)	\$61,134
Unrelated business income?	N
Total contributions	\$1,228,127
Program service revenue	\$292,237
Investment income	\$11
Com p. of current officers, directors, etc.	\$111,938
Form 990	PDF (HTTPS://PROJECTS.PROPUBLICA.ORG/NONPROFITS/DOWNLOAD-FILING?PATH=2013_07_EO%2F27-2460359_990_201212.PDF)

2011 Dec

Form Type	Form 990EZ
Total revenue	\$27,051
Total functional expenses	\$29,955
Total assets (EOY)	\$13,412
Total liabilities (EOY)	\$12,000
Total contributions	\$0
Program service revenue	\$0
Investment income	\$0
Com p. of current officers, directors, etc.	\$0
Form 990	PDF (HTTPS://PROJECTS.PROPUBLICA.ORG/NONPROFITS/DOWNLOAD-FILING?PATH=2012_10_EO%2F27-2460359_990EZ_201112.PDF)

Additional Filings (PDFs)

- 2018 Dec Form 990 (https://projects.propublica.org/nonprofits/download-filing?path=01_2020_prefixes_26-27%2F272460359_201812_990_2020012417063809.pdf)
- 2010 Dec Form 990EZ (https://projects.propublica.org/nonprofits/download-filing?path=2011_06_EO%2F27-2460359_990EZ_201012.pdf)

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