



Building civic learning games for Wisconsin changemakers

Libby Falck

she/her/hers

libby@forwardlabs.io



Opportunity





Problem

**Only 20% of eligible voters
cast a ballot in Wisconsin's
spring election.**



Problem

**1 in 3 Americans can name
all three branches of the
federal government.**

(Legislative, Judicial, Executive)





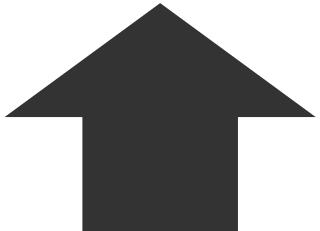
Problem

American schools spend
**\$52/student on STEM each
year.**

They spend 5 cents on civics.



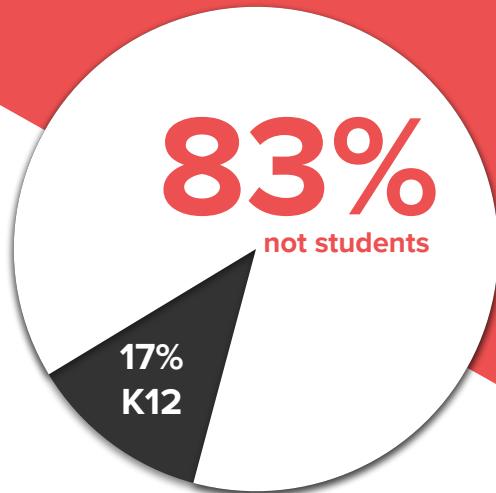
**Increase in K12
civic investment**



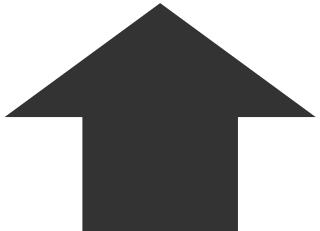
What about
everyone
else?

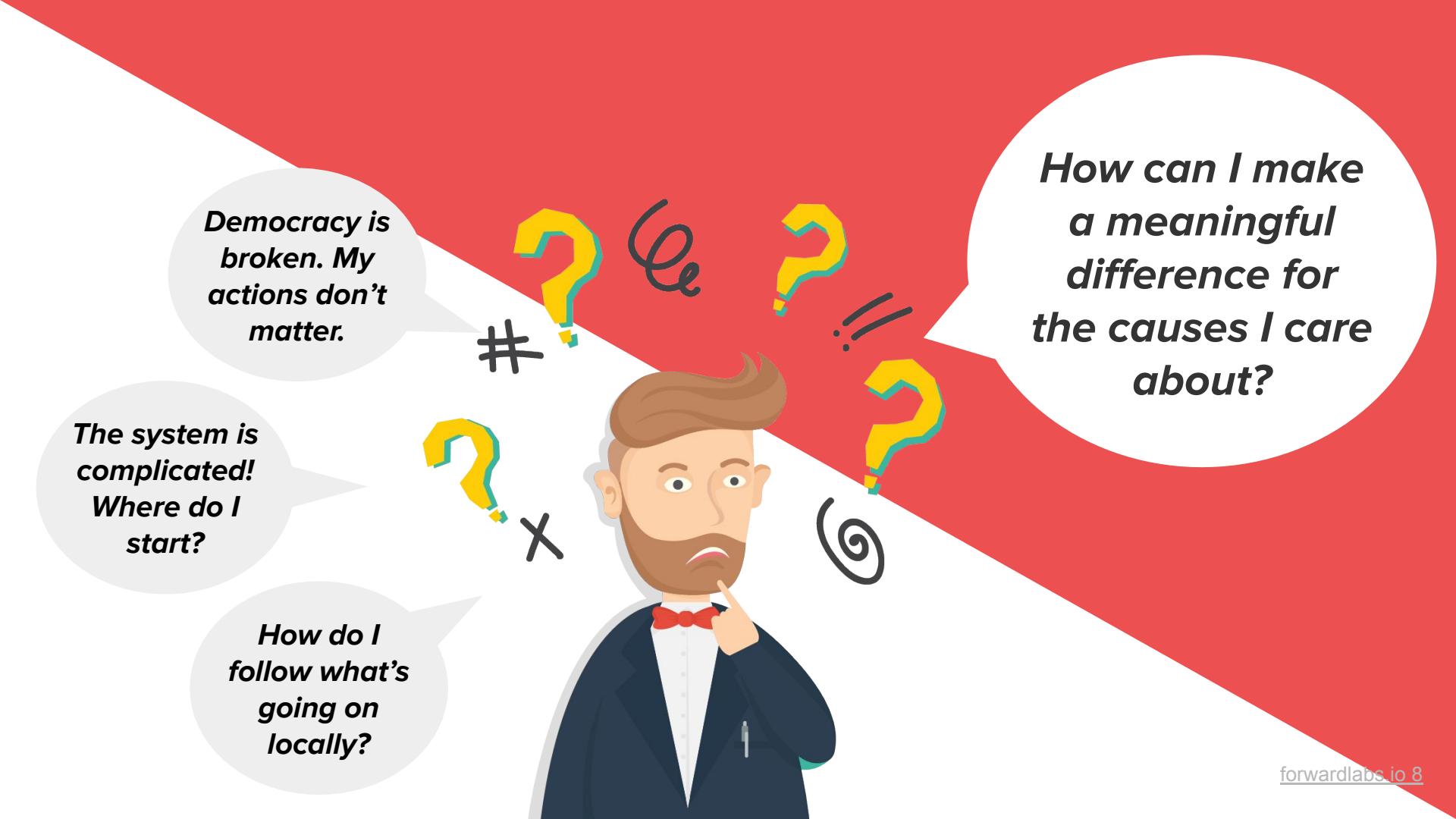


US POPULATION



Increase in K12
civic investment



A central illustration of a man with a beard and a bow tie, looking thoughtful with his hand on his chin. He is surrounded by four thought bubbles on a red and white diagonal background. The bubbles contain text and symbols: a question mark, a hashtag, a cross, and a spiral. The text in the bubbles reads:

Democracy is broken. My actions don't matter.

The system is complicated! Where do I start?

How do I follow what's going on locally?

How can I make a meaningful difference for the causes I care about?

How do I follow what's going on locally?

The system is complicated! Where do I start?

Democracy is broken. My actions don't matter.

How can I make a meaningful difference for the causes I care about?



Three unaddressed barriers to civic participation.



1. Lack of access to local information
2. Limited opportunities for civic learning
3. Lack of personalization



Can learning games make a difference here?

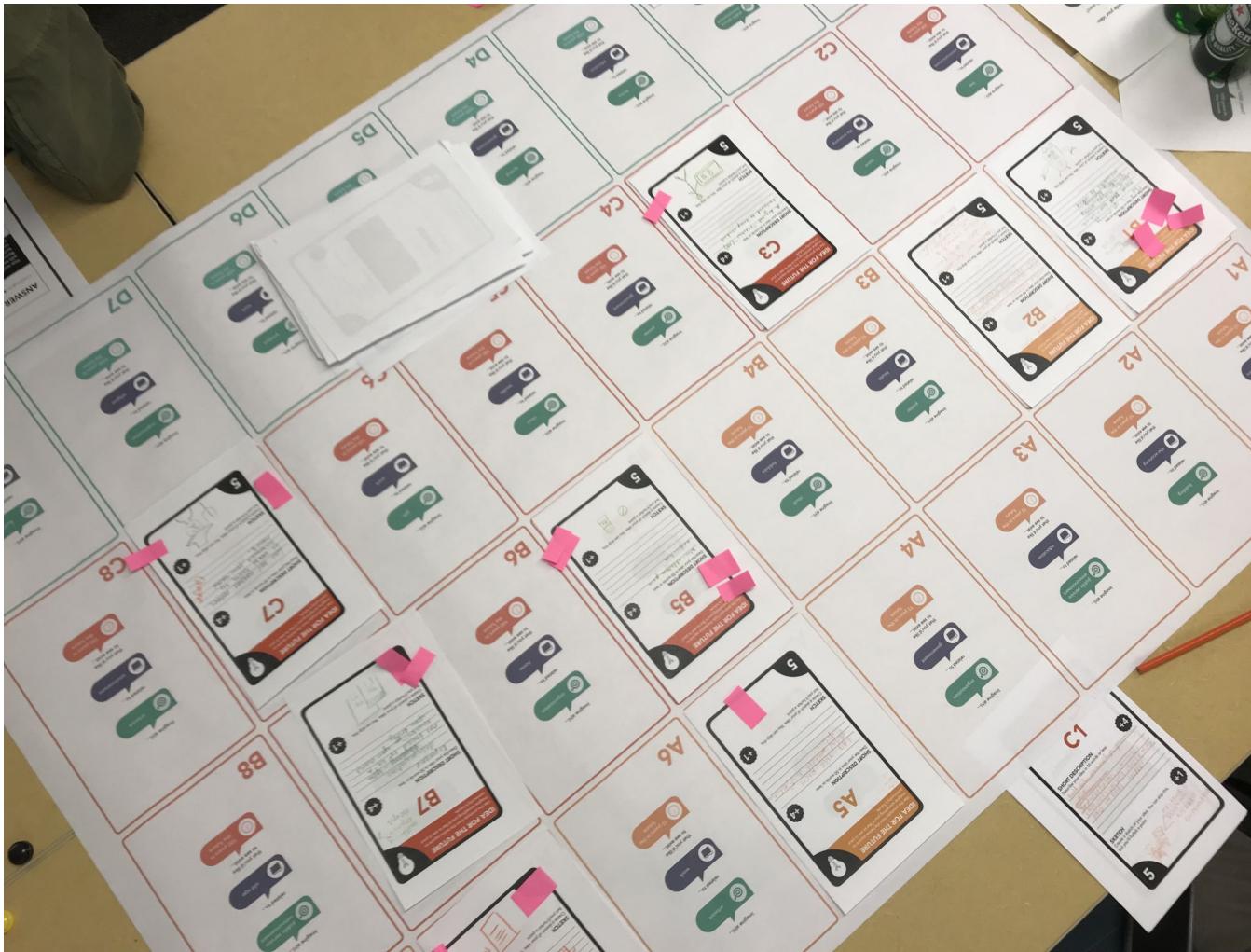


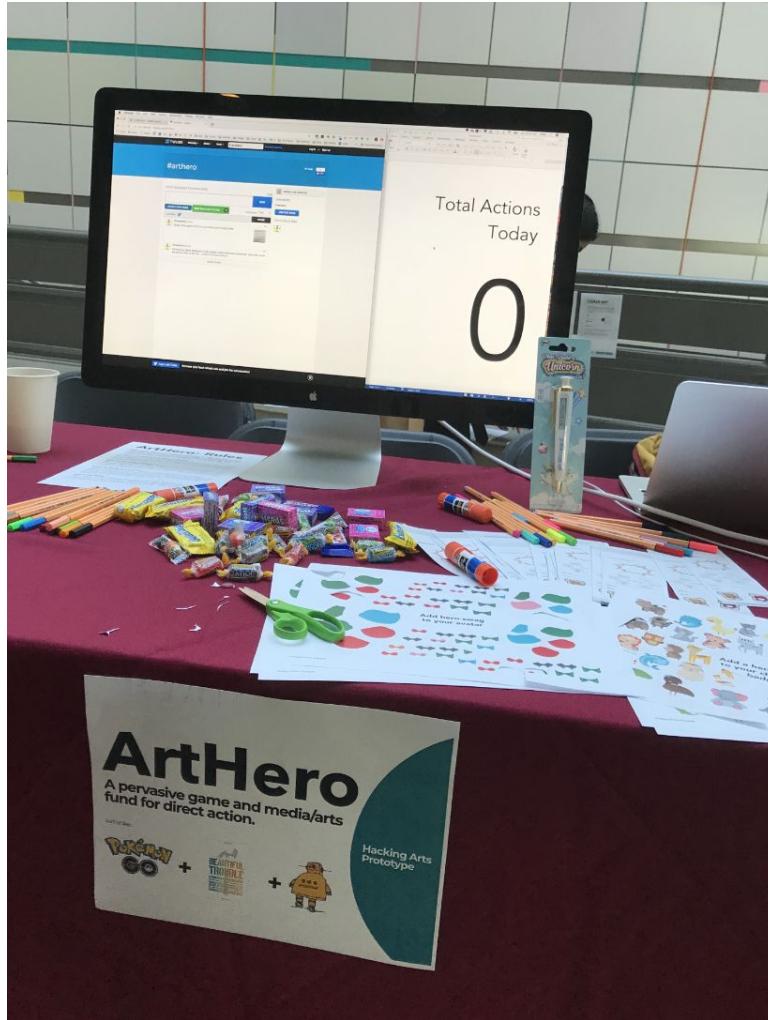
1. Lack of access to local information
2. Limited opportunities for civic learning
3. Lack of personalization



6 Lessons from Learning Games

1. Offer choices
2. Scaffold learning
3. Provide feedback
4. Build community
5. Create opportunities for play & expression
6. Crowdsource change









Forward Labs



1. Forward Directory

The screenshot shows the homepage of the Forward Directory. At the top, there is a navigation bar with a search bar containing "What do you care about?", a user sign-in link, and a teal "Add" button. Below the header, the word "Forward" is written in large, bold, teal letters, followed by "Wisconsin's directory for local civic information." in black. Underneath this text are three buttons: "Groups", "Actions", and "Campaigns". To the right of these buttons is a large, stylized illustration of a diverse crowd of people's faces, rendered in black and white. Below the main title and search bar is a search form with fields for "Keyword" and "Regions", and a "Search" button. At the bottom left is a logo for "The Forward App" with its name in black text below it. At the bottom center is the text "By and for Wisconsinites". The footer of the page contains the URL "forwardlabs.io 16".

What do you care about?

Explore The Directory Activity About Sign in or Register Add

Forward

Wisconsin's directory for local civic information.

Groups Actions Campaigns

Keyword Causes

Regions

Search

The Forward App

By and for Wisconsinites

forwardlabs.io 16



2. 2020 GOTV

25 teams
completed
1,312 missions in
4 days.

The screenshot shows the top navigation bar with icons for Google Fi, battery level (35%), and the time (8:14 PM). Below the bar is a banner for the "GO-TV GAME" in Wisconsin, encouraging people to get out the vote. The main content area is titled "Anytime Missions" and lists seven mission categories: Chalk It Up: Library, Chalk It Up: Public Park, Window Decorations, Registration Double Take, Down for Down Ballot?, Letter to the Editor, and Voting Pumpkins. Each category is enclosed in a light gray box. At the bottom right of the screen, there is a link "abs.io 17".



Pilots & Prototypes - 2020 GOTV

Verizon 10:39 AM

Let's get out the vote in Wisconsin!

FOR RELIABLE VOTING INFORMATION: CONTACT LIBBY WITH GAME QUESTIONS: libby@forwardlabs.io

myvote.wi.gov

Home Play Bonus Anytime More 94 pts

FRI/SAT: Trivia: Assembly Seats

3 points

How many seats are in the Wisconsin State Assembly?

- 2
- 72
- 99
- 222

Go

back

Tries left: 3

Verizon 10:40 AM

Let's get out the vote in Wisconsin!

FOR RELIABLE VOTING INFORMATION: CONTACT LIBBY WITH GAME QUESTIONS: libby@forwardlabs.io

myvote.wi.gov

Home Play Bonus Anytime More 97 pts

Pet Promotion

20 points

Dress up your dog, cat, gerbil, etc with some voting swag and send us a picture. Maybe a VOTE bandana for the dog? Or a tiny little VOTE hat for your bearded dragon? Up to you! Need some inspiration? Check out this patriotic pooch.



Verizon 10:41 AM

Let's get out the vote in Wisconsin!

FOR RELIABLE VOTING INFORMATION: CONTACT LIBBY WITH GAME QUESTIONS: libby@forwardlabs.io

myvote.wi.gov

Home Play Bonus Anytime More 100 pts

Sew What?

30 points

Hey Betsy Ross! This mission is for YOU.

Sew, knit, or crochet something that promotes voting! What the heck, you could also embroider you animal! Once you complete your work of art upload a picture of it here. And bonus points if you share your project as a public post on social using the hashtag #CreativeGOTV





Pilots & Prototypes - 2020 GOTV





2021 Earth Day

**135 players in
53 teams
completed
2309 missions.**





Pilots & Prototypes - 2021 Earth Day



REGISTER

bit.ly/playearthday

**4 DAYS
100+ MISSIONS
FUN PRIZES
PLAY ON A TEAM
OR PLAY SOLO!
\$0-\$10**

**PLAY ANYWHERE
IN WISCONSIN**

A graphic for Wisconsin Earth Day Trivia. It features a white circle on a dark background with a megaphone pointing towards it. Inside the circle is a green question mark icon above a trivia question. Below the question is a green button labeled "EARTH DAY TRIVIA". At the bottom of the circle, there is a "JOIN THE GAME:" label and a URL.

?

In 2017, what portion of Wisconsin's electricity came from burning coal?

EARTH DAY TRIVIA

JOIN THE GAME:
bit.ly/playearthday

**22 orgs
created the
game's
152 missions.**



Pilots & Prototypes - 2021 Earth Day



dvh

9 days ago

0

✓ 50

KID CHALLENGE: COLORING SHEETS Print out these fun nature themed coloring pages and get creative...You can also hang them in your window for your neighbors to see while they take walks in your neighborhood. It will definitely brighten their day. Only children under the age of 13 qualify for this special Kids Mission! To complete the mission, upload a picture of your completed coloring sheet! Mission created by Forward Labs



Leave Comment



Verizon 11:17 PM

25



Ramstacks



Take a selfie picking up a piece of litter in your community.

COMPLETE BY 10AM SUNDAY
Mission by the Dane County Office of Energy & Climate Change



falcon42



Liked



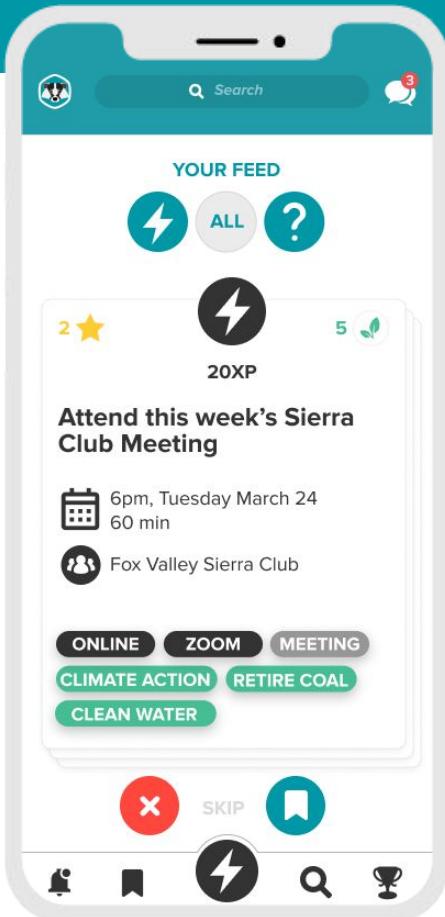
Comment





Solution

Forward
THE DEMOCRACY APP



Action Feed

Follow organizations working on the causes you care about and get alerts on actions you can take to support them.

Civics Refresher

Brush up on the basics of how our government works with trivia and action-oriented civic challenges.

Community

Meet neighbors with shared passions, follow friends, and collaborate with others to influence local policies.



Product Summary



Learning Game



**Personalized
Recommendations**



**Local Data
Crowdsourcing**

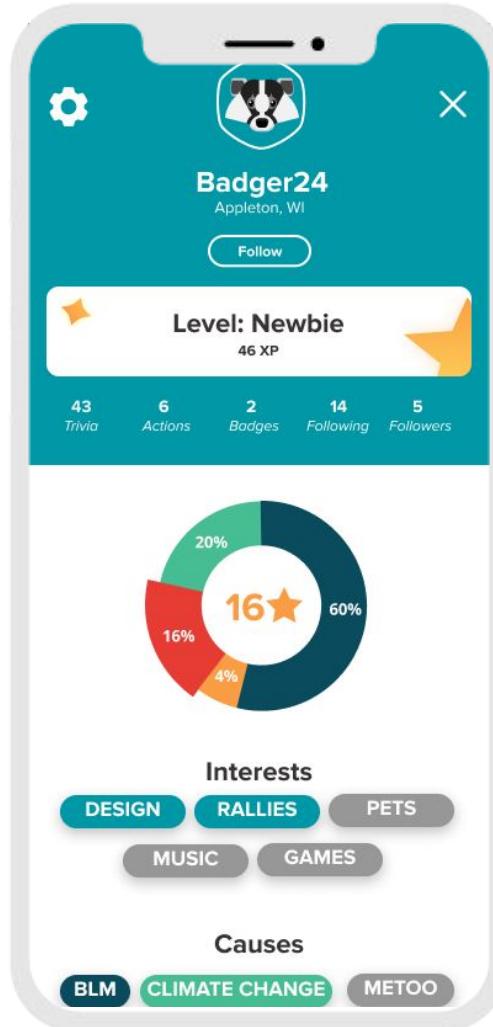
[View the Forward User Story Deck](#)



Personalization



1. Only follow causes, organizations, and tags you care about
2. Track your personal progress and learning





Learning Loops



1. Earn badges & win prizes
2. Play with a team
3. Climb the leaderboard
4. Take control of locations

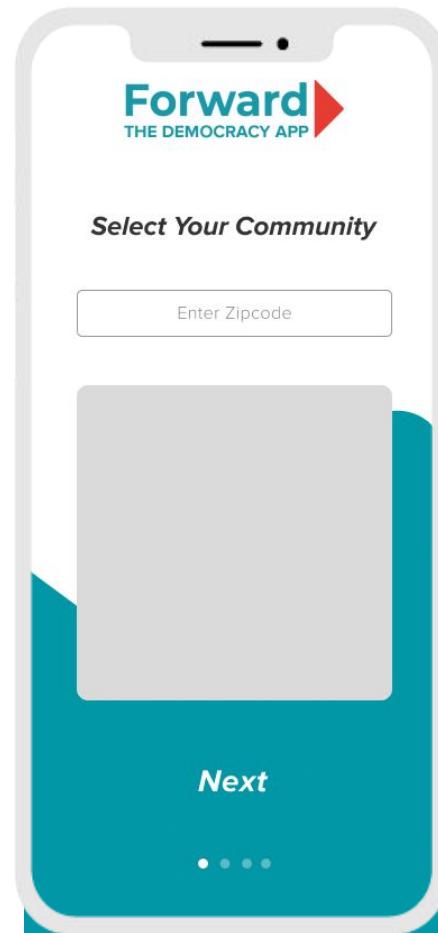




Local First

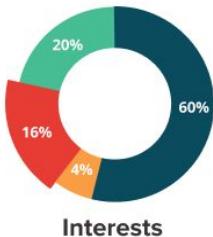


- 1. Get information on local issues first**
- 2. Crowdsourcing new content is part of the game!**





Product



INTERESTS
DESIGN RALLIES PETS
MUSIC GAMES

Causes

CAUSES
BLM CLIMATE CHANGE METOO
CANCER RESEARCH VOTING RIGHTS

[View the Forward User Story Deck](#)

The image displays three mobile phone screens illustrating the Forward app's interface:

- Your Feed:** Shows a feed item for "Attend this week's Sierra Club Meeting". It includes a 2-star rating, a lightning bolt icon indicating 20XP, and details about the event: 6pm, Tuesday March 24, 60 min, and the organization: Fox Valley Sierra Club. Below the event are cause tags: ONLINE, ZOOM, MEETING, CLIMATE ACTION, RETIRE COAL, and CLEAN WATER. At the bottom are interaction buttons: a red circle with an X, a blue bookmark icon with the word "SKIP", a lightning bolt icon, a search icon, and a trophy icon.
- Profile Detail:** A profile card for "Limor Shani" from "District 9, Neenah". The card features a circular profile picture of a woman with short brown hair. Below the card is another profile card for "Tiana Leykin" from "District 23, Appleton". At the bottom of the screen is a large question mark icon with the text: "This is a local alderperson. Who is she and where does she serve?"
- Activity:** Shows a feed item for "JennyS earned the 3-Day Streak badge" at 4:26pm. Another item shows "Badger24 attended the Rally for Local Climate Action" at 3:26pm, held at "Houdini Plaza". At the bottom is a summary: "NEW ACTION! JennyS posted Attend this week's Sierra Club".



What's Next?



Next Step



May 29 - November 29
One city or statewide

Player goals:

- Increase voter turnout
- Increase pre-post civic literacy scores
- Increase awareness of local organizations



Team



Libby Falck
Founder & CEO

libby@forwardlabs.io



Sandbox Innovation Fund Program



MIT IDEAS GLOBAL CHALLENGE





Needs

Technical

- 1. Use mockups to scope technical plan and work estimates**
- 2. Build and lead technical team (consultant and volunteer)**

Non-Technical

- 1. Fundraising (sponsorship & grants)**
- 2. Partnership building - cities and orgs**
- 3. Promotion & Marketing plan**

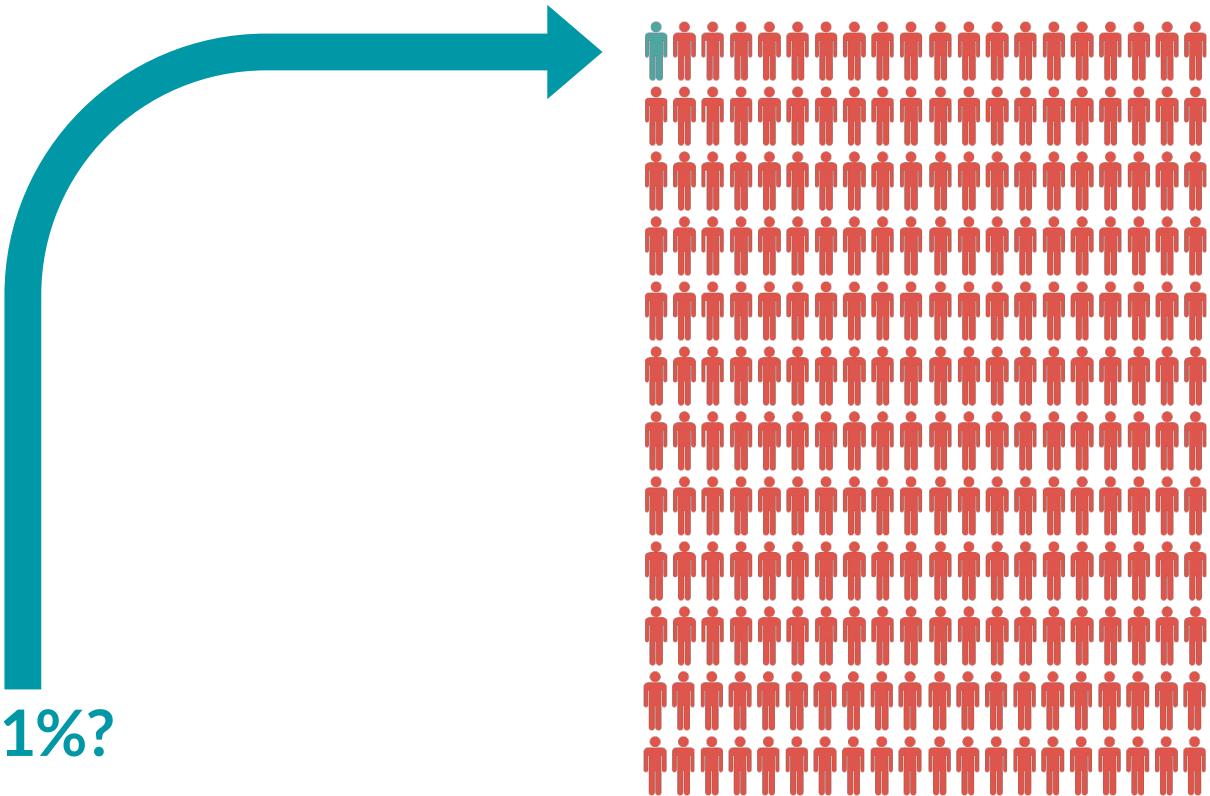


Recap





Recap





Problem

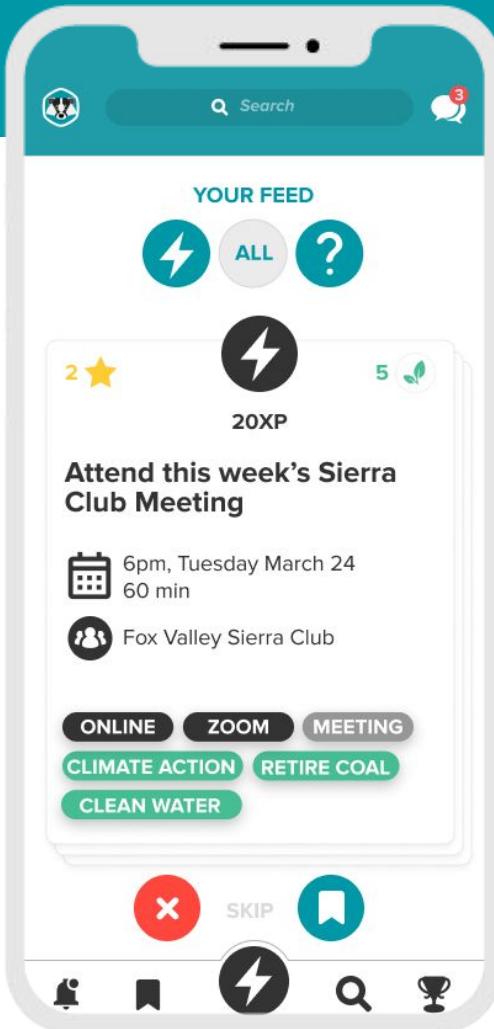
... you only need **3.5%**
to make a difference.



Forward

THE DEMOCRACY APP

Forward delivers **vetted, real-world actions** users can take to support the causes they care about while **learning the civic skills** necessary to make real and lasting change, **starting locally.**



Help with:

Technical Scoping

Fundraising

Partnership Building

Email Libby Falck
libby@forwardlabs.io