
The Charles Benton Next Generation Engagement Awards

Broadband Internet is the opportunity-generating infrastructure of the 21st century. As a non-partisan, non-profit voice of communities committed to ensuring fast, affordable, and reliable broadband access for all, Next Century Cities has grown to 130 member communities nationwide. These mayors and city leaders are unleashing the power of next-generation broadband to connect their residents to new economic, educational, and civic opportunities.

The Charles Benton Next Generation Engagement Awards are a new competition led by Next Century Cities that will reward communities harnessing high-speed Internet to enhance citizens' democratic participation and engagement.

Winning communities will receive financial resources, technical support from experts, and workshops to connect with other innovators—all designed to strengthen and learn from the cities' efforts to drive more participatory democracy and civic engagement using high-speed broadband.

With the Benton Awards, Next Century Cities will elevate the wide array of creative activities and possibilities by municipalities that use high-speed broadband to enhance civic engagement and participation. Next Century Cities will also take steps to encourage the replication and spread of these innovations in tech-powered civic engagement nationwide.

Visit www.nextcenturycities.org/next-generation-engagement-awards for more information about the Benton Awards.

Benton Awards Facts

- Winning communities will be awarded up to \$30,000 to implement or enhance projects that tap high-speed Internet access to better engage their citizens in the democratic and civic process.
- Winning communities will also receive hands-on technical assistance from Next Century Cities to implement their plans and peer-to-peer connections with other innovative municipalities.
 - Applications will be accepted from April 6 through June 15, 2016 at www.nextcenturycities.org/next-generation-engagement-awards.
- At least three communities will win the inaugural Benton Awards. Winners will be announced Late Summer 2016.
- Examples of areas ripe for innovation include: Participatory budgeting; Public transportation and urban planning; Involvement in local government deliberations; or Community concern reporting and response.
- All municipalities are encouraged to apply. Communities do not need to be members of Next Century Cities. Applications will only be accepted from municipal employees.
- Communities applying will be expected to demonstrate how they will contribute funds or use in-kind or partner support in addition to the award to support the project that enhances civic engagement.
- The award program is being primarily supported by the Democracy Fund, with additional support from the Benton Foundation.

For more information on the Benton Awards, contact Todd O'Boyle, Deputy Director of Next Century Cities at Todd@NextCenturyCities.org.