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# Letter From Executive Director **AMANDA DAFLOS**

Dear Friends and Partners:

This summer, I will enter my second year as the executive director of the Bloomberg Center for Public Innovation at Johns Hopkins University, and I am proud to acknowledge the growth and success of the Center as a result of the close collaboration between Center staff, city leadership, Johns Hopkins, and Bloomberg Philanthropies. In 2021, the Center was an idea. Today, we are a thriving organization focused on making public institutions more creative and innovative so that they can stretch to meet the needs of those they are designed to serve.

As we embarked upon creating the Center, we worked to quickly deliver support to cities through world-class programming – knowing that public leaders are working every day to support millions of people in myriad critical ways. While the good work of cities occasionally earns recognition in press releases, news stories, and marketing campaigns, we know that the majority of the work is recognized outside of the headlines – through the smiles, reactions of relief, and subtle everyday moments as blocks, libraries, parks, resident services, and community experiences change.

The Center aims to raise the ambition and creativity of cities while building skills that are essential to



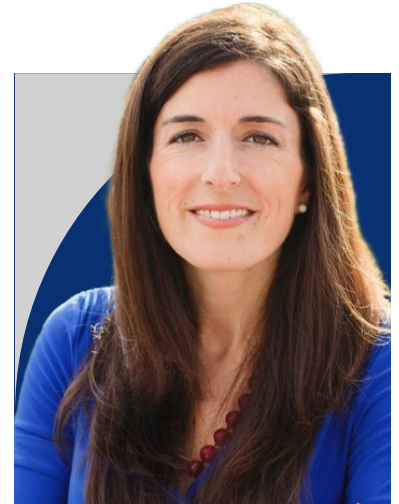
government – data literacy, digital literacy, program development and delivery, research, assessment, prototyping, iteration, storytelling, and user-centered design. In the Center’s first full year, we have been honored to partner with leaders who are on the front lines of change to offer resources, technical support, grants, and other capacity-building tools. We are honored to support public institutions and leaders that aim to listen to people’s perspectives, introduce new methods, and build public trust in ways that will create positive outcomes for generations.

I have spent my entire career working for a more thoughtful and visionary government that is, with no hesitation, able to stretch and adapt to meet the ever-changing needs of residents. I am grateful for each and every one of our global partners who share this belief and sheer perseverance and work to deliver every day. The field of public innovation will continue to be shaped by those who push to apply new methods, introduce more creative ideas, and never relent.

*With gratitude,*



**AMANDA DAFLOS**  
Executive Director



**“Our cities and local governments are a critical part of how we all live and work. Our mission is to infuse this essential work with the most innovative and effective people, practices, and programs that drive better results for residents.”**



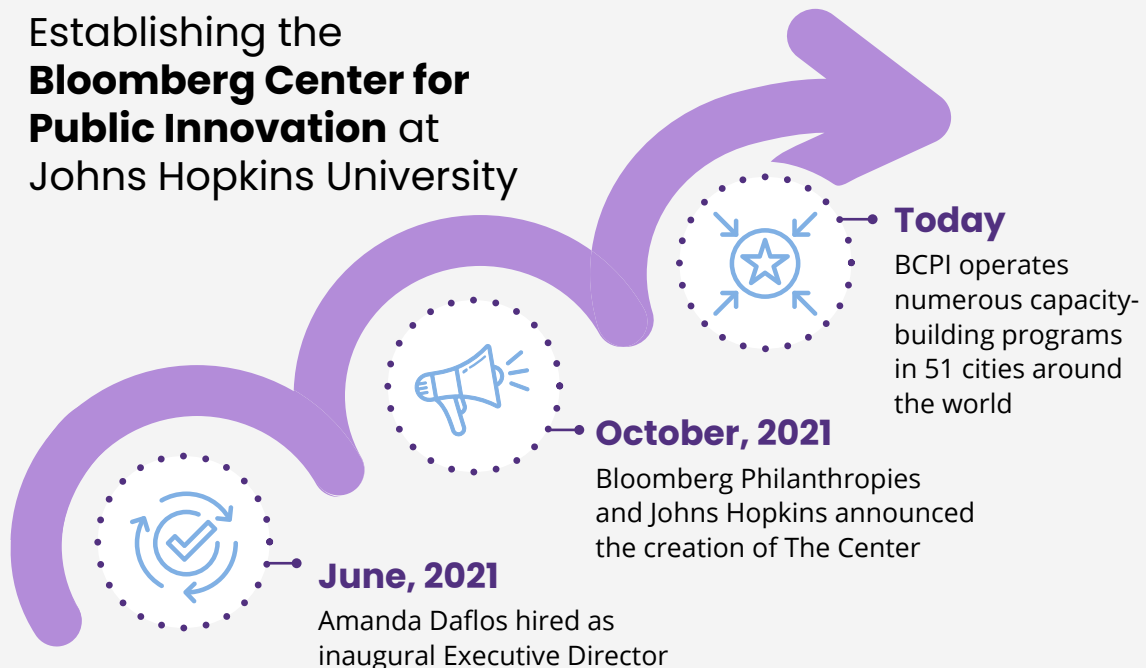


# A New and Growing Center

Our growing team works to bring to life the vision for a world where creative, ambitious, and outcomes-driven governments facilitate joyful lives for people and their communities.

The Center generates positive impacts for cities worldwide and new insights into the role, future, and impact of innovation in government.

## Establishing the **Bloomberg Center for Public Innovation** at Johns Hopkins University



HALLÓ

HOLA

## Expert Team

HELLO

Diverse staff who collectively speak more than a dozen languages and draw on decades of experience and expertise from work in the private, nonprofit, and public sectors.

# Our Work in City Governments Worldwide

We equip city leaders and staff with world-class tools and skills so that they are empowered to work with residents to deliver on new ideas.



**TOOLS & TRAINING**



**TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE**



**FINANCIAL GRANTS**



**CAPACITY BUILDING**



**DEDICATED PERSONNEL**

**51**

**Cities and local governments** engaged through grants, training, and experiences.

...in...

**6**

**Countries** where the Center is active today.

# Advancing Public Innovation Through Cornerstone Programs

A selection of the Center's cornerstone programs include:



## Digital Innovation Teams (i-teams)

Building digital skills, knowledge, and capacity



## Procurement i-teams

Improving procurement through data, human-centered design, digital capacity building, and resident focus



## Innovation Training

Applying innovation methods to generate and scale solutions



## Love Your Block

Fostering collaboration between city hall and communities



## Bloomberg Cities Network and Hub Programs

Connecting global city leaders to resources and each other



## Bloomberg Public Innovation Fellowship

Translating knowledge into leading-edge practice and policy



## Working across more than 20 disciplines to support cities

Issues ranging from housing to police reform to gang violence reduction to homelessness and sanitation – the Center supports cities that are working to bring new ideas to the most important issues facing residents.

Born out of an expansion of the long-standing partnership between Bloomberg Philanthropies and Johns Hopkins University, the Center is a new and important part of Johns Hopkins' growing focus on public sector innovation.



# Digital Transformation





# Our Approach

We believe successful digital transformation leverages technology to disrupt government processes, scale innovation and design, and expand services for the people who need the most support. We help cities respond to the dynamic impacts of emerging technology through coaching, training, peer support, and toolkits for cities around the world, including:

## Digital Transformation

The Center works to develop digital governance, standards, policy, and metrics that can be shared and implemented by local governments around the world.

## Digital Procurement Training

The Center supports a cohort of cities as they look to make procurement more strategic and equitable through the use of human-centered design and the integration of digital tools.

Learn more at:

[publicinnovation.jhu.edu/digital](https://publicinnovation.jhu.edu/digital)



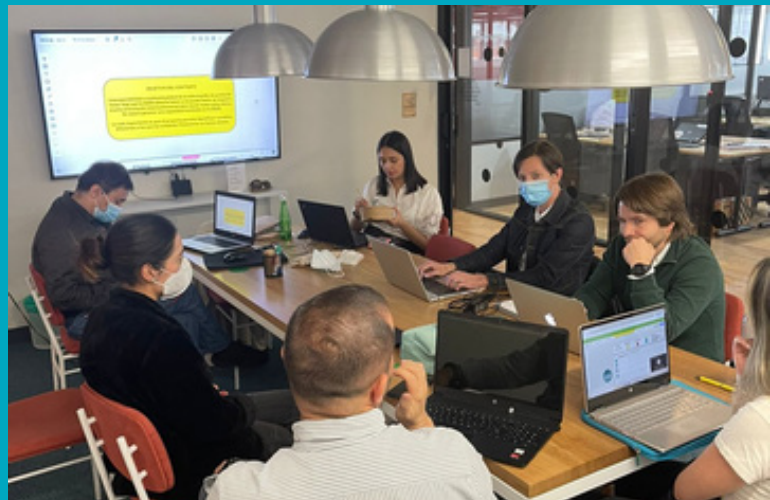
**“Digital service delivery and transparency help governments grow trust, increase equity, and connect people to the critical services they need. Today, the rapid evolution of technology enables innovation at scale. The momentum driven by cities and their partners has built a strong foundation for advancing the next generation of digital solutions across the globe.”**

**MAI-LING GARCIA**  
Digital Practice Director

# Highlights

**Mexico City's 'Llave' provides a key to services for the city's adult population.** Llave, a single sign-on system that gives users a digital access key to more than two dozen city services, has registered over **1,100,000 new users**, nearing a total of **4.9 million people**.

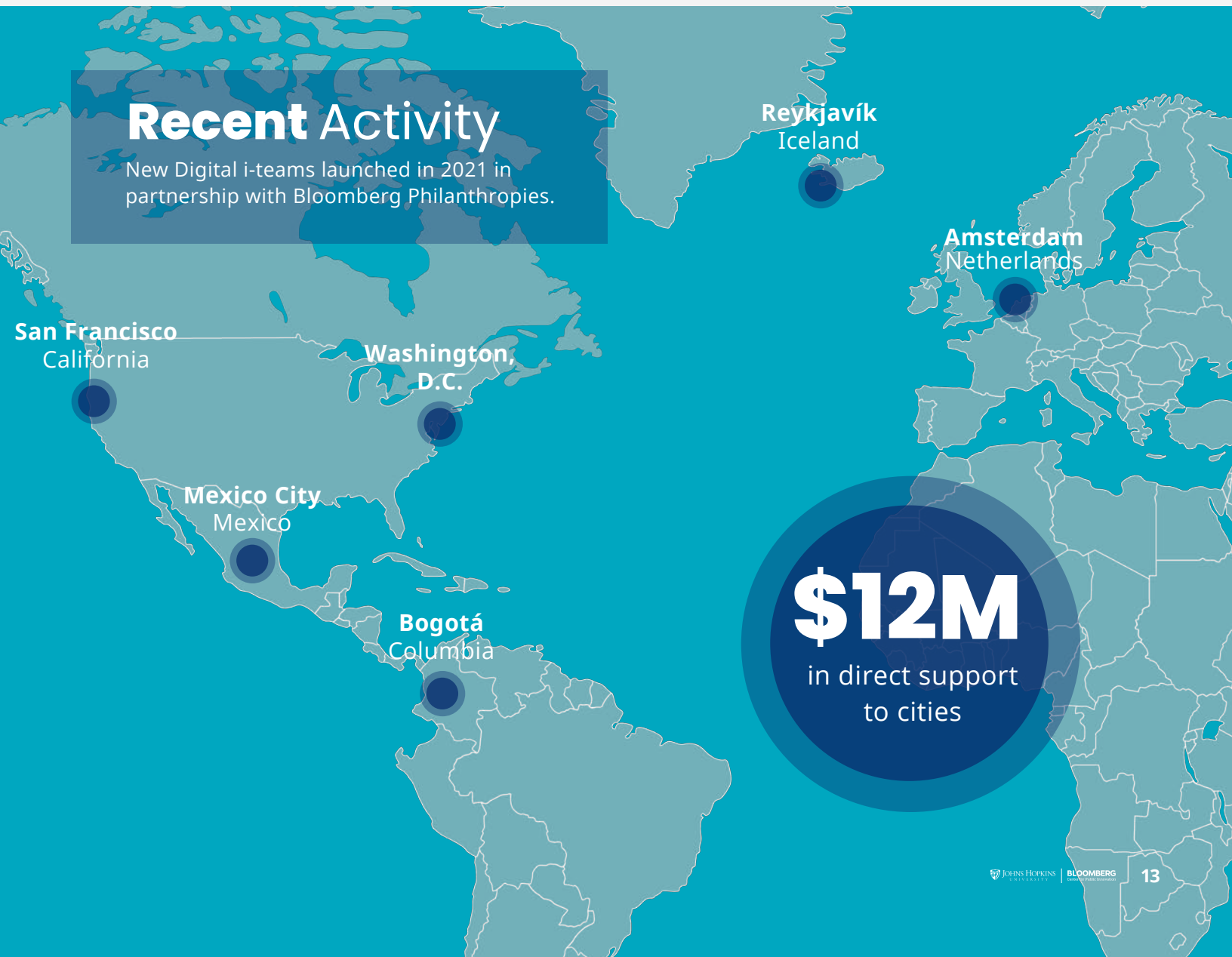
**Reykjavík's "A Better City for Children" campaign is digitizing a previously paper-based system** to make youth social and school support services more accessible, targeted, efficient, and secure for the city's **80,000+ children and their families**.



**Amsterdam's Digital i-team aims to develop the emerging field of digital urban planning.** The city is combining data and geographic 3D modeling to improve housing equity, create economic opportunity, and increase access to digital services across the city with specific attention to the **90,000+ residents** of the young and diverse Zuidooost neighborhood.

**51** Digital i-team staff members who represent new capacity in global city halls

Ongoing **technical support** to cities focused on capacity building





# Innovation Support



# Our Approach

Our Innovation Practice works to help cities effectively use data analysis, human-centered design, inclusive innovation, project management, and storytelling to solve problems and drive better results for local communities through key programs that include:

## i-teams

The Center supports the creation and development of Innovation Teams in city governments around the world. These teams are focused on supporting mayors to develop bold, new solutions to pressing challenges in collaboration with community members and subject-matter leaders.

## Innovation Training Programs

This training helps mayors and their leadership teams adopt design-based innovation techniques to engage residents in researching, testing, prototyping, and scaling creative ideas that have lasting impact. Available in a variety of formats, the program helps interdisciplinary city teams build their innovation capabilities and develop solutions to a pressing city problem.

Learn more at:

[publicinnovation.jhu.edu/innovation](http://publicinnovation.jhu.edu/innovation)



**“Innovation has the power to address long-standing challenges and create positive change in cities. From large-scale community and economic challenges to our day-to-day experiences, it’s clear that the combination of centering people, leveraging data, and collaborating in new ways will help cities and residents thrive.”**

**JUSTIN ENTZMINGER**  
Innovation Practice Director



# Highlights



**Orlando, Florida, USA secures \$8 million to address youth homelessness.** Innovation training participants leveraged equitable design and co-creation approaches to secure new federal support for centralizing wrap-around services to combat homelessness and connect youth to education and vocational opportunities.



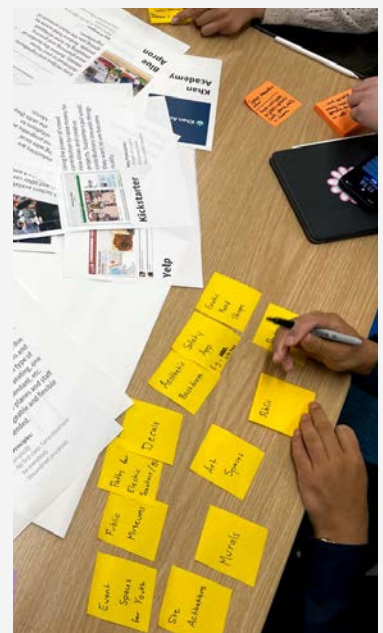
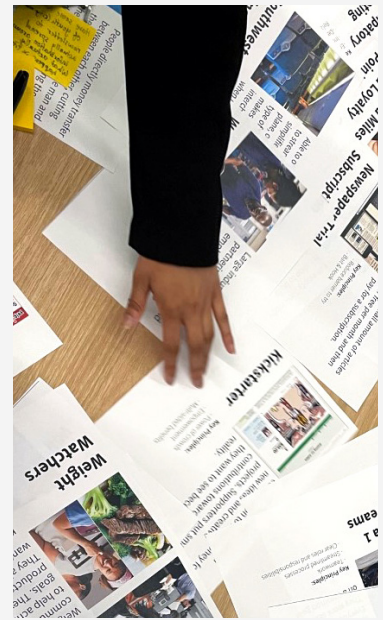
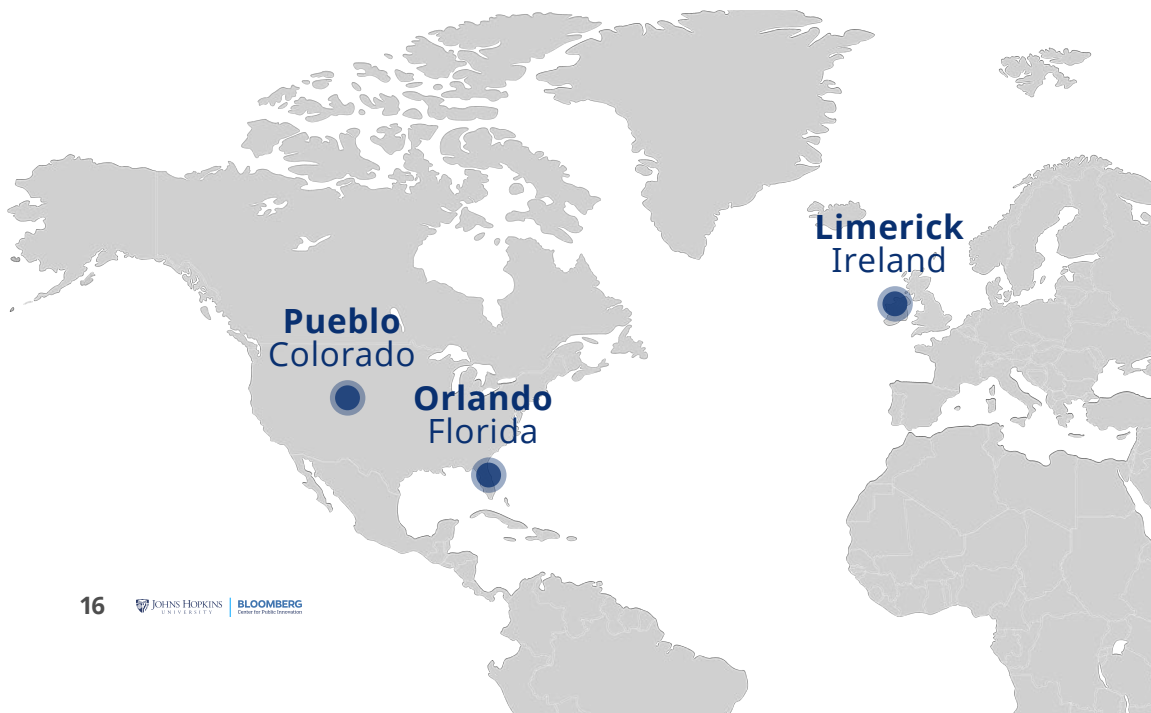
**Pueblo, Colorado, USA launches new youth violence prevention initiative.** New mental health support and mentorship initiative is powered by \$900,000 in funding and partnerships at the state and local level.



**Limerick, Ireland creates community vibrancy path to innovation.** City staff engaged more than 200 community stakeholders through pop-ups in parks and a downtown disco night to co-create a process with residents and local organizations for future activations of underutilized downtown spaces.



**Cities create new innovation offices** as a result of the Center's engagements and develop bold visions for delivering improved outcomes for their residents.





# Recent Activity

**25**  
cities  
participated



**266**  
city employees  
trained

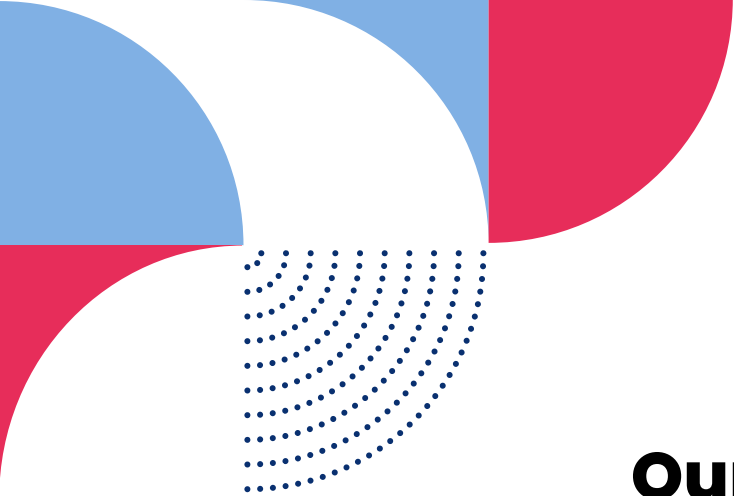


**3,109**  
residents  
engaged directly



# Civic Engagement





# Our Approach

The Love Your Block program supports cities through technical assistance, coaching, access to a community of practice, and grants to help deliver high-impact projects and mini-grants for resident-powered projects in each location.

It is a tested, high-impact service strategy that builds trust between residents and city governments by facilitating open communication, collaboration, and partnership as mayors' offices empower residents to revitalize their communities one block at a time.

In each city, a dedicated leadership team that includes a Love Your Block Fellow, an AmeriCorps VISTA, and a designated city employee lead work to build trust and engage a diverse set of community members in supporting and sustaining projects during and after participation.

Learn more at:

[publicinnovation.jhu.edu/civic-engagement](http://publicinnovation.jhu.edu/civic-engagement)



**“There’s a lot of literature about how you build civic infrastructure, and Love Your Block and our civic engagement programming is where we’re helping cities test those theories. We’re learning in real time from these cities. Over the coming years, that’s how this field is going to evolve. The cities are going to inform our theory, and that theory will inform their practice.”**

**TRACY M. COLUNGA**  
Civic Engagement  
Practice Director

# Highlights



**In Jackson, Tennessee, the Love Your Block program completed 62 projects** ranging from home repairs to park cleanups. The team in Jackson enlisted more than 330 resident volunteers who gave more than 900 hours of service and together helped clear more than 17,000 pounds of trash. Because of its participation in Love Your Block, the City of Jackson has added permanent staff in community engagement positions to continue the successes started through Love Your Block, a testament to the Center's ability to grow capacity for public sector innovation at the level of city hall staff.

*"Love Your Block is showing people that the local government does care. We come meet people where they are, start the conversation and help them start on improvement projects, and now residents see the Love Your Block team as a partner for positive transformation in the community."*

- Abby Palmer  
Neighborhood Specialist for the City of Jackson, TN



**In Duluth, Minnesota, the Love Your Block program facilitated 13 resident-powered projects** that included a coordinated food-pickup cooperative for working and single mothers, outfitting playgrounds with equipment and trash receptacles, and the painting of a community mural in the Harbor Highlands neighborhood.

*"Being a part of that trust-building and having people walk away feeling good and being able to look at the city a little better in that light, it's really cool to know you're nurturing that relationship. Having people feel heard is a really tangible thing, and it's a lot of what we do."*

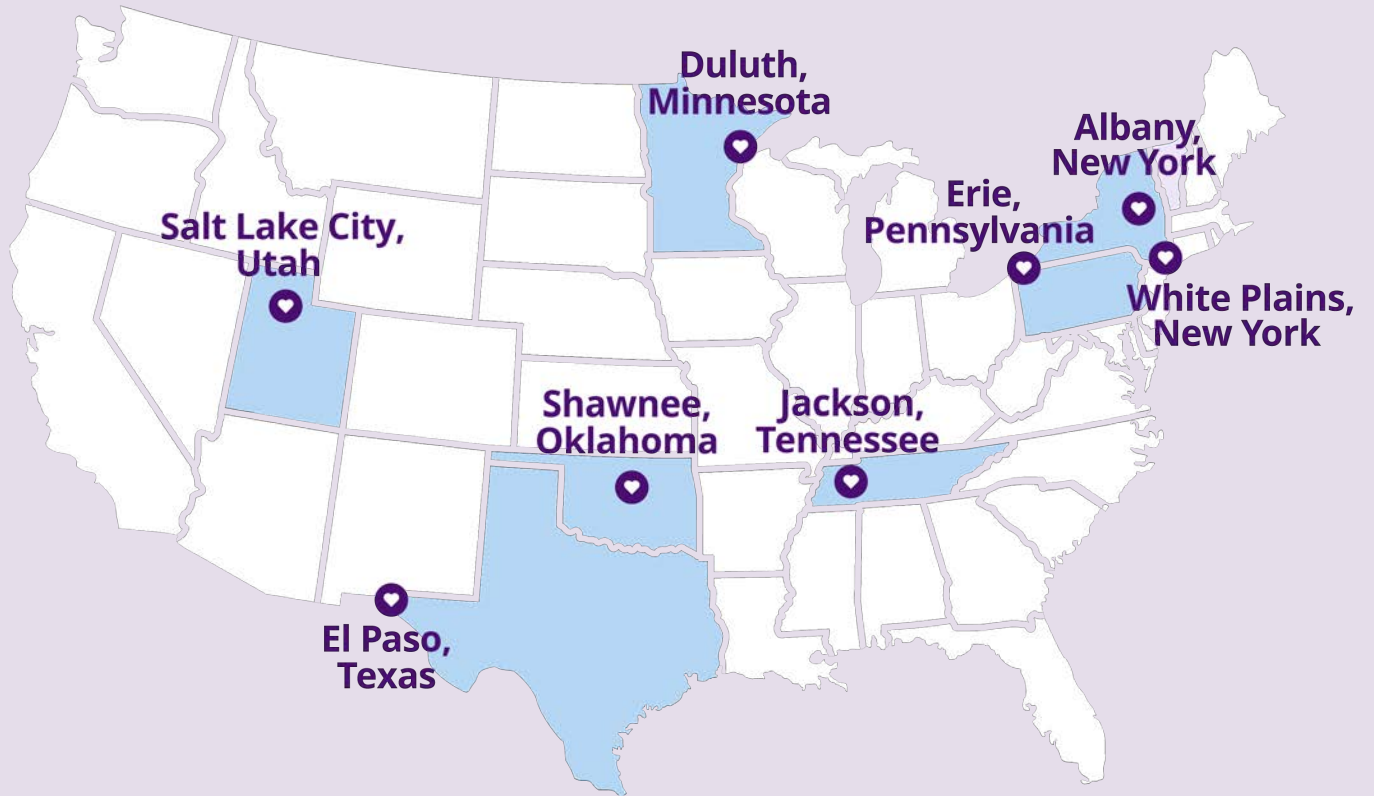
- Annika Frazer  
City of Duluth Love Your Block AmeriCorps VISTA



## 35 public sector innovators

from eight cities attended the Love Your Block Learning Academy in Baltimore in November, where they conferenced, shared successes and challenges, learned from the Center's experienced practitioners, and inspired each other for continued successes in 2023 and beyond.

# 2022 Love Your Block Cities



## Recent Activity



**66,300**

**Pounds**  
of trash  
cleared



**10,100**  
Volunteer  
**hours**

**7,100**

**Residents**  
and partners  
engaged



**7,100**

Civic deliberation  
**hours** with residents  
and stakeholders

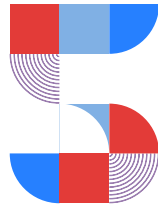


**85**

Mini-  
grants  
**awarded**



**76**  
Project  
**sites**



# Global Collaborations





# Bloomberg Cities Network

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## Our Approach



The Bloomberg Cities Network quickly established itself in 2022 as the world's premier community for leaders advancing innovation, civic engagement, and data practices in their cities. The Network grows the worldwide government innovation ecosystem by connecting city leaders to each other, spotlighting the latest methods and practices, presenting exclusive events, and providing specialized resources.

Learn more at:

[bloombergcities.jhu.edu/network-application](https://bloombergcities.jhu.edu/network-application)



## Highlights

-  In mid-2022 BCPI launched the **Bloomberg Cities Network**, which now includes more than 1,500 city leaders and staff from 485 cities in 65 countries on six continents.
-  BCPI enabled inaugural Network members to attend world-class in-person and virtual events and meet with leaders in the public innovation field to assist them in building their network and deepening their own practice.

**“Too often, the stories of cities and their leaders are left untold. When we harness the power of story and design, we create new opportunities for stronger, more equitable communities. That power is one of the keys to changing lives and driving better results for residents.”**

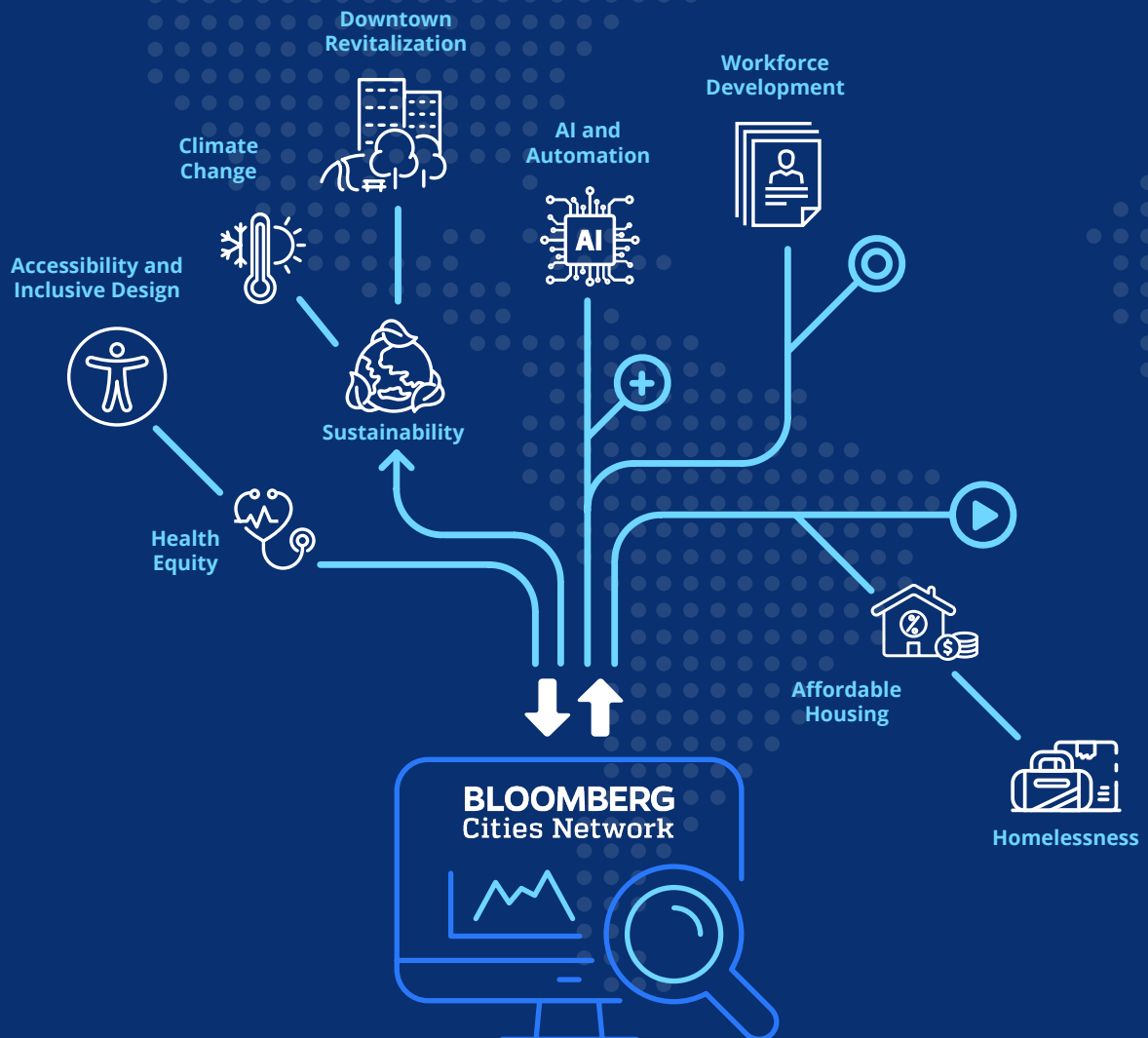
**JOVAN HACKLEY**

Communications  
Practice Director

# BLOOMBERG Cities Network

## Recent Activity

Helping to connect city leaders seeking to share, replicate, and adapt solutions through exclusive events and interactions focused on building capacity for public innovation and helping leaders expand their ideas and collaboration on a wide range of issues:





**1,200+**

Network members

**485**

Cities with active  
Network members

**65**

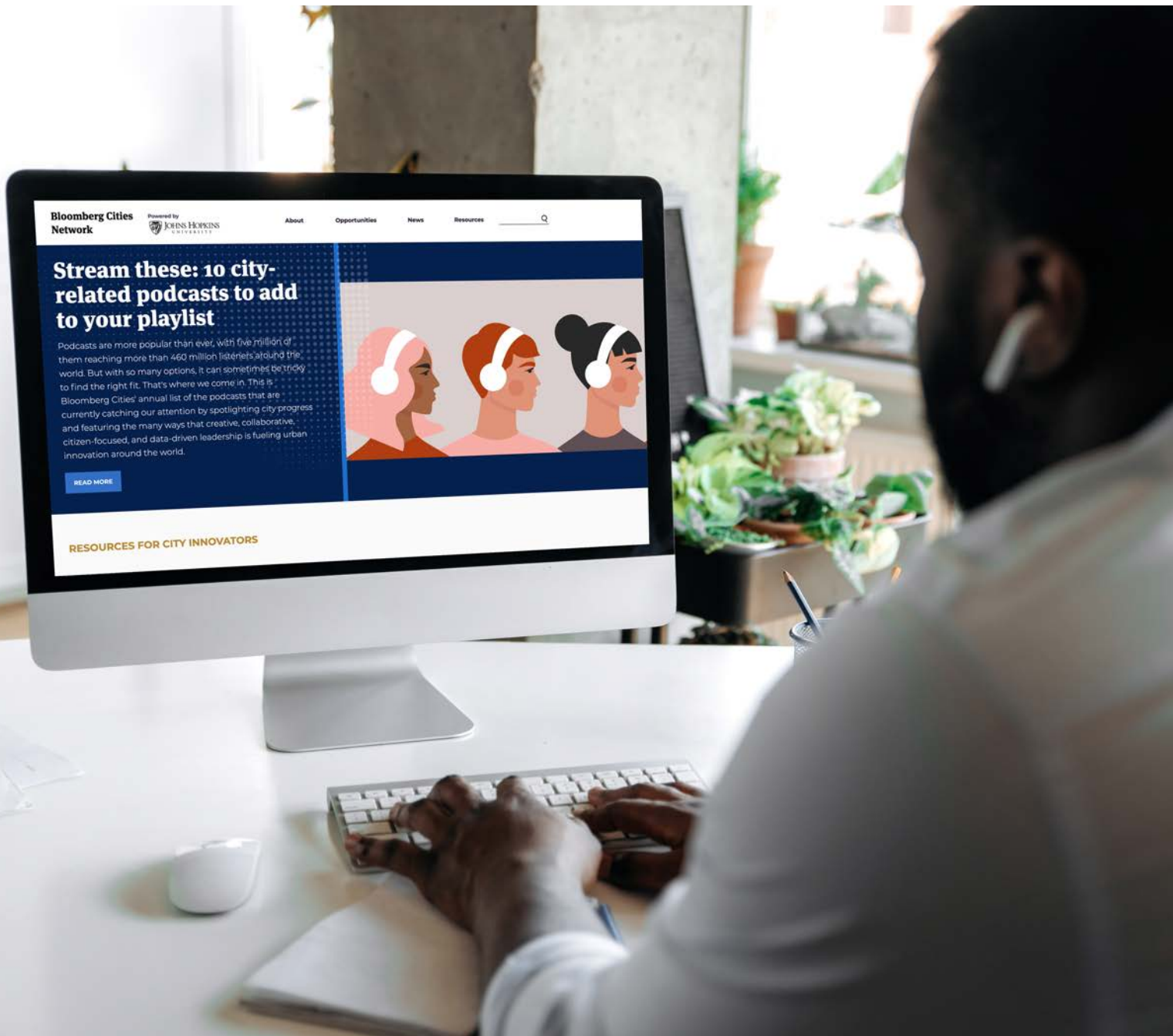
Countries

**6**

Continents



# Resources for Leaders





# Bloomberg Cities Network Hub

## Our Approach

The Bloomberg Cities Network Hub is an easily accessible tool for global government leaders seeking access a variety of grant opportunities and training programs that will help their cities. The Network Hub website also connects city leaders to news and stories of other cities working on similar challenges and opportunities so they may replicate great ideas and connect with city leaders globally.

Learn more at:

[bloombergcities.jhu.edu](https://bloombergcities.jhu.edu)

## Highlights



1,184 pages of content



411 documents available for download



Access to a deep program portfolio that includes:

City Data Alliance

CityLab

Cycling  
Infrastructure

Federal  
Assistance e311

Innovation  
Training

Mayors Challenge

## Recent Activity

**130,000**  
users in  
2022

**299,000**  
pageviews

**2.59M**  
search  
impressions

# Local Infrastructure Hub

## Our Approach

The Local Infrastructure Hub connects cities with the resources and expert advice they need to access federal infrastructure funding to drive progress, improve communities, and deliver results for residents. As part of cities' access to Local Infrastructure Hub grant-application coaching, city staff personnel receive training on best practices for inclusive and equitable co-creation with residents of community projects and solutions. News, toolkits, fact sheets, community engagement workbooks and additional resources help cities make the most of the more than 400 funding opportunities presented by the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA), also known as the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, and leaders can connect with mayors, policy experts, and special guests for exclusive presentations and grant-application bootcamps.

Learn more at:

[localinfrastructurehub.org](https://localinfrastructurehub.org)

## Highlights



**5,000+ registrants enlisted** to attend the workshop for federal grant applications through the Local Infrastructure Hub's specialized training resources.



**400 cities trained** through Local Infrastructure Hub training, tools, and workbooks developed in 2022 on community engagement and other best practices.





## Recent Activity

**32,000**

users since summer 2022 launch for a combined 82,000 total pageviews

**863**

city staff received technical assistance in three bootcamps

**732**

small- and mid-sized cities used the Local Infrastructure Hub portal in the fourth quarter of 2022



# Academics and Research





## Our Approach

The Bloomberg Public Innovation Fellowship brings accomplished Public Innovation practitioners from the United States and abroad into a two-year fellowship at the Center. Fellows have the opportunity to reflect on their experience, develop original research and thought leadership, and actively contribute to public sector knowledge and practice.

Learn more at:

[publicinnovation.jhu.edu/academic](https://publicinnovation.jhu.edu/academic)

## Student Experiences at Johns Hopkins

The Center’s student engagement programs work to deliver applied learning, field opportunities, and inspiration to Johns Hopkins students. Our active work is creating pathways to careers for those interested in public service, including hiring PhD students to support the work of our team and cities. In 2023, the Center will work to place students in city programs and ultimately develop a standardized and dedicated student experience in cities. In addition, the Center will continue to expand ways of sparking new interest in how students can impact their communities as volunteers, researchers, and career contributors to government.

*“I had never really considered public service in these ways before and how many things we take for granted. What I loved learning is that including everybody in planning is an active process. You can’t just open the doors. You have to guide people in and include them in the conversation. It really opened up my eyes to how big of a world there is in local government, and it inspires me to do work in that space in the future.”*

– **Kobi Khong**  
Johns Hopkins University public health student



**“At the Bloomberg Center for Public Innovation at Johns Hopkins University, we believe that when local government leaders and researchers work together, residents win. Now, more than ever, our cities need our collaboration and commitment to develop a knowledge base around innovation practice and solutions.”**

**DR. FRANCISCA ROJAS**  
Academic Practice  
Director

# Highlights



The Center's recent work includes launching its first academic course for Johns Hopkins undergraduate students, *Co-Governance for Public Space: Sharing Power while Ensuring Public Value*. The Center fellows are also leading conversations with cities and thought leaders worldwide as the Center expands the footprint of public innovation globally.

“

**The role of trust in government innovation**

*“Success in the relationships between people and cities hinges on the core element of trust. When trust is present, we see great things happen. What many leaders struggle with is understanding how to systematically build trust, effectively respond when trust fails, and the key contributors and signals that indicate trust.”*

– **Terrance Smith**  
Bloomberg Public Innovation Fellow



“

**Friction as a necessity and opportunity in government innovation**

*“Equitable communities that successfully share power and continuously improve systems, spaces, and relationships are those that develop the capacity to both live with and leverage the inevitable factors of friction and difference.”*

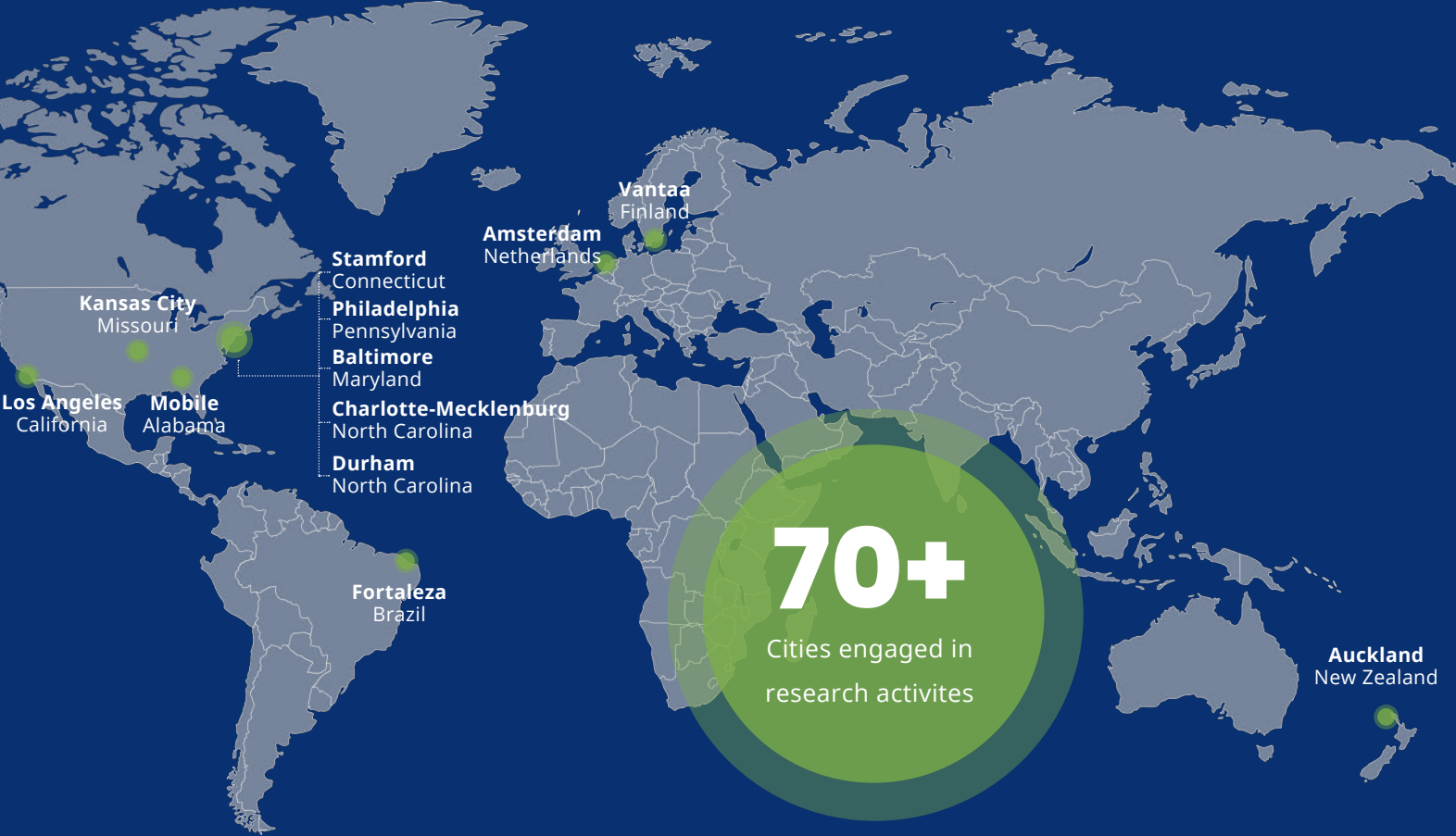
– **Tommi Laitio**  
Bloomberg Public Innovation Fellow



# Recent Activity

The Bloomberg Center for Public Innovation at Johns Hopkins designed and launched a first-of-its-kind fellowship that enables leading public sector officials space to develop thought leadership and advance the field. In 2022, the Center launched the first two fellowships with the selection of two individuals well known in the field of public innovation who are now advancing global thinking on the topics of public trust and public space.

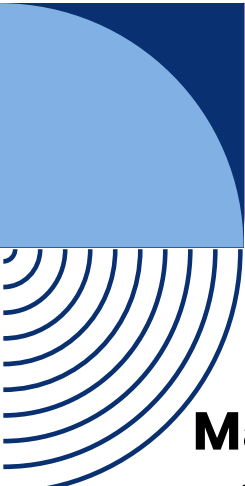
# City Engagement





# Thought Leadership





## Marrying cutting-edge practice with world-class research

### Our Approach

Public innovation has grown exponentially in the decade since the initial launch of innovation labs, and the Center is conducting research to better understand how cities and public servants are building lasting capacity to unlock more innovative public services and engage in more ambitious problem solving.

### Highlights

Dedicated innovation labs and i-teams have been established in over 100 cities since the first teams were established in 2008. Innovation continues to proliferate, sustain its presence through political transitions, and grow as a core component of local governments and their ability to function. Innovation practice is simultaneously broadening its scope and moving toward tackling systemic challenges, in addition to its initial focus on addressing discrete problems. Cities with innovation teams are more adept than ever at using data quickly and efficiently to tailor solutions to their population’s most pressing needs.

Learn more at:

[publicinnovation.jhu.edu](http://publicinnovation.jhu.edu)

### Recent Activity

The Center provides state-of-the-field snapshots of government innovation, laying a research foundation for scholarship in 2023 and beyond through briefs, case studies, and learning tools.

## Growth in Global Innovation

While human-centered design and service design were novel concepts when the first labs were set up in city halls, the concepts are now mainstream. Design skills are in demand, and innovation-focused staff roles are invaluable for teams and agencies on the policy-making front lines.

Local government innovation units

10x growth from 2010 to 2016

300% growth from 2016 to 2022

120+ Innovation units now operate in cities across the globe



## Stay Connected

**At the heart of the work we do** to help cities innovate is our commitment to improving lives. We live this commitment by carrying out our mission to marry cutting-edge practice with world-class research in order to help leaders transform the culture of government, deliver exceptional results for residents, and inspire trust in public service. Our work is made possible by Bloomberg Philanthropies and Johns Hopkins University, two of the most respected names in the world whose shared commitment to creating lasting, positive change provides a foundation and home for our critical work. The many additional partners and supporters who have shared this journey with us – and the many more who will join in the coming months and years – do so knowing we will continue to work tirelessly to create a world in which creative, ambitious, and outcomes-driven governments facilitate joyful lives for people and their communities.

**Stay connected with the Center** as we continue to build and strengthen the capacity for innovation in cities throughout the world:

[publicinnovation.jhu.edu](https://publicinnovation.jhu.edu)

Follow [@publicinno](https://twitter.com/publicinno)    

[publicinnovation@jhu.edu](mailto:publicinnovation@jhu.edu)



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## EXECUTIVE TEAM

**AMANDA DAFLOS**  
Executive Director

**AMY MILLER**  
Strategy and  
Operations Director

**JOVAN HACKLEY**  
Communications  
Director

**JUSTIN ENTZMINGER**  
Innovation Director

**MAI-LING GARCIA**  
Digital Director

**TRACY COLUNGA**  
Civic Engagement  
Director

**DR. FRANCISCA M. ROJAS**  
Academic Director



More than

**200**

years of combined  
experience  
working with local  
governments

**Diverse  
staff**

with expertise  
drawn from the  
private, nonprofit,  
and public  
sectors



Speak more than  
**12**  
languages

Impacting the lives of  
**200+**  
million people

**Thank You**  
to the cities across the world that partner with us in transforming local government



**“Building a great team and making strategic, thoughtful decisions are key to the success of every organization.”**

**AMY D. MILLER**  
Strategy and Operations  
Director



**BLOOMBERG**  
Center for Public Innovation  
AT JOHNS HOPKINS

ANNUAL REPORT

**PARTNERS IN  
INNOVATION**

IMPACT HIGHLIGHTS 2021 - 2022

