

# REAL MONEY, REAL POWER

## PARTICIPATORY BUDGETING



GINNY BROWNE, PROJECT MANAGER  
Participatory Budgeting Project



# ABOUT PBP

## HISTORY

Founded in 2009, incorporated as nonprofit in 2011

## MISSION

To empower people to decide together how to spend public money.

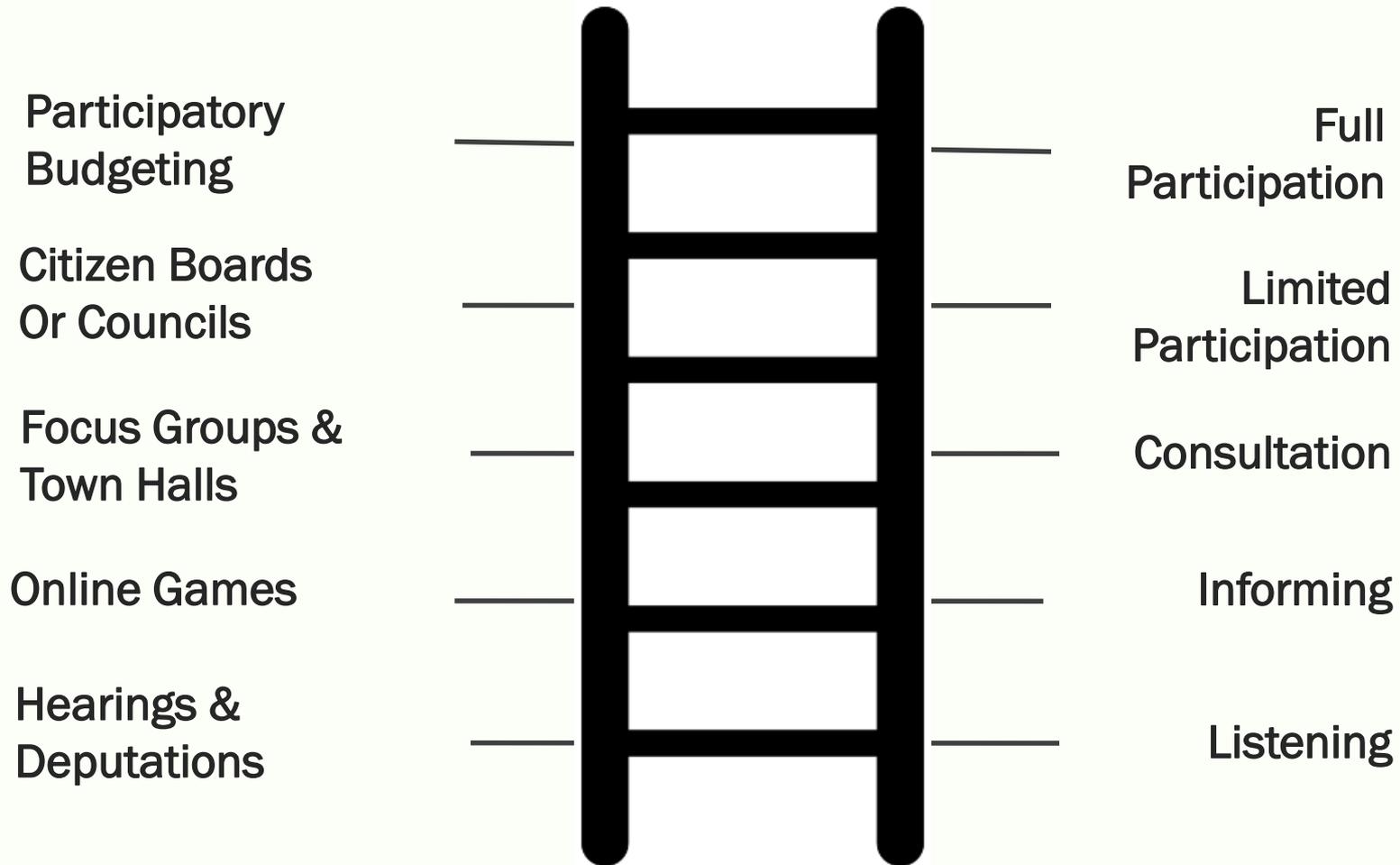
## PROGRAM AREAS

- Technical Assistance
- Movement Building

## WHERE WE WORK

Across the US and Canada, with staff in New York City, Oakland, and Chicago

# A LADDER OF BUDGET PARTICIPATION



# WHAT IS PARTICIPATORY BUDGETING?

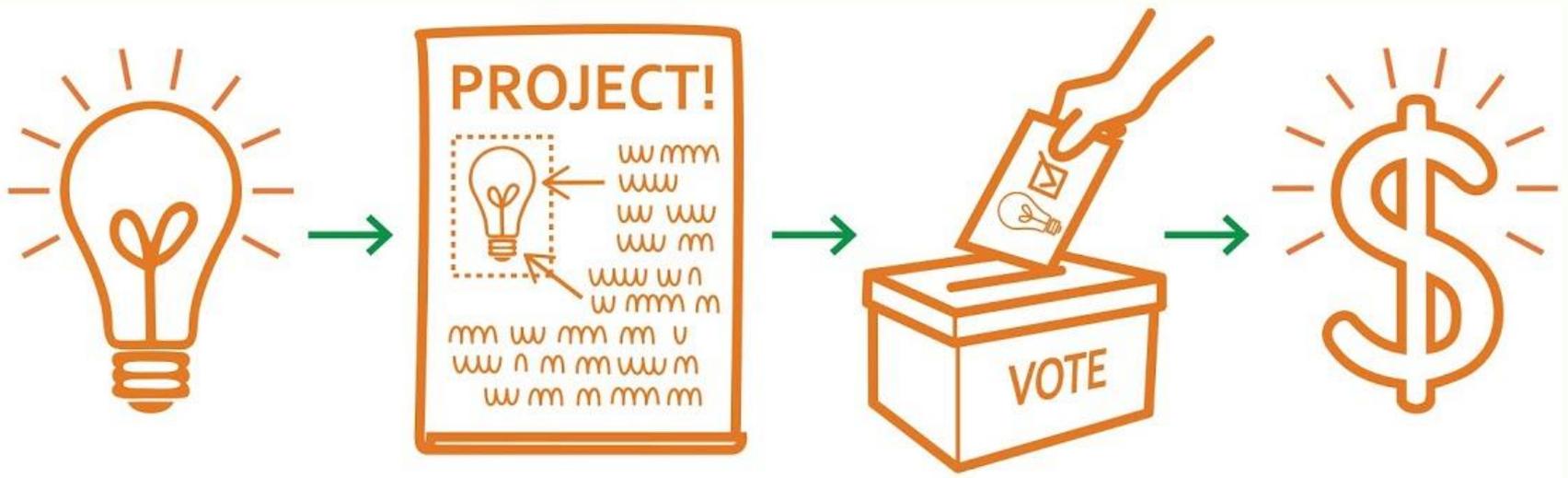


A democratic process in which community members directly decide how to spend part of a public budget.

# WHAT IS PARTICIPATORY BUDGETING?



# HOW DOES IT WORK?



Residents  
brainstorm  
ideas

Delegates  
develop  
proposals

Residents  
vote

The top  
projects win  
funding

A light gray world map is centered in the background. Numerous green location pins are scattered across the map, primarily concentrated in North America, Europe, and parts of Africa and Asia. The text is overlaid on the map.

# WHERE

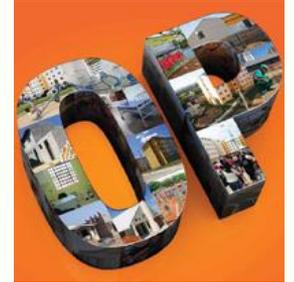
## HAS PARTICIPATORY BUDGETING WORKED?

**1,500+ PB processes in the world!**

- ✓ Cities
- ✓ States
- ✓ Counties
- ✓ Public Housing
- ✓ Schools
- ✓ Community Organizations

# PORTO ALEGRE, BRAZIL

1989



1.5 million residents | up to 50,000 participants per year

Decide as much as 20% of the budget | \$200 million

## KEY VICTORIES

Doubled sanitation coverage

Doubled the number of students in schools

Expanded bus service to neglected areas

# PARTICIPATORY BUDGETING IN NORTH AMERICA



# TORONTO COMMUNITY HOUSING

2001

- 164,000 tenants -

*The second largest public housing provider in North America*

As many as **6,000 tenants** per year have allocated  
up to **\$9 million** in capital funds per year

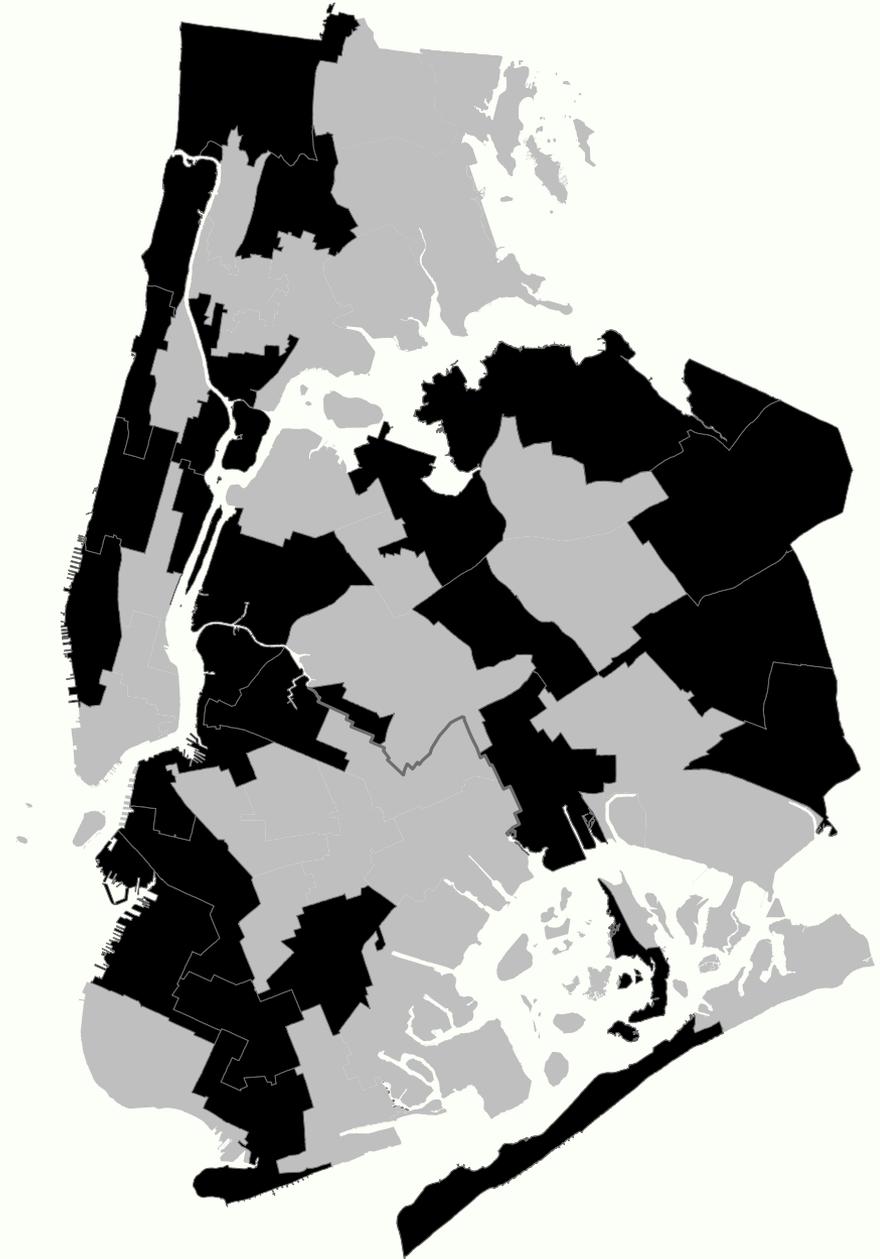




# NEW YORK CITY

2011

**\$30 million** reaching over  
**3.5 million** residents in  
**24 districts**







# BOSTON

2014

**\$1 million** decided entirely by  
**YOUTH** residents  
ages 12-25



# ENSURING EQUITY THROUGH PB

- ✓ Grassroots leadership
- ✓ Inclusive design
- ✓ Targeted outreach
- ✓ Equity criteria



WHAT ARE THE  
**IMPACTS** OF PB?



# BROADER POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

## VALLEJO

20% of PB voters were ineligible to vote in regular elections

## NYC

Higher percentage of low-income residents voted in PB (40%) compared to full population (34%) & local elections (29%).

## BOSTON

95% of most engaged participants were youth of color.



# NEW COMMUNITY LEADERS



Participants report increased skills in public speaking, negotiating, building agreements, and contacting officials.

# STRONGER RELATIONSHIPS

BETWEEN GOVERNMENT, ORGS, AND RESIDENTS



The majority of PB participants say their view of city government improved after PB.

# MORE EQUITABLE & EFFECTIVE SPENDING

In NYC, funds are more likely to go to projects in low-income areas through PB than through other discretionary funds.



# FOR MORE INFO



WEBSITE [www.participatorybudgeting.org](http://www.participatorybudgeting.org)

TWITTER [@PBProject](https://twitter.com/PBProject)

FACEBOOK [facebook.com/ParticipatoryBudgetingProject](https://facebook.com/ParticipatoryBudgetingProject)

**Ginny Browne** Project Manager

[ginny@participatorybudgeting.org](mailto:ginny@participatorybudgeting.org) | [@ginevraHUDSON](https://twitter.com/ginevraHUDSON)