



## 2018-2019 Civic Seminary Application

The **Citizen University Civic Seminary** will prepare everyday citizens to lead their communities to renew a shared sense of civic power and moral purpose. Fellows will explore the ethical foundations of their beliefs (and those of others), learn to craft and deliver catalytic sermons that draw on both the current day and the civic traditions of our society, and ultimately create a Civic Saturday Program where they live and work.

Civic Saturday was created by Citizen University in November 2016. It is a regular gathering that is a civic analogue to church, mosque, or synagogue. It is not about a faith tradition, however; rather, it is about American *civic* religion: the values and practices of being a contributing member of civic life in the United States. The goal of Civic Saturdays is to give participants the tools, inspiration, moral grounding, and opportunity to engage powerfully as citizens.

We gather friends and strangers in a common place to nurture a spirit of shared civic purpose and humanity. We empower participants to make sense of the moral questions they face as citizens and change-makers – and to develop the capacity to act with character in the collective. We aim to build a community rooted in local culture but inclusive of unfamiliar perspectives, centering on an affirmative framework of civic values, and weaving together the many stories and passions of our congregants in ways that activate empathy and responsibility.

**The Civic Saturdays Program began in Seattle but now is spreading across the country. And this is why we are launching this Civic Seminary: to train and shape a diverse group of people who have the presence, the moral grounding, the historical context, and the civic commitment to bring Civic Saturdays to their own communities.**

The first class of Civic Seminary Fellows will be selected in November 2017 for a program that will run until February 2019. Fellows will attend one of two Seminary Trainings (January 24-26, 2018 or June 18-20, 2018), before leading Civic Saturdays in their own communities.

Over the 13-month arc of their experience, Fellows will:

- Attend one of two Seminary Trainings (January 24-26, 2018 or June 18-20, 2018)
- Learn Citizen University's framework of civic values and skills, and become fluent in the traditions, dilemmas, and moral arguments that shape American civic life
- Learn how to read, write, and speak powerfully as citizen-leaders
- Learn how to circulate and generate citizen power
- Attend and participate in the Citizen University National Conference March 2019 in Seattle
- Develop and execute at least two Civic Saturday gatherings in their own community with guidance and advice from Citizen University staff



The inaugural class of Civic Seminary Fellows will be limited to a total of 20 participants, spread across the two Seminary Trainings. Fellows can be based anywhere in the United States, and do not need to be documented citizens. We are looking for people with character, integrity, compassion, and a record of service to others and inclusive civic engagement: people with the standing to lead a Civic Saturday, and with the presence to hold the space with clarity and command. There are no required education or subject-matter credentials. We encourage diversity on every dimension.

**TO APPLY:**

In order to apply for the 2017-2018 Citizen University Seminary Program, please submit your resume and two letters of recommendation along with answers to the following questions. Answers to all questions combined should not exceed five pages.

1. Why are you interested in being a part of the Citizen University Civic Seminary Program?
2. How do you define community? Who is your community?
3. In your community, what problems are most important to solve, and why?
4. How do you organize and build intentional community?
5. In your notion of intentional community, how do you strike a balance between common purpose and diversity? Relatedly, is it more important to build a community of like or unlike minds?
6. Civic Saturday, like faith gatherings, often revolves around discussing a text and how it highlights the moral choices and dilemmas we face today. What are 3 texts from American civic life that you think are particularly relevant to this moment in time? Why? (Please submit all quotations in a separate document. Each quote should be no more than ½ page. Quotations are not included in overall page length).

Send your application materials and any questions about the program to Arista Burwell-Chen at [arista@citizenuniversity.us](mailto:arista@citizenuniversity.us) by October 27, 2017.

**About Citizen University:**

Citizen University is a national non-profit, founded by Eric Liu, that fosters responsible and empowered citizenship through activation, communication, and education. Citizen University runs a range of national, regional, and community-based programs and projects designed to teach the art of powerful citizenship. Learn more at <http://www.citizenuniversity.us/>.