How might we harness wisdom of the people to crowdsource and implement meaningful ideas for change?

Sharing on observations, reflections, lessons and ideas gained from *The People's Money* in New York City

Presented By:

Vincent Ng
Founding Member &
Former General Manager,
A Good Space Co-operative

Through 7 years with A Good Space, I became interested in citizen engagement and today, I come as a student and citizen to share and learn from your experience

A Good Pitch

Organized 2 grant calls to give $11,000 for citizens to start projects, attracting 77 citizen-led projects

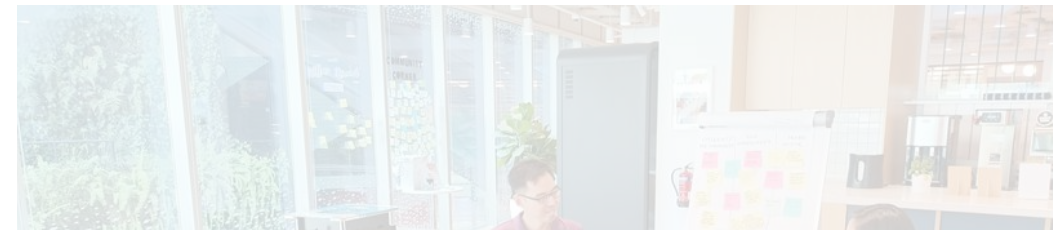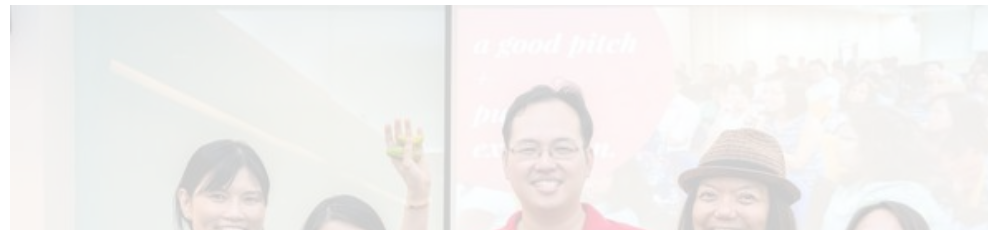
Forward SG Conversations

Designed 2 dialogues for 40+ changemakers to share actionable partnership ideas for the 3P sectors with POHs

Listening Living Labs

Gathered 168 multi-sector reps to prototype 6 ideas for migrant workers and digital inclusion over a year

Through 7 years with A Good Space, I became interested in citizen engagement and today, I come as a student and citizen to share and learn from your experience

Citizens are our greatest untapped assets and they don't have to come forward only when they are angry.

Organized 2 grant calls to give $11,000 for citizens to start projects, attracting 77 citizen-led projects

Designed 2 dialogues for 40+ changemakers to share actionable partnership ideas for the 3P sectors with POHs

Gathered 168 multi-sector reps to prototype 6 ideas for migrant workers and digital inclusion over a year

- I was in the US because of the US Department of State's Community Solutions Program

- 58 Community Leaders for a 4-month practicum with a US host organization

- I spent 4 months at Jacob A Riis Neighborhood Settlement, a 130-year old social service agency in Queens, New York City

Riis was located in Queensbridge, Long Island City - the largest public rental flat neighborhood in the United States with 100 rental blocks, built in the 1930s

6,046 Population

3,120 No. of Households

$24,190 Median Household Income

Numbers gathered from Census data and 2019 NYCHA figures

I only managed to physically participate in Phase 1 and virtually in Phase 2 and 3, so I have more questions than answers

In the next 12 minutes, I will share 6 key takeaways, in hopes that it can be of service to the good work you are doing

1

Context about New York City's budget, *The People's Money* and historical roots of Participatory Budgeting

In the next 12 minutes, I will share 6 key takeaways, in hopes that it can be of service to the good work you are doing

1

Context about New York City's budget, *The People's Money* and historical roots of Participatory Budgeting

2

Phase 1 - 4 of *The People's Money* from Ideation to RFP

In the next 12 minutes, I will share 6 key takeaways, in hopes that it can be of service to the good work you are doing

1

Context about New York City's budget, *The People's Money* and historical roots of Participatory Budgeting

2

Phase 1 - 4 of *The People's Money* from Ideation to RFP

3

Personal reflections on *The People's Money* process

In the next 12 minutes, I will share 6 key takeaways, in hopes that it can be of service to the good work you are doing

1

Context about New York City's budget, *The People's Money* and historical roots of Participatory Budgeting

2

Phase 1 - 4 of *The People's Money* from Ideation to RFP

3 Personal reflections on *The People's Money* process

4 Comparisons to some models of crowdsourcing citizen ideas in Singapore - similarities / differences?

In the next 12 minutes, I will share 6 key takeaways, in hopes that it can be of service to the good work you are doing

1

Context about New York City's budget, *The People's Money* and historical roots of Participatory Budgeting

2

Phase 1 - 4 of *The People's Money* from Ideation to RFP

3

Personal reflections on *The People's Money* process

4

Comparisons to some models of crowdsourcing citizen ideas in Singapore - similarities / differences?

5

Suggestions for Singapore

In the next 12 minutes, I will share 6 key takeaways, in hopes that it can be of service to the good work you are doing

1

Context about New York City's budget, *The People's Money* and historical roots of Participatory Budgeting

2

Phase 1 - 4 of *The People's Money* from Ideation to RFP

3

Personal reflections on *The People's Money* process

4

Comparisons to some models of crowdsourcing citizen ideas in Singapore - similarities / differences?

5

Suggestions for Singapore

6

Invitation to connect for further discussion and application

1

Context about New York City's budget, The People's Money and historical roots of Participatory Budgeting

Quick reference to terms used in this presentation

- New York City has 5 boroughs and is home to 8.4 million people

- Each borough has council districts, totaling 51 districts that make up the city council which enacts legislation and passes budgets

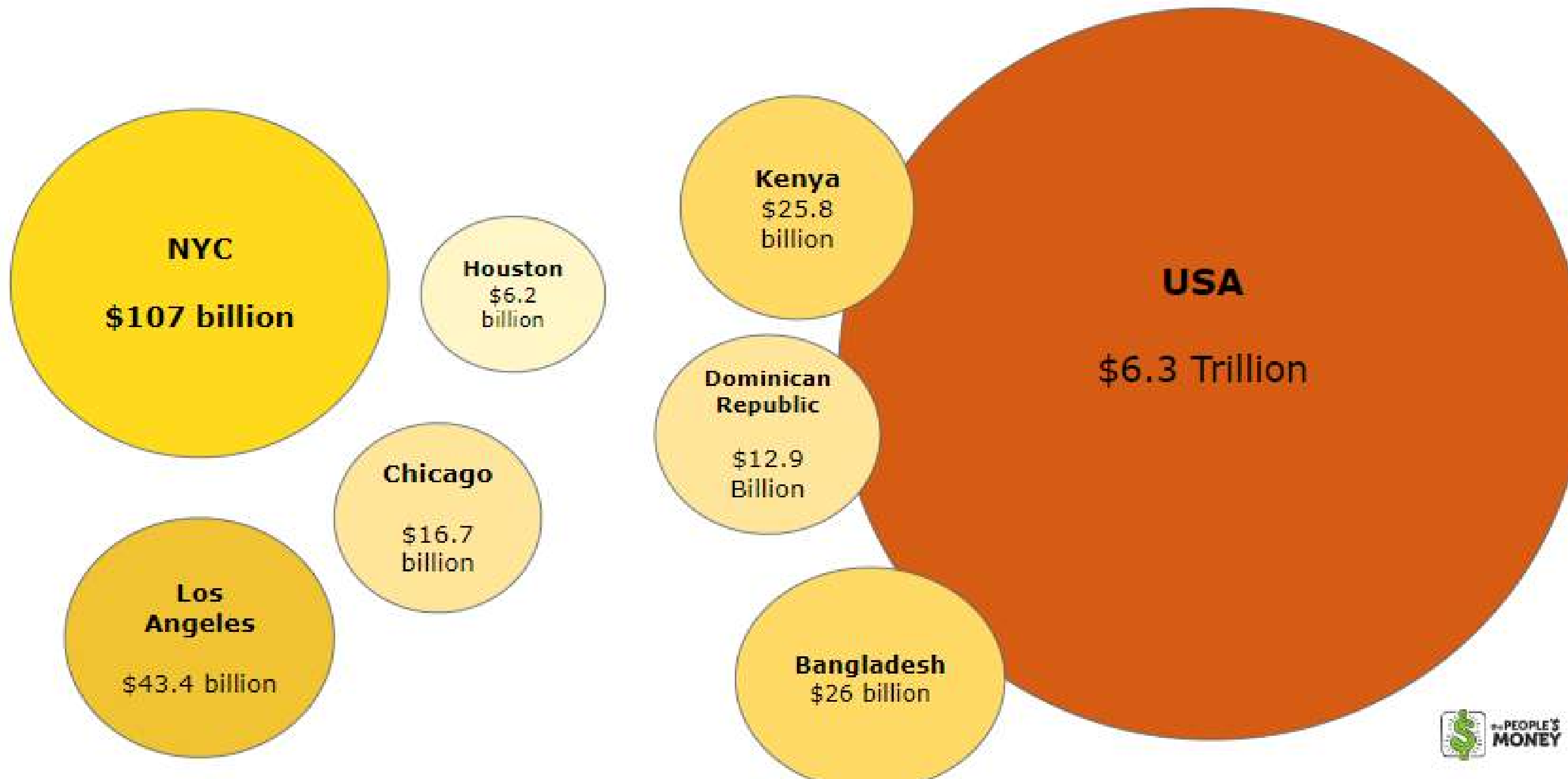- The city elects a Mayor which oversees different city agencies

The New York Civic Engagement Commission aims to make civic engagement inviting and memorable
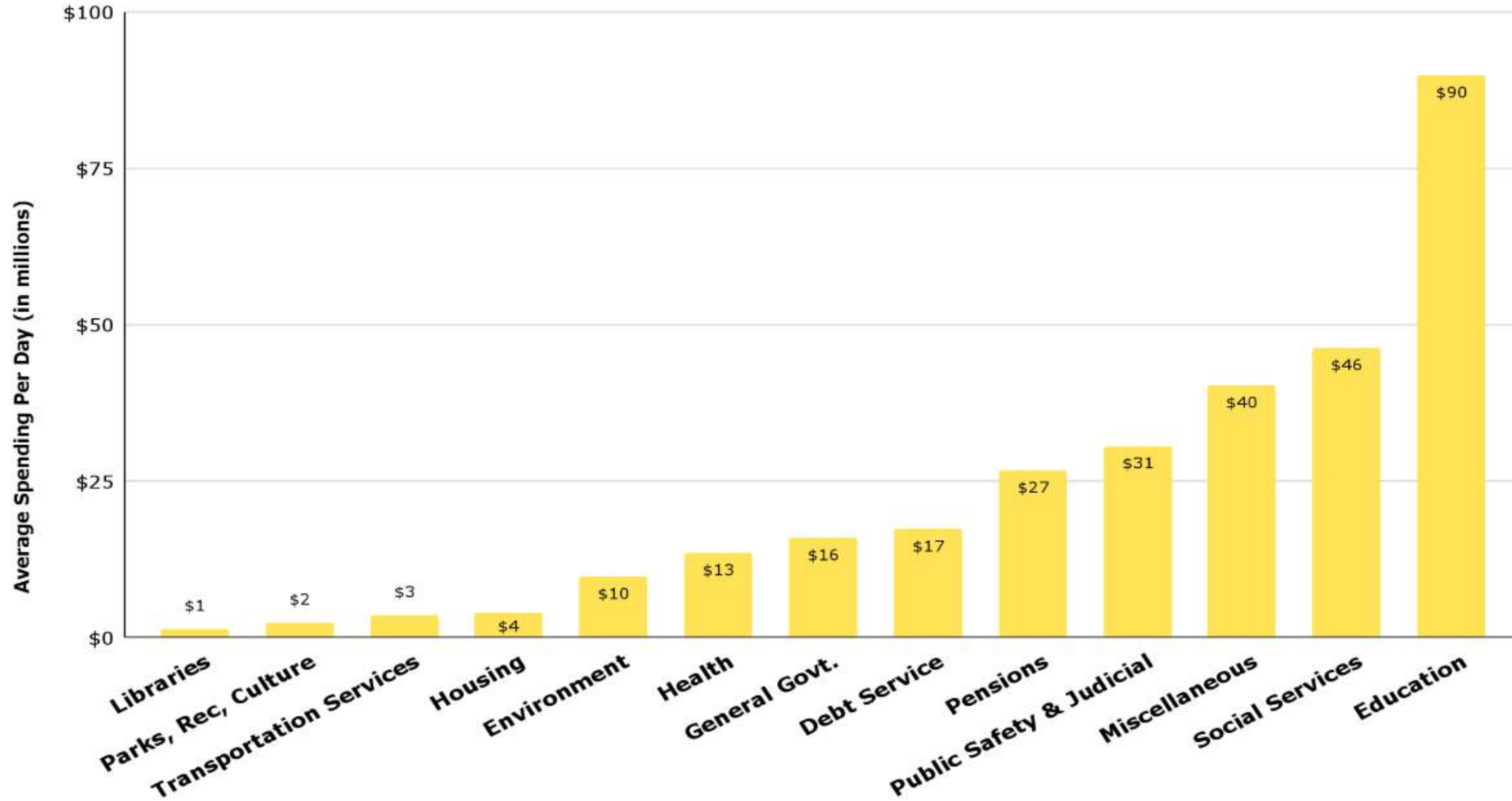
- Established by voters through a ballot in Nov 2018 that revised the NYC constitution

- Responsible for restoring civic trust and strengthening democracy by promoting inclusive civic participation for all New Yorkers

At $107 billion, New York City has a larger budget than many US cities and even some countries! (similar to Singapore)

NYC $107 billion

Houston $6.2 billion

Chicago $16.7 billion

Los Angeles $43.4 billion

Kenya $25.8 billion

Dominican Republic $12.9 Billion

Bangladesh $26 billion

USA $6.3 Trillion

the PEOPLE'S MONEY

On average, New York City spends $300 million a day

Participatory budgeting is a way for citizens to have a say in how the city spends its money and it has a long history

- Citizens are involved in the process of deciding how public money is spent

- Began in Porto Alegre in Brazil in 1989 and credited with shifting priorities to support poorest parts of the city

- Implemented over 11,000 times in cities all over the world

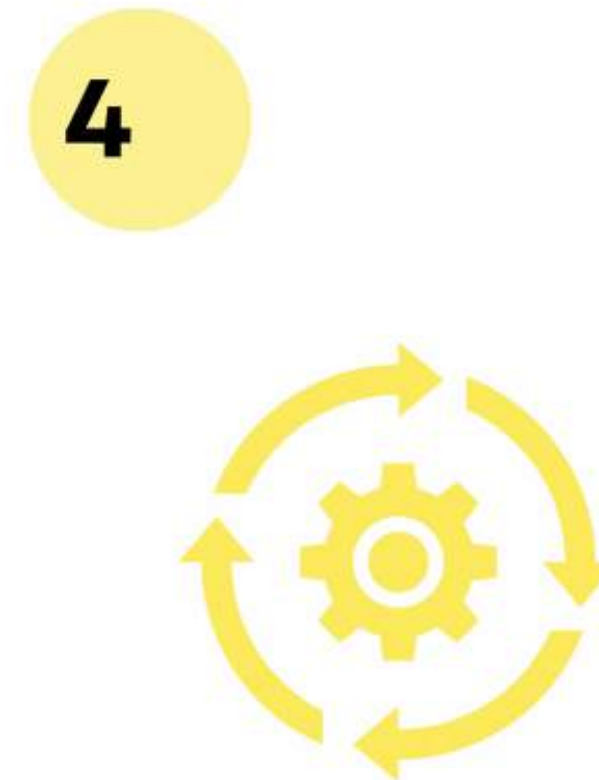**Launched by the CEC in 2022, The People's Money is a citywide participatory budgeting process which funds <u>expense projects</u>**

1

Idea Generation

2

Project
Development

3

VOTE

Voting

4

Project
Implementation

The CEC gave $52,000 each to 33 neighborhood-based organizations to form coalitions in their neighborhood to implement the four phases of PB

Coalition for:
Queensbridge, Long Island City

Riis Settlement
Community center serving youths, older adults and immigrants

Floating Hospital
Provides low cost / pro-bono medical services

Urban Upbound
SSA helping with employment and enterprise development

Queensbridge Residents' Association
Similar to an RC - advocates for tenants to NYCHA
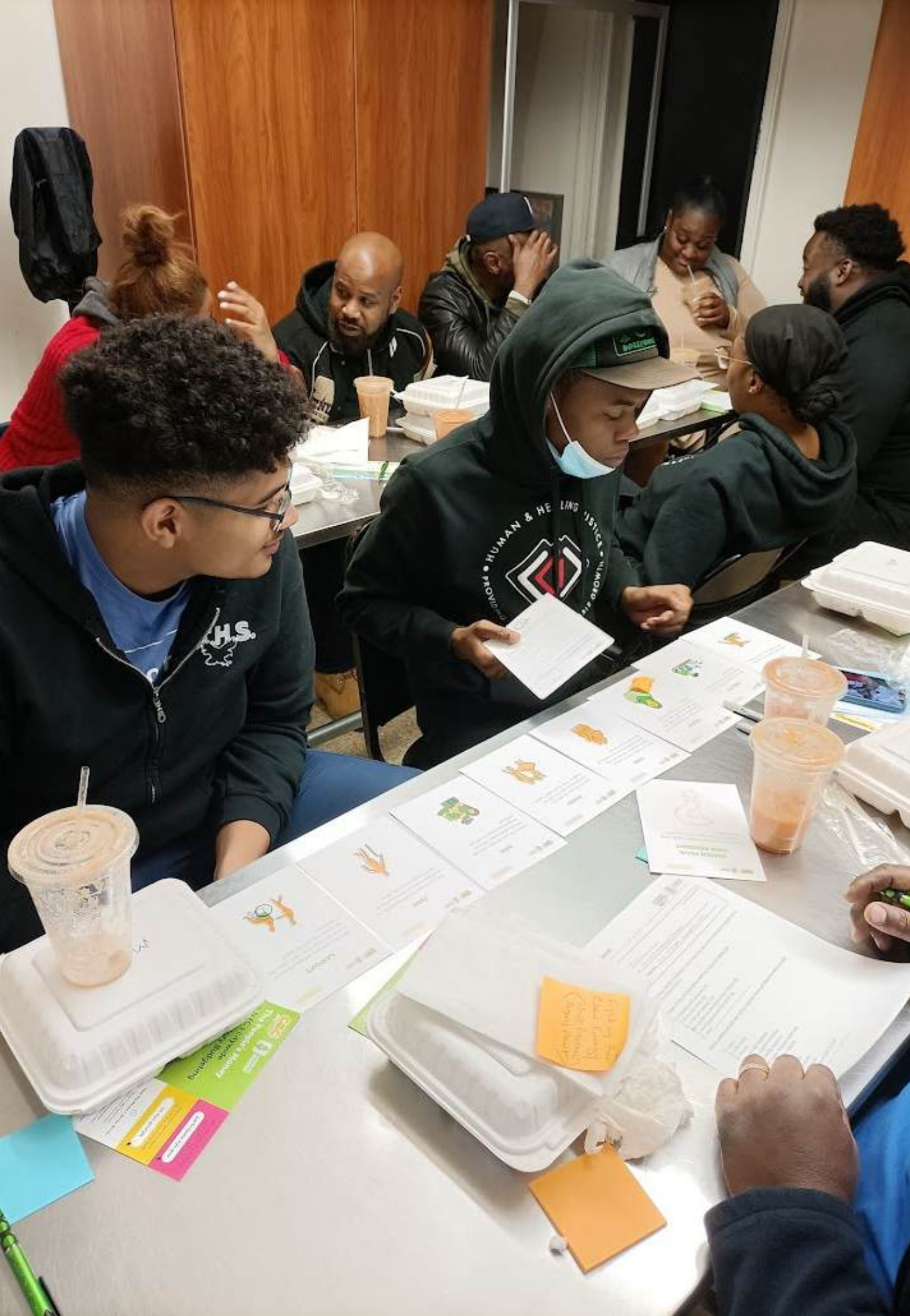
2

Phase 1 - 4 of
The People's Money

Phase 1:
Idea Generation

Phase 1: Idea Generation Workshops

- Comprise 20 - 25 participants for 2 hours. Participants we attract must live in a particular zip code (e.g. NY11101)

- Participants are split into smaller teams of 5 for the idea generation game

Round 1: Pick one type of city - each team selects <u>one</u> that they would like to work on from a set of 5 cards

GREAT CITY

We want to create a
HEALTHY AND SUPPORTIVE CITY

In this city, residents have <u>access</u> to:

- Quality and healthy food
- Exercise and fitness
- Mental health resources
- Nurturing relationships
- Free or low cost health care
- Housing resources
- An affirming community
- Support in raising a family
- Support for struggles with addiction

In your experience, what makes a healthy and supportive city?

GREAT CITY

We want to create a
FUN AND VIBRANT CITY

In this city, residents have <u>access</u> to:

- Diverse food, music, and art
- Festivals, fairs, and concerts
- Culturally responsive education
- Low cost or free entertainment
- Opportunities for sports and recreation
- Opportunities to celebrate cultures and diversity

In your experience, what makes a fun and vibrant city?

GREAT CITY

We want to create a
SAFE AND PEACEFUL CITY

In this city, residents:

- Know their rights
- Know how to de-escalate
- Have opportunities to heal
- Support their neighbors
- Feel safe going to places
- Know how to prevent and protect themselves from crimes and violence

In your experience, what makes a safe and peaceful city?

Round 2: Pick one type of resident - each team chooses <u>one</u> resident they would like their idea to support from a set of 9 cards and writes down the challenges they face

RESIDENTS

DIMITRI

Dimitri is an 11 year old boy who lives with his single mom in public housing.

RESIDENTS

LAMONT

Lamont is a 81 year old grandfather of 5 who lives in an older adult home. He has a back injury so he uses a wheelchair.

RESIDENTS

DESIGN YOUR OWN RESIDENT

You can combine resident cards, think of someone you know, or use your imagination!

Round 3: Read limiting factors - each team reads the 6 limiting factor cards to understand the constraints they have when brainstorming ideas

CEC | **the PEOPLE'S MONEY**   LIMITING FACTORS

MUST BE A PROGRAM OR SERVICE

The People's Money does not fund projects that involve construction, infrastructure repair, purchases of land, or any other physical public improvements.

Examples:

❌ Build a community center

✅ Create a program in an existing community center

❌ Install security cameras on a busy street

✅ Create a community safety workshop for residents on that street

CEC | **the PEOPLE'S MONEY**   LIMITING FACTORS

MUST NOT CHANGE POLICY OR STAFF NUMBERS

The People's Money cannot be used to change policy, or add staff to a city agency.

Examples about Policy:

❌ Change the public school curriculum

❌ Change the hours of library branches

Examples about Staff:

❌ Hire more police officers

❌ Increase salaries of public school teachers

CEC | **the PEOPLE'S MONEY**   LIMITING FACTORS

MUST LAST FOR ONE YEAR OR LESS

Projects will take place starting in July and will last through June of the next year.

Example:

✅ English language class for new immigrants for once a week for 9 months

Round 4: Pick one brainstorming method - each team reads the 4 brainstorm cards and selects one brainstorming method to come up with ideas

BRAINSTORM

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

Get a piece of paper and pen.

Without talking, think and write down any ideas you have to address your challenge.

Once everyone is ready, go around and share your ideas.

BRAINSTORM

LEARN ABOUT PAST IDEAS

As a group, visit bit.ly/pastideas or scan the QR code to read about past projects from Cycle 1.

Do you see past projects that relate to your challenge? What types of programs do you see?

BRAINSTORM

TURN AND TALK

Turn to the person next to you.

Each person should share ideas to address the challenge. What do your ideas have in common? How are they different?

At the end of the idea generation part, they had to complete this worksheet

Idea Worksheet

CEC NYC Civic Engagement Commission | **the PEOPLE'S MONEY**

To be filled out by facilitator

Today's Date:_____

Host of Workshop: _____

Full Address of Workshop: _____

Goal: As a group, identify a challenge in your community and create a relevant and feasible idea to submit to *The People's Money*.

Which type of city did your group select to focus on? Select one.

☐ *A Healthy and Supportive City*
☐ *A Fun and Vibrant City*
☐ *A Safe and Peaceful City*
☐ *A Liveable and Environmentally-Friendly City*
☐ *An Empowered and Educated City*
☐ *Other: _____*

Which audience(s) did your group select to focus on? Select as many as apply.

☐ *Youth*
☐ *Older Adults*
☐ *Parents*
☐ *People with Disabilities*
☐ *Justice Impacted Individuals*
☐ *Public Housing Residents*
☐ *Limited English Proficient Individuals*
☐ *Immigrants and/or migrants*
☐ *Veterans*
☐ *LGBTQ+ community*
☐ *Low income individuals*
☐ *Unemployed individuals*
☐ *Black, Indigenous, and People of Color*
☐ *Other: _____*

Describe a challenge your audience(s) face that keeps them from enjoying the city type.
You can include your own opinions, experiences, and/or data to help others understand the challenge. This is not where you should write your idea or solution.

What is your idea to help address this challenge?
Ideas will be vetted by borough resident representatives before placing the top projects on a ballot. The CEC will select community based organizations to implement the winning ideas through a competitive process. They will be tasked with carrying out the program based on the idea, which may include classes, workshops, events, and direct services like resource distribution, training, camps.

Give your idea a title of 2-5 words.
The title you provide here is for organizational purposes and will not be taken into account during evaluation.

Which borough is your idea for? Select one.

☐ Bronx   ☐ Brooklyn   ☐ Manhattan   ☐ Queens   ☐ Staten Island

Do you have a specific neighborhood(s) where your idea could take place?
Ideas likely to advance will reach several neighborhoods across a borough. Your opinion on which neighborhood(s) the idea should be implemented in will be taken into consideration when further developing the project.
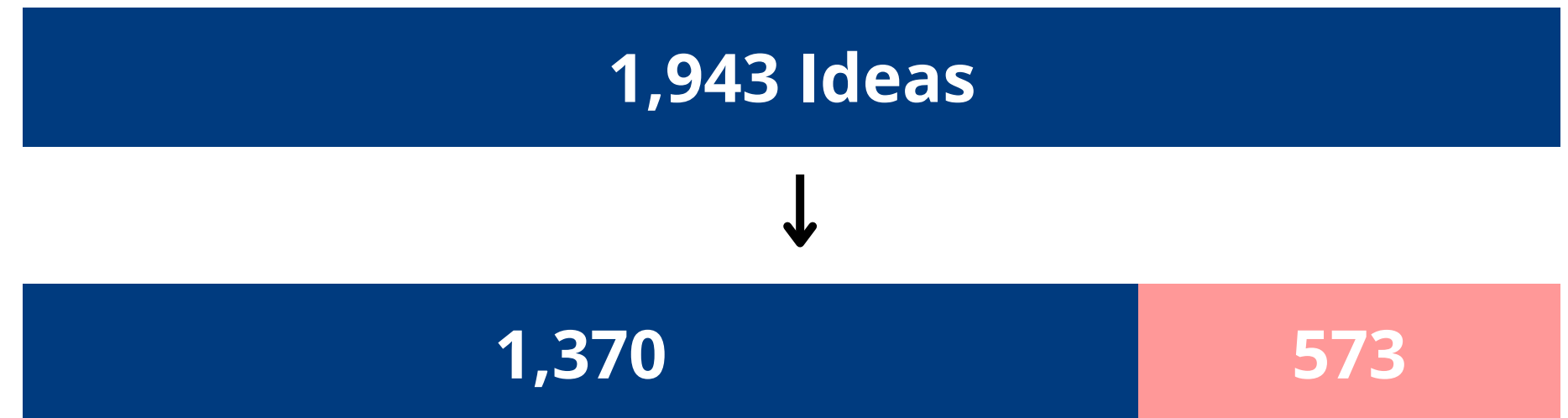
Phase 2:
Project Development via the Borough Assembly Committee (BAC)

The CEC reviews all ideas submitted and disqualify or combine them before the Borough Assembly Committee gets involved
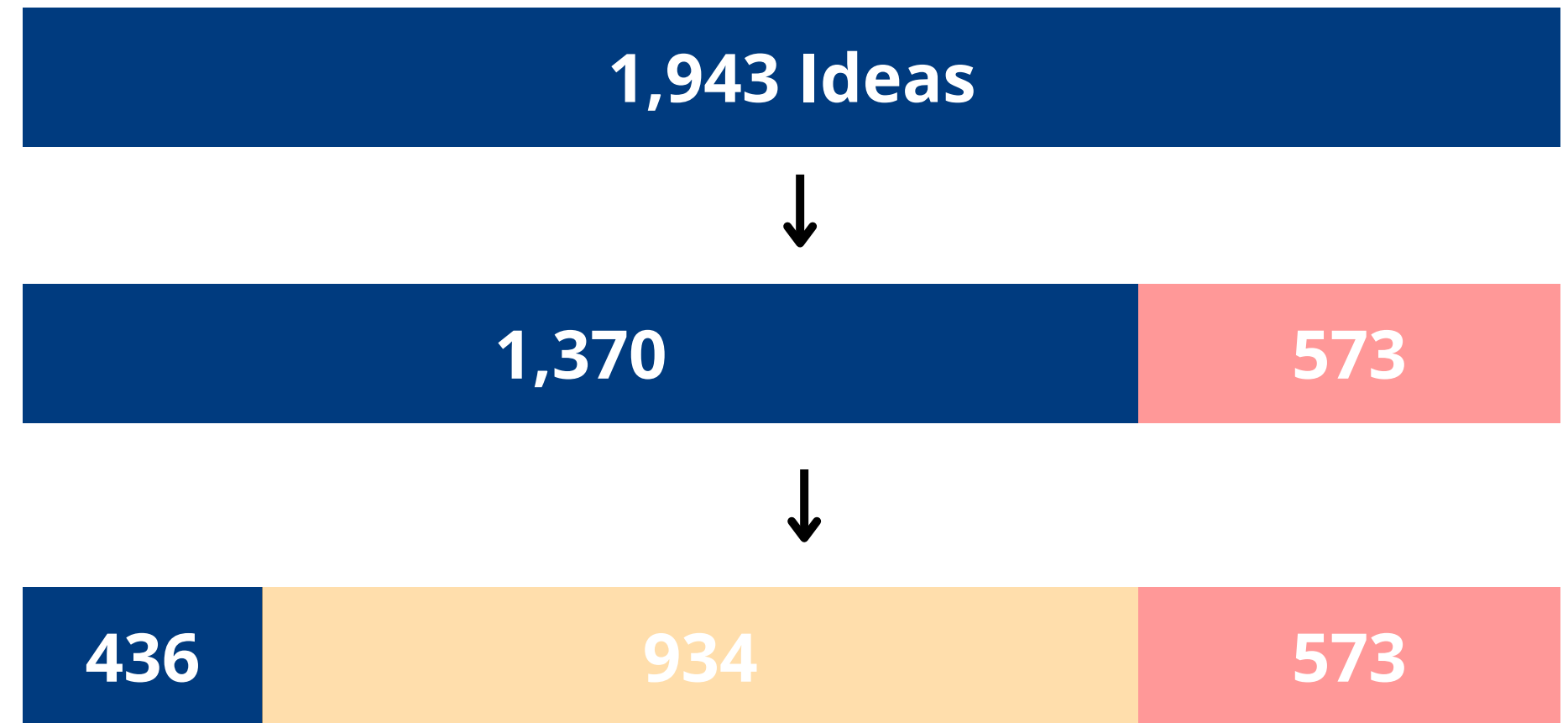
Step 1:

The CEC reviews and disqualifies ideas that don't fit the criteria

Disqualifying Criteria:
- Capital project
- Increase agency headcount
- Policy recommendation
- Incoherent
- Intolerant of others
- Too vague to understand

1,943 Ideas

↓

1,370	573

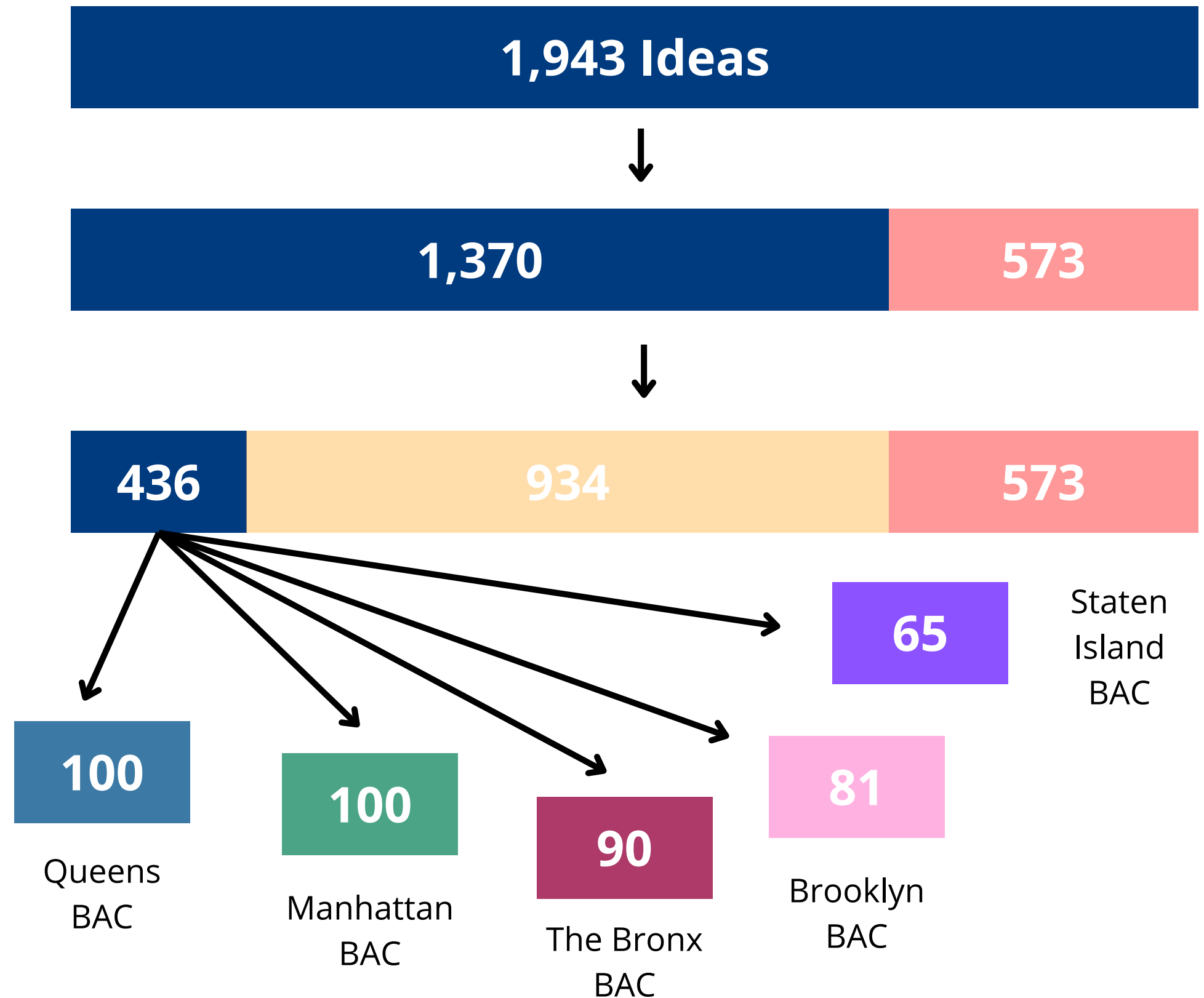# The CEC reviews all ideas submitted and disqualify or combine them before the Borough Assembly Committee gets involved

1,943 Ideas

↓

| 1,370 | 573 |

↓

| 436 | 934 | 573 |

Step 2:

The CEC bundles similar ideas together. In the end, 436 ideas move onto Phase 2

5 Borough Assembly Committees comprising 20- 25 residents matching the demographics of the borough will narrow down to 10 ideas to go on the ballot

1,943 Ideas

↓

1,370 | 573

↓

436 | 934 | 573

65
Staten Island BAC

Step 3:
Each BAC narrows down to 10 ideas that go onto the Borough's ballot

100
Queens BAC

100
Manhattan BAC

90
The Bronx BAC

81
Brooklyn BAC

Queens Ideas Packet

Impact Area:	Education
Subcategory:	EDU – Early Childhood Education

Idea Number:	6661
Idea Title:	New Yorkers with kids can work worry free!
Similar Ideas:	There were 1 additional ideas submitted that are very similar to this one.

Idea Type:	Service Delivery
Suggested Audience:	Youth Parents Justice Impacted Limited English Proficient Individuals

Suggested Neighborhood:	Corona

Community Issue:
A lot of parents, specially women in NY struggle to work worry free when the have kids at school, because first: a lot of people dont have anyone who can watch their kids and cant afford a daycare, second, they need to get a job that probably start after 9:30 or 10:00 am , if the kid is not accepted in an afterschool program this types of parents have to work only 3 hours so they can go back pick up their kids, 3rd, days school is not working (that are a lot of days) they can't work because there isn't anyone to take care of the kids. 4th. They can't work an evening schedule because kids are at home and if they have a partner the partner is not home before the time they need to live the house. That's a big challenge!!

Idea Description:
We should create more programs whether they are at school or in other institution with a big capacity : a programable to teach the kids new skills, engage the kids in activities that develop their brain, that helps with homewor , that have sports in it, that has a policy of not screen time while in there.

This program will include free bus transportation straight from school to the institution where the program will take place and back to school at the time the program finishes with the options of pickup at the place of the program too.

With this service parents will be able to work a worry free regular schedule knowing the kids are learning and enjoying ath same time and well protected.
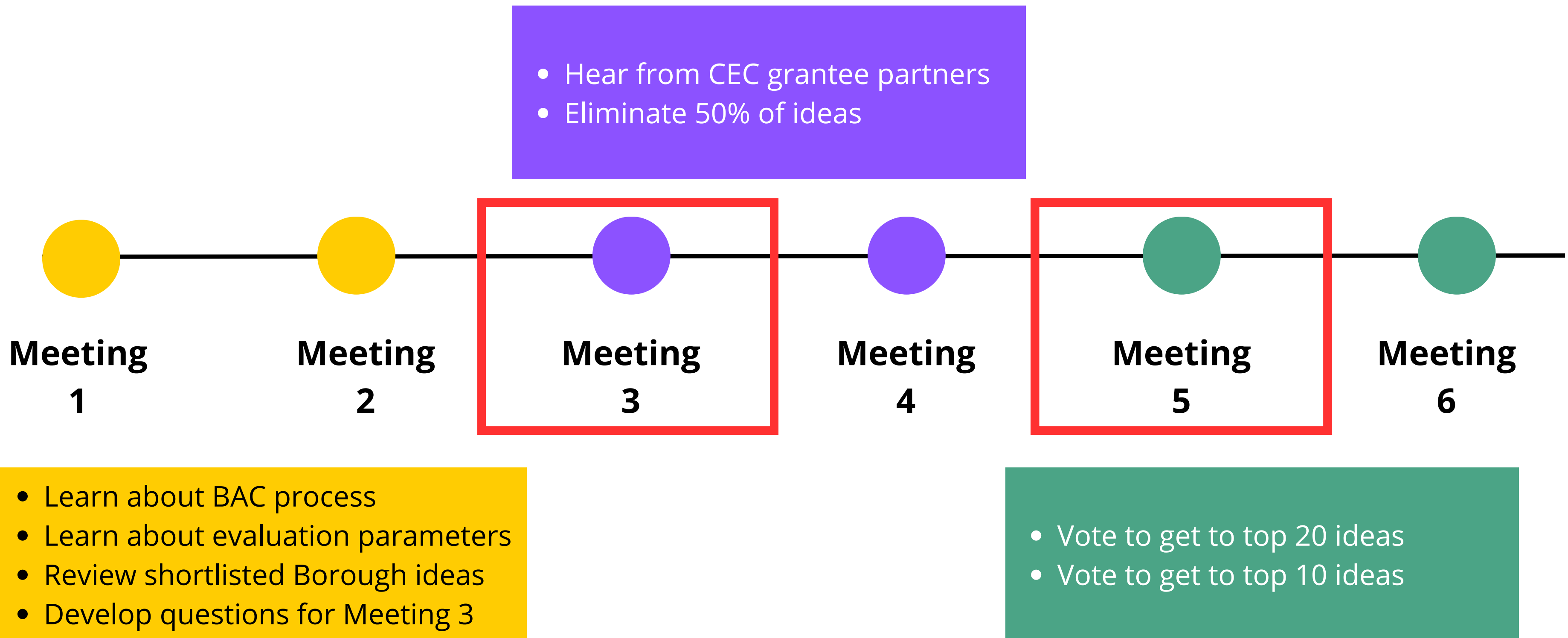
Example of 1 idea out of the 100 that the Queens BAC will receive

Indication of how many ideas were similar and combined to form this idea

Description of the community issue

Description of the idea

Over 6 meetings, the BAC filters through the ideas for their Borough, eventually narrowing down to 10 ideas that will go on the ballot in Phase 3

- Hear from CEC grantee partners
- Eliminate 50% of ideas

Meeting 1

Meeting 2

Meeting 3

Meeting 4

Meeting 5

Meeting 6

- Learn about BAC process
- Learn about evaluation parameters
- Review shortlisted Borough ideas
- Develop questions for Meeting 3

- Vote to get to top 20 ideas
- Vote to get to top 10 ideas

Mindful Pause

What is one thought, question or comment that is emerging for you now?
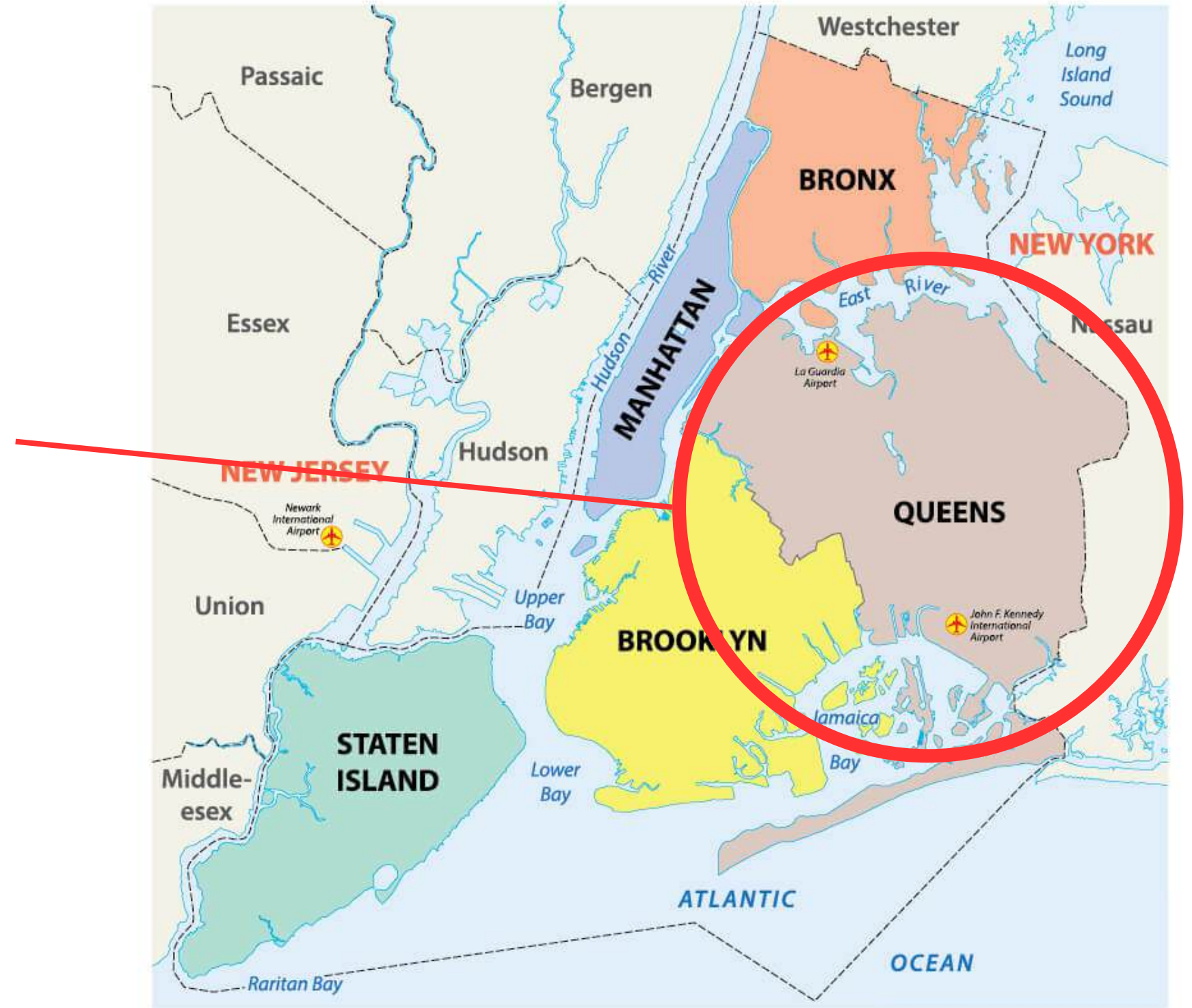
Phase 3: Voting

Phase 3: Voting

- Residents vote on their borough's ballot for projects they want to see funded in their borough

- They can vote online or through a paper ballot at pop-up events, libraries and more!

- Anyone in the city aged 11 years and older can vote, regardless of immigrant status

- This year: **139,688** ballots cast

Phase 4:
Project Implementation

Phase 4: Project Implementation

● **Winning Idea 1:**
Restaurants partner with local food pantries to provide healthy meals. Families pick up meals at monthly healthy food workshops.

● **Winning Idea 2:**
Provide HS students with career readiness programs led by professionals.

● **Winning Idea 3:**
Connect youths to seniors isolated due to ill health or citizen status to provide befriending services.
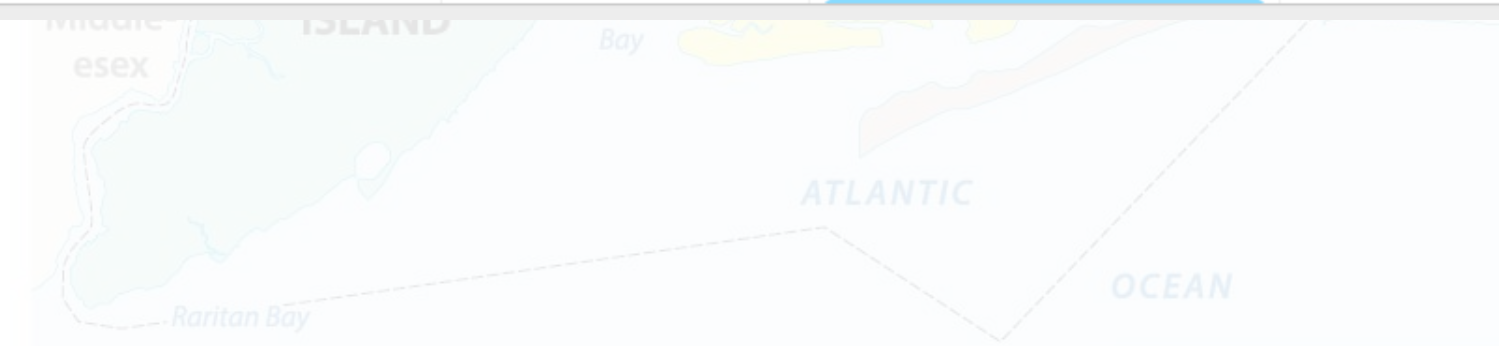

Each project's implementor will receive $170,000 for a year

BOROUGH							Sum $850,000
Queens	Count 5						
10	Healthy Meals Partnership	Queens	Richmond Hill and South Ozo... / Queens Village / Jamaica, South Jamaica, Hollis,...	11419, 11420, 11429, 11412, 11423, 11432, 11433, 11434,...	Restaurants will partner with local food pantries to provide healthy meals. Families will pick up the food at monthly healthy food workshops focused on health issues. Services will be multilingual.	Health and Wellbeing	Low income / Public housing residents	$170,000
	Youth Empowerment Afterschool Workshops	Queens	Rockaway and Broad Channel	11691, 11692, 11693, 11694	After-school programs to serve 10 to 19-year-olds living in public housing by providing arts and crafts, boxing, dancing, ASL education, and homework help. It should also include counselors and peer mentorship.	Education	Low income / Immigrants / Youth	$170,000
12	Connection Resource Center	Queens	Briarwood / Woodhaven	11435, 11421	The center would connect people to services such as food assistance, housing, healthcare, employment, and more. Reaching out to youth, immigrants, people with low income, and people with disabilities.	Accessibility	Youth / Immigrants / Low income / Unemployed	$170,000
13	Bridging the Skills Gaps: Job Training for High Schoolers	Queens	Queensbridge	11101	Prepare HS students with career readiness programs that include workshops led by professionals. Activities could include resume-building, mock interviews, and networking to connect students with opportunities.	Career Development	Youth / Immigrants / Low income / Limited English Proficient Indi...	$170,000
14	Connectivity Program for Seniors	Queens	East Elmhurst / Corona	11368, 11369	Seniors who are isolated due to ill health or citizenship status need places to go. This project would connect youth and seniors and provide transportation, technology, and language access.	Accessibility	Youth / Older adults / People with Disabilities / Immigrants	$170,000

Scan the QR Code to see all the winning ideas from this year!

Project implementation happens across a year

TRAINING

Attending M&E Class
November – January

MONITORING

Reporting
January – May

PLANNING

Creating a project plan
August – November

IMPLEMENTATION

Hosting Workshops
January – May

EVALUATION

Final Report
Summer 2024

3

Personal Reflections on The People's Money process

> *We want this to go beyond a transactional grantor-grantee relationship to nurture a learning partnership, where the CEC can learn from your successes and help provide resources to* **strengthen your ability to mobilize communities**

Dr Sarah Sayeed
Chair and Executive Director,
New York City Civic Engagement Commission

But it wasn't all smooth sailing. I observed 3 drawbacks of this model

1 **Not enough scaffolding in Phase 1**
Idea generation workshop was too short. Citizens may be experts of their lived experiences but need some scaffolding to create meaningful ideas

But it wasn't all smooth sailing. I observed 3 drawbacks of this model

1 **Not enough scaffolding in Phase 1**
Idea generation workshop was too short. Citizens may be experts of their lived experiences but need some scaffolding to create meaningful ideas

2 **Citizens might feel disappointed**
Someone might feel strongly about an idea that doesn't make it to Phase 4 or the person who suggested the idea might not be awarded the proposal to implement it

But it wasn't all smooth sailing. I observed 3 drawbacks of this model

1 **Not enough scaffolding in Phase 1**
Idea generation workshop was too short. Citizens may be experts of their lived experiences but need some scaffolding to create meaningful ideas

2 **Citizens might feel disappointed**
Someone might feel strongly about an idea that doesn't make it to Phase 4 or the person who suggested the idea might not be awarded the proposal to implement it

3 **Mechanism for idea sustainability is unclear**
What happens after a year of funding and what support can CEC provide to help ideas continue?

4

Comparisons to some models of crowdsourcing citizen ideas in Singapore

I think The People's Money differs from local citizen ideation efforts in 5 aspects

	the PEOPLE'S MONEY	YOUTH ACTION CHALLENGE	OSCAR+
Implementation	33 Coalition Partners	Appointed Vendor(s)	Staff
Community Participation			
Ideation Process			
Capability Development			
Relationship			

I think The People's Money differs from local citizen ideation efforts in 5 aspects

	the PEOPLE'S MONEY	YOUTH ACTION CHALLENGE	OSCAR
Implementation	33 Coalition Partners	Appointed Vendor(s)	Staff
Community Participation	**High** Representative BAC scores ideas and citywide voting	**Medium** Esteemed judges score ideas and select 'winners'. Youths can vote for ideas online which could give extra funding to projects	**Low** Grant panel decides
Ideation Process			
Capability Development			
Relationship			

I think The People's Money differs from local citizen ideation efforts in 5 aspects

	the PEOPLE'S MONEY	YOUTH ACTION CHALLENGE	OSCAR
Implementation	33 Coalition Partners	Appointed Vendor(s)	Staff
Community Participation	**High** Representative BAC scores ideas and citywide voting	**Medium** Esteemed judges score ideas and select 'winners'. Youths can vote for ideas online which could give extra funding to projects	**Low** Grant panel decides
Ideation Process	Source for best ideas, then appoint teams to implement	Source for teams and help them develop their ideas	Fund teams who already have ideas
Capability Development			
Relationship			

I think The People's Money differs from local citizen ideation efforts in 5 aspects

 the PEOPLE'S MONEY   YOUTH ACTION CHALLENGE   OSCAR+

Implementation	33 Coalition Partners	Appointed Vendor(s)	Staff
Community Participation	**High** Representative BAC scores ideas and citywide voting	**Medium** Esteemed judges score ideas and select 'winners'. Youths can vote for ideas online which could give extra funding to projects	**Low** Grant panel decides
Ideation Process	Source for best ideas, then appoint teams to implement	Source for teams and help them develop their ideas	Fund teams who already have ideas
Capability Development	Train partners in civic engagement skills	Train teams in issue identification and idea pitching skills	-
Relationship			

I think The People's Money differs from local citizen ideation efforts in 5 aspects

	the PEOPLE'S MONEY	YOUTH ACTION CHALLENGE	OSCAR+
Implementation	33 Coalition Partners	Appointed Vendor(s)	Staff
Community Participation	**High** Representative BAC scores ideas and citywide voting	**Medium** Esteemed judges score ideas and select 'winners'. Youths can vote for ideas online which could give extra funding to projects	**Low** Grant panel decides
Ideation Process	Source for best ideas, then appoint teams to implement	Source for teams and help them develop their ideas	Fund teams who already have ideas
Capability Development	Train partners in civic engagement skills	Train teams in issue identification and idea pitching skills	-
Relationship	Implementation Partners	Grantor - Grantee	Grantor - Grantee

5

Suggestions for Singapore

What could this mean for Singapore?

1   **What if we had a BAC for evaluating ideas?**
Could we introduce more citizen participation on grant panels that evaluate ideas?

What could this mean for Singapore?

1 **What if we had a BAC for evaluating ideas?**
Could we introduce more citizen participation on grant panels that evaluate ideas?

2 **Give community-based / civil society organizations more opportunities to shape or lead civic engagement efforts?**
Mess might not be a bad thing and could lead to strengthening of social fabric and resilience. What are we sacrificing when we consolidate?

What could this mean for Singapore?

1 **What if we had a BAC for evaluating ideas?**
Could we introduce more citizen participation on grant panels that evaluate ideas?

2 **Give community-based / civil society organizations more opportunities to shape or lead civic engagement efforts?**
Mess might not be a bad thing and could lead to strengthening of social fabric and resilience. What are we sacrificing when we consolidate?

3 **Citizens as a prototyping force for non-profits?**
How to intentionally pass on / integrate ideas within operations of non-profits?

In closing, I'd like to suggest two steps to continue the conversation
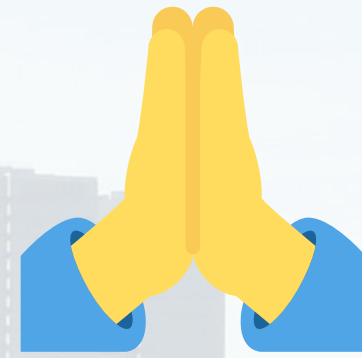
1

Connect with me and let's have coffee! I'd love to hear your thoughts and support if you are interested to implement this.

2

Read an article-version of this PPT on the Citizen Changemaker Blog:

🙏

I hope you can consider implementing this for Singapore, thank you for listening!

Appendix

- CEC's impact evaluation metrics
- Different levels of grantmaking

The CEC evaluated the success of Phase 1: Idea Generation using 6 indicators, collected through exit surveys and partner feedback reports

Indicator	Change They Wish to See
Budget Education	• Increase in participant knowledge about the city budget
Generation of Ideas	• Create substantiative ideas which can become projects
Assessing Community Needs	• Give citizens agency to surface community needs and gaps
Building Innovative Civic Processes	• Inspire excitement amongst residents to participate
Space for Dialogue and Connection	• Provide residents with opportunities to connect with each other • Provide residents with a space to talk to the city government
Fostering Gov - Community Trust	• Increase trust between city officials and residents • Strengthen civic capacity of organizations

The grant-making mechanism provided for different levels of participation

Type	No. of Organizations Awarded	Funding Amount	Description
TRIE	33	$52,000	Participate in Phase 1 - 4 of the PB process and forms a coalition with at least 3 other organizations
Tier 1	13	$15,000	Host at least 10 idea generation sessions across 3 boroughs
Tier 2	9	$9,000	Host at least 6 idea generation sessions in 1 borough but different neighborhoods
Tier 3	15	$4,500	Host 3 sessions in 1 neighborhood
Tier 4	29	$1,500	Host 1 session