

June 2021

FUTURE OF EUROPE - SET OF ACTIONABLE RECOMMENDATIONS

The **Association Civic Tech Europe** (ACTE) was founded in December 2019 to represent civic techs at the European level.

Civic tech actors are independent of any political or economic movement and rely on technological innovations to strengthen citizens' participation in democracy and forge new links between voters and institutions.

The main objective of ACTE is to contribute to **creating a mutually beneficial relationship** between its members and the European institutions.

Recommendation n°1: Ensure diversity in participation and inclusivity in the process

Online solutions developed for the Conference on the Future of Europe should have inclusiveness and diversity at their core if the Conference is **to reach its goal of diverse and massive participation**, as underlined in the Joint Declaration.

Key to achieving inclusiveness and diversity over these public consultations is to make online platforms accessible to all, and easy to use. To achieve real diversity in participation, particular attention must be paid to ensuring the widest access for all types of users.

❖ Civic tech tools needed to reach this objective

Though online civic technologies might have been seen in the past as a vector of inequality by leaving out people with poor access to the internet, digital participation platforms are nowadays inclusive and accessible by design. Civic tech tools and the protocols built to exploit them can assist decision-makers by reaching out to citizens both online and through face to face consultations, helping them achieve their stated aims of inclusiveness and accessibility.

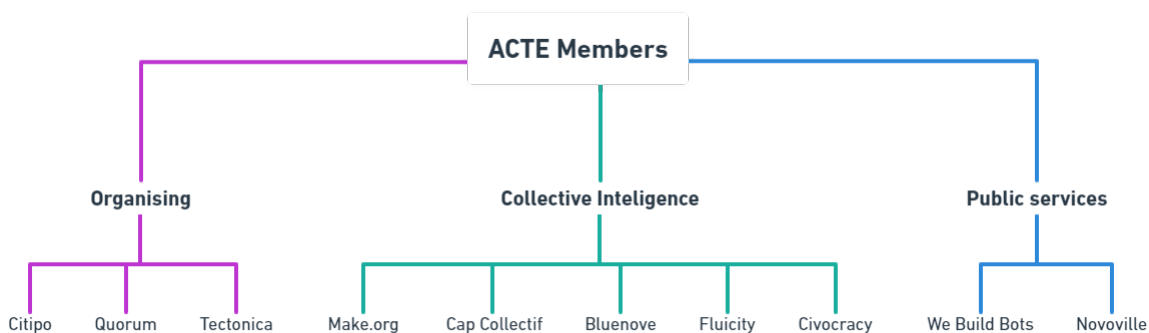
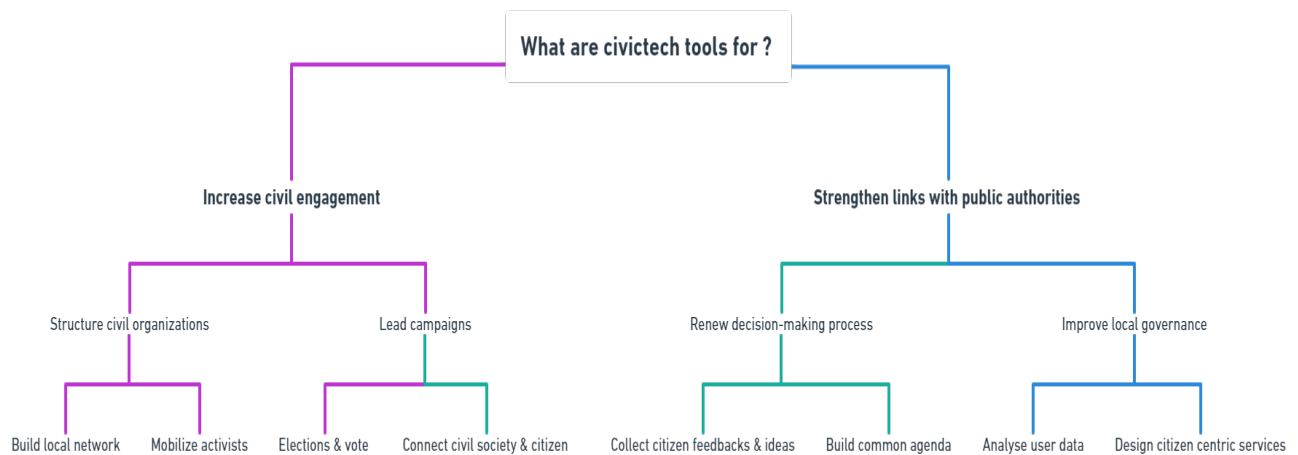
Achieving large scale in online consultations is also key to ensure a representative participation of society. Civic tech organizations have developed methodologies to ensure that the silent majority does engage, by reaching out to citizens where they already are, be it on social media, in-person at their local council, or throughout existing channels in their respective communities.

The diversity and complementarity of civic technologies underpins their efficiency. For example, the initiative [Après, Maintenant!](#), in France, relied on 15 different initiatives and online civic tech tools around one big issue during the COVID crisis “What do we want for the world after COVID?”. In just a few weeks, thanks to the variety of tools and approaches, 300k citizens were reached and contributed to that topic. Having different civic tech solutions means different methodology, modules and approaches: proposing to the public various ways of engaging ensured more diversity and higher numbers of people and contributions. A consortium of Civic tech actors could offer comprehensive and flexible solutions to European Institutions, in order to improve the citizens’ participation (e.g. the campaign [WeEuropeans](#) reached 38 millions of Europeans and 1,7 millions participants, before the 2019 European elections).

❖ Potential collaboration between ACTE and the European institutions

ACTE members strive to remove and reduce all barriers to citizens' participation to come as close as possible to a representative sample of the population. This balance is crucial to the success of the Conference on the Future of Europe. According to their abilities and skills, European civic techs stand ready to assist the institutions to make the Conference an initiative for all European citizens, in all their diversity.

ACTE members are willing to cooperate with the European Institutions and map the European civic tech ecosystem and solutions to find the right approach for the online tool of the Conference.



Recommendation n°2: Mobilize ACTE’s local ecosystem to promote the CoFoE and launch debates with partners

To make sure all European citizens engage in the Conference of the Future of Europe, ACTE suggests **relying on the civic tech sector’s network of local partners**. ACTE members work closely with governments at the local level in thousands of authorities throughout Europe. This gives us a chance to involve **representatives of cities, departments, and regions** to reach out to their residents as part of the public consultation.

The Conference on the Future of Europe offers a unique opportunity to leverage the reach of organizations who operate in this space. Their solutions are available to spread this ambitious initiative to every corner of the European Union and “massify” participation through mobilization from the ground up.

❖ Civic tech tools needed to reach this objective

Civic technologies developed by the ACTE members are being used at national and local level, in dozens of Member States. These digital tools are now essential to:

- Organize consultations for citizens to strengthen the links between the population and the public authorities;
- Capture citizens’ input, and include them in the decision-making processes;
- Help civil society organizations (associations, citizens interest groups, activists) to structure communities and operational grassroots movements.

❖ Potential collaboration between ACTE and the European institutions

Association Civic Tech Europe can gather with European institutions to reach citizens effectively on a local level, and increase the impact of the Conference on the Future of Europe. Such a common project would encourage citizen engagement and the EU’s presence in cities, departments, and regions. By joining forces with trusted third-parties, the CoFoE could be better implemented all over the EU.

ACTE offers to reach out through its local network to give the necessary solutions to local authorities in order to organize consultations, and generate more participation and responses for the CoFoE.

Recommendation n°3: Analyse data and give feedback to the European citizens

Once a very large number of individual contributions has been reached, European institutions will have **to analyse the data provided by partner solutions**.

Analysing this data will be complex and the European Union should **be equipped as effectively as possible** to take into account citizens' inputs and **reach the conclusions it needs to build its future**.

Furthermore, **clear feedback should be given to the European citizens** to learn about the Conference's conclusions and any political consequences.

❖ Civic tech tools needed to reach this objective

Again, the civic tech sector can support the European institutions to both analyse the data and disseminate the outcome, and offer concrete feedback to both citizens and European public authorities.

While some of the technologies developed by ACTE's members are innovative, they are appropriate to moderate the debate, analyse data and build cross analysis-synthesis. Our solutions are a good example of how AI and Natural Language Processing can serve European democracy while staying in compliance with European standards (transparency, General Data Protection Regulation, cybersecurity, prevention against the dissemination of fake news or the influence of trolls). Additionally, the members of ACTE develop code conscious of bias, of the power of algorithms: the overall design and visualization of data and contributions by citizens is considered in an ethical way.

❖ Potential collaboration between ACTE and the European institutions

ACTE recommends sharing data from partner platforms during the entire Conference on the Future of Europe, and not just at the end of the process. Open data, shared results and APIs will allow the European institutions and their partners to better analyse and synthesize the contributions of the citizens.

ACTE suggests sharing its expertise (frameworks and knowledge of the civic tech sector) with the European institutions to create a methodology for moderation.

ANNEX - ACTE'S MEMBERS

 **fluicity**

**MAKE.
ORG**

QUORUM

Civocracy 

novoville

 **Cap Collectif**

 **itipo**

bluenove
opening organizations:

we.

 **TECTONICA**