

CASE STUDY: VA TECH RICHMOND CENTER COFFEE AND CONVERSATION EVENT

Overview

On November 16th 2024, more than 22 recent One Small Step participants gathered for a Coffee and Conversation event at the Virginia Tech Richmond Center, Virginia. Many attendees were also alumni of [Leadership Metro Richmond](#), bringing together a group with shared experience in civic leadership and an interest in continuing dialogue across difference. The gathering was designed as a follow-up opportunity for people who had already participated in a One Small Step conversation and were looking for a way to stay engaged.



Approach

The event was hosted in partnership with the Virginia Center for Inclusive Communities (VCIC) and structured as a “Second Step” experience. Rather than introducing One Small Step for the first time, the focus was on reflection and connection after participants’ initial conversations. Facilitators guided the group through a process that began with establishing shared conversation norms, then moved into small-group dialogue according to same-colored lanyards with OSS Great Questions. Participants spent approximately an hour in structured discussion, reflecting on their thoughts and emotions following the election and listening to how others were experiencing the same moment.



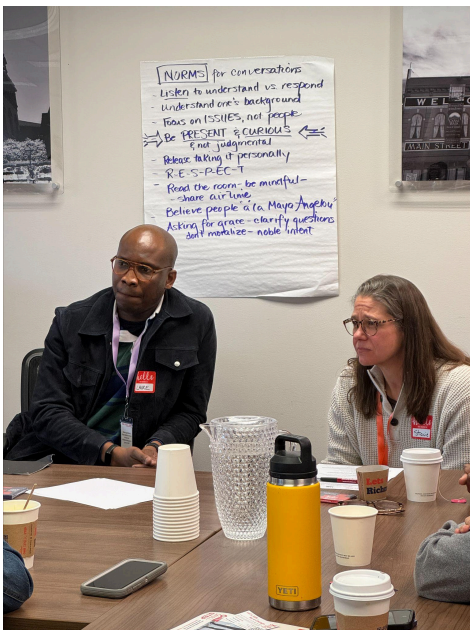
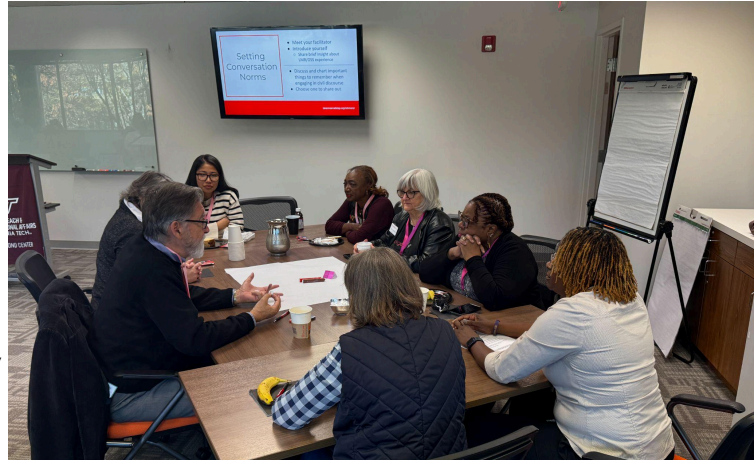
Key Insights & Lessons Learned

Participants consistently noted the value of having a facilitated space to process current events alongside others who were committed to respectful conversation. Beginning with shared norms helped set expectations and created a sense of trust across differences. Several attendees appreciated the chance to reconnect with their original One Small Step conversation partner, while

others valued meeting new people who were similarly interested in continuing the practice of dialogue beyond a single conversation.

Notable Outcomes and Key Takeaways

All participants engaged in sustained conversation across perspectives, supported by experienced facilitation from VCIC. The partnership strengthened the depth and flow of the dialogue and helped keep conversations focused and grounded. Many participants left with clearer ideas about how they wanted to remain involved in bridge-building efforts moving forward. The event demonstrated that post-conversation gatherings can serve as a meaningful extension of One Small Step by giving people space to reflect together, deepen relationships, and consider how dialogue fits into their ongoing civic lives.



Project Links:

- [OSS RIC LMR/VCIC/OSS Second Step Coffee ...](#)
- [OSS LMR VCIC Second Step Agenda Nov 16](#)
- [OSS RIC Coffee Conversation VCIC LMR Nov 1...](#)