

The Center for Urban Pedagogy (CUP)

How does a city work? Education programs, workshops and actions to foster civic engagement and public participation



Project author or developer:
Damon Rich

Where:
US / United States / New York

Website:
welcometocup.org/

The Center for Urban Pedagogy (CUP) is a nonprofit organization that uses design and art to improve civic engagement. CUP projects demystify the urban policy and planning issues that impact our communities, so that more individuals can better participate in shaping them.

We believe that increasing understanding of how these systems work is the first step to better and more diverse community participation.

CUP projects are collaborations of art and design professionals, community-based advocates and policymakers, and our staff. Together we take on complex issues—from the juvenile justice system to zoning law to food access—and break them down into simple, accessible, visual explanations. CUP takes two approaches to improving public engagement through civic education: youth education programs in which students work with teaching artists to investigate some aspect of how the city works and create final products that educate others about what they learned; and community education programs that bring together designers and advocates to produce tools, workshops, and publications that explain complex policies or processes for specific audiences.

Community Education

CUP works with advocacy organizations, policy experts, and designers to produce publications, workshops, and other teaching tools that explain important policy issues for the people who most need to know. CUP publications and teaching tools are made for and with specific groups in specific places, but they reach a national audience of people interested in civics education and graphic and information design. Youth Education CUP partners with schools and afterschool programs to produce experiential, project-based curricula that get students out of the classroom to interact with New York City and the people who make it work. Our education programs vary in length from one day to one semester and reach over 500 students each year—from the Bronx to South Brooklyn and everywhere in between.

