Americans hunger for creative and civil approaches to improve our democracy and the lives of our people. At Convergence, we envision a world where leaders at all levels choose collaboration to address issues of critical public concern. In this world, people recognize that no one group or perspective holds all the wisdom on how to solve big problems. Fostering relationships of trust can unleash powerful, shared solutions that do not compromise principle. Since 2009, Convergence has worked intensively to transform this vision into reality.

Our democracy requires people to work together across differences. For nine short years, we have brought together leaders and doers—many who never thought they could talk to one another—to build trusting relationships, identify breakthrough solutions, and form unlikely alliances for constructive change on issue after intractable issue. At a time when many are concerned about the fraying of our social fabric, Convergence’s approach can help restore our sense of community and strengthen our democratic institutions.

"[Convergence] has been quietly connecting people with different priorities, beliefs and political leanings to build trust and foster relationships, so they can find pathways for cooperative action...
The process requires skill to manage, but it's not magical. Convergence has shown it can be repeated with reliable consistency."

– The New York Times
November 2015
The **Issues**

Since our inception, we have taken on many of America’s toughest problems.

| Our projects have addressed a range of political, social, and economic challenges in the United States, including: |
| + Transforming K-12 education so all children can reach their full potential |
| + Reforming the federal budget process |
| + Increasing economic mobility for low-income Americans through work |
| + Identifying bipartisan solutions to improve the U.S. health care system |
| + Reducing recidivism and promoting the successful reentry of formerly incarcerated individuals |
| + Addressing the looming long-term care financing crisis |
| + Strengthening relations among leaders in the U.S. and Pakistan |
| + Reducing obesity and other diet-related diseases |

| **Who We Convene** |
| Convergence brings America’s leaders to the table, creating unlikely alliances across traditional silos. We engage national and community leaders, experts, and advocates representing: health care, education, business, labor unions, public health, academia, philanthropy, think tanks, technology, and more. |

Some of the organizations whose leaders have participated in a Convergence project include:

- AARP
- Google for Education
- Galen Institute
- National Urban League
- Kroger
- Brookings Institution
- Right on Crime
- American Correctional Assn.
- The Walt Disney Company
- American Federation of Teachers
- National Education Association
- American Enterprise Institute
- Robert Wood Johnson Foundation
- Center for American Progress
- The Aspen Institute
- Target
- American Cafe Society
- U.S. Chamber of Commerce
- Bipartisan Policy Center
- Hilton
- Americans for Prosperity
- Hewlett Foundation
- AFL-CIO
- The Heritage Foundation
- Harvard University
- The Pew Charitable Trusts
- Family for America
- National Association of Convenience Stores
- National Governors Association
- PepsiCo
- Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States
- Families USA
- National Center for Victims of Crime
- McDonald's
- IBM
- Leading Age
Our Impact

Our model galvanizes people to work for change, yielding collaborations, ideas, and solutions never thought possible.

This includes a range of impacts, including: changes to national, state and local policies; the development of pilot tests for market-based solutions and new business practices; the creation of national networks and partnerships; a reshaping of the national conversation; and shifting the priorities of philanthropy.

Education Reimagined

In 2013, we brought together often opposing education practitioners, scholars, businesses, union and charter school leaders, parents, and administrators to move past the usual debates for a new conversation about the future of education. This group of “unlikely bedfellows” created a shared Transformational Vision of Education in the U.S. and launched a partnership of leaders committed to realizing this vision together.

Five years later, Convergence’s Education Reimagined initiative has developed an influential network of hundreds of national education leaders, local practitioners and learners from across the country who are building the tools, systems, and conditions to enable learner-centered education to thrive, spread, and last. Their vision has been adopted by superintendents, major companies, state educator associations, and more.

Project on Nutrition and Wellness

Beginning in 2012, the Convergence Project on Nutrition and Wellness (PNW) brought together food manufacturers, public health experts, food retailers, community groups, healthcare providers, consumer advocates, health insurers, and others to explore cross-sector approaches to reduce obesity, diabetes, and other nutrition-related problems.

Through our process, the group commissioned groundbreaking research to better understand how to increase consumer demand for healthier foods. They conducted pilot tests in grocery and convenience stores and developed tools for these industries to promote healthier diets. Their Grocery Retail Scorecard is being used by a major national grocery chain with over 1,800 stores across the country.

In addition, PNW’s work with the National Association of Convenience Stores supported a growing national shift toward selling healthier food and beverages in convenience stores nationwide.

Health Reform Roundtable

As the 2017 health care debate was roiling the nation, our Health Reform Roundtable helped reshape the perceptions of both policymakers and the media as to what is possible on this contentious issue. Our Roundtable, consisting of experts who helped create the Affordable Care Act and those who have worked to dismantle it, developed bipartisan recommendations that received coverage in dozens of national media outlets, including the Wall Street Journal and the Washington Post.

Many of the recommendations reflected in bipartisan legislation considered in the Senate mirror the recommendations of our Roundtable. The Roundtable was the first of several bipartisan groups last year to lay out balanced framing and substantive ideas that could bridge key differences in Congress on health reform. Building on these efforts, we are now organizing national stakeholders around a broader mission to envision a future, much-improved American healthcare system in our Future of Health Project.

“I’ve participated in a lot—and I mean a lot—of multi-stakeholder dialogues. None of these dialogues were as salient, as illuminating, or ultimately as productive as PNW.”

Mary Sophos
Executive Vice President
Grocery Manufacturers Association
Our Model

Unleashing the Power of Collaboration: We employ a unique model for collaborative problem-solving that leverages the human and financial resources of diverse and influential groups for collective impact.

1. Identify and Research an Issue

Identify a critical national issue where division or the failure to coordinate across differing perspectives stands in the way of progress. Through research and interviews, map the perspectives and positions of the key players on the issue. Frame the challenge in a way that invites collaboration across differing points of view.

2. Convene Stakeholders and Build Trust

Enroll divergent and diverse leaders who have the collective knowledge, resources, commitment, and influence to drive change. Through professional facilitation, create space for open and safe communication. Go beyond the positions of participants to explore their underlying interests, values and concerns. Create a shared factual framework and foster curiosity to learn together.

3. Develop Shared Recommendations

Through sustained dialogue, participants push each other’s thinking and explore areas of common ground. Through negotiation and innovation, participants generate actionable recommendations that attract widespread enthusiasm and support.

4. Take Action

Stakeholders and outside partners implement an action plan, with continued support from Convergence to maximize impact.

"When you focus on building the quality of the relationships, then what increases is the quality of the kinds of conversations that you have… When you improve the quality of the conversations, then you will improve the quality of your decision-making. And when you improve the quality of your decision-making, then you improve the quality of results."

– Becky Pringle
Vice President
National Education Association
**Invest in a National Culture of Collaboration**

Never in recent memory has our country experienced such deep divides in our politics and discourse. People of good will and spirit are unable to understand each other or bridge their differences, paralyzing decision-making and thwarting progress.

At this pivotal time, Convergence can make a powerful contribution to our democracy, helping our nation move forward on urgent and intractable issues.

We have a unique opportunity to positively affect the lives of millions of Americans, and we are eager to seize it.

To this end, we are actively raising philanthropic revenue to assure our strategic growth and impact, as well as our long-term sustainability. This will require a significant investment by those who believe that what unites us is stronger than what divides us. We seek significant support to:

+ **Maximize the results of our current projects** by generating game-changing recommendations and unlikely alliances for action over time;

+ **Start timely new projects on critical issues** where the failure to collaborate across differences stymies progress;

+ **Build our communications capacity** so we can spread the word about our project recommendations as well as the power of collaborative problem-solving; and

+ **Multiply our impact** through inspiring and supporting others to address issues of public consequence through collaborative means.

We invite you to support Convergence’s work and contribute to the creation of a culture that chooses collaboration first. By investing in Convergence, you become part of restoring hope in our country’s ability to transcend differences and solve critical national issues.