

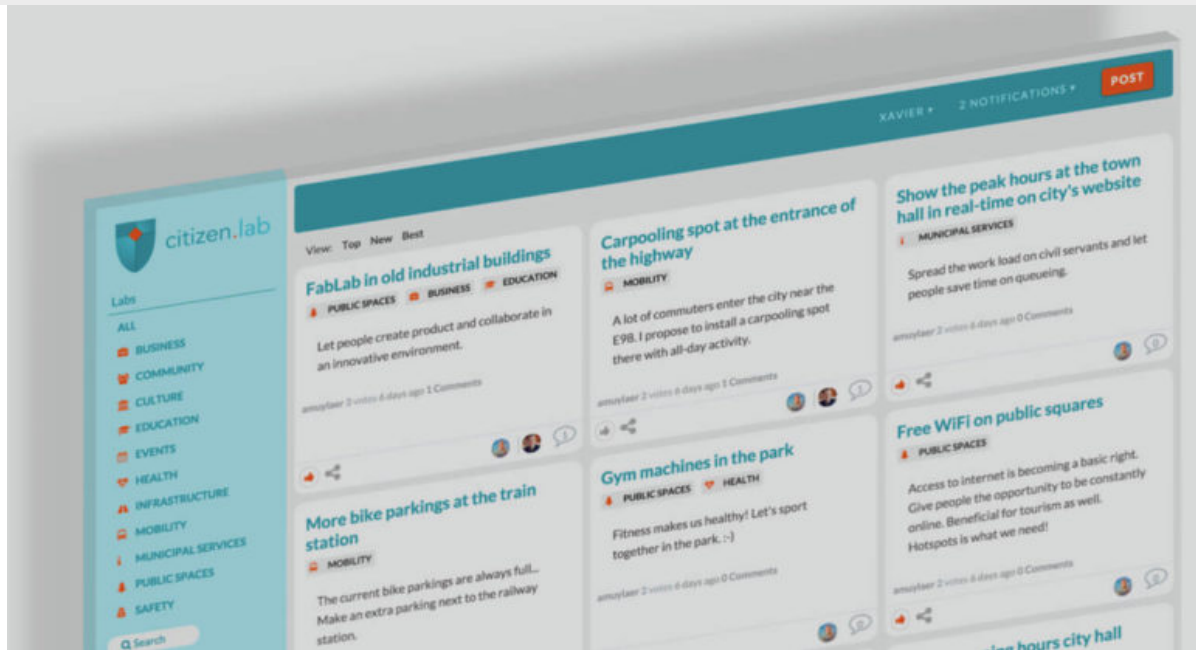
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## CIVIC ENGAGEMENT PLATFORM BRINGS THE TOWN MEETING ONLINE

 WORK & LIFESTYLE

**CitizenLab provides a space for citizens to communicate about ideas for their city, with their local government and each other.**

Citizens may have the ability to express enthusiasm or disgust for government policies online, but these opinions are only as valuable as the ears they reach. We recently saw [Balancing Act](#) offer citizens the ability to view and play around with their city’s budget, providing governments with a better understanding of the wants and needs of their constituents. Now, [CitizenLab](#) is another civic engagement platform, which is bringing the town meeting into the digital age — providing a space for citizens to communicate with their government, and for governments to ‘citizensource’ opinions on their policies.



To begin, participants visit the platform and enter their city. This will take them to a collection of 'labs' — categories such as education, health and public spaces. They can then post new ideas, join existing conversations and upvote interesting topics. Local governments can then use the platform as a resource to discover the priorities of its citizens. They can respond directly to discussions and consult the public opinion on important issues. Governments can also acknowledge the most vital issues raised by taking them to city council for discussion. The platform is designed to host positive ideas, rather than raise issues.

CitizenLab is currently in Beta and welcoming participants from around the world to engage with and trial the platform. Could a similar system be implemented on a smaller scale in other institutions such as universities?

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