Princeton BDI’s practical Community Toolkit provides resources for local leaders and citizens to empower their community, prevent political violence, and respond to incidents that do arise. The toolkit combines lessons from international best practice with domestic expertise of US emergency management, faith-based, and community-building networks.

- **Problem:** As we witness heightened political tensions and resurgent political violence in the United States, local leaders and peacebuilders are seeking resources to respond in their own communities.

- **Our Solution:** BDI helps local peacebuilders and leaders better prepare and integrate conflict prevention best practices into all aspects of their work; planning for and mitigating violence before it starts.

- **Our Model:** BDI’s Community Toolkit is an easy to digest and use document that breaks down risk analysis and mitigation into more manageable steps, empowering local leaders to take a more community-wide approach in thinking about political violence and building links to the broader community. Flexible, customized technical assistance helps leaders put the guide into practice, while linking to other existing resources and networks doing the same.

- **The Impact:** And if violence does occur, communities are better prepared to immediately respond, resist escalation, and recover together - while leaving open the window for long term reconciliation.

**Other Partners:**

- **Alliance for Peacebuilding** has agreed to support pro bono desk research on existing peacebuilding resources and best practice case studies, ensuring BDI is able to fill existing gaps and build/integrate with existing resources.

The Bridging Divides Initiative at Princeton University seeks to understand polarization in the United States – bringing students, the academic community, and practitioners together to promote domestic community building and cross partisan efforts. Drawing lessons from decades of work around the globe in violence prevention, community cohesion and addressing polarization in post-conflict and highly politicized environments, BDI seeks to support domestic efforts to do the same.

Initial initiatives from the BDI team include an online resource and risk map, support to a national strategy on political violence prevention, building student leaders, and a community toolkit.
● **National League of Cities University** has expressed interest in hosting BDI sessions at their next training, as well as piloting early toolkits among members with existing interest. Depending on plans to scale, NLC also expressed willingness to co-fundraise.

● **National Governors Association** has offered to provide connections to Governor’s Homeland Security Advisors for piloting and feedback, potentially offering a specific BDI policy academy focused on the social and cultural aspects of election security and preventing targeted violence.

● **U.S. Conference of Mayors**, and their Center for Inclusive and Compassionate Cities Initiative, offer several existing programs where BDI could partner or offer technical assistance.

● **Princeton’s Institute for Successful Societies** may provide frameworks and technical assistance to prepare technical case studies of challenges and successes in building resilient communities in the US context. Ongoing conversations with Princeton’s Politics and Sociology Departments cover potential PhD assistantships, research support, and other partnerships.

● BDI additionally holds existing partnerships with the **Bridge Alliance, Listen First Coalition, Peace Insight** and is expanding to include other networks. We would draw on both expertise and local knowledge through these networks to support the initiative.

**Timeline:**

Given the timeline for community-wide engagement and national trends ahead of the November 2020 election, BDI has started initial research and scoping with pro bono support. With secure funding, BDI would bring the project to scale through a rapid drafting, testing, and iterative pilot process - targeting fully public resources and available technical assistance by no later than February 2020.

**Cost:**

Building on existing resources and infrastructure at Princeton, BDI can run a full program and provide robust, targeted technical assistance to communities through the 2020 election cycle for $250k. Additional partnerships and funding would allow the BDI team to more fully support national policy.