



Level Up

Rethinking democratic participation

Researchers develop innovative method to make democratic participation accessible for everyone

How can we reach people who usually don't engage with democratic participation projects? How do we make sure every voice is heard when creating new policies? How can we get European politicians to genuinely connect with local communities? These are just some of the questions that Level Up aims to answer.

Level Up, a non-profit organisation led by researchers and social entrepreneurs from leading European universities, rethinks how governments, NGOs, and other organisations set up democratic participation projects. To that end, the Level Up team has developed an innovative methodology based on gamification that is fun, inclusive- by-design, and engaging.

Level Up's mission is to reconnect European politicians - often seen as sitting in their Eurobubble - with local communities and underrepresented people. With populism on the rise and more people disconnecting from politics as a whole, we want to help change democracy before it's too late. It is high time for a wind of change.

Level Up was born out of the Europaeum Network, founded by the University of Oxford, and the Europaeum Scholars Programme, a two-year leadership and policy course for some of the most promising doctoral candidates across Europe. Building on one year of interdisciplinary research together with international experts, Level Up is now excited to implement its first pilot projects across Europe.



To learn more about Level Up's cutting-edge solutions or to interview any of our team members, contact us at hello@gamifydemocracy.org

Key Highlights of Level Up

1. **Innovative Toolkit:** Level Up is offering an original participation model that is both fun and inclusive, backed by science. It can be used at various levels (e.g. local, regional, international) to boost joint decision-making and public consultation processes. For each use, Level Up designs a custom-made process emphasising (1) gamification, (2) physical encounters, and (3) a level playing field between actors from different groups of society.
2. **Unmatched Expertise:** Run by an international team of leading researchers and backed by an advisory board of seasoned experts, Level Up brings together some of the best minds in the industry of democratic participation. Our team draws from varied experience and research in geography, history, cultural leadership, folklore, politics, international relations, literature, and law. They combine their expertise to deliver tailored solutions that address the evolving challenges of the democratic participation landscape.
3. **Commitment to Sustainability:** We are dedicated to developing sustainable solutions that minimise our carbon footprint, engage local communities, and promote long-term social justice. We believe that these values are essential for a peaceful and prosperous Europe. Our commitment to sustainability is embedded in our operations, products, and team culture.

Recent Accomplishments

Level Up invites media professionals and industry leaders to explore our newly launched website www.gamifydemocracy.org where you can learn more about the programme and our recent events:

- 31 May – 1 June 2023: We completed **Level Up Our School**, where 30 high school students of [Colegio Fuhem Montserrat](#) had the opportunity to engage with local policy-makers about the future they want for their community, learn about democracy, and boost collaboration. More info [here](#).
- 15 June 2023: We completed **Level Up Our Climate Targets**, where European policy-makers, stakeholders, and the public will co-create proposals in the framework of DG CLIMA's public consultation on its 2040 climate targets, in partnership with the [European Climate Pact](#) and the [Global Governance Institute](#). More information [here](#).

The Level Up Team will present its final project and policy recommendations to the Europaeum Jury in September 2023.



KEY LINKS

Website: www.gamifydemocracy.org

LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/company/gamify-democracy/>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/HQLevelUp>

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/gamifydemocracy/>

Email: hello@gamifydemocracy.org

Team

We are a team of doctoral researchers seeking social impact and working together in the framework of the [Europaeum Scholars programme](#) based in Oxford, UK. Our group project runs until September 2023, when we will present our policy recommendations to high-level stakeholders. Afterwards, we plan to turn our research-based project into a non-profit organisation.



Our team of researchers with the Europaeum Director, Dr Andrew Graham, at our joint training module in Lisbon. Every three months, we meet

Our team of researchers:

- [Sašo Gorjanc](#), PhD in Geography (**University of St Andrews**), specialises in marine biodiversity, conservation, and management
- [Johanna Jaschik](#), PhD in Contemporary and Digital History (**University of Luxembourg**), researches mental maps in Western Ukraine during the post-socialist transformation
- [Iris Jugo Nuñez-Hoyo](#), PhD in Cultural Leadership (**Universidad Complutense de Madrid**) is an accomplished musician exploring the relationships between education, performing arts, and social impact
- [Marie Martine](#), DPhil in Modern Languages (**Oxford University**), focuses on women writers in France, Germany and Norway in the 19th century

in a different university to learn from experts and develop our own group project among 40 scholars selected based on a competitive application process.

- ♦ Jens Meijen, PhD in Social Sciences (**KU Leuven**), focuses on European populism and its relationship with democracy and technology
- ♦ Toine Paulissen, PhD in Social Sciences (**KU Leuven**), specialises in European politics, especially direct democracy, political finance and the EU
- ♦ Savannah-Rivka Powell, PhD in Ethnology and Folklore (**University of Tartu**), explores relations between minoritized identities, culture, gender and state
- ♦ Lena Riecke, PhD in Intelligence and Cybersecurity (**Leiden University**), is an interdisciplinary scholar drawing on law, history, cybersecurity, & intelligence
- ♦ Sophie Vériter, PhD in Security and Global Affairs (**Leiden University**), explores disinformation, democracy, & policy-making in Europe