

A large group of diverse people, including men and women of various ages and ethnicities, are posing for a group photo. They are arranged in several rows, with some standing and some kneeling or sitting in the front. Many of the people have their arms raised in the air, some with open palms, suggesting a celebratory or enthusiastic atmosphere. They are dressed in casual to semi-formal attire. The background is a large, vibrant mural on a wall. The mural depicts a woman with voluminous, curly purple hair, a mustache, and a serene expression. Her arms are outstretched horizontally, and her hands are open. The mural is painted in shades of purple, blue, and white. The wall itself is a light, textured color. The overall scene is brightly lit, likely by artificial lights, creating a warm and energetic environment.

# VANGUARD RICHMOND

PRESENTED BY

**NEXT  
CITY**

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# WHO WE ARE

Founded in 2003, **Next City** is a nonprofit journalism organization that believes in the power of storytelling to amplify solutions, helping spread workable ideas from one city to the next city. We inspire social, economic and environmental change in cities, enabling a network of doers to lead the way toward a more sustainable, equitable future.

“Next City is a terrific resource for learning about practices and successes in other urban places, as well as what to look out for with potential potholes. Very thoughtful, well presented and **helpful for those of us who care about our urban environment and humanity.**”

**Next City Reader**, *Reader Survey*



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## VANGUARD

**Next City's Vanguard Conference** is the premier formative experience for rising urban leaders committed to cultivating equity and sustainability in cities for the next generation. Vanguards aren't just talking the talk. Every day, they work to counteract historical patterns of social, economic and environmental injustice in cities.

For over 500 individuals and counting, this conference has become an invaluable touchstone in their professional development. This is your chance to stand with them, in a moment they'll never forget.



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## HOST CITY: RICHMOND

Vanguard gathers 40 rising urban leaders working in the United States and around the world. Each year, Next City selects a different host city. So far, 14 conferences have been held across 14 cities:

- Washington, DC
- Philadelphia, Penn.
- St. Louis, Mo.
- Cleveland, Ohio
- Chattanooga, Tenn.
- Reno, Nev.
- Houston, Texas
- Montreal, Canada
- Newcastle, Australia
- New Orleans, La.
- Newark, NJ
- Sacramento, Calif.
- Greensboro, NC
- El Paso, Texas

**Next up: Richmond, Virginia!** With the support of the Mellon Foundation, Next City is proud to bring Vanguards in 2023 to this vibrant capital city, rich with lessons from history and for our future, We're looking for supporters to help bring the conference to life.



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## 2023 RICHMOND HOST COMMITTEE

The Vanguard program is run by Next City in partnership with a Host Committee. Are you interested in serving or know someone who aligns with Next City's values? We're now accepting nominations.

Host committees are made up of a diverse group of stakeholders from as broad a range as the Vanguards including urban planning, community development, entrepreneurship, government, transportation, sustainability, design, art and media.

The Vanguard host committee helps select meaningful venues and inspiring speakers for our panels, tours, dinners, and workshops.



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# WHEN AND HOW

Timeline of Planning

**January-February.** Form Host Committee

**March.** Open Vanguard Applications

**Spring.** Scout Venues & Recruit Speakers

**May.** Select Vanguard Cohort

**August.** Virtual training with Vanguards before their arrival.

**September.** Welcome Vanguards to Richmond.



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# WHEN AND HOW

Conference Format

**Opening Reception** » As a prelude to the conference, Vanguards take part in a lightning round of introductions to their work.

**Day 1** » Historic overview of the Host City » Tour the Host City, experiencing neighborhoods through the lens of conference theme.

**Day 2** » Meet with community organizations, attend and participate in panel discussions, and connect with local innovators. » Local Ambassadors meet with Vanguards to share insights on the challenges they face. Sharing experiences helps create a long-term bond between Vanguards and the community. » **Keynote address.**

**Day 3** » Vanguards present a range of their work through the lens of the conference theme and share back insights from their experience.





# WHO ARE VANGUARDS?

The conference brings together professionals working across disciplines and sectors. Each Vanguard class includes policymakers and politicians, architects and urban planners, artists and media makers, all selected via a competitive application process.



READ THEIR  
BIOS AT  
[NEXTCITY.ORG/  
VANGUARD](https://nextcity.org/vanguard)

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## WHAT THEY'RE SAYING: VANGUARD ALUMS



### **Maya Ford**

*Founder of FordMomentum!*

*2019 Vanguard Sacramento Alum*

“Have you ever had an idea you’ve struggled to express? I suffer from this. It seems easy, but there are invisible barriers to my ability to navigate the steps to make my solution tangible. The hunt can be maddening because I do the work to clarify my vision. I read, talk, sniff, and dig. But sometimes, I just can’t get there. Next City understands this about creative, solution-oriented people.

“The Vanguard Conference brings us together to observe, learn, exchange, and witness the complexities of our time and space. They do this on the principles of servant leadership, allowing each intention and result to benefit all stakeholders in a regenerative way. **My conference was the first time I met people who reflected the best of me in a professional environment.** The diversity of ethnicity, age, geography, gender, and skill made me feel whole and safe. I got to talk about my role in developing the new world from my perspective without anyone challenging my authenticity or capacity.”

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## WHAT THEY'RE SAYING: RETURNING ALUMS



**Paola Aguirre Serrano**  
*Founder of Borderless Studio,  
2015 Vanguard Reno Alum*

“Being a Next City Vanguard was a game-changer in my journey as an urban designer. After my Vanguard experience in Reno in 2015, I felt tremendously inspired to make a bold move and to launch Borderless, an urban design and research practice invested in spatial justice and equitable design.

**“I felt such an infusion of energy and was meaningfully reminded that I’m not alone in doing this work.”**

Vanguard is an incredible network of brilliant and committed folks working on multiple fronts. Year after year, I keep coming back to the conference, both for inspiration and shared learning opportunities.”

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## WHAT THEY'RE SAYING: VANGUARD TURNED HOST



**Cecelia Thompson**

*Executive Director for Action Greensboro,  
2021 Vanguard Conference Host*

“I had the privilege of participating in the 2013 Next City Vanguard cohort in Cleveland. Looking back, it was such a rich opportunity to stretch my perspective of urban development, community building, organizing, diversity, equity, and inclusion. The network I was introduced to included seasoned leaders in the fields of planning, architecture, tech, and government, and they were inspiring and welcoming to those of us who were novices in the urban planning space. **Vanguard connected me with civic leaders across the country, which propelled me to make a difference back home.**”

“It was especially gratifying to host the 2020 Vanguard Conference in Greensboro, knowing that emerging leaders would be connected to Next City and all it provides through my city's lens.”

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## NOTABLE VANGUARD ALUMNI

The Vanguard network includes mayors, heads of planning departments, and founders of leading design firms devoted to social justice.



**JUSTIN GARRETT MOORE**  
Program Officer, Mellon Foundation



**PETER SVARZBEIN**  
Councilmember, City of El Paso, TX



**ERIC SHAW**  
Director of Housing, San Francisco



**NICK BOWDEN**  
Founder, Replica



**LIZ OGBU**  
Designer and Artist



**ANDREW RODRIGUEZ**  
Councilmember, City of Walnut, CA



**MARITA GARRETT**  
Mayor of Wilkinsburg, PA




**BRYAN LEE JR.**  
Principal, Colloqate Design

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**THE ANDREW W. MELLON FOUNDATION**





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# WHAT'S NEXT?

LET'S WORK TOGETHER TO SHARE THE TRUE STORY OF RICHMOND  
AND HELP YOU **REACH OUR NETWORK** OF URBAN LEADERS, CHANGEMAKERS AND DREAMERS.

**BECOME A SPONSOR**