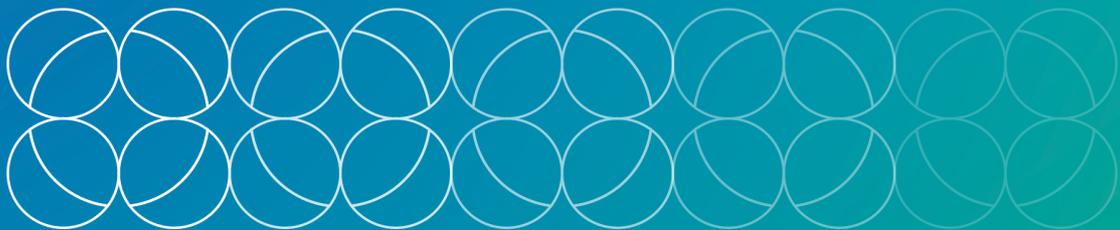




More in  
Common

# More in Common 2025 Strategy



MARCH 2022

**More in Common's vision** is of more united and inclusive democratic societies, in which people believe and feel that what they have in common is stronger than what divides them.

**More in Common's mission** is to understand the forces driving us apart, find common ground and bring people together to tackle shared challenges.

This paper sets out **More in Common's global strategy** over the next four years, to the end of 2025. This strategy is the result of a series of conversations with our team, our national and global boards and our partners that took place from mid-2021 to early 2022. This strategy is **more of a sketch than a blueprint**. It is being used alongside our **national strategies** which apply the strategic intent expressed below to our specific national contexts. While this strategy points to the 'next hill to climb', our country strategies identify the best route for the ascent.

## More in Common's lens on the world

More in Common's central focus is **social cohesion** – strengthening the sense of solidarity, inclusion and belonging among people in societies. We believe greater cohesion creates resilience against the forces that threaten to divide our societies. At the core of our vision and mission is the belief that cohesive societies are better able to tackle shared challenges, defuse conflict, steer clear of toxic “us versus them” narratives and create a sense of belonging that includes everyone.

While many organisations broadly share More in Common's vision and mission for more cohesive societies, **four key factors** make up our unique **lens on the world**.

### a Mapping people's values and identity

We try to understand the forces driving us apart through the lens of people's **values and identity**. This is a key part of our evidence-based approach. Drawing from social psychology, our methodology shifts the focus from the top of the iceberg to what lies below the surface - the deeper beliefs that shape what people think and do. We find that beliefs are often highly predictive of how people respond to a wide range of issues that can divide our societies. We believe the most effective engagement strategies meet people where they are, by understanding a person's orientation to society as expressed in their core values and their own sense of belonging and identity.

### b Understanding audiences

The nuanced understanding of **audiences** that emerges from our work (including our national segmentation mappings) provides distinct and actionable insights for our partners. We build an evidence base around different audiences, at the level of their group psychology. We explore areas of consensus and disagreement, and ways to build common ground through attention to values, language and how people live their lives. Our work on audiences seeks to capture the zeitgeist and provide breakthrough insights often not available from narrower, more siloed or traditional approaches such as those focused on demographics alone. This work gives a big picture view of society but is also applied in very granular terms from informing strategy to shaping communications and social media engagement.

Our audience work looks at society as a whole, but we pay special attention to a key group we describe in our research as the *'Invisibles'* who are characterised

by low social trust, stronger feelings of being under threat and lacking confidence in the system. These groups often feel left behind, powerless and disrespected – in other words, they can feel that they are invisible to society. They participate less in community life and have the highest levels of loneliness and isolation of any population group. They are typically more vulnerable than other groups to efforts to divide our societies into an ‘us’ and a ‘them’.

## c Navigating change

Central to addressing conflict in our societies is finding ways to better **navigate change**. More in Common was formed during a period of profound upheaval, amidst the rise of authoritarian populism in many countries. Periods of change generate both threats to our societies’ cohesion, and opportunities to transcend established fault lines. In the 2020s, we will continue to operate in an environment of heightened uncertainty and accelerating change in the global economy, geopolitics, health, technology, culture, the environment, and much more. Change can make people feel more insecure, anxious and fearful of others. But it is not inevitable that change deepens societal divisions – it can also provide opportunities for people to come together. Just as conflict entrepreneurs deepen and exploit differences, we can inspire and resource leaders and institutional partners to become more adept in navigating cultural and political conflict. Being attentive to new threats and opportunities is in our DNA, and we use our research to help identify the ways that change is affecting different segments of the population and our countries as a whole. Harnessing insights from our work, leaders can deploy common ground strategies that transcend false binaries, increase social trust and bring people together, even in uncertain and rapidly changing environments.

## d The lens of people and society, rather than issue siloes

Part of what sets More in Common apart is that we look at the world primarily from the **point of view of people**, and not firstly through the lens of issues. Our research suggests that most people’s views are not based on a deep knowledge or interest in individual issues, but rather reflect the way those issues connect to their values and identity. By tapping into this, More in Common provides distinctive insights into how people’s psychology and group identities interact with the issues that our societies are facing. **When we place a single issue within the wider context of people’s orientation to the world, our work can unlock progress and new opportunities for us and for our partners.** Our work is complementary to that of issue-specific organisations, and collaborating closely

with those working on issues from climate and democracy to immigration, inequalities and disinformation has led to some of our most productive partnerships.

## Three Strategic Priorities

At the 2025 horizon, More in Common will focus on three overarching priorities: **insights, partnerships and our ecosystem.**

### 1 Producing paradigm-shifting insights through research and thought leadership

In the next phase of our work through to 2025, we aim to generate paradigm-shifting, original and distinctive insights across a wide range of issues and geographies. Achieving a paradigm shift involves bringing significant change to the way that a leader, institution or network sees the world. We want More in Common to expand its work at the leading edge of explaining the world around us in a way that feels fresh, positive and impactful. We will measure this work against the yardstick of both paradigm shift and its translation into real-world impact. This requires us to be consistently curious and creative in providing the unique perspective that comes from thinking about the many changes and crises facing our countries through our unique More in Common lens.

### 2 Forging deep and meaningful partnerships that catalyse change

We believe that our greatest impact will come from partnering with leaders and institutions, and help shape them into more powerful agents for social cohesion and bridge-building. Through to the end of 2025, we aim to substantially grow the depth and reach of our partnerships. This will require an expansion of our capabilities, and a greater intentionality in developing partnerships. Our country strategies identify key organisations in different sectors with whom we want to work. Sustained partnerships require engagement both with organisational leaders and with local networks where the most meaningful work is often done. This involves taking practical steps such as identifying areas of overlapping interest and alignment, embedding with our partners, identifying the best ways to collaborate, developing ways to track our progress and impact and forging strategies that help partners advance towards their goals, while also strengthening cohesion.

### 3 Helping build up a more powerful ecosystem of people, organisations and initiatives in service of our mission

The scale of the issues we work on demands more than producing insights and a series of effective partnerships with a limited number of organisations. We also need to achieve impact on a more **systemic level**. We can best do that by helping to build up a larger ecosystem of organisations, networks and initiatives to unite divided societies and build resilience against social fracturing. A myriad of organisations already work on different aspects of our mission in civil society, philanthropy, political parties, media, social institutions, service delivery organisations, academia, business groups, technology firms, faith communities, unions, government agencies, arts and culture groups, social movements and many others. We want to play a role in connecting and catalysing this eco-system and allowing it to be more than the sum of its parts.

#### Our commitments to ourselves

Across all three of our priority axes, we will hold ourselves accountable to the following commitments:

- 1 We commit to maintaining **rigor and excellence** in everything we do.
- 2 We commit to pursuing **systemic not piecemeal change**.
- 3 We commit to **learning continually** from what we and others are doing.
- 4 We commit to being both **humble and confident**.
- 5 We commit to **generosity** towards each other and other organisations.
- 6 We commit to **moving beyond describing the problem** to focusing on solutions.
- 7 We commit to keeping **'the Invisibles'** at the centre of our work.
- 8 We commit to **joining the public conversation** when we have a contribution to make.
- 9 We commit to encouraging a healthy and respectful diversity of perspectives, never **mistaking weak consensus for common ground**.
- 10 We **commit to being agile**, integrating strategy and tactical approaches and always open to opportunities to make tangible short-term impact to advance our longer-term mission.
- 11 We will **always put mission first**, even as we develop our systems and processes.

## Examples of impact

More in Common's impact takes very different forms across contexts and issue areas. Here are a few examples:

### Example 1 Building movements

More in Common's work provides a **common language that inspires and provides a roadmap for building broad-based coalitions and movements**. We provide something similar to a shared 'Operating System' that works across different devices – where organisations might play different roles and have distinctive voices that reach different population segments, but where those efforts all build momentum towards shared goals. By sharing our evidence-based insights and by training a wide range of movement partners, we help equip dozens of local, national and global movement organisations to better implement their mission and help reinforce an ecosystem of actors around shared goals and tools. For example, large campaigning groups working on democracy, immigration and climate use More in Common's segmentation maps as the starting point for their engagement and communications strategies. This model has also helped them identify population segments that are not being reached, resulting in resources being reallocated and new initiatives started. Examples include our work with democracy partners in Texas through our [\*Threads of Texas\*](#) project or our work on climate communications through the [\*Britain Talks Climate\*](#) project and sister initiatives in France and Germany.

### Example 2 Helping shape and frame policy

Our work has also proven to be impactful in helping shape **large-scale policy packages**. Our lens on the world and our insights have allowed policymakers to gain a deeper understanding of how particular policies might be made more effective or better communicated, particularly to take into account the views of hard-to-reach audiences. We have been told this has helped policymakers avoid 'flying blind',

particularly in moments of crisis. Examples of demonstrable impact on policy include our work on refugee sponsorship policy in the UK, Germany and the United States, as well as our engagement at both national and EU level on the framing of the European Green Deal and COVID recovery packages.

### Example 3 Being a Helpful Strategic Partner

By helping connect specific issues and program areas to the wider context of people's orientation to the world, More in Common can help unlock **new opportunities and progress**, for example working alongside our partners in philanthropy, civil society and the media. Specifically, our work helps organisations and leaders from a range of worldviews and issue areas navigate periods of change. More in Common is frequently called upon and commissioned to help rethink and reshape organisational strategies or help our partners adapt to significant evolutions in their operating environments – in recent times, we've done this work with large aid delivery organisations, philanthropic foundations, unions and public broadcasters. We have also helped incubate and launch new organisations such as funder tables and new campaigning groups.

### Example 4 Convening

Helping strengthen and grow our ecosystem is one of the priorities expressed in this strategy. Depending on the local context, we either participate in existing convenings or, when we see a need, act as conveners ourselves, sharing insights, tools and methodologies. Our team in Germany, for example, runs a physical 'hub' where we host diverse partner organisations to work with us through a formal fellowship program. Working side by side in the same physical space as our partners, we explore ways of engaging previously unreachable parts of the German public. In France, we run regular convenings on audience insights and strategic communications with over 100 organisations working in a variety of issue areas.

## Culture and values

Over the course of our strategy conversations, we heard repeatedly from our team and our partners that **our culture is one of our greatest strengths** as an organisation. Maintaining and nurturing a strong, supportive culture and making it 'portable' will be essential to our success for this next strategic period especially as More in Common grows beyond the size which allows us all to fit comfortably in one room.

Our culture is characterised by the following attributes:

- We seek impact in the world by thinking in terms of systems and the whole.
- We value curiosity, and we are always learning.
- We are non-partisan but not neutral.
- We are bound to one another by a common mission and culture, but we value difference and respectful disagreement.
- We trust each other.
- We believe we have a far better chance of success if our team and the partners we work with reflect a broad range of backgrounds, beliefs, political persuasions and life experiences.
- We always place our mission before our ego and we are generous towards colleagues and other organisations.
- Our spirit is original, rigorous, restless and creative.
- We dwell on the edge but not on the margins. We are comfortable being non-conformist.
- We feel called to this work by a sense of both urgency and hope.
- We share a belief in the power of a good laugh.

## Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI)

More in Common works in diverse settings, and we want to embody the values and practices that strengthen understanding, trust, and inclusion. A considerate diversity, equity, and inclusion strategy helps us advance More in Common's mission by ensuring all aspects of our work authentically reflect a diversity of perspectives, backgrounds and life experiences. Our DEI strategy guides how we recruit, develop, and support our team and build a culture of pluralism, where individuals of diverse backgrounds and perspectives feel like they belong and can thrive at More in Common. We want all aspects of our work to reflect the full

diversity of the societies in which we operate, and the shared values and identity to which we aspire. This means bringing diverse perspectives and new voices to inform how we approach our research, how we cultivate and work through partnerships, how we think about the current ecosystem we operate in and how it needs to evolve. Our DEI strategy also details the accountability mechanisms we use to evaluate our fidelity to these principles and their application in practice.

## Organisational Structure

More in Common is a **multinational organisation**. Learning from the challenges of other organisations that operate across multiple jurisdictions, we want to avoid the mistakes of being so globally oriented that we are not nationally relevant, or so nationally-focused that we become a franchise of independent groups, united only by the More in Common brand. Unlike some global organisations who operate in multiple countries, we place a **premium on relevance and impact at the country level** where we aspire to operate on par with leading national organisations in our field. The power of More in Common's organisational design lies in being a **hybrid** that aims to integrate the best of these global and national dimensions.



## Defining Success

By 2025, we will have succeeded if we can demonstrate that...

**We will measure our progress by asking ourselves...**

Our insights contributed to paradigm shift

**Key question:** Have we generated original insights that have met our definition of shifted paradigms?

We built partnerships that delivered impact

**Key question:** Has our work with key partners significantly helped them advance their mission in a way that helps us advance our own mission? Has our work with them helped improve their strategy, leadership, funding, advocacy or communications?

We helped build and strengthen our ecosystem

**Key question:** Has the work of More in Common helped energise and advance powerful networks and movements, both existing and new?

We became a world-class learning organisation

**Key question:** Has our work and that of our partners and our ecosystem benefited significantly from our learning strategy? Has learning allowed our impact to be exponential?

We increased our impact by telling the story of this work

**Key question:** Are we and our partners communicating effectively about all aspects of our work in a way that multiplies impact?

We nurtured our team and culture

**Key question:** Has our culture remained strong and true to the principles expressed in this strategy?

We lived up to our commitment to true DEI

**Key question:** Are we living up to our commitments to DEI in everything we do?

We secured the funding we need for this strategy

**Key question:** Have we secured the level and type of funding to power this strategy and lead us to success?



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