



William Monroe Trotter Collaborative for Social Justice

The William Monroe Trotter Collaborative for Social Justice at the Center for Public Leadership, led by former NAACP president and CEO Cornell William Brooks, utilizes applied research to foster advocacy and citizen activism at Harvard Kennedy School and across Harvard University. A "think-and-do tank" for Harvard students committed to social justice and rigorous research, the Trotter Collaborative teaches a wide range of advocacy skills from litigation and direct action to strategic communications and grassroots mobilization campaigns.

Background

The Trotter Collaborative was created in 2018 to further the legacy of William Monroe Trotter, a Harvard University alumnus who meaningfully advanced civil rights and social justice. The Trotter Collaborative was conceived with the goal of connecting Harvard scholars of social justice with external advocacy organizations to collaborate on field-based exploration, policy projects, and public service work.

Objectives

The Trotter Collaborative supports the development of public leadership and the rigorous teaching of advocacy skills through classroom pedagogy, convenings, and field engagement. Through conducting and employing applied research, the Trotter Collaborative supports advocacy, citizen activism, and impactful, nonpartisan policy solutions to civil rights and social justice issues. Ongoing partnerships with nonprofits and policymakers allow the Trotter Collaborative to leverage the research and analytic capacity of Harvard faculty, students, and staff in service of grassroots organizations.

Courses

Professor Brooks' Harvard Kennedy School course "Creating Justice in Real Time: Vision, Strategies and Campaigns" brings together a select, interdisciplinary cohort of students from across Harvard who develop practical advocacy campaigns using legislative, policy, organizing, communication, and moral framing strategies to address injustice. The "Justice, Advocacy, and You: Race and Crime as a Case Study" module equips students with advocacy strategies to end systemic racism through deeper understanding of the criminal legal system.

"Excellence in the practice of social justice is not merely a meritocratic measure of public leadership, but a moral measure of American democracy. The Trotter Collaborative's work aims to advance the practice of social justice to create a just democracy."

Cornell William Brooks
Director, Trotter Collaborative