
Mission and History

The Consensus Building Institute (CBI) is a not-for-profit organization created by leading practitioners and theory builders in the fields of negotiation and dispute resolution. CBI works with leaders, advocates, experts, and communities to promote effective negotiations, build consensus, and resolve conflicts.

CBI improves the way that leaders use negotiations to make organizational decisions, achieve agreements, and manage multi-party conflicts and planning efforts. CBI uses proven principles, processes and techniques that improve group decision-making on complex public and organizational issues. Many of these strategies have been developed through the Program on Negotiation and MIT-Harvard Public Disputes Program at Harvard Law School, where a number of CBI's staff and Board members are affiliated.

CBI was founded by Lawrence Susskind, Professor at MIT's Department of Urban Studies and Planning. CBI's managing directors are David Fairman and Patrick Field, who are experts in consensus building and negotiation theory and practice. CBI staff are senior professionals who provide training, facilitation, mediation, assessment and research services to clients on local, national, and international negotiations and collaborations. CBI also works with well-known senior partners and consultants who further expand its areas of expertise and capability. CBI professionals engage diverse stakeholders and assist them to identify shared goals, manage conflicts, and build productive working relationships in which participants achieve their goals and more.