

# **Directories and Search Engines**

## ✓ Democracy Network (DNet)

The Democracy Network (DNet) has quickly established itself as a key source of information about local, state, and federal political candidates. DNet is operated by the Center for Governmental Studies, a nonpartisan think tank in California, in cooperation with the League of Women Voters.

To find information for a particular state, you just click on a national map. During election season, candidates are invited to post statements, biographical materials, policy papers, and other materials on the page for their state. Each state's page also provides links to state political parties, nonpartisan state election information, candidates for all federal and statewide offices, federal and statewide elected officials, and state newspapers.

On the national level, DNet provides links to selected sites and news articles about the 2000 presidential election and to sites operated by national political parties.

### **Vital Stats:**

Access method: WWW  
To access: <http://www.dnet.org>

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## ✓ Liszt: Politics

This page offers information about more than 250 Internet mailing lists concerning various political topics. Information provided for each list varies in amount but often includes subscription instructions and a brief description.

The lists are divided into more than two dozen categories, including action alerts, activism, conservative, economics, environment, government, human rights, international, labor, regional, specific issues, and women.

### **Vital Stats:**

Access method: WWW  
To access: <http://www.liszt.com/select/Politics>

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## ✓✓ NIRA's World Directory of Think Tanks

Detailed information about more than 200 think tanks around the world is provided at this site, which is operated by the National Institute for Research Advancement in Japan.

You can access the information by choosing World Directory of Think Tanks on the home page. The think tanks are arranged by country. Most of the think tanks are from the United States, although an excellent selection of think tanks from other countries also is provided.

The information available about each think tank varies in amount but often includes the Web site address, postal address, telephone number, fax number, history, areas of research, geographic focus, titles of publications, number of staff, names of key researchers and their specialties, budget figures, and titles of periodicals published.

For a current list of links to think tanks around the world, at the home page choose Links to Think Tanks and Other Policy Research Resources. The list just provides links, but it's updated regularly.

The site also provides links to several other think tank directories on the Internet.

**Vital Stats:**

Access method: WWW

To access: <http://gate.nira.go.jp/ice/index.html>

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✓ **Open Directory Project: Issues**

The Open Directory Project provides this page, which has links to more than 6,000 Web sites about various political issues. The top page has links to a few general sites. It also leads to separate pages about dozens of specific subjects, each of which typically provides dozens or hundreds of links.

The topics covered include abortion, animal welfare, censorship, children, church-state relations, civil liberties, corporate operations, crime and justice, disabilities, economics, education, end of life, environment, free speech, gun control, health, housing, human rights, hunger, immigration, international trade policy, militia movement, peace, population, poverty, privacy, property rights, science and technology, sexual politics, terrorism, violence, war and defense, welfare and workfare, women, and youth rights.

Each link is briefly annotated.

**Vital Stats:**

Access Method: WWW

To access: <http://dmoz.org/Society/Issues>

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✓✓ **Policy.com**

Policy.com's highlight is its thousands of links to policy-related position papers, reports, press releases, newspaper and magazine articles, government documents, and court decisions from a huge array of organizations across the political spectrum.

The links are located in the Issues Library, where they're divided into hundreds of topics. Some of the top-level subjects include agriculture, civil rights,

communications and technology, constitutional issues, crime, defense policy, economics, education, elections, government reform, health, immigration, regulatory reform, Social Security, society and values, trade, and urban renewal. You can browse the documents by topic or search them by organization, keywords, title, author, and date.

Another key feature is a collection of annotated links to Web sites operated by thousands of organizations involved in public policy. Separate lists provide links to think tanks, advocacy groups, associations, foundations, businesses, universities, U.S. government agencies, foreign governments, international organizations, and media outlets.

The site also offers daily news stories about policy issues from the Associated Press and summaries of articles from major policy magazines.

**Vital Stats:**

Access method: WWW  
To access: <http://www.policy.com>

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## ✓✓ Political Advocacy Groups

Created by a political science librarian at California State University, this site is much more than just a collection of links to hundreds of Web sites operated by political advocacy groups. Besides supplying links, the site also provides the e-mail address, postal address, telephone number, fax number, and a brief description of each group from the group's own Web site. This additional information greatly increases the links' value.

The links are divided into several dozen subject categories, including African Americans, animal rights, Arab Americans, children, consumer advocacy, corporate accountability and responsibility, environment, government reform, international affairs, land resources, Native Americans, religion, voting and elections, and water resources.

**Vital Stats:**

Access method: WWW  
To access: <http://reinert.creighton.edu/advocacy/index.htm>

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## Political Information

This site is a gateway to a massive amount of political information on the Internet. It's operated by a private company.

The site's highlight is a targeted search engine that lets you search more than 5,000 political and policy Web sites. The engine indexes sites operated by the news media, issue advocacy organizations, political interest groups, trade asso-

ciations, political parties, and others, and lets you search more than 275,000 documents. The search index is updated every two or three weeks.

One caution: The engine uses some unorthodox syntax, so it's a good idea to click on Improve Your Search to learn the details. For example, to search by phrase you must connect all the words with dashes.

A separate engine lets you search political news from dozens of sources, including the *Los Angeles Times*, *Roll Call*, *Hill News*, *Boston Globe*, *Newsday*, *Washington Post*, CNN, MSNBC, ABC News, and PBS. The database is updated every two hours.

Another highlight is a directory of links to political sites across the Internet. The directory has more than 1,500 links, which are arranged into more than 200 categories. The top-level categories are campaigns, news, government information, grassroots, issues, parties and organizations, and research tools.

You also can sign up at the site to receive a newsletter by e-mail about political use of the Internet

**Vital Stats:**

Access method: WWW

To access: <http://www.politicalinformation.com>

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✓ **Political Resources on the Net**

This site presents links to more than 16,000 politics-related Internet sites around the world. The links lead to sites operated by political parties, organizations, governments, media outlets, and others. You can browse the links by region or country, and you also can search the whole site.

**Vital Stats:**

Access method: WWW

To access: <http://www.agora.stm.it/politic>

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✓ **Political Science and Public Policy Resources**

Operated by a librarian at Michigan State University, this page has links to hundreds of politics-oriented Internet sites. The links are divided into more than a dozen subjects, including breaking news, public policy resources sorted by subject, think tanks, U.S. political parties and groups, journals and maga-

zines, campaign information, political science associations, and public opinion polls.

**Vital Stats:**

Access method: WWW

To access: [http://www.lib.msu.edu/harris23/govdocs/pol\\_sci.htm](http://www.lib.msu.edu/harris23/govdocs/pol_sci.htm)

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✓✓ **Political Science Resources: United States Politics**

This site from the University of Michigan Documents Center offers links to hundreds of Web sites about politics and elections in the United States. The annotated links are divided into more than twenty categories, including campaign finances, elections, lobby groups, news sources, political parties, primaries, public policy issues, statistics, and think tanks.

**Vital Stats:**

Access method: WWW

To access: <http://www.lib.umich.edu/libhome/Documents.center/psusp.html>

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✓ **Political Site of the Day**

As its name implies, each day this site highlights a single political site on the Internet. It provides a link to the featured site and a one-sentence description. The sites are selected for their quality, so this is a good place to check for new or especially interesting political sites.

The home page lists picks for the previous two weeks. The library offers hundreds of links to sites selected since July 1995. The library links are listed by month, but there is no way to search by subject.

**Vital Stats:**

Access method: WWW

To access: <http://www.aboutpolitics.com>

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✓✓ **Politics1**

Politics1 offers more than 1,000 links to political sites, all neatly arranged and annotated. The obvious care taken in building the site and its thoroughness have quickly made Politics1 one of the premier political sites on the Internet.

Perhaps the highlight is the section about U.S. presidential candidates. For each candidate, Politics1 provides a link to the official campaign site, links to unofficial and opposition sites, biographical details, a partial list of endorse-

ments, and information about any books written by or about the candidate. Dozens of candidates are covered, ranging from announced major party candidates to obscure independents. The presidential section also has a handy calendar of all presidential primaries and caucuses and links to other sites that offer information about the presidential election.

Another impressive section offers extensive state political links. For each state, there are links to Web sites of the candidates for governor, U.S. Senate, and U.S. House of Representatives; state election offices; state newspapers; and state political parties.

Politics1 also provides a huge list of links to sites operated by major and minor political parties (along with a detailed description of each party), links to dozens of issue-oriented Web sites, and links to numerous sources of political news.

Finally, Politics1 publishes an extremely useful e-mail newsletter called Politics1 Report.

**Vital Stats:**

Access method: WWW

To access: <http://www.politics1.com>

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## ✓✓ Project Vote Smart

Project Vote Smart is a political junkie's dream come true. Through thousands of pages of original material and links to other sites, it provides a huge array of information about campaigns, elections, political leaders, and government.

Perhaps its most impressive section provides extensive information about more than 13,000 candidates for president, Congress, governor, and state legislator. For each candidate, the site provides a biography, positions on issues, voting record, campaign finance data, contact details, and ratings by various special interest groups.

Another highlight is the CongressTrack section, which provides information about the status of major bills, floor schedules for the House and Senate, details about how individual members voted on bills, congressional committee information, and links to all the major Internet sites about Congress.

Project Vote Smart also offers a superb collection of links to sites about dozens of political issues. Some of the topics covered include abortion, AIDS, animal issues, campaign finance, citizen participation, civil liberties, crime, defense, education, foreign policy, gender issues, government reform, gun control, health care, immigration, labor, media and communications, taxes, tobacco, and violence.

Other highlights include links for each state to sites run by courts, governments, interest groups, the news media, political parties, and think tanks; the

text of ballot initiatives from states around the country; results from past federal and state elections; lesson plans and resources for teachers and students; links to political news sources, online political magazines, and think tanks; and a political source book for reporters.

Project Vote Smart is the major program of the Center for National Independence in Politics. The center is a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization that provides voters with information about issues and candidates.

**Vital Stats:**

Access method: WWW  
To access: <http://www.vote-smart.org>

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✓ **WebActive**

WebActive provides more than 2,000 annotated links to Web sites aimed at progressive political activists. The links are divided into more than forty subjects, including AIDS/HIV issues, animal rights, children's issues, civil rights, elections and politics, food and nutrition, health care, housing and shelter, human rights, international affairs, labor, media watch organizations, nonviolence and physical safety, peace, religion, and social justice. You also can browse the links alphabetically or search them using keywords.

WebActive also offers broadcasts of progressive radio programs, including Pacifica Network News, RadioNation, Democracy NOW!, Hightower Radio, and CounterSpin.

WebActive is provided by RealNetworks, the makers of RealAudio and other computer software.

**Vital Stats:**

Access method: WWW  
To access: <http://www.webactive.com>

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**Web White & Blue**

After lying dormant since the 1998 election, Web White & Blue was still in the planning phase for the 2000 election when this book was being written. The site is sponsored by the Markle Foundation, among other organizations.

In 1998 the site provided links to just under four dozen of what it considered the best election directories and voter information sites on the Internet. The links were divided into six categories: voter info, issues, election news, campaigns, your state, and participate. Although the site's exact focus in 2000 is still

unknown, it's expected once again to provide links to a select number of political Web sites.

**Vital Stats:**

Access method: WWW

To access: <http://www.webwhiteblue.org>

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✓ **Yahoo! Issues and Causes**

This page from Yahoo! provides links to more than 3,000 Web sites about various political issues and causes. The links are divided into dozens of subjects, including abortion, affirmative action, campaign finance reform, climate change policy, church and state, conservation, the death penalty, euthanasia, firearms policy, global warming, health care policy, human rights, immigration reform, Internet policy, language policy, militia movement, population, poverty, race relations, Social Security reform, stadium taxes, tax reform, term limits, and weapons disarmament and nonproliferation.

**Vital Stats:**

Access method: WWW

To access: [http://dir.yahoo.com/Society\\_and\\_Culture/Issues\\_and\\_Causes](http://dir.yahoo.com/Society_and_Culture/Issues_and_Causes)