

CIVIC TECH INITIATIVES:

Tools and Learnings from a Civic Data Challenge Case Study



National Conference on Citizenship
Connecting People. Strengthening Our Country.



ABOUT

NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON CITIZENSHIP

The National Conference on Citizenship (NCoC) is a congressionally chartered organization dedicated to strengthening civic life in America. We pursue our mission through a nationwide network of partners involved in a cutting-edge civic health initiative, an innovative national service project, and our cross-sector conferences. At the core of our joint efforts is the belief that every person has the ability to help their community and country thrive.

Congress chartered NCoC in 1953 to harness the patriotic energy and civic involvement surrounding World War II. We've been dedicated to this charge ever since. In 2009, Congress named NCoC in the Edward M. Kennedy Serve America Act, once again memorializing our important role. This legislation codified and expanded our Civic Health Initiative (CHI) helping it become the nation's largest and most definitive measure of civic engagement.

NCoC's CHI is at the center of our work. Leveraging civic data made possible by the Corporation for National & Community Service, we have partnered with dozens of states, cities, and issue groups to draft reports and action plans to strengthen civic life. This initiative has also been an important incubator for programs such as the Civic Data Challenge and *The Civic 50*. Each program has used data and 21st century tools to create locally led, collective impact across our country. By 2020, we plan to integrate this pioneering initiative into ongoing partnerships in all 50 states and the District of Columbia.

CIVIC DATA CHALLENGE

In 2012, NCoC launched the first Civic Data Challenge – a crowdsourcing initiative to turn the raw data of 'civic health' into useful applications and visualizations that have a direct impact on public decision-making. Throughout the course of managing two national data challenges, NCoC connected with a wide range of leaders and partners in the open data and "technology for good" communities. Their guidance and input, along with Challenge participant feedback, has helped shape these materials. More information is available at www.civicdatachallenge.org



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INTRODUCTION

Many nonprofits rely on data to inform their stakeholders, measure their impact, and to prioritize their resources. However, traditional data analysis, and reporting do not reflect the real-time information stream that stakeholders have become accustomed. Technology has advanced our capacity for sharing and visualizing data in faster, cheaper, and more easily digestible formats. There is a clear opportunity for nonprofits to take advantage of these solutions.

In recent years, open source and open data movements have built significant momentum around the principles of accessibility, collaboration, and transparency. They focus on using data and technology for the greater good. The open source movement promotes universal access to and redistribution of a product's blueprint, along with subsequent improvements. In general, open source refers to computer or internet-based programs developed through peer collaboration. The end product (source code, blueprints, and any supporting documentation) is made available to the general public for free use and modification. This movement is founded on the belief that certain data should be made freely available to the general public without restriction.

Building upon the open source and open data movements, there is an ever-growing array of opportunities to make data useful, accessible, and relevant. One helpful way to think of this is through the lens of "civic tech." The Knight Foundation defines this as the "nexus of technology, civic innovation, open government, and resident engagement."¹ Under this umbrella, civic data that supports this technology is mined from social networks, community organizing platforms, government data, crowdfunded and crowdsourced assets, and peer-to-peer shared resources. As Micah Sifry, Director of Civic Hall, recently said, "Civic tech is a ripe moment where interest from different sectors of society and government is rising."²

Benefits to organizations include:

- ***Making Data Useful*** - The driving purpose of these efforts is to make data useful and relevant to public problem solving. New applications allow users to access data in ways that shape their own decision-making about what bus to take, who to vote for, and how to fix a problem in their neighborhood. New data visualizations allow policymakers to quickly digest and interpret social trends—and raise public dialogue around the need for policy responses. New websites allow stakeholders from the public, private, and nonprofit sectors to see patterns and intersections in datasets, identify points of collaboration, and eliminate inefficiencies.
- ***Tapping into New Minds and Skillsets*** - These civic tech initiatives help expand the pool of people working on the same problems, challenges, and same datasets your organization confronts every day. Their creativity, insights, skill sets, and outside-the-box thinking can work wonders. The Civic Data Challenge in 2012 attracted a group of diverse participants including a group of undergrads from Berkeley, a community-based organization in the San Juan Islands, and an astrophysicist from NYU. Never before had NCoC imagined that such a group of individuals with such diverse backgrounds, education, skill sets, and perspectives would help us understand how to apply our data to their community's issues.
- ***Greater Social Good*** - The open source and open data movements are built upon the principles that transparency, collaboration, and accessibility can unlock the potential of data and technology to do good for society.
- ***Expanding Reach*** - Whether it's a weekend hackathon, corporate volunteer project, or year-long data challenge, these civic tech initiatives allow your organization to reach new audiences yet to be fully tapped. For NCoC, we were consistently amazed by the response we received from high-profile judges, prize sponsors, and promotional partners who were eager to support the Civic Data Challenge. These offers of support broke us into new spaces physically through speaking engagements at venues like DataWeek and a Better World by Design. They did so virtually through social media and new social networks. These new networks and relationships can yield an array of unforeseen benefits down the road.

- **Staying Relevant** - At NCoC, providing useful resources to our stakeholders is core to the success of our mission. If we are generating and analyzing useful data, but only making it accessible through reports that do not reach anyone, then we are not fulfilling our mission. Civic tech initiatives provide a critical opportunity to ensure that your data and your organization continue to remain relevant. They provide opportunities to present data in new ways by engaging new audiences to interact with the data and develop innovative interpretations. Using data for a greater good ultimately sustains data-driven organizations and opens up the possibility for new sources of support.
- **Meaningful Volunteer Engagement** - Participants in these initiatives see a wide range of benefits as well. These range from cash incentives, to promotion and recognition in their field, to skill and resume building. Often most important to participants is the opportunity to contribute their time and skills in ways that have an impact. By creating a space for individuals to do that, you're not only generating impact for your mission, but potentially building a new team of lifelong advocates and supporters. Challenges are a thoughtful way to engage the tech community and spot emerging trends.³

There are tremendous benefits to engaging in civic-tech and connecting to this movement. This Toolkit provides those interested in engaging effectively in this space with the resources, materials, and planning questions needed to do so.

These materials highlight the takeaways and lessons learned from NCoC's Civic Data Challenge, as well as a vast network of partners and resources cited throughout. These lessons and guiding principles of the Civic Data Challenge are informed and reinforced by other resources. They provide a roadmap of emerging principles that are universal to civic tech initiatives of varying size, scope, and structure. For example, the Knight Foundation report on the role of contests for philanthropy offers many recommendations similar to the lessons learned by NCoC and other institutions that have implemented challenges.¹ As this movement grows, it is our hope that we can contribute a piece of this bigger picture of knowledge-sharing and information gathering to better support organizations interested in doing this work.

The Annie E. Casey Foundation and the National Conference on Citizenship (NCoC) have partnered to develop tools and materials that nonprofits can adopt and use to engage in or build their own 'civic tech' initiative. We encourage you to use these materials and to modify them as needed to meet your own goals and outcomes.

This Toolkit is accompanied by an in-depth Landscape Review which provides the background on the growing civic tech world. The Landscape Review includes an overview of the value proposition for this type of work, background on ways to get involved, and guiding principles for the work.

The materials are organized into three main stages: **Planning, Implementation, and Evaluation.**

Each section is structured to include:

- **General Guidelines and Resources** - For each section, we provide some guiding principles for how to tackle planning, implementation and evaluation of your initiative. This also includes resources (books, websites, and planning documents) that can guide the development of your initiatives.
- **Questions for Consideration** - We offer some questions to keep in mind as you develop your initiative. Whether it's engaging a group of volunteers or hosting a major data hackathon or challenge, these should help you think through your goals, capacity, and execution.
- **Civic Data Challenge Lessons Learned** - The Civic Data Challenge, and the partnerships NCoC developed through its implementation, have largely informed this Toolkit. For each section, we provide examples of how we tackled each phase of the project, some of the lessons we learned, and the materials we developed. Though the templates we have provided are specific to our experience in running a data challenge, with thoughtful consideration they can be adapted to other civic tech initiatives. We encourage nonprofits to contact NCoC for support in developing a program or partnership.

CASE STUDY: NCoC's Civic Data Challenge

The National Conference on Citizenship (NCoC) was founded in 1946, and chartered by Congress in 1953 to harness the patriotic energy and civic involvement surrounding World War II. In 2006, NCoC launched America's Civic Health Index, measuring civic engagement trends nationally on indicators such as volunteering, political participation, and social connectedness. Through partnerships with local universities, foundations, policymakers, and nonprofits, NCoC has been able to expand the Civic Health Index to provide localized data in state- and metropolitan-specific reports. NCoC now works in over 30 communities nationwide to produce reports and create initiatives. Using civic data, we work with these partners to inform legislation, develop grantmaking programs, increase service opportunities, catalyze statewide civic health advisory groups, and more.

Given these early successes, NCoC realized there was an opportunity to generate even more attention to and support of civic data—and to ensure the data led to greater impact.

With the support of the Knight Foundation, NCoC began the Civic Data Challenge in 2012 as a project to democratize our research process. We wanted to bring new eyes, minds, and skill-sets to civic data. We invited researchers, data scientists, graphic designers, coders, and others to download a variety of civic health data from multiple sources, including Census. We asked them to analyze it against data on other social outcomes. These included health, safety, education, and the economy. We challenged them to create a product of their choosing to display what they found. We intentionally left the parameters broad to encourage creativity and diversity of thought to see what participants would create.

2012 Program Overview

- **170 people joined the Civic Data Challenge Google Group; 52 joined teams to create products for submission.**
- **17 qualifying submissions were received.**
- **16 judges reviewed the entries according to a rubric.**
- **7 teams were selected as winners; 10 received honorable mentions.**



This first Civic Data Challenge expanded our network and gave us a presence in the rapidly expanding data and technology for good fields. We received products that showcased our data in new and interesting ways. However, it was unclear what impact these products would have beyond the scope of the Challenge.

Based on our lessons learned from the first Civic Data Challenge, we refined our process and set clear goals and criteria for our second iteration. When we re-launched the Civic Data Challenge in 2013, our goal was to promote the creation of tools with demonstrable utility. We asked participants to turn the raw data of civic health into useful applications and visualizations that could have a direct impact on public decision-making. Developers, designers, data scientists, and researchers were asked to collaborate with local leaders to create useful products that addressed specific needs and issues within a community.

Where our first Challenge was very broad, we added a significant amount of structure to the 2013 Challenge. We also increased support to participants and expanded the time to build a greater sense of ongoing community. We divided the Challenge into three phases:

- **Ideation** - During this period of time NCoC's civic health partners and the general public were asked to identify community needs that could be addressed through the use of civic data and brainstorm possible solutions. Participants were able to submit their ideas to a public platform where others could comment and make suggestions.
- **Creation** - Participants built their entries according to the Challenge rubric. Participants were encouraged to form diverse teams to take advantage of a wide-spectrum of skills and abilities. Participants were also encouraged to identify and collaborate with a community partner to ensure that their product would meet a real community need. Community partners included community foundations, government, nonprofits, and local businesses. Submissions went through an initial round of judging to assess their viability, and the most promising continued as finalists into the Implementation phase.
- **Implementation** - Finalists worked with community partners to pilot their products in a community in order to receive feedback and testing to improve them. A final round of judging reviewed these products and judged them according to proven utility and potential for impact.

In addition to stages, we developed in-depth rubrics to provide participants with transparency for the Challenge process and a framework for success. We attempted to bridge the gap between users and developers by facilitating introductions between participants and our community partners, and providing mentors to participants. These tools are included below. In addition, we worked with our consultants to incorporate these resources into a more interactive site.

2013 Program Overview

- **329 members in the Google Group, a total of 49 people joined a team to create a submission**
- **30 ideas were submitted during the Ideation Phase; 14 submissions during the Creation Phase; 7 of these submissions continued to the Implementation Phase.**

We received high-quality submissions that were responsive to real community needs and could be used. Descriptions of these winners can be viewed here: www.civildatachallenge.org/2013-finalists.

We have organized the following materials into the three main areas of focus of the Civic Data Challenge: Planning, Implementation, and Evaluation. Each section contains the materials that NCoC used, as well as some lessons learned and questions for consideration in creating your own civic tech initiative.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The following guidelines should serve as the guideposts for developing your own civic tech initiative.

- **Determine your goals carefully and provide a framework for how to be successful** - Whether you host a challenge or work with volunteers on a specific project, it is important to present a clear goal. Participants and volunteers are not usually involved in the daily mission of your organization and they require clear direction to inform their work. The better defined your goal, the stronger the outcome will be.
- **Understand what motivates your audience** - Data challenges and other crowdsourcing initiatives attract a unique and diverse audience of skilled professionals who are motivated by a range of factors.
- **Emphasize volunteer communication and management** - Participants come from a variety of professional backgrounds who may or may not be familiar with your mission or the issues your organization addresses. Additionally, they may use open data and open source terminology that feels unfamiliar. Take some time to learn some open data and open source terminology as this will facilitate your conversations with participants and partners. Our **Key Terms** section is a good place to start. It's also important to be very clear and specific about your own goals and mission. Don't presume a level of familiarity with your organization's work or datasets. Take the time to orient your participants to the context and history of how you arrived where you are.
- **Be an ambassador for your data** - No one understands your data like you. You know how it is collected and how it has transformed over the years. You know how people are currently using the data and you may even have ideas for how it could be better used. Communicate this information to your participants and they will be more engaged and create stronger products that truly highlight the worth of your data. You will also develop a strong group of advocates for your data.
- **Bridge the gap between users and developers** - A common criticism of challenges, hackathons, and other crowdsourcing initiatives is that they create cool applications and tools that are useful and interesting for their intended audience. However, the tools created may not adequately meet the needs of the user-audience or the user-audience may not have the resources required to adopt the tool. These issues need to be addressed early on. You can help bridge the gap between users and developers by facilitating connections and discussion.
- **Promote sustainability** - To be sustainable, a product needs to be adoptable and marketed.
 - **Adoptable.** The tools you create need to match with the resources and needs of the user-audience. Challenge participants and volunteers should be creating tools that are responsive to clearly identified needs or challenges. Facilitate connections between users and developers and encourage participants to survey their target audience to gain a better understanding of the resources available to them. Doing this work from the outset is critical to ensure that products are used over time.
 - **Marketed.** No matter how well developed a product is, or how well it meets an important social need, if people do not know about it, they will never become users. Successful marketing can also draw the attention of investors who can help provide the funding necessary to maintain products.

The Appendix includes a number of resources including original materials from the Civic Data Challenge that can be adapted for use in other initiatives.

PLANNING

The planning stage is critical to building the foundation for a successful civic tech initiative. In this stage, you will have the opportunity to think about your goals for the project: in an ideal world, how would constituents receive your data and what would they do with it? How can you tap into new technologies, new resources, and new volunteers to help you achieve that vision?

Once you've set your goals, you can think about staff capacity, resources, timeline, and structure to make sure you're building an initiative that will meet them.

Not every organization will have the opportunity to launch a major new civic tech initiative, given limitations in resources and staff capacity. However, there is a wide range of ways to get involved as outlined in the accompanying Landscape Review. Perhaps your organization would like to host a one-day hackathon, or invite a small group of corporate volunteers to help you problem solve and develop new tools. Regardless, the following planning tools can help make sure you think through the objectives and logistics to realize your vision.

a.) Defining Your Goals

Data challenges and similar initiatives will be structured differently depending on your organization's goals for the program. It is essential that goal-setting be the first step of your planning process. These goals will help you identify opportunities for growth and clarify your value proposition to your organization, board, funders, partners, and other stakeholders. They will help determine the direction of activity, the staff and resources needed, and the timeline and structure for implementation.

Determine your goals carefully and provide a framework successful:

Whether you host a challenge or work with volunteers on a specific project, it is important to present a clear goal. Participants and volunteers are not usually involved in the daily mission of your organization and they require clear direction to inform their work. The better defined your goal, the stronger the outcome will be.

RESOURCE: [Sample Goal Setting Exercise](#)

Provide those involved in goal setting (organization staff, key partners, and board members) with background materials that could help inform a discussion on program goals. These materials could include your organization's mission statement, a summary of your strategic plan, and highlights of current programming or any identified gaps in your current program. Then set a team meeting to go over the 'Questions to Consider.' Have each team member list their top five goals for their program. Where is their overlap?

Examples of Goals:

- Raise awareness of KIDS COUNT Data and/or Mission
- Create products that benefit KIDS COUNT partners or community members
- Build a community of users and developers around KIDS COUNT DATA

Narrowing your goals and establishing the scope of your challenge:

- Considering your staff capacity and resources, which of these goals are most feasible? What are the current gaps and where can you leverage outside support? You may want to use the 'Questions to Consider' from the staffing section below as a framework for this conversation.
- Look at your goals and consider the steps you would need to take to accomplish them. Who would need to be involved and what materials would need to be created? Outline potential costs and assign a monetary value to each goal.

Using Your Goals to Guide Your Work:

- Keep these goals front and center – within easy reach for continuous reference as you build your messaging and program structure.
- Consider creating a public-facing goals document so partners and participants understand the purpose of the Challenge. This can also ensure they can contribute their time and resources in a way that will help you to advance your top goals.

Questions to Consider

- What is the current strategic plan for your organization? How can this strategic plan be translated to programmatic goals?
- Are there gaps in your current programming that a challenge or similar initiative could help fill?
- What does your organization do really well? How can you play to this strength?
- What does success look like?
- What is the main focus for the initiative? A few possibilities might include engaging new audiences, building your brand, building one useful tool, expanding awareness of your data, increase visibility/awareness of issues, or raising money for your organization.
- If you could dream up an ideal end product from your initiative, what would it look like?
- How many participants do you hope to engage and how?
- Who are the key audiences for this initiative? Who will ultimately use the final product? Who will you engage along the way (volunteers, partners, etc)?
- How do these audiences help you either expand, or refine, your vision?

Civic Data Challenge: Our Experience

Our first Challenge was broad in scope. Our main goal was to build a community around our data – to get coders, developers, designers, and data scientists interested in civic health data. While we received a number of interesting submissions, we did not know how to best use them beyond the scope of the Challenge. When we re-launched the Civic Data Challenge in 2013, our goal was to promote the creation of tools with demonstrable utility. We asked participants to turn the raw data of civic health into useful applications and visualizations that could have a direct impact on public decision-making. In order to achieve an exceptional level of real-world usefulness, developers, designers, data scientists, and researchers were asked to collaborate with local leaders in order to respond to specific communities or social issues.

RESOURCE: See our [Civic Data Challenge Goals Sheet](#) in [Appendix PAGE 34](#)

After you've identified your goals for the initiative, you can begin to think through your organization's capacity to implement a new project.



b.) Determining Staffing and Resources

The first question after you establish your ideal goals for the initiative will be staffing and resources. This will help your organization determine what's feasible and what may need to be scaled back accordingly.

Keep in mind that there are a wide range of initiatives, that each require a wide range of capacity and resources accordingly. A national data competition can require a full year of planning and execution by full-time dedicated staff. Participating in an event like a hackathon, however, may be possible with the leadership of existing staff and resources. Furthermore, many of these initiatives allow you to plug into existing networks without creating a new structure yourself. For example, programs like DataKind and the Code for America brigade are built to support organizations in this work. Staff time and resources are still necessary to build partnerships, but may not require funding an entirely separate project.

Questions to Consider

- How much staff time are you able to dedicate to this program on a weekly/monthly basis? How long would you be able to maintain this (1-2 month, 6 months, a year)? Is there a particularly busy time of year when you will not be able to spare any staff?
- Are you able to hire a dedicated program manager?
- Which staff members would be able to dedicate time to this program? What are their skill sets?
- What would you need to outsource?
- What is your budget for this program? Are you able to raise additional funds for incentives, prizes, and management?
- What kinds of existing programs and networks could you tap into that won't require new staff or funding? See the Resources and Partners list below for further suggestions.

RESOURCE: See Partners Section on **PAGE 28** for ideas on existing partners you could connect with.

Civic Data Challenge: Our Experience

Our staffing model engaged the following resources:

- Chief Program Officer to oversee and provide input on program management. Attend speaking engagements as needed.
- Director of Community Strategies to lead outreach to partners, potential judges and sponsors. Attend speaking engagements as needed.
- Program Manager or Program Fellow to lead program planning and execution, coordinate internal staff and external partners, social media outreach, draft communications, and materials creation.
- Executive Director to provide input on program goals as they relate to the organization's mission and to attend speaking engagements as needed.
- Operations Manager to manage budget, travel, and staffing decisions.
- Website, Strategy, and Communications Consultants to develop and maintain website, develop and implement communications strategy, and help navigate the civic tech field.

The goal behind these initiatives is to ultimately **build capacity** for your organization. Tapping into new volunteers and networks provides your organization the opportunity to create new tools and products that you may not otherwise have staff expertise or time to build. These initiatives also position your organization to be attractive to new funders and eligible for new grants.

c.) *Defining Your Stakeholders and Knowing Your Audience*

A key step of the planning process in developing an effective civic tech initiative involves defining your stakeholders. You will have two audiences to keep in mind: 1) the partners, sponsors, and volunteers you engage to build your initiative and products, and 2) the constituents or end-users for whom the products are created. It is critical to carefully define these audiences early on in planning for your initiative. This step is crucial to both leveraging resources while also creating products that are high-impact and sustainable. The goals you develop early on should inform the process of defining your audiences and vice versa. As you come to more clarity on your various stakeholders, you may modify your goals accordingly.

Guiding Principles:

- **Understand what motivates your audience:** *Data challenges and other crowdsourcing initiatives attract a unique and diverse audience of skilled professionals who are motivated by a range of factors including advancing social causes, connecting with organizations they care about, building their own experiences and skillsets, connecting with others in their field, developing new tools, and financial incentives.*
- **Bridge the gap between users and developers:** *A common criticism of challenges, hackathons, and other crowdsourcing initiatives is that they create cool applications and tools that are useful and interesting for their intended audience. The tools created may not adequately meet the needs of the user-audience or the user-audience may not have the resources required to adopt the tool. These issues need to be addressed early on. You can help bridge the gap between users and developers by facilitating connections and discussion.*

When thinking about your target audience, first consider who you will engage as allies and supporters:

Questions to Consider

- Who are your target allies? Are they corporate volunteers? Are they participants in a hackathon? Are they Code for America Brigade members?
- How do you best reach these audiences? What networks exist to connect with these individuals that you can leverage?
- What is the communication and management style that will be most effective? (See more tips in the Timeline and Messaging Sections below.)
- What are your expectations of these supporters? What are there incentives?
- What assets do they each offer? And in turn, how do they require investment of different types of resources and time?
- Do you want to emphasize data analysis and research findings, or data uses and applications? If the former, then you may engage more data analysts, academics, and practitioners in helping you find new connections and findings with your data. If the latter, then you may want to engage more coders, developers, and designers to help you build apps, websites, and infographics. Ultimately, you may want all of these audiences engaged, but it's important to keep in mind the unique skill sets each stakeholder will need to bring to the table.

Lessons Learned

In the first iteration of the Civic Data Challenge, we wanted to discover both new findings with our data and new applications or uses of the data. This was a tall order, and we learned quickly that it required a wide range of skill sets. A graphic designer may be able to make information come to life—but might need a researcher to help analyze the data first and identify what findings are most compelling. Coders and developers may help build the website you want to host your data, but you may need practitioners or policymakers to identify what questions that data can help answer—and how the website serves as a vehicle for doing that. In our second iteration of the Challenge, we focused on data uses. This allowed us to emphasize the tools that would be created, the partners that would use them, and the long-term plans for how those products would be sustained. You may decide that new research or findings is more important to your organization. Asking yourself that question early on will help you target your supporters more effectively.

Through surveys of Civic Data Challenge participants, we found that participants were more likely to join to meet new people and make an impact than to receive prizes. During a focus group, participants told us they preferred promotional/recognition opportunities, such as opportunities to present at conferences and placement in popular blogs and journals. These opportunities were seen as a way to gain notoriety and potential investors for their work.

As a result, we sought out high-profile judges, new speaking engagements, and communications efforts as ways to recognize our participants' work. We shifted our focus toward ensuring their submissions would meet community needs. We de-emphasized prize money. Once you know your audience's motivation, you can structure your initiative to be more responsive to those incentives.

You will also need to consider carefully who you hope will ultimately use the outcome of your initiative (i.e. new websites, apps, infographics).

Questions to Consider

- Who are your end users for the products created (Policymakers? Citizens? Nonprofit leaders?)
- What types of data delivery have already proven successful in reaching these audiences?
- What do you hope they do with the information? (For example, if your goal is that a set of data is more readily understood, perhaps you need a data visualization challenge. If your goal is to help make sure your data informs new and distinct policy conversations, perhaps you need a new way of mapping your datasets with others.)
- How can you engage their voice from the beginning of the process? Surveys, focus groups, online comment boards are all ways to get end-users involved early on in the process.

Civic Data Challenge: Our Experience

To help ensure participants created products that could be used, we realized we would need to engage a variety of audiences. We needed community partners to provide insight into their needs, skilled professionals who could build the products, expert judges and advisors that could review and provide feedback on entries, and partners and sponsors who could provide resources to participants to continue to develop and maintain their entries.

Here are a few examples of audiences we had in mind when planning the Civic Data Challenge. Many of these are applicable regardless of the type of civic tech initiative you develop.

- **End User/Community Partners.** For the Civic Data Challenge, Community Partner was loosely defined as an institutional entity with credibility and capacity to offer perspective on a community need and/or social issue. Community Partners played a critical role in ensuring that Civic Data Challenge submissions were responsive to community needs and used beyond the close of the competition. All teams in the Implementation Phase were required to work with a Community Partner. This work entailed: providing context and consultation on the community's needs; collaborating with participants on an implementation plan; and promoting the team's entry.

End users or community partners are vital audiences to engage early on. They ensure that the ideas are appropriate and are adopted for use once your initiative is complete.

- **Participants/Supporters/Volunteers.** Participants were the coders, developers, designers, data scientists, nonprofit professionals, and others interested in volunteering their time. Your participants will be the greatest resource during the challenge due to their range of perspectives and experiences that they bring to the issue. Some of the most creative outcomes will come from unexpected connections made by teams and individuals coming together on the challenge. Participants might be engaged through an online competition, a weekend hackathon or an ongoing partnership with a local company, university, or Code for America brigade.
- **Sponsors.** Sponsors for the Civic Data Challenge provided cash or in-kind prizes that reward participants for their work and provide them with resources to improve and maintain their products. Examples of in-kind prizes include software packages, consulting services, and gadgets. In return, sponsors were mentioned in Challenge promotions, announcements, and events, and their logos were included on the website.

Participating in a civic tech initiative may position your organization to receive funds or assistance from new supporters. You may be able to secure in-kind donations from local corporations, apply for major grants from national foundations, or crowd fund your project among new individual donors. *It's important to not only think in terms of resources needed for your project, but the potential to unlock new resources by getting involved.*

- **Promotional Partners.** This group committed to featuring the Civic Data Challenge on their website at key times, featuring the Challenge in at least one newsletter to encourage their network to participate, and promoting the Challenge through social media. In return, promotional partners were included in Challenge promotions and announcements and their logos were included on the website. Regardless of the type of initiative you host, you will need promotional support. This may be to get the word out about community focus groups you plan to host, or ultimately to promote the new app you develop. It's important to engage other allies and partners early on in your mission, as they can help expand your reach into new audiences and communities.

Judges and Advisors were essential stakeholders in the Civic Data Challenge, and may be relevant to your work should you host a competition.

- Judges.** Individuals with expertise in coding, developing, design, or innovation, and, if possible, national reputation and name recognition. Civic Data Challenge judges played essential roles in scoring and selecting finalists and winners. They also served as a major incentive for the work, as participants were drawn to the opportunity to get their work in front of high-profile individuals in their fields. Judges also serve as great ambassadors for your data and initiative.
- Advisors.** During the Civic Data Challenge Creation Phase, advisors committed to providing feedback to Challenge participants to help improve their entries. This entailed connecting with 3-5 participant teams, vetted by NCoC, to offer input and support on a limited basis – addressing one specific question posed by the participant and vetted by NCoC. In the end, none of the Civic Data Challenge participants ended up using this service and we re-purposed Advisors as Judges. We learned that teams informally sought out their own advisors or mentors who could provide more continuous guidance throughout the creation process.

Lessons Learned. The Civic Data Challenge attempted to match participants with interested community organizations through an interest survey. Other ideas for bridging the gap include spotlighting community issues through blog posts and webinars. You can also host in-person and online events where users and developers can interact with each other and brainstorm what types of products would be most responsive to community needs. In-person events could include informal mixers or un-conferences such as CityCamp (<http://citycamp.govfresh.com/>). If resources are limited, partner with events that are already established. You can find key players in our Overview section. Online events could include Twitter chats and Google hangouts.

RESOURCE: Sample Engagement Model



Civic Data Challenge 2013: Engagement Model



d.) Clarifying Your Structure

Once you have developed your goals, identified staff and resource capacity, and clarified your stakeholders and audiences, you can begin shaping your initiative in more detail. This process will allow you to determine whether you host a smaller volunteer engagement, a large-scale hackathon, an ongoing data challenge, or another type of initiative. Regardless of the size and scope, these initiatives can help advance your organization's mission and ultimately build capacity

Details on the various types of initiatives, and the potential merits and limitations to each, are included in the *Civic Tech Initiatives: A Landscape Review*. After you review those options, you may want to consider the following.

Questions to Consider

- What potential positive outcomes are most in line with your goals? What potential pitfalls do we most want to avoid?
 - Do you prioritize building awareness of your data and reaching new audiences? If so, a national competition that preferences quantity over quality might be more appropriate.
 - Do you prioritize creating a new product (i.e. a website, app, data visualization) with specific functionalities and outcomes in mind? If so, engaging a small group of volunteers through a corporate partnership, tapping into university talent, or engaging a local Code for America brigade, might allow you to offer more direction and control over what's ultimately created.
 - Do you prioritize 'outside of the box' creative thinking and problem solving? Do you not have an end goal in mind, but want to engage new minds and new skillsets in your work? If so, an event like a hackathon through partnerships with DataKind, the National Day of Civic Hacking, or Code for America, can connect you with talented volunteers who can help show you new possibilities for your data.
- What are your organization's strengths and where do you hope to build capacity? Perhaps you have a very strong research team and need to engage coders, developers and/or designers. Perhaps marketing is your strength, and you need more data analysts to help show you what findings are most compelling and relevant to policy issues. The 'Defining your Audience' section above will help you think through this further. Ultimately, outlining those ideal audiences will help you clarify what kind of structure is needed to reach them.
- Do you want to engage local participants only, or open your initiative up to a broader audience remotely? Hosting data challenges online gives you the opportunity to connect with participants in different communities that you might not otherwise engage. For organizations in more remote or rural communities, this might be a key asset. However, if your hope is to build longer-term relationships, then building connections offline with local supporters might be better.
- What is your ideal timeline for the initiative? More detail on timeline development is included below. As you determine the structure of your engagement, is it something you hope to see results from in the short term (within 6 months), or are you thinking about how to build a multi-year initiative? A short-term data competition, or one-day hackathon, can yield results quickly. Building partnerships beyond that will require a longer term strategy. You might decide you want both to take a step forward with a smaller engagement and see where it leads in the long term.

- Does it make sense to divide your initiative into phases? You may want to structure your work into different phases such as: concept development (where you allow end users to help shape what will be created); execution (where participants come together to build those ideas), and implementation (where you refine what's created and ensure it's adopted).
 - If you envision a longer term initiative, phases can help structure the work and engage appropriate audiences at different points.
 - If your initiative is shorter term, has 1 or 2 broad goals, and/or you have limited staff capacity, then phases may not make sense.

Civic Data Challenge: Our Experience

To best engage a variety of audiences and ensure that participants were being thoughtful in addressing community needs with their products, we divided our Challenge into three phases: Ideation, Creation, and Implementation. For each phase, we outlined key audiences and the actions we would need to take to meet each goal.

The three main phases were:

- **Ideation** - During this period of time we asked NCoC's partners and the general public to identify community needs that could be addressed through the use of civic data, and to brainstorm possible solutions. Participants were able to submit their ideas to a public platform where others could comment, show support for the ideas, and make suggestions to refine and improve them.
- **Creation** - Participants built their entries according to the Challenge rubric. Participants were encouraged to form teams to take advantage of a wide-spectrum of skills and abilities. Participants were also encouraged to identify and collaborate with a community partner to ensure that their product would meet a real community need. Community partners included community foundations, government, nonprofits, and local businesses. Submissions went through an initial round of judging and the most promising continued to the Implementation Phase.
- **Implementation** - Finalists worked with community partners to pilot their products in a community and improve them. A final round of judging reviewed these products and judged them according to proven utility and potential for impact.

We originally felt it was important to create categories for competition based on common themes that bubbled up during the Ideation Phase. However, we later decided that we did not want to limit participants to these groups. Instead, we offered these categories as points of reference that participants could use to inform their work. Our identified categories included:

- **Civic Infrastructure & Action**
- **Public Services, Planning & Safety**
- **Education & Generational Development**

RESOURCE: We developed a Civic Data Challenge model that helped us map our communications goals, activities, events and materials with each of these phases. This could be adapted to meet your own needs for a variety of civic tech initiatives.

Civic Data Challenge 2013 Structure

	Communication Target	What We'll be Doing	Events	Materials
Ideation People submit ideas (a proposal that defines a community issue based on research* and that may or may not suggest a solution). We will prioritize reaching out to CHI and other Community Partners for ideas.	Community Foundations/ Leaders/Partners, Nonprofit Leaders, Government, Data Scientists	Webinars, launch event, major outreach, enabling connections, fielding calls, holding a local event, storytelling	-Launch -DataDive/ Revised CityCamp**	-Web-platform to submit ideas, collaborate on formation of ideas (Google Moderator) -Participant Packet -Event Packet
Define Categories Internal selection committee including NCoC, Data Scientists, Community Partners	Begin strong outreach to developers, coders, designers and data scientists	Review ideas. More clearly define focus of Challenge and eliminate ideas that fall outside of scope		Website – link categories to acceptable ideas that fall under that category*** Tracking traffic
Creation+ Participants will form teams around ideas and build entries. Form relationships with Community Partners.	Designers, developers, coders, and other skills-based participants	Communicate expectations, criteria, metrics. Promote team building, connect teams to Community Partners, host local event Host Judge's prep session****	-Happy Hour/ Bar Camps to form teams and mingle	-Web: submission form -Judging Form -Rubric -Publicize Advisor Feedback instructions
Implementation Top entries are implemented in communities.	-Constituents of local communities -Media	Provide feedback to teams from judges, check-in on progress, communications push leading up to finale	-CEOs for Cities -NCoC (present on finalists)	
Finalists	-Media -Public -Potential Future Participants -Possible donors to sustain winning products?	Planning/organizing final judging event, big communications push to achieve mainstream penetration (story telling), Begin compiling data on participation and reach/ mentions	-In-Person event, Finalists present to panel of judges and public (Newseum?)	-Editorial -Blog posts

e.) Building Your Timeline

The above sections have helped you shape your goals, staffing, audiences, and structure for your civic tech initiative. The next step is mapping out more of the logistical planning. Timeline—in terms of length of time needed and the best time of year to launch a new effort—is first among these steps.

Questions to Consider

- What is the cycle of your organization like? Are there times when you're particularly busy or calm?
- Considering the capacity of your organization, how long could you sustain a civic tech initiative? This question is essential to your efforts to clearly define the scope of your efforts.
- Consider your goals. How much time would it take you to plan and prepare the materials needed for each goal?
- How much time would it take participants to create a product that meets your expectations? If you're unsure, ask other challenge hosts or host a survey or focus group. For a list of key players in the field, see page 28.
- What kind of delays might you need to anticipate when working with outside partners, participants, and volunteers? How can you be flexible in your timeline to accommodate these?

Civic Data Challenge: Our Experience

The grant we received for the Civic Data Challenge was for one year, so that informed our program planning. Building upon lessons learned from our 2012 Challenge, we shifted our 2013 Challenge into three stages (Ideation, Creation, and Implementation). More information on these phases is included in the next section. Our Challenge needed to be planned and executed within one year. However, we would recommend a comparatively longer Implementation Phase to give participants the time needed to do a full beta-test of their products, incorporate revisions, and test again.

One key lesson we learned around timeline is that flexibility is key. In our experience, participants submitted their entries at the last possible moment and occasionally they asked for extensions. Our goal was to receive the highest quality products while being as fair as possible to all participants. Therefore, we felt comfortable extending submission deadlines (for all participants) so long as it did not conflict with a set event or the general timeline we had established with the judges.

The same challenges will likely occur with any type of initiative engaging volunteers. In the end, these challenges and other engagements are refined volunteer management systems.

Guiding Principle: Emphasize volunteer communication and management

*Participants come from a variety of professional backgrounds who may or may not be familiar with your mission or the issues your organization addresses. Additionally, they may use open data and open source terminology that feels unfamiliar. Take some time to learn some open data and open source terminology as this will facilitate your conversations with participants and partners. Our **Key Terms** section is a good place to start. It's also important to be very clear and specific about your own goals and mission. Don't presume a level of familiarity with your organization's work or datasets. Take the time to orient your participants to the context and history of how you arrived where you are.*

A dedicated project manager can greatly facilitate communications between the hosting organization, user-audiences, and the participants. This person can help translate nonprofit goals into clear instructions for volunteers and build an environment where the nonprofits' expectations are managed, and the volunteers are given enough guidelines to work effectively.

You may also find that there is a culture shift needed in communicating with participants in civic tech initiatives. Several project managers have noted they felt like they needed to be more responsive late at night or on weekends (when participants are more likely focused on their projects). Having a project manager who is prepared to manage these expectations on both ends can be very helpful.

It is important to note that participants are action- and goal-oriented. They have already self-selected to volunteer their time. This is also a highly collaborative audience that seeks to continuously make products and programs better. They value transparency and openness. It is important to be flexible and open to feedback. Formal opportunities to provide feedback, such as through surveys and focus groups, will be appreciated and will help build a group of advocates around your program.

Organizations like Points of Light offer great resources for how to effectively manage skills-based volunteers. (<http://www.pointsoflight.org/corporate-institute/resources/skills-based-volunteering>).

RESOURCE: Sample Timeline from 2013 Civic Data Challenge that can be adapted for future challenges in Appendix **PAGE 35**

IMPLEMENTATION

A.) Messaging

Now that planning is largely complete, you can begin the work of implementing your new initiative. Messaging is a key foundation to build, as it will determine how various audiences interpret, and ultimately, contribute to your end goals.

Creating a one-page document to highlight the message and your program's value-add will help communicate to your audience what you are trying to accomplish and how they can be involved. It's important to be clear and specific about your goals and program design. The work you've done in clarifying your audience and goals will be critical to effective communications.

Guiding Principle: Be an ambassador for your data

No one understands your data like you. You know how it is collected and how it has transformed over the years. You know how people are currently using the data and you may even have ideas for how it could be better used. Communicate this information to your participants and they will be more engaged and create stronger products that truly highlight the worth of your data. You will also develop a strong group of advocates for your data.

Sharing reports that highlight key findings can be useful, however participants and volunteers have limited time and are often most interested in working with the raw data. Providing technical or data assistance webinars can help engage participants from a variety of skill-levels and ensure that everyone is analyzing your data correctly. Short videos or human-interest stories on how the data has already been used to make an impact can help motivate participants and further inform the creation of their products.

As you develop your messaging, keep in mind the following:

Questions to Consider

- What is unique about your challenge or program?
- What is your top goal? What are you trying to accomplish?
- Who are you trying to attract?
- What are the incentives for participants to join?
- What key points do you need to address? These could be related to the structure of the challenge, the timeline, rules and regulations.

Civic Data Challenge: Our Experience

The core message of our Civic Data Challenge materials reflected our driving purpose: to make civic data more accessible and useful to have a direct impact on public decision-making. We also decided to highlight the structure of our Challenge in order to differentiate ourselves from other crowd-sourcing initiatives and demonstrate our focus on community impact.

Our website was a key platform for communicating our messaging. Working with our consultants, we narrowed down which functionalities were needed to have in order to engage participants and clearly and easily present all our information. Our consultants at Fission Strategy were a valuable resource for mapping out and structuring our website. The Civic Data Challenge website can be viewed at www.civickdatachallenge.org.

We needed a home page with text we could easily update based on upcoming deadlines. We also included buttons and links to most relevant and current resources and sections of the website. To keep the website looking fresh, we kept a blog and had twitter stream. We also included ample opportunities for participants to connect with us through Facebook and Twitter. At the foot of our website we included the logos of our partners and sponsors.

While we would have liked to include an interactive directory of participants, it was out of our budget to create such a custom page. Instead, we embedded a Google Group into the Group page. It acted as a discussion board where participants could interact with each other. Our consultant frequently researched and provided open source or low cost open source alternatives to building out custom pages.

RESOURCE: [Civic Data Challenge Messaging One-Pager in Appendix PAGE 36](#)

B.) Outreach

Building upon the work you have already done to identify your key stakeholders, you can then develop an effective outreach strategy.

Questions to Consider

- Who is your key audience?
- What is the best medium to reach your key audience? Online, in-person, newspaper or other in-print advertisements?
- If online, which online platform does your key audience use most? Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, or other?
- What existing communities and networks can you tap into to get the word out?
- What partners can you engage as promotional champions on your behalf? Do they have name recognition among the community you're trying to reach? For example, if you're hosting a competition, recruiting judges that are a draw for participants can be a key outreach strategy. If you're engaging a group of volunteers, what other organizations might have reach into the communities you want to engage?

Civic Data Challenge: Our Experience

To attract participants, we used a variety of approaches. We created post cards that we could hand out at events. We went to a mix of events, such as DataWeek, TechWeek, Community Indicators Consortium, and others where we presented formally, to small professional meet-ups that we found through meet-up.com. A cost effective alternative would be virtual postcards (or photos) that can be shared through Twitter, Facebook, and email. Our most effective medium was Twitter, followed by Facebook. We also created a list of relevant blogs that we could ask to cross-post our announcements.

One effective strategy was to consistently arm our stakeholders (judges, partners, and sponsors) with sample promotional language that they could plug in to their own blogs, e-blasts, and social media avenues. We recruited promotional partners (oftentimes other nonprofit organizations) who committed to these regular outreach bursts, and we recognized their support through prominent branding on our website and communications materials.



RESOURCE: Civic Data Challenge Sample Promotional Language

Facebook Posts:

- Open call to data scientists, coders, designers, and nonprofit leaders to join the Civic Data Challenge! Form teams, work with Civic Health data, engage with the community and create useful applications and visualizations that have an impact. Join here: www.civicdatachallenge.org <http://www.civicdatachallenge.org/>
- Join the Civic Data Challenge at the National Day of Civic Hacking, June 1-2! Find an event near you and start working on your Challenge entry. www.civicdatachallenge.org <http://www.civicdatachallenge.org/>
- Do You Have A Civic Problem? If yes, the Civic Data Challenge has tech entrepreneurs ready to help you. Community organizations sign up here to work with a team of Challenge participants to improve or pilot their product. <http://www.civicdatachallenge.org/CommunityPartner>

Twitter

- The Creation Phase of the @CivicData Challenge has launched! Here's what you need to know: <http://ow.ly/llxb8>
- @CivicData is looking for #apps and #visualizations to help improve our civic infrastructure. Entries due 7/28/13 <http://ow.ly/lkojw>
- Need help getting started on your @CivicData Challenge entry? Browse through the brainstorm here: <http://ow.ly/lkqg0>
- #DataScientists #Coders #Developers #Designers & #Nonprofits unite! Join @CivicData Challenge and create useful apps <http://ow.ly/lkszi>
- Join @CivicData at @CivicHackingDay (June 1-2) and start working on your Challenge entry! <http://ow.ly/lkseW>

Blog Posts:

- The Creation Phase: What You Need to Know <http://www.civicdatachallenge.com/blog/post/the-creation-phase-what-you-need-to-know>
- Join the Civic Data Challenge and Get to Work at the National Day of Civic Hacking <http://www.civicdatachallenge.com/blog/post/join-the-civic-data-challenge-and-get-to-work-at-the-national-day-of-civic-hacking>
- What is Civic Data? <http://www.civicdatachallenge.com/blog/post/what-is-civic-data>

For twitter outreach, we tried to stay up to date on common or most used hashtags and built those in to our tweets. Always search for a hashtag before using it in a message as some may have unexpected uses or may be linked to unrelated topics.

RESOURCE: Sample Hashtags in the Civic Tech World

Data Analysts	Visualization	Design	Developers	Research	Topical
#bigdata	#visualization	#design	#developer	#research	#civic
#data	#dataviz	#app	#community	#opendata	#millennial
#privacy	#datavisualization	#infographic	#css3/#html5	#opengov	#health
#analytics	#gis		#android	#nonprofit	#engagement
#dataissexy	#design		#iphone	#transparency	#education
				#openaccess	#democracy

C.) Rules

If you are hosting a meetup, hackathon, contest or challenge, you will need to clearly state the rules and criteria for competing. Transparency is important for participants and also helps ensure their time was well-spent in participating.

Questions to Consider

- Who's eligible to participate? Are their legal limitations to this based on prize money?
- What are your submission requirements?
- Do you want the end products to be open source and publicly available?
- What kind of promotional rights or other intellectual property considerations are there?
- What do you want to communicate about the criteria and judging process—who is ultimately awarding prizes and how?

Civic Data Challenge: Our Experience

For the Civic Data Challenge, we dedicated a page of our website to this: <http://www.civicdatachallenge.org/rules-and-criteria>. If you are awarding cash prizes, pay special attention to who is eligible to participate. It is important to have someone with legal expertise review your rules. Within our rules, we also included an outline of steps participants needed to take to compete. This helped to clarify our expectations for the participants.

RESOURCE: See [Sample Civic Data Challenge 2013 Rules](#) as a reference in Appendix **PAGE 37-38**

D.) Rubrics

A rubric can be an essential tool for clarifying what you hope to accomplish with your initiative, for communicating clear expectations and criteria externally, and for ensuring participants create products that meet your goals.

This is most relevant to challenges and competitions, but a rubric can really be helpful for any type of initiative. It's a helpful way to think through how you measure success internally, and how you message those ingredients to success externally.

Questions to Consider

- Considering your goals, what components do participants need to include or address for their product to be successful?
- How would you weight those different elements of success relative to one another? What are your priorities?
- What does success look like?
- Can you clearly communicate your vision for success to external audiences? Is there a road map they could follow to make sure they're on track?
- Are you focused on quantity or quality? In other words, do you want to simplify your rubric to encourage more entries and engage more participants? Or do you want to set a higher bar for entries, which may limit participation, but yield stronger products?

Civic Data Challenge: Our Experience

To best support our participants, we made rubrics available at the launch of the Creation and Implementation Phase. By providing these rubrics early on, participants had a clear framework for creating a successful entry and the criteria for selection were equally transparent to all. To form our rubrics, we considered our goals and tried to define what a successful product would look like and accomplish.

Using our goal sheet as a foundation, we divided the Creation Phase rubric into four criteria: depth of process, quality of concept, ultimate utility of product, and quality of design. We weighted each category according to how we prioritized our goals. We also provided criteria for consideration, which we broke down into recommended criteria, required, and advanced (or above-and-beyond criteria). The rubric we provided to judges included suggested possible point breakdowns that they could reference while judging an entry.

RESOURCE: See our [Civic Data Challenge Rubric in Appendix PAGE 39-41](#) and adapt for your own initiative.

For the Implementation Phase rubric, we restructured the categories slightly to include a community engagement section. We also included a section for participants to showcase how they evolved their product over time and how they improved it based on judges' feedback. We wanted to ensure that participants were thoughtful in how they worked with the community to build a strong product that would address the community's need.

RESOURCE: See our [Civic Data Challenge Implementation Phase Rubric in Appendix PAGE 42-43](#) and adapt for your own initiative

E.) Submission Forms

Similar to rubrics, submission forms are another tool that are most useful for competitions and challenges. Regardless of your initiative, however, they are another planning tool that helps you think ahead about what you would ideally want to know about volunteers or participants involved in your initiative, their process for engagement and what they create. It is important to create a submission form that closely aligns with your rubric. A well-formed submission application will:

- Be easy and clear for participants to complete
- Effectively highlight the participant's work
- Facilitate ease of judge review (if applicable)

Questions to Consider

- What information do you need to capture from your participants to ensure they are compliant with the rules? Examples:
 - Age
 - Citizenship
 - Address
 - Confirmation that they reviewed the rules
- How intensive do you want your submission process to be? Keep in mind that more in-depth submission will likely yield higher quality products, but can serve as a barrier to participation. Quantity vs. quality is a key question in developing your submission process.
- What information do you want to capture from your participants?
 - As an example, we collected the following information because we wanted to learn more about the reach of the competition and the type of people who became involved:
 - Address
 - Professional background
 - How they heard about the challenge

Civic Data Challenge: Our Experience

For the Creation Phase, we created a submission form through SurveyGizmo. In addition to collecting submissions from the Creation Phase, we used this application as an opportunity to collect information on our participants and ensure that they met all the rules and criteria of the Challenge.

We learned that there is a balancing act between an in-depth submission process (quality) and having too high a barrier of entry (potentially limiting quantity). Two Civic Data Challenge finalists were unable to complete with Implementation Phase because it was too rigorous with too short a timeline. We decided that the loss of two entries was worth it, considering the high caliber entries we were receiving. However, this tension between quality and quantity should be considered when structuring your own submission and rubric processes.

RESOURCE: See our [Sample Submission Form in Appendix PAGE 44](#)

We created the Implementation Phase submission form in the form of a work booklet that teams could reference throughout the Implementation Phase to help guide their progress.

RESOURCE: See our [Implementation Phase Submission Form in Appendix PAGE 45-57](#)

F.) The Judging Process

Judges can play a key role in not only determining winners of your Challenge, but supporting outreach, increasing brand awareness, and incentivizing participation. Judges can be useful both for larger data competitions and hackathons as well as smaller engagements. A great resource for the role of judges and prizes in sparking innovation is “And the Winner Is....Capturing the Promise of Philanthropic Prizes” by McKinsey & Company (<http://mckinseysociety.com/capturing-the-promise-of-philanthropic-prizes/>).

Questions to Consider

- Staffing and time: How much do you have to spare and how many judges can you manage? Plan to spend about an hour on the phone for each judge you try to recruit, sharing your goals, walking them through the structure of your challenge, and gathering their feedback and buy-in.
- How do you value name recognition relative to time constraints? The biggest names are also the busiest. You need to be flexible when working with their schedules.
- Do you have clear structure and expectations? Give judges a general timeframe on when they can expect to receive submissions to score and how many hours they can expect to spend scoring.

Civic Data Challenge: Our Experience

As mentioned earlier in the ‘Roles’ section, we invited people to participate as judges based on their expertise within the tech, data, or nonprofit sector. We also took name recognition and reputation into account. To begin our outreach process, we asked leaders in the space for information interviews. As a follow up, we would invite them to participate as judges and to recommend other potential judges.

The judging process – key recommendations:

- Host a judges' informational call to walk through the rubric and share expectations. Answer any questions they have. We found that judges greatly appreciated having a time to interact with each other and several would have liked more opportunities to interact through platforms such as a Google hangout.
- Vet your entries. Those entries that clearly do not meet the basic rules or criteria for the competition should not be sent forward to judging.
- Assign entries to judges so each judge has a manageable workload. We recommend 3-4 entries per judge, which we estimated to be 2-3 hours of scoring. Because the Implementation Phase submission form was significantly more rigorous we limited the number of entries per judge to 2.
- In our challenge, each entry was judged at least three times, and each entry was seen by at least one appropriate expert judge (i.e. if an entry is heavily computer coding focused, ensuring that a judge with coding expertise has the opportunity to weigh in on that entry).
- In addition to providing judges with a rubric, give judges a scoring sheet. We used an excel spreadsheet. Judges were able to assign points for each category. We included a column for comments so the judges could explain their scoring process. We also included a feedback column and encourage the judges to write key feedback that we could share with the participants. Most judges included both comments and feedback.
- Provide judges with 1 to 2 weeks to score entries. Remember, judges are volunteers and you may need to be flexible with deadlines. If a judge becomes unresponsive, you may need to reassign their entries.
- Compile scores and determine the cut off for who would move on to the final round. We did not pre-establish a set number of entries that we would move on. Instead we saw a natural point gap between the top half of entries and the bottom half. This could also be determined based on available resources.

We reserved the right to structure the winners and assign prizes as we deemed appropriate. We had gold, silver, and bronze level winners and there could be multiple winners at one level, and to ensure that every team that completed the strenuous Implementation Phase was recognized and rewarded. We assigned prizes based on the team's need. For example, if a team had a strong code but lacked the design or communication skill to successfully market their product, then we gave them an in-kind prize of consulting services at a communication firm that had signed on as a sponsor. Alternatives include announcing that there will be a 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place winner with each winner receiving a specific prize.

We ended up dividing the cash prizes, creating incentives for teams to continue improving their product based on judges' feedback. We gave them two to three measurable changes they could make within a month. These could include adding or clarifying some of their messaging points, sharpening their design, or creating a basic manual for communities interested in replicating the product.

EVALUATION

As with any new initiative, evaluation is key to understand your successes and opportunities for improvement. Evaluation methods such as internal reflection, participant surveys, stakeholder focus groups, and qualitative and quantitative feedback from partners can all be very valuable. An internal process evaluation on how the planning and implementation were done is vital to ensure you capture lessons learned. A short-term impact evaluation would also be useful in deducing the impact on the community or communities in which the challenge was implemented. Ideally, you will have outlined clear objectives and metrics for success from the outset by which to measure your successes.

Guiding Principle: Promote Sustainability

To be sustainable, a product needs to be adoptable and marketed.

Adoptable. *As mentioned in the section above, the tools created need to match with the resources available to the user-audience. Challenge participants and volunteers should not create an iPhone app if the user audience is mostly Android users. Facilitate connections between users and developers and encourage participants to survey their target audience to gain a better understanding of the resources available to them. Doing this work from the outset is critical to ensure that products are used over time.*

Marketed. *No matter how well developed a product is, or how well it meets an important social need, if people do not know about it, they will never become users. Successful marketing can also draw the attention of investors who can help provide the funding necessary to maintain products.*

Questions to Consider

- Reflect back on your objectives and metrics for success in the planning phase. How did you do? Did you exceed any objective or fall short? If so, why?
- Were your assumptions correct on who participated?
- What are you hearing from participants? Why did they participate? What did they enjoy? What did they find challenging?
- Are your end products what you were hoping for? Are they useful for our key user audience? Are they being adopted?
- What worked well through the implementation process? What areas have room for improvement?

Civic Data Challenge: Our Experience

Data challenge participants are a highly collaborative audience that seeks to continuously make products and programs better. They will greatly appreciate formal opportunities to provide feedback, such as through surveys and focus groups.

We drew upon these tools to make significant structural changes from year 1 to year 2. We realized we needed to be more responsive to community needs, and more responsive to participant incentives—key driving influences in our improved data challenge.

RESOURCE: [Sample Participant Survey in Appendix PAGE 58](#)

In addition to internal evaluation processes, it can be helpful to produce external reports on your initiative to reflect on your successes. We produced 'By the Numbers' documents that captured some key metrics of success as one way to do this.

RESOURCE: [See By the Numbers in Appendix PAGE 61-62](#)

KEY PLAYERS & RESOURCES

There are tremendous benefits to engaging in the “civic tech” space and finding opportunities to use your data in new ways to generate dialogue and spark action. The guiding principles above can help in planning, implementing and evaluating a wide range of initiatives.

Perhaps you see the value in this type of work, or even have an idea of the type of initiative you would like to develop. Regardless of your stage of development, here are a few simple tips to get started:

1. Civic Tech Initiatives Toolkit: The toolkit which accompanies this landscape review provides those interested in engaging effectively in this space with the resources, materials, and planning questions needed to do so. The toolkit walks you through each section with questions to consider, lessons learned from the Civic Data Challenge, and materials and resources that can be modified for your purposes.

2. Key Players and Resources: The list below captures just some of the leading organizations, resources and events that support this type of work. To highlight just a few here:

- **Code for America (www.codeforamerica.org/):** Code for America builds open source technology and organizes a network of people dedicated to making government services simple, effective, and easy to use. Their programming includes the Brigade, which is a city-centered network that engages participants through regular hack nights and events. They also have a Peer Network where local government innovators connect to share resources and best practices, and collaborate on common problems. Check out this map to find a Code for America chapter in your community.



- **DataKind™ (www.datakind.org):** DataKind™ was founded “in the hopes of creating a world in which every social organization has access to data capacity to better serve humanity.” DataKind™ helps social organizations gain access to highly trained data scientists, developers, and tech experts. Their programming includes:
 - DataCorps™, vetted data scientists, technologists, project managers, and designers who can engage with social organizations on a pro bono basis on specific projects.
 - DataDive™, a weekend event that teams selected social organizations that have a well-defined data problem with volunteer data scientists.

Learn more and sign up to get involved here: <http://www.datakind.org/getinvolved/>

- **National Day of Civic Hacking (www.hackforchange.org/):** The National Day of Civic Hacking (NDoCH) is an annual event that brings together technologists, entrepreneurs, developers, and other engaged citizens to improve communities and the governments that serve them. The event is planned in coordination with the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP) and sponsors. The NDoCH accepts proposals for events, challenges, and projects in which its network can participate. Sign up here: <http://hackforchange.org/>

For others, you can check out the below list of websites or do a little research to find out what similar efforts might already exist in your community. The presence of data volunteers, hackathons, ‘innovation hubs’, and other civic tech resources is growing—you might discover that an infrastructure for this work already exists in your community.



3. Connect With Others in Your Community: While connecting to existing resources is a great start, you don’t have to work formally with a ‘tech for good’ or ‘data for good’ organization. As highlighted above, you may find that a local company or university provides the talent pool and resources you need to get something started. Other ideas for great civic resources to look into in your community might include:

- Community Foundations
- Chambers of Commerce
- Local Economic Development Institutions or Agencies
- Local Government offices on civic innovations
- Community Colleges

Additional resources and suggestions are included on the next page.

Networks & Events

Caravan Studios (caravanstudios.org)

Caravan Studios builds apps that help communities organize, access, and apply local resources to their most pressing problems.⁴ They use an open, collaborative, and community-centered process to create products that meet clearly identified community needs. Their process includes 5 steps:

1. Generate - community convening surfaces pain points and ideas
2. Select - the community selects the best solution
3. Design - create prototypes and solicit community feedback
4. Build - develop a technology tool
5. Use - community use drives adoption and surfaces improvements⁵

CityCamp (citycamp.com)

CityCamp is an unconference focused on innovation and collaboration for municipal governments, community organizations, and citizens. CityCamps aim to bring together local government officials, municipal employees, experts, developers, designers, citizens, and journalists to share perspectives and insights about their cities. Their goal is to create outcomes that participants will act upon. CityCamp's website provides a playbook for creating your own CityCamp. This can also be used as a blueprint for creating similar outcome focused events.

Code for America (codeforamerica.org)

Code for America builds open source technology and organizes a network of people dedicated to making government services simple, effective, and easy to use. Their programming includes the Brigade, which is a city-centered network that engages participants through regular hack nights and events. They also have a Peer Network where local government innovators connect to share resources and best practices, and collaborate on common problems. They are a wealth of knowledge on open government initiatives.

DataKind™ (datakind.org)

DataKind™ was founded “in the hopes of creating a world in which every social organization has access to data capacity to better serve humanity.⁶” DataKind™ helps social organizations gain access to highly trained data scientists, developers, and tech experts. Their programming includes

- DataCorps™, vetted data scientists, technologists, project managers, and designers who can engage with social organizations on a pro bono basis on specific projects.
- DataDive™, a weekend event that teams selected social organizations that have a well-defined data problem with volunteer data scientists.

DataWeek (dataweek.com)

DataWeek is an annual conference that brings together engineers, data experts, and executives to discuss the role of data and innovation in business, technology, and society. While DataWeek's audience is heavily technical- and skills-oriented, the organization is an advocate for initiatives similar to the Civic Data Challenge and its participants who seek to use their technical skills for social good.

GovFresh (govfresh.com)

GovFresh features public servant innovators, civic entrepreneurs, and the ideas and technology changing the way government works.⁷

Kaggle (kaggle.com)

Kaggle provides access to a large community of data scientists and, for a fee, will assist organizations interested in hosting a competition.

Meetup (meetup.com)

Meetup is a website that facilitates the gathering of neighbors to learn something, do something, or share something. We used this tool to learn of local groups that may be interested in participating in a data challenge. Groups included data, tech, and design experts looking for opportunities to learn new skills and volunteer their services.

National Day of Civic Hacking (hackforchange.org)

The National Day of Civic Hacking (NDoCH) is an annual event that takes place in over 83 cities across the nation.⁸ The event brings together technologists, entrepreneurs, developers, and other engaged citizens to improve communities and the governments that serve them. The event is planned in coordination with the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP) and sponsors. The NDoCH accepts proposals for events, challenges, and projects in which its network can participate.

Random Hacks of Kindness (rhok.org)

Random Hacks of Kindness (RHOK): a community of developers, geeks and tech-savvy do-gooders around the world, working to develop software solutions that respond to the challenges facing humanity today.

Visualizing.org (visualizing.org)

Visualizing is a community of creative people making sense of complex issues through data and design.⁹ The organization provides a platform for designers to showcase their work, and for organizations to host and publicize their data. Visualizing also hosts challenges for community members to create visualizations on different data sets and issues.

Visual.ly (visual.ly)

Visual.ly is a key player in the design sector. They work to connect organizations with designers, journalists, animators, and developers on specific projects for a fee.

Platforms & Tools

Github (github.com)

Github is an online repository of open-source code. Github users can subscribe or create free accounts to post and manage source code for apps, websites, and data tools.

Google Hangout

Google Hangout is a great, free tool for bringing together groups of 2 to 10 people in an online, video chat. You can also broadcast your Google Hangout by making it “on air” (**learn more here: <https://www.google.com/+/learnmore/hangouts/onair.html>**). This can provide a substitute for on-ground events, particularly if your audience spans the nation.

Hootsuite (hootsuite.com)

Hootsuite is a subscription-based service that allows organizations and businesses to manage their social media across multiple platforms.

IdeaScale (ideascale.com)

IdeaScale is a “comprehensive innovation software that helps organizations identify great new ideas and bring them to life.” The Civic Data Challenge used IdeaScale to help generate a public brainstorm during our Ideation phase.

Storify (storify.com)

Storify is an online platform that allows users to pull content and media from multiple sources to create a web “story” that can be easily shared. One of NCoC’s partners created a storify of the Civic Data Challenge: (**storify.com/caravanstudios/civic-data-challenge-2013**)

ThunderClap (thunderclap.it)

Thunderclap is a “crowdspeaking platform,” a social media amplifier that allows organizations to tap into their supporters’ social networks to create a massive online campaign for an event or cause

Additional Resources

Civic Apps Competition Handbook

Created by Kate Eyer-Werve and Virginia Carlson This guidebook provides a broad review of how to plan, organize, and trouble shoot apps competitions.

Civic Data Challenge (civicdatachallenge.org)

The Civic Data Challenge website links to a number of reports, resources, partners, and events that may be useful for your civic tech initiative.

Civic Hackathon Challenge Design Principles: Making Data Relevant and Useful for Individuals and Communities.

Created by the National Day of Civic Hacking, this document provides participants with a guideline for getting involved with communities and their data, and tips for how to make their data products meaningful.

Knight Foundation

The Emergence of Civic tech: investments in a Growing Field. (slideshare.net/knightfoundation/knight-civictech) and “Why Contests Improve Philanthropy. Six Lessons on Designing Public prizes for Impact”. (knightfoundation.org/media/uploads/publication_pdfs/KF-Contests-Report-lores.pdf)

Let’s Get Digital! 50 Tools for Online Public Engagement

A list of tools for online engagement that can be used to complement in-person events. (communitymatters.org/blog/let%E2%80%99s-get-digital-50-tools-online-public-engagement)

Points of Light

POL offers several resources on how to effectively manage skills-based volunteers across a variety of sectors and issues. (pointsoflight.org/corporate-institute/resources/skills-based-volunteering)

Social Good Guides (socialgoodguides.com)

Authored by industry experts, the Social Good Guides are a collection of subject specific guides created for startup changemakers. Guide topics include: legal primer, branding and identity, business plans, and marketing. These are especially useful for challenge participants who want to turn their entry into a startup.

Pro Bono Support

Catchafire (catchafire.org)

Catchafire is a skills-based volunteer-matching service designed to help nonprofits build capacity. Organizations can create a profile and determine their greatest strategic and operational needs like website design, volunteer management, and marketing strategy. Catchafire will then match nonprofits with volunteers willing to contribute their skills and time to a specific project.

Npower (npower.org)

Npower mobilizes the tech community and provides individuals, nonprofits, and schools opportunities to build tech skills and achieve their potential.¹⁰ The organization connects technology professionals to higher ed institutions’ and nonprofits through its Community Corps. They also provide technology training and education for underserved populations and veterans through their technology service corps.

Taproot Foundation (taprootfoundation.org)

Taproot’s mission is to drive social change by leading, mobilizing, and engaging professionals in pro bono service.¹¹ The nonprofit organization makes business talent available to nonprofits by matching organizations with talented professionals and businesses that can provide the marketing, design, technology, management or strategic planning skills they need.

Funders

Innovation Endeavors (innovationendeavors.com)

Innovation Endeavors combines a venture fund with a unique approach to venture-creation in order to partner with entrepreneurs to build lasting technology companies. They work closely in support of the National Day of Civic Hacking.

John S. and James L. Knight Foundation (knightfoundation.org)

Knight Foundation supports transformational ideas that promote quality journalism, advance media innovation, engage communities and foster the arts.¹² In the past, they have been involved in different crowdsourcing tech initiatives. They have compiled their lessons learned, including an overview of investment trends, in a civic tech landscape review (knightfoundation.org/features/civictech). Their current programming includes the Knight Prototype Fund, a program designed to give people with high-quality concepts for media and information projects grants of \$35,000 and six months to take their idea to the demo stage along with a class of others facing a similar challenge.¹³

Sunlight Foundation (sunlightfoundation.com/about)

The Sunlight Foundation is a nonpartisan nonprofit that advocates for open government globally and uses technology to make government more accountable to all. To accomplish this mission, they create tools, open data, policy recommendations, journalism, and grant opportunities to expand access to vital government information and make public officials more accountable.

Government Resources

Challenge.gov

Challenge.gov is a technical platform and list of challenge and prize competitions, all of which are run by more than 69 agencies across federal government. These include technical, scientific, ideation, and creative competitions where the U.S. government seeks innovative solutions from the public, bringing the best ideas and talent together to solve mission-centric problems.

White House Office of Science and Technology Policy: (whitehouse.gov/administration/eop/ostp)

The mission of the Office of Science and Technology Policy is threefold; first, to provide the President and his senior staff with accurate, relevant, and timely scientific and technical advice on all matters of consequence; second, to ensure that the policies of the Executive Branch are informed by sound science; and third, to ensure that the scientific and technical work of the Executive Branch is properly coordinated so as to provide the greatest benefit to society.

CONCLUSION

As the open data and 'data for good' movements grow, mission-driven organizations will need to evolve along with their constituents, volunteers, and fundraisers to quickly and easily interpret data. Civic tech initiatives provide a wealth of opportunities for nonprofits to fully leverage data's potential to help support their missions and goals. The flexible and highly customizable formats for data challenges allow several entry points for mission-driven organizations to experiment in this space. With these support of the guidelines and templates provided in this toolkit, any nonprofit can design a data challenge to fit their budget, capacity, location, and need.

Sources:

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- 2 Patel, Mayur. "Why Contests Improve Philanthropy. Six Lessons on Designing Public prizes for Impact". Knight Foundation, July 2013. (http://www.knightfoundation.org/media/uploads/publication_pdfs/KF-Contests-Report-lores.pdf)
- 3 See <http://www.civicdatachallenge.com/winners-for-2012-winning-entries>.
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- 9 Visualizing.org (<http://visualizing.org/about>). Accessed 2/9/2014
- 10 NPower. (<http://www.npower.org/Our-Purpose/Our-Purpose.aspx>). Accessed 2/9/2015
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APPENDIX

Civic Data Challenge Goals Sheet

Goals	Metrics for Success	Notes/Steps to Take
Create Useful Tools (Results)	10 entries used/tested by community partners	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Solicit ideas from partners on what would be most useful for them. 2. Have a discussion on website where participants can engage with ideas and build them out further 3. Create a rubric that focuses on utility and publish it early on in the Challenge so participants have a framework for building their entry
	2 entries that continue to be used after the Challenge in 2014	Award prizes that can be used to maintain and grow the most promising entries.
Build Community Stories	One complete narrative of a participant's journey	One complete narrative of a participant's journey. Engage with participants early on through social media and events, if possible, to solicit stories that we can highlight
	More than half who engage in a Challenge connect with someone they didn't know before	More than half who engage in a Challenge connect with someone they didn't know before. Create space for community to happen organically, preferably through our website www.civickdatachallenge.org
Support Partner Engagement	Formalize 10 partnerships the majority of which reach new audiences	Aggressive outreach towards partners who have audiences that we have previously not interacted with
	Engage a variety of types of partners	Create job descriptions for different types of partners: Advisor, Judge, Sponsor, and Promotional Partner roles
	Ensure that each partner promotes the Civic Data Challenge	Make it easy for partners to promote the Challenge by providing sample social media content and blog posts
Achieve Mainstream Penetration	The majority of entries show that they are based in research that has defined a clear need that their product can address (as defined in the rubric)	Pitch editorial (stories captured in Goal 2) at the beginning of the Implementation Phase
Better Synthesis of Research and Utility	The majority of entries show that they are based in research that has defined a clear need that their product can address (as defined in the rubric)	Ensure this criterion is clearly defined on the rubric and that the need for a strong research foundation is messaged to participants
Encourage Provocativeness and Truth	Be open to receiving a few entries that challenged the effectiveness of civic engagement or current programming	In messaging, leave room for participants to challenge the status quo

Sample Civic Data Challenge Timeline

Time Frame	Phase	Actions
2-3 Months	Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish goals and metrics Develop structure Finalize messaging Write rules and criteria (including legal review) Build website Create materials, including rubrics; submission forms; communications plans; messaging documents to share with potential partners, sponsors, judges, and participants Recruit sponsors, judges, advisors, and promotional partner organizations
1- 2 Months	Ideation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Launch event Promote Challenge through social media, blog posts, promotional partners Host webinars to engage partners in submitting ideas Collect ideas and promote discussion through online and offline events Encourage and facilitate formation of teams
2-3 Months	Creation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Post rubric and submission forms Facilitate connections with community partners as needed Promote Challenge through social media, blog posts, promotional partners Host/attend events Support participants by providing access to resources and expert advisors
3 Weeks	1st Round of Judging	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Host a judges' informational call to walk through the rubric and share expectations. Answer any questions they have Assign entries to judges Provide judges with 1 to 2 weeks to score entries Compile scores and determine the cut off for who would move on to the final round.
3 Months	Implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote finalists through social media, blog posts, promotional partners, conferences and speaking opportunities Post rubric and submission forms Facilitate connections between participants and community partners as needed Outreach to media
3 Weeks	Final Round Judging	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Host a judges' informational call to walk through the rubric and share expectations. Answer any questions they have Assign entries to judges. Provide judges with 1 to 2 weeks to score entries Compile scores and determine how you want to structure the winners and assign prizes
2-3 Weeks	Winners Announcement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Select a date and venue for announcement. Because our participants spanned the country, we chose to host a virtual finale event through Google Hangout on Air (see resources). An in-person event will require much more time to plan (3+ months depending on size and venue) Notify winners. Provide them with promotional language to announce their accomplishment, as well as a template press release for them to use with their local news outlet (to be embargoed until the official announcement) Work with operations staff to identify necessary documents for distributing prizes and collect from winners Send out finale event invitations to partners, sponsors, and participants Send out media advisories and press releases to media partners and potential news outlets Host finale event
1 Month	Wrap-Up	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote Challenge winners and outcomes through social media, blog posts, news, promotional partners Gather participant feedback through surveys and focus groups Compile lessons learned in preparation for next iteration



**CIVIC DATA
CHALLENGE**

Civic Data Challenge 2013

The Civic Data Challenge turns the raw data of ‘civic health’ into useful applications and visualizations that have direct impact on public decision-making.

Through the Challenge, participants will bring new minds and skill sets to the field of civic health, with the purpose of making data-driven community insights more valuable and accessible. In order to achieve an exceptional level of real-world usefulness, designers, data scientists, researchers, and application developers will collaborate with local leaders and respond to the needs of specific communities or social issues.

Civic Health Data, available for all 50 US states and the 50 largest metropolitan areas, will be provided by NCoC, and additional data and resources will be made available through the network of Challenge participants in key categories of civic decision making.

Challenge entries will be judged based on the quality of concept, analysis of community need, collaboration with local leaders, incorporation of diverse skill sets, user experience, design, and the ultimate utility of the product.

April - May	June - Sept.	Oct. - Dec.
Ideation	Creation	Implementation
<p>The Challenge will launch at the 2013 Data Visualization Summit in San Francisco (April 11-12).</p> <p>Using an “idea marketplace” on civicdatachallenge.org, participants and community organizations will be able to submit and build on their ideas for an application or visualization that will have a direct impact on public decision-making.</p> <p>We will invite community leaders and Community Partners to submit ideas based on their community’s needs. We hope to facilitate and promote events across the nation to bring community leaders and participants together.</p> <p>Ideas will be selected by a committee to continue on to the creation phase</p>	<p>Using a platform on civicdatachallenge.org, participants will be able to form teams to develop applications and visualizations based on the winning ideas. They will also have the opportunity to connect with Partners to support them through entry development.</p> <p>Participants will be encouraged to identify and collaborate with a Community Partner independently, but Partners will be available to ‘match’ with participants as needed.</p> <p>Expert Judges will select qualifying entries to move forward to the implementation phase.</p>	<p>The Finalists will work with Community Partners to improve and implement their submissions.</p> <p>Final judging will determine which teams were most successful in implementing their creations and award grand prizes.</p>

Civic Data Challenge Rules

Eligibility

The Civic Data Challenge is open only to: [1] citizens or permanent residents of the United States who are at least thirteen (13) years old at the time of entry (or teams of eligible individuals); and [2] private entities, such as corporations or other organizations, that are incorporated in and maintain a primary place of business in the United States. Individuals submitting on behalf of corporations, nonprofits, or groups of individuals (such as an academic class or other team) must meet the eligibility requirements for individual participants. An individual may join the Challenge with more than one team, corporation, or nonprofit organization. NCoC, Knight Foundation, and Fission Strategies employees, as well as Challenge judges, and members of such persons' immediate family (spouses, children, siblings, parents), and persons living in the same household, whether or not related, are not eligible to win.

Steps to Compete

1. **Join the Challenge:** Contestants must join the Civic Data Challenge Google group.
2. **Share Ideas:** Participate in a collective brainstorm! Share your ideas, show support for other ideas by voting and add comments to help others develop theirs.
3. **Work with the Data:** Analyze Civic Health data. Entries must be informed by the Civic Health CPS data provided. This data may be analyzed together with additional dataset(s), as long as civic health data is involved. Suggested datasets in the Challenge categories may be provided, but entries may also use data from other public sources online, as long as the dataset is appropriately cited. Additionally, use of Knight Foundation Soul of the Community data is recommended.
4. **Connect with Others:** Form a team to develop the best all-around product you can. Participants are also required to collaborate with a community partner to ensure their product is meeting a real community need. Possible community partners include community foundations, government, nonprofits, and local businesses.
5. **Create and Amaze:** Create useful visual representations and applications to showcase your findings and help fill a community need.
6. **Pilot your Program:** Finalists will collaborate with their community partner to launch a beta version of their product in the community.
7. **Win!** Grand prize winners will be those teams who most successfully implement their product in a community.

Intellectual Property Rights

Please note that funding will not be awarded to ideas suggested during the Ideation Phase of the Challenge. NCoC will treat all ideas during this Phase as public property, open to the Challenge community. Such ideas shall not be treated as a "submission" under our Intellectual Property Rights policy. Our goal, during this phase, is for people to spur others to think and build creatively as a community upon the ideas suggested. Therefore, all participants will have the opportunity to build entries based upon the ideas submitted. Submission of an idea represents acceptance of this policy.

All submissions to the Civic Data Challenge remain the intellectual property of the individuals or organizations that developed them. By registering, consenting to the terms of the challenge, and entering a Submission, however, the Participant agrees that both NCoC and Knight Foundation reserve an irrevocable, nonexclusive, royalty-free license to use, copy, distribute to the public, create derivative works from, and publicly display and perform a Submission for a period of no less than one year starting on the date of the announcement of contest winners. NCoC also encourages participants to visually incorporate the Civic Data Challenge and/or NCoC logos into their products. Any code developed through the Civic Data Challenge must remain open source. Submissions must be made available to the public throughout the Challenge and for a period of one year after the announcement of winners.

Note: "Any code developed through the Civic Data Challenge must be open source." The people who participate in and support challenges and similar initiatives are heavily invested in promoting the open source movement (see landscape review). During the formation of the Challenge, several partners and advisors highly recommended including an open source provision in the rules.

Publicity

Except where prohibited, participation in the Challenge constitutes each winner's consent to NCoC's and its agents' use of each winner's name, likeness, photograph, voice, opinions, and/or hometown and state information for promotional purposes through any form of media, worldwide, without further permission, payment or consideration.

Copyright

Participant represents and warrants that he or she is the sole author and copyright owner of the Submission, and that the Submission is an original work of the Participant, or if the Submission is a work based on an existing application, that the Participant has acquired sufficient rights to use and to authorize others, including NCoC, to use the Submission, as specified in the “Intellectual Property Rights” section of the Rules; and that the Submission does not infringe upon any copyright or upon any other third party rights of which the Participant is aware, and that the Submission is free of malware.

Prizes

Prizes will be available for finalists in each category at the end of Creation phase, as well as for overall grand prize winners at the end of the Implementation phase. An individual can submit as many entries as they would like and can submit one entry in multiple issue categories (if applicable).

Note: At no point did we specify the number of winners or which types of winners would receive which prizes. We intentionally left this broad to give us the flexibility to award teams with prizes best suited to their needs (especially for in-kind prizes such as cameras or pro bono consulting services).

Submission

Entries that were created before the launch of the Civic Data Challenge are still eligible for submission. However, to qualify for prizes in the Challenge, entrants of previously created entries must be able to: 1) demonstrate that significant improvements have been made since original creation, 2) clearly articulate how the submission was informed or improved by civic data, and 3) clearly articulate how it was improved in and collaborated on during the Challenge process.

During the Creation phase you must submit your entry using the instructed form on the website. After approval, your entry will be added online to the Civic Data Challenge site. Remember to sign up for the Civic Data Challenge Google group, so you can keep up to date with recent announcements and participate with the community. All submissions will be posted online as soon as they are sent in. Please only send in complete entries. Entries must be received by 11:59 p.m. Eastern on Sunday, July 28.

Deadline

Submissions for the Creation phase are due by 11:59 p.m. Eastern on Sunday, July 28. Winners will be notified mid-August. Winners will be invited to the 2013 National Conference on Citizenship in Washington, DC and all participants will be strongly encouraged to attend the Conference.

Judges

The Submissions will be reviewed by the judges identified in the Challenge details or by another qualified panel selected by NCoC at its sole discretion. The panel will judge the Submissions on the criteria identified above in order to select winners in each category. The decisions of NCoC as informed by the Judges are final. NCoC is not responsible for ensuring the accuracy of the findings presented by the Challenge or the functionality of the products beyond the close of the competition.

Liability and Insurance

Any and all information provided by or obtained from NCoC is without any warranty or representation whatsoever, including but not limited to its suitability for any particular purpose. Upon registration, all participants agree to assume and, thereby, have assumed any and all risks of injury or loss in connection with or in any way arising from participation in this Challenge, development of any application or the use of any application by the participants or any third-party. Upon registration all participants agree to and, thereby, do waive and release any and all claims or causes of action against NCoC and its officers, employees and agents for any and all injury and damage of any nature whatsoever (whether existing or thereafter arising, whether direct, indirect, or consequential and whether foreseeable or not), arising from their participation in the contest, whether the claim or cause of action arises under contract or tort. Upon registration, all participants agree to and, thereby, shall indemnify and hold harmless NCoC and its officers, employees and agents for any and all injury and damage of any nature whatsoever (whether existing or thereafter arising, whether direct, indirect, or consequential and whether foreseeable or not), including but not limited to any damage that may result from a virus, malware, etc., to computer systems or data, or to the systems or data of end-users of the software and/or application(s) which results, in whole or in part, from the fault, negligence, or wrongful act or omission of the participants or participants' officers, employees or agents.

Based on the subject matter of the Challenge, the type of work that it possibly will require, and the likelihood of any claims for death, bodily injury, or property damage, or loss potentially resulting from challenge participation, Participant is not required to obtain liability insurance or demonstrate fiscal responsibility in order to participate in this Challenge.

Civic Data Scoring Rubric: Round #1, Creation Phase

The goal of the Civic Data Challenge is to turn the raw data of ‘civic health’ into useful applications and visualizations that have direct impact on public decision-making. This could entail generating dialogue about civic health, informing public policy issues, developing strategic initiatives, or generating other forms of action locally or nationally.

At the end of the Creation Phase (July 28th), Civic Data Challenge entries will be judged by four main criteria for a total of 100 scoring points. Judges may award an additional 5 bonus points to entries that incorporate Knight Foundation Soul of the Community data.

During this first round of judging, judges will score entries based on the criteria outlined below. Participants must meet a majority of the required criteria in order to be considered for advancement as finalists to the Implementation Phase where they will pilot their products in collaboration with community partners. Finalists will be notified in late August. A second round of judging will occur in November at the end of the Implementation Phase. Round Two judging will determine grand prize winner(s) and will be based on the success of the implementation and proven utility of the products.

Depth of Process (Thoughtful and Collaborative) – 30 points	
<p>This category intends to recognize your methodology – the behind-the-scenes process utilized during the Challenge. High-rating entries in this category will demonstrate both depth of the analytical process, as well as quality of the partnerships formed to inform and complete the product.</p>	
<p>Criteria for Consideration:</p> <p>REQUIRED</p> <p>Was the submission thoughtfully informed by the civic data provided by the Challenge?</p> <p>Did the participants analyze in-depth a particular community need or issue?</p> <p>Does the submission have a clear goal that is related to addressing a community need or social issue? Would this product be helpful to generate dialogue about civic health, inform public policy issues, develop strategic initiatives, or generate other forms of action locally or nationally?</p> <p>Has the participant clearly considered the target audience for their entry?</p> <p>Are there clear goals for metrics of use? In other words, has the participant defined what success looks like?</p> <p>RECOMMENDED</p> <p>Did the participant use multiple data sets to explore the information from new angles?</p> <p>Did the participant’s thought process demonstrate creativity or innovation?</p> <p>Did the participant work with other team members with complementary skill sets to gain new perspectives and create a higher-quality product?</p> <p>ADVANCED</p> <p>Did the participant engage with the community in a way that will be sustained beyond the Challenge (i.e. host meetings, hold focus groups, etc.)?</p> <p>Has the submission gone through several iterations? Has it been improved?</p>	<p>Possible Point Categories:</p> <p>0 points: The entry does not appear to meet any of the basic requirements of this dimension.</p> <p>1-9 points: The entry was somewhat thoughtfully informed by civic data, the participants showed some basic analysis of a particular community need or issue, and their submission had a goal related to the improvement of a community’s civic health.</p> <p>10-14 points: The entry is thoughtfully informed by civic data, the participants showed in-depth analysis of a particular community need or issue, defined a target audience, and their submission had a very clear goal that is related to their findings.</p> <p>15-20 points: In addition to meeting the required criteria, the participant used at least one other data set in conjunction with the civic health data. The participant worked with a team to create a higher-quality product.</p> <p>21-25 points: In addition to meeting the required criteria, using at least one other data set and working with a team, the participant demonstrated creativity and innovation in their thought process.</p> <p>26-30 points: In addition to meeting the required criteria and the majority of the suggested criteria, the participant went above and beyond in regards to the mission of the Challenge by engaging with a community partner in a way that will be sustained beyond the Challenge and has replicable implications for other communities. Their product may have also gone through several iterations and been improved to reflect a better understanding of community needs.</p>

Quality of Concept (Unique and Relevant) – 15 points

This category intends to recognize entries whose concepts are innovative and relevant. High-rating entries in this category will present unique, data-informed solutions to clear community needs.

Criteria for Consideration:

REQUIRED

Does this entry provide a timely and relevant way to use civic data to inform dialogue and action?

Is the concept of this entry original?

RECOMMENDED

Does the entry offer a new or unique solution to a known civic issue?

Does the entry offer a new way to view or discuss the impact or value of civic health?

ADVANCED

Is the concept interesting/promising enough to warrant additional research, development, and attention beyond completion of the Challenge?

Possible Point Categories:

0 points: The entry does not appear to meet any of the basic requirements of this dimension.

1-3 points: The entry has little relevance to improving civic health and its concept is somewhat original.

4-7 points: The entry is relevant to improving civic health and its concept is fairly original.

8-12 points: In addition to meeting the required criteria, this entry offers a new or unique solution to a known civic issue.

13-15 points: In addition to meeting the required and suggested criteria to a significant degree, the concept behind this entry may be interesting/promising enough to warrant additional development and attention.

Ultimate Utility of Product (Useful and Valuable) – 30 points

This category intends to recognize your execution – how useful the entry is for individuals and institutions that care about using civic data to inform dialogue and action. High-rating entries in this category will have created a product that responds to a specific community need or social issue, provides functional value and will likely be used beyond the close of the Challenge.

Criteria for Consideration:

REQUIRED

Does the product make civic data more accessible and meaningful?

Did the participant effectively incorporate their analysis of a community need into their entry? In other words, does their product accomplish their goal – did they create something that was responsive to a clearly stated community need?

Will the intended audience be able to easily use and access this product?

Is this product likely to be used beyond the scope of the Civic Data Challenge?

RECOMMENDED

Has the team built in features that would incentivize use by their intended audience?

Does the submission have applicability for other communities? Is it replicable?

Is there a built-in tool for tracking use?

ADVANCED

Would people/institutions not explicitly engaged in this Challenge be receptive to or find a need/use for this product?

Possible Point Categories:

0 points: The entry does not appear to meet any of the basic requirements of this dimension.

1-9 points: The participant somewhat incorporated their analysis of a community need into their entry and made civic data somewhat more accessible and meaningful. Their product is accessible by their audience and is somewhat likely to be used beyond this Challenge.

10-14 points: The product has made civic data more accessible and meaningful. The participant effectively incorporated their analysis of a community need into their entry. Their audience can easily access and use this product. The product is fairly likely to be used beyond this Challenge.

15-24 points: The participant very effectively incorporated their analysis of a community need into their entry. Their audience can easily access and use this product AND they are incentivized to do so. The product is likely to be used beyond this Challenge and there is a built-in tool for tracking use.

25-27 points: In addition to meeting the required criteria, the product is highly likely to be used beyond this Challenge. The entry provides a strong incentive for its audience to use it and there is a built-in tool for tracking use. The submission has applicability for other communities and may be replicable.

28-30 points: In addition to meeting the required and most of the suggested criteria, the entry could be embraced by a wider audience and used by people/institutions not explicitly engaged in this Challenge. a better understanding of community needs.

Quality of Design (Appeal and Functionality) – 25 points

This category intends to recognize entries that are functional and visually attractive. High-rating entries in this area will demonstrate use of thoughtful design, making the entry approachable and accessible.

Criteria for Consideration:

REQUIRED

Is the design visually appealing, clean, and easy to follow?

Does the entry clearly present its function and its importance/relevance in a way that is easy to see and understand?

Is it intuitive and user-friendly?

RECOMMENDED

Is the product particularly innovative in its functionality and/or creative in its display?

Does the product incorporate the Civic Data Challenge brand into its design, or otherwise denote participation in the Challenge in some way?

ADVANCED

Does the entry incorporate sophisticated and inventive design elements such as use of new or emerging technologies?

Possible Point Categories:

0 points: The entry does not appear to meet any of the basic requirements of this dimension.

1-4 points: The entry incorporates no design elements—visually or as an interactive product. This might include the submission of a proposal or a written description. The product’s function and its importance/relevance is minimally presented.

5-10 points: The entry incorporates design elements but they may not be visually appealing, clean, or easy to follow. The entry clearly presents its function in a way that is easy to see and understand.

11-20 points:The entry incorporates design elements that are visually appealing, clean, and easy to follow. The entry clearly presents its function and importance/relevance in a way that is easy to see and understand. The product is somewhat innovative in its functionality and/or creative in its display. The product mentions participation in the Civic Data Challenge in some way.

21-25 points: In addition to meeting the required criteria, the product is highly innovative in its functionality and/or creative in its display. It incorporates sophisticated or inventive design elements such as the use of new or emerging technologies.

Civic Data Challenge Implementation Rubric

The goal of the Civic Data Challenge is to turn the raw data of ‘civic health’ into useful applications and visualizations that have direct impact on public decision-making. This could entail generating dialogue about civic health, informing public policy issues, developing strategic initiatives, or generating other forms of action locally or nationally.

At the end of the Creation Phase, we conducted a first round of judging to determine which entries had the most potential to be used by and to make an impact in their communities. Finalists moved on to the Implementation Phase where they piloted their entries in collaboration with community partners. This final round of judging will determine prize winner(s) and will be based on the success of the implementation and proven utility of the products. To ensure transparency in judging, this rubric is being provided to finalists at the start of the Implementation Phase. Prizes include pro bono consulting services, software, and cash.

Depth of Process (Thoughtful and Strategic) – 30 points-	
<p>This category intends to recognize strategy – the behind-the-scenes process utilized during the Implementation Phase. High-rating entries in this category will demonstrate a high level of thoughtfulness in developing an implementation strategy, thoughtful metrics, and strategic partnerships.</p>	
<p>Criteria for Consideration:</p> <p>Did the team formulate a thoughtful strategy for implementing their entry? Does this strategy include the following components:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research/background on the community need being addressed, including analysis of Civic Health data and other cited sources of data • A target audience and outreach plan • A definition of success • Defined relevant metrics for demonstrating impact <p>Has the team clearly considered the target audience for their entry and created a product that can engage that audience?</p> <p>In their outreach plan, did the team identify strategic partnerships with organizations and individuals who can help them reach their target audience?</p> <p>Is the team’s definition of success a realistic goal for their entry?</p> <p>Did the team design relevant and rigorous metrics?</p> <p>Is the team’s implementation strategy or outreach plan particularly creative or innovative?</p>	<p>Possible Point Categories:</p> <p>0 points: Poor</p> <p>1-4 points: Fine The team formulated an implementation strategy that included basic components. However, the team demonstrated little thoughtfulness in developing their strategy. Their metrics may have been irrelevant or too soft, their outreach plan may not have clearly connected to their key audience, and/or their definition of success may not have been a realistic goal for their entry.</p> <p>10-20 points: Good The team formulated an implementation strategy that included all necessary components. The team demonstrated a fair amount of thoughtfulness in developing their strategy, but they may have fallen into one of the issues outlined above (i.e. irrelevant or soft metrics). Their implementation strategy or outreach plan is not particularly creative or innovative.</p> <p>21-30 points: Great The entry incorporates design elements that are visually appealing, clean, and easy to follow. The entry clearly presents its function and importance/relevance in a way that is easy to see and understand. The product is somewhat innovative in its functionality and/or creative in its display. The product mentions participation in the Civic Data Challenge in some way.</p>
Community Engagement (Collaborative) – 20 points	
<p>This category intends to recognize collaboration with community and partners. High-rating entries in this category will demonstrate an in-depth partnership with organization(s) and individual(s) that can help inform and implement the product.</p>	
<p>Criteria for Consideration:</p> <p>Did the team identify strategic partnerships with organizations and individuals with complementary skill sets to gain new perspectives, improve their entry, and more successfully implement their product?</p> <p>Has the team connected and developed relationships with those strategic partners?</p> <p>Did the team develop a meaningful partnership with at least one credible community partner?* Did their relationship result in a deeper understanding of a community need and how to refine their product to meet that need?</p> <p>Did the team engage with the community in a way that will be sustained beyond the Challenge?</p> <p>* A community partner could be from the nonprofit, private or public sector. The partner needs to be an institutional entity with credibility and capacity to offer perspective on a community need and/or social issue</p>	<p>Possible Point Categories:</p> <p>0 points: Poor</p> <p>1-6 points: Fine The team has identified some potential partner organizations and/or individuals but these potential partners are not particularly strategic or complementary to the team’s mission. The team did not engage with the community in a way that is likely to be sustained beyond the Challenge.</p> <p>10-20 points: Good The team identified several strategic partner organizations and/or individuals and may have begun partnership talks with them. They worked closely with a credible community partner to develop a better understanding of their community need. The team engaged with the community in a way that may be sustained beyond the Challenge</p> <p>21-30 points: Great: The team identified several strategic partner organizations and/or individuals and has demonstrated formal partnerships with a number of them. They worked closely with a credible community partner to develop a deep understanding of their community need. The team engaged with the community in a way that is likely to be sustained beyond the Challenge.</p>

Ultimate Utility of Product (Responsive) – 30 points

This category intends to recognize execution – how useful the entry is for individuals and institutions that care about using civic data to inform dialogue and action. High-rating entries in this category will have created a product that responds to a specific community need, provides functional value and will likely be used beyond the close of the Challenge.

Criteria for Consideration:

Did the participant effectively incorporate their analysis of a community need into their entry? In other words, did they create something that was responsive to a clearly stated community need?

Test Group Product Review

According to the team's metrics, have they made progress towards their goal?

According to the common challenge metric categories (p.8), has the team demonstrated utility or high potential?

Long-term Utility/Potential

Was the intended audience able to easily use and access this product?

Did the user-group find the participant's product useful in addressing the defined community need?

Has the team built in features that would incentivize use by their intended audience? Were they successful?

Possible Point Categories:

0 points: Poor

1-9 points: Fine The metrics showed marginal progress towards the team's goal and little potential. The test group found the product either hard to use or not particularly useful. The team may have demonstrated the wider impact that their product could have, but it is either unrealistic or unsupported by their findings from the Implementation Phase.

10-20 points: Good The metrics show progress towards the team's goal and potential. They may have demonstrated the utility of their product. The test group provided moderate to positive feedback on usability and usefulness. The team provided a long-term strategy that included several of their findings from the Implementation Phase and clearly demonstrated the wider impact their product could have.

21-30 points: Great: The metrics show progress towards the team's goal and demonstrate the utility of their product. The test group provided positive feedback on usability and usefulness. The team provided a long-term strategy that included several of their findings from the Implementation Phase and clearly demonstrated the wider impact their product could have. Their product could draw the attention of an audience outside the Challenge and/or could be replicated in other communities.

Quality of Design and Functionality (Appealing and Functional) – 20 points

This category intends to recognize teams who have built out their entry to improve its functionality and design. High-rating entries in this category will be clearly responsive to feedback and beta test results.

Criteria for Consideration:

Has the team improved their product in response to judge or community feedback?

Have changes to the entry been made in response to initial beta testing or some other form of user feedback?

Did the team add new data?

Has the team ensured Civic Health data has been thoughtfully incorporated—whether in development or in the product itself?

Have new capabilities been added to the product?

Possible Point Categories:

0 points: Poor

1-6 points: Fine The team made little or no changes to their product throughout the Implementation Phase.

7-14 points: Good: The team is clearly responsive to feedback and demonstrates a willingness to continuously improve their entry by adding new data and/or building out new capabilities. The team has incorporated Civic Health data.

15-20 points: Great: The team is clearly responsive to feedback and demonstrates a drive to continuously improve their entry by adding new data and/or building out new capabilities. The team has thoughtfully and fully incorporated Civic Health data.

Conclusion – 5 points

Taking all realized and envisioned potential of this entry into account, in this judge's expert analysis, does this entry have the potential to make a long-term impact?

0 - 5 Points

Civic Data Sample Submission Form

General Information

Please enter your contact information. This information is for internal use only and will not be shared with outside organizations.

First Name: _____ Last Name: _____
Street Address: _____ Apt/Suite/Office: _____
City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____ Country: _____
Email Address: _____ Phone Number: _____
Date of Birth: _____

What is your profession?

- Coder Designer Data Scientist/Analyst Education Professional
 Engineer Nonprofit Professional Researcher Other _____

How did you hear about the Civic Data Challenge

- Friend NCoC Knight Foundation Civic Data Challenge Judge or Advisor
 Partner or Sponsor Website Social Media Event Blog Other _____

List all additional teammates and their contact information. Please use the following format:

First Name	Last Name	Email	Phone	Profession	Date of Birth
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

Your submission will be judged by the judges identified in the Challenge details or by another qualified panel selected by NCoC at its sole discretion. The panel will judge the Submissions on the criteria outlined on the website in order to select finalists. All decisions will be final. Finalists will be notified in late August and proceed to the Implementation Phase where they will compete for grand prizes.

By checking this box, you agree to the rules, guidelines and criteria outlined on the Civic Data Challenge website.

About Your Submission:

Please identify which theme or category, if any, your submission falls under.

- Civic Infrastructure & Action Public Services, Planning, & Safety Education Development

Describe your methodology. Please address the following questions:

Which particular community need or social issue did you analyze? What was your method of analysis?

How did you use the Civic Health data provided by the Challenge to inform your entry? Please be specific (i.e. methodology, software, data points used).

Did you use multiple data sets? Which ones?

Briefly state the goal of your submission by addressing the following points.

What is the goal of your submission?

Do you have a target audience? Did you have a process for identifying this audience?

What are the metrics of use? What will success look like?

Building a community is an important element of the Civic Data Challenge and collaboration will be factored into the criteria for judging. Please use the space below to address the following questions:

Did you work with others on your entry? If so, how did you find your team members and what complementary skill sets did everyone bring to the project?

Did you work with a community partner? Who did you work with and how did you work together?

Please upload and host your Challenge entry on your own website or another online platform (e.g. YouTube for videos, Flickr for infographics and visuals, Google+, or BuzzData.com), and then provide us with the link.



Implementation Phase Submission Form

Congratulations on moving forward to the Implementation Phase!

We have put together the following Submission Form to help you best showcase your entry to our panel of judges. Your team has until **11:59PM Eastern on November 3, 2013** to complete the Implementation Phase and this submission form. Prize winners will be determined based on this final round of judging. This year's prizes include pro bono consulting services, software licenses, gadgets, and cash. A detailed list of prizes is available on our website: <http://www.civicdatachallenge.org/prizes>.

Entries will be judged not only on current success, but on potential for long-term impact. You are welcome to review the rubric provided for further information on how your entry will be judged.

Please submit your team's Implementation Phase Submission Form to

AMurphy@NCoC.net

by **11:59PM Eastern on November 3, 2013**.

Incomplete submission forms will not be judged. Please take a moment to confirm that your email includes the following:

- Completed Implementation Submission Form titled 'EntryName_Submission'
- Background PDF titled 'EntryName_Background'
- Metrics PDF titled 'EntryName_Metrics'
- Electronically signed 'Rules and Criteria'
- Community partner letter of recommendation

Please contact Alice Murphy at AMurphy@NCoC.net if you have any questions.

Title of entry: _____

Entry URL: _____

Participant Information: Please complete the following required information for each team member.
You may make a copy of this page if more space is needed.

First Name: _____ Last Name: _____

Street Address: _____

Apt/Suite/Office: _____ City: _____ Country: _____

Email Address: _____ Phone Number: _____

Date of Birth: _____ Professional Title: _____

First Name: _____ Last Name: _____

Street Address: _____

Apt/Suite/Office: _____ City: _____ Country: _____

Email Address: _____ Phone Number: _____

Date of Birth: _____ Professional Title: _____

First Name: _____ Last Name: _____

Street Address: _____

Apt/Suite/Office: _____ City: _____ Country: _____

Email Address: _____ Phone Number: _____

Date of Birth: _____ Professional Title: _____

First Name: _____ Last Name: _____

Street Address: _____

Apt/Suite/Office: _____ City: _____ Country: _____

Email Address: _____ Phone Number: _____

Date of Birth: _____ Professional Title: _____

First Name: _____ Last Name: _____

Street Address: _____

Apt/Suite/Office: _____ City: _____ Country: _____

Email Address: _____ Phone Number: _____

Date of Birth: _____ Professional Title: _____

First Name: _____ Last Name: _____

Street Address: _____

Apt/Suite/Office: _____ City: _____ Country: _____

Email Address: _____ Phone Number: _____

Date of Birth: _____ Professional Title: _____

I. Background: Please include an overview of your research on the community need you hope to address through your entry. This should include analysis of Civic Health data (available at <http://www.civicdatachallenge.org/data/civic-health-data>) and other sources of cited data. The objective is to provide background information for judges and others who may not have prior knowledge of your issue area, and to establish the degree to which your entry was thoughtfully informed by Civic Health data. You may include charts and graphics, but please limit yourself to two pages or 600 words. **Please attach this overview as a PDF titled 'EntryName_Background' when you send in your submission form.**

II. Implementation Strategy: Please answer the following questions.

a. What is your main goal or objective? What does success look like for your entry?

b. How are you tracking the progress of your entry? Specifically, what metrics have you designed to gauge success? Where do you hope to fall on these metrics in 3 months/6 months/1 year?

b. Who is your target audience?

c. What is your outreach plan for engaging your key audience? How was this plan informed? What is your timeline for this plan? (Please remember, entries will be judged not only on current successes, but on potential for long-term impact.)



Section 2: Community Engagement

I. Community Partner: Please answer the following questions.

a. Who is/are your community partner(s)?

b. Why did you decide to work with this partner(s)?

c. How did your community partner(s) help your team better understand the issue your entry hopes to address? Describe your partnership.

II. Partner Outreach: While the Challenge only requires one in-depth community partnership, we encourage strategic outreach to multiple partners. Please use the chart below to provide general information on your partner outreach efforts.

Organization Name	Sector/Focus Area (i.e. nonprofit focused on voter engagement)	Status (i.e. made introductions, signed partnership agreement, served funding, promotional partner)

III. Community Partner Letter of Recommendation: Please email us your community partner's letter of recommendation. If they prefer, they can email us directly at AMurphy@NCoC.net no later than **November 3, 2013**. Their letter should address the points below.

- a. Name, organization, role, and contact information
- b. As this team's community partner, how did you help them better understand your community's need?
- c. Describe your partnership with this team. When were you engaged and what input did you have in the team's entry? What improvements have you seen them make as a result?
- d. Will your organization be able to use this team's entry? How would you describe its usefulness?

I. Metrics

a. Show us what progress you have made according to your metrics as identified on page 3. Please be as specific as possible (i.e. note where you were at the beginning and end of the Implementation Phase and where you hope to fall on these metrics in one year). **Please attach as a PDF titled ‘EntryName_Metrics’ when you send in your submission form.**

b. We have identified the following common Challenge metric categories. Please complete the fields to the best of your ability.

Category	At Start of Implementation Phase	At end of Implementation Phase
# of Users or Members		
% of Target Audience Reached		
# of Media Mentions		
Social Media Reach (please specify platform)		
# of Partners		

c. If applicable, use the space below to list any significant media mentions and reach of outlet. Include links where possible. Feel free to highlight any social media successes here, as well.

I. Metrics

a. Show us what progress you have made according to your metrics as identified on page 3. Please be as specific as possible (i.e. note where you were at the beginning and end of the Implementation Phase and where you hope to fall on these metrics in one year). **Please attach as a PDF titled ‘EntryName_Metrics’ when you send in your submission form.**

b. We have identified the following common Challenge metric categories. Please complete the fields to the best of your ability.

Category	At Start of Implementation Phase	At end of Implementation Phase
# of Users or Members		
% of Target Audience Reached		
# of Media Mentions		
Social Media Reach (please specify platform)		
# of Partners		

c. If applicable, use the space below to list any significant media mentions and reach of outlet. Include links where possible. Feel free to highlight any social media successes here, as well.

I. Improvements Chart: Use the space below to showcase improvements you have made to your entry since July 29, 2013. This can include adding new data, building out new functions, incorporating user feedback, etc. Include the reason when applicable.

Date	Improvement	Reason i.e. judge feedback/user/community partner feedback

Eligibility

The Civic Data Challenge is open only to: [1] citizens or permanent residents of the United States who are at least thirteen (13) years old at the time of entry (or teams of eligible individuals); and [2] private entities, such as corporations or other organizations, that are incorporated in and maintain a primary place of business in the United States. Individuals submitting on behalf of corporations, nonprofits, or groups of individuals (such as an academic class or other team) must meet the eligibility requirements for individual participants. An individual may join the Challenge with more than one team, corporation, or nonprofit organization. NCoC, Knight Foundation, and Fission Strategies employees, as well as Challenge judges, and members of such persons' immediate family (spouses, children, siblings, parents), and persons living in the same household, whether or not related, are not eligible to win.

Steps to Compete

- **Join the Challenge:** Contestants must join the Civic Data Challenge Google group.
- **Share Ideas:** Participate in a collective brainstorm! Share your ideas, show support for other ideas by voting and add comments to help others develop theirs.
- **Work with the Data:** Analyze Civic Health data. Entries must be informed by the Civic Health CPS data provided. This data may be analyzed together with additional dataset(s), as long as civic health data is involved. Suggested datasets in the Challenge categories may be provided, but entries may also use data from other public sources online, as long as the dataset is appropriately cited. Additionally, use of Knight Foundation Soul of the Community data is recommended.
- **Connect with Others:** Form a team to develop the best all-around product you can. Participants are also required to collaborate with a community partner to ensure their product is meeting a real community need. Possible community partners include community foundations, government, nonprofits, and local businesses.
- **Create and Amaze:** Create useful visual representations and applications to showcase your findings and help fill a community need.
- **Pilot your Program:** Finalists will collaborate with their community partner to launch a beta version of their product in the community.
- **Win!:** Grand prize winners will be those teams who most successfully implement their product in a community

Intellectual Property Rights

Please note that funding will not be awarded to ideas suggested during the Ideation Phase of the Challenge. NCoC will treat all ideas during this Phase as public property, open to the Challenge community. Such ideas shall not be treated as a "submission" under our Intellectual Property Rights policy. Our goal, during this phase, is for people to spur others to think and build creatively as a community upon the ideas suggested. Therefore, all participants will have the opportunity to build entries based upon the ideas submitted. Submission of an idea represents acceptance of this policy. All submissions to the Civic Data Challenge remain the intellectual property of the individuals or organizations that developed them. By registering, consenting to the terms of the challenge, and entering a Submission, however, the Participant agrees that both NCoC and Knight Foundation reserve an irrevocable, nonexclusive, royalty-free license to use, copy, distribute to the public, create derivative works from, and publicly display and perform a Submission for a period of no less than one year starting on the date of the announcement of contest winners. NCoC also encourages participants

to visually incorporate the Civic Data Challenge and/or NCoC logos into their products. Any code developed through the Civic Data Challenge must remain open source. Submissions must be made available to the public throughout the Challenge and for a period of one year after the announcement of winners.

Publicity

Except where prohibited, participation in the Challenge constitutes each winner's consent to NCoC's and its agents' use of each winner's name, likeness, photograph, voice, opinions, and/or hometown and state information for promotional purposes through any form of media, worldwide, without further permission, payment or consideration.

Copyright

Participant represents and warrants that he or she is the sole author and copyright owner of the Submission, and that the Submission is an original work of the Participant, or if the Submission is a work based on an existing application, that the Participant has acquired sufficient rights to use and to authorize others, including NCoC, to use the Submission, as specified in the "Intellectual Property Rights" section of the Rules; and that the Submission does not infringe upon any copyright or upon any other third party rights of which the Participant is aware, and that the Submission is free of malware.

Prizes

Prizes will be available for finalists in each category at the end of Creation phase, as well as for overall grand prize winners at the end of the Implementation phase. An individual can submit as many entries as they would like and can submit one entry in multiple issue categories (if applicable). Learn more about prizes [here](#).

Submission

Entries that were created before the launch of the Civic Data Challenge are still eligible for submission. However, to qualify for prizes in the Challenge, entrants of previously created entries must be able to: 1) demonstrate that significant improvements have been made since original creation, 2) clearly articulate how the submission was informed or improved by civic data, and 3) clearly articulate how it was improved in and collaborated on during the Challenge process. During the Creation phase you must submit your entry using the instructed form on the website. After approval, your entry will be added online to the Civic Data Challenge site.

Remember to sign up for the Civic Data Challenge Google group, so you can keep up to date with recent announcements and participate with the community.

All submissions will be posted online as soon as they are sent in. Please only send in complete entries. Entries must be received by 11:59 p.m. Eastern on Sunday, November 3, 2013.

Deadline

Submissions for the Implementation Phase are due by 11:59 p.m. Eastern on Sunday, November 3, 2013. Winners will be notified mid-November.

Judges

The Submissions will be reviewed by the judges identified in the Challenge details or by another qualified panel selected by NCoC at its sole discretion. The panel will judge the Submissions on the criteria identified above in order to select winners in each category. The decisions of NCoC as informed by the Judges are final. NCoC is not responsible for ensuring the accuracy of the findings presented by the Challenge or the functionality of the products beyond the close of the competition.

Liability and Insurance

Any and all information provided by or obtained from NCoC is without any warranty or representation whatsoever, including but not limited to its suitability for any particular purpose. Upon registration, all participants agree to assume and, thereby, have assumed any and all risks of injury or loss in connection with or in any way arising from participation in this Challenge, development of any application or the use of any application by the participants or any third-party. Upon registration all participants agree to and, thereby, do waive and release any and all claims or causes of action against NCoC and its officers, employees and agents for any and all injury and damage of any nature whatsoever (whether existing or thereafter arising, whether direct, indirect, or consequential and whether foreseeable or not), arising from their participation in the contest, whether the claim or cause of action arises under contract or tort. Upon registration, all participants agree to and, thereby, shall indemnify and hold harmless NCoC and its officers, employees and agents for any and all injury and damage of any nature whatsoever (whether existing or thereafter arising, whether direct, indirect, or consequential and whether foreseeable or not), including but not limited to any damage that may result from a virus, malware, etc., to computer systems or data, or to the systems or data of end-users of the software and/or application(s) which results, in whole or in part, from the fault, negligence, or wrongful act or omission of the participants or participants' officers, employees or agents.

Based on the subject matter of the Challenge, the type of work that it possibly will require, and the likelihood of any claims for death, bodily injury, or property damage, or loss potentially resulting from challenge participation, Participant is not required to obtain liability insurance or demonstrate fiscal responsibility in order to participate in this Challenge.

By electronically signing, your team agrees to the rules, guidelines and criteria outlined here and on the Civic Data Challenge website.

Full Name: _____

Date: _____

Sample Participant Survey

As members of the Civic Data Challenge community, we would greatly appreciate your input on what worked well and how we could improve any future initiatives. Thank you in advance for taking 10 minutes to complete this survey.

Where are you located? (i.e. San Francisco, California) _____

What most motivated you to enter the Challenge? Please rank the following incentives from most to least motivating. (Skip this question if you did not submit an entry)

- Gadgets & services provided as prizes Prize Money Recognition as part of national initiative
- Speaking Opportunities Opportunity to make an impact To have my work in front of a particular judge
- Meet new people/Collaborate with others To promote an existing product/tool

If you did NOT enter the Challenge, what prevented you from submitting an entry? Select all that apply.

- Lack of specific skill-set to develop an entry Inability to form a team Found out too late in the process
- I didn't have time in my schedule The Challenge directions and criteria were not clear Difficulty of using the data
- Lack of incentives Other _____

Please rank the following incentives (top being most likely to motivate you to participate in a future Challenge, and bottom the least likely).

- ___ Prize money
- ___ In-kind prizes such as consulting services
- ___ Recognition and speaking engagements
- ___ To create a tool that will be used beyond the scope of the competition
- ___ To put my skills to good use
- ___ To have my work in front of a particular judge
- ___ Promotion of an existing product/tool
- ___ Other

How did you hear about the challenge?

- Twitter
- Facebook Post
- Blog Post
- Civic Data Challenge Website
- Google Group
- Knight Foundation
- Visually
- Friend
- LinkedIn
- NCoC
- Partner or Sponsor Website

What is your profession?

- Coder Designer Data Scientist/Analyst Education Professional Economist Public Health Professional
- Engineer Nonprofit Professional Researcher Other _____

We would like to continue to build and strengthen our Civic Data Challenge community. What is the likelihood that you would participate in the following:

	Very Likely	Likely	Unlikely	Not at All
Networking Event/Meet-up	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Webinar	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Google Group	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Some other online forum	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hackathon	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Additional Questions:

What improvements would you make to the Civic Data Challenge, and what would you like to see from future opportunities?

Is there an online forum that you would like to see us make better use of? Or a conference/event at which you think the Challenge should have a presence?

What are the possibilities that you see for the Civic Data Challenge to create a valuable and sustainable impact (i.e. creating new tools to be replicated in other communities, uncovering new findings about why civic data matters)?

Civic Data Challenge Winners Overview

Submission	Description	Metrics of Use
<p>Texas Connector</p>	<p>The Outline team seeks to provide citizens with tools to model, visualize, and evaluate government policies. They hope to democratize policymaking so the ordinary citizen has access to concrete data on policies, allowing them to shape the political discussion. Their Balanced State Budget Simulator tool allows citizens to assess public policy with the same understanding of the impacts as an economist. The team worked with the Commonwealth of Massachusetts to test this tool.</p>	<p>1,210 users</p>
<p>State Budget Simulator</p>	<p>The Outline team seeks to provide citizens with tools to model, visualize, and evaluate government policies. They hope to democratize policymaking so the ordinary citizen has access to concrete data on policies, allowing them to shape the political discussion. Their Balanced State Budget Simulator tool allows citizens to assess public policy with the same understanding of the impacts as an economist. The team worked with the Commonwealth of Massachusetts to test this tool.</p>	<p>5,000 signups to use the tool upon launch</p>
<p>Manifesto Project</p>	<p>The Manifesto Project team asks the question: How does Arizona retain its young leaders? The Manifesto Project collects civic health data from young Arizonans. It will leverage that data to place young Arizonans in positions of leadership to influence change. Their goal is to secure commitments from 100 organizations, corporations, and government bodies to open a board seat for a young leader.</p>	<p>900 members and 7 community partners</p>
<p>DC Community Resource Project</p>	<p>The DC Community Resource Directory Project helps residents find health and social services referral information. It establishes 'community resource data' as a commons -- cooperatively produced and managed by local stakeholders, and open to an ecosystem of applications and users. They are working with a core set of community anchor institutions, including Bread for the City, Martha's Table, and Lutheran Social Services, to continue to develop their product and recruit partners.</p>	<p>6 local partners and 4 global partners</p>
<p>Civic Data Denver</p>	<p>Civic Data Denver partnered with Earth Force to create an interactive visual that empowers youth to take civic action to address social and physical health issues in their community. Civic Data Denver's website will be used by students and educators where Earth Force programming takes place.</p>	<p>4 community partners</p>

Civic Data Challenge Winners Overview



CIVIC DATA CHALLENGE

Civic Data Challenge 2013

This year's Civic Data Challenge awarded 5 winners. For a full description of each of the winning teams, please visit www.CivicDataChallenge.org. While many winners are still finalizing their products for a public release in early 2014, here are our most currently available metrics of use and community engagement:

Texas Connector

1,210 users

.07% target audience reached (Of our 1,210 listed members, only a very small subset of those individuals chose to report the name of their nonprofit organization. Of those reported, the Texas Connector reached 75 unique organizations of the 97,553 nonprofit organizations in Texas.

State Budget Simulator

5,000 signups to use the tool once it launches in 2014

Manifesto Project

900 members and 7 community partners

DC Community Resource Project

6 local partners and 4 global partners

Civic Data Denver

4 community partners

Here's a sample of what our judges had to say about the entries:

"The team is clearly very skilled when it comes to analyzing and visually representing data. The provided URL is clear, easy to understand, and offers incredible depth that is easy to explore. I believe that if they find a core partner who has extensive experience working with youth, this could be an incredible tool."

– Trina Chiasson, Co-founder and CEO of InfoActive

"This entry has tremendous potential. The idea of linking civic health data to developing the next generation of leaders in order to keep talent in the state is quite brilliant."

– James Siegal, Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer of KaBOOM!

"Just fantastic. This is a great example of community partnerships with technologists to create a tool that is useful to both works and the public. The data used isn't hugely extensive but it's what needs to be there for the purposes of looking at budget adjustments. The team has also given great thought to the metrics of success, the users they're providing the tool for, and outlined potential avenues for scaling the project... If this tool can shed light on the ramifications of budget decisions to the point that the public starts engaging in the dialogue for/against certain budget proposals, that will be a HUGE contribution to society. Excited to see what happens with this! I would fund it if I had the money."

– Jake Porway, Founder and Executive Director of DataKind

Civic Data Challenge Winners Overview



CIVIC DATA CHALLENGE

Civic Data Challenge 2013

2,356 Facebook Followers

1,714 @CivicData Followers

- A 84% increase in followers from 2012

329 Members of the Civic Data Challenge Google group

- A 93% increase from 2012

30 Ideas

- The Civic Data Challenge began with an Ideation phase, which generated ideas for how to use civic data to address specific community needs. These ideas informed the submissions to the Challenge, ensuring that the tools created would be responsive and sustainable.

20 High-Profile Judges and Advisors

- The Civic Data Challenge engaged an outstanding team of high-profile judges and advisors including Vivek Kundra, Executive VP for Salesforce.com and Former US Chief Information Officer, Jake Porway of DataKind, and Craig Newmark of Craigslist.

14 Submissions

- The Civic Data Challenge received 14 submissions, engaging a total of 49 participants from communities spanning Chicago, Denver, Phoenix, San Francisco, and Washington DC.

7 Finalists

- The Civic Data Challenge will publicly announce 7 finalists at the 2013 National Conference on Citizenship in September. These finalists will move on to the Implementation Phase where they will work to improve and pilot their entry alongside community partners.

131 Views of the Winners Announcement Broadcast

- With an average live view duration of about 12 minutes

6 High-Profile Speaking Opportunities

- Over the course of the Civic Data Challenge, partners and finalists have spoken at events including:
 - Main stage launch of the Challenge at the Data Visualization Summit in San Francisco
 - HuffPost Live segment, featuring NCoC and Civic Data Challenge 2012 winners and 2013 participants
 - National Conference on Citizenship, Open Data and Technology Learning Summit, Sept 19-20, Washington DC
 - A Better World by Design, Providence, September 29th
 - DataWeek, San Francisco, October 2nd
 - Community Indicators Consortium, Chicago, October 15-17th

ENDNOTES

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- ⁴ DataKind. (www.datakind.org/aboutus/) Accessed 11/8/2014
- ⁵ Caravan Studios. (www.caravanstudios.org/). Accessed 11/8/2014
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- ⁸ Hack for Change. (hackforchange.org/about/). Accessed 11/9/2014
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- ¹⁰ NPower. (<http://www.npower.org/Our-Purpose/Our-Purpose.aspx>). Accessed 2/9/2015
- ¹¹ Taproot Foundation. (www.taprootfoundation.org/about-probono/about-taproot). Accessed 2/9/2015
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- ¹³ Barr, Chris. "17 projects receive funding through Knight Prototype Fund." Knight Blog. April 22, 2014. (www.knightfoundation.org/blogs/knightblog/2014/4/22/17-projects-receive-funding-through-knight-prototype-fund/). Accessed 11/9/2014



National Conference on Citizenship
Connecting People. Strengthening Our Country.