



#MIGRAHACKTO 2018 REPORT



MCIS LANGUAGE SOLUTIONS

Y O U R G L O B A L V O I C E

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MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



If you had asked me 6 months ago what a Migrahack was, I would have drawn a blank. My daughter who works in the technology space ran a hackathon 2 years ago and explained to me its purpose is to get together programmers, designers and project managers for an intensely short period of time to create usable software.

So what did MCIS hope to get out of MigrahackTO? Did we achieve it?

Claudia Nunez created the Migrahack project when she was a fellow at the JSK School of Journalism at Stanford in 2012. She had been at several hackathons in Silicon Valley and had found them to be intimidating and unwelcome. However, she decided to borrow the format of working intensely over a short period with data and software, to visualise migration data to tell interesting journalistic stories. So ideally we wanted to recreate the spirit of what Claudia had envisioned, providing a comfortable space, laptops, some clean data sets, people from non- profits eager to visualise their data and tell stories about the issues they address or don't, some journalists to help them do it and, finally, mentors and facilitators who could guide us in the use of Tableau software to do all that.

MigrahackTO took place over 3 days from November 3rd to 5th, 2017 at the beautiful space donated to us by Mozilla at their prime downtown Toronto location. Our primary purpose was to gather all relevant folks in that space to see what could emerge. Not to intimidate, but to make it a fun event in a welcoming environment, where everyone collaborates and each person's contribution is valued.



All we needed was open minded people and a willingness to learn Tableau software, license to use for which had been generously donated to us, and share in a collaborative environment. We did not have an end goal. Attending all days, staying committed, and trusting in the process was all we had hoped for.

However, I also realised the valuable contribution folks from my generation can bring to this endeavour. We are able to fill in some important knowledge gaps given our historical perspective, our understanding of systemic constraints, and our knowledge of how bureaucracy works. Hackathons are particularly great because they are transgenerational and span several sectoral perspectives.

For some of the reasons stated above, this project took a lot of courage to conceive and execute. Credit goes to Eliana Trinaistic (MCIS' Social Impact Manager) for her vision and her willingness to wade into this space which is uncharted territory. WHTO (Welcome Home Toronto) gave us all the support to realise Eliana's grand vision, with logistics, contacts, social media support, sheer presence/energy and lots of ideas. Our thanks to Craig Carter-Edwards, Founder, and Kitty Shephard, Director of Communications and Outreach.

We had amazing facilitators/mentors/motivators guiding us through the process: Bianca Wylie, Howard T. Tam, Claudia Nunez, Patricia Carbajales-Dale, David Dou, Nadia Caidi, Niel Chah, Obim Okongwu, Alexander Lovell, Ramzi Jaber and Saadia Muzaffar. We had a wonderful gang of committed volunteers whose activities were streamlined and ably coordinated by Zoya Khan.

Our profound thanks also goes out to all the agencies whose staff stepped up to the challenge to participate besides MCIS – Lifeline Syria, Fred Victor Centre, Sojourn House and Agincourt Community Services Association, and students from iSchool University of Toronto and Ryerson's Journalism program.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Latha'.

LATHA SUKUMAR
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
MCIS LANGUAGE SOLUTIONS

WELCOME HOMETO: WHY MCIS AND WHY NOW

by Kitty Sheppard, WelcomeHomeTO



We sat down with Eliana Trinaistic, MCIS' Social Impact Manager to understand more about MCIS' role in hosting the event, the benefits of visualizing data and why uniting diverse professionals can help develop solutions to social challenges.

How is Migrahack engineered to ensure a greater likelihood of real social change?

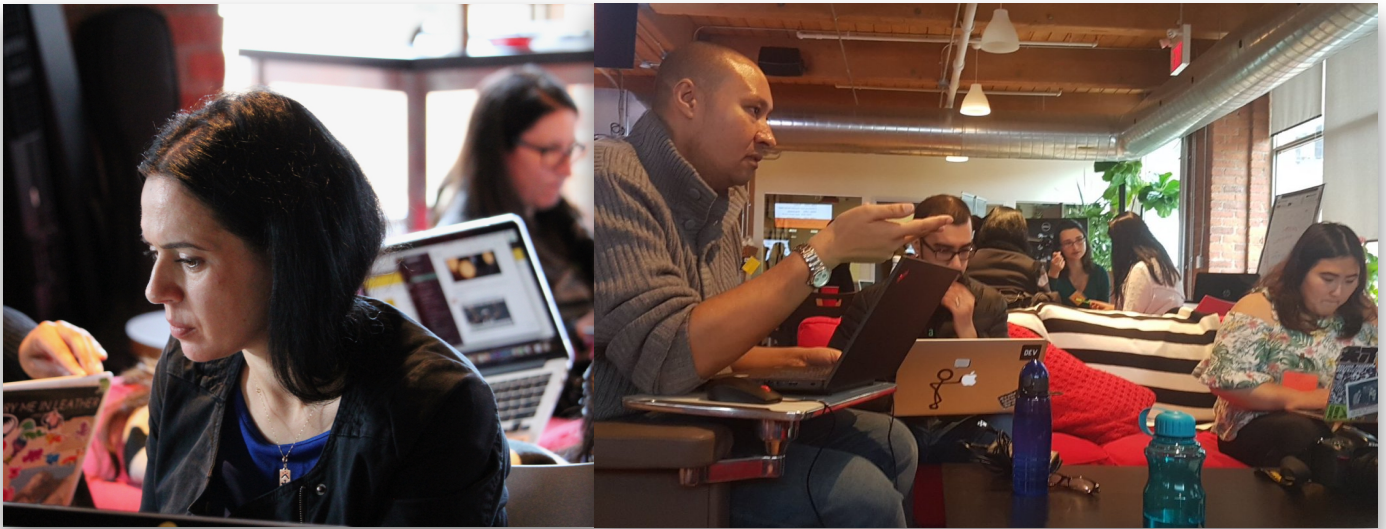
I believe that real change depends on policy and culture change. At the policy level, our hope is that Migrahack will contribute to the *ongoing discussion around social innovation* that is currently curated at the federal level. We are encouraging participants to monitor and contribute to this discussion. Innovation "expertise" can be found at every level, inside and outside of governance, and outside expertise is crucial for identifying gaps.

A large part of creating real social change on immigration issues is related to non-profits to owning the data they generate. Our hope with #MigrahackTO is for agencies to start asking for all "social" data to be open by default so that each NPO, irrespective of size, will have one or two dedicated data storytellers, or evidence-based advocates. What we need is a grassroots approach to sharing data. As a first step, Migrahack aims to break the barriers between academia, tech developers, journalists, government and non-profits, and their datasets. Events nurture connections, and connections motivate us to work together.

In your experience, what are the advantages of visualizing data?

We live in a predominantly visual culture. Our brains are wired to process 93% of the information we receive. Because our brains need less than 13 milliseconds to process an image, we tend to think in visual terms first. We understand maps and pie charts better than words. Most of us are not skilled statisticians, so when we are faced with the complexity of large datasets we have difficulties connecting the dots. For most of us, it is not the numbers, but shapes or colours that will tell the story. We have a human need to relate to the information we gather, so we need to have data converted into an image. To relate, we need a story to be in a position to communicate the social issues behind the numbers to our audience. Data visualization is a crucial skill for social advocates to understand the different angles for better impact and the ability to influence policies and create change.

WHAT IS #MIGRAHACKTO?



Migrahack combines “migration data” with “hackathon.” A hackathon (“hackers” and “marathon”) brings people of various disciplines together with the goal of developing open access digital projects that benefit society. A Migrahack is unique because it specifically uses immigration-related data to develop digital projects such as maps, graphic, or databases.

Why open access to data and digital journalism?

There is data, and there is also “social” data. Social data is generated by non-profit organizations (NPOs), non-governmental organizations (NGOs), social enterprises, and other public bodies that help deliver services in health, education, transportation, job training, immigration and other fields. They all collect useful data and statistics, but they do not always share this data due to privacy and other concerns. However, not all data is private and not all data should cause concern. Data can tell a story by postal code or gender, and in our view, all non essential, non privacy-endangering data, should be open by default. Without having significant segments of data open to the public in a usable format, the skills to manipulate or the ability to visualize, the story behind the numbers is denied. Access to open data and digital journalism allows “social” data to inform the public about the systemic issues we are struggling with.

#MigrahackTO was envisioned as a 2.5 day community hackathon/ training at the Mozilla Office in Toronto using migration data with Tableau. The idea was to gather non-profits, community agencies, journalists and developers and form mixed teams to discover and share stories about acquired data sets. Our primary goal was to highlight the importance of collaboration and social data sharing as well as learn about free or affordable tools, e.g. Tableau. We also wanted to encourage the settlement and immigration sector to connect with each other, as well as the tech community and journalists to collaboratively contribute to more accurate reporting about social issues.



Turnout at #MigrahackTO

40 people registered for the Hackathon, 35 attended including 5 agencies submitting data sets which helped us form four teams. The turnout and commitment to projects surpassed our expectations.

The Structure of the Event

After the morning opening remarks by the organizers, Latha Sukumar, Eliana Trinaistic, Mozilla's community sponsor Mike Hoyer and facilitator Bianca Wylie, we were introduced to an excellent *Intro to Data Viz and Infographic* by David Dou, business intelligence developer. Afternoon workshops included *Mapping Data Boot Camp* by Niel Chah and *Media with Purpose* by Saadia Muzzaffar, Dana Wagner and Ramzi Jaber. Migrahack founder, Claudia Nunez, joined us via Skype from Spain just before dinner time.

Saturday was devoted entirely to the hackathon providing two optional workshops, one on *Data Sources, Spreadsheets and Data Mining* by Niel Chah and another on *Open Data and Freeing Info* by Obim Okongwu. On Sunday, just after the finished products were presented to the audience, we provided live streaming of the end discussion (available [here](#)).

Teams, volunteers and staff have worked extremely hard, some of them almost without any breaks, to fill the gaps and advance the projects as far as possible within the 25-hour time limit.

By 12:30 pm on day 3, Sunday, the projects were uploaded ([here](#)) and the teams had some more time to prepare their short presentations (5 minutes each). We had no judging panel but we shared approaches, solutions, summaries of discussions and ideas around framing the data.

Our lengthy closing discussion identified four major threads, as well as some solutions and strategies to address the availability and readability of data sets for advocacy purposes.



THREADS

Over the weekend, and especially at our Sunday closing panel, we were able to identify four conversational threads/issues that participating non-profits experience as a barrier to the flow of social data: limited availability of police service data, limited availability of data on specific segments of the vulnerable community, open data/ freedom of information (FOI) requests and issues around exclusion from the "digital agenda".

In the next section, we will briefly describe the main points of these discussion threads at a general level, as well as solutions and strategies that emerged.

THREAD 1: POLICE SERVICES DATA (LANGUAGE, ETHNICITY, CARDING)



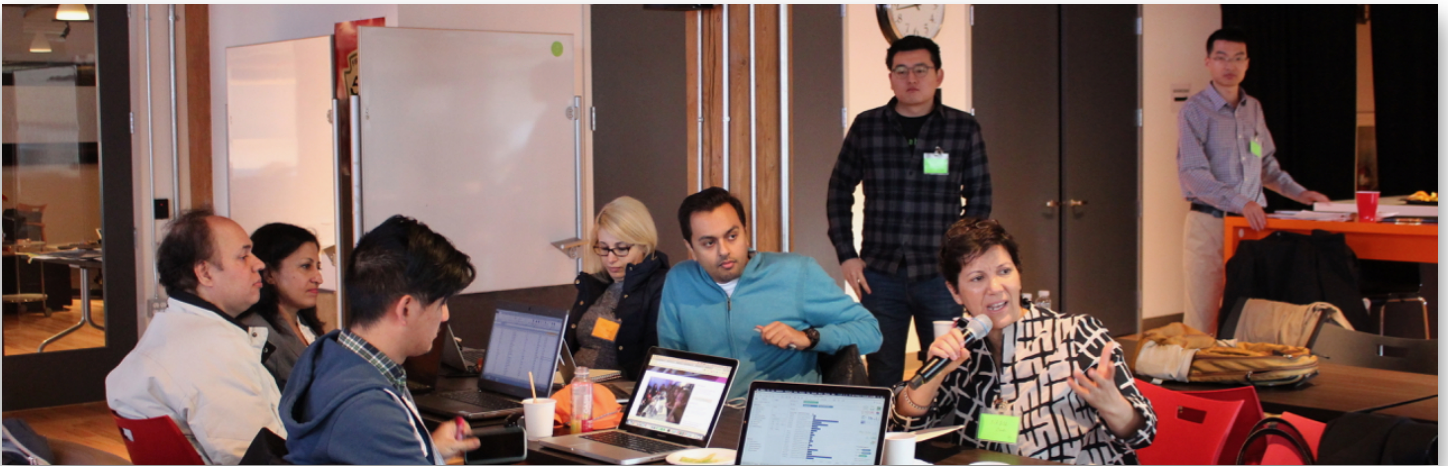
ISSUES

- Insufficient data on police services using interpreters or police serving vulnerable groups (victims of domestic violence, the homeless with language barriers);
- No transparency around unlawfully collected carding data prior to January 2017;
- Police facing a backlog of Freedom of Information (FOI) requests because of unclear policies and /or aging infrastructure .

SOLUTIONS AND STRATEGIES

- Create a "police open data" oversight committee responsible for policies for safe and timely data release;
- Engage police with civic tech initiatives around data advocacy (e.g. Code Across);
- Organize public consultations to receive the feedback on portals such as Toronto Police Services' Public Safety Data Portal (what is collected, why, and what should be collected);
- Create cross- coalition advocacy and identify law-enforcement champions for the use of open data for problem solving, innovation and accountability;
- Improve Toronto Police Services data infrastructure to streamline reporting and increase transparency;
- Create data visualization using data about languages in police services by working on releasing the language and minority component from the Police Administration Survey Supplemental questionnaire.

THREAD 2: VULNERABLE COMMUNITIES DATA (MINORITIES, IMMIGRANTS, NEWCOMERS, DISABILITY, MENTAL HEALTH)



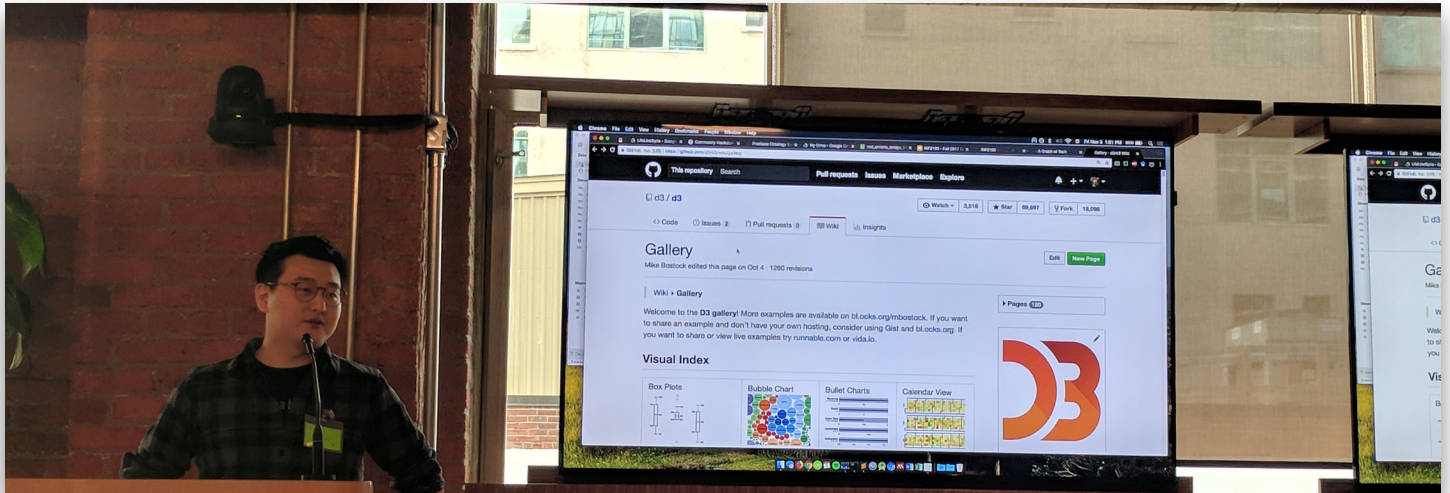
ISSUES

- Lack of disaggregated data (data that can be broken down to understand specific segments of the population experiencing adverse impact of systemics racism) e.g. racialized people with mental health issues or with disabilities;
- No standard framework and guidelines to ensure consistent collection that will result in reliable, usable and comparable data sets.

SOLUTIONS AND STRATEGIES

- Keep up to date with the Ontario 3-years Anti-Racism Strategic Plan and the data sets being collected (race-based disaggregated data);
- Join a data buying coalition (community data consortium) or create one to increase the purchasing power of your coalition (cost of membership \$125.00; cost of customized consortium data sets from \$5,000 - \$19,900);
- If a persistent systemic barrier is identified, have your coalition collaborate with the Ontario Human Rights Commission on a collection strategy to design the cycle of data collection and appropriate action;
- Think about events that will promote "information hacking rights".

THREAD 3: OPEN DATA/ FREEDOM OF INFORMATION (FOI), DIGITAL LITERACY



ISSUES

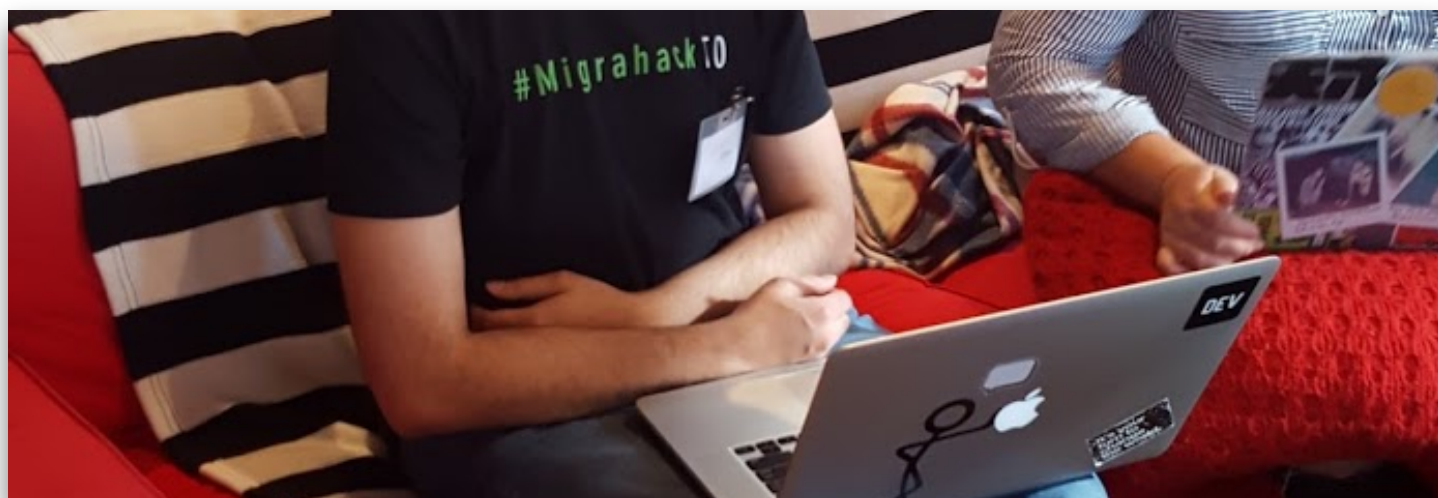
- Questionable data quality, integrity, and collection methodology of municipal, provincial or federal data sets;
- Questionable speed by which the data has been released (e.g. since 2009, the City of Toronto has published on average only 25 to 30 datasets per year; currently a total of 258 datasets and only 1,100 data files available);
- Lack of digital literacy with respect to the practical understanding of how to ask questions, how data works and is shared (including chatbots) and how networked infrastructure supports non-profits;
- Lack of understanding around data sharing policies or FOI requests (process, cost, timelines).

SOLUTIONS AND STRATEGIES

- Challenge the province (Strategic Data Unit) to release needed sets more often;
- Engage the legal sector to help with education, hacking legal information or sharing/requesting on behalf of the non profit sector;
- Engage with groups, Labs and on-line education tools that will provide education or access to communities of practice on the go (e.g. CivicTechTO, PoweredbyData*);
- Monitor conferences such as Digital Inclusion Summit and Transform the Sector ;
- Get tribal! Collaborate! Do not be intimidated by the magnitude of your task! What is too much for an individual could be a stimulating experiment for a tribe (coalition or interest group).

*Other recommended resources for the social sector are: [DataBasic.io](#), [Data Therapy](#), the [Engagement Lab](#), [DataPop Alliance](#) (digital literacy issues at global scale), the [Centre for Innovation](#) at Leiden University, [HumanityX](#), [Tactical Tech Collective](#), [Responsible Data Forum](#), [National Digital Inclusion Alliance](#) and [Engine Room](#).

THREAD 4: WHO IS EXCLUDED FROM A DIGITAL AGENDA



ISSUES

- Low level of general literacy corresponds with low level of digital literacy;
- Low trust in government being able to perceive real life issues including who is included and who is excluded;
- Low inclusion of end beneficiaries with designing of digital tools/ policies further diminishes opportunities for distribution of risks and benefits.

SOLUTIONS AND STRATEGIES

- Create a case for well narrated local digital and literacy agenda by including coalition of journalists, end users, non-profits, academia and government representatives;
- Create an on-line repository of non profit open data sets and learn how to pitch stories to journalists to further develop them (including hiring journalists, if needed);
- Always focus on who might be excluded to be more collaborative and transparent in your approach (promoting the principles of design justice);
- Monitor opportunities to participate in prototypes and pilots;
- Treat everything - all relationships and all partnerships (including those with funders) - as a way of serving your community first, but don't shy from leading coalitions and initiatives if leadership is missing.

*Other recommended resources for the social sector: Democracy? There's an app for that – the tech upstarts trying to 'hack' British politics (The Guardian, by Zoe Williams, June 2017)



Finished projects video





VOICES

*"Mozilla was a great venue for people of diverse backgrounds to meet, network,
and work together!"*

#MigrahackTO Participant

CLAUDIA NUNEZ: MIGRAHACK'S EARLY BEGINNINGS

Claudia Nunez founded Migrahack in 2012 after experiencing hackathons at Stanford. Her goal was to increase the diversity of participants at these events and connect journalists, and developers with non-profits to learn from each other and create solutions to real-life challenges.



How did you realize that journalists were not using data that non-profits, hackers and system users were producing to help write stories on migration?

Actually, journalists have always used data. However, I believe that there is a huge lack of knowledge on how to interpret the numbers, how to make them be the story tellers, and how to put a human face on what the migrants are going through. I think there needs to be more training on this, especially for such a delicate topic as immigration. After more than a decade covering this topic, I saw that the majority of the media covered this beat by narrating the crisis, pain, and joy of the immigrants. Nevertheless, there was poor effort in generating accountability and I saw that the newer generations that took on the topic would return to the same circle – narrating tragedy, suffering and not creating stories based on factual evidence.

In your experience, how has migration data helped journalists tell newcomers' stories about their journeys?

There are many examples. Among them, the official reasoning behind the supposed need for more detention centers, when, in many cases, the number of migrants has decreased; or the need for English as a Second Language classes in schools where the service is not available or rare, yet the data suggest that there is a large need for this service for recently arrived migrants.

What is your favorite part of a Migrahack event?

Without a doubt, it is seeing the collaboration that forms among complete strangers fighting to develop a common project. When a team forms among journalists, programmers, and NPOs and they start work on their project, they work together like clockwork, each little gear pushing the others along to channel their drive to serve the community at large.

ADAM CHEN: MY #MIGRAHACKTO EXPERIENCE

Journalism Master's Student from Ryerson School of Journalism, Adam Chen, shares how #MigrahackTO helped him learn a useful skill for his career and get a head-start on data visualization. We interviewed Adam after MigrahackTO, and here's what he had to say.

What made you interested in Migrahack and what were you hoping to get out of it?

I was interested in Migrahack because I'm a journalist who is interested in learning the ways we use data to create meaningful stories. Having migrated across globe for the past decade, I consider it important for us to tell the stories of migrants to Canada – as these are often the voices that won't be heard. With Migrahack, I was hoping to strengthen my abilities of going through datasets and turning them into compelling visualizations. I was also excited to make some meaningful connections with people who are passionate about migration issues – there's no better way to bond than working together on projects!



What was the most valuable tool you learned about?

The most important thing I learned for my journalism toolbox was how to make interesting visualizations with Tableau. The most interesting thing I learned at the event was how crucial it is to have well-trained language interpreters for our increasingly diverse country.

How do you think these tools can help journalists thrive?

Well, I'm currently doing an investigation into ways that seniors that don't speak English or French are potentially vulnerable, due to a lack of funding or access to language interpretation services. My understanding of Tableau has already helped me create visualizations for several of the stories I'm working on – and has given me the insight into the ladder I need to climb in order to take my visualizations to the next level!

AN EXCERPT FROM: COUNTERING THE DIGITAL CONSENSUS— Technology, Elites, and Elections

By Bianca Wylie, Open Data
Institute, Tech Reset, Facilitator

"Hold on to that idea — the one where we could do a much better job of delivering social policy using tech—and hold it up against the dominant discourse of digital technology. The dominant discourse of digital focuses on the end-user having easy, quick, seamless experiences doing government things. Even in the cases that escape the middle-class focus, say the Ontario Student Assistance Program calculator, it's about a student getting on a computer and doing the work. It's not a lot of work, granted, but it's a self-directed tool.

A few times a year, I'm tempted to throw the whole idea of open data aside as superfluous, a layer of privileged policy discussion. And after having this discussion with myself and others several times, I arrive back to the one point of open data that remains, for me, a reason to stick with it. Open data is a way to learn about our governments. Beyond learning about them, it enables consultation and public discussions grounded in reality. Real numbers of people, real data on race, real numbers of assets, real amounts of money. [...]

This connects to the idea of openness about the state of government tech. The stakes are high for government technology, but they've always been high. Not because of robots, not because of AI, but because technology is the domain of an elite. It has never been applied to anything other than governance.

This will not sit well with the persistent digital consensus that digital is somehow inherently progressive, but it's not. And I'm part of that elite. The time to apply technology to a state that recommits to social welfare is thirty years ago. But this could also start now. It's one way to get to a different future, a different social equity space, and a different government."



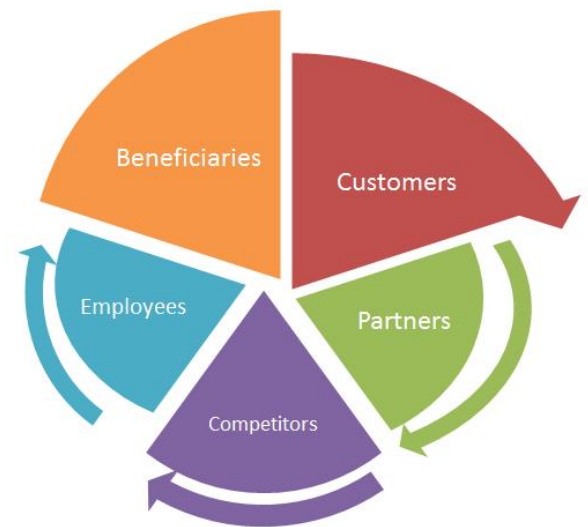


NON-PROFIT INNOVATION

"The more I understand how analysis can be carried out, the better and more effective I will be in my advocacy."

#MigrahackTO Participant

WHAT MAKES THE SOCIAL SECTOR INNOVATIVE?



EMPLOYEES	BENEFICIARIES	CUSTOMERS	PARTNERS	COMPETITORS
Passionate advocates with high innovation ratio Space and opportunity for innovation Implementing the six principles of innovative non-profits*	No large change in the quality and availability of services Consistent, inspiring message around the brand	Strong, trusted brand Impeccable reputation (accountability, going over and beyond) Competitive pricing (innovation-based, volume advantages)	Attracting premium cross industry partners High ability to set industry standards Having a nodal position in the industry	Reputation of being a powerful competitor Demonstrating effectiveness and efficiency in creating <i>social value</i> Acquiring and retaining talent

* Leslie R. Crutchfield, [Forces for Good](#): advocate + serve; make markets work; inspire evangelists; nurture non-profit networks; master the art of adaptation; share leadership.

SYSTEM DESIGN AND INNOVATIVE NON-PROFITS

By Eliana Trinaistic



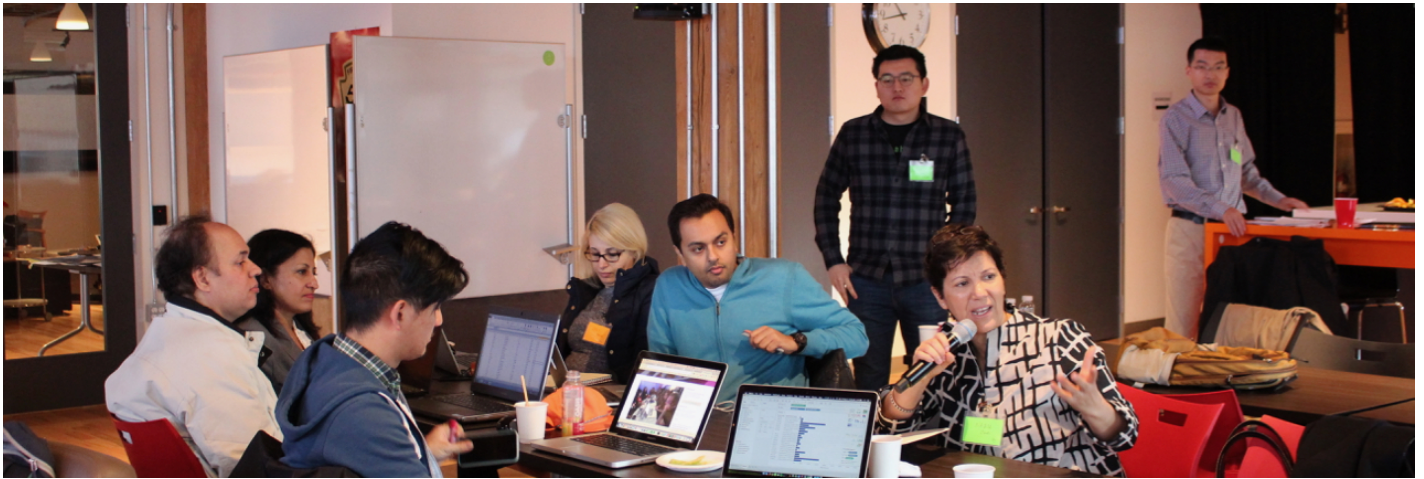
As individuals, groups or organizations we often choose to be reactive in response to change and disruption. Our choices are made “after the fact”, taking the shape of acquiring new skills, implementing new technologies, or creating alternative work flows.

To be proactive is quite different. Pro-activity needs some time: time for research “before the fact”, time for setting objectives, time for planning. It sometimes includes time for conversations and analysis to anticipate future reiterations, future *designs* of our actions. Pro-activity combines data, experience, and intuition.

Let us use the social sector as an analogy.

We can start by thinking about the relationship between “social” as a sector or organization (solid) versus “social” as a system (fluid). We can also think about gaps in the system that led us to solidify some type of response to the gap for which funding, organization or service were provided. When we look at this relationship between solid and fluid, we do not immediately think about the choice, or design. We also forget the fact that the initial response to inadequacy was created in a way that felt appropriate at the time (and may still be appropriate) but it has a *relative* value and is open to modification. The reason why we are not encouraged to look at the world from a “design” perspective is, perhaps, that as children we were prevented from taking things apart. Or, as teenagers and young adults, we were prevented from challenging systems and institutions, be it education, marriage, or work. Yet, everything that is built, be it material or immaterial, is based on a design of some sort that could be changed, given adequate resources, timing and a proper *raison d'être* (stakeholders’ support).

Therefore, it could be that over time, going back to the social sector, these initial, solidified responses (funding, organization, services) were also multiplied, making us believe that, given how prevalent they are now, they are the best designed solutions, too. After all, the nature of organizations, including the social ones, is to appear solid and structured. Organizations are disciplined and routinized for the purpose of greater efficiency. Although we are sometimes able to think beyond funding or service level (especially when we run out of one or the other), we are rarely able to think beyond the level of the organization. Because, to think beyond what appears solid, we need to think in a way that will penetrate the nature of the fluidity, the system. In other words, to think beyond the organization and rise to the level of the system, including the social system, we need to think transcendentally.

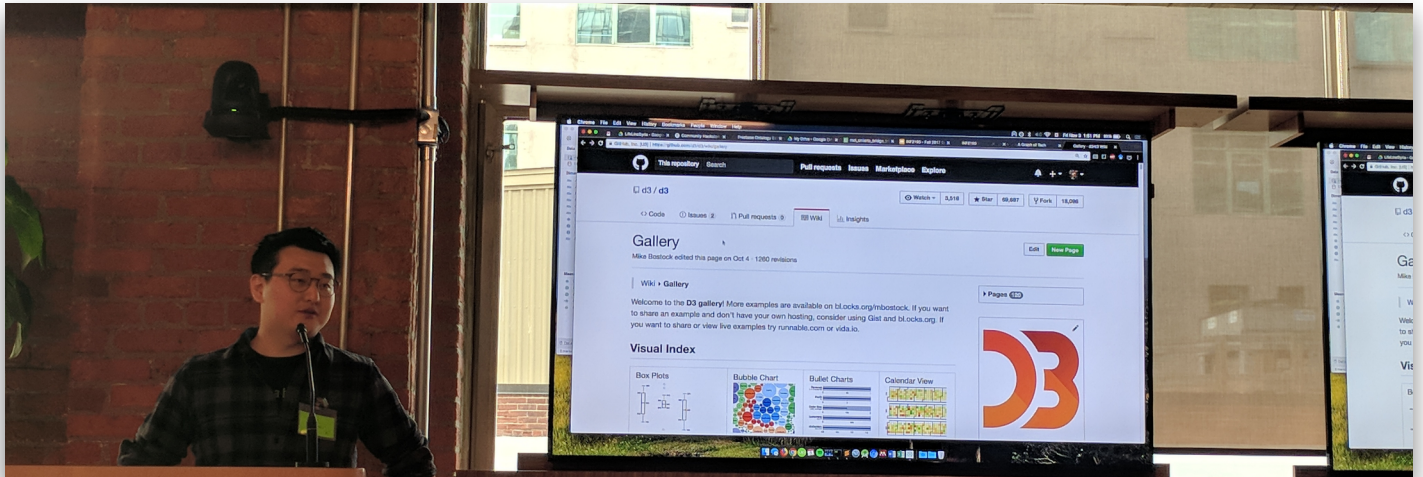


Now, systems are tricky and elusive: sometimes non-linear, often non-hierarchical, and always larger than the sum of their parts. Systems are inherently problematic to wrap our minds around. Yet, this effort of first transcending the tension between “social as a system” and “social as a sector/ organization/service” and then redesigning the latter so it will take into account the newfound evidence, is one of the core principle of social innovation. Without analyzing and understanding a macro perspective and challenging our set models of thinking, the destiny of the social sector will not be to innovate but to perpetuate responses that we have long outgrown.

Going back to reactivity, there could be a huge incentive for implementing system thinking for the social sector, especially in relation to technology.

In addition to outcome-related data, we still do analyze social systems by face to face consultations, because our evidence must be informed by lived experiences around human - systems interaction. What consultations help us understand, too, is how humans interact with the technology that is facilitating many of those interactions, and what are the limits of technology with respect to social systems and service delivery. These findings are crucial, especially because lately, particularly in the field of social innovation, we find an almost dangerous obsession with the imperative of the “simple”, such as simple apps and platforms for vulnerable populations, and the “effortless”, such as replacing the complexity of human interaction with standardized online protocols.

To counteract the notion of “simple and effortless”, consultations or evidence gathering (research) about what was proven useful (analytics), sometimes help us realize that our interventions are not technology but human dependent, such as building trust, better relations, better communication. We might also find that it is wise, especially for cash-strapped non profits, to keep a technologically-agnostic stance and opt for a greater number of small tech solutions fitting a particular purpose, rather than having a one-model-fits-all approach.



Naturally, there is a cost to the exploratory/emerging approach, too. We still have to pay for the space and time, for participants, consultants and facilitators. And we still have to experience pressure from many sides - from the Board, staff, and stakeholders who often prefer the "simple" and "effortless" over the "slow science" of the exploratory and emerging. One obvious gap we can see here is that non-profits have no budget for research and development (R&D). For sure, R&Ds are initially costly. Yet being intentional about developing them, which in non profits would translate into budget/space for conversations with stakeholders (end users of social services, service providers, founders, Civic Tech, academia, communities) about design, might guide social innovation toward where social innovation should land: *co-creative design of services in parallel to co-creative design of relevant technologies*.

Not having a dedicated R&D budget/space, on the other hand, will not only reduce non-profit ability to innovate but also actively neglect the principles of inclusive design justice that need to be considered. In other words, (social) innovation is wonderful but like all wonderful things, only the right type of innovation is actually beneficial.

And this is how the cycle of reactivity might stop.

We need to allow our non profit organizations to rise above their operational thinking about immediate service delivery and be funded for creating spaces for collaboration and co-creation of social services and social service related technologies.

With this, the resources of the sector will be used more wisely, the confidence in the sector will be strengthened and our hope for a more appropriate human-centered social service system may reach bright new heights.



"We need to create a compassionate society with good living conditions for all of us. And we can't do this if we don't address the gaps in services and infrastructure that exist today. And this can all be made possible only through these kinds of initiatives and conversations that materialize into something concrete."

Latha Sukumar

IS THE PATH TO NON-PROFIT INNOVATION PAVED WITH DATA SHARING?

By Eliana Trinaistic



Compared to the past, when the work of the non-profit sector was primarily disrupted by policies, laws, and social conventions, which moved slowly but with a somewhat steady predictability, our contemporary environments, penetrated by technology/data, media, and political disruptions, have increased the pace of change, pressuring non-profit organizations (NPOs) to step up to the plate.

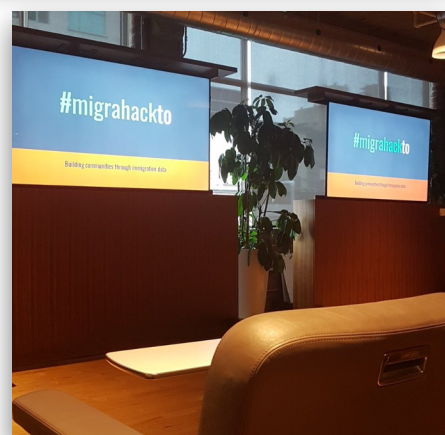
Certainly, if the non-profit sector is asked if it is changing fast enough, it will most likely say no. Even those few organizations that are retaining adequate change management are realizing that the sector is extremely vulnerable and that more needs to be done to increase its resiliency.

Besides trying to advocate to NPOs that “data sharing is a force for good”, we had three additional objectives (and challenges) with respect to creating Migrahack#TO.

The first set of challenges arose from the “whys”.

We needed to find a way in which we could leave the predictable haven of “what a non-profit is supposed to do” to justify the involvement of our language services agency with hackathons and open data advocacy.

What encouraged us to expand beyond our mission were three important discoveries: our theory of change, our internal and external capacity audit, and new perspectives on our aspirations.





In the years preceding #MigrahackTO, we realized that we need to take a more active role in both advocating for access to critical information and services and connecting academia with the private and public sectors for better cross-industry collaboration.

Another set of challenges emerged in relation to understanding how the social sector can leverage data with analytics, visualization and storytelling. For us, advocating for open data and evidence based reporting is already one of the strategic goals for which we have a dedicated budget and resources.

However, contrary to our assumptions, we were happy to find that not only were a good number of other NPOs already embracing data advocacy, but that they were also willing to participate in valuable discussions around the social sector potentially serving as a custodian of social data collected on the government's behalf.

Finally, and indirectly, we were also interested to see where system and design-based thinking fits within a NPO's hackathon structure.

It is important to mention that without our greatest resource, our incredible staff and our community partners supporting us along the way, none of it would have been possible.

In the social sector, the social system is exclusively evaluated by policy makers, and it is anything but common for NPOs to engage with system or design thinking.

Yet, what data, technology and analytics in particular has helped us see is that each NPO can also see itself as a node within the sector system network that interacts with other nodes - NPOs, the government, and a user base - through service delivery and funding.

As an academic discipline, design thinking for the social sector has been developing for over a decade.

A solid body of research available thus far demonstrates that it is not too difficult to introduce the design of simple systems or service solutions to our front facing staff to enable them to improve the process.

What is missing, however, is courage as much as opportunities for practicing and experimentation. Without frequent opportunities to apply newly learned skills, our commitment to this work will wane.



"The data is great, the stories are great but the biggest thing that comes out of these things is the new community that gets formed and then what we can do when we are together."

Craig Carter-Edwards, WelcomeHomeTO



In closing, the principles of system thinking that help us with “transcending the immediate, the visible” could be a valuable way of looking at life in general. We found that when we talk about systems it helps us to discover and expose to ourselves and others our most intimate (the most difficult to change) models of thinking.

By talking about systems we can challenge our assumptions about what we know, while learning a new language to describe what troubles us (gaps in the system) and why.

In other words, #MigrahackTO undoubtedly helped us foster new human connections while working with human data, but, in a lesser way, also gave us the courage and hope that we will be able to rearrange, redesign and change ourselves.

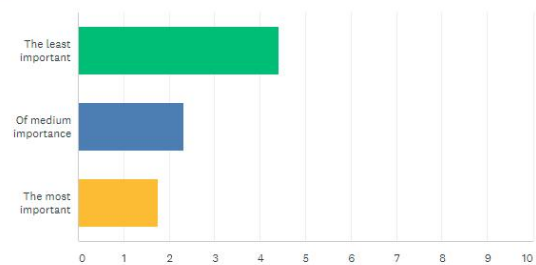


FEEDBACK AND NEXT STEPS



On the scale of 1 - 5, 1 being the least important and 5 being the most, how would you rate the subjective "importance" of various aspects of the hackathon?

Answered: 12 Skipped: 0



	TECHNICAL SKILLS (DATAVIZ)	PEOPLE/ CONVERSATIONS/ BRAINSTORMING	ADVOCACY/ POSITIONING SKILLS	GENERAL EMPOWERMENT/ ENCOURAGEMENT	A DAY AWAY FROM THE OFFICE/ ROUTINE	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
▼ The least important	8.33% 1	0.00% 0	8.33% 1	8.33% 1	75.00% 9	12	4.42
▼ Of medium importance	33.33% 4	25.00% 3	16.67% 2	25.00% 3	0.00% 0	12	2.33
▼ The most important	50.00% 6	41.67% 5	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	8.33% 1	12	1.75

"The potential to utilize this to analyze large amounts of data and generate conclusions is useful for our evidence based decision making and advocacy."

#MigrahackTO



The needs of non-profits, especially technology-related needs, are not only increasing but also evolving. Unlike other industries, non-profits have complex structures and equally complex funding. To understand the context of the how and why of the service delivery, one needs to delve more deeply into

social as a system and think beyond the paradigm of supply and demand.

We know, and our participant survey has demonstrated too, that non-profits have a desire to use data science to anticipate future service needs, measure impact and improve advocacy efforts.

For cash-strapped non-profits that normally lag behind in the adoption of new technologies, hackathons are nothing less than essential. Hackathons are a link to grant-makers, public agencies, academia and social entrepreneurs who can help with funding, training and partnerships.

To enable the valuable connections with technology and other professional volunteers and to endure over a long period of time, non-profits also need *connectors* - places, labs coalitions or institutions that will take the ideas and work done over hackathon day or weekend to the next level.

The task of connectors is to create intentional opportunities for training,

grant partnerships in addition to continuous, steady access to skillful work through corporate sponsorships and corporate volunteering.

Connectors will have what non profits might not: dedicated resources, time and money, people and places, to ensure the sustainability of new emerged idea or design. Otherwise, it is expected that the work will not have sufficient fuel to continue. Non-profits will almost always deprioritize R&D, including tech, on account of other pressing needs, such as service delivery.

#MigrahackTO Survey

At the end of the event, a short survey was distributed to ask participants if they found their participation useful and relevant to their work. One of the aggregated responses (pictured on the previous page) indicates a need for balance between technology and people non-profits seeks. Non-profits like to grow networks in parallel to growing technology. Another surprising element, "*empowerment*"

was featured frequently, not only in the survey but also in the closing section when we asked about next steps (e.g. workshops).

To our question about what was missing and what they needed more of, the participants suggested "more time for developing technical skills, including understanding of *relevant data*". The participants also noted that larger presence of non-profits and end-users would be more beneficial. Quite a few participants noted that involvement of "youth" would help non-profits to bridge the technological gap.

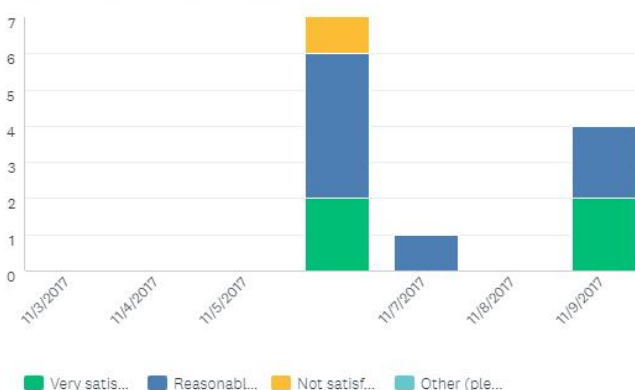
In terms of event structure, participants asked for more time for sharing between the groups, assigning a 'project manager' role to each team to ensure that the tasks will be communicated and tracked, and well defined 'check-in' periods to share the progress.

"Increasingly, the non-profit sector has to incorporate data and its analysis in their work - to improve their operations and measure their impact... Innovative technologies are being built upon data, and the non-profit sector has to be in sync to ensure risks to society or our environment are prevented or mitigated."
#MigrahackTO Participant

We also asked about who else should act as a connector to bridge this gap between people, social data, technical skills and advocacy to which a list of "usual suspects" was generated - "expert journalists, data miners, educators, sector thought leaders" + "the biggest holder of data sets and funding - key people in government working on policy, granting functions, legislative change and reform." Participants

How satisfied are you with your deliverables (strategy, final product, skills etc.)?

Answered: 12 Skipped: 0 First: 11/6/2017 Zoom: 11/3/2017 to 11/9/2017



suggested to inviting "more locally based organizations working with youth-oriented social enterprises to assist youth in learning about advocacy and dataviz". Another suggestion was to create "separate, facilitator roles" for individual NPOs who will lead individual hackathon "threads". In addition, 100% of participants agreed that non profits needs grants for datavis training (100% agree) as well and also that we should seek larger representation from the corporate and the Government, including the City of Toronto at our hackathons.

In terms of satisfaction with final deliverables (the

chart above) - we found "reasonable" satisfaction with the acquired skills and the end products (details here).

Taking advantage of the tension between corporate need for pro bono skills-based volunteering and the often desperate need for capacity-building (anything tech, marketing or HR that is normally considered to be an "overhead"!), hackathons emerged as a viable non-profit capacity building solution, simultaneously responsive to the challenges of creating meaningful work (the corporate) and meaningful engagement (government, academia).

Next steps

For us at MCIS, our commitment has always been to what needs to be done.

In this case, we believe that there is a role for us to be a connector and build upon lessons learned over the past few years.

We are in the process of developing a **Critical Access Lab** to assist us with community based co-designing for the purpose of transforming the system.

Thank you for reading, and please stay tuned for our future announcements!

CONTRIBUTORS, CO-CREATORS AND SPONSORS



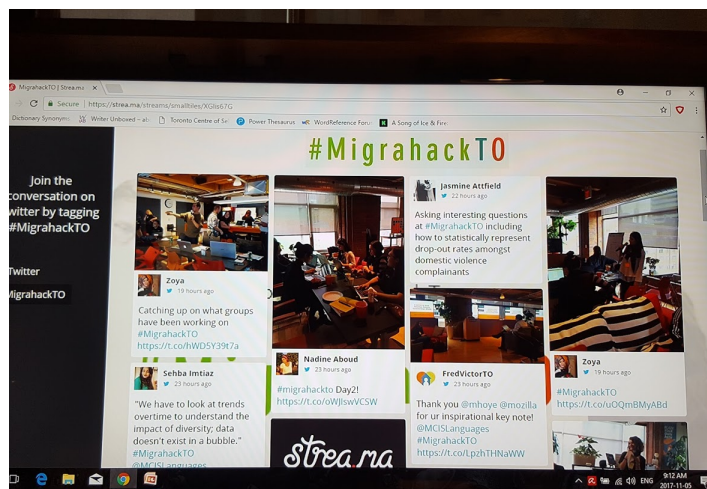


For over 40 years the backbone of the **Agincourt Community Services Association** has been the army of volunteers who help run an array of programs. While the original concept has remained the same, some of the methods have changed: more and more ACSA helps people to help themselves by providing 'hand up' programs rather than 'hand out' programs. Programs have also changed to reflect the ever-changing community needs (Hackers: *Mounir Nasri, Lakshmi Rajan*).



Lifeline Syria was launched in June 2015 and incorporated as a not-for-profit in September 2015 in response to the ongoing humanitarian refugee crisis, to assist sponsor groups to welcome and resettle Syrian refugees as permanent residents in the GTA. The organization is committed to helping Syrian refugees settle in Canada (Hackers: *Sally Abdullah, Diaan Khadem*).

Fred Victor is a social service agency that encourages long-lasting and positive change in the lives of homeless and low income people in Toronto. Each day, more than 2,000 people use Fred Victor programs and services. The programs, located at 18 sites across Toronto, help people rebuild their lives by offering affordable and transitional housing, emergency shelter, food access and access to health service (Hacker: *Inta Dukule*).



MCIS Language Solutions has been relentlessly pursuing its goal to remove language barriers for 30 years. With over 60 full time staff and a roster of 6,000 interpreters, translators, voice artists and facilitators, MCIS provides a full suite of solutions: from language interpretation, translation and transcription to localization, training and training development for government, legal, police and health care organizations in 300+ languages. (Hackers: *Deanna Nemeth, Gregory Bourne, Hedayat Farooqui, Judy Abraham, Luisa M. Cano, Nazanin Azari*).

Coming from the most war-torn, poverty stricken countries around the world children, women and men will seek refuge at **Sojourn House**. Our shelter and transitional housing programs assist them with their integration into Canadian society. By offering shelter, safety and other essential services, Sojourn House is the helping hand and the umbrella of hope for refugees while they begin to rebuild a life in Toronto (Hacker: *Marium Yousuf*).



Video

Special shout out to Laura Maxwell, the Civic Tech Toronto, Patricia Carbajales-Dale, Pippin Lee (*Open Journalism Project*) and Keita Demming (*Disruptive Conversations*), who helped with early developments of this project. And to our wonderful Kitty Sheppard (WelcomeHomeTO) for her efforts around event promotion! It is hard to imagine the life of any project without the heart and soul of our dedicated volunteers. We salute you all!

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PARTNER: WelcomeHomeTO is a group of professionals from various disciplines with the shared goal of supporting the best settlement experience for new Canadians, starting with resettled refugees in Toronto. We began our journey by mapping out the broader settlement sector and researching the lived experiences of refugees, settlement service providers, private sponsors and active citizens.



SPONSORS:

VENUE - (To our Mozilla community sponsor Mike - we love you, man!)



DATA VISUALIZATION LICENSES PROVIDED BY:



CATERING PROVIDED BY:

Out of this World is a social enterprise within the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH). Originally a vocational rehabilitation program run by (CAMH); at it's Queen St. site Out of This World Cafe (OTW) was divested to Working for Change in 2002 to be operated as a social enterprise employing over 30 individuals with mental health and addiction histories.



MEDIA OPPORTUNITIES:

- Judy Pham at the Regent Park Focus (recording here)
- Marco Campana at Marcopolis (recording here)



MCIS advocates to remove language barriers. This improves access to critical information about local schools and job opportunities, civic and political rights, and health and legal services. Information about these vital services makes it possible for people to fully participate in civic life and for communities to remain prosperous (Canadian Index of Well-Being).

THREE major ways to remove language barriers:

- provide access to information and services in a more familiar language,
- increase language proficiency through the use of language acquisition tools,
- take advantage of third party language solutions including translation and interpretation services.

CONNECTING THE GLOBE CELEBRATING OUR DIVERSITY



TOP 20 INTERPRETED LANGUAGES

1. ARABIC
2. HINDI
3. URDU
4. PUNJABI
5. CHINESE
6. VIETNAMESE
7. KOREAN
8. SPANISH
9. ITALIAN
10. FRENCH
11. RUSSIAN
12. PORTUGUESE
13. POLISH
14. JAPANESE
15. GERMAN
16. HEBREW
17. PERSIAN
18. ROMANIAN
19. CZECH
20. GREEK

TOP 20 TRANSLATED LANGUAGES

1. FRENCH
2. SPANISH
3. PORTUGUESE
4. ITALIAN
5. GERMAN
6. JAPANESE
7. KOREAN
8. VIETNAMESE
9. POLISH
10. RUSSIAN
11. HINDI
12. URDU
13. PUNJABI
14. CHINESE
15. ARABIC
16. HEBREW
17. PERSIAN
18. ROMANIAN
19. CZECH
20. GREEK

DID YOU KNOW?

According to the 2011 Census, 213,500 Canadians have an Aboriginal language as their mother tongue. 60 different Aboriginal languages, grouped in 12 language families, are spoken in Canada.

GATEWAY TO VITAL INFORMATION AND SERVICES ALWAYS READY

THE SPOKEN WORD

INTERPRETATION

ENSURING ACCESS TO CRITICAL SERVICES INCLUDING:



59,169
THE NUMBER OF
CRITICAL SERVICE
INTERPRETATIONS**

THE WRITTEN WORD

TRANSLATION

ENSURING ACCESS TO CRITICAL INFORMATION INCLUDING:

36% LEGAL SECTOR
18% GOVERNMENT
14% MEDICAL
14% COMMUNITY*

SERVING VULNERABLE POPULATIONS EQUITY OF ACCESS

1/3 OF ALL LANGUAGE INTERPRETATIONS ARE ACCESSED BY VULNERABLE PERSONS

18,300 LANGUAGE INTERPRETATIONS FOR VULNERABLE PERSONS IN 2015 ALONE



CREATING A LEGACY OF WORLDWIDE COMMUNICATION MEETING THE GROWING GLOBAL NEED

389,092
NUMBER OF LANGUAGE INTERPRETATION PROJECTS OVER THE LAST 10 YEARS

11,491
NUMBER OF TRANSLATION PROJECTS SINCE 2001



* ALL STATISTICS PROVIDED ARE BASED ON 2015 TYPICAL ANALYSIS PERFORMED FROM 2014-2015. ** MCIS LANGUAGE SOLUTIONS, TORONTO, CANADA, 2015. PHOTOGRAPH BY SHUTTERSTOCK/STOCKPHOTO



APPENDICES

APENDIX 1: MCIS' HACKATHON CODE OF CONDUCT

MCIS Language Solutions (MCIS) is dedicated to ensure empowering collaborative learning experience for everyone who participates in or supports our community. We are committed to creation of inclusive environment that will ensure the safety and security of our members, and we will not tolerate harassment of members and participants in any form. This Code of Conduct specified the details of a harassment-free experience, and procedures for addressing issues, should they arise. As a non-profit organization dedicated to help people to overcome linguistic and cultural barriers, we strive to provide a harassment-free experience of any kind for everyone regardless of gender, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, ability, physical appearance, body size, race, ethnicity, age, religion, or socioeconomic status. Event participants violating these rules may be sanctioned or expelled permanently, at the discretion of the members of the MCIS' leadership team.

Forms of Harassment and Discrimination

Forms of harassment include:

- Sexual language and imagery, sexist, racist, and exclusionary jokes;
- All acts that insult or belittle other event attendees in any way;
- Offensive verbal comments related to gender, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, ability, physical appearance, body size, race, ethnicity, religion, socioeconomic status; sexual images in public spaces; deliberate intimidation; stalking; following,
- Unwarranted photography or recording;
- Sustained disruption of event programming;
- Inappropriate physical contact and unwelcome sexual attention.

Event participants asked to stop any harassing behavior are expected to comply immediately and may be removed from the event without warning by any member of MCIS' leadership team. Participants are expected to comply with the MCIS' Code of Conduct at all event venues.

Consequences for Harassment and Discrimination - If a participant engages in behavior which is defined as harassing or discriminatory in any way, the event organizers will take any action they deem appropriate, inclusive but not limited to, issuing a warning or expulsion from the present and all future events. If a warning or expulsion is issued, MCIS may choose to share this information with directors from any event that the participant joins in the future.

How to Report Harassment and Discrimination - We encourage you to report any incident of harassment, discrimination, or unacceptable behavior as soon as possible. MCIS leadership will take all appropriate actions to mitigate risk factors moving forward and continue to provide a safe and secure environment for all MCIS event participants. MCIS leadership is happy to assist attendees in contacting venue security, local law enforcement, or otherwise aid those experiencing harassment so that they feel safe for the duration of the event. The MCIS leadership team will take great care to ensure that the assistance provided meets the needs of attendees who were affected. If you experience or notice harassment, discrimination, or any of the unacceptable behaviors outlined herein at a MCIS' event, or have any other concerns, please report the incident as soon as possible. To report an incident, take one of the following actions:

- Inform the event organizer on site;
- Inform co-organizer in your network;
- Report the incident to MCIS directly by completing our incident report form ([here](#)).

If you choose to share your name on the form, it will only be seen by MCIS leadership involved with resolving the issue.

Periodic Review - MCIS strives to create a positive and inclusive environment. As such, the MCIS is committed to an annual review of the Events Code of Conduct to ensure that it continues to align with this goal and address the needs of our community. MCIS welcomes feedback from its members. All feedback should be submitted to MCIS by emailing: eliana at mcis.on.ca.

Acknowledgments -We would like to thank you Women Who Code CODE OF CONDUCT for their document that guided our own. We also extend thanks and gratitude to the MCIS' advisors, and allies, such as Mozilla, who prompted us to create this code and help our continuous improvement.

APPENDIX 2: THE SURVEY



1. The professional field you belong to is (Government/ Academia/ Technology/ Community – Other/Business/ Social enterprise/Other)

2. Have you participated in hackathons in the past?

3. On a scale of 1 (not at all relevant) to 5 (extremely relevant) please indicate how relevant and useful was the training part (FRIDAY) of the hackathon for your professional needs

4. On a scale of 1 (not at all relevant) to 5 (extremely relevant) please indicate how relevant the “hacking” part of the hackathon (SATURDAY) was for your professional needs?

5. On a scale of 1 (not at

all informative) to 5 (extremely informative) please indicate how informative the closing discussion was at the #MigrahackTO (SUNDAY)?

6. What did you like in particular about the #MigrahackTO Discussion (SUNDAY)?

7. On the scale of 1 to 5, 1 being the least important and 5 being the most, how would you rate the subjective “importance” of various aspects of the hackathon? (a. Technical skills (dataviz); b. People/ conversations/ brainstorming; c. Advocacy/ positioning skills; d. General empowerment/ encouragement; e. A day away from the office/ routine)

8. What was missing? What you need more of?

9. How satisfied are you with your deliverables (strategy, final product, skills etc.)? (Very/Reasonably/Not/ Other)

10. Do you think that the non-profit sector should seek funding for both, dataviz training and dataviz professionals' salaries?

11. Would you be interested to participate in hackathons in the future or encourage your colleagues to join one?

12. Would you be interested to join a coalition and participate in joint advocacy efforts for funding tech components in the social sector?

13. Who else should be in the field of bridging the gap between people, social data, technical skills and advocacy (organizations, individuals, etc.)?

14. What did we not ask you about? Any other comments or suggestions you have for us?



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Y O U R G L O B A L V O I C E

#migrarahackto

Building communities through immigration data

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