**NNIP AND OPEN DATA**

Thursday afternoon, 3:30 p.m. – 5:15 p.m.

For the past year, NNIP has been working on a series of activities supported by the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation to explore the implications of the Open Data movement for NNIP partners locally and for the network as a whole. This movement and NNIP share the common goal of increasing the amount of relevant information that is available to residents and stakeholder organizations, whether to hold governments accountable, improve citizen services or inform community decisionmaking.

As of early 2013, two-thirds of the NNIP partners were already actively contributing to open data by providing downloadable files of indicators for census tracts and/or neighborhoods. From the partner survey conducted in Summer 2012, about half of the partners had engaged in other activities related to the open data movement, such as meet-ups, hackathons, or unconferences; a share that has likely risen since then.

***The purpose of this session is to help local partners consider how their organization and the NNIP network can productively engage with governmental and non-governmental advocates and practitioners of open data.***

Kathy Pettit from the Urban Institute will begin the first part of the session by presenting some ideas on how NNIP Partners can improve access to and use of open government data *locally*. Steve Spiker from Urban Strategies Council in Oakland and Bob Gradeck from the Pittsburgh Neighborhood and Community Information System will talk about how their organizations have been facilitating open data in their cities. Jack Madans, Program Coordinator at Code for America (CfA- see next page), will talk about opportunities for local partners to connect with CfA programs and give his perspective on the need and opportunity for NNIP partners to collaborate with local government around open data.

The second part of the session will cover what NNIP as a Network should be doing to advance open government data. Kathy Pettit will present general ideas based on the network’s experiences to date, and Jack Madans will offer other ideas from CfA’s perspective.

There will be time for discussion after each section of the session.

**Questions for Discussion**

* In addition to those described by the panelists, are there ways that NNIP partners can relate positively to the open data movement?
* What are the potential payoffs to a closer connection with the open data movement? What are the barriers or risks?
* What actions related to open data should UI be taking on behalf of the network (e.g. communications, training, documenting NNIP partner examples)?

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***Code for America*** *seeks to help cities leverage the power of the web to become more open and efficient. Their activities include:*

**Fellowship Program: Showing What’s Possible**

Through Code for America’s fellowship program, we recruit talented web developers, designers, and entrepreneurs into a year of public service and then invite forward-thinking cities to apply to work with them, hand-in-hand, to help them better leverage technology and engage the community. Through this process — and the apps they create, datasets they open, and events they host — both the fellows and the cities not only make a real difference in each city, but they also show what’s possible in any city.

**Accelerator: Driving the Adoption of New Tools**

While technological and market advances over the past few decades have enabled the private sector to run more efficiently, government has been left behind, saddled with outdated and inefficient software and vendors. That has to change. The Code for America Accelerator recruits “civic startups” and turbo-charges them with a national platform to raise awareness, a wealth of business training and advice, and a broad network of potential investors and civic leaders.

**Brigade: Mobilizing Citizen Engagement**

Anyone can code for America, anywhere. And they are. Across the country civic technologists are coming together to remix and reuse apps, promote openness in city halls, and work together to solve local problems. The Brigade provides a national platform to help these groups come together, and for others, the tools and resources to start a local chapter in their community. This growing network of civic leaders is working to redefine the notion of citizenship at the local level.

**Peer Network: Connecting Civic Change Agents**

Local governments are changing. Forward-thinking public servants across the country are leveraging technology to innovate the way our cities work — and it’s accelerated by the exchange of ideas, solutions, best practices, and even software code between likeminded leaders. The Code for America Peer Network is a professional learning network for local government innovators who share the common goal of taking innovation in their city to the next level. Through the Peer Network, Code for America connects local governments around the country to facilitate peer learning, collaborative problem-solving, and the spread of innovation best practices between cities.