Fostering Innovative Communities of Practice in the Pacific Northwest

Shelly D. Farnham, Ph.D.
Research Scientist / Executive Director, Third Place Technologies

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Our mission is to explore new ways to leverage social media, open data, and collective action technologies to empower communities and foster community well-being.
NETWORKED PUBLICS
AS THIRD PLACES

Networked Publics:
- Social media, community technologies, big social data, Wikipedia, learning networks

Third Places:
- Public places away from home and work
- Gathering places for conversation
- Essential for the emergence of communities and collective action

Target Communities:
- Hyperlocal/neighborhoods
- Place-based communities of practice
Paradigm shift via social media:

**PARTICIPATORY**

Public
Networked
Open
Decentralized
Informal
Self-organized
Fluid Identities
Self-expression

Connective Action*

Informal, emergent inclusion *via public voice*

Personal expression shared over social media

Peer-based, self-organizing networks

*Bennett, L.*
Helping communities help themselves.
FEATURES OF A THRIVING COMMUNITY

Communities of practice:

- Members know each other and regularly interact
- Members can articulate their common goals
- Members have a feeling of belonging
- Community has a shared understanding of best practices and repositories of shared artefacts
FEATURES OF A THRIVING COMMUNITY

**Innovation community:**
- Culture of openness to new ideas
- Collaboration across organizations and disciplines
- Diversity and inclusiveness

_Fuse Labs Creative Week_
ART AND TECH: A GROWING COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE with unique characteristics, and special needs

- Technology-mediated
  - digital media, big data, sensors, social media, computer generated, programmed, physical computing, robotics, information
- Interactive, participatory
- Collaborative, interdisciplinary

SUMMER 2014 ART & TECH WORKSHOP
Organized in collaboration with Cornish, Stranger, MSR

Overall goal: Foster community of innovators, increasing awareness, collaboration, and collective efficacy toward common goals

Workshop was optimized for conversation.
Network Map of **Workshop Invitees (Pink)**, with their **Roles (Orange)**, **Interests (Blue)**, and **Organizations (Green)**
ARTICULATING COLLECTIVE GOALS

Community Goals, Ordered by Importance

More diversity in perspectives, across gender, race or SES 6.28
More exhibitions and exhibition spaces 6.04
Increased access to educational opportunities 6.0
An improved sense of community and social support 5.95
More funding, fund-raising, grants 5.88
Increased access to collaborative spaces 5.8
Increased access to specialized tools and machinery 5.8
Better promotion of arts/tech related activities 5.75
More networking events and conferences 5.36
An online directory for artists/technologists 4.92
Better online collaboration and knowledge sharing tools 4.87

Importance of Community Goals, where 1 = Not at All, and 7 = Extremely So
COMMUNITY BUILDING ACTIVITIES

► Documentation

► Write up report
► Design study, how to increase diversity in creative communities

► Communication and collaboration channels

► Mailing list (ArtsTechNW)
► Developing an online, searchable community directory of who’s who: BrinkNW

► Community building events

► Arts/tech Seattle meetups
► Arts/tech focused Pecha Kucha
► Electric Sky
► An art & tech hackathon in June
Survey says, still most important for “communication and sharing with community”
BRINK NW

- Community network of people, organizations, events, projects, optimized for interdisciplinary, cross-organizational collaboration
- Content is based on community-sourced collaborative editing
- Integrated updates from blogs, Twitter, calendars, etc.
CREATIVE COLLABORATION DIVERSITY STUDY

- Self-organizing collaborations tend to be low in diversity, as people tend to find similar backgrounds, and tech is biased toward white male.

- Throughout their formative process, how can we best intervene to increase diversity?

- Study:
  - 132 questionnaire participants
  - 20 interviews focused on collaboration origin stories
Communities are an important context for the emergence of collaborations
Support opportunities for immediate involvement & trust building
Foster innovation culture norms

“We do have our own culture as [school name] students. We say, “Yes, and....” We make these kind of gestures and motions to allow people to not have perfect thoughts, but still express themselves...So we did have those, I guess, tools in a way that we were using, that I hadn't thought about just because it's kind of engrained.” -P4
Improve awareness of community work, mentors, and role models

“I have a Muslim female group on LinkedIn, so I share a lot of information about coding for women and I share it in my community for women who may be interested in coding. But it’s not just enough shared, they need to see that more women are doing it.” - P17

Personal engagement via communication tools is important (email, phone calls)
BRINK NW

- Optimize design and “seed” content to provide diversity in role models
- Help people find mentors
You are invited!

Please join us at Electric Sky, an art and tech weekend campathon June 26-28 bringing together artists, technologists, and other interested parties to collaboratively engage with the environment in new and exciting ways. This event is a cross between an artist retreat and a hackathon, with the goal of fostering interdisciplinary creativity and collaboration in an inspiring environment. It is being organized in conjunction with the Sky Art Week, including workshops, including this campathon, an art exhibit in the nearby town of Skykomish, and a wrap-up party. The registration fee is $25 for adults, and $15 for children.
Civic Technology Community Mapping Survey

goal: mapping who’s who, community goals, opportunities for improvement

- Open Data Day at UW
- 31 respondents
  - Roles play in the civic tech community:
    - Hacker (7), technologist (6), community organizer (5), mentor (5), entrepreneur (4), event production (4), maker (4), blogger (3), designer (3), government (3), student (3), academic (2), non-profit advocate (2), corporate advocate (1), critic (1), data provider (1), industry researcher (1), innovator (1), journalist (1), open data guy (1), researcher (1)

- 45% as an employee of an organization / 55% as independents
MAPPING THE COMMUNITY

- Participate in/members of:
  
  **Code for Seattle (11), Impact Hub (5), City of Seattle (4), CTTAB (2), Microsoft (2), SoDApop (2), 4th Circle (1), ACCIS (1), Expanding Your Horizons (1), Google Code-In (1), Google Summer of Code (1), Hack to End Homelessness (1), Humanitarian OpenStreetMap Team (1), Infocamp (1), IPMA (1), King County (1), Knight-Mozilla Open News (1), Maptime (1), Auxiliary Communications Services (1), OpenStreetMap (1), Random Hacks of Kindness (1), Red Cross (1), Sahana Software Foundation (1), School Social Media Lab (1), Seattle Community Network (1), Social Venture Partners (1), St Vincentde Paul (1), State of Washington (1), Surf Incubator (1), Third Place Technologies (1), UW (1), Uxcamp (1), Vlaire Group (1), Washington fish and wildlife (1), Washington State DOT (1), Whoa Strategies (1)

- How keep up to date with information and events:
  
  **Meetup (13), CTTAB (2), Socrata (2), Sodapop Meetup (2), Code for Seattle Meetup (4), Geekwire (4), Twitter (4), Code for Seattle (3), agency contacts (1), Beowolf Cluster (1), City of Seattle (1), Community Tech list (1), Facebook (1), Feedly (1), friends (1), google (1), Govtech.org (1), Impact Hub mailing list (1), IVO (1), Last serve (1), Linkedin (1), Maptime (1), Seattle Tech Calender (1), Startup Seattle (1), State email communications (1), Ta3m mailing list (1), Word of mouth (1), WTIA (1)**
Who’s Notable

► Notable organizations:

**Code for Seattle (7), Socrata (6), City of Seattle (3), Impact Hub (2), Tableau (2), City Club (1), City of Seattle CTO (1), Code for America (1), Community Tech (1), CTS (1), Cugos.org (1), Geekwire (1), Gov’t tech mag (1), Hack the CD (1), Here Seattle (1), KC G15 portal (1), like “One Bus Away” (1), Maptime (1), Microsoft (1), Microsoft Civic Tech (1), Seattle University (1), State of Washington CIO (1), TAF (1), Tech Alliance (1), Tech Diversified (1), University of Wa (1), UW CSE(Alan Boring) (1), UW Data Club (1), UW Tech (1), Zakayla Productions (1)**

► Notable people:

**Chris Metcalf (3), Seth Vincent (3), Bill Schrier (2), Will Sanders (2), Al Boss (1), Alan Borning (1), Chris Devore (1), David Keyes (1), Dr. JT (1), Ethan Phelps-Goodman (1), John Sechrest (1), Lance Bennit (1), Larry wall (1), Leni Oman (1), Micheal Coackvill (1), Monica Guzman (1), Sabra Scrneider (1), Sarah Schacht (1), Shelly Farnham (1), Susannah Malarkey (1), Taylor Sopher (1), Will Scott (1)**

► Notable events:

**Code for Seattle (5), Hackathons (4), Hack to End Homelessness (2), Accessibility camp (1), Civic Cocktail (1), National Day of Civic Hacking (1), Open Data events (1), Data Seattle Camp (1), Seattle OpenStreetMap (1), Socrata customer summit (1)**
BRINK NW DEMO

- Civic tech NW community
Articulating Community Goals

Extent Interested In:

- Civic technology exhibitions/show and tells
- Educational workshops
- One or two day educational or networking conferences
- A discussion list for those actively engaged with civic tech
- Hackathons
- Networking events
- A listing of volunteer or job opportunities
- An online directory or network of who’s who
- Membership in a collaborative lab, work space, or art studio
Primary Goal of Civic Tech Community

Apply new technologies to improve public life and empower citizens

- Increasing engagement among government, public, tech community. Providing tech resources to government and civic/humanitarian organizations for projects they could not otherwise afford.
- **improve government** through mutual education and creating space for innovative thinking about government.
- to improve public life and empower citizens
- First to leverage public into public good and to build a portfolio.
- Design work at the UW
- **improve access** to and the way we use data
- promote the convergence of people, technology, community, and governance
- to serve the undeserved communities in Seattle
- to share data, to advocate transparency in government and communities, to utilize the vast data for good use in the city, state, and government
- leverage new skills to give back to the community
- establish a pathway of innovation, people who help transfer tech to benefit citizens and improve government operations and procedures
- to connect technology enthusiasts in the Seattle area
- **distribute knowledge and power** to the citizens
- Figure out how to use civic tech to improve engagement and (?) citizen
- To give back to the city and inspire others to do the same
- using technology **to solve community issues**
- help civic tech inform long range policy decisions
- To leverage technology and community to benefit Seattle and its Seattleites
- commune with code or digitaly
- Apply modern technology to social and cultural challenges. Extend or amplify government services
Community Pain Points

- Sustainability of “movement” through improved processes
  - Organizational infrastructure
  - Project leads
  - Fundraising
- Increasing awareness of who’s who and matching skills/projects
- More diversity
- Increase open data availability

What are community pain points that should be addressed?

- Sustainability beyond inventory of real community needs
- Apply their skills and energy to problems not otherwise addressed; advocacy, equity, tech that works for the underprivileged and underrepresented
- Identify fixable obstacles keeping open data from being available
- Use project leads to help track and implement new and ongoing projects.
- CEP (disability puts design limits as well)
- matching ideal people with skilled volunteers to move projects forward
- develop a robust backbone organization tied closely with the city of Seattle to promote and sustain this movement
- to get more people of color on the development scale and the consumer scale.
- fundraising for these kinds of projects, find out who’s who
- bring access to data to the community in a transparent way
- organizing and maintaining data particularly demographics
- communication
- obtain good data from public agencies and make creative use of it. Improve practical productive relationships between citizens and government employees
What Participants Need for their Civic Projects/Goals:

- Knowledge
- Community
- Mentorship
- Dialogue
- Project opportunities
- Funding
- Cloud services
- User research

- knowledge and community
- knowledge, stories, and community around civic tech.
- Opportunity to learn more programming and to have chances to work regularly with a mentor without taking time from my family.
- Mentoring web design and social media
- Speak to people with disabilities for ideas to increase event accessibility.
- Dialog and conversations between data users and data stewards.
- motivation, time
- education on the foundations of civic tech; coding skills and data sheets
- opportunities to work with teams
- a job in tech with like-minded people
- access to funding and Tech transfer experts
- knowledge
- cloud services (AWS, Azure, Google cloud)
- like minded and skilled people
- better knowledge of models in this space. A better sense of what is being done and what needs to be done. More knowledge of the non-profit sector
- connect with people, understand the needs
- do events like this one, bring folks together for small collaborative projects
- better data management and more interactive software training
- organization
- regular repeated community events like open data day: follow up with notes, lessons, etc. after the events
“Innovators”

▶ 58% of respondents were innovators
  ▶ 42% Volunteer only
  ▶ 58% Volunteer & work
  ▶ 0% work only

▶ If collaborative, 4.7 people on average

Current Projects:
▶ Making an application for foodbanks to manage their data
▶ Bringing subject matter experts and technologists together to address problems that impact the community at large: e.g. hack the Commuse
▶ Knight-Mozilla Open News supports the community of people doing journalism through code and design
▶ I work for King County and try to drive use of their open data site and to prove the concept I end up building apps.
▶ catagory and making available DFU Cat1 Data Sp7s
▶ open data and open source mapping
▶ making data more accessible
▶ developing citizen sentiment tools and strategies for government and communities
▶ community mapping portals, instantly deployed of the free tier of cloud services
▶ research-development community technologies
▶ I participate in events when I learn about them and have time
▶ open business solution, payroll and taxes
▶ I'm promoting open data set development at WSDOT; arguing the case and persuading data stewards to participate

Civic Tech Projects Collaborative?

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Skills

Have: development skills

- software engineering (assorted languages)
- strategic communicators, program design
- Javascript/HTML/CSS; Python and Django
- Programming in Javascript, using data in unexpected ways, Scocrata.
- C#, SQL, Javascript, data analytics
- programming (javascript, CH, android app development) and Data analytics/ engineering
- data analysis, program management, CRM, collective impact
- GIS, graphic design, tech and grant writing, software systems, interaction and architecture ESRI ARCGIS< Foss, QGIS
- Social data analytics, experimental research, social psych of communities
- python( matplotlib, pandas, djaso, wongo). javascript( angular, D3)
- data science skills: data analytics and visualization, R programming: forecasting, clustering, optimization
- programming in C#, Python, javascript
- I can build infographics in illustrator and have 10+ years of policy experience re: urban planning and social justice
- C++, Perl
- writing, presenting, communicating

Work with: Designers, Data Analysts, Researchers

- deis, designs, data
- depends on needs of the project
- data analytics
- design, hardware, statistics
- Dev, storytelling, data analytics
- coding
- Ethnographic Research, Social network analysis
- data analytics, domain expertise
- no projects so far
- data analysis: outreach and engagement
- Data providers, collectors and creators of transportation data, data analysts and policy setters at my agency

Want to develop: Data Analysis, APIs

- I want to be more informed locally, nationally, and globally informed. Also, more fluent in data generally.
- Open data API’s, mobile apps, using the data to tell a story, convincing data owners in government they benefit for releasing their data.
- Licensing, ontologies, standards
- API
- learn open data apls
- more awareness of data resources, more understanding of civic research that can be (?) by tech
- discover open data, data social media
- want to learn about data APIs, mobil app development
- learn open data
- how to sell open data and civic engagement to my agency’s data standards
HOW COLLABORATE

Github (4), Skype (3), Impact Hub (2), cloud deployment technology (1), content management systems (1), CRC (1), email (1), ESR (1), GIS (geographical information systems) (1), google docs (1), Google Groups (1), Google OME (1), In-person (1), IRC (1), shared docs (1), social media (1), Socrata (1), Surf Incubator (1), Vent (1), Weekly open data hackathons via Code for Seattle and Socrata (1), Word (1), Work on common language (1)
DISCUSSION

Hack the Commute