HACK FOR WESTERN MASS

Hack for Western Mass is part of almost 100 events nationwide in a White House-initiated weekend of civic hacking. On June 1 and 2, 2013, technologists and community organizations will gather at UMass Amherst to tackle local challenges.

What's a hackathon?

Civic "hackathons" are the good kind of hacking. They bring together government officials, non-profit leaders, and volunteer technologists, data wranglers, and designers to develop technical solutions to local or national challenges. Past results have ranged from projects to match surplus food to those who can distribute it to tools for identifying backers of political ads to maps of city tree ecosystems.

The hackathon movement is gaining significant momentum all across the country, and Western Massachusetts is joining in. During Hack for Western Mass, local people engaged in community-focused efforts will collaborate with some of our region's best technical minds.

We want YOU to submit a challenge for Hack for Western Mass!

How it works

On the morning of June 1, selected organizations will pitch their challenges to hackathon attendees, who will form teams and decide which projects to work on. If your challenge is accepted, someone from your organization will work with the team throughout the weekend to provide expertise about your needs and goals.

Teams will present their efforts on Sunday afternoon, June 2, and all projects will be open sourced and featured on the Hack for Western Mass website.
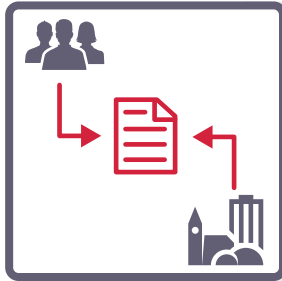
A good challenge:

✔ Is related to an **ongoing problem** that your organization works on.

✔ Has **context** and is **relevant** to the community.

✔ Has an **understandable impact**. How many people would benefit if the problem was solved? Which organization(s) would use the solution?

✔ Has **data**. What data would help solve this problem? Is it publicly available?

✔ Can **be owned** by a person or organization with relevant expertise.

Guidelines for
Defining Civic Hackathon Challenges

When defining a challenge, here are some possibilities to consider:
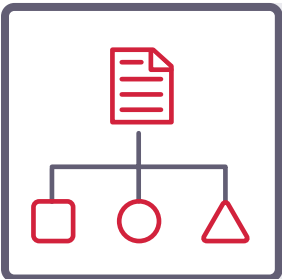
Collecting information
What information do you wish you had?

Sharing information
What information do you have that you wish others had access to?

Organizing information
How could information or processes be better organized?

Understanding information
What information would help people make more informed decisions?

Visualizing information
How could information be visualized to make it clear & actionable?

Submit your challenge by May 20th at
www.hackforwesternmass.org/submit

Any questions? Email hackforwesternmass@gmail.com. The planning team will evaluate the challenges based on their viability and invite chosen organizations to make an official pitch at the hackathon.

Hack for Western Mass is an affiliate of Hack for Change, national organizers of the June event, which has support from over 15 government agencies as well as tech companies like Intel and Facebook. We're also licensed under Random Hacks of Kindness, an organization started by Microsoft, Yahoo, and NASA, and the World Bank to run hackathons around the world. For more information about the event in Amherst, visit our website at hackforwesternmass.org.