CASE STUDY
CODE FOR GERMANY

This Case Study serves to document the Code for Germany program with the hope that it will serve as a helpful reference to support partners in other countries in the development and implementation of their own programs. The following is a living document serving anyone with the desire to replicate or remix parts of this civic technology program for their own purposes and to learn from the experience of the Code for Germany team. Produced (originally) by Marcus Dapp from Code for Germany in collaboration with Lynn Fine and Brielle Plump from Code for America.

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BACKGROUND

Home to over 80 million people, Germany is known for its strong political and economic position within the European Union (EU) and has received much attention for its economic role in the region in the wake of the economic difficulties encountered by many of its EU neighbors.

While Germany is at the forefront of the EU in economic terms, it is lagging behind its EU neighbors in key areas that affect the German government's ability to engage digitally with its citizens. Germany ranks second to last in three out of four policy priorities related to e-government (user centricity, transparent government, cross border mobility, and a set of key enablers like eID, etc.) according to the 2014 EU e-government Report. Germany has not reached the technologically advanced and open government maturity levels of some of its EU neighbors.

Germany has taken some important steps to help its institutions improve in these areas. For example, in 2009 Germany passed an article ("Art. 91c Grundgesetz") which led to the creation of a new national IT Planning Council ("IT-Planungsrat"). The council is responsible for setting IT standards in a number of public sector agencies at multiple levels of government. Several other important steps were taken by the German government to address this gap which included:

2012:   Commissioning the report "Open Government Data Deutschland"

2013:   Launching a portal for open government data (www.govdata.de)

2014:   Publishing a national e-government strategy paper (which focuses mainly on digital strategies without an explicit open government or open data focus).

The Council also initiated several infrastructure projects in 2011.
These included:

a.   A national service phone number ("D115") similar to 311 in the US, which directs you to the proper contact point for your request on all administrative levels.

b.   An email system for traceable and secure communication between citizens and the administration ("DE-Mail").

REMAINING CHALLENGES FOR
GERMANY'S IT CLIMATE - GERMAN CITIES

Despite Germany taking steps to improve in these areas at the national level, it's important to note that cities in Germany have a fair amount of autonomy and can determine their own policies (digital or otherwise). As a result, there is a range of innovation in German cities and using a top-down approach isn't particularly effective (more on this later).

 Overall, there are some common challenges that most German cities face.

I.   PROCUREMENT: German cities tend to find themselves in a pretty rigid procurement dilemma. Cities tend to lean towards large contracts with large vendors (mainly because such vendors are allegedly more capable of shouldering project risks). Unfortunately, city governments are hesitant to bank on smaller projects and light-weight web or mobile technology, leaving many startups and small businesses without opportunities to sell to government. As a result, IT projects become more complicated than necessary and these projects require a level of sophisticated IT project management expertise that many government officials working for cities lack. This situation deters small business growth (hindering economic growth) but also costs citizens a lot of money as smaller start-ups tend to be more nimble and able to produce effective IT project results at lower costs. Most importantly, when German government IT projects become too large and unwieldy, they fail and citizens don't receive the benefits those projects were intended to deliver in the first place.

II.   CLOSED TECHNOLOGY TRAP: The current procurement policies create another kind of trap in which cities end up with large pieces of closed-source software, leaving them at the mercy of that single, large vendor who developed the original project. Open-source technologies and standards (where code is shared and freely licensed and others can contribute to improving it) are only very slowly adopted as existing vendor lock-in effects are strong. The cost of switching systems and software infrastructure can be sizeable and licensing agreements force city governments to continue to pay for these resources and prevent sharing between governments and between departments (a highly inefficient use of government resources).

III.   FINANCIAL TRAP: Cities transforming into more tech-driven 21st Century administrations require initial investments in technology and people. However, the pressure to reduce costs (and debts) is on the rise so it's difficult to politically justify making these investments in the short term, despite the fact that doing so will have long-term benefits and ultimately save government money and improve service delivery for residents.

IV. DEMOGRAPHIC TRAP: Finally, people with advanced technology skills are generally not drawn to government work. City governments suffer from a reputation as slow, rigid, and uncreative, which isn't appealing for young people who have tech industry skills and can land jobs in work settings that are known for being, fun, creative, and (more obviously) inspiring. This challenge is made more difficult because of government salary constraints. City governments are required to follow strict salary bands and have little flexibility to use salary as a carrot to attract tech-savvy employees. With 25% of public sector staff in Germany set to retire in the next 10 years, there is considerable urgency to remedy this situation as soon as possible.

Combined, these issues put many cities in a difficult situation with limited options to improve their use of technology (beyond the sole replacement of outdated IT systems). And the people these governments exist to serve and represent are the ones who pay the highest price.

THE OPEN KNOWLEDGE FOUNDATION

Open Knowledge Foundation (OKF) is an international network of access to information advocates that works to fix challenges closely linked to those above. OKF advocates generally work towards increasing openness, the improved use of technology, and encouraging more active civic sharing and collaboration. Founded in 2004 in Cambridge, UK, tool development (most of the well-known data portals run on CKAN, their open source data portal solution) and civic tech have always been strong components within the Open Knowledge Foundation network's work. After years of the OKF lobbying for more transparency and open data, there was a natural evolution towards focusing on the reuse of datasets and community building. The German chapter co-organized Germany's first nationwide competition, "Apps für Deutschland" (Apps for Germany), in 2012, and ran several hackathons (Energyhack, Wahldatenhelfer, Apps and the City, and more), and helped grow the civic tech developer community. Also, in 2013 the German chapter kicked off a nationwide civic tech Fellowship program called Stadt Land Code.

Currently, the non-profit's largest impetus exists in Europe, with a strong cluster of efforts located in Berlin, Germany; therefore, how to tackle the IT challenges throughout the country is a natural concern of many of OKF's most active leaders.

CONSIDERING A CODE FOR AMERICA APPROACH

OKF and Google Germany began to explore potential ways to better equip German cities with citizen-centric, community-based, and inexpensive IT innovations. The assumption was that there were many untapped aspects of modern life that could be considerably improved upon through open, small, and cheap technology.

The entire OKF network had been admiring Code for America's work and their approach to civic tech engagement with local city governments. The OKF and Google Germany contacted Code for America to see what type of partnership they could potentially establish. Catherine Bracy, the Code for America International Programs Manager at the time, visited OKF Germany in April 2013 to help lead the cooperation. Code for America and OKF Germany signed a Memo of Understanding. Thus "Code for Germany" became the first international partner in the newly started "Code for All" program.

CODE FOR GERMANY'S CORE MISSION

Code for Germany (CfG) set out to answer three questions: How can community life in Germany be improved? How can collaborative approaches enabled by new technologies make significant contributions? How can city governments use external knowledge and expertise to become more citizen-centric, transparent, and efficient?

By tackling these questions, CfG aims to contribute to an IT-based German government administration that offers comprehensive digital services to its citizens. By deepening cooperation between city governments and local civic tech communities, Code for Germany hopes to sustain long-lasting partnerships among all residential stakeholders. To achieve this, CfG has been developing four different modules of citizen-government collaboration that together will comprise the Code for Germany program. They build upon each other and, together, form the pieces of a larger "civic innovation process."

MODULE 1 **OPEN KNOWLEDGE LABS**

Implementation of the first module started in Spring 2014 by starting a network of Open Knowledge Labs (OK Labs), inspired in part by Code for America's Brigade program. In a growing number of cities across Germany, CfG began offering individuals a place to meet and network, building a local open data community where like-minded people could create innovative web or mobile solutions for their own city. OK Labs either use the data the city already provides (open government data), or help the city to release more open data. The OK Lab network in Germany also aims to connect Labs across the country so that ideas and applications can be recycled and re-purposed. OK Labs alone attract around 200 people to meetups on a regular basis and at the time of writing there are 13 Labs throughout Germany. While each of the OK Labs are only loosely integrated with each other, a healthy amount of exchange of ideas and code happens between them.

MODULE 2 **PEERS & PARTNERS NETWORK**

Thanks to OK Labs, volunteer groups across the country are actively contributing to open (government) data projects and actively collaborating with each other to do so. Communication inside and between city administrations has proven to be quite a different process to start. For most government departments, open government/open data is not on the agenda; until recently, drawing upon civic tech approach was a rare undertaking, or not considered a worthwhile way to find solutions to governmental problems. In the cities

MODULE 2 (CONT'D)

who do engage in open data activities, most of their efforts are pioneered by a few individuals or small groups, oftentimes scattered across the organization. Only very few places such as Berlin, Cologne, Moers, Ulm, and a few others, have "active" open data agendas that prioritize and outline the importance of defining an open data policy for an entire region, establishing dedicated roles to further advance this issue area for the region, committing to regularly publishing data sets, and building community ties. Given this context, it became apparent that a key piece of CfG's approach would be to create a network of government officials that would enable peers from across cities to partner with one another and build coalitions to further IT innovation in government in Germany. The Peers & Partners Network is thus an online forum that provides Google Hangouts, webinar trainings, and the sharing of resources for the German administration. It operates similarly to the CfA Peer Network, with a few key differences (outlined in further detail below).

MODULE 3 **FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM**

The previous two modules work on preparing two different ways (citizens interested in open data and making a difference in their cities using technology and engaged and motivated city government professionals) for strengthened cooperation over the long term. The Fellowship program is designed to foster more targeted project-based problem solving over fixed periods of time. Much like the CfA Fellowship program, the CfG Fellowship program plans to send teams of Fellows to support a specific city's IT administration locally, over a nine month time period. Once selected and trained, Fellows would work side-by-side with city staff and the local OK Lab to cooperatively address challenges relevant to citizens and their local governments. Further details related to this Module are included in Section Three.

MODULE 4 **INCUBATOR**

After the first three modules are well established and have completed web products, CfG has plans to systematically support potential new businesses created by the apps and APIs that emerge across the programs. In this program, the core value of code availability and re-use that is integral to all three other programs is combined with analysis, so that promising apps can flourish into viable business models. In this way, the Incubator program would help teams take their app and API designs to build them into full-blown products that can gain investment and funding opportunities. The goal for this program is to strengthen Germany's civic tech ecosystem by establishing startups and social enterprises around open data and respective open source apps. It too is modeled from a CfA program.

THE FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM:
AN EARLY 'FALSE START'

The first workshop for CfA's "Code for All" International partners was held in San Francisco in June 2013. Work during that time focused mainly on drafting the concept of CfA-inspired programs while taking into account the unique contexts facing each of these new global partners. Affiliates from Mexico and the Caribbean were also present, as was Google who provided a grant to kick off each country's first project.

Originally, each country was planning to begin their efforts by building a Fellowship program (MODULE 3). For CfG, the implicit understanding was that a German Fellowship program would have to be designed differently than the U.S. version, although the overall structure would be very similar with teams of three and a nine month duration. The main deviation was that CfG fellows would likely spend most of their time living in the cities they were partnering with rather than at CfG headquarters. Implementation proved to be a large leap given that most German cities were entirely unfamiliar with this type of civic tech Fellowship model.

In order to identify which cities would host the first-ever CfG Fellows, the team analysed the cities using categories developed by Bertelsmann Foundation. They started with the largest cities because CfG hoped that at least the challenge of resourcing the Fellowship would be less than with smaller cities. Starting with friends and family and some extensions of those circles, CfG sent proposals to numerous cities across Germany and had several personal meetings – usually with high officials from the administration (IT/egov unit leads).

To pilot this program, a partnering city would need to spend roughly 100,000 EUR, equivalent to 3 full-time salaries, or what a university graduate in the public sector might expect. OKF and CfG would run the whole program, advertising and selecting the Fellows, hosting the workshop series, etc. OKF taking the lead on hiring and training the Fellows would help the program avoid the lengthy HR hiring processes many cities have in place.

RECRUITING CITIES AND SPONSORSHIPS

CfG initially wanted to host Fellowships in three to four cities, and began to reach out to contacts within its existing networks to find out about cities that might be interested. Simultaneously, they also sent proposals to various companies (including Microsoft, SAP, Esri, Siemens, IBM, Cisco, Deutsche Bahn, Deutsche Post, Telekom, GitHub, Rackspace, and Xing) to offer the possibility of partnering or sponsoring the program. Unfortunately, CfG's knowledge about the U.S. experience, combined with immense enthusiasm, still left the team in a tough position to convince city leaders and potential sponsors that investing in this project was a timely and worthwhile idea. Gradually, CfG decided to reduce its initial goal of having three to four cities down to one city. The benefits of hosting a Fellow were unclear to most of the contacts that CfG reached out to, making sponsorship an even tougher sell, with no city committed to participate. Therefore, CfG decided to focus on securing a city to pilot the Fellowship, and would return to fundraising efforts when at least one city was on board.

The following cities demonstrated serious interest in participating in the program:
- Berlin
- Cologne
- Freiburg
- Hamburg
- Munich
- Ulm

CfG had in-person meetings with each of these cities, and also prepared customized materials showcasing ideas of issues the city could address through the program.

CfG narrowed the options down to four cities in the end: Berlin, Cologne, Hamburg, and Munich. These cities stood out due to their strong understanding of the benefits of the Fellowship, and their interest in seeing their city help get the Fellowship program off the ground so future German cities could do likewise in later years. After the cities became confident that the funds would be available to host three Fellows each (which took several weeks/months), CfG was ready to discuss concerns related to procurement.

PROCUREMENT OPTIONS

Based on German procurement law, there appeared to be a few different options for how cities in Germany could legally collaborate and acquire the necessary funds to pay for the CfG Fellowship program. Unfortunately, most of the options would take too long to implement based on the CfG schedule. For example, one option was to establish CfG within a university or research institution; this would allow the Fellowship to be classified as a "research based cooperation," a collaboration that requires a very lightweight procurement process. With more time that option would have been more feasible. Going through the standard procurement process was another option, but would have required each city to run a lengthy and costly process of writing tender documentation, coordinating with participating departments, and then issuing the tender. Naturally, cities were not inclined to make this effort. An additional aspect that made this option unattractive is that other (competing) organisations/companies could win one or more of these tenders leading to the awkward situation that fellowships in different cities would be run by different organisations. Building the program as envisioned by CfG would have been impossible to accomplish in this setup.

CHANGING DIRECTIONS

As a result of the pending complications around procurement and sponsorship, in December 2013 CfG made the decision to not move forward with the Fellowship program for the time being. The silver lining was that as less than 25% of the initial funding from Google.org was spent, substantial funding still remained. Moreover, several well-intentioned contacts in different cities were committed to working with CfG. CfG was now able to focus its attention on building upon one of the other modules that promised to be more lightweight and faster to implement, as well as less dependent on cities to cooperate or fund.

The German version of CfA Brigades — the Open Knowledge Labs — was thus born in early 2014.
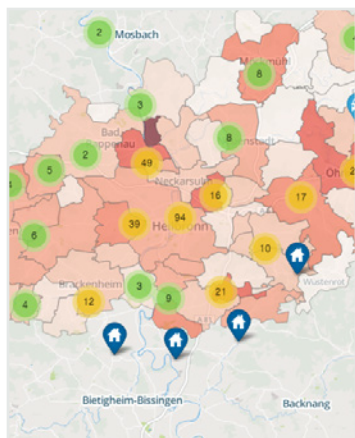
OK LABS:
A REWARDING LAUNCH

[TIME PERIOD Q1-Q2/2014]

The Code for Germany OK Labs kicked off on International Open Data Day, February 22nd, 2014. The initial plan was to start out with 8 labs; however, 11 different cities ended up planning pilot events for this global event.

To prepare the kickoff and ensure the program would fit the needs of local civic tech communities, CfG invited a group of very active OKF community members from cities all over Germany to join the Open Data Day event at the OK Lab in Berlin. The goal of the workshop was to define and design the OK Labs mission and goals together with the community and to recruit OK lab leaders.

Lynn Fine and Hannah Young from Code for America came to Berlin to train the potential Lab leaders and to share their experiences and learnings. The workshop turned out to be a great success, and every single community member CfG invited to the workshop decided to start an OK Lab in their city. Through this collaborative kickoff event, the concept of cooperation among civic tech communities across Germany was more accessible to the various stakeholders involved. The OK Labs program seemed to be the program everyone had been waiting for.

Now, six months after the kickoff, 13 OK Labs are active. The OK Labs have received very positive feedback from the community, and there is almost more demand than the CfG team can handle at times for new Labs in cities throughout Germany. CfG is receiving requests for new labs every other week, but has decided to focus on the development and support of the existing Labs for the remainder of the year. CfG is planning a second round in the beginning of 2015, with an eye towards making the OK Lab scalable and easier to deploy with local autonomy.

PARTICIPATION

While OK Labs are all working towards the same general goals, no lab is quite the same. The local context largely influences projects and approaches. Some OK Lab attendees are active members of the German hacker community, others have close contacts to politics, and still other people are highly involved residents who are sometimes affiliated with local companies and startups.

The cities range from big metropolises like Berlin, Hamburg, Munich, and Cologne to mid-sized cities like Chemnitz, Stuttgart, Dresden, Leipzig, Ulm, Münster, and Bremen, to small cities like Paderborn, Gießen, and Heilbronn. Depending on the size and the location of the city (for example East vs. West), the communities as well as their focus and approaches vary.

The OK Lab in Stuttgart (a rather rich city in the south of Germany) got started by a group of friends who run a tech startup, while the Lab in Chemnitz (former East German city) was initiated by a group of hacktivists that are part of the Chaos Computer Club. Some OK Labs are mainly run by students, others consist of developers who join the meetups in their spare time. The Lab in Hamburg focuses on data journalism and visualization while the team in Ulm has a strong focus on open transportation data. Some OK Labs are already very well connected to city governments while others are in the process of developing those government relationships.

COMMUNICATION & NUMBERS

The OK Labs meet on a regular basis – most of them meet every second week of the month. Almost all of them focus on the reuse of Open Data. They showcase their work and projects on the Code for Germany website, where every Lab has its own subsite. The subsites feature information on the meetups, members and projects of the OK Labs. The site is hosted on Github so that every OK Lab member can easily send pull requests and help to improve the website. This model has proven to be very efficient and sets the right tone: "This is your website, not our website."

There are currently thirteen active OK Labs with an average member count of 15 people who attend bi-weekly meetups. Modestly calculated, that's a total of 2340 hours hacked since the meetings started taking place regularly in April.

Every OK Lab receives 800 EUR of funding per year to run local events. Additionally, CfG has a central budget for travel expenses, workshops, and promotional materials. The OK Labs are each currently coordinated by one full time Project Leader and a part-time Project Assistant.

GOALS

CfG's overarching goals for OK Labs in 2014 include:

- Growing the local civic tech community.
- Building better relationships between residents and local governments.
- Releasing more datasets.
- Bringing more attention to the topic of open data.
- Enhancing a civic tech content library with tools and best practices.
- Fundraising.

Here is a quick glance at what some of the OK Labs are doing to accomplish these goals.

I.   HEILBRONN - Although Heilbronn is one of the smallest cities in the program, the community is very active and well connected to city government and the local press. The OK Lab in Heilbronn has been working on a variety of topics directly linked to the everyday life of citizens.

Drinking tap water is quite popular in Germany, so this OK Lab decided to build an app that analyzes and shares the quality of local water. In close cooperation with the local administration, they managed to open the local water data and combined it with already accessible information. To spread the word about the project they collaborated with a local newspaper and launched a "What's in my tap water?" campaign. Not only is the site very informative, providing a breakdown of water contamination and minerals, but it includes visuals and charts as well. This user-friendly app has proven to be a great product to share because it clearly depicts the usefulness and relevance of open data, and is a very effective "door opener" for discussions with city officials who might be unclear on the benefits of civic tech.

Another great app idea by OK Lab Heilbronn was to visualize the statistics on theft in their region, mostly in order to compare it over time and report on the seemingly rapid growth of incidents. The local police department opened up the data for the Lab, and since then the application Crime Map has been featured in several articles in the local press.

II. BERLIN - The OK Lab in Berlin has an active membership pool of approximately twenty people, with many more people visiting the OK Lab from time to time. Several of the apps that are being worked on focus on city planning and urban development, in part because Berlin is such a booming and ever-evolving city.

One of the projects deals with the planned modification of the big city park "Tempelhofer Feld" which used to be an airport, and has been converted into a giant open field that is being used by numerous citizens as a recreational area. There were plans to convert

the space once again, but these plans were opened up to public debate in a referendum. Stefan, a member of OK Lab Berlin, saw an opportunity here and thought of a way to help citizens comprehend what changes are being planned for the Tempelhofer Feld, in order to enable them to make an informed decision. A team from a local newspaper joined the effort and supported Stefan and helped him build an application that would represent the pending plan ideas in 3D form. The result was a beautiful and helpful visualization that was published on the newspaper's website prior to the referendum, to prepare and inform citizens before their vote. In part because of the collaboration with the newspaper, the project received a lot of publicity and attention from the public and got an extremely positive response.

The OK Lab Heilbronn was inspired by this idea, and are now planning to build a similar application for the upcoming BUGA, the National Garden Exhibition, to depict the building plans that are in the works.

III. HAMBURG - The motivation behind forming an OK Lab in Hamburg came from a group of open data experts whose focus is on the visualization of data and data journalism. They've been very active applications such as mappable.info and Data Driven Journalism Hamburg. They invite both journalists and civic hackers to their meet-ups, and generally 20 people come together and meet every two weeks to uncover new journalism stories and to build tools for their city. OK Lab Hamburg is very well connected with its city officials, possibly due to the fact that the city of Hamburg was the first city in Germany to introduce a Transparency Law. As a result, all public datasets were required by law to be opened beginning in autumn 2014, which will give this OK Lab plenty of resources to keep progression high.

Since February 2014 this OK Lab has been working on a variety of visualizations and projects. Their main focus is on geospatial data and topics like gentrification. One of the Lab's latest projects is a map that shows how trees in public spaces contribute to air quality in Hamburg. For the map they used data from the city's tree database to display tree types and their CO2 levels. But visualizing the data is just a first step as the data allows for much more. This Lab is also planning build another related/integrated app that outlines the pollen level in specific areas, and offers mechanisms to adopt a tree in your neighbourhood.

To read more stories from other OK Labs, please visit here.

LESSONS LEARNED

Based on CfG's rocky start to the Fellowship program, many of the lessons learned so far relate to the challenges faced with procurement and city recruitment when doing Fellowship programs. While the OK Lab programs have also influenced CfG's processes greatly, most of what has been learned stems directly from CfG's experience with the Fellowship.

RECRUITMENT

Unfortunately, presenting CfA experiences alone, such as Fellowship program success stories in the U.S., was not enough to convince local governments in Germany to take a leap of faith and invest in the Fellowship program. When recruiting both cities and sponsors, CfG highlighted examples of applications, models, and the positive impact on relationships that the CfA Fellowship program had had in the United States. More explanation regarding how these examples could be relevant in German cities might have have made a more significant impact on the willingness of city officials to engage in the Fellowship program. More examples of how German civic tech activities could create positive change for German citizens would have likely helped local city governments better envision how a Fellowship would benefit their immediate constituents, and would have set more accurate expectations for the overall process. Generally, it might have been more beneficial in terms of securing a city government partner for the Fellowship program for CfG to discuss the potential impact for German cities instead of focusing on the impact of CfA's programs in the U.S.

Without context-specific examples in Germany city representatives, even in IT departments had great difficulty imagining what the results of having Fellows in-house locally would be. This uncertainty posed a political and economic risk that German cities were not willing to take. In the future, CfG would like to do more participatory recruitment like workshops and webinars, so they can better identify the needs of cities before proposing deliverables. CfG can also now use examples from the OK Labs to show German city officials "what's possible" through engaging in civic tech. Until cities are identified, sponsorships and procurement processes cannot be discussed.

TIMELINE

Based on the above, CfG has learned some valuable information about the timing involved in starting programs from the ground up. In the future, setting priorities will be key to establish realistic timelines for starting a program especially a Fellowship program. Additionally, CfG has learned that when time is of the essence, initiating OK Labs is a much more realistic starting point. Although CfA started with Fellowships and then with Brigades (the CfA version of CfG's OK Labs), not every location has to follow this order. In the case of CfG, having well-run and popular OK Labs may be the key ingredient to starting the Fellowship program because many citizens, techies, and government officials will already be familiar with civic tech and better understand it within the German context.

OWNERSHIP & PARTICIPATION

The success of OK Labs showed that ownership is crucial. It has been important to involve people from local government and the tech space early on in the process of building OK Labs. This allows them to take ownership of the program and its activities from the beginning rather than once the OK Lab is up and running. Also, CfG and OKF hope that getting more people involved in the planning phases of all these modules will open up the space to build a more diverse network. The Lab leadership team has noticed that all of the OK Labs are currently populated by mainly young white men. In the future, they hope to see all the demographics represented in German cities present on OK Lab leadership teams.

LESSONS FOR CODE FOR AMERICA

By partnering with OKF, Code for America has learned a lot about how things can be done differently in different contexts. From the Fellowship mishap to the surprisingly successful OK Labs, Code for America will be able to better advise future International Partners on how to be flexible when managing expectations based on the presence or absence of civic tech efforts within a country or city.

NEXT STEPS

CfG is excited to have successfully launched so many OK Labs in such a short amount of time, and has identified ways to use their success towards additional planned modules and programs.

PEERS & PARTNERS NETWORK:
COACHING CITIES

[EST. TO START IN Q3/Q4 2014]

CfG has learned that starting with a fully fledged Fellowship program was an unrealistic task for most cities. Moreover, CfG has seen how quickly the OK Labs flourished compared to the time and resources it took to pitch the Fellowship program to cities. The next step is to experiment with a similarly lightweight and scalable program to help city governments prepare for a more involved engagement (such as a Fellowship program) in the future. CfG intends to support cities that helps to build internal momentum for and interest in civic technology efforts by connecting individuals who work in similar administrative capacities in different locations by creating a "Peers & Partners Network" (MODULE 2).

The Peers and Partners Network aims to build community inside and between cities. The goal is to not only to connect staff on an operational level and bring together examples and practices from other cities/countries, but also to politically drum up more momentum around open data. This network thus aims to achieve two primary goals: help cities by bringing them together around open data, and challenge cities to commit publicly to an open data agenda.

I.   CFA'S PEER NETWORK MODEL - One model for this network is the CfA Peer Network, a hands-on collaborative program that functions on an operational level. Staff members in city governments across the globe who are doing open government/open data work meet virtually to discuss and exchange ideas, and help each other improve civic tech engagement. It is a network between and within administrations.

II. THE OPEN GOVERNMENT PARTNERSHIP MODEL - The other model for this program is a slight variation to the existing Open Government Partnership (OGP) (more info below) but would function on the municipal level (while OGP is at the federal level). This type of network is new for open data on the local level. In this manner, this program aims to create an "OGP for cities." The OGP is an international partnership with political aims. The OGP builds political momentum and commitment on behalf of national governments to pursue an open government agenda by offering membership
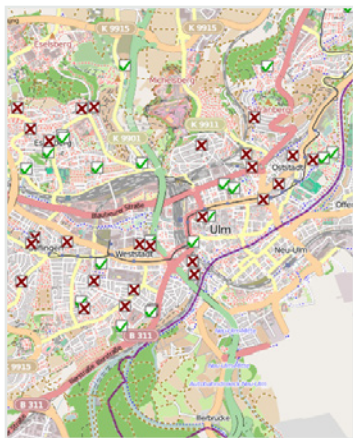
access to an exclusive group, or club, of officials in exchange for the creation and subsequent completion of open government action plans. Countries can only become members of the OGP if they undertake concrete steps that demonstrate their political commitment towards transparency and civic participation. For the CfG version of such a program, mayors would be expected to sign a open government/open data declaration text and city councils would be expected to pass according legislation. (Details of the eligibility criteria are a work in progress at this point.) Doing so would grant a city access to this exclusive "club." These steps alone do not involve concrete steps that increase the openness of cities, but without such expressed commitments related efforts would be much more at risk to fizzle out as resources are less likely to be made available in the absence of an expressed open data mandate at the political level.

III. LEVERAGING ASSOCIATIONS - There was one additional idea that CfG identified that could increase the usefulness of networking different groups and also serve as a way to better deal with procurement challenges. Many cities are members in one or more "associations" and this membership could be used to advance CfG's goals for Germany. Given the current plan, three associations are of particular relevance.

a. DEUTSCHER STÄDTE - UND GEMEINDEBUND (DStGB) is one of three umbrella organizations that represents their member cities at the state, national, and European levels. They are financed by membership fees which allow them to act independently. Membership in the 3 associations breaks down as follows:

   DST (Deutscher Städtetag) for 5,700 large cities
   DLT (Deutscher Landkreistag) for 296 counties
   DStGB (Deutscher Städte- und Gemeindebund) for 13,000 middle/ small cities

b. KGSt is a professional association for public management with a similar financing mechanism based on membership. They organize exchanges, training, etc. on leadership, organizational design, and management.

c. VITAKO is the national association of municipal IT service providers in Germany. These 57 IT service provides employ 500,000 IT staff in 10,000 mid-sized small cities.

CfG is currently exploring opportunities and ways to work with these associations. As many cities are members in one or more of them, it might be worthwhile to explore ways to describe the Fellowship as an offering that can be easily integrated within their respective membership offerings. The Peers and Partners Network will be a vehicle through which CfG can further explore this opportunity.

INCUBATOR:
FOSTERING INDEPENDENT INNOVATION

[EST. TIME PERIOD 2015 AND BEYOND]

The Incubator (MODULE 4) program is the least developed module of CfG's future programming plans, because it is not intended to take place until well into the future. Stable and active OK Labs and (ideally) a running Fellowship program are neededto start establishing an Incubator, as the products and applications these groups produce would be the ones "incubated."

The general idea and rationale for an Incubator, which OKF is modeling off of CfA's Incubator, is straight-forward: Offer support for any team of Fellows or OK Lab members who want to create a business model around one or more of the apps/technology they have developed.

As a first proof-of-concept CfG needs to answer a minimum of the following questions: How could projects coming out of OK Labs (and, later, Fellowships) access the Incubator? What requirements would need to be fulfilled? What type of support should the Incubator provide? How could financial investments be secured? What resources are needed (finance, skills, etc.) to run the Incubator?

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS