CIVIC LAB

code for
Romania

DISPELLING THE DARKNESS
OF WHAT WE HAVE TO DO TO
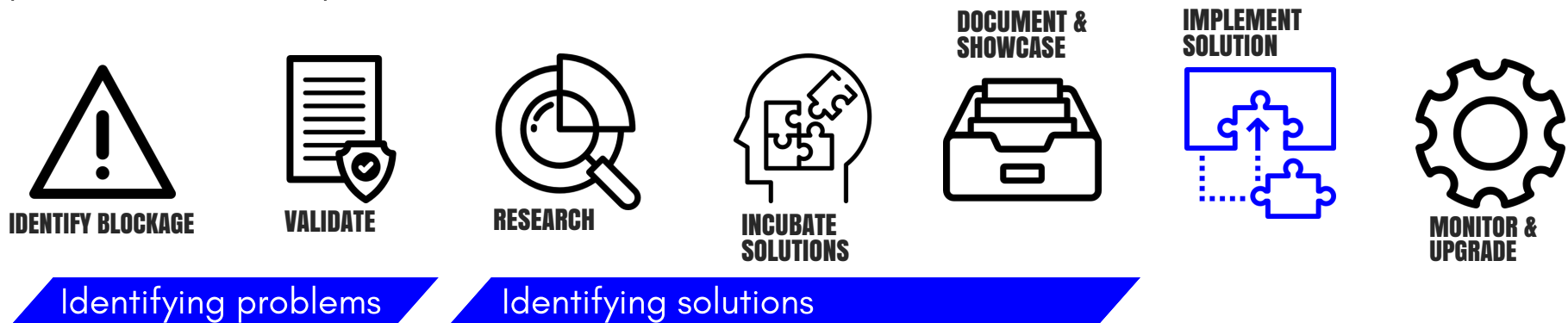
UPGRADE ROMANIA
TO THE COUNTRY WE WANT TO LIVE IN

WHAT MAKES UP A LAB?

We think there are two factors: **a scientific method** and an **innovative solution** driven process.

Simply put, Civic Lab is where Code for Romania does its magic, finding solutions that work for solving Romania's social blockages.

Many associate Code for Romania with IT development, but much of our work happens in fact before the first lines of code are written. Our team within the Civic Lab is always busy researching and mapping up the most relevant social blockages Romania is facing at both local and national level. We document all our findings, search for the most innovative and impactful solutions, test them and make them ready to implement them. We are never thrown off by the complexity of the problems or the scope of the solutions.

			DOCUMENT & SHOWCASE	IMPLEMENT SOLUTION	

IDENTIFY BLOCKAGE VALIDATE RESEARCH INCUBATE SOLUTIONS MONITOR & UPGRADE

Identifying problems Identifying solutions

Civic Lab is in both scope and method a unique undertaking in Romania.

With every app coming out of our Civic Lab we are upgrading Romania.

IDENTIFY BLOCKAGES:

GATHERING LEADS

Through the last year we have been approached by numerous professional groups, NGOs or private individuals signalling us various social blockages that they are facing.

For effectively collecting this information we will be launching a website titled "**What Keeps You Up at Night?**". It will feature an easy-to-use form enabling the user to formulate their message so that we can have a clear starting point for further research.

The launch of the website will be doubled by a strong communication campaign aimed at making professional groups, businesses and civil society actors as well as private individuals aware of the existence of the platform and transforming it into the go to place for signalling social blockages in Romania.

IDENTIFY BLOCKAGES:

DIAGNOSING ROMANIA

We will not just sit back and wait for social blockages to be reported to us.

Our research team will actively collect and identify issues by running a separate independent study on certain fields of interests.

We will identify the stakeholders, organisations and institutions working on each of the areas under research and reach out to them to tap into their knowledge.

We will also be organising focus groups and conduct semi-structured interviews with specialists on each topic, identifying those blockages across Romania that could potentially be solved through tech solutions.

>> **Culture and Arts**

>> **Diaspora**

>> **Ecology**

>> **Education**

>> **Health**

>> **Justice**

>> **Journalism**

>> **Rural Development**

>> **Transparency & Open Data**

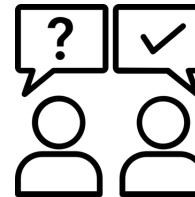>> **Vulnerable Groups & Social Inclusion**

VALIDATE:

MAKING SURE THE ISSUES ARE REAL

Mapping a list of societal problems identified by various stakeholders is just a first step. We cannot assume these problems to be real or 100% accurate.
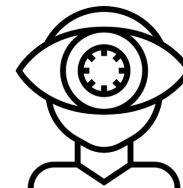
A research and analysis team will gather together with experts and other relevant stakeholders in order to define and implement the correct quantitative and qualitative research methods for each specific problem mapped. Be it questionnaires, interviews or field research, all the necessary efforts will be put into validating the problem.

All of the data and findings resulting from the mapping and validation phases will be gathered in extensive reports on each field of interest and made public.
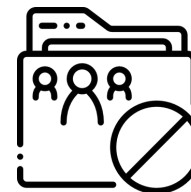
POSSIBLE OUTCOMES OF THE VALIDATING PROCESS

PROBLEM VALIDATED AS INITIALLY DEFINED

PROBLEM REDEFINED

PROBLEM DOES NOT EXIST OR CANNOT BE SOLVED THROUGH A TECH SOLUTION
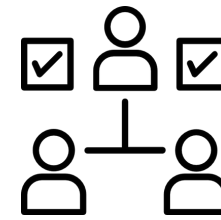
RESEARCH:

UNDERSTANDING EACH ISSUE IN DEPTH

Once we validate a certain problem, we will be able to clearly define it and enter the research phase.

Gathering in depth knowledge on the issue at hand is the very core of our undertaking and it is the result of several simultaneous efforts.

Starting with user research, detailed documentation, persona definition, story mapping and behavioural studies, our work continues with contextual research that analyses the legal framework the issue is subjected to, the social factors that influence it's development and the cultural norms it manifests in.
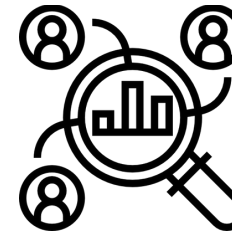
We are also planning to partner with a Research Agency that can support the Civic Lab with comprehensive data at every stage of the process.
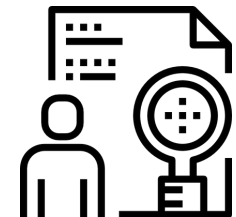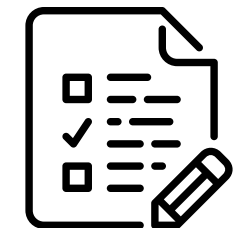
FOCUS GROUPS

SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS

RESEARCH AGENCY

FIELD RESEARCH

LEGAL RESEARCH

QUESTIONNAIRES

TECH RESEARCH:

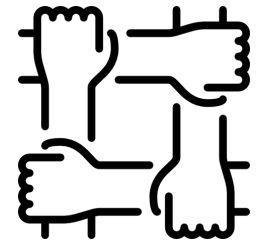## IMPORTING SOLUTIONS AND KNOWLEDGE

Social change is never the result of doubling the work of others, but of improving and adding to it and we believe resources should be invested with that principle in mind.

That is why, as soon as we start understanding each issue in detail, our Tech Research Department starts mapping ways in which these problems have been solved around the world and evaluates if we can (1) import some of the tech solutions, (2) import specific modules, or (3) learn from the work of other organisations tackling the same issues.
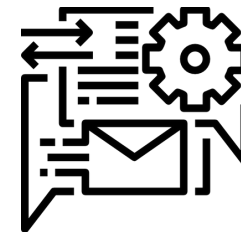
As partners within Code for All we are in constant touch with some of the biggest and most impactful civic tech organisations worldwide, exchanging knowledge, solutions and, where possible, working together on building civic apps.
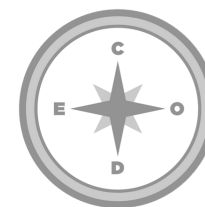
REPLICATION

CO-CREATION

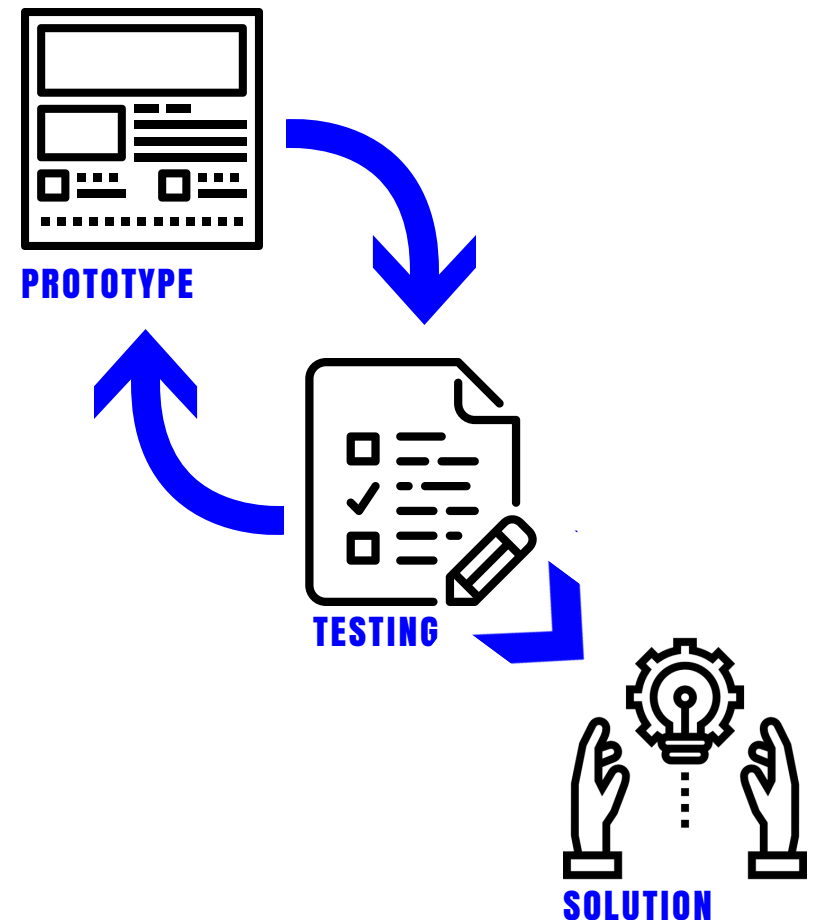**KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE**

CODE FOR ALL

INCUBATE SOLUTIONS:

FINDING SOLUTIONS THAT WORK

Based on the research findings, our UX and development team will move to a prototyping and testing process.

Every solution will benefit from a functional prototype meant to further confirm the usability of the proposed digital solution and will also allow us to better measure the potential impact of the final app. At the same time, this useful practice has a powerful effect on shortening and simplifying the following development stage by eliminating potential erroneous iterations from the beginning.

The result of this stage is a clearly defined minimum viable product, ready to be designed and implemented by the tech team.

PROTOTYPE

TESTING

SOLUTION

DOCUMENT & SHOWCASE:
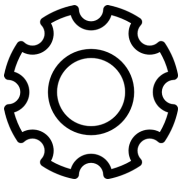
ROMANIA'S UPGRADES PACKAGE

Once the research and incubation cycles are over and a solution is documented and ready for implementation, it will be showcased on the Civic Lab website.

We do believe that it is within our power to upgrade Romania and Civic Lab is putting forward the means to do that: a list of thoroughly-researched, well-documented, straight-forward tech solutions that can solve some of the country's social blockages.

Code for Romania pledges to develop these civic apps voluntarily with the support of sponsors who we call upon to cover the logistical costs of this endeavour.

Once adopted, each solution enters our Tech for Social Good Programme where Code for Romania's tech community will implement it.
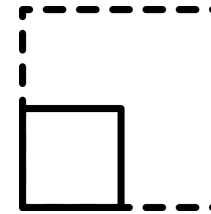
MONITOR & UPGRADE:

OPTIMISING CONTINUOUSLY

By no means do we stop after launch. We cannot assume a problem is solved automatically and even the best solutions need continuous optimisation to perform and be sustainable.
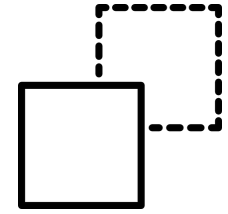
Therefore, we permanently monitor each and every app and upgrade them based on the findings. We verify that they respond to the identified needs, that their impact is indeed making a change and see where we can improve in order to maximise the positive change the apps bring in peoples' lives.

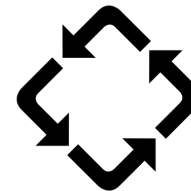We also continuously look for opportunities to export, scale or replicate the solutions we build.

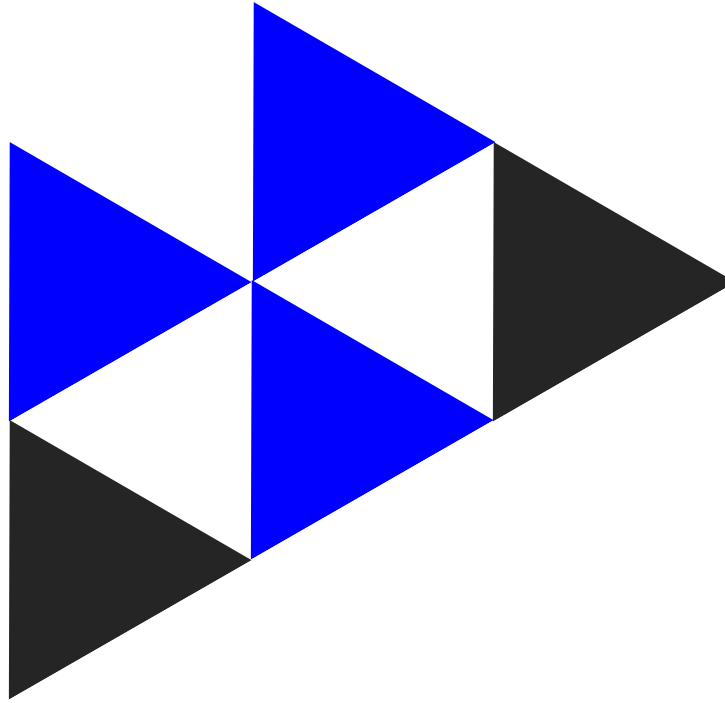## MAKING THE MOST OUT OF EVERY APP

SCALE

REPLICATE

REUSE IN PART OR IN FULL

EXPORT

IT IS WITHIN OUR POWER TO UPGRADE ROMANIA!

ONE APP AT A TIME

UPGRADING ROMANIA one app at a time

Brain Gain

Centru Civic

Data Portal

Redirectioneaza 2%

WHAT WE SOLVE
the disconnection
between Romanian
experts (especially the
ones abroad) and
organisations in need
of their expertise:
media, NGOs
and public institutions.

WHAT WE SOLVE
the duplicated work
done by NGOs in
developing civic apps
and the lack of
awareness of the
general audience
regarding open source
digital tools.

WHAT WE SOLVE
the lack of an open
data portal that is
built with attention to
usability and employs
clear standards and
support mechanisms
for data curation.

WHAT WE SOLVE
the time consuming
process for both NGOs
and citizens of
collecting and
submitting tax form
#230.

UPGRADING ROMANIA one app at a time

Monitorizare Vot

Incognito

Ce Zice Legea

WelcoME

WHAT WE SOLVE
the lack of a digital
and real time
monitoring and
reporting on what is
taking place in polling
stations on election
day.

WHAT WE SOLVE
no safe, secure and
easy way for people to
whistleblow which can
be used by any
journalist and NGO in
Romania.

WHAT WE SOLVE
no simple way to track
legislation through all
its approval stages.

WHAT WE SOLVE
no proper
communication
channel adapted to
the needs of closely
knit and/or
marginalised groups.

UPGRADING ROMANIA one app at a time

Catalog Politic

WHAT WE SOLVE
the lack of digitised, centralised & easy-to-understand data on elected officials.

Theater Hub

WHAT WE SOLVE
the lack of an extensive collaboration platform for artists and specialists tailored to the specifics of their profession.

Disaster Relief Ecosystem

WHAT WE SOLVE
while prone to them, we lack awareness of and preparedness for major natural disasters, especially earthquakes.

Vot Diaspora

WHAT WE SOLVE
the complicated process of registering for voting abroad.

LET'S UPGRADE ROMANIA
one app at a time

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code for
Romania