

Hey D.C. squad!

TL;DR (but seriously, pls read all): We have major traction, next semester will be more legit, commit 10-15 hours/week, if you want to continue sign up here:

<https://goo.gl/forms/XFcRbdpGo6eIV8j32>

Many of you want to know details of what's next, so here's finally everything laid out. VERY long, but very important b/c transparency.

First off— really hope that all of you that came to D.C. decide to continue with this next semester, and everyone that came has an automatic option to do it. D.C. was a formative experience for me (Alice), and seeing how valuable we were honestly changed how I think about my career. Plus resistance was lit. Continuing together would be the dream, but it's your decision.

Second— sorry if Tyler, Anjali, and I haven't been transparent enough thus far. It's a combination of not knowing ourselves exactly where things were going (Alice only just decided to work on this part time even after graduating), being focused on the D.C. event, having this weird it-is-a-class-but-it's-not-a-class situation where it was hard to communicate, and the shift between people not caring at all to people wanting to get involved (if anyone remembers that september meeting, starting stuff is hard!) We'll do better in the future, and please bear with us throughout this whole learning experience.

Nonprofit & The Dream

Moving forward, we are starting a nonprofit organization (basically a **nonprofit startup**) and want to continue doing the kind of work that we just did this semester. We have a pretty grand dream-- to **increase public access to data and insight that would further human security and help prevent and address illicit financing, terrorism, genocide, war crimes, kleptocracy, you name it**. Basically anything geopolitical that's related to security. Even as students, we can have a huge impact on issues that matter to us.

This is a nonprofit for three reasons: first, to be mission-driven rather than profit-driven; second, because we're not at a stage that we need profit anyway; third, because our (everyone in the nonprofit's) collective mission is much more powerful together than as individual products. For example, flight crew would drown in the DC quagmire (the big fish are playin' and it's too real) without some other products. The story of a squad of Berkeley students daring to change the world really means something, and people will help us along the way.

Traction

- Reporters, researchers, analysts, treasury people wanting to use all the products
- Treasury people really, REALLY impressed (director of OFAC kinda just sputtered praise to Michael Murphy and Ali for a few minutes)
- Lawyers, mentors, Yaya, faculty all really into it and really into helping out

- New partner at Boalt; continuing with C4ADS; other partnerships pending
- Seriously, we've hit a pain point

Overview of Meeting at Treasury

This happened super randomly, with someone from OFAC messaging Tyler on LinkedIn during finals week. What I thought would be a 30 minute meeting with one guy and some demos turned into a two hour meeting with twenty people in suits--as well as one of Treasury's top executives--and long story short they were really impressed by everything we've built. What this means is that we know that what we're doing is valuable, and even might be more innovative than some of the most expensive tools. We considered forming a partnership with them, but **decided against working directly with government as anything more than users**. If anyone has an opinion on this, would love to discuss it more.

Changes Next Semester

Noteworthy changes based on feedback from students and industry partners:

1. Yaya is the first member of the Board of Directors
2. 4 Engineering Products: at least 2 continuing from last semester, 2 new (tentative)
 - a. Products expected to run for a year+ (flexible)
 - b. New products decided before the semester starts
 - c. 1+ partner org for each product
 - d. Number of products and which ones we continue depends on interest & feasibility
 - e. Prioritize high impact products that make strategic sense (i.e. diversity & not just 4 products related to terrorism)
 - f. Tyler handles broad technical oversight
3. Picking up partnership w/ [Human Rights Investigation Lab](#) in Boalt on a new product
4. Team formation
 - a. Each team will have a **product manager** that manages execution, corresponds with customers and partners; one-year commitment; a **part of all decisions related to their product**
 - i. PMs chosen based on demonstrated commitment
 - b. Teams will be mostly formed before the semester starts, then will work to recruit new members where they need help
 - c. Product managers will have the responsibility/authority to recruit potential new members based on needs of their team
 - d. We'll also be doing organization-wide recruiting in the fall--you all will be involved in interviewing and selection
 - e. Reach out to your friends who would love to join and contribute
5. **Broadening scope** to include war crimes, human trafficking, hate crime, etc
 - a. Reason: fighting terrorism alone isn't enough; the world's a lot more complicated
6. Adding an **analysis/ journalism division**
 - a. Reason: tech alone isn't enough; we also need to communicate what we're doing; impact comes from reports and journalism that people understand
 - b. 5 people, beta stage

- c. **Supplements our software products**; we'd be conducting analysis with the products we build--validating our tools and providing valuable internal test users/customers
 - d. Multimedia, long-form journalism, podcasts, data-driven analysis, world is your oyster
 - e. Headed by Anjali
- 7. We're not a class, supervised by the SCET or any other on-campus group, and we are not a student organization. This means:
 - a. We are all **directly accountable to our clients and partners**, as well as others in the organization
 - b. **Deadlines and expectations will no longer be loose**. The atmosphere will be more professional and we'll be expected to deliver quality products within the deadlines we set.
 - c. We have the freedom to recruit, fundraise, and do what we wish without any university/bureaucratic/political oversight

What do Tyler, Alice, and Anjali do?

We'll continue to act as the leadership and decision making team, but want to open up our decision processes to include as many members as possible. We'll manage partnerships and clients, recruiting, internal operations, and PR. Additionally, us 3 will have more defined responsibilities:

- Tyler is going to run the internal operations of the organization, particularly the engineering focused products. Ask Tyler about any questions you have concerning your role next semester, desired team/product, or internal organizational suggestions.
- Anjali will be running the new analysis division as well as organization-wide PR. Ask Anjali to clarify anything related to the analysis side, make suggestions about it's structure and goals, and please let her know if you'd like to be on our analysis team.
- Alice will be our overall president and the external face of the organization to our clients and partners. If you have questions about our relationships with other organizations, suggested partners, legality and IP, or finding customers for your product, ask Alice.

We want feedback and to involve as many people as possible. We'll iterate until we find a structure that gives everyone autonomy while not bogging the whole org down. This will be a flat startup structure.

Intellectual Property

A really important clarification: what we all built this semester in this class and the nonprofit are separate. Basically, if you did work this semester, you get to decide what to do with the work (putting it under the nonprofit is an option). But if you decide to be a part of the nonprofit—meaning the nonprofit team collectively provide PR, a network of contacts, legal help, negotiation and strategy— then the IP falls under the nonprofit in some way. We'll need to work out the details of this with a lawyer, but hopefully all of us can find some way that people still have personal stake in IP of what they build. However, what we should avoid is our products

spinning off into for-profit companies, since many of them have the potential to be profitable. In order to work towards the dream, we do want products to stay in the nonprofit.

What continuing looks like

Options are to PM, work on a product, or be on the analysis team. We'll probably have a weekly all-team meeting, which will mostly be working sessions but every three weeks will have everyone updating each other & checking in with leadership. You can get as involved as you want, more involvement = more responsibilities. Expect more commitment than last semester and more accountability— but it's still a **part-time activity for full-time students**. Commit at least **10-15 hours a week**.

As a next step, **sign up here if you want to continue:**

<https://goo.gl/forms/XFcRbdpGo6eIV8j32>

A lot of stuff is still up in the air, and up to now we've tried to not talk about stuff that's not confirmed (because it looks unprofessional if it falls through). But we want to discuss with you! So there will be more things in the next email if you decide to continue.

If you have any questions, concerns, suggestions, etc, or just want to discuss something and get more involved, please don't hesitate to reach out to Tyler, Anjali, or myself. Transitioning from the three of us bootstrapping and trying to make sure the collider course didn't go up in flames to being an actual organization and a collective undertaking definitely has growing pains-- but that's where we want this to go.

Major props to you for getting this far,

Alice, Anjali, and Tyler

For next email for those wanting to continue:

Palantir has said they'll be our tech mentor next semester (meaning some of their software engineers will be on slack and schedule periodic meetings), but the details need to be fleshed out and they haven't responded to emails since D.C.

Financial Details:

Some other things to note:

We are currently in contracting discussions with C4ADS. Most of these talks are specific to the flights product, which C4ADS would like to continue. We're currently at an impasse where they want to pay to own all IP rights of the future flights platform, while we're looking for shared IP

and a more collaborative relationship. Negotiations are ongoing. If it goes well, though, C4ADS has said they're going to publicize the platform and have their partner orgs throughout the world use it. This means the nonprofit appears in NYTimes, WSJ, major publications, and the product will get used and have legitimacy.

Additionally, C4ADS expressed interest in funding and collaborating on the continuation of the OFACasaurus product. Nothing is official and talks have barely begun, but again if they go well OFACasaurus could be used in many C4ADS partner organizations and government agencies.

Working on several leads to get a law firm on board Pro Bono. We need IP/contracts help.