# about:dribdat

v.1.5-09.2020 _ **dribdat.cc** _ CC BY 4.0

dribdat is an online accelerator of Hackathons with Impact. It helps organizers and participants to connect events, challenges, teams, participants and projects across documentation, development and community platforms. With dribdat powering your event, transparent analytics on the progress of teams help to document verifiable results in real-time and with open standards.

## Goals

Using dribdat, you can collect and showcase projects at time-bound events known as hackathons. Hackathons are more than just a trendy way to get recruited into an IT job: they are a venue for open collaboration, civic engagement, and technical experimentation in a social setting. With the experience of organising many such rencontres, we started this platform to streamline efforts and share best practices with the wider community.

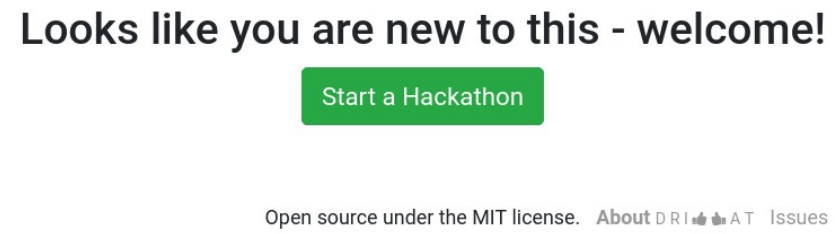
Emerging from the world of open data and civil society initiatives, dribdat began on the premise that participants are not only using data sources to create projects with a real-world impact, but that they themselves participate in intense data sharing experiences. In other words, hackathons can be thought of as focus groups of data collection and development driven by open access.

The name dribdat is a tip of the hat to Dribbble, a famous online community for graphic designers, and the Dat project, a peer-to-peer protocol and one of the most revolutionary Internet publication and data exchange initiatives of recent years.

## dribdat is an open source project board for splendid collaboration.

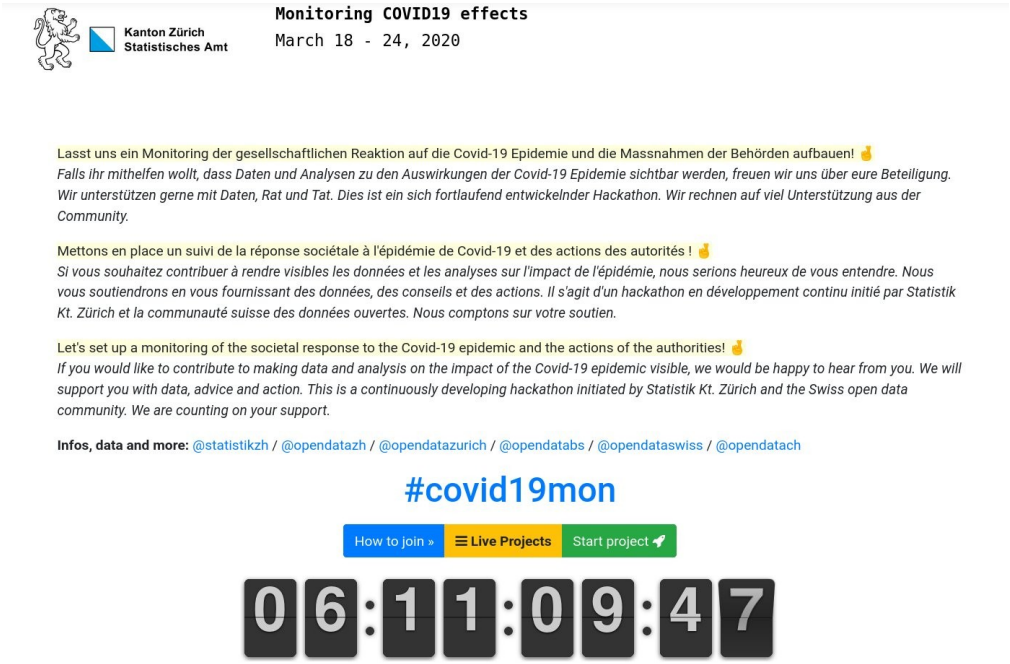
Designed with the goal of helping organizers take better care of their teams, dribdat features timekeeping and progress tracking, streamlined information channels to teams, making it easier to sustain the energy in the room or online event, and let everyone focus on driving ideas forward. dribdat could also be used in a variety of similar formats, such as *Design Thinking* and *Rapid Prototyping* workshops, where time is of the essence.

The code is accessible for free from GitHub with instructions for self-hosting the platform. Once an application is running, you set up your first hackathon. Future events can run on the same site.




On the front page you can see then the upcoming event, as well as any previous events. A short description is followed by a link to the event home page, as well as a second-by-second countdown of time remaining until the start or the finish line (once started). *Projects*, *Challenges* and *Resources* are shown in the event screen. Here you can learn about topics, datasets, schedules, get directions and any other vital information that the organizers have provided.

Before the event begins it is possible to *Share a challenge*. People who are interested in your challenge can join it to express their support, approach you in person or via virtual channels that we integrate into the tool. Once the event has started, you can form a team just by clicking the *Join* button, taking over a challenge and boosting it, or selecting *Start project* to begin afresh.




Canton of Zürich / #covid19mon 2020

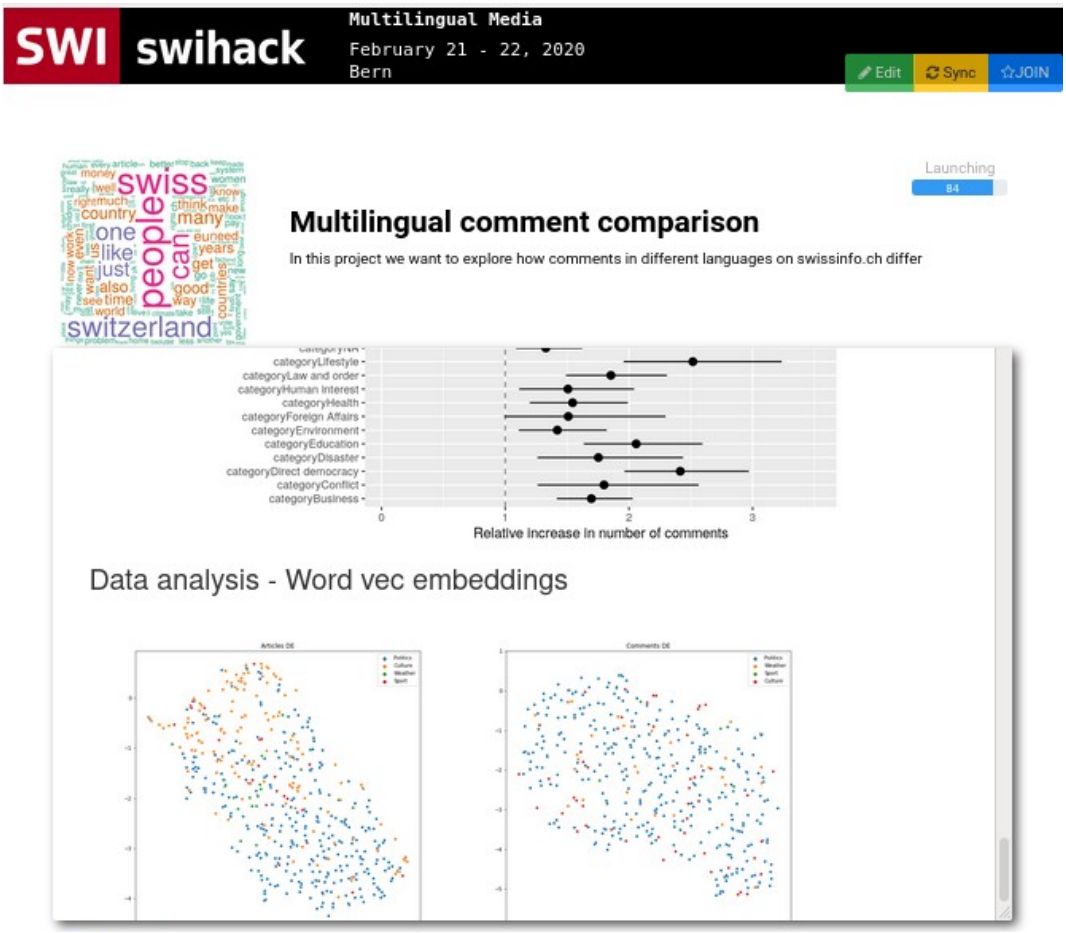
## dribdat is the best connection to your hackathon results.

Typically, hackathons are run on some kind of publishing workflow that collects data from the team in a series of forms. We consider this to be a laborious process that steals valuable time from teams and organizers while introducing bias and latency. It is more rare that project information is facilitated with the ability to start a project on the basis of existing data from GitHub or another site.

We believe in the power of the open Web, and in dribdat-powered events, the teams are truly free to work where they please. Keeping up with every twist and turn in the online collaboration landscape, dribdat connects a support community sharing the best brainstorming, prototyping and code sharing tools, helping to ensure we can plug in to the most preferred platforms.

No more forms! Projects which are published in a compatible source repository - such as GitHub, GitLab, Bitbucket - or supported wikis, such as Etherpad, DokuWiki and Google Docs - can be synchronized so that documentation can take place, and *continue to happen in a distributed way*, using standard formats such as the *README's* favored by the open source community.

Users may also use short Twitter-like posts with Markdown formatting to document their project, and we are working on simpler, more direct ways to capture insight into participant activity – such as dridbot, a Slack integration that allows updating projects directly within a team channel.



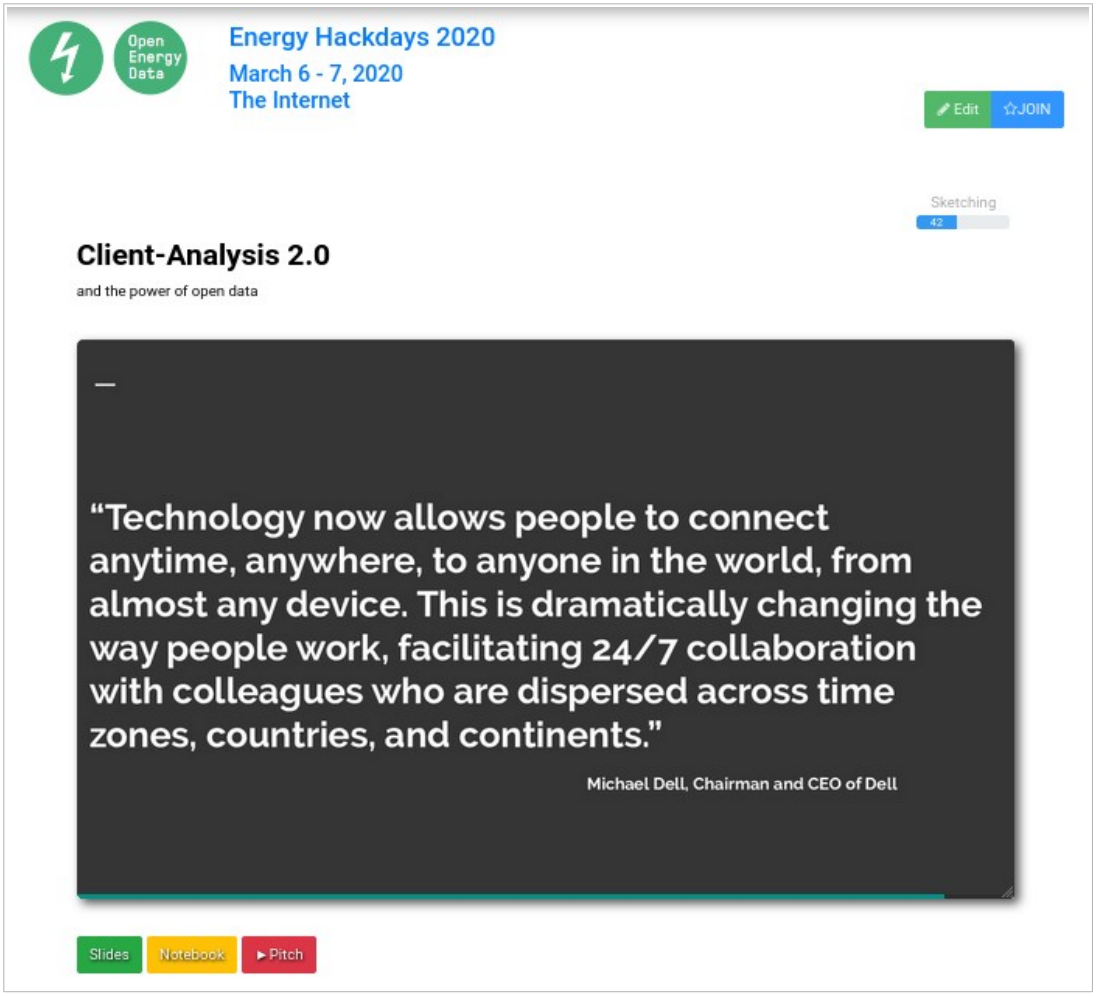

Swiss Broadcasting Corporation / #swihack 2020

## dribdat reduces friction for more effective collaboration.

Project presentations and demos are made easily and efficiently available for evaluation. We support embedding real-time collaborative text editing such as CodiMD and Jupyter notebooks, directly into the project to minimize the friction of on-boarding participants.

Each team can update their own progress level, in addition to an automatic metric for profile completeness and activity levels, to give each project a progress score. Team members can subscribe to the project once you have started it, and immediately gain access to improving the content. Their public profile will then be linked to it, and platform activities (messages, progress reports, code commits) can be tracked along side their team-members. We are working to build this into a powerful tool for tracking performance and recognizing contribution.

Our data exports, API and event dashboard allows organizers to at a glance see how all their teams rank over the course of the event, and extract statistics for insight on the pulse of the hackathon, pointing to improvements and providing compelling content for sponsors. Fundamental to all of this is the experience of the hackathon participant, their ability to represent their team, be aware of what's happening in the wider event, document their efforts, and present the results.




Opendata.ch / Energy Data Hackdays 2020

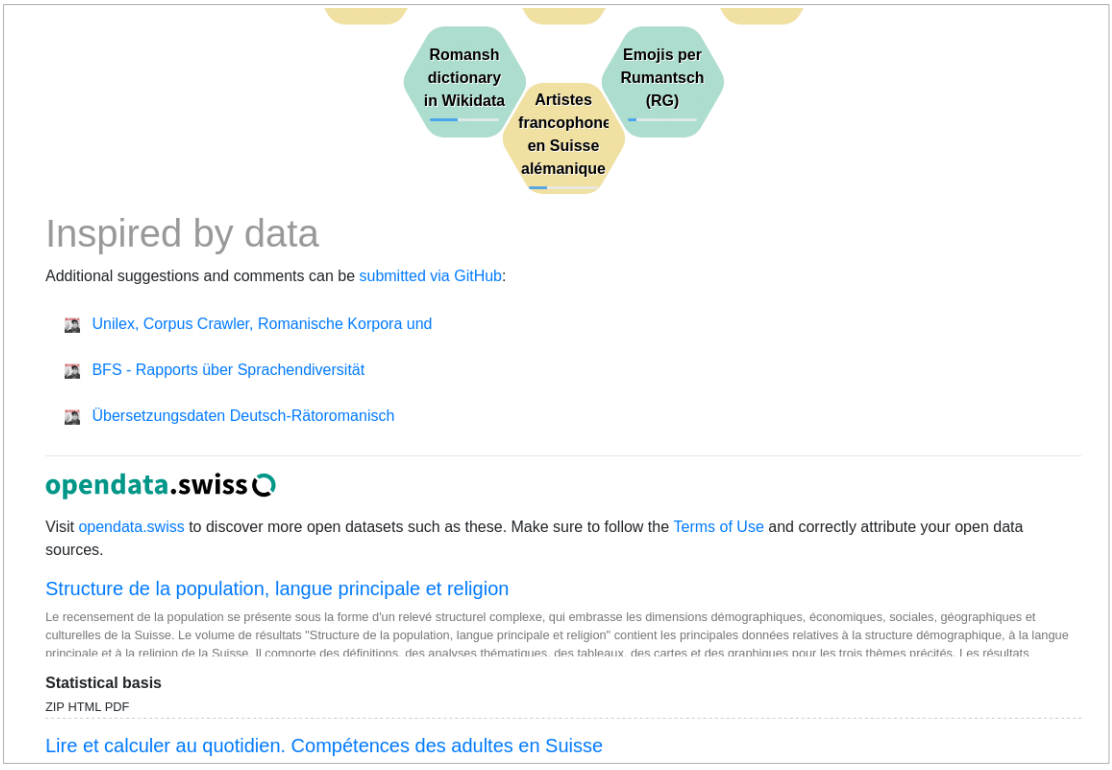
## dribdat is about interoperability.

Not a metaphor: this platform is a digital glue between a plethora of tools and processes that are being deployed in the civic tech community, enabling quick and painless deployment and support of hackathons, which have become an important instrument in facilitating concentrated social change-making that is digitally sustainable.

Several innovations are baked into the core of the project, such as support for Frictionless Data, the “open-source toolkit that brings simplicity and gracefulness to the data experience” (frictionlessdata.io) which we use to embed Data Packages which accelerate the process of unpacking and exploring open information sources in the crucial early research & experimentation phases of a hackathon.

We have created and promoted an open schema for documenting hackathon results, *hackathon.json*, which is a simple, readable text file at the root of any dribdat instance. Along with compliance for Schema.org and OpenGraph standards, we strive to ensure that hackathon publications are picked up by search engines and easily federated. Did we already mention there is an API? Search is a feature that we so far have not bothered to implement into the user interface.

For event organizers, our backend allows quick browsing and export of project data: in document form for evaluation by jury, or in CSV or JSON formats for external workflow. Spammy or invalid entries can be easily hidden or cleaned up. With OAuth 2 support, user profile administration can go through an external, enterprise-scale provider such as GitHub or Slack. We can generally support integration with any kind of data platform or collaboration tool through IFRAMEs or APIs. We can work with event management software, even other hackathon platforms, if you need to mix and match features: dribdat’s is intended to be part of an ecosystem of composable Internet tools.




Forum Helveticum / Plurilingualism Hackathon

## dribdat is being excellent to each other.

This project was built in the tradition of creative hacking. We combined best practices in using wikis, issue tracking, and content management systems, and created the basic framework of the application at a hackathon in 2015: a Web application written using the Flask framework for Python and Bootstrap, that runs on most operating systems and well known databases. A grant from Swisscom made it possible to put in more work, and release it into the wild.


In these first years of service, dribdat has supported dozens of events around Switzerland, and has become the official hackathon platform of Opendata.ch - the Swiss chapter of Open Knowledge, the Open Network Infrastructure Association, and DINAcon - the largest annual Swiss conference for digital sustainability. We have seen international usage and interest in the platform from Spain to the U.S.A., and are currently crowdfunding and organizing grants to build up speed.

All attendees, sponsors, partners, volunteers and staff at our hackathon are required to agree with the Hack Code of Conduct. Organisers will enforce this code throughout the event. We expect cooperation from all participants to ensure a safe environment for everybody. For more details on how the event is run, see the Guidelines on our wiki.



Independently developed at the grassroots, behind the scenes of this project are compacted qualities of what we believe entails good collaboration: a supportive atmosphere that proliferates diversity and tolerance, clearly stated goals, community support and progressive guidelines.

The project is rooted in open data and emerging connected IoT technologies on open networks: dribdat can run as a cloud service, and as an on-premises hardware product. The maintainers are dedicated to the hackathon scene, involved in standardization and data integration efforts. Alternative versions and new designs are being promoted through an open code organization.

## dribdat is not all the things.

This is a niche product with unique features and clear limitations. While you will find a variety of enhancements being worked on at hackathons-ftw/dribdat/issues, here are a couple of major areas where we are lagging. See here for similar products that you may wish to consider for your needs, and visit the dribdat Open Collective to discover a number of ways to invest into our project.

1. **No user profile.** There is currently no way to see details on a user, such as all the events and projects that a user has worked on, or to add any details about yourself except for a single link to some online profile. You can use an anonymous username and disposable e-mail address. Collecting personally identifiable information is not the goal of dribdat - facilitating recognition in a privacy-protecting way is: and will continue to be improved upon.

   **Tip**: we suggest eitheher using social networks like Twitter or GitHub for this purpose, or ask users to create profiles in the community platform that you integrate with dribdat - like Discourse or Slack. You might also recommend “CV builder” platforms like LinkedIn or Stack Overflow which allow us to conveniently list our hackathon experiences.

2. **How to contribute to a project?** We have left the project structure open ended, allowing organizers and teams to define how people can engage as contributors or testers. This is certainly part of the challenge of succeeding with promoting a hackathon idea, but it is also a major area of improvement to assist beginners and encourage active participation. We are collaborating on designs for enhancing this with several groups.

   **Tip**: at some hackathons, like the hacknight challenge pictured below, we recommend following an easy-moderate-advanced structure (“ski pistes”) in their task descriptions. Other events set up a template which forces project teams to think about this issue.


3. **Commercial support is rare**. The code base has developed organically using crowdsourced requirements. So far there is no service provider running instances on demand. We believe there is a market for this and are happy to talk to any IT company who would be willing to put some thought into this. We are also contributing to other, newer attempts to build a scalable operating system for hackathons, such as VersusVirus.

   **Tip**: dribdat runs on Heroku, and is easily adaptable to other PaaS clouds. It should not take system administration expertise to run a server. The Python/Bootstrap technical stack is extremely popular right now, so finding engineering help is easy. Let us know if you would like to discuss support options.

***In a Nutshell, dribdat…***

- ... has had 654 commits made by 7 contributors representing 6,664 lines of code
- ... is mostly written in Python with a low number of source code comments
- ... has a codebase with a long source history maintained by a small development team with increasing Y-O-Y commits
- ... took an estimated 2 years of effort (COCOMO model)
  starting with its first commit in September, 2015
  ending with its most recent commit 4 days ago

– https://www.openhub.net/p/dribdat

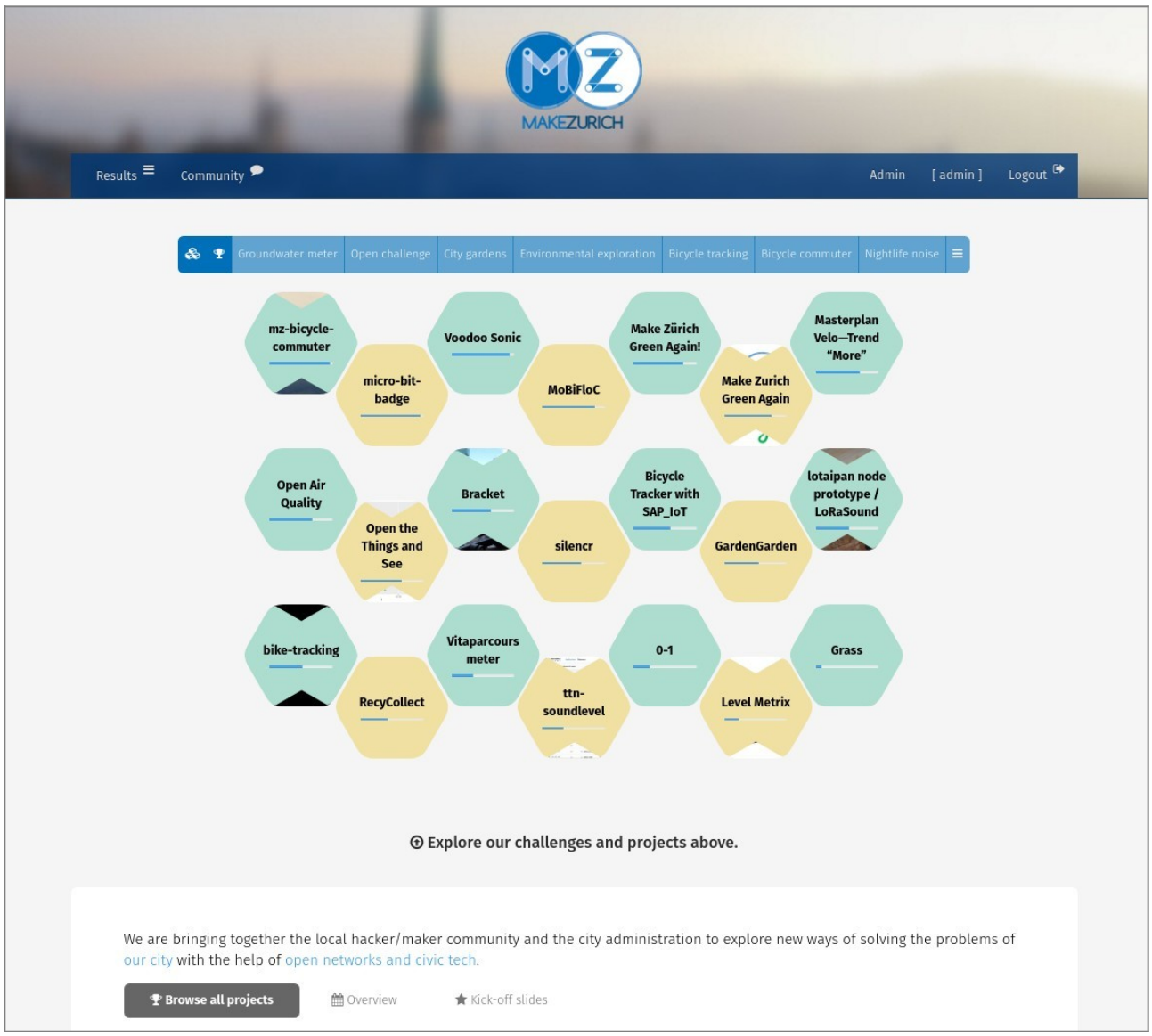
# hackathons FTW!

The easiest way to try dribdat is to sign up for an upcoming event (e.g. at hack.opendata.ch), and to use our platforms as participant. You can also visit the home page at dribdat.cc to get instructions on how to quickly deploy it on your own server and set up your own events. If you need help or advice in setting up your event, or would like to contribute to the project in some way, please get in touch via dribdat@datalets.ch or any of these links:

Website: **dribdat.cc**
Funding: opencollective.com/**dribdat**
Twitter: @**dribdat**
Source: github.com/**hackathons-ftw**

**2015 – 2020**

On the following pages are reference deployments with background details




*The community of interest around the Internet of Things is at the core of dribdat.*

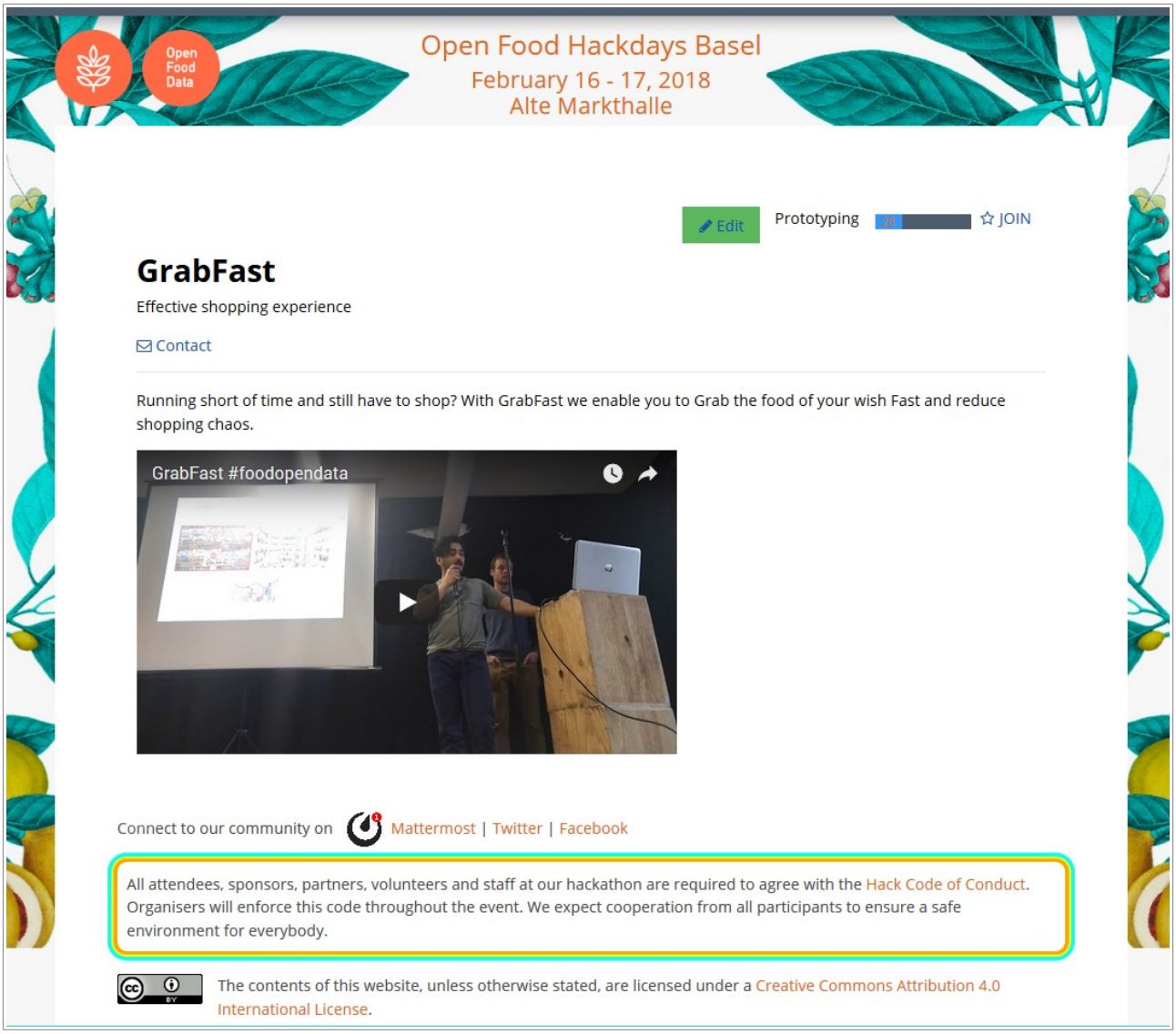
## MakeZurich

**User**: Open Network Infrastructure Association

**Application:** http://now.makezurich.ch/

**Discussion:** https://forum.schoolofdata.ch/t/22-30-6-makezurich-2018

**Integrations:** Slack, GitHub, The Things Network




*From 2016, dribdat became the official platform of Opendata.ch hackathons around Switzerland.*

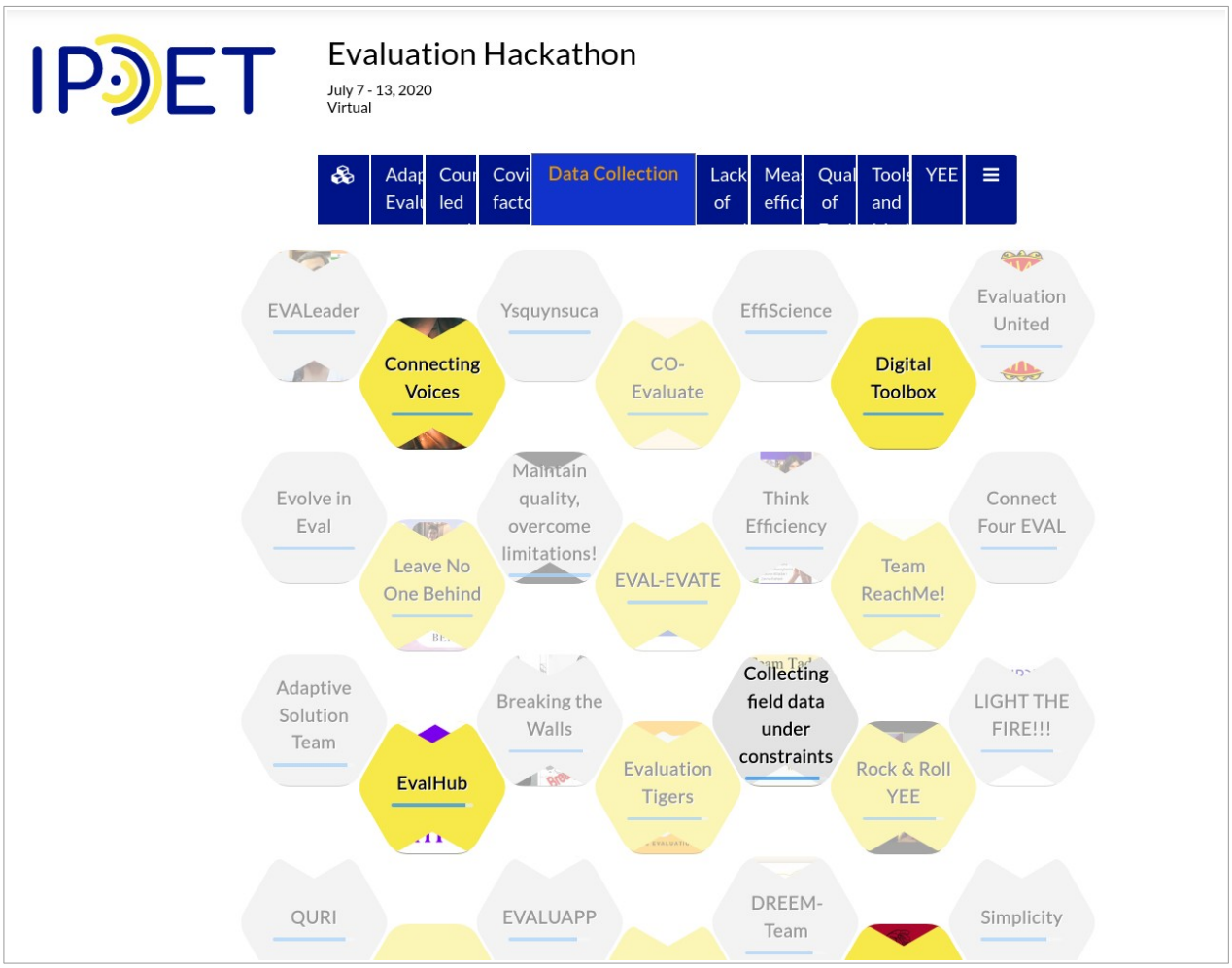
## Open Data Hackdays

**User:** Opendata.ch, Swiss Chapter of Open Knowledge

**Application:** http://hack.opendata.ch/

**Discussion:** https://blog.datalets.ch/039/

**Integrations:** Datacentral, CKAN, Discourse, GitHub, Slack



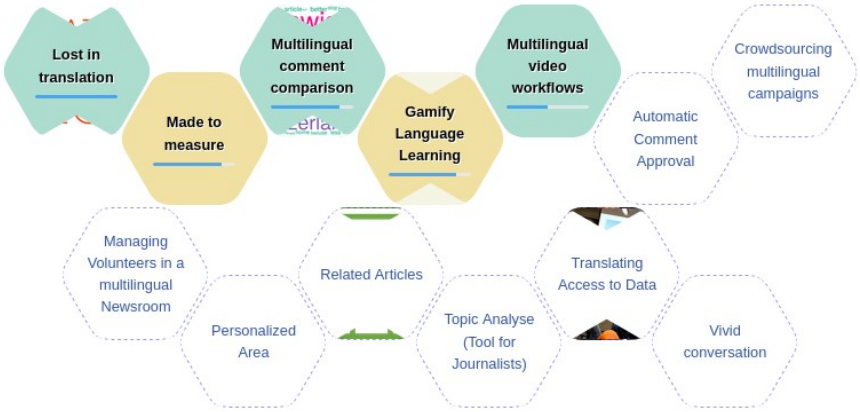

# Evaluation Hackathon

**User:** International Program for Development Evaluation Training

**Application:** https://evalhack.org/

**Discussion:** https://opencollective.com/dribdat/updates/a-season-of-hackathons

**Integrations:** Slack, Disqus, YouTube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SRF DATA

OPEN KNOWLEDGE SWITZERLAND

On Feb. 21 and 22, Switzerland's first Multilingual Media Hackathon took place in Bern at the newsroom of SWI swissinfo.ch, the international service of the Swiss public broadcaster SRG-SSR. **Many thanks to all involved!** There is documentation here, live streamed presentations (YouTube), and commentary on social media (Twitter) to explore. For more details, visit our website.

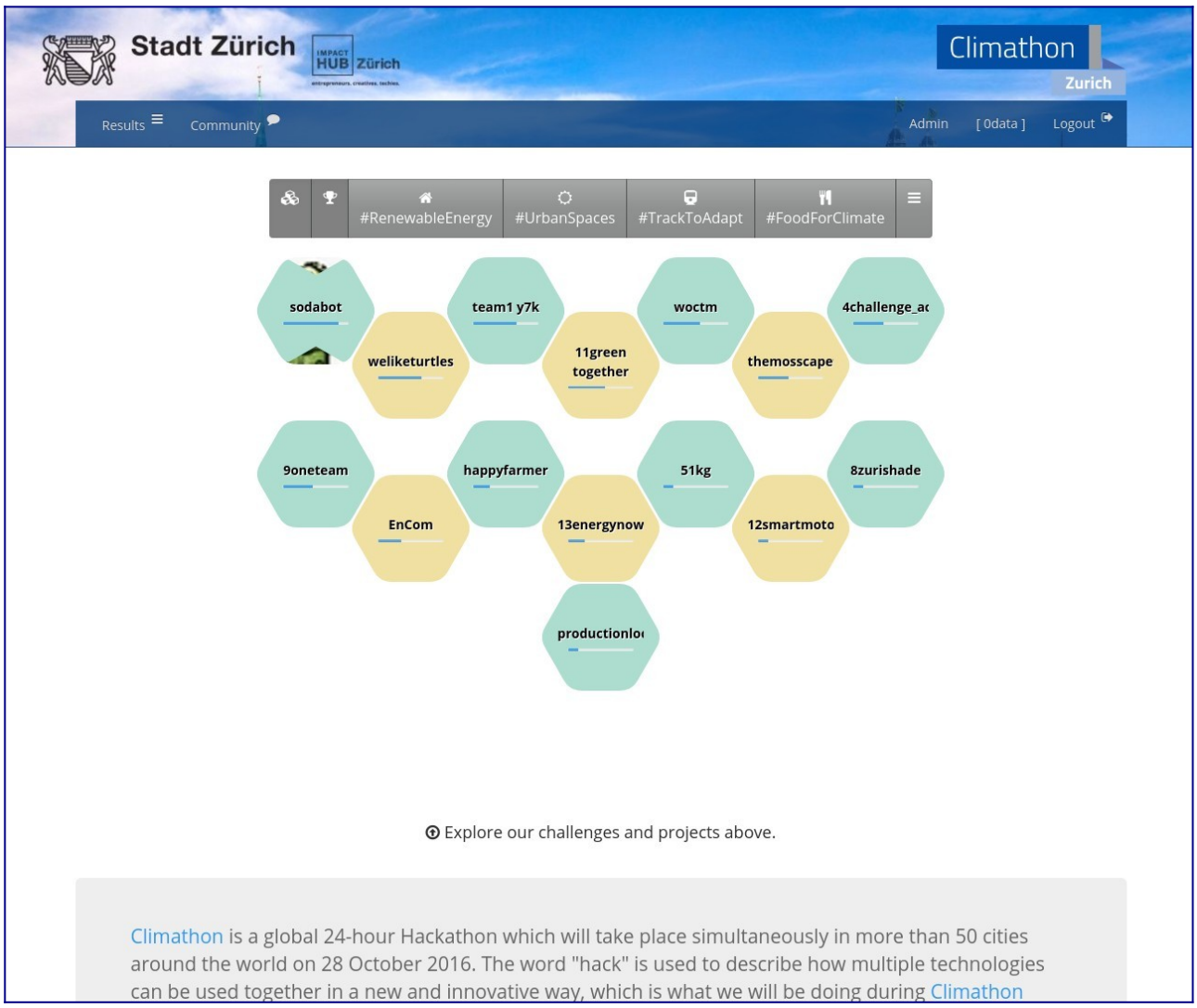
# Multilingual Media Hackathon

**User:** Swissinfo

**Application:** https://db.schoolofdata.ch/project/58

**Discussion:** https://blog.datalets.ch/065/

**Integrations:** CodiMD, GitHub, YouTube




## Climathon Zurich

**User:** City of Zürich

**Application:** http://hack.opendata.ch/event/4

**Discussion:** https://blog.datalets.ch/023/

**Integrations:** Slack, Hubot (sodabot), GitHub


*Image courtesy of [Impact Hub Zürich]*

*Dribdat's first release, designed in cooperation with the Swisscom Pirate Hub.*

## Internet of Things Hackathon

**User:** Swisscom

**Application:** https://datalets.ch/dribdat/iot-2015/

**Discussion:** http://blog.utou.ch/2015/an-internet-of-open-things-to-tell-stories/

**Integrations:** Slack, GitHub, Twitter, Instagram, Heroku, custom hardware