

# DATA SCIENCE FOR SOCIAL GOOD

A blurred background image of a person with light hair and glasses, wearing a green hoodie, looking down at something in their hands.

THE BEST MINDS OF MY GENERATION  
ARE THINKING ABOUT HOW TO MAKE  
PEOPLE CLICK ADS. THAT SUCKS.

— Jeff Hammerbacher (Co-founder Facebook)

SOCIAL ORGANIZATIONS NEED TO  
ALLOCATE SCARCE RESOURCES FOR  
MAXIMUM IMPACT

- identifying supporters likely to donate
- predicting where services will be needed
  - predicting impact of campaigns
  - forecasting trends and changes

# BASICALLY REGRESSION PROBLEMS

Social organizations often don't have

DATA SCIENTISTS

WHAT IF DATA SCIENTISTS WOULD  
DONATE  
THEIR SKILLS?



This is already happening...\*

\* ...but not in Germany (afaik)

# A GUIDED TOUR THROUGH THE DATA SCIENCE FOR SOCIAL GOOD MOVEMENT

# DSSG FELLOWSHIP

- supported by the Eric & Wendy Schmidt Foundation
  - 6 month fellowship
- taking applications for 3rd year (started 2013)
  - Partners: NGOs, Governments

<http://dssg.io/>

# EXAMPLES (PROJECT HEADLINE COPY&PASTE)

- World Bank Group – Prediction & Identification of Collusion in International Development Projects
- Chicago Public Schools – Student Enrollment Prediction for Budget Allocation
- Pecan Street , WikiEnergy – Building Open Source Tools to Analyze Smart Meter Data

# SELECTED DSSG EXAMPLE

Partner: Nurse-Family Partnership

DSSG analyzed who was „benefiting the most“ from NFP’s Program.

<http://dssg.uchicago.edu/2014/08/27/nfp-undefinable-unmeasurable.html>

# MORE EXAMPLES

visit <http://dssg.io/projects/>

# DSSG ATLANTA

- like DSSG Chicago
- mainly funded by Oracle and Georgia Tech
- started 2014 (one year after Chicago)

<http://dssg-atl.io/>

# BAYES IMPACT (YC-BACKED)

Bayes Impact is a nonprofit that deploys data scientists to solve big social problems with civic and nonprofit organizations

- started this year
- 12-month Fellowship

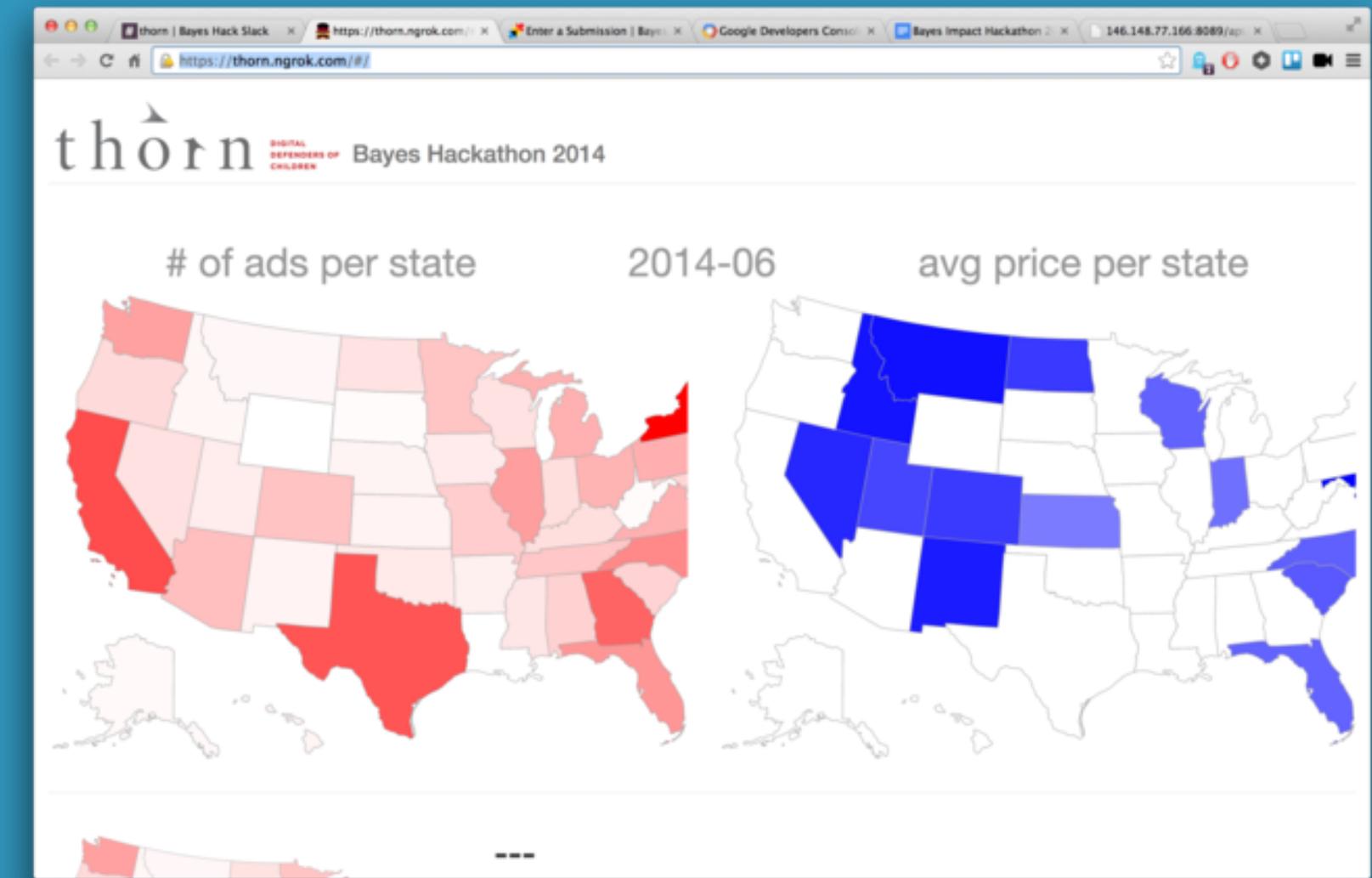
# EXAMPLES (PROJECT HEADLINE COPY&PASTE)

- Increasing Graduation Rate And Optimizing Class Offerings For UC Riverside
- Improving Outcomes For Emotionally And Behaviorally Challenged Children With Youth Villages
- Stratification Of Parkinson's Disease Patients
- Optimizing Ambulance Response Times In Sf

# BAYES HACK NOV 15TH

One weekend,  
impact the world

[http://  
bayeshack.challengepost.com  
/submissions](http://bayeshack.challengepost.com/submissions)



# THORN FELLOWSHIP

drive technology innovation to fight child sexual  
exploitation

– <http://www.wearethorn.org/thorn-innovation-lab>

<http://www.wearethorn.org/thorn-innovation-lab/>

# DRIVENDATA

- started this year (2014)
- currently 3 competitions

<http://www.drivendata.org/>

KDD 2014

had a

Workshop on Data Science for Social Good



We're tackling the world's biggest problems through data science.

— <http://www.datakind.org>

DataKind connects charities with data scientists by organizing two-day data dives where those data scientists help solve the charities' data problems.



Jake Porway at TEDxMontreal

**EXAMPLES**

# ANALYZING POVERTY THROUGH SATELLITE IMAGERY

**DataKind helped GiveDirectly**  
– an NGO making unconditional cash transfers to poor households via mobile phones in Kenya and Uganda<sup>1</sup>  
– to identify especially needy villages through satellite image analysis<sup>2</sup>.



<sup>1</sup> [http://www.ted.com/talks/joysunshouldyoudonate\\_differently](http://www.ted.com/talks/joysunshouldyoudonate_differently)

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.datakind.org/projects/using-the-simple-to-be-radical/>

VIEW THE PRESENTATION  
OR READ THE PAPER

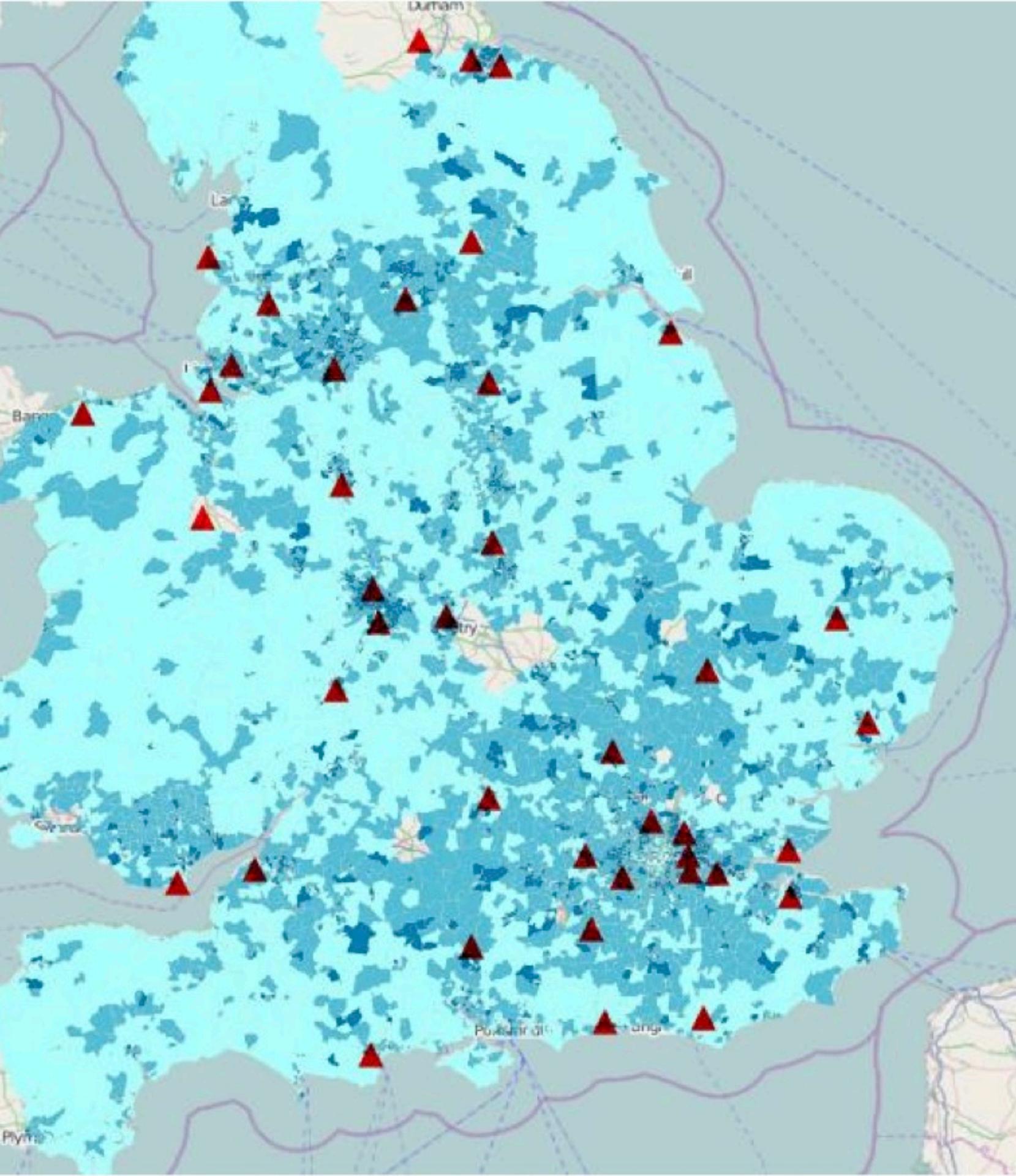


# EARLY WARNING SYSTEM FOR HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES

To help prioritize the many calls for help reaching Amnesty International's Urgent Action Network DataKind volunteers have created a predictive model that analyzes messages for potential escalation.<sup>34</sup>

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.datakind.org/projects/using-predictive-analytics-to-prevent-human-rights-abuses/>

<sup>4</sup> [http://www.washingtonpost.com/business/on-it/amnesty-international-considering-using-big-data-to-predict-human-rights-violations/2013/11/22/3f4f1a1e-5388-11e3-a7f0-b790929232e1\\_story.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/business/on-it/amnesty-international-considering-using-big-data-to-predict-human-rights-violations/2013/11/22/3f4f1a1e-5388-11e3-a7f0-b790929232e1_story.html)



# PREDICTING DEMAND FOR CHILDREN'S HOSPICES

Combining data from Shooting Star Chase, public data about the hospice and healthcare sector and demographic data DataKind volunteers calculated predicted demand against hospice capacity to reveal areas of possible shortage.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.datakind.org/finding-30000-missing-children/>

Most of DataKinds projects have been tackled by volunteers on 2-day data dives.

WHAT'S A  
DATA DIVE!

# BEFORE: PREPARATION OF THE DATA

(by voluntary data ambassadors in collaboration with the challenge partner – starting ~2 month before the data dive)

- anonymization/pseudonymization
  - cleaning/fixing
- ensuring proper (machine readable) data formats

BEFORE:  
PREPARATION OF THE  
QUESTIONS

ANY DATA SCIENTIST WORTH THEIR  
SALARY WILL TELL YOU THAT YOU  
SHOULD START WITH A QUESTION, NOT  
THE DATA.

— Jake Porway in <https://hbr.org/2013/03/you-cant-just-hack-your-way-to/>

# THE DATA DIVE

- Challenge partners pitch their problems
- Volunteers create analyses, models and visualizations (led by data ambassadors) in two intense days of hacking
- solutions are being presented at the end

# AFTERMATH: IMPLEMENTATION

Social organizations still don't have the expertise: data ambassadors must help implement the solutions

# AFTERMATH: IMPACT ANALYSIS

Did it help at all?

There is currently no organization in Germany comparable to DataKind.

There is currently no organization in Germany comparable to DataKind.

O RLY?



Open Knowledge  
Foundation



WE WANT TO START THE  
DATA SCIENCE FOR SOCIAL GOOD  
MOVEMENT IN GERMANY

# WHO WE ARE?

- Daniel Kirsch
- Marit Brademann
- Richard Lawrence
- Tobias Pfaff (of [dataforgood.co](http://dataforgood.co))
- You?

# SUPPORTERS

- Klaas Bollhöfer,  
**Chief Data Scientist,**  
The Unbelievable Machine Company
- Adam Drake,  
**Chief Data Scientist,**  
Zanox

# WHAT WE NEED

# WE NEED DATA AMBASSADORS

## (HOW DATAKIND CALLS THEM)

- to prepare data before data dives
  - lead teams at data dives
- help with the implementation afterwards

# WE NEED PROBLEMS

The international of the Data Science for Social Good-movement shows that data scientists are eager to donate their skills.

Social organizations need to understand how we can help them. Are you in contact with NGOs? Spread the word!

# CONTACT

Daniel Kirsch  
[mail@danielkirs.ch](mailto:mail@danielkirs.ch)  
@kirel

No website yet... No name...  
just contact me!

**THANK YOU!**

**QUESTIONS?**

# LINKS:

- <http://datakind.org>
  - <http://dssg.io>
  - <http://dssg-atl.io/>
- <http://bayesimpact.org>
  - <http://codefor.de>

# ATTRIBUTION

- Foto of Jeff Hammerbacher by Fred Brenenson licensed under CC BY 2.0