

# Your guide to **TICTeC**

from mySociety



## TICTeC



## The Impacts of Civic Technology Conference

@mysociety

#TICTeC

# What is TICTeC?

Hosted by UK not-for-profit organisation mySociety, 'TICTeC' is 'The Impacts of Civic Technology Conference'. It's the world's only conference dedicated to exploring how civic technologies are impacting citizens, institutions and the development of digital participation around the world.

Whereas many tech conferences provide a platform for organisations showcasing new or existing digital tools or components, TICTeC is specifically focused on research. The majority of speakers will be presenting evidence-based research to demonstrate the various impacts of civic technology.

# What is Civic Technology?

The field of Civic Tech is growing across the globe, often at a grassroots level — and yet, to those outside its network, the term can be unfamiliar. You will often see 'Civic Tech' mentioned along with sister buzzwords like 'smart cities', 'e-gov', 'govtech', 'ICT4D' and 'Tech For Good', to name but a few.

Civic Tech embraces all digital tools that enable citizens to easily and effectively engage with civic life, whether that is reporting an issue to a local authority, engaging with elected representatives or monitoring the use of community assets.

At its most effective, Civic Tech can save lives, protect environments, and mobilise citizen task forces in times of crisis. At a useful if less dramatic level, it can save time and money for governments, improve neighbourhoods and keep residents informed.

Civic Tech is often — but not exclusively — built by non-profit organisations working for a better, more representative, democratic or functional society. The result is often open source 'tech for good' software that is free or cheap to implement.



# Why do we host TICTeC?

There are several existing annual conferences in which civic technology is showcased, and in which the potential for such tools to change and drive participation can be discussed, however, very few of these events include real and in-depth research into whether the potential outcomes of civic technology were realised.

Civic technology is now a mature sphere of activity, and as such, it should be scrutinising its impacts to ensure its own validity and legitimacy. That said, many civic technology organisations do not have significant resources to invest in understanding or conducting high quality research. There are, however, many researchers attached to universities, institutions and NGOs that are doing interesting research into civic technology, and wish to do more.

We created TICTeC to bridge the gap between civic tech and research – to bring two different communities together, to emphasise the importance of being able to demonstrate impact, and to share what those impacts are.

## The benefits of TICTeC

TICTeC brings together the very different and often isolated worlds of civic technology, academic research, private business, philanthropy, and government. Despite the delegates' differences in focus and approach, each TICTeC has generated an enormous buzz, as people from different disciplines interact and are inspired to collaborate or work in different ways.

Our post-event feedback has shown that the learning and connections made at these events has resulted in new, concrete research being conducted, new tools being developed and new research partnerships being formed. TICTeC has been successful in shining a light onto the real-world impacts of civic technology, and it is now established in the research and civic technology community as an energising and inspiring event not to be missed.

As Stefaan Verhulst from The GovLab NYU puts it:

*“TICTeC is a crucial milestone in the development of civic tech and open government, because it takes stock of what we know, what works, and how.”*

A key element of TICTeC is that we directly provide travel and accommodation grants for key delegates, especially from underfunded organisations operating in less open countries and jurisdictions to ensure that they can attend and contribute to the conference. Our funders and supporters enable this to happen. TICTeC matters because Civic Technologies represent the future of democratic engagement. TICTeC allows us to pause, examine what works, and, crucially, what doesn't — and ensures that we are all on the right path to making the world more inclusive, more equal, and more transparent.

It's one of the few opportunities for those working and interested in Civic Technology to come together in person to share experiences, knowledge, research, and code, to ensure that the wheel isn't being constantly being reinvented.



# Past TICTeC events

TICTeC was born in April 2015 on a rainy day in [London](#), with 100 delegates and one full day agenda of plenary and breakout sessions. It was so successful that we enlarged and extended the event for 2016, taking it to [Barcelona](#) (where it also rained) for a 1.5 day conference for 140 delegates from over 25 different countries. In 2017 we held the third TICTeC in [Florence](#), Italy over two full days and attracted 140 researchers and practitioners from 28 countries. In 2018 the fourth TICTeC was held over two days in [Lisbon](#), where 150 leaders in the field from 29 different countries attended. The fifth TICTeC was held in association with the OECD at their conference centre in [Paris](#) in 2019 and attracted over 200 attendees from 29 countries over two full days.

In September 2017 we hosted [TICTeC@Taiwan](#), which was the headline event of the week long Civic Tech Fest. The event brought together 270 participants from 33 countries. Being chosen as the headline event of a festival dedicated to tech as a whole shows how respected and important TICTeC and research is for the civic tech community, so we were honoured to be regarded so favourably.

On the back of the success of our global TICTeC event, in 2018 we hosted the first ever [TICTeC Local](#) in Manchester in the UK, which focussed specifically on how civic tech connects with and impacts Local Government. The event saw us bring together 100 representatives from local councils, civic tech organisations, universities and the private sector.

## Keynote speakers have included:

- Baroness Martha Lane Fox
- Ethan Zuckerman
- Dr Shelley Boulianne
- Professor Jonathan Fox
- Audrey Tang
- Dr Guy Grossman
- Tiago Peixoto
- Helen Milner OBE
- Alessandra Orofino
- James Anderson

## Notable presenters have included:

- Oxford University
- MIT
- Harvard University
- Facebook
- The United Nations
- World Bank Group
- Google
- French parliament
- OECD
- Luminate

## Resources from previous TICTeC events:

**TICTeC 2015, London:**

**TICTeC 2016, Barcelona:**

**TICTeC 2017, Florence:**

**TICTeC@Taiwan, Taipei:**

**TICTeC 2018, Lisbon:**

**TICTeC Local 2018, Manchester:**

**TICTeC 2019, Paris:**

[mysociety.org/research/tictec2015](https://mysociety.org/research/tictec2015)

[mysociety.org/research/tictec-2016](https://mysociety.org/research/tictec-2016)

[tictec.mysociety.org/2017](https://tictec.mysociety.org/2017)

[tictec.mysociety.org/taipei](https://tictec.mysociety.org/taipei)

[tictec.mysociety.org/2018](https://tictec.mysociety.org/2018)

[tictec.mysociety.org/local/2018](https://tictec.mysociety.org/local/2018)

[tictec.mysociety.org/2019](https://tictec.mysociety.org/2019)

For a list of all organisations who have previously attended TICTeC, see:  
[tictec.mysociety.org/sponsorship#attendees](https://tictec.mysociety.org/sponsorship#attendees)



# Feedback on TICTeC

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| <p><i>"Interested in #civictech or #ict4d? #TICTeC is truly one of the best "practitioners meet academic" conference. Consider attending."</i></p> <p><b>Dr Guy Grossman, University of Pennsylvania</b></p>   | <p><i>"It has been a while since I have seen a conference that has so much quality top to bottom."</i></p> <p><b>Dr Erik Johnston, Arizona State University</b></p>   |
| <p><i>"TICTeC is the most important Civic Tech conference in the world, and is the only conference I travel for"</i></p> <p><b>Samidh Chakrabarti, Facebook</b></p>  | <p><i>"I have met so many inspiring people (mySociety team included of course) who helped me to figure out how to improve my research."</i></p> <p><b>Maria Zuffova, University of Strathclyde</b></p>  |
| <p><i>"Fantastic conference! I had several very fruitful conversations and an attentive and inquisitive audience for my talk, which is all you can ask for. Thank you for giving me a chance to speak. I hope to make this conference a staple of my travels every year."</i></p> <p><b>Erhardt Graeff, MIT Center for Civic Media</b></p> | <p><i>"One metric of measuring the impact of a meaningful conference is the conversation test: where you're talking to someone having a great conversation, but you're also within earshot of several other great conversations happening, and you want to be part of all of them. That's TICTeC."</i></p> <p><b>Matt Stempeck, Microsoft</b></p>                           |
| <p><i>"There really isn't another conference I would choose to attend over TICTeC."</i></p> <p><b>John Webb, Google</b></p>  | <p><i>"I just wanted to say thanks again for putting on the only conference I really value :)"</i></p> <p><b>Kate Krontiris, Researcher and Strategist</b></p>  |
| <p><i>"TICTeC 2018 was also one of the most diverse conferences I've ever attended, not just in terms of gender, but also in terms of representativeness of regions of the world, plus a great variety of professional profiles and backgrounds."</i></p> <p><b>Luisa Izuzquiza, Access Info Europe</b></p>                                | <p><i>"I think [TICTeC] is the best concentration of practitioners, academics and thinkers in this field that I've come across anywhere. It's only halfway through the first day and I've already been inspired and had my thoughts provoked, and I can't wait for the rest of it."</i></p> <p><b>Fran Perrin, CEO, Indigo Trust</b></p>                                    |
| <p><i>"I generally feel that there are far too many events in our field and not nearly enough practical outcomes as a result, but TICTeC is very much the exception. Already I look forward to next year's event and to the forthcoming research that emerges in the interim."</i></p> <p><b>David Sasaki, Hewlett Foundation</b></p>      | <p><i>"At conferences on open data and civic tech you often hear people discuss 'This is the project I'm working on' - I think TICTeC stands out as an example where it's about the lessons learnt rather than the activities. The focus on 'This is the impact we've uncovered by doing this project' sets TICTeC apart."</i></p> <p><b>Andrew Young, GovLab @ NYU</b></p> |

# Previous TICTeC sponsors



TICTeC brings together the world's best Civic Technology researchers, practitioners and funders — but we can't do it without financial support.

There are a range of sponsorship opportunities available, see our [Sponsorship page](#) or contact [tictec@mysociety.org](mailto:tictec@mysociety.org) for more details.

## Get involved

Want to present at TICTeC? Then please do submit a presentation or workshop proposal. Each TICTeC conference has an open call for presentation and workshop proposals that are relevant to the impacts of civic technology. We encourage submissions to focus on the specific impacts of technologies, rather than showcase new tools that are as yet untested.

Please keep an eye out on [tictec.mysociety.org](https://tictec.mysociety.org) for current and future submission opportunities. You can also join the [TICTeC Google Group](#) to keep up to date with conference announcements as they happen, and to connect with the global civic tech research community.



If you have any questions about TICTeC please contact us: [tictec@mysociety.org](mailto:tictec@mysociety.org)