



ASPEN TECH POLICY HUB

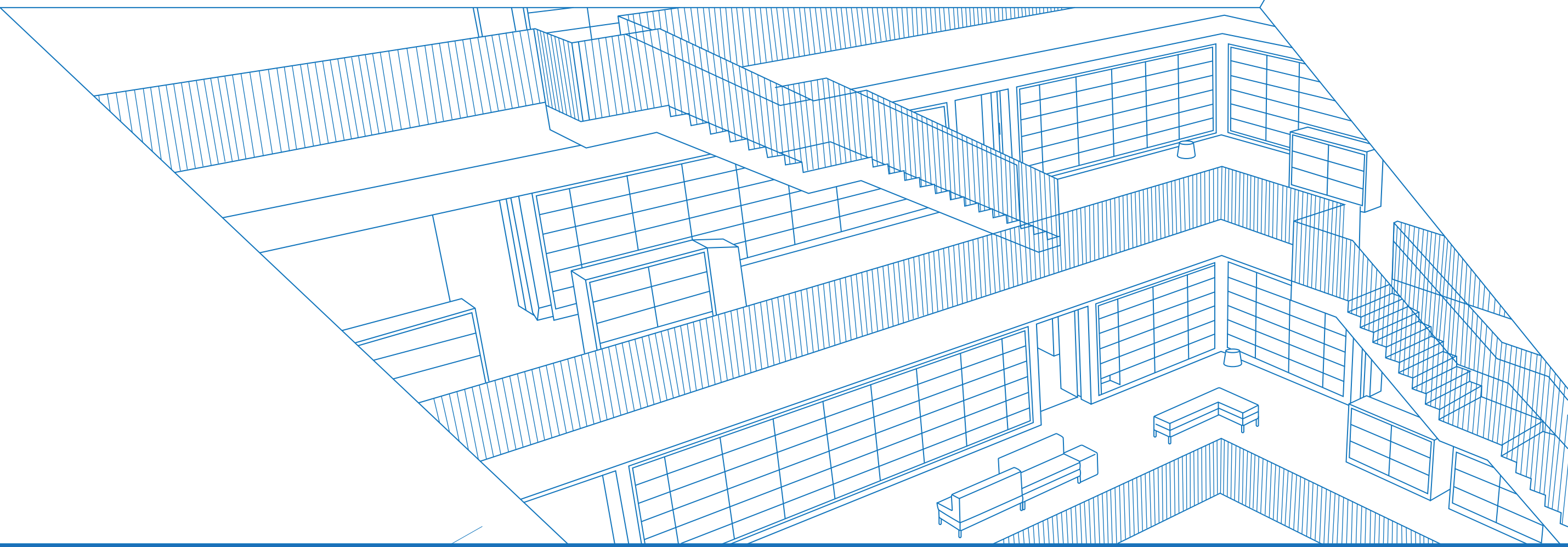
# Aspen Tech Policy Hub Annual Report 2019

 THE ASPEN INSTITUTE

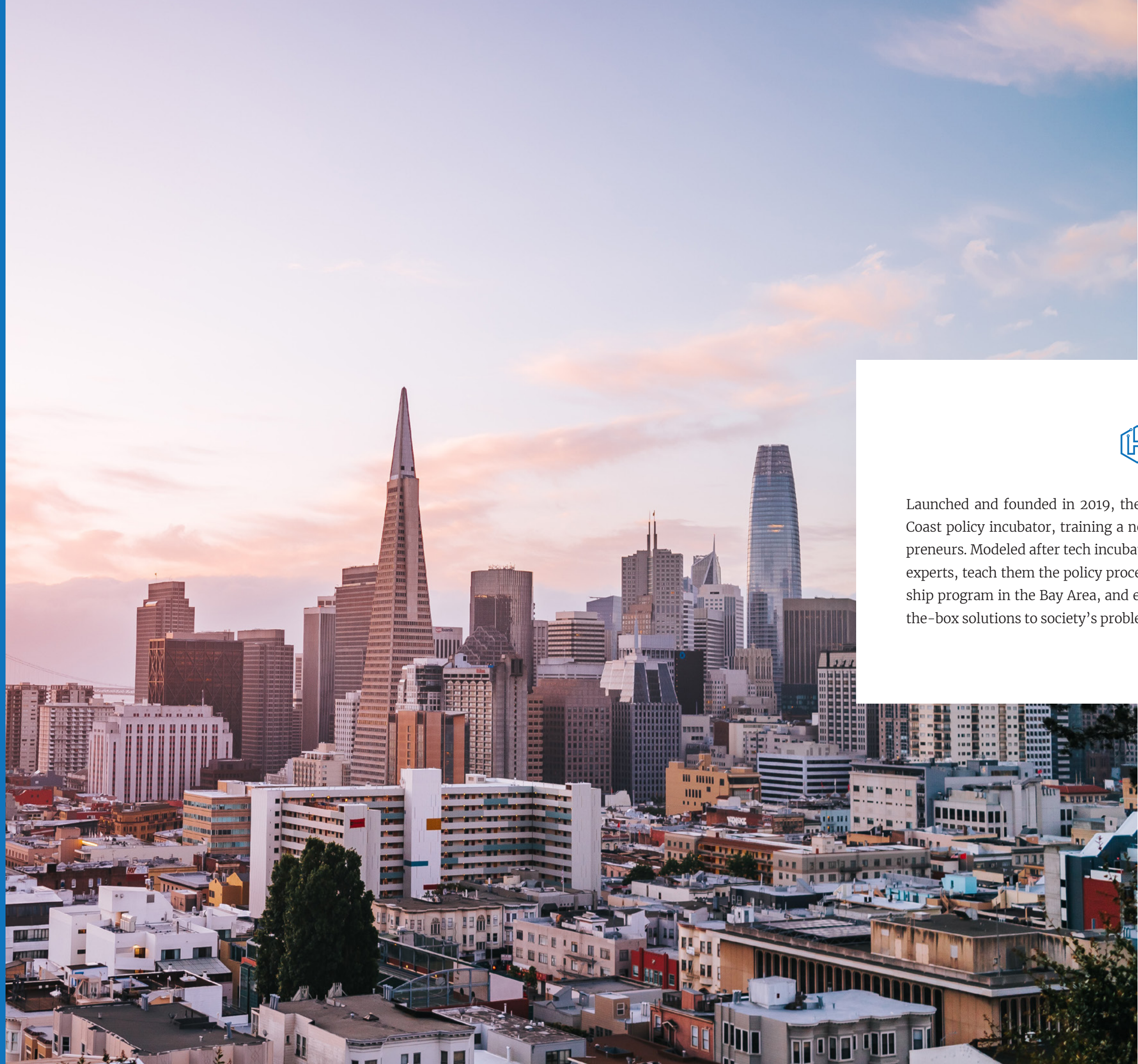


# Aspen Tech Policy Hub Annual Report 2019

 THE ASPEN INSTITUTE







Launched and founded in 2019, the **Aspen Tech Policy Hub** is a West Coast policy incubator, training a new generation of tech policy entrepreneurs. Modeled after tech incubators like Y Combinator, we take tech experts, teach them the policy process through an in-residence fellowship program in the Bay Area, and encourage them to develop outside-the-box solutions to society's problems.





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## Letter From The Director



From debates about political ads on social media to the use of algorithmic tools in the court system, our world continues to shape — and be shaped by — technology. Today’s digital tools are being developed at a pace, and with societal consequences, that few can predict. Moreover, despite a growing tech policy movement in recent years, there is still a large gap between Silicon Valley and government institutions. Technology innovation and policy development largely occur in parallel, with different stakeholders, goals, and interests.

To address these challenges, we need innovative and informed solutions. To get there, we need a diverse set of people who can champion causes — experts who can speak the languages of both tech and policy. The dire need for tech policy experts is what motivated us to launch the Aspen Tech Policy Hub. This past year was our first year, and we achieved important milestones as we began to build a backbench of tech policy entrepreneurs who can use their technical expertise

to drive innovative and informed public policies for the common good.

In 2019, we hit the ground running, establishing a presence in the Bay Area as a premier tech policy leadership training program. In the first half of the year, we became a core initiative of the Aspen Institute and launched recruitment for our first cohort, selecting 15 talented fellows from a pool of over 270 applicants. In the second half of the year, we developed and piloted an innovative curriculum for policy training, which included over 50 events with over 100 featured speakers.

*Soon enough, our fellows rose to meet our high expectations and began shaping tech policy, producing 12 robust projects that included submitting public comments, penning op-eds, and producing substantive policy proposals.*



While our first cohort only wrapped up in the fall of 2019, we have already seen significant impact of our work on the tech policy ecosystem. Several fellowship teams had their work adopted by government agencies and companies. Other organizations took note; two of our fellows were selected by the Transatlantic Commission on Election Interference to work as Election Integrity Fellows and help combat the spread of misinformation in democratic processes. Our inaugural Demonstration Days showcasing our fellows’ projects were attended by over 100 people each, and major news outlets covered our work. Perhaps most importantly, we received feedback from our fellows that the fellowship program substantively changed their career paths and trajectories to focus more on policy.

While we launched the first successful pilot of our program, we also were laying a strong foundation for the future of the organization. We began the program with two part-time program assistants provid-

ing key support. Later, we were able to hire our second full-time employee, who serves as the Hub’s program coordinator. We secured more funding to launch summer and winter cohorts of fellows in 2020, and we are finalizing our search for a permanent home for the Hub. This strong foundation will allow our impact to keep growing in 2020 and beyond.

This report reviews the Hub’s accomplishments for 2019 and identifies short- and long-term goals for what lies ahead. We are inspired by what we have accomplished this year, and eager to continue to drive change in technology policy for years to come.



BETSY COOPER

Director | Aspen Tech Policy Hub

2019 FELLOWSHIP:  
**5 FAST FACTS**

**2 or 3**

month full-time  
fellowship

**15**

inaugural fellows

**3**

week bootcamp

**5 to 9**

week policy  
project period

**\$7,500**

Paid/month  
for participating



## The Year in Review

2019 was an exciting year for the Aspen Tech Policy Hub; from our first launch of applications in January to the conclusion of our inaugural cohort in the late fall, we demonstrated the need for more innovative tech policy training and executed a successful pilot that achieved real impact.

### WHY A TECH POLICY INCUBATOR?

In Silicon Valley, novice startup founders join intensive 2-3 month incubator and accelerator programs such as Y Combinator and 500 Startups to learn the basics of how to build a startup, to network with successful founders, and to obtain funding for their efforts. In policy, by contrast, there are limited paths for later-career professionals to get training in policy, apart from returning to school for a multi-year degree. Through the Aspen Tech Policy Hub, we sought to create the Y Combinator for policy: a program that would enable passionate policy novices to get the training they need to have an impact, without requiring multi-year career gaps.

We chose to center the Hub around a leadership training program because a substantive shift in this space will require teams of motivated and entrepreneurial technologists who will become tech policy champions in a variety of public, private, and civil organizations. As such, we strove to create a dynamic class of fellows for our program that included academics, startup founders, and software engineers who showed passion, humility, and a capacity to thoughtfully address the human issues underscored by technology. A fellowship program also allows our participants to grow and learn from one another, leading to dynamic collaborations and new perspectives.

### FELLOWSHIP RECRUITMENT

In order to recruit our first class of fellows, we held several webinars and in-person events, ultimately attracting over 270 applicants. We were also thoughtful about reaching out to groups traditionally underrepresented in both technology and policy. A group of professional reviewers helped us narrow down and select our final class, and we interviewed over 40 candidates before making final selections. Our first 15 fellows had extensive experience working in cybersecurity, artificial intelligence, and media, and one individual had even run for office in his hometown. This first cohort began their two- to three-month fellowship program in early June 2019.

Building on the successful recruitment of our first cohort of fellows, we also recruited in late 2019 a second cohort of fellows who began their fellowships in January 2020. Our second cohort represents a group of 15 engineers, start-up founders, and entrepreneurs who were selected from over 200 applicants.

**Our fellows are at the core of what our program is all about. Through thoughtful questions and purposeful outreach, we were able to recruit a group of fellows who were not only technically proficient, but also diverse and motivated to use their skills for public good.**



**SEAN AHRENS**  
Health-tech founder  
researching where  
democracy meets technology



**AMINA ASIM**  
Data scientist building  
models for transnational  
communication



**STEVEN BUCCINI**  
Engineer bringing  
governments into the  
21st century



**ALONI COHEN**  
Cryptographer at the  
interface of computer  
science and law



**ALISSON DAY**  
Googler passionate about  
social justice



**ANIL DEWAN**  
USDSer into technology,  
privacy, and building a better  
world



**GINNY FAHS**  
Software engineer  
championing digital rights



**ERICA GREENE**  
Machine learning engineer  
passionate about journalism  
and privacy



**KARISSA MCKELVEY**  
Open source engineer  
decentralizing the web



**BRANDIE NONNECKE**  
Tech and human rights  
researcher passionate about  
evidence-based policy



**NEAL PARIKH**  
Startup founder and machine  
learning researcher



**ALEX ROSENBLAT**  
Ethnographer studying how  
tech rhetoric shapes culture



**ELIZABETH RUIZ**  
Design thinker creating  
solutions to solve federal  
challenges



**ORA TANNER**  
EdTech researcher designing  
more equitable K-12 STEM  
education



**STEVE WEIS**  
Cryptographer & entrepre-  
neur focused on protecting  
people's sensitive data



For our fellowship program, we looked for fellows with three key characteristics:

**1 APPLICANTS SHOULD HAVE HAD SIGNIFICANT PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE WITH TECHNOLOGY.**

For instance, applicants might have worked as an engineer, computer scientist, or business executive at a technology company; might be trained as a data scientist or in human-computer interaction; might have worked at a university or at a think tank studying cybersecurity, artificial intelligence, or the Internet of Things; or might have professional technology experience, such as serving as a patent lawyer.

**2 APPLICANTS SHOULD SHOW POTENTIAL TO APPLY THEIR TECHNOLOGY EXPERIENCE TO AFFECTING POLICY AND SOCIAL CHANGE.**

We looked for applicants who were passionate about solving the world's problems, and who could clearly articulate creative, innovative ideas about the ways in which they want to make a difference and how their experience will help them do that. We were particularly interested in applicants who are passionate about problems in four priority areas:

- Cybersecurity;
- The effects of emerging technologies, such as artificial intelligence, the Internet of Things, autonomous vehicles, and quantum computing;
- Protecting democracy, combating disinformation or misinformation, and election security; and
- Using technology to help at-risk populations or encourage social justice.

**3 APPLICANTS SHOULD NOT YET HAVE SIGNIFICANTLY EXPLORED THEIR POTENTIAL TO ENACT CHANGE THROUGH POLICY.**

This is an introductory program to the policymaking process, and we looked for applicants who did not have significant past policy experience.

**BUILDING A DEEPER AND MORE DIVERSE BENCH**

Ultimately, our program's goal is to build a deeper bench of tech policy entrepreneurs. In today's digital landscape, tech policy issues emerge every day that require passionate and committed individuals fluent in both technology and policy to advocate for results, champion causes, and build coalitions.

In addition to building a deeper bench of tech policy experts, we are also eager to build a more diverse bench. Both the technology and government sectors struggle with diversity issues, and we made it a key goal of our program to recruit fellows from a variety of backgrounds and perspectives. To do so, we reached out to affinity groups to advertise the program, hosted a series of webinars accessible to applicants from anywhere in the world with any background, and created an application and interview ranking system to minimize potential bias. We saw the fruits of our labor in our first cohort, where 80% of our fellows self-identified as a woman or ethnic minority. Our second set of fellows, recruited in fall 2019, shows similar success; over 70% of our fellows self-identify as a woman or minority. We believe our efforts provide a new pipeline for more diverse candidates to enter leadership roles in tech and government.



Though there is always room for improvement, we were impressed with the diversity of our first and second cohorts of fellows. To share what we've learned about recruitment, Director Betsy Cooper published an article in *Fast Company* that described our fellowship recruitment process and strategies we found to be successful in improving diverse recruitment. We hope that others take our lessons learned to expand access to opportunity in the tech policy world.

## OUR APPLICATION PROCESS

For our inaugural cohort, we received over 270 applications. First, a handful of internal Aspen Institute staff reviewed the applications and selected the top 80 applicants from our larger pool. After this initial screening, the applications were sent to expert technology and policy reviewers from academia, industry, and the public sector. We selected approximately 40 top candidates based on composite scores for interviews. Though time consuming, live interviews allow us to get a deeper sense for a candidate's motivations and expectations for a fellowship. Ultimately, 15 fellows were offered a position in our program.

Throughout the entire application process, we undertook steps to recruit a set of candidates from a variety of backgrounds. We did this in part through an anonymous review of applicant essays and by including and scoring a question in which applicants could describe their approach to diversity. After several months of work, we emerged with a diverse set of 15 practitioners who brought unique perspectives to challenge and learn from each other.

## THE POLICY BOOTCAMP

In 2019, we also developed a new curriculum that could train technologists on the policy process. Our fellowship program started off with a three-week intensive bootcamp that focused on the key elements of policymaking, from mapping stakeholders and defining policy problems to developing policy outputs and advocating for innovative solutions. Our bootcamp gave fellows a common framework to identify and solve tech policy problems across a broad range of issues. Following our pilot cohort, we recognized that the teaching pace was too compressed to provide adequate time for reflection, so we lengthened the bootcamp to four weeks for our Winter 2020 cohort.

We supplemented the policy bootcamp with hands-on activities that would allow fellows to put their newly learned skills into practice. Fellows did not just undertake academic exercises; they were assigned work on current tech policy issues that they then presented to working policy stakeholders. For example, the fellows participated in a policy writing exercise with the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace and the Transatlantic Commission on Election Interference, where they presented solutions to mitigate the harms from the spread of “deep-fakes” in democratic elections. The commission was so impressed by the work of our fellows that they invited several of them to serve as non-resident fellows and continue the work they proposed in their memos. To culminate the three-week bootcamp, the fellows also participated in a 48-hour exercise in partnership with Eventbrite and the City of San Francisco, where they

presented technology solutions to help improve safety for major events in cities. Throughout the exercises, the fellows continuously honed their policy skills, giving one another feedback on projects and receiving comments from experts.

In addition to the policy bootcamp and hands-on exercises, the fellows were able to hear from a wide variety of technology and policy experts. We hosted four “topic panels,” where experts in AI, democracy and misinformation, cybersecurity, and tech for social good convened to give an overview of current challenges in their field, and to answer questions from fellows. Throughout the summer, we also held weekly dinners with top government and technology officials who candidly spoke about their experiences working in the trenches of tech policymaking. Speakers for the 2019 dinner series included former Secretary of Homeland Security and Arizona Governor Janet Napolitano, founder of Craigslist Craig Newmark, and former White House Cybersecurity Advisor Michael Daniel. Other experts led trainings on topics such as stakeholder mapping, White House policymaking, and the role of non-profits in the tech policy sphere.



Overall, our curriculum is what makes us unique: it gives us the power to enable our fellows to distill essential information about the policy process and practice using that information in the real world. By giving our fellows a common language with which to tackle technology challenges, we empower them to combine their technical knowledge with their desire to seek creative solutions to society's problems.





#### POLICY LECTURES AND WORKSHOPS

- What is Policy & Overview
- Translating Technical Concepts
- Writing an Argument
- Reading and Writing for Policy
- Scoping a Policy Problem
- Assignment: Policy Research and Writing
- Stakeholder Mapping
- Outputs Part 1: Written Policy Documents & Public Comment
- Assignment: Writing Public Comments
- Policy Memo Training
- Policy Memo Workshop
- Assignment: Policy Memo
- Scoping Solutions
- Outputs Part 2: Thinking Outside the Box
- Outputs Exercise
- Implementation and Advocacy

#### GOVERNMENT & POLICYMAKING LECTURES

- Intro to Government
- Intro to White House Policymaking
- Intro to Legislative Policymaking
- Intro to Agency Policymaking
- Intro to Company Policymaking
- The Role of Companies and Nonprofits in Policymaking
- Getting Things Done in the White House
- A Conversation with a Congressional Director

#### FOCUSED SUBJECT AREAS + SKILLS TRAINING

- Tech Policy 101
- Cybersecurity 101
- AI 101
- Democracy and Mis/Disinformation 101
- Using Technology for Social Good 101
- Ethics in Tech Policy
- Working with Multilateral Organizations
- Media and TV Training
- Op-Ed Training
- Presenting to Stakeholders

#### EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING: OUR TRIP TO SACRAMENTO

Our curriculum featured experiential learning opportunities where fellows were able to meet with tech policy professionals and legislators at the municipal and state levels. For example, the fellows took a day trip to Sacramento to learn about policymaking at the state level. At the state capitol, our fellows met with Lieutenant Governor Eleni Kounalakis, California Assemblyman Kevin Kiley, Senior Policy Advisor in the Governor's Office Ben Chida, Director of the California Department of Technology Amy Tong, and Legislative Director Brandon Bjerke. The fellows learned about the differences between state and federal policymaking, as well as current technology policy initiatives that California is undertaking. The fellows were also able to meet with a coalition of government officials from Canada to discuss the international implications of automation on the future of work.



Fellow Aloni Cohen presents on his final project regarding the California Consumer Privacy Act

#### 2019 FELLOWSHIP: 5 FAST FACTS

**12**  
total projects

**7**  
websites

**4**  
projects focused on  
state-level policies

**2**  
projects focused on  
federal-level policies

**3**  
projects focused on  
corporate policies

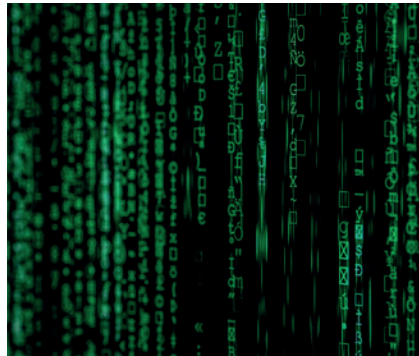
#### FELLOW FINAL PROJECTS

After the policy bootcamp concludes, fellows spend the majority of time on a final project: they research, develop, and iterate on practical yet original policy solutions for societal problems they are interested in tackling. To foster collaboration, fellows were encouraged to split their time using the 80/20 approach: each fellow selected a main project to focus 80 percent of their time on, and dedicated the remaining 20 percent of their time to an additional project. This model proved fruitful as fellows were able to supplement each other's strengths, explore new ideas, and push for more robust policy outcomes.

Fellows developed projects across a diverse range of topics, from improving the use of algorithmic tools in the criminal justice and education spheres to proposing amendments to the California Consumer Privacy Act. We were encouraged by the depth and breadth of projects that our fellows completed.



## SELECTION OF 2019 HUB PROJECTS



### CLASSIFIED THREAT SENSORS FOR NATIONAL SECURITY

Steve Weis

Foreign nation-state cyberattacks against US-based companies create a national security risk, yet classified data prevents easy data-sharing agreements. This project recommends using secure enclaves to operate classified threat sensors on the servers of private companies to look out for cyber attacks without exposing sensitive data.



### TEST-DRIVEN DEVELOPMENT

Neal Parikh, Brandie Nonnecke, and Ginny Fahs

Often, technology policies do not fully address the issues they are concerned with or have negative, unintended consequences. This project recommends applying a computer science methodology, Test-Driven Development, to policymaking in order to ensure more robust policies, meaning that issue areas can be substantively and systematically addressed and potential unintended consequences considered.



### RISK-LIMITING AUDITS IN NORTH CAROLINA

Steven Buccini

The North Carolina Board of Elections finds itself at a juncture as it seeks to implement new voting systems. To counter election interference, this project recommends the Board implement risk-limiting audits to supplement a paper ballot system. Risk-limiting audits are a cost-effective way to increase the efficiency of the auditing process and reduce the probability that interference with the voting process can change the results of an election.



### INTEREST RESEARCH ALLIANCE (PIRA)

Brandie Nonnecke

Social media platforms hold vast amounts of data that are of extremely high value for public-interest research and human rights investigations. However, platforms are increasingly constraining access to data use due to data security and privacy concerns due in large part to nascent data privacy regulations. To address this ambiguity, PIRA is a proposed multistakeholder, non-binding coalition dedicated to establishing shared principles and operational guides for appropriate data access, sharing, ownership, and privacy standards for public-interest research collaboration.

## POLICY IMPACT

A core goal of our fellowship program is to empower future tech policy entrepreneurs to drive real policy change. Our first cohort demonstrated that, with just a few weeks of training, they could translate the training we offered into meaningful policy impact.

Several of our fellows worked independently to successfully advocate for change in their home states. Ora Tanner's project focused on issues of algorithmic transparency, fairness, and bias within the Florida School Safety Portal, a state-wide integrated student data repository designed to identify school shooting threats in the aftermath of the Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School shooting. Tanner presented her concerns about the portal at a Florida state school safety commission hearing, arguing in favor of stronger data protections based on an operational plan she and project partner Erica Greene developed at the Hub.

Steven Buccini, who had previously run for office in his home state of North Carolina, remained engaged with North Carolinian politics for the duration of the fellowship. A software engineer by training, Buccini submitted a public comment and published an op-ed in the *Greensboro News & Record* to advocate for the inclusion of paper ballots in the state's voting system. His home city adopted paper ballots as a result of Buccini's advocacy, and his proposal for a novel form of ballot auditing is likely to be piloted in 2020.

Fellow Ginny Fahs, with 20 percent assistance from Tanner, Buccini, and fellow Anil Dewan, focused on developing tools to better protect elderly users online. After a series of interviews and design workshops with older users, Ginny's team produced a policy brief with recommendations on how government agencies could improve their cybercrime reporting systems for elderly users, redesigned a scam reporting form, and built a website with resources for family members of survivors of elder scams. Her team presented their project to a variety of government stakeholders, including the FBI and the Department of Homeland Security. The group was able to achieve considerable policy impact, as the Cybercrime Support Network — a public-private collaboration focused on combating cybercrime — will be using the fellows' draft scam reporting form as version 1.0 of a new form that centralizes the reporting of online crime and fraud to all relevant law enforcement agencies.

## POLICY IMPACTS

4

op-eds

2

public comments  
submitted

12+

stakeholder meetings

16

media appearances

5

policy briefs  
published

4

websites

3

operational  
guidelines published

2

white papers  
published





Even after our program concluded, fellows continued to leverage the policy skills they developed in our program in their own careers. Several of our fellows were invited to become nonresident fellows of the Transatlantic Commission on Election Interference as a result of memos they had presented to the commission as a training exercise in our program. Fellow Ginny Fahs also took advantage of our media training and writing workshops to send a letter to government officials in support of her non-profit #MovingForward, which aims to reduce harassment in the venture capital industry. Aloni Cohen submitted comments on the California Consumer Privacy Act draft regulations, pointing to technical flaws in the drafting of the regulations.

#### IMPACT ON FELLOWS

We are encouraged by the positive feedback we've received from the pilot run of our program. In a post-fellowship anonymous feedback form, our fellows reported overwhelming overall satisfaction with our program. A majority reported a much stronger understanding of the policy process, as well as a more robust understanding of career options in tech policy. A majority also stat-

ed they would consider a significant career change into tech policy following the fellowship. In fact, in the short time since the fellowship concluded in fall 2019, two of our fellows have already switched careers: Elizabeth Ruiz has joined In-Q-Tel, a strategic investor for the U.S. intelligence and defense communities, and Neal Parikh has become the Director of Artificial Intelligence for the City of New York. The vast majority of the fellows in our pilot cohort indicated that they would recommend or strongly recommend our program to their peers.

As with any pilot, our program seeks to iterate and make improvements for future cohorts. We spent the last quarter of 2019 refining and honing our curriculum in preparation for our winter fellowship, re-writing over half the content from the pilot cohort. We also have added new training sessions, including a more specific session on how to have policy impact, and a career training and resume writing workshop. Overall, we look forward to improving based on the substantive feedback we received from our fellows and peers. We are also excited to see what our fellows continue to accomplish in the coming months with their newfound policymaking skills.

#### Deep Dive

## Florida School Safety Project

With experience working as an educational technology researcher, science educator, and physicist, Ora Tanner was eager to focus her final project for the Hub on the use of algorithms in education. More specifically, Tanner developed a multi-pronged project on a new law passed in her home state of Florida that aimed to prevent school shootings through the use of algorithms.

Florida lawmakers had passed legislation in the wake of the Parkland shootings to create a central database called the Florida Schools Safety Portal (FSSP). The FSSP pulls student information from disparate data sets to flag students who demonstrate warning signs for undertaking mass school shootings, allowing school and law enforcement officials to intervene before a potential incident. In doing so, the database proposed collecting significant amounts of sensitive data about all Florida schoolchildren.

Tanner worked with technical and subject-matter experts to analyze the ethical and technical risks of the new database and predictive algorithms. She expressed concern with a lack of data quality and the potential for bias against certain subpopulations. Tanner, with project partner Erica Greene, developed an operational plan for oversight and monitoring of the FSSP. In addition, Tanner published a series of op-

eds, one-pagers, and videos to explain the details of the FSSP to students, parents, and school administrators. Tanner presented her findings to the State of Florida's Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School Public Safety Commission. The Commission has since narrowed the scope of the FSSP's purpose and has made stronger efforts to protect student privacy, due in part to concerns raised by Tanner and others.

#### FLORIDA SCHOOL SAFETY PORTAL PROJECT OUTPUTS

- Operational Plan
- One-Page Information Sheet for Parents
- One-Page Information Sheet for Students
- Op-Ed in the Tampa Bay Times
- Explainer Video
- Public Comment at FSSP Commission Meeting
- Policy Brief in Contexts (Academic Journal)
- Blog Post on Aspen Institute Site
- Podcast Interview on WashingTech Policy Podcast



FELLOWS SELECTED  
IN 2019

12

Software Engineers

6

Researchers

10

Project and Product  
Managers

4

Startup Founders

4

PhDs  
(in Media Studies,  
Computer Science,  
and Educational  
Technology)

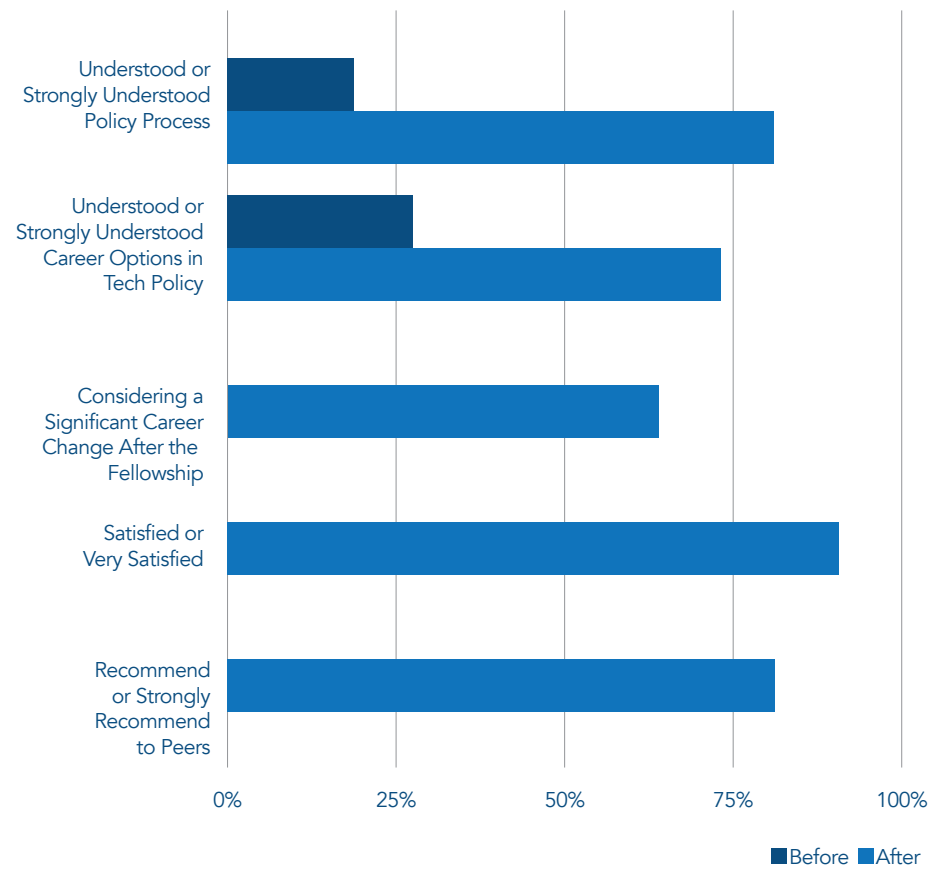
4

Government  
Employees  
(at local, state and  
federal levels)

2

Former Veterans

Fellowship Outcomes



FUTURE COHORTS

With one successful fellowship cohort under our belts and another underway, we are looking toward growing our impact as we bring on more fellows with unique interests and areas of expertise. Our second cohort, running from January through March 2020, includes a similarly diverse range of start-up founders, software engineers, IT professionals, and other technologists who are focused on a wide range of issues, from cybersecurity to education and diversity in tech. With each iteration, we will look to expand our bench of trained technology policy experts. In the future, we also hope to expand the fellowship to include up to three cohorts per year. We are also exploring bringing in cohorts that are focused on a specific subject area (such as climate change policy), and making elements of our curriculum more publicly available to assist those who cannot join our program on a full-time basis. Our inaugural year has set a strong foundation for our future goals to be achieved.





## External Engagement

Our fellowship program is the backbone of the Aspen Tech Policy Hub. However, we also spent the past year establishing our presence in the technology and policy communities and building innovative partnerships to facilitate our work.

### ESTABLISHING OUR PRESENCE

In January 2019, we publicly announced that the Hub had been formed and opened for applications for our inaugural cohort. Through extensive and continued coordination with various technology and policy communities, we successfully promoted our fellowship and organization, individually reaching out to over 2,000 partners. We held informational webinars, wrote pieces about the program in influential publications such as *Lawfare*, and promoted the Hub's efforts on podcasts such as *WashingTech* and *TechDirt*. We participated in several conferences and panels, including the 2019 Aspen Ideas Festival and the Code for America Summit. These efforts were critical to advertising the Hub and attracting highly motivated and high-quality applicants.

The Hub also pushed to establish a presence in the San Francisco Bay Area and beyond through several key large-scale events. Over the course of the last year, we organized eight events that were open to the public:

- An event launching the Hub in Washington, DC, with *The Bridge* founder Allie Brandenberger and former White House Cybersecurity Coordinator Michael Daniel as panelists;
- Two information sessions for fellowship applicants, one in partnership with Travis Moore, Director of TechCongress;
- A launch event to introduce the first cohort of fellows, with an introductory conversation by *Washington Post* correspondent Lizza Dvoskin and Tom Kalil, former Deputy Director at the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy;

- Two demo days—one in San Francisco and one in DC—to present fellow work to stakeholders, with remarks by former White House CTO Megan Smith, current Partnership on AI Director Terah Lyons, and former White House Deputy CTO Nicole Wong; and
- A fellowship closing event, hosted by journalist Kara Swisher of *Recode* and former White House cybersecurity coordinator Michael Daniel.

Most of these events attracted more than 100 participants each, and served as hallmarks for our program to establish a community of engaged tech policy entrepreneurs.

Despite our status as an unknown at the beginning of the year, the Hub succeeded in having a significant presence in print media throughout 2019. From regular appearances in the *Washington Post* and *Politico*, to our fellows' work being covered by NPR, *Wired*, and CNBC, we established the Hub as a source of

cutting-edge research and policy outputs across a range of tech policy topics.

Finally, the Hub grew our online social media presence significantly this year:

- We established a custom-designed, interactive website ([www.aspentechpolicyhub.org](http://www.aspentechpolicyhub.org)) to feature our fellows and their projects. We deployed a temporary website from January to May 2019 and launched the final product, designed by Studio 1500, in June 2019.
- We significantly grew our presence on Twitter, tweeting 776 times and gaining almost 1.3K followers (a 400% increase) in 2019.
- We launched our LinkedIn and Youtube channels, which now have 215 followers and 18 videos uploaded respectively.

We are pleased with the growth of our social media while recognizing that there is room for improvement in secondary social media channels like YouTube and LinkedIn.





## MEDIA APPEARANCES

### ABOUT THE HUB

- Axios
- Bloomberg Government
- Fast Company (Op-Ed)
- Lawfare Blog
- Medium (Op-Ed by Nicole Wong)
- Politico
- Politico Cyber Monday
- Risky Business Podcast
- SF Chronicle
- Tech Dirt Podcast
- Tech Policy Podcast
- TechCrunch

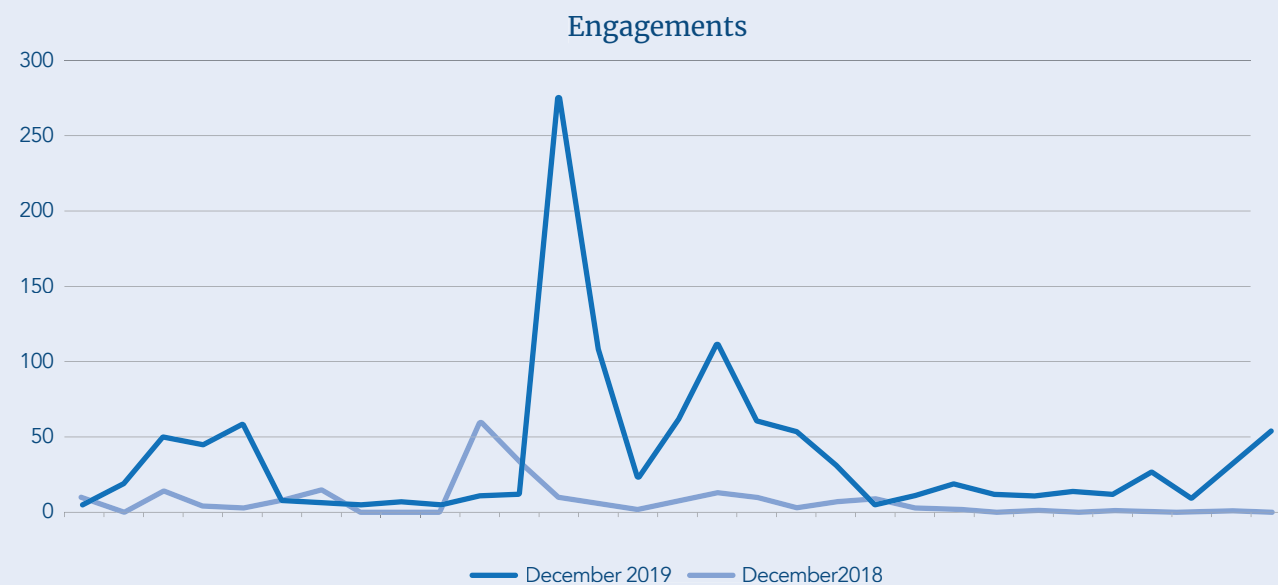
### HUB AREAS OF INTEREST (Cybersecurity, AI, Tech for Good)

- CNet
- Gulf Today
- NPR's Marketplace
- OneZero (Medium)
- The National (UAE)
- Washington Post: Cybersecurity 202 (x2)

### FELLOWS + FELLOW PROJECTS

- Aspen Institute Blog
- CNBC (x2)
- Contexts, American Sociological Association Journal
- Greensboro News
- Medium (Op-Ed)
- NPR's On Point
- Protego Press (x2)
- SF Citi
- Tampa Bay Times (Op-Ed)
- The Atlantic (Op-Ed)
- University of South Florida Spotlight
- Wired (Op-Ed)
- WUSF (Radio)

## SOCIAL MEDIA GROWTH IN ONE YEAR



Another way we strove to establish the Hub this year was through the use of social media. On Twitter, we averaged over six times the number of engagements in the month of December 2019 as compared with December 2018.

## BUILDING PARTNERSHIPS

Another key goal of this year was to cultivate partners in the tech policy world. Partnering with tech policy experts is crucial to our program's success, as our partners play a considerable role in Hub operations, from reviewing applications to serving as mentors for fellow projects. Engaging with key practitioners, technologists, and policy professionals is also essential to cultivating a tech policy community within the Bay Area.

We are extremely grateful for all of the support we received this year from our partners, whether they delivered guest lectures, served as panelists, judged our fellows' projects, or joined us for dinners. This support was crucial for the success of our program, and we look forward to having our partners continue to contribute to our tech policy community.

**The adage that "it takes a village" runs especially true at the Hub. We are deeply grateful for the over 100 guests who donated their time and expertise to teach, provide feedback, and share their experiences with our inaugural cohort of fellows.**

- |                            |                      |                     |
|----------------------------|----------------------|---------------------|
| DAVID AGRANOVICH           | GEORGE HOYEM         | CHRIS PAINTER       |
| JENNIFER ANASTASOFF        | ALEX IFTIMIE         | TODD PARK           |
| KEELY ANSON                | ROSE JACKSON         | PHILIP REINER       |
| ALLIE BRANDENBERGER        | ANDREW JAMES GROTTTO | MARGARET RICHARDSON |
| STEFFI BRYSON              | TOM KALIL            | DAVID RIEMER        |
| BEN CHIDA                  | FLORENCE KASULE      | CHRIS RILEY         |
| CINDY COHN                 | KEVIN KILEY          | MONICA RUIZ         |
| MARIANO-FLORENTINO CUELLAR | ALEX KOTRAN          | SHIREEN SANTOSHAM   |
| MICHAEL DANIEL             | ELENI KOUNALAKIS     | YOAV SCHLESINGER    |
| TREVOR DARRELL             | ZVIKA KRIEGER        | RAJ SHAH            |
| RENEE DIRESTA              | ANKA LEE             | KAREN SILVERMAN     |
| EILEEN DONAHUE             | PETER LIEBERT        | ALEX STAMOS         |
| ELIZABETH DWOSKIN          | TERAH LYONS          | CHARLOTTE STANTON   |
| CHRIS FINAN                | ROXANNE MAKASDIJAN   | LEXI STURDY         |
| WILLIAM FLETCHER           | BRENT MARAVILLA      | KARA SWISHER        |
| BETH GEORGE                | MEGAN METZGER        | EMILY TAVOULAREAS   |
| NATHANIEL GLEICHER         | TRAVIS MOORE         | NICOLE TISDALE      |
| JOHN GONZALEZ              | JANET NAPOLITANO     | AMY TONG            |
| BRYCE GOODMAN              | CRAIG NEWMARK        | KIP WAINSCOTT       |
| LINDSAY GORMAN             | TIM O'REILLY         | KEN WUN             |
| MATTHEW GROTE              | MATT OLSEN           | CORI ZAREK          |
| SARAH HECK                 | JEN PAHLKA           |                     |



## Organizational Development

As with any new organization, 2019 brought a significant amount of exciting growth for our organization. We hired our first staff members, located a space for our program, and undertook significant fundraising for future cohorts.

### GROWING A TEAM

We know that the success of any initiative demands a strong and hardworking team. As such, we spent a significant portion of this year building the internal capacity of the Hub to ensure our fellowship programs ran smoothly.

At the start of 2019, founding Director Dr. Betsy Cooper was the only full-time staff member for the Hub. Cooper is a cybersecurity expert who joined the Aspen Institute after serving as the founding Executive Director of UC Berkeley's Center for Long-Term Cybersecurity and as an advisor at the Department of Homeland Security. An attorney and researcher by training, Cooper has leveraged her expertise in law, public policy, cybersecurity, and technology policy to ideate, build, and lead the Hub.

Before the launch of the fellowship program, Cooper hired two capable and hardworking part-time program assistants to help support our fellows for the summer. Maitreyi (Mai) Sistla, a current graduate student at UC Berkeley's Goldman School of Public Policy, joined the Hub as our Graduate Program Assistant, bringing expertise in policymaking at the state and local levels, as well as experience in managing and building new organizations. She was joined by Ryan Olson, our Undergraduate Program Assistant, and a current student at UC Berkeley majoring in economics and minoring in public policy. Ryan brought considerable design expertise to the Hub, helping our fellows build outputs that clearly communicated technical concepts to policy stakeholders. Ryan designed many of the infographics used by Hub fellows in their final projects.

As the year progressed, we were excited to hire our first full-time staff member, David (pronounced dah-VEED) Albán Hidalgo, as a program coordinator. David brings experience working for the Mayor's Office of Tech & Innovation in San Jose as well as a multidisciplinary academic background in policy, technology, and ethnic studies. This small but dynamic team proved to be a strong foundation for our program's first year.

### OUTSIDE SUPPORT

While we are appreciative and grateful for having a strong internal team fully committed to our work, we also rely on a team of outside supporters and vendors to be able to carry out our mission. From photographers, videographers, and event managers to designers, developers, and professional copy editors, we could not have done our work on our own. The support of each individual is crucial to helping the Hub run successfully.

The Hub partnered with design firm CCM Design to develop a series of policy briefs, project briefs, and white papers to ensure a consistent Hub brand.



## OUR TEAM



**BETSY COOPER**  
Director



**DAVID ALBÁN HIDALGO**  
Program Coordinator



**MAI SISTLA**  
Graduate Program Assistant



**RYAN OLSON**  
Undergraduate Program Assistant





One of the more visible results from our key partners is the photography of Bryan Walker Ting. Bryan’s clean and crisp images complement the work of our web designers at Studio 1500, giving our brand a distinct and professional look.

### A HOME IN THE HEART OF SAN FRANCISCO

As the de facto capital of the technology world, we felt strongly that a leadership training program for technologists should be located in San Francisco. Not only is the city home to many potential applicants, but it has proximity to technology experts who serve as trainers and speakers, which has proven to be invaluable. San Francisco also benefits from considerable policy expertise, with a tech-savvy government working in city hall around the corner and an influential state capital a short drive away. The Bay Area has also provided our fellows with ample policy problems on which to work, such as diversity in tech and the use of algorithms in California state operations.

With a fast-moving real-estate market, we unfortunately were not able to secure a permanent space for the Hub in 2019. However, this created the opportunity for us to partner with Code for America, the premier non-profit seeking to address the widening gap between the public and private sectors in their effective use of technology and design. Through the generosity of Jen Pahlka and the Code for America staff, we were able to host our first fellowship in downtown San Francisco offices, and to share lessons learned across the policy-technology divide.



### MAKING THIS WORK POSSIBLE

The work of the Hub would not be possible without the generous support of funders. We were especially thankful for the support of funders who were willing to take a chance on us as we built a new organization from the ground up during this first year.

Seed funding came from Craig Newmark Philanthropies, who generously donated funds to found our organization and allowed us to hire a Director. We quickly received support from other key partners, such as the Hewlett Foundation, Omidyar Network, and Mozilla, allowing us to fully fund our pilot cohort. We have thrived on support from organizations that have allowed our team to be free from ideological influences or project constraints, thus allowing our fellows to pursue a variety of creative and varied policy projects. We look forward to announcing additional support in early 2020.

## Craig Newmark Philanthropies



OMIDYAR NETWORK  
A WORLD OF POSITIVE RETURNS



Our first fellowship program was hosted in the offices of Code for America (CfA). CfA’s projects include building an application system that greatly accelerates the process to apply for food assistance programs in California; a program that helps governments automatically clear eligible criminal records for residents; and a nationwide volunteer system that collaborates with local governments to build civic tech. Our partnership with CfA allowed our fellows to learn more about using technology and design principles to improve government services.



## The Way Forward

We are entering 2020 aiming to build on our successes, with core goals of expanding our program and policy impact. First and foremost, we plan to run two cohorts of the Hub in 2020, drawing on the lessons learned from our first year and refining our model of support. By the end of 2020, we plan to have a polished method of training for technology experts in cybersecurity, AI policy, and other topics.

We also hope to hire a Deputy Director in mid-2020 who will be working with our Executive Director on teaching and mentoring our fellowship cohorts. Expanding our internal capacity will allow us to better engage with external stakeholders, allowing us to grow our presence and impact in the tech policy community. It will also allow us to think about expanding the number of fellows or the types of fellowship programs offered, potentially running programs on specific policy areas that are especially in need of creative thinking, such as climate

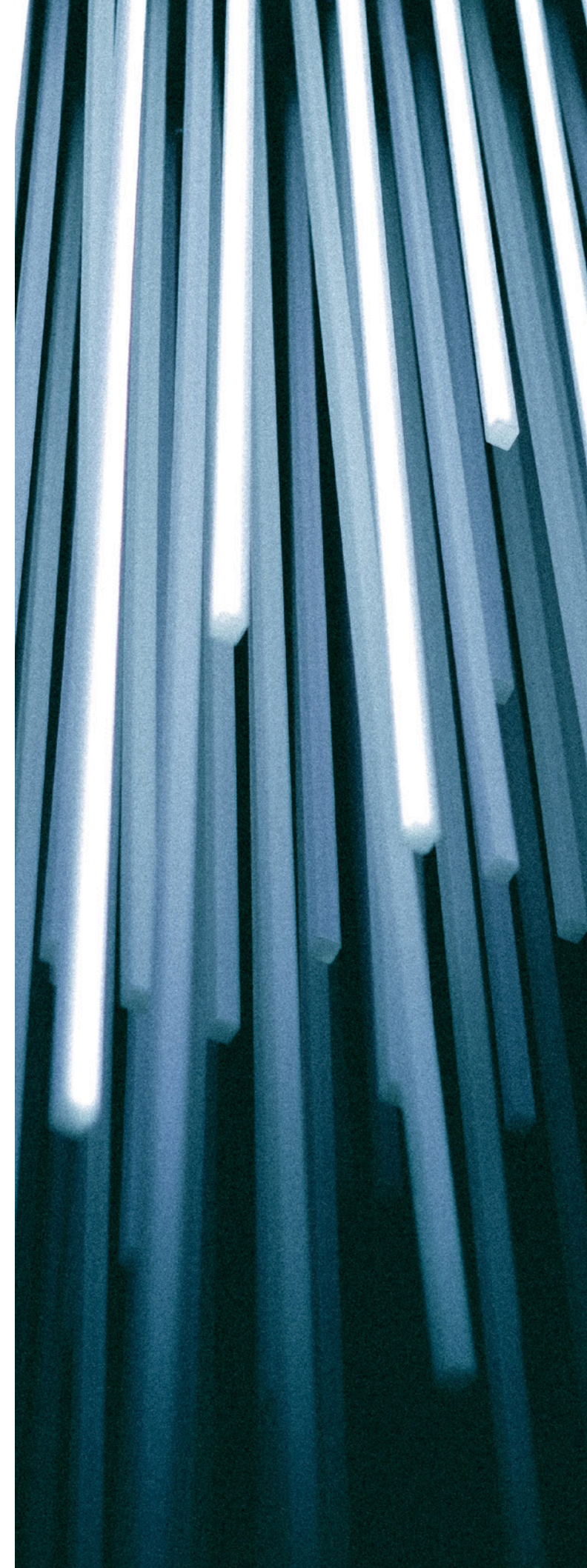
change. Ultimately, we see this growth as necessary to establishing the Hub as the premier policy innovator and training program within the tech policy world.

In addition to expanding our internal capacity, we are also eager to establish a permanent residence in the Bay Area. Having a permanent office space will allow us to fulfill one of our original visions for the Hub: establishing a physical location, or “hub”, where past and current fellow members and partners can work and engage with one another, even beyond the fellowship program. Having a dedicated space will also enable us to consider other methods of teaching our curriculum, including ‘executive education’-style programming.

Lastly, and perhaps most importantly, we are eager to share our lessons learned with the broader technology and policy communities. We plan to make elements of our curriculum accessible to the general public

over the coming year and beyond. By doing so, we expect to empower technology and policy experts around the world to pursue innovative, creative, and effective solutions to pressing tech policy challenges.

All in all, we are encouraged and inspired by the work we have been able to accomplish in our founding year of the Aspen Tech Policy Hub, and we look forward to an exciting 2020 ahead.











**ASPEN TECH  
POLICY HUB**

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