

BACKGROUND

- **An established Government Innovation Effort.** An 8-year old Silicon Valley based 501(c)(3) tax-exempt non-profit designing and developing an open source, publicly owned, elections technology framework, called the **TrustTheVote™ Project**.
- **To increase confidence in elections and their outcomes.** Working directly with elections official stakeholders to develop a publicly owned platform that can be adopted, adapted, and deployed in any jurisdiction across the nation.
- **Covering all aspects of elections administration.** Includes apps for all aspects such as voter registration and administration, ballot design and distribution, casting and counting, audit and verification, and performance analytics and results reporting.
- **Comprised of some of the Tech Sector's best and brightest.** Founded by experienced technology executives turned social entrepreneurs from Apple, Facebook, Google, Netscape, Oracle/Sun Microsystems, and other tech firms.

THE PROBLEM & OPPORTUNITY

- **Privatizing voting systems has resulted in a dysfunctional oligopoly.** 80% of America's voting systems are provided by 2 vendors in a market where there is no incentive to innovate because counties have little money to pay for it.
- **Critical democracy infrastructure teetering on failure.** Yet, this is the critical infrastructure on which our Democracy relies to maintain its constitutional operational stability, through public elections where no "do-overs" are allowed.
- **All voting machinery is approaching end-of-life.** The 2013 Presidential Commission on Elections Administration (PCEA) reported that within 6 years all of America's voting systems will have reached the end of their useful life—technology already so antiquated, that stock-piling spare parts is the only innovative thing being done.
- **Ill-advised ad-hoc patches.** State legislatures, desperate for improvement, are rapidly turning to any alternative they can find—and these stopgap measures are not addressing the underlying fundamental problems with current infrastructure that relies on black-box proprietary antiquated technology.
- **A growing national security risk.** America is increasingly risking an election meltdown that would rival what happened in 2000. Digital hacking is the newest tool of criminal enterprise. It's easy to see how vulnerable outdated voting systems, and ad-hoc efforts to route around them, is becoming a national security issue.
- **Time is short.** In the next 4 years, voting system after system across the nation will either be replaced with similar machinery of no better quality, or worse: simply have their service contracts extended in hopes of available spare parts.

THE SOLUTION

- **Make this Infrastructure publicly owned.** The only way to resolve this is to shift the R&D of elections technology to a glass-box open source solution, that is publicly owned and enable the commercial market to re-invent itself as systems integrators.
- **Real innovation where the industry cannot.** This will result in adaptable and deployable election technology that is more verifiable, accurate, secure, and transparent than any commercial black-box proprietary solution to date.
- **This unique project solves 3 problems.** Using tech-sector know-how, this public benefit project can **1]** reinvigorate a flagging industry, **2]** make elections administration more efficient and reliable while making the process of voting easy and convenient; and **3]** ultimately restore trust in the most critical aspect of our democracy—one that supposed to be a role model for the world.
- **The key differentiator: a focus on stakeholder needs, not technology elegance.** By putting elections officials at the center of the Project, rather than software, this non-profit effort is producing solutions according to specifications approved by those who decide what they will use for elections administration.
- **Massively scalable.** Through this Stakeholder-driven approach and their tacit approval, with a focus on open common data standards, the TrustTheVote Project is poised for massive adoption across the nation.
- **A blueprint for broader change.** The TrustTheVote Project *could* be a road map for the kind of real change envisioned by those who've attempted to innovate other government I.T. services, from human services to Treasury.
- **The right approach; the right time.** Elections officials are desperate for a more verifiable, accurate, secure and transparent alternative. They tell us our approach would be a remarkable solution. We believe at least 12 States will commit to adopt this work when the remainder of this project is funded.
- **Adoption is at hand.** L.A. County, CA and Travis County, TX are the only 2 in the nation who are building an alternative solution likely to integrate parts of this Project. What those 2 counties do, so most of the rest of the nation's elections jurisdictions is likely to adopt—*especially if the technology is freely available*. They have great hopes that we can finish our work and be ready for federal and/or state certification in time.

WHAT'S REQUIRED

- **A sum-certain amount, for a time-certain deliverable.** This project only recently won a long battle for its Federal tax-exempt status and just began fund raising this year. The total funding required to finish this project by 2018 is equivalent to a typical new venture "series-A" round of commercial investment.
- **Philanthropic funding producing real results.** Dollars go directly to hiring full time engineers and product managers developing production-grade technology; and increasing stakeholder support. Overhead is minimal. We run as lean as possible with start-up mentality, and no commercial product launch investment is required.

- **Consider that Ballots are effectively the “ROI” on Campaign Funding.** This investment to innovate America’s elections infrastructure is a small fraction of money raised for campaigns. Billions are poured into political campaigns, but ballots are the return on that investment, and this project is like an insurance policy that ensures **a]** those ballots will be counted as cast, **b]** voters will have the kind of experience of ease and convenience that increases their participation, and **c]** everyone’s confidence will increase in elections and their outcomes.

MOMENTUM IS BUILDING

- **Real results you can see, touch & try.** We have 7 years of engineering already invested in this next generation elections and voting technology—now ready to be finished for production; a suite of apps and components garnering interest throughout the U.S., and internationally.
- **Our software is already at work.** The PCEA featured our voter services tech in the President’s Final Report; our software already powers Virginia’s voter services portal and the majority of 3rd party voter registration services; and 16 states will participate in our next version of the VoteStream elections reporting platform.
- **Our Board continues to evolve.** Several State Secretaries, plus former U.S. CTO Aneesh Chopra, the CSO of Salesforce.com, and a DHS cyber-security director are advising us. Former Facebook exec Chris Kelly joined the Board this year and committed significant financial backing along with others from the Tech Sector.
- **Partially backed by the Knight Foundation.** The TrustTheVote Project is also supported in part by the Knight Foundation, focusing on one aspect of the election technology framework—innovative services for publishing elections results.
- **We’re helping establish national standards.** The Project is at the forefront of efforts to set national standards in elections and voting data working closely with standards bearers such as IEEE (Institute for Electrical and Electronic Engineers) and NIST (National Institute of Standards & Technology).
- **We’re building a robust IP strategy.** The innovations in our elections technology design are so solid and numerous that we’re prosecuting a robust patent portfolio—domestic and international, which we intend to turn over to the public and ensure the sustainability of this technology for the public benefit forever.

WE CAN MAKE SOME HISTORY

We invite you to become a collaborator in this first of its kind “digital public works” project. Together, we’re going to write some American democracy history. So, let’s stop talking about change and make it happen. **Please join us.**

To learn more, please get in touch with Gregory Miller (gam@osetfoundation.org) or Peter Harter (peter@osetfoundation.org).

Visit OSETFoundation.org for more of the story, media coverage, and our blog. And see: votestream.trustthevote.org for a video demo of our work.