



## Data and Society Accelerator Program: 2023 Data to Safeguard Human Rights Cohort

The Data and Society Accelerator Program aims to support nonprofits as they make progress on their respective data journeys, while equipping nonprofit teams with the mentorship, tools, and expertise they seek to develop and test proof-of-concept data approaches that rely on large, complex datasets.

Many nonprofit organizations have unique datasets that – alone or in combination with other data – may offer deeper insights into the needs of beneficiary groups, more precise evaluation of programmatic interventions, or greater confidence in anecdotal evidence relevant to their missions. Program staff working on data-centric projects may have a new hypothesis about the information contained in their organization’s datasets that – if validated – could dramatically improve decisions, activities and impact.

Yet through our conversations with 300+ nonprofits over the past five years, we have learned that the in-house infrastructure, tools, and technical expertise required to yield these insights are often out of reach due to prohibitive costs and overburdened nonprofit staff. Nonprofit organizations may have an interest in working on the cloud and building their advanced analytics and data technology capacity, but lack the resources required to make the case that such an investment is worthwhile.

In response, our Data and Society team designed the Accelerator program: *providing interested nonprofits with a nine-month grant in support of developing and testing a cloud-based proof-of-concept data approach with guidance from Data and Society’s in-house data scientists, engineers, and technologists.* Our goal is to de-risk learning by creating a space for nonprofits to build their capacity for advanced data approaches that might significantly improve their operations, service delivery impact, or community engagement. We provide resources to seed potential, rather than to scale proven solutions, foregoing the need for nonprofits to set up and invest in a test data infrastructure or strategy before knowing if it’s a good fit for their work.

Once selected, Accelerator grant partners team up with our in-house technical team to:

1. Translate problem definitions into data questions
2. Develop a tactical roadmap to organize and adapt the team’s data work
3. Prepare the data for ingesting, and
4. Use cloud-hosted services and tools to test, explore, and analyze data to answer the previously defined questions

5. Develop a sustainability or wind-down plan based on project outputs

Beyond our in-kind contributions of technology and expertise, we may also provide supplementary support to cover associated project expenses of up to \$100,000.

**Knowledge Capture and Learning:** The program is run annually through a cohort model. Accordingly, Data and Society Accelerator grant partners are expected to demonstrate a commitment to shared learning by documenting their processes and setting an example for how other nonprofits can advance their work with industry-standard data analytics, management, and governance practices in impactful, responsible, and inclusive ways. They are also expected to actively shape and contribute to the [PJMF Learning Network's peer learning programming and events](#). Program staff collaborate with Accelerator grant partners to support their peer learning and storytelling goals around the work.

**Actionable Outcomes** We define success as making progress on your organization's data journey through the process of delivering a conclusive response to your data hypothesis and determining actionable next steps for your program – whether that entails outlining a means to address newly identified data gaps and quality issues, sharing promising insights with potential partners, or targeting larger grantmaking organizations to advance your data project.

**Expected Time Commitment:** Accelerator projects are high-touch grant engagements. Our in-house team of data and cloud engineers, technologists, and data scientists, as well as our program staff, will dedicate between 50-60 hours of facetime to your organization for project scoping, onboarding, technical syncs and peer learning activities during the course of the nine-month grant period. We expect each Accelerator grant partner to drive its project forward, but our in-house technical team will work alongside your team to get your data project onboarded to the platform and into a steady state, as well as to help troubleshoot issues as needed along the way.

**Application Process:** The call for Expressions of Interest (EOI) in the 2023 Data to Safeguard Human Rights cohort will run from **Aug 23, 2022 - Sep 19, 2022**, during which we will review submissions on a rolling basis. Those organizations who meet our initial criteria for program fit and impact potential will be asked to participate in a series of project scoping conversations and technical workshops. Finalists will be invited to submit a formal proposal for consideration by **Friday Oct 21, 2022**.

Final decisions around the Data to Safeguard Human Rights cohort will be made in **November 2022**, with up to **12** organizations selected to join the cohort during the first quarter of 2023.

To submit an Expression of Interest, [<<click here>>](#).

**Contact us. Have a question not covered here? Send us an email at [accelerator@mcgovern.org](mailto:accelerator@mcgovern.org)**

