# Finding the right tech partner

Digital Competences for CSOs - blended online course, May 2019

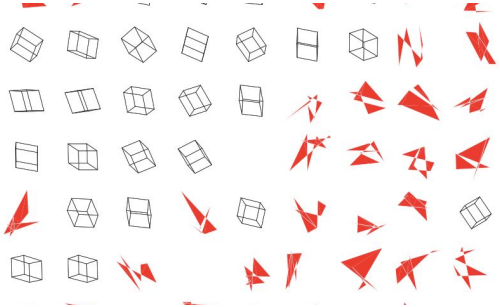
# Hello! My name is Tin.

# Tin's two hats

Social Innovation Specialist

Hivos
people unlimited

Computational artist



@tingeber, tin.fyi

# I worked with:

global witness

# Two webinars

**Finding the right tech partner**

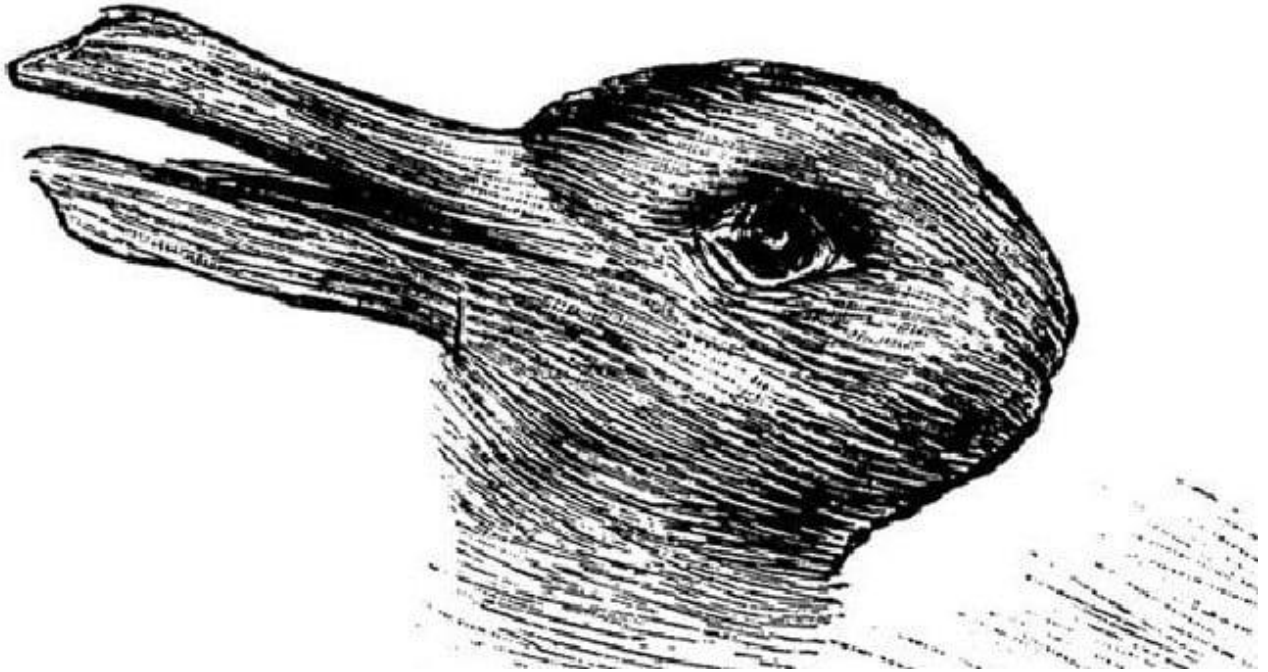
1. Lost in translation
2. Define well
3. Do the homework
4. Write an amazing RFP (Request For Proposals)

**Working with tech service providers**

- ...coming soon!

# 1. Lost in Translation

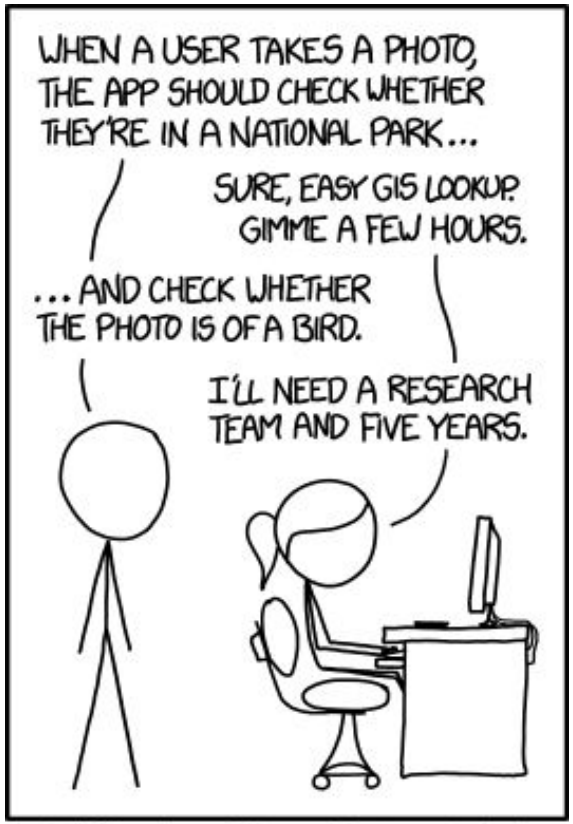
# What do you see?



# Our understanding is limited by:

- Our expertise
- Our experience
- Our bias (implicit or explicit)
- Our expectations

# The Dunning Kruger effect




IN CS, IT CAN BE HARD TO EXPLAIN THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE EASY AND THE VIRTUALLY IMPOSSIBLE.

# Story Time

# 2. Define Well

# Checklist

1. What's your main objective?
    - Short, concise, clear
2. What do you want the tool to accomplish?
    - How will this contribute to your objective?
3. Who will use the tool?
    - Why would they want to use your tool? Why not?
    - What would prevent them from using your tool?

# Focus on needs, not tools

| Tools-based | Needs-based |
| --- | --- |
| “We need a website” | A way for our partners to know about our work |
| “We need a data dashboard” | An overview of our results |
| “We need an app” | A way for the public to **monitor XY in real time** |

# List your assumptions

# 3. Do the Homework

# Checklist

1. Describe in detail what the tool should do
    - Features features features
    - Must have, nice to have, wishlist
2. Research existing tools
    - Which apps or platforms do similar things?
3. Ask around
    - Colleagues or partners that had similar projects: how did it go?
4. What could go wrong?
    - What are the risks for you and your stakeholders in doing this project?
    - Unintended consequences?

Tech service providers
*will not know*
what is best for you

# Make a detailed features list

# “We need a database that includes basic information about our volunteers.”

**Essential:**

- The database should include fields for a person’s name, address, telephone number and job description.
- Users should be able to attach a PDF file to each person’s entry, for CVs and other information.
- Users should be able to search using any of these categories.

**Desirable:**

- Users should be able to print information from any person’s entry in .csv format, without including the PDF document.
- Users should be able to search for information inside the attached PDF files as well as information in the database.

**Nice to have:**

- Users should be able to attach multiple PDF files to each entry.

# 4. Write an Amazing RFP

# What even is an RFP?

1. Organizational background
2. Short project description
3. **Project requirements and project objectives**
4. Project budget
5. Milestones and deadlines
6. Questions and required information
7. Contact information and deadline for submissions

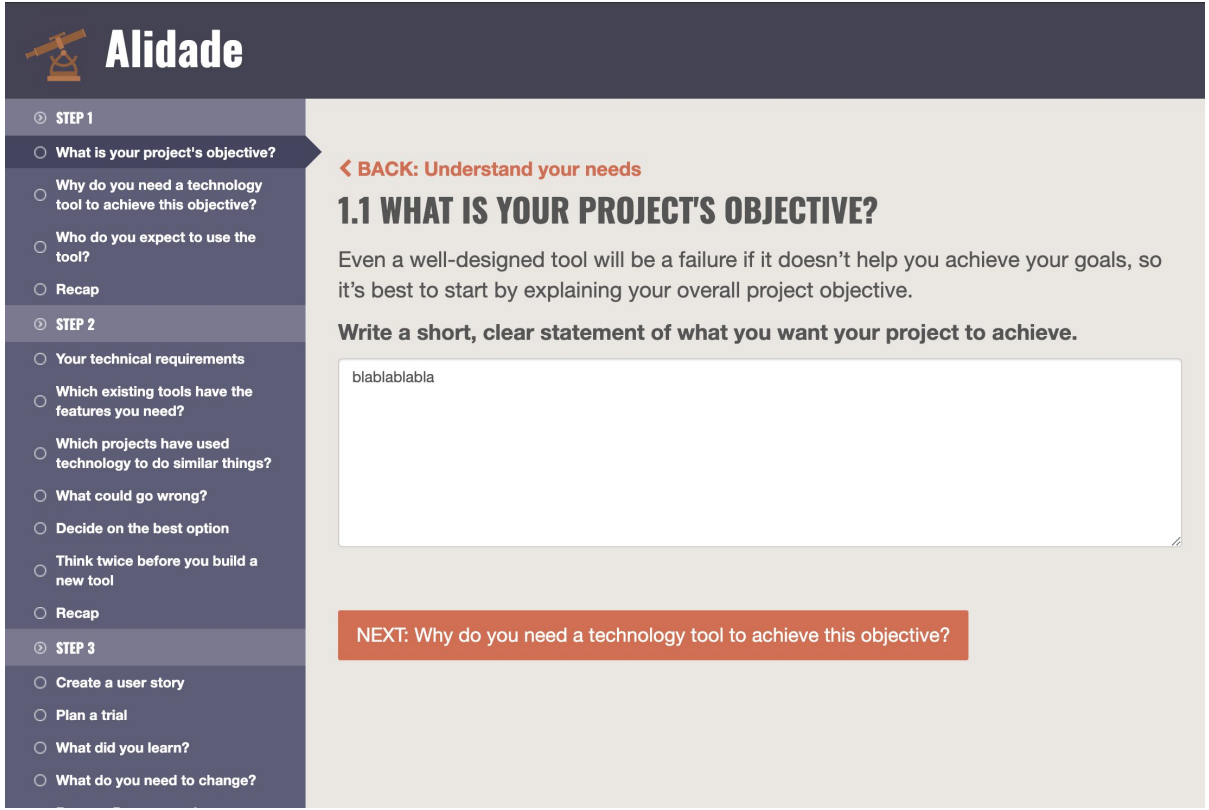
# Step 3:
# everything we did earlier

# Resources

# Alidade

[www.alidade.tech](http://www.alidade.tech)

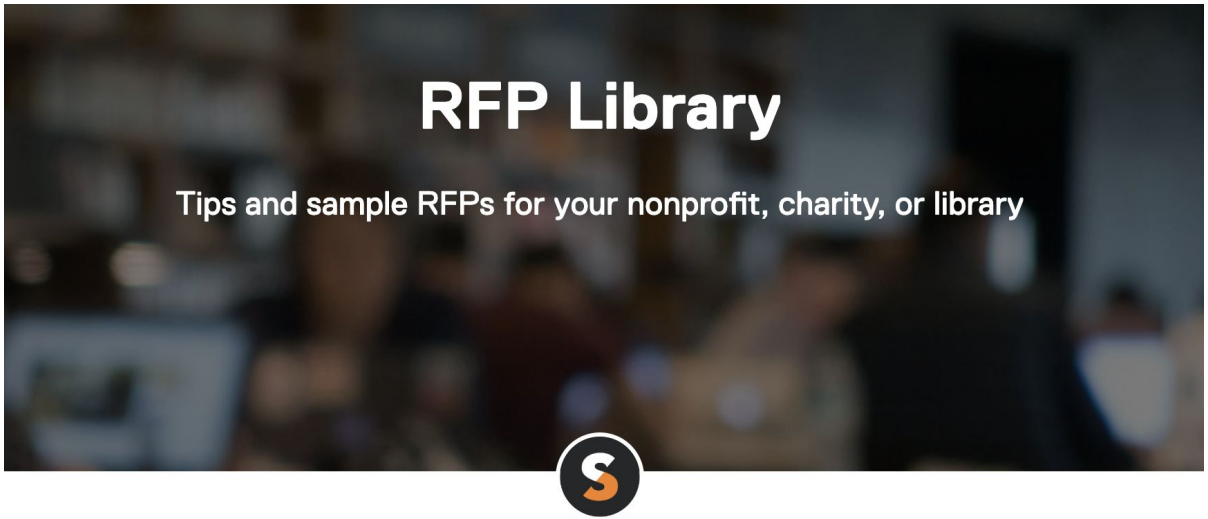
- Interactive tool
- Helps create a plan for finding technology tools that suit your social change project
- Built on in-depth research in Kenya and South Africa
- Designed for activists and social change organisations



# TechSoup RFP Library

https://www.techsoup.org/support/articles-and-how-tos/rfp-library

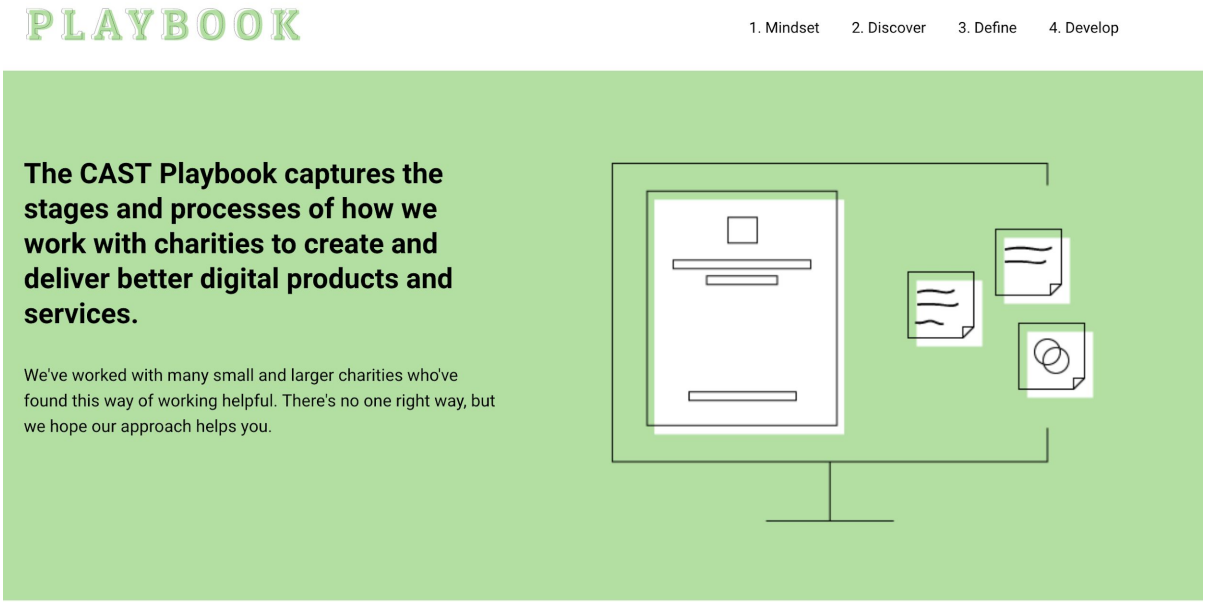
- Great overview
- Lots of templates and guides
- TechSoup has decades of experience supporting NGOs with technology



# The CAST playbook

https://playbook.wearecast.org.uk/

- A slightly different approach
- Closer to “design thinking”
- Helps understand the process a tech service provider goes through



# Homework

By 05.06.2019

- Go to alidade.tech
- **Complete Step 1 and Step 2**
- Download PDF with results and send it to us