

HACK NORTH KOREA

BRINGING ABOUT NEW WAYS TO ENGAGE WITH NORTH KOREAN CITIZENS

By Human Rights Foundation

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- Community Engagement
- Social Exclusion
- Open Source
- Physical Computing
- Social Software

In August 2014, the Human Rights Foundation (HRF) hosted the Hack North Korea event in San Francisco, a gathering of technologists, investors, engineers, designers, activists and North Korean defectors. The aim was to spark new ideas for getting information into the world's most closed and isolated society.

Prominent North Korean defectors and refugees travelled from Seoul to educate participants on how information is currently brought into the tightly controlled closed regime — whether via leaflets dropped by helium-nitrogen balloons, on USB drives and DVDs, or by shortwave radio. The participants built on this existing knowledge and brainstormed new and innovative ways of getting information past the blockade. Judges selected a winning team, and HRF's goal is to implement some of the winning ideas into actual field operations in the following months.

The 'hackathon' is part of HRF's ongoing Disrupt North Korea project. It's another step in building a bridge between the defector and Silicon Valley communities, allowing more information than ever to reach the North Korean people.

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