

THE BRIDGE PROJECT

FIRST GLOBAL REGISTRY OF NON-PROFIT ORGANISATIONS

By The Bridge Project

Project URL: <https://bridge-registry.org/about-us/>

- Data
- Internet

There are millions of social sector organisations in the world. The US alone counts 1.5 million non-profits according to the National Center for Charitable Statistics (NCCS).

The good news is that the number of organisations working on social good projects has been growing. The bad news is, that as the non-profit sector increases in complexity, it is more and more difficult for potential partner organisations to find each other and avoid duplication.

In the US, Employer Identification Numbers (EINs) are reused, and parent and chapter organisations often share the same number. Some countries have multiple registers for non-profits, while others have no registers at all, and certain countries share a numbering system, which means one number can be assigned to several different charities in different countries.

BRIDGE (Basic Registry of Identified Global Entities) has been established to address the problem. Founded by four US-based partners, Foundation Center, GlobalGiving, GuideStar and TechSoup, the system assigns a unique number to non-governmental organisations, social programmes and even schools and churches. The universal identifier acts as a 'numerical fingerprint' and also refers to the organisation's name and the location of its headquarters.

BRIDGE is still in its early stages, with a number of limitations. The database is currently an aggregate of the four founding partners' databases, and if a new non-profit wants to be added, it needs to apply to be added to one of the four individual databases. The data is not currently open source, which means that a request has to be made to the four partners to use it.

Nevertheless, three million entities have now been assigned a BRIDGE number, and four partners hope that BRIDGE becomes a useful and universal standard, widely integrated within the non-profit world. Search for a non-profit at <https://bridge-registry.org>

Image courtesy of Peter Dean

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