Employing Boston's Urban Youth in Summer Jobs

Civic Technology & Data Collaborative: Boston

Boston Collaborative

MAPC
METROPOLITAN AREA PLANNING COUNCIL

Boston Centers for Youth & Families
Martin J. Walsh, Mayor

BOSTONIA CONDITA AD 1630

DIVISION OF YOUTH ENGAGEMENT & EMPLOYMENT

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CODE for BOSTON
A CfA BRIGADE

MIT Economics

Today

1. Why summer jobs?
2. Participatory design: Youth-led algorithm
3. Measuring outcomes and Boston’s unique ecosystem
4. Early Findings and Next steps

First introductions to the Workforce, ever

Summer employment positively impacts long-term outcomes for low income youth

- High school graduation and attendance rates
- Increased reading and math scores in the short term
- Decrease in violent-crime arrests
- Reduction in risky and violent behaviors, including the use of drugs and alcohol, physical fighting, damaging property, and threatening someone with a weapon

https://www.brookings.edu/research/expanding-summer-employment-opportunities-for-low-income-youth/

Jobs for Youth in the City of Boston

Boston Centers for Youth & Families
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DIVISION OF YOUTH ENGAGEMENT & EMPLOYMENT

Each year, the DYEE receives 8,000+ applications but is only able to place ~3k youth in summer jobs

Executive support for this work

Mayor Marty Walsh's has a stated target to hire 10,000 young people across Boston

Equity and the Jobs Lottery: 60:40 rule

The time it takes to reach and place a single young person: 14 minutes

Challenges to Running the Program

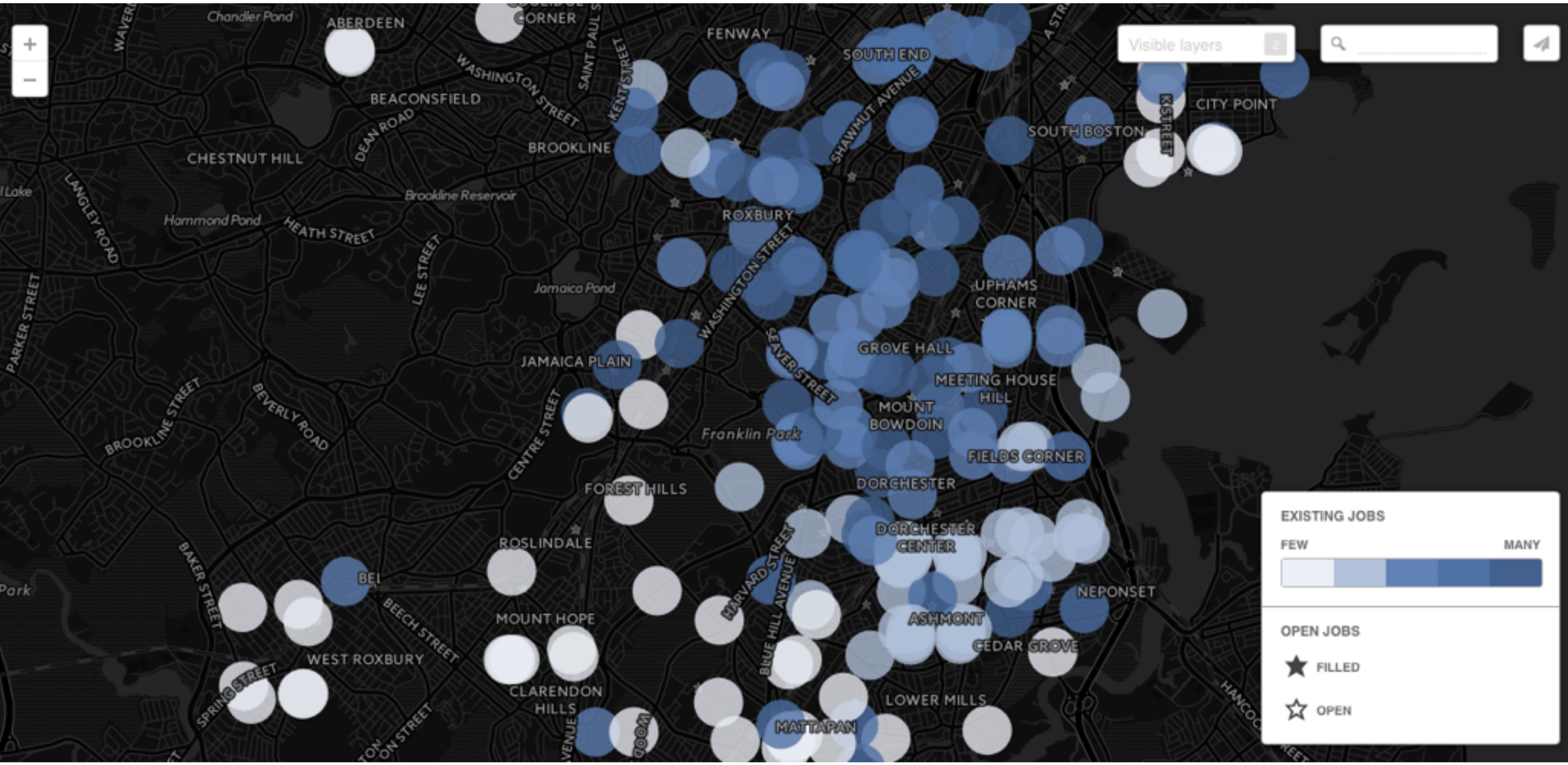
- Processing time (capacity)
- Manual selection (little data, few inputs)
- Need for more meaningful positions

EMBEDDING EQUITY and YOUTH INSIGHT DIRECTLY INTO THE TECH

Designing a placement algorithm by young people, to be used by young people

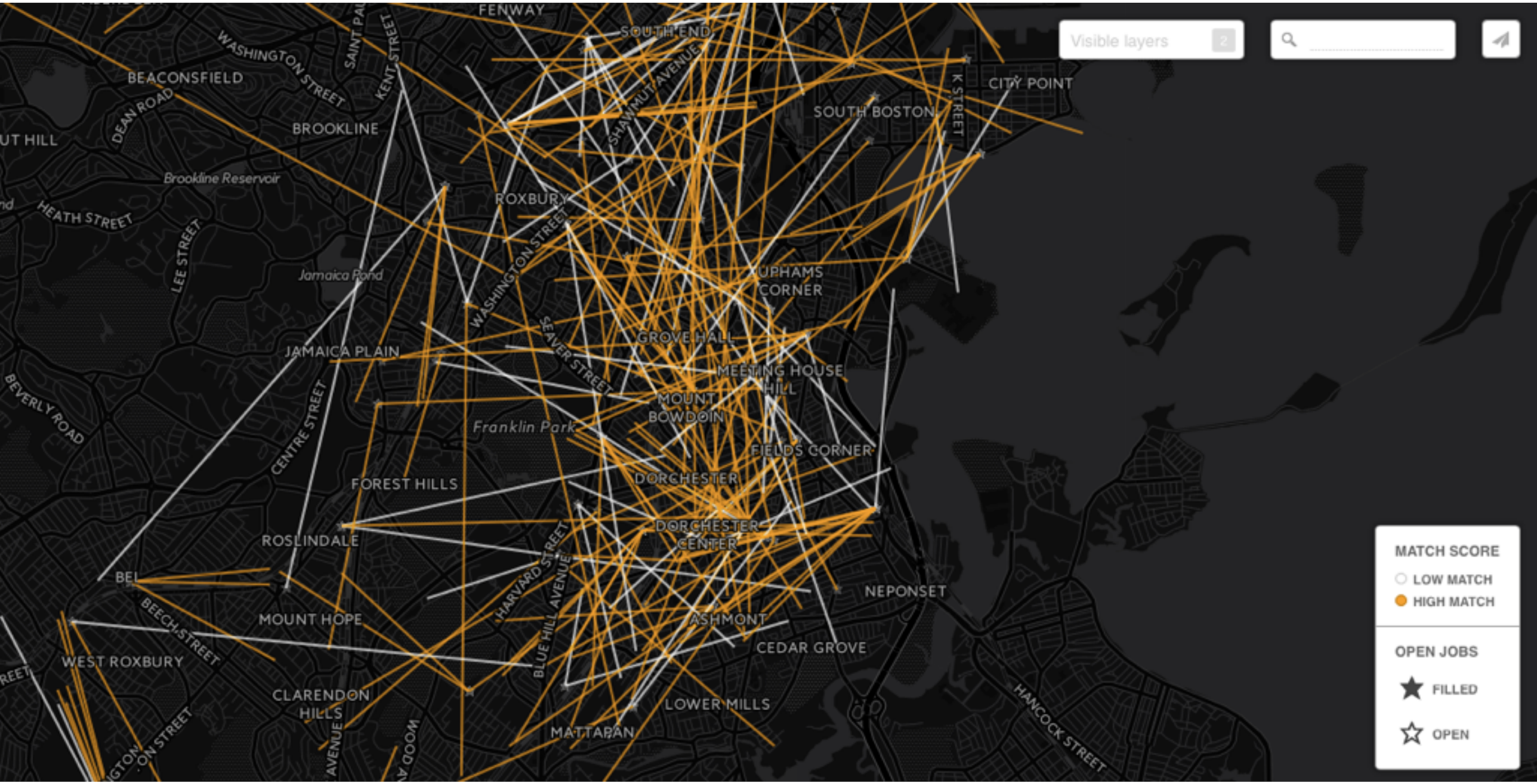
https://www.brookings.edu/research/expanding-summer-employment-opportunities-for-low-income-youth/

Redistributing jobs, equitably



How accessible are jobs in our neighborhoods?

Rebalancing for transit access and applicant interest



MEASURING OUTCOMES IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR: WHY + HOW

Batching the Lottery Groups

phone-based manual, matching

automated matching email

email + phone

split test (summer 2016)

Building on existing MIT research on school assignment models

What Really Matters in Designing School Choice Mechanisms*

Parag A. Pathak, MIT and NBER†

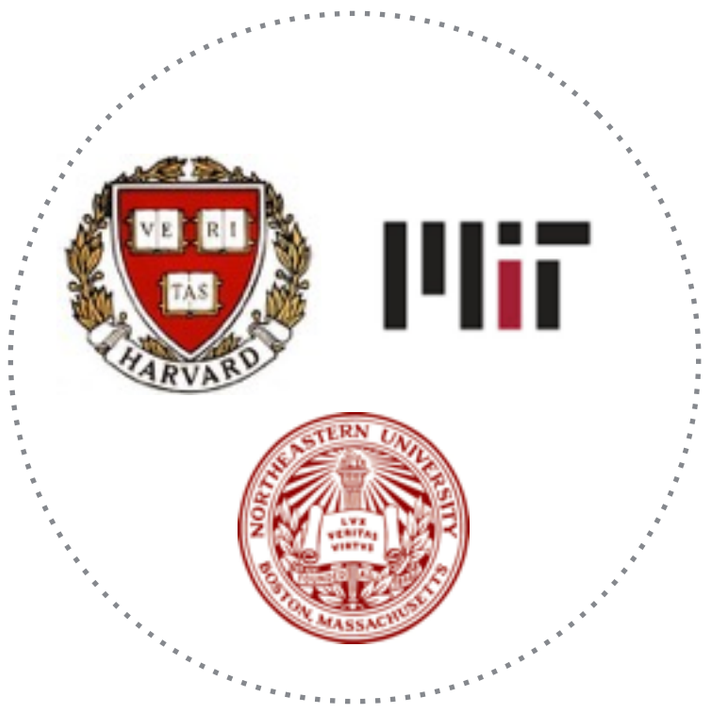
Draft date: January 2016

Abstract

In the last decade, numerous student assignment systems have been redesigned usin
from economists in the large American cities and elsewhere. This article reviews some
case studies and uses practical experiences to take stock on what has really mattered in
choice mechanism design so far. While some algorithm design details are important, ma
less practically important than initially thought. What really matters are basic issues
market operators in other contexts would likely be concerned about: straightforward incentives,

DR. PARAG PATHAK

Leveraging research institutions and Boston's unique civic technology ecosystem



research universities

public sector civic tech

private civic tech community

Resiliency and turnover

- We've had 100% turnover on this project in one year
- Unique relationship between client (DYEE) and technical advisor (DoIT) has made all the difference

Early Findings

19% of the automated batch accepted a job offer, through email, saving 8.8 weeks (44 full work days) of manual phone calls

Next Steps?

1. Post-lottery survey and results evaluation

2. Exploring other sides of the issue (end-to-end user experience; front-end interface; lottery portal)

3. Mapping and building our civic tech ecosystem

Q+A