

Innovation Fund Platform V1.0

How might we design a platform that both motivates investors to explore new and emerging opportunities in social innovation as well as allows for the monitoring of investments in real-time?

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THE PLATFORM

UNICEF's Innovation (Venture) Fund is a newly established, non-thematic, pooled fund which has been specifically designed to finance early stage, open-source technology that can benefit children. The core motivation of the Innovation Fund is to identify "clusters" or portfolios of initiatives around emerging technology – so that UNICEF can both shape markets and also learn about and guide these technologies to benefit children. We invest in solutions that can impact the lives of the most vulnerable children.

We find these solutions clustered around \$100billion industries in frontier technology spaces, such as: blockchain, UAVs, virtual and augmented reality, 3D printing, machine learning, quantum computing, genetic engineering, Internet of

Things, artificial intelligence, nano-satellites and human dynamics.

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While the design team contributes to both streamlining the recruitment and portfolio management process backstage, we are also responsible for the website design you see here. The current objective of the website is to display real-time data information which allows users to monitor the growth of projects in each of our portfolios – Youth Engagement, Real-Time Information and Infrastructure.

THE OPPORTUNITY

We wanted a platform that could summarize the landscape of our investments, inspire investors to participate in the social innovation space and motivate startups and UNICEF Country Offices to apply for the fund and see themselves as contributing to enhancing opportunities for children.

Capacity

We don't have a huge design team, so another challenge we face is capacity to build out the website while concurrently addressing the overall system and architecture of the fund. We know that aside from the website, we must also address things like how we recruit startups, how we make it easier for country offices to understand the application process, how we manage a growing number of investments and how we onboard companies.

Through all of this, a big goal of ours is how we maintain empathy in the technology space. At the end of the day, we must continue to share UNICEF's mission so it important for us to find the best ways to express impact and change for the communities we are servicing through the products we invest

in.

We indeed have our hands full with this project.

Uncertainty

You see, the first sketch of the UNICEF Innovation (Venture) Fund website started on a brown paper lunch bag, evolved to a flimsy paper plate and eventually made it's way through a rough and tumble developer onto a screen. It has been iterated on through a not so orderly design process and passed through the hands of different designers and conceptualizers for the past 2-3 years. It's important that we acknowledge that the concept of the Venture Fund is quite new, and with newness comes uncertainty. How do we share information? Why does real-time data matter? How can this website add value or build demand? How can we work with constraints in timing, capacity and budget? These are just some of the questions we face as we design.

We are constantly thinking about how we design a digital experience that can accommodate for the changing needs of our stakeholders, so our current site from a design perspective is very much a work in progress.