

ACTIVITY: Investigate That Tech

In this activity we will investigate ownership and impact of everyday technologies, and then reimagine them as if they were built by and for your community.

Step 1: Take five minutes to brainstorm a list of a few technologies you and your community use. Here are some examples to get you started:

1. My home phone network
2. My mobile phone network
3. Social media platforms
4. Online news platforms
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.

Step 2: Circle one technology from your list that you're interested in further investigating.

Step 3: Answer the following questions about the technology you chose. The answers do not have to be long but they should be accurate, and not based on opinion. If you have access to books or the internet, you may use them to help answer these questions.

1. Who owns the technology?
2. How are decisions made?
3. Who designs the technology or system?
4. Who is it designed for? Who has the most access to this technology?
5. Who has the least access to this technology?
6. How are skills and knowledge shared about the technology?

Step 4: Take a second to read through your answers. What jumps out to you? In the space below, draw connections or patterns that you notice.



Step 5: Identify a community you are a part of. This can be your neighborhood, a group of people you love working with, your circle of friends—anything you identify as community. Take a minute to describe your community:



Imagine that same technology you chose was built for and by your community. How would it be different? In the box below, draw how you think your community would design that technology; then write down what you changed, and why.



Did anything change? If so, what changed and why?



What did we learn?

Instead of trying to fit our communities to existing technology, we need to reshape technology to fit our communities. It's not just about knowing how to use tech but investigating, teaching, and learning about it; encouraging people to be entrepreneurs as well as consumers; and building communications networks that match the social networks in our neighborhoods.

There is a relationship between people's creativity and their ability to take ownership of their own lives and lead their communities. We can better advocate for ourselves when we have the ability to shape the future we envision.

Community technology is an alternative vision of technology in which communities and neighborhoods have direct control over their digital communications, allowing for greater self-determination and power over their shared digital voices.

THINK ABOUT IT ...

Why is creativity important for building self-confidence?

How would technology need to change to meet the needs of your community?

How could creating content for the internet build community in a neighborhood?