



By [Lynsey Lacher](#)

In summer 2020, we launched our pro bono project program because we wanted to extend our expertise to companies in need of UX services that may not have the financial resources needed for consultation. Each summer, we'll select two organizations for an eight-week engagement where we provide strategy, research, and design to make their products and services intuitive and delightful for all users. We're committed to working with BIPOC founders who seek to create innovative solutions for society's most pressing issues.

[Our call for pro bono program applicants](#) back in April 2021 brought several excellent organizations to our attention. We're excited to share the two organizations we selected to work with during 2021: [ImpactMapper's HERO Index](#) and [Rescuing Leftover Cuisine \(RLC\)](#).

During the eight-week project engagement, we assign each pro bono project a dedicated team of UX practitioners. Now that we're at the project midpoint, we checked in with each team to learn more about the work in flight.

## **HERO Index: Making conscious investing possible**



ImpactMapper has been built on a strong foundation of social justice values (equality, participation, voice) and based on the needs of and collaborations with feminist, human rights and social justice advocates and evaluators.

Source: [Impactmapper.com](https://www.impactmapper.com)

## About the client

HERO Index will help investors make socially and environmentally conscious decisions about where to invest their money by comparing companies' positive and negative impacts on the world. In addition, people can use this index to build their investment strategy around "companies doing good in the world," says Blink Design Director Chris Mueller.

## The project work

Initial research shows that participants think the HERO Index is a "win-win opportunity" for investors and the greater community, says Blink UX Researcher and Project Director Tim Bridgham. "People have an inherent belief that, in the end, good companies will be more successful." According to Visual Design Intern Louis Rakovich, the project's highlight so far has been the design workshop. "I enjoyed seeing how we integrate [our research] into the design process. A workshop helps anchor the subjective and highlights how visual design and evidence-based design are connected."

## What's next?

The Blink team is excited to design the HERO Index as a one-stop shop for investors to make informed decisions about where they invest their money. The client's goal is to "create a 'sticky' tool — one that people want to come back to, to help change the world for the better," says Mueller.

## Rescuing Leftover Cuisine: Eliminating food waste



Source: [rescuingleftovercuisine.org](https://rescuingleftovercuisine.org)

## About the client

Rescuing Leftover Cuisine (RLC) is an established food rescue organization with its headquarters in New York City. The organization's mission is to build self-sustaining communities by "making food rescue sustainable and universal, and food hunger a thing of the past" through a network of devoted volunteers.

## The project work

RLC came to Blink with an existing product — a company website — that allows volunteers to find out about and sign up for upcoming food events. RLC has also conducted some of its own research. "We get to bring in the Blink perspective," says Research Intern Carolyn Donaldson. "The client was already doing research, so [at first] we wondered, 'what value can we bring?' but Blink has a unique perspective on design and has been able to offer the RLC team something different that they haven't done before."

## What's next?

According to Donaldson, the project's "aha!" moment was when the team narrowed down the project to focus on improving the volunteer experience. "There was excitement for many other features that came up on the perimeter, but it came down to focusing on the core elements of the website, which was to focus on the experience of the volunteer. Sometimes the best way to proceed is to focus on the most eminent project needs," says Donaldson. Blink is excited to improve the current RCL web application and create a signature experience that enhances the volunteers' initial engagement and encourages long-term retention.

### Get involved

Applications for our pro bono project program are closed for 2021. Applications for the 2022 program will re-open next spring. For more information regarding our pro bono projects, and updates about our 2022 application process, [follow us on Twitter](#).