

How to get started in Public Interest Tech

Are you:

- a policy wonk who is disenchanted with bureaucracy?
- a designer or software engineer with a desire to use your technical skills for good?
- interested in the ability to make organizations work better, but don't want to step into the trenches of management consulting?

Welcome to the world of Public Interest Technology and Government Digital Service Design.

Public interest technology is a field that emphasizes leveraging technology and the skills required to build products and design services for the common good.

The opportunity to use technical, design, and management skills for public good have grown as teams across the country have taken on issues ranging from helping eligible Californians register for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) to upgrading software that helps NATO military advisors determine mission-readiness.

Whether you come with an interest in community organizing, management consulting, tech start-ups, or user experience design -- **this might be the path for you.**



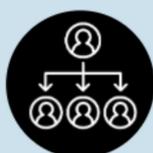
UI/UX/Service Designers



Data Scientists



Software Engineers & Coders



Product/Project Manager



Content Strategists & Storytellers



Policy Makers with an Interest in Tech & User Research

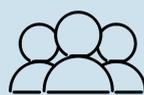
frameworks for thinking



acknowledge work already being done



move purposefully & fix things



design with, not for



be respectful

main issues



bureaucratic navigation



agile project management limitations



cross agency communication



data security



legality of user testing



don't assume - listen

major themes



design to scale



experimental



data-enabled



data ethics



human centered



procurement



acknowledge high stakes

**Government:
Know Before You Go**

What this work might look like

Developing PR campaigns and communication strategies for government service roll-outs



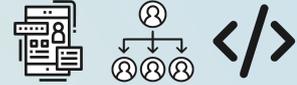
think US Department of Agriculture Smokey the Bear for Wildfire Prevention

Facilitating cross - agency communication



think Depts. of Homeland Security, State & Health & Human Services Refugee Resettlement

Improving the user interfaces of critical, public-facing digital services



think Healthcare.gov

Measuring & increasing the effectiveness of existing government services



think the World Bank Global GovTech Partnership

Advising Congress on how to regulate & legislate around new technology



think anti-trust, data privacy, cryptocurrency, facial recognition

Make better use of government data & modernizing outdated software

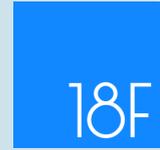


think enabling Medicare to integrate their health records with third-party applications

Common skills



Where it happens



Designated digital service/data teams within the federal government



Agencies that are experimenting with innovative (digital/design/data/agile) practices



Nonprofits and startups



A sampling of states and cities that have dedicated digital service, research & development, or data teams

Potential pathways

Our Advice for Getting Started? AVOID career paths that will burn you out early and START somewhere where you can practice solving complex problems early on.

