

Digital Bootcamp: Overview of Federal Digital Initiatives

Contents

Two-pager: Apolitical Bootcamp Overview of Federal Digital Initiatives

General federal Government of Canada digital-driven initiatives

Canada's Digital Standards

Creation of the Canadian Digital Service (CDS)

Digital Operations Strategic Plan:

AI and automation

Improving content on Canada.ca

Beyond 2020 initiative

2020 Policy on Service and Digital

Two-pager: Apolitical Bootcamp Overview of Federal Digital Initiatives

General federal Government of Canada digital-driven initiatives

The Government of Canada is going through a period of defining renewed ambitions for digital services and policy work. This desired future state has been expressed through such examples as:

- A Minister of Digital Government (<https://www.canada.ca/en/government/system/digital-government.html>) position
- Canada's Digital Charter (https://www.ic.gc.ca/eic/site/062.nsf/eng/h_00108.html), led by ISED
- Participation in the Digital Nations group (<https://www.canada.ca/en/government/system/digital-government/improving-digital-services/digital-9.html>), which Canada currently chairs
- GC Data Strategy Roadmap (https://www.canada.ca/content/dam/pco-bcp/documents/clk/Data_Strategy_Roadmap_ENG.pdf) and supporting departmental data strategies
- Emergence of Chief Digital Officer roles (e.g., ISED, TC, CSPS)
- Renewal goals from the Clerk of the Privy Council's Beyond 2020 (<https://www.canada.ca/en/privy-council/services/blueprint-2020/beyond-2020.html>) initiative around the themes of an agile, equipped, and inclusive public service
- 2020 Policy on Service and Digital (<https://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/pol/doc-eng.aspx?id=32603>)

A number of these as well as additional examples, concrete and diverse in nature, are outlined in the following text below.

Canada's Digital Standards

The Government of Canada released ten Digital Standards (<https://www.canada.ca/en/government/system/digital-government/government-canada-digital-standards.html>) with the goal of providing Canadians with access to public services that are intuitive, easy to use, and trustworthy.

They are living standards which are intended to evolve over time. Below are the ten standards with a few examples:

1. Design with users:

- Research with users to understand their needs and the problems we want to solve.
- Conduct ongoing testing with users to guide design and development.
- Example: Veterans Affairs Canada and the Canadian Digital Service met with 106 Veterans and area office staff to learn from their experiences interacting with VAC services, and to test new prototypes directly with them.

2. Iterate and improve frequently:

- Develop services using agile, iterative and user-centred methods.
- Continuously improve in response to user needs.
- Try new things, start small and scale up.
- Example: The Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) team and the Canadian Digital Service who worked on the Reschedule a Citizenship Test service deployed new updates 20+ times per week, up from a baseline of 3-4 updates to IT systems per year. This service is now retired.

3. Work in the open by default:

- Share evidence, research and decision making openly.
- Make all non-sensitive data, information, and new code developed in delivery of services open to the outside world for sharing and reuse under an open licence.
- Example: Managed jointly by Transport Canada and Statistics Canada, the Transportation Data and Information Hub (<https://www144.statcan.gc.ca/tdih-cdit/index-eng.htm>) has provided public access to over 600 datasets which features high-quality, timely and accessible multi-modal transportation data and performance measures. The Federal Geospatial Platform (<https://maps.canada.ca/en/index.html>), managed by Natural Resources Canada, provided public access to 750+ (as of July 2018) authoritative datasets via Open Maps.

4. Use open standards and solutions:

- Leverage open standards and embrace leading practices, including the use of open source software where appropriate.
- Design for services and platforms that are seamless for Canadians to use no matter what device or channel they are using.
- Example: The Canadian Centre for Cybersecurity created AssemblyLine (<https://www.cyber.gc.ca/en/assemblyline>), an open source malware detection and analysis tool, which has been installed a total of 2,204 times in 33 different countries. The team has responded to 109 requests for help, bug reports and feature requests in the open source community.

5. Address security and privacy risks:

- Take a balanced approach to managing risk by implementing appropriate privacy and security measures.
- Make security measures frictionless so that they do not place a burden on users.
- Example: Veterans Affairs Canada and Canadian Digital Service worked to ensure the research and development of the service was privacy-centric. This resulted in an easy-to-read privacy statement that informed veterans of how their input would be used to improve the service. Find Benefits and Services (<https://benefits-avantages.veterans.gc.ca/?lng=en>) was able to eliminate the need for collecting personal information while ensuring a high quality user experience that shows benefits that are tailored to each individual's needs.

6. Build in accessibility from the start:

- Services should meet or exceed accessibility standards.
- Users with distinct needs should be engaged from the outset to ensure what is delivered will work for everyone.
- Example: ESDC has established a Centre of Expertise for Accessible Client Service to inform its service design and delivery. Engagement with the community has identified opportunities such as virtual sign language interpretation to support the deaf community and plain language web content to support those with cognitive, intellectual and memory disabilities. ESDC's client experience surveys explicitly breakout information on clients with disabilities and restrictions to understand which aspects of its service delivery hinders their access.

7. Empower staff to deliver better services:

- Make sure that staff have access to the tools, training and technologies they need.
- Empower the team to make decisions throughout the design, build and operation of the service.
- Example: PSPC has supplemented their service transformation team by recruiting new talent and training existing staff in service design and design research roles, in order to better meet the needs of their users.

8. Be good data stewards:

- Collect data from users only once and reuse wherever possible.
- Ensure that data is collected and held, in a secure way, so that it can easily be reused by others to provide services.
- Example: Information from the Canada Revenue Agency is leveraged by Employment and Social Development Canada to identify clients for automatic enrolment for Old Age Security pension. This has resulted in an increase in the number of clients who were automatically enrolled to over 50% of new OAS beneficiaries.

9. Design ethical services:

- Make sure that everyone receives fair treatment.
- Comply with ethical guidelines in the design and use of systems which automate decision making (such as the use of artificial intelligence).
- Example: The Canada Revenue Agency and the Canadian Digital Service are prototyping ways (<https://digital.canada.ca/partnerships/>) for low-income Canadians to easily complete their taxes online, particularly for those who are unable to do so through other means. This can help them access benefits and services that they would not otherwise receive.

10. Collaborate widely:

- Create multidisciplinary teams with the range of skills needed to deliver a common goal.
- Share and collaborate in the open.
- Identify and create partnerships which help deliver value to users.
- Example: The Canadian Digital Service (<https://digital.canada.ca/>) works in partnership with federal departments to improve their digital services, and shares guidance, on ways of working, on a public blog for others to adopt and reuse.

Creation of the Canadian Digital Service (<https://digital.canada.ca/>) (CDS)

The Canadian Digital Service (CDS) was launched to help government improve how it designs and delivers services around the needs of the people who will actually use them. Since CDS launched two years ago, they have recruited top digital talent from across Canada and around the globe, partnering with several departments and agencies to improve services to the public. This includes working with Veterans Affairs Canada on a live service that helps Veterans and their families find and access benefits that match their needs, as well as ongoing work with the Canada Revenue

Agency to help Canadians with low income file their taxes, and with Employment and Social Development Canada to make it easier to apply for the Canada Pension Plan Disability benefit. The Canadian Digital Service is also developing common building blocks to help all departments deliver better, more consistent service experiences, beginning with the launch of a notification service (<https://notification.alpha.canada.ca/>) this year that makes it easier for government to keep people updated along their service journeys.

You can read more about current and past partnerships between the CDS and other federal government departments by visiting this page (<https://digital.canada.ca/partnerships/>).

Digital Operations Strategic Plan: (<https://www.canada.ca/en/government/system/digital-government/digital-operations-strategic-plan-2018-2022.html>)

This plan the third iteration in the Government of Canada's strategic planning process for how we manage technology and technological change in government. A few stand-out examples:

AI and automation

- The Government of Canada has released a Directive on Automated Decision-Making and an Algorithmic Impact Assessment to provide an assessment framework to help institutions better understand and mitigate the risks associated with automated decision-making systems by providing the appropriate governance, oversight and reporting, and audit requirements. The Assessment tool is being developed via open collaboration.

Improving content on Canada.ca

- TBS's Digital Transformation Office is working on projects with departments to make it easier.
- For each project, the Digital Transformation Office co-creates prototypes, sets concrete usability targets, and runs usability tests with Canadians, trying to improve to address specific questions that people have about specific federal services. For a prototype to launch, it must make it at least 20% easier for people to get the right answer. Considering the high numbers of visits to in-demand pages, such an increase in task success rates is significant. Ultimately, it means people spend less time looking for the answers they need from the government.

Beyond 2020 initiative

Beyond2020 (<https://www.canada.ca/en/privy-council/services/blueprint-2020/beyond-2020.html>) is refreshed framework for the federal Government of Canada with a focus on mindsets and behaviours. In a time that is increasingly characterized by data, digital, new workplace designs, flatter work cultures, and multiple generations working together, it is critical to examine and adopt the mindsets and behaviours that will meet the changing expectations of Canadians. The desired outcome is a Public Service that is more agile, more inclusive, and better equipped. The three areas of focus for Beyond 2020 are:

Agile:

- A-1: Mobilize resources and people to key priorities
- A-2: Empower our workforce
- A-3: Embrace uncertainty and learn through experimentation

Inclusive:

- I-1: Create an environment where individuals are safe to express themselves

- I-2: Expand partnerships and remove barriers to collaborate
- I-3: Co-create by bringing different perspectives to the table

Equipped:

- E-1: Design work environments to optimize performance
- E-2: Make learning a fundamental part of your job
- E-3: Explore technology and tools to help you be more effective in your role

2020 Policy on Service and Digital

Effective April 2020, the Policy on Service and Digital (<https://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/pol/doc-eng.aspx?id=32603>) and supporting instruments will serve as an integrated set of rules that articulate how Government of Canada organizations manage service delivery, information and data, information technology, and cyber security in the digital era. Other requirements, including but not limited to, requirements for privacy, official languages and accessibility, also apply to the management of service delivery, information and data, information management and cyber security.

Retrieved from 'https://wiki.gccollab.ca/index.php?title=Digital_Bootcamp:_Overview_of_Federal_Digital_Initiatives&oldid=16205'

This page was last edited on 20 January 2020, at 09:21.

Content is available under [Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License](#) unless otherwise noted.