De-risking Gov Tech Field Guides

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The problem

Of all government software development contracts over $6M, only 13% are successful (cost, schedule, performance).
Our objective

Accelerate agencies’ ability to deliver on their mission, by sharing common agile pitfalls and recommendations.
Table stakes

**Empowered, government product owner** to ensure you’re building the right thing and making the right choices

**User-centered design** to focus on software that meets actual people’s needs

**DevSecOps** practices, which improve software quality, deploy quickly, and maintain security

**Iterative development** to deliver value to users faster, learn from each release, and continuously improve

**Open source** development whenever feasible to prevent vendor lock-in and facilitate gov reuse.
De-risking Gov Tech Field Guides

Deliver successful technology projects
Guidance for delivering successful custom technology projects in government.
Read the guides  Request a workshop

Only 13% of large government IT projects succeed*
Implementing custom software projects can be extraordinarily costly and risky in a government setting. Waterfall software development remains standard at all levels of government. Outdated budgeting and oversight processes have been designed around these very waterfall processes. Moving toward a user-centered, agile approach to this work will save millions of dollars in spending on bad software.

* From The Standish Group’s “Haze” report

https://derisking-guide.18f.gov/
Assign dedicated and empowered product owners to lead development efforts

Expecting someone to lead a product development team with only a fraction of their time is setting them — and the product — up for failure.
Use the “Agile Contract Format”

- Statement of Objectives
- Time & materials (T&M)
- Short PoP (3 years or less)
- Quality Assurance Surveillance Plan (QASP)
- Open Source
Consider tradeoffs in build vs. buy decisions

Are you buying COTS, or are you buying “unrecognizably modified off-the-shelf software” (UMOTS)?
Observed impact

- Reduced procurement timelines (2+ years to 4 months)
- Over $1B in cost avoidance
- Structuring contracts to allow agencies to pair with the private sector effectively
Need help?

Workshop
- Teach basics of modern software development practices
- Develop draft product vision, problem statement, roadmap, and user stories
- Align cross-functional teams on everyone's roles and what needs to happen
- Draft solicitation and IGCE
- Highlight risks

Post-workshop support
- Refine solicitation
- Conduct Q&A with industry
- Serve as advisors to the evaluation panel
- (Optional) prototype to inform procurement action

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What if your idea could change how the government uses technology?

Turning good-for-government ideas into good-for-people solutions

10x crowdsources ideas from federal employees and turns them into real products that improve the public’s experience with the federal government.

We start small, validating the idea and increasing the investment as we go, to ensure we’re funding the ideas that deliver the most impact. We believe that the most creative, game-changing ideas come from those who work most closely to the problem—people like you.

https://10x.gsa.gov/
Thank you

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