Innovation Definition: What is the Innovation Toolkit? (V8 + Amy)

**Table of Contents**

[Overview](#_p9hyph87accj)

[Innovation Toolkit Goals](#_439wc8wz0qbj)

[History of the Innovation Toolkit](#_lciit8vgoblt)

[How to Give Feedback](#_dfr5drbh7cwq)

[Credits](#_iski15q3pyt6)

# Overview

Throughout the Federal government, a movement towards being more innovative and forward-thinking has gained momentum, specifically in an increasingly interconnected world. Some may think that this is a buzzword without much meaning, but it is real and present in pockets in the government. To find out more about how we define “innovation” please visit Government Innovation [crosslink to Government Innovation].

There is no singular understanding of innovation across the Federal government. Concepts span many overlapping communities, tasked with tackling different problems through different skillsets, time horizons, and understanding of what innovation means. The primary goal of this Toolkit is to translate what has worked in the private sector—and has been used successfully in the government already—so that it can be used to promote innovation across the Federal government. This Toolkit captures and shares these innovative approaches to tackling some of the government’s biggest problems—and how you might be able to adapt it for success at your agency.

# Innovation Toolkit Goals

This Toolkit exists to foster the awareness, adaptation, and adoption of a core set of innovation principles to solve problems and promote a culture of experimentation both within the government and beyond. The approaches and mindsets used in this Toolkit can lead to the following outcomes for your agency or organization:

* Improve government effectiveness
* Increase agility of government
* Deliver better results at a lower cost
* Improve core processes
* Improve ability to solve problems

# History of the Innovation Toolkit

In October 21, 2015, President Obama’s Administration unveiled its third of three updates to their “[Strategy for American Innovation](https://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/strategy_for_american_innovation_october_2015.pdf)”. This Strategy, first issued in 2009, provides an overview of Administration efforts to ensure America continues to lead as the world’s most innovative economy, to develop the industries of the future, and to harness innovation to help address our Nation’s most important challenges.

Building on the President’s efforts to continue to increase innovative solutions and approaches, the Strategy included a new chapter on steps the Administration has taken and will take to make the Federal government even more innovative by harnessing new approaches for institutional change. Continued institutional innovation and experimentation are needed both to improve the performance of the Federal government and to create a better environment for innovation by the private sector and civil society. These public-sector innovations include tapping the ingenuity of the American people to solve problems using incentive prizes and using a “test-validate-scale” approach to find and fund what works.

The Administration is building the capacity for the broader adoption and institutionalization of these and other innovations. Organizations like the [Presidential Innovation Fellows](http://pif.gov), General Service Administration’s [18F](http://18f.gov), and the [United States Digital Service](https://www.usds.gov/) teams are making access to government services simpler and more intuitive, while also working with agencies to modernize IT development and customer service standards. A network of Federal agency innovation labs is fostering a culture of innovation by empowering and equipping Federal employees to deliver better results for the American people. Also, a new Innovation Toolkit, which you are reading right now, will give Federal employees the information they need to try new approaches to solve problems, improve the core operations of government, and promote innovation.

*“The Administration is creating an “Innovation Toolkit” that will increase the ability of agencies to deliver better results at lower costs for the American people. These approaches can increase the effectiveness and agility of the government through improvements in its core processes and ability to solve problems.*

* *Strategy for American Innovation, October 2015*

# How to Give Feedback

In our first “Alpha” release, we’re targeting the mid-level product manager who has the resources and support from their agencies to innovate. Over time we will include other groups of people and content tailored to their needs. There is no “one-size-fits-all” approach to innovation, and so this toolkit is designed to be dynamic and grow over time with feedback from the people within government needing it the most.

We would love to hear your thoughts—if you have comments or additions to this toolkit, please contact the Innovation Toolkit team at Innovation\_Toolkit@gsa.gov.

# Credits

To be determined