Tour of Duty Hiring (V7)

Table of Contents

[Overview](#_xym2uvzi7n1g)

[Why do “Tour of Duty” Hiring](#_9s7wcsf48wiv)

[How to Implement “Tour of Duty” Hiring](#_60xqfhaqf7ww)

[OPM Fact Sheet: Schedule A Hiring Authority](#_4uetavydi7zh)

[Fellowships and Industry Exchange Programs Hiring Authority (5 CFR 213.3102 (r))](#_tpcezl5y202k)

[Frequently Asked Questions](#_h767unq96kw7)

[What positions can be filled under this Authority?](#_kaz1e8gwktb5)

[How does it work?](#_ifc27ikve80z)

[Are employees hired under this Authority eligible for benefits and leave?](#_do801n3nry5l)

[What else do I need to know?](#_xmeq1xwf8edz)

[Benefits to Tour of Duty Hiring](#_slo6sood6emo)

[Faster time-to-hire](#_eeovai9j3ca)

[Sourcing of applicants with skillsets better aligned to agency need](#_i0jbie3eseso)

[How to Frame The Appeal to Top Talent: On Extraordinariness [sidebar]](#_fjttkmj9zt41)

[When and How to Use “Tour of Duty” Hiring](#_71z22xntrrvj)

[Success Stories](#_knoedwyp188n)

[Agencies using “Tour of Duty” Authorities](#_t0z5oi8ske2p)

[General Services Administration (GSA) 18F](#_mvr77ise5hrw)

[Key Accomplishments and Impact](#_3tnq3h8a64om)

[How it Works](#_l7jad5wi6h0g)

[Key Insights](#_sfaq2sz89hna)

[Read more](#_54i4n05husrz)

[The US Digital Service (USDS)](#_xp7xpgw3vey5)

[Key Accomplishments and Impact](#_lw5sbq1u3zfn)

[How it Works](#_q4yklbkot9i1)

[Key Insights](#_i5epgdwvqr2f)

[Fellowship Programs](#_gdgc88nhwnj9)

[Presidential Innovation Fellows](#_eu7akmirafny)

[Accomplishments and Impact](#_djxdqf8t1k8d)

[How it Works](#_imzjuixxqk6d)

[Key Insights](#_6ieb62wyzi22)

[Presidential Executive Fellows (PEx)](#_jegk71rxcq18)

[Key Accomplishments and Impact](#_co3y2v1vpxtx)

[How They Did It](#_o5bsbdpd4x4z)

[Key Insights](#_vxfvn4d4ozt0)

[Food and Drug Administration (FDA) Entrepreneurs-in-Residence](#_195wpjrfjeu5)

[Key Accomplishments and Impact](#_adeg00kiw9d)

[How They Did It](#_p2o5mhuvb9e3)

[Key Insights](#_ah25bblf23bm)

[Read More](#_cd8g1jrs0gm5)

[Challenges and how to overcome](#_y3x95us894oc)

[Navigating the hiring authority landscape](#_5q9k9pt5frr)

[Finding talent outside](#_vgrbtmh5ylj3)

[Investing agency resources into recruitment infrastructure](#_xfwvpnscgxyu)

[Addressing cultural tension: Building collaborative environments between short-tenure hires and career Federal employees](#_vjl5bhu4yigv)

[Supporting innovators during their tenure and institutionalizing change](#_yqhwxipqmibp)

[How to Do Tour of Duty Hiring](#_mh577ze1vjlr)

[How to Pitch to private sector talent with a “call to serve”](#_or4p308ob6l)

[How to adopt private-sector best practices for active recruiting of top talent into government](#_a2a4kbup0n2m)

[Using “demo day” and roundtable events to build talent pipelines](#_5jaqgyxye8sk)

[How to recruit for both technical expertise and cultural fit](#_7g51wu9du9c8)

[How to create a fellowship program under the Schedule A(r) authority](#_9r3un22nuzk)

[Future States](#_i4z24xw4xuu)

[Fellowship Expansion](#_pjso4pdiv0n6)

[Shared recruiting infrastructure](#_4n75bow0wx8v)

[Highly integrated recruiting and hiring platform](#_ojyk9qjv7fff)

[Policies](#_djy3uuqzp4ly)

[Further Resources](#_qce7ki9127yn)

# Overview

The caliber of the people that Federal departments and agencies are able to recruit, hire, and retain has a decisive impact on public sector performance. Agencies already draw on the efforts of a diverse and talented workforce, but many could additionally benefit by continuing to actively recruit individuals who can help build a more effective, efficient, and innovative government. Framing recruitment as a temporary “tour of duty” can tap into new talent willing to answer the call to serve their country. [[Source](https://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/strategy_for_american_innovation_october_2015.pdf)] By augmenting their traditional recruitment channels with the use of flexible hiring authorities, agencies can recruit executives, entrepreneurs, technologists, and other innovators willing to enter government service for a short period of time. [[2015 AmStrat](https://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/strategy_for_american_innovation_october_2015.pdf)] Drawing in fresh, outside talent is an important avenue for infusing new, innovative thinking into Federal work. When coupled with active recruitment methods, tour of duty hiring approaches can help agencies rapidly address technical skill gaps and tackle emerging challenges.

This guide lays out the rationales and use cases for “tour of duty” hiring. Instances where “tour of duty” stints have been impactful for agencies are highlighted. Agency leadership and human resource officers can find information regarding:

* How to use flexible authorities, including the Intergovernmental Personnel Act (IPA), Direct Hire Authority (with permission from OPM), Schedule A Part R hiring authority, and Expert and Consultant Pay
* How to pitch to talent in the private sector with a “call to serve”
* How to effectively recruit top talent into government by adopting private-sector best practices
* How to recruit for both technical expertise and cultural fit
* How to build collaborations between innovators and career Federal employees so that the influx of new talent serves as a “force multiplier” for the entire Federal workforce
* How to ensure that innovators are supported during their tenure for maximal impact.

## Why do “Tour of Duty” Hiring

Agencies may find flexible hiring models useful for more rapidly recruiting top-class talent with specialized skills. By drawing upon an additional talent pool from the private sector, tours of duty also help to infuse new technologies and innovative practices into agencies. Programs like the [Presidential Innovation Fellows](https://presidentialinnovationfellows.gov/), 18F, and the [United States Digital Service](https://www.usds.gov) (USDS) have demonstrated the benefits of recruiting technical talent to significantly improve the delivery of digital services and experiment with new approaches to solving problems. Agencies can reap similar benefits from using flexible hiring authorities to bring in domain experts in other critical areas besides digital technology, including process improvement, data science and data-driven decision-making, financial innovation, human-centered design, and agile approaches. The benefits of detailing world-class talent extend beyond filling critical skill gaps; they can help agencies define their frontier problems and stretch goals. [[Chopra](https://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/microsites/ostp/openinnovatortoolkit_nstcmemo.pdf)]

## How to Implement “Tour of Duty” Hiring

A “tour of duty" refers to temporary employment or an expedited hiring process under flexible hiring authorities. Tour of duty hiring approaches allow agencies to quickly meet critical hiring needs, find qualified candidates if there is a candidate shortage, or recruit subject-matter-experts to work on specific issues. Examples of flexible hiring authorities that can facilitate tour of duty stints include the [Intergovernmental Personnel Act](https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/hiring-information/intergovernment-personnel-act/) (IPA), [Direct Hire Authority](https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/hiring-information/direct-hire-authority/) (with permission from Office of Personnel Management (OPM)), [Schedule A Part R hiring authority](http://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?rgn=div5&node=5:1.0.1.2.22%23sg5.1.213.c.sg0), and [Expert and Consultant Pay.](http://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?rgn=div5;node=5:1.0.1.2.34)

This hiring method may be an attractive option for agencies looking for specific talent to join on a temporary basis to address a new or challenging issue. It is a complement -- not a replacement - to traditional competitive hiring practices. Understanding and properly using all available flexible hiring authorities can help each agency's human capital team meet agency hiring needs more efficiently. The Office of Personnel Management (OPM) offers [additional guidance](https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/pay-leave/reference-materials/handbooks/humanresourcesflexibilitiesauthorities.pdf) on different hiring authorities and recruitment approaches that agencies may use to meet hiring needs. [SEE BELOW for potential embed text]

How can agencies attract top talent on a temporary basis? Domain experts and outside leaders can be drawn by an active recruitment strategy framed around a “call to serve,” explains Jennifer Tress, the Director of Talent at 18F. An effective public service appeal tells prospective hires that they have tremendous skills and directly asks them to use those skills to serve their country. Particularly with the use of fellowship authority ([Schedule A sub-part R](http://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?rgn=div5&node=5:1.0.1.2.22%23sg5.1.213.c.sg0)), talent can be hired under 2 year appointments with the option of being extended another 2 years. The tour of duty model can be especially alluring to talent with technical expertise who might not have otherwise considered public service, Tress explains: “These [2-year] terms actually do a good job of saying [to recruited hires], ‘We want you here for a focused period of time, and we want you here to disrupt in a respectful way.’”

# OPM Fact Sheet: Schedule A Hiring Authority

## Fellowships and Industry Exchange Programs Hiring Authority (5 CFR 213.3102 (r))

The Fellowships and Industry Exchange Programs hiring authorityis a Government-wide excepted service hiring authority under 5 CFR 213.3102(r) that can be used to hire for fellowships and similar programs when recruitment is from limited applicant pools. It is sometimes referred to as the ‘r’ authority. Below is the OPM guidance:

**Purpose**: The “r” authority can be used for fellowships and similar programs when recruitment is from limited applicant pools. This authority supports professional/industry exchange programs that provide for cross fertilization between industry and the private sector to foster mutual understanding, an exchange of ideas, or bring experienced people into government.

**Type of Appointment:** Appointments under this authority are in the excepted service (i.e. Schedule A).

**Public Notice Requirement:** There is no requirement for a job announcement (public notice) prior to filling a position and agencies may advertise in order to broaden the applicant pool.

**Veteran’s Preference:** Veterans’ preference applies when filling jobs.

**Qualifications:** Applicants must meet qualification standards developed by the agency which employs them (i.e., no government-wide qualification standard.

**Grade Levels and Compensation:** There is no grade level limitation on appointments (i.e., can go up to GS 15 level). Appointees are paid in accordance with commensurate grade level. Agencies may also use SL for this authority, IF the agency has the allocation and it has been determined that the work to be performed is classifiable above the GS-15 level. There are no restrictions on the types of positions to which employees may be appointed.

**Length of Appointment:** Appointments limited to up to 4 years, and do not lead to a permanent job.

**Benefits/Leave:** If appointed for more than 1 year employees can earn health and life insurance.

Everyone appointed for at least 90 days, can earn sick and annual leave.

**OPM Approval:** OPM does not have to approve appointments made under the “r” authority (i.e., each agency does its own hiring).

**“r” Authority vs. Pathways:** The “r” authority is appropriate when recruitment is expected to be from limited applicant pools, or the aim is to infuse talent on a short-term basis from private industry. Pathways is designed to be much broader in scope in terms of recruitment, and the fellows appointed under Pathways are recruited to be future leaders.

## Frequently Asked Questions

### What positions can be filled under this Authority?

* Agencies may use this authority for positions in support of fellowship or professional/industry exchange programs. Fellowship programs are programs that provide developmental or professional experiences to individuals who have completed their formal education. Professional/industry exchange programs are programs that provide for cross fertilization between industry and the private sector to foster mutual understanding, an exchange of ideas, or bring experienced people into Government.
* Positions may be filled at any grade level up to the GS-15 level, as well as Senior Level (SL) positions.

### How does it work?

* Agencies may make appointments lasting up to 4 years.
* No public notice (posting on USAJOBS.gov) is required; however, agencies can advertise if they choose and should use other appropriate recruiting activities.
* Veterans preference applies.
* Applicants must meet qualification standards developed by the agency which employs them (i.e., no Government-wide qualification standard).
* Agencies must have excepted service policies in place prior to using this (or any) excepted service authority, which govern the process for receiving/processing applications; making qualification determinations; rating and ranking applicants; and the application of veterans preference.

### Are employees hired under this Authority eligible for benefits and leave?

Employees hired on appointments that are expected to last for at least 90 days are generally eligible for health insurance coverage and also earn annual and sick leave.

Employees hired for periods longer than 1 year are eligible for the following benefits:

* Health Insurance
* Annual and Sick Leave
* Long Term Care Insurance
* Life Insurance
* Flexible Spending Accounts
* Retirement and Thrift Savings Plan

### What else do I need to know?

* Individuals hired under this authority are subject to the same suitability/background investigation process as other employees.
* Agencies may this Government-wide hiring authority without additional approvals from OPM.
* Appointments under this authority do not lead to permanent employment.

# Benefits to Tour of Duty Hiring

For agencies, tour of duty hiring can help mitigate specific challenges in traditional hiring authorities. Specifically, flexible hiring can provide:

* [Faster time-to-hire](#_eeovai9j3ca)
* [Sourcing of applicants with skillsets better aligned to agency need](#_i0jbie3eseso)
* How to Frame The Appeal to Top Talent: On Extraordinariness

## Faster time-to-hire

The process for flexible hiring authorities can be considerably accelerated compared to traditional vacancy announcements. The federal hiring process on average "takes 100 days to fill an open position." [[Source]](https://fcw.com/articles/2016/09/29/lankford-warns-on-federal-hiring.aspx) This timeline is at odds with the rapid pace required to hire top talent: for a strong chance at landing competitive talent in the private sector, hiring organizations need to move from first contact to formal offer within 30 to 60 days, and a longer timeline risks losing a candidate to another opportunity *[Source – Jennifer Anastasoff, interview of Dan Portillo, Talent Partner of Greylock Partners]* Though many flexible hiring experts caution that “rapid hiring” still entails a process that is not instantaneous, it can be possible to complete hiring in weeks instead of months. After the U.S. Digital Service invested in building a streamlined hiring process, their time-to-hire decreased from 180 business days to 23 business days, according to Jennifer Anastasoff. Decreasing time-to-hire metrics is important for sourcing talent for immediate needs, but it also has a direct impact on the quality of candidates.

## Sourcing of applicants with skillsets better aligned to agency need

Flexible hiring authorities can help agencies to select and onboard the candidates who are best-suited for an agency’s priority needs. For example, in a February 2016 study conducted by the National Academy of Public Administration and ICF International, one third of the surveyed federal leadership reported that a lack of employees with current digital skills was a significant barrier to realizing the full potential of digital technology in their agency. [[Source](http://napawash.org/images/reports/2016/FLDIS_Feb_2016_Report_Final.pdf)] Several agency leaders and staff have observed job applicants they may have deemed the most qualified are not always selected through the traditional hiring process, in part due to applicants’ lack of familiarity on how to optimize applications through USAJOBS (i.e. tailoring resumes for keyword matches). Disconnects between human capital offices and program offices can also result in misalignments between posted job requirements and the actual programmatic needs for domain experts.

When framed as a public appeal or call to serve, the use of flexible hiring authorities – coupled with active recruiting measures that seek out top talent – can help agencies quickly find ideal candidates and bring them aboard to solve challenges. The increasing use of tour of duty approaches has already brought a significant amount of top talent in to solve pressing problems. From their program inceptions through late 2016, the U.S. Digital Service (2014), GSA’s 18F (2014), and the Presidential Innovation Fellows program (2012), more than 450 engineers, designers, data scientists, and product managers have signed on for a tour of duty to serve in over 25 agencies alongside dedicated civil servants. [[Source](https://www.whitehouse.gov/blog/2016/06/21/100-examples-putting-science-its-rightful-place)]

## How to Frame The Appeal to Top Talent: On Extraordinariness [sidebar]

*“’****Go where you are rare.’*** *That’s US CTO Megan Smith’s advice to people from what Todd Park calls ‘metaphysical Silicon Valley.’ Those five simple words belie a deceptively difficult and brave choice made by those who left careers in Silicon Valley to work in government, in Federal agencies, at the* [*United States Digital Service*](https://www.usds.gov/)*,* [*18F*](http://18f.gov/)*, the Presidential Innovation Fellows, and similar efforts at the state and local level. The plays you ran every day in your consumer tech job are very difficult to run on the government playing field. Things work differently. When you go where you are rare, you realize you’re working from a set of assumptions that most of your colleagues don’t share, and you have to step back–sometimes way back–and try to justify, explain, convince, win over dozens or hundreds of people in order to do what you came to do. I have some personal experience with this. It’s hard.*

*But in government, though your skills may be rare, you have something very much in common with your fellow public servants. Of course you are a talented, entrepreneurial, 21st century doer and thinker. Of course you work with data and technology in ways that change the world. Of course you spread the gospel of user-centered, iterative and data-driven approaches to problem-solving. You would not have been selected for your position otherwise. But (as you already know),* ***it’s not your talent that makes you extraordinary.*** *What makes you extraordinary is the same thing my friend saw in his partner at that federal agency, delaying retirement to keep a critical system running despite all odds:* ***it is your empathy, and your desire to serve****. Keep honoring that, and the service of those around you, and you will do more good for the American people than the most extraordinary talent this country has to offer.”*

Excerpt of [August 2, 2016 Medium post](https://medium.com/code-for-america/on-extraordinariness-c48a2a5e955c#.y1c9t41nl) by Jen Pahlka, Founder of Code for America

# When and How to Use “Tour of Duty” Hiring

Flexible hiring authorities, accelerated hiring practices, and “tour of duty” hiring models to rapidly recruit top talent, can be used when there is a significant gap between world-class performance and current public-sector practices. Agencies report that time-limited stints work best where a role is concretely oriented around a discrete assignment, and new hires are deeply integrated alongside existing career staff.

While tour of duty hiring approaches have frequently been used particularly for digital and technical talent in the last few years, they are not limited to recruiting for technologists. Tour of duty approaches can be a valuable way to acquire expert talent from a range of domains, including:

* Executives who can provide senior agency leadership (e.g. Chief Innovation Officers or Presidential Executive Fellows) [crosslink content to various CINOs and PEx cases, respectively]
* Entrepreneurs who can help deploy innovative advances [crosslink to HHSpreneurs case study]
* Domain specialists who have expertise in human centered design and other user-centered approaches [crosslink to HCD vertical]
* Academic experts who have deep subject matter expertise [Crosslink to Chris Gerdes CINO case study, individual case studies in p2]

From deploying fellows on high priority challenges, program administrators have learned that most successful fellowship appointments share three qualities:

* Limited duration
* Well defined objectives
* Nonpartisan design

Fellows confirm the importance of their appointment structure -- a time-limited tour in which they work on issues of national importance – as integral to their participation. [Source: Bernie Kluger] The short, set period of time “makes people feel like, ‘‘I don’t need to be here for 30 years to effect real change,’” notes Jennifer Tress.

# Success Stories

Tour of duty hiring approaches augment the capabilities of agencies to address their top priorities. A few (non-comprehensive) snapshots of success stories illustrate the impact that agencies, fellowship programs, small teams, and individuals can have.

**Case focuses**

Agencies using ”tour of duty” approaches to increase recruiting and hiring efficiency

* [18F](#_mvr77ise5hrw)
* [United States Digital Service (USDS)](#_xp7xpgw3vey5)

Fellowship programs

* [Presidential Innovation Fellows (PIF)](#_eu7akmirafny)
* [Presidential Executive Fellows (PEx)](#_jegk71rxcq18)
* [Food and Drug Administration Entrepreneurs-in-Residence](#_195wpjrfjeu5)

Additional example initiatives

* HHS’ Entrepreneur in Residence
* VA.gov redesign (USDS, 18F)

## Agencies using “Tour of Duty” Authorities

### General Services Administration (GSA) [18F](https://18f.gsa.gov/)

Built in the spirit of America’s top tech startups, 18F is a team of top-notch designers, developers, and product specialists inside the General Services Administration. Begun in 2014, 18F is a civic consultancy for the government, inside the government, and enables agencies to rapidly deploy tools and services that are easy to operate, cost efficient, and reusable. [[Source](https://www.whitehouse.gov/blog/2016/01/05/call-to-action-consumer-electronics-show)] [18F Consulting](https://18f.gsa.gov/consulting/) “provides agile coaching, modular contracting expertise and technical advice to Federal agencies at cost-recovery prices.” [[Source](https://18f.gsa.gov/2015/02/11/a-story-of-an-agile-workshop/%253e)]  *[[Note: language is directly sourced]]*

#### Key Accomplishments and Impact

When 18F changed their hiring process to screen applicants for technical expertise and cultural fit dimensions, the result was an 80 percent reduction in hiring times and six-fold growth in only five months.

#### How it Works

Recruiters are essential for 18F’s hiring process. They play a key role in “sourcing the right individual and then building the relationship with them to convince them that the Federal government is an employer of choice,” explains Jennifer Tress. Recruiters can also work directly with the agencies 18F serves to better clarify the specialized experience that is sought; Agencies have found in talking with 18F recruiters that the role they were envisioning is not necessarily the role that they truly needed. Collaboration with the recruiting specialists can lead to reimagining and redefining the agency’s hiring goals, helping them better pinpoint the skillset or technical gap they are targeting.

Once recruiters understand the problem space that agencies are trying to solve, the path forward for sourcing talent becomes clearer. Recruiters can connect with the right individuals and organizations to link agency need directly to prospective candidates. Tress cautions that even for 18F, rapid hiring is often a three to four month process. At the same time, because time has been invested in sourcing the best fit for the need, the resulting hires are able to quickly perform once brought on-board.

#### Key Insights

* It’s important to work with willing partners. Agency leadership sponsorship is critical for smooth collaboration between agency staff and 18F teams.
* 18F uses agile development, with the aim of produce a minimum viable products and then further iteratively refining.
* 18F’s philosophy focuses on collaborating to solve the “problem space” confronting agencies.
* Change is institutionalized through succession planning; in their work with agencies, an explicit goal for 18F is to eventually replace staff roles with permanent agency employees.

#### **Read more**

[[UPLOAD: 18F Core Values Interview Guide]]

[[UPLOAD: 18F Hiring Guide]]

### The US Digital Service (USDS)

The US Digital Service (USDS) builds teams of problem solvers who apply the best of product design and engineering practices to transform how government works for the American people. [[Source](https://www.whitehouse.gov/blog/2016/01/05/call-to-action-consumer-electronics-show)] [[*Note: Language directly sourced*]]

#### Key Accomplishments and Impact

From its inception in 2014 through fall 2016, the US Digital Service has hired over 160 professionals with expertise in software, design, and other technological skills. Below are specific examples of how they hired for tours of duty.

#### How it Works

USDS has captured what they’ve learned so far from the iterative development of their recruitment process in an in-depth case study analysis to share with other agencies how they have iterated their hiring process and what lessons they’ve learned on recruitment. With regard to tour of duty hiring, USDS emphasizes that they use existing hiring tools, like the [**Schedule A hiring authority**](http://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?rgn=div5&node=5:1.0.1.2.22%23sg5.1.213.c.sg0) or the ability to engage people as [**Intermittent Consultants**](http://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?rgn=div5;node=5:1.0.1.2.34). Specific examples include:

* OMB and VA digital service teams are using the **Schedule A “pilot” authority**. It was explicitly created to allow the hiring of technical talent experts for two years, with the opportunity to renew for another two years. Only OMB, VA, and GSA are allowed to use this pilot authority. There are a limited number of slots available, and positions are tied to a position description.
* A different version of [Schedule A, **Schedule A (i)(3),**](http://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?rgn=div5&node=5:1.0.1.2.22%23se5.1.213_13102) has been used by the DDS, SSA, SBA and DHS digital service teams. It allows the hiring of people to fill positions related to Smarter IT Delivery Initiative projects funded in the 2016 budget for 1 year, with the opportunity to renew for 1 more year. It is available to **all** agencies through 2017. [(See 5 CFR 213.3102(i)(3); reference 2015 OPM guidance for using.)](https://www.chcoc.gov/content/smarter-it-delivery-schedule-hiring-authority)
* OMB also uses [**Intermittent Consultants**](http://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?rgn=div5;node=5:1.0.1.2.34), which are a temporary appointment for less than 1 year. The ability to hire intermittent consultants is available to **all** agencies, and it is not limited to technical need. (See 5 U.S.C. 3109; 5 CFR part 304.)
* [Directly sourced language: USDS case study draft]

### Key Insights

USDS’ knowledge on developing a streamlined hiring process can be distilled into four elements:

1. **Recruiting:** Actively recruit qualified individuals to apply, with a variety of targeted communications and outreach activities.
2. **Selection:** Build a selection process that uses technical subject matter expert evaluation at every single stage of the applicant assessment.
3. **Candidate Experience:** Prioritize candidate experience by making it easy to apply, quickly processing incoming applications and hires, and frequently communicating with applicants.
4. **Data driven decisions:** Collect relevant data throughout each of these three areas, benchmark it against industry, and use the data to identify bottlenecks and hold ourselves accountable. [Directly sourced language: USDS case study draft]

**Read more:**

* [The First 2 Years of USDS](https://medium.com/the-u-s-digital-service/two-years-of-the-u-s-digital-service-e14af5ce713b%23.jizieatg1)
* [Star Spangled Geeks](https://backchannel.com/inside-the-obama-tech-surge-as-it-hacks-the-pentagon-and-va-8b439bc33ed1%23.ytvpswx9a)

[[UPLOAD: Case study draft – pending finalization and OPM sign-off]]

### Fellowship Programs

Fellowship programs are one talent pipeline for deploying proven leaders on high priority initiatives. Using existing authorities and expertise, fellowship programs are positioned to immediately reach back into their pool of exceptional recruits to accelerate the staffing of priority challenges. Like other flexible hiring models, fellowships complement -- not replace -- existing hiring methods. Agencies may consider:

* Participating in existing Presidential fellowship initiatives to source their talent needs
* Spinning up – with support – agency-specific fellowship programs

Several agencies have used presidential fellowships in recent years as one avenue for achieving agility in hiring and deploying talent. Prestige is an additional factor in attracting proven, senior leaders who may not have otherwise considered a tour of duty in the Federal government. Among the ranks of recent fellows are former top executives from Google, GM, Accenture, Pepsi, and Goldman Sachs. Although small in scale, Presidential fellowship programs have had outsized impact in recent years. Fellows have provided leadership on major initiatives including:

* [HealthCare.gov](http://healthcare.gov/) relaunch
* [Build America Bureau](https://www.transportation.gov/buildamerica) of DOT -- $10 billion in financing for 21 projects
* [Rural Infrastructure Opportunity Fund](http://www.usda.gov/wps/portal/usda/usdahome?contentidonly=true&contentid=2015/07/0218.xml) -- $10 billion placed for rural investment
* [PROMESA](https://www.congress.gov/bill/114th-congress/senate-bill/2328/), the response to the Puerto Rico financial crisis

The creation of agency-specific fellowship programs is another potential avenue for sourcing top talent. The Department of Education’s Innovation Fellows program [crosslink below] provides one example for agencies to consider replicating.

#### [Presidential Innovation Fellows](https://presidentialinnovationfellows.gov/)

The Presidential Innovation Fellows (PIF) program brings the principles, values, and practices of the innovation economy into government. Begun in 2012, this highly competitive 12-month program pairs talented, diverse technologists and entrepreneurs with top civil servants to collaborate during focused “tours of duty.” These teams of government experts and Fellows take a user-centric approach to the intersection of people, processes, products, and policy. Fellows have leveraged the power of open data to create new products and jobs, improved the ability of the Federal government to respond effectively to natural disasters, designed pilot projects that make it easier for startup companies to do business with the Federal government, and more. [[Source](https://www.whitehouse.gov/innovationfellows)]

##### **Accomplishments and Impact**

Because Fellows are on time-bounded assignments, they are often tasked with developing discrete products or platforms that can be the starting point for continued discussion and partnership. At the same time, Fellows have also worked with agencies on problem discovery and definition, culture transformation, and change management issues. Selected projects include:

* With the support of PIFs, the FDA launched [openFDA](https://open.fda.gov/) to provide easy access to public FDA datasets. The portal makes several valuable FDA public datasets—including millions of adverse event and medication error reports on FDA-regulated drugs—available to the public for the first time, via application programming interfaces (APIs) and raw structured files.
* [RFP-EZ](https://www.sba.gov/blogs/making-procurement-better-rfp-ez) is an online platform developed by the U.S. Small Business Administration and PIFs in only six months, making it easier for innovative small tech businesses to bid on government contracts, while also making it easier for Federal agencies to identify the bids that offer the best value for taxpayers. [[Read more](https://www.sba.gov/blogs/making-procurement-better-rfp-ez)]
* PIFs assisted HHS in expanding the reach of the [Blue Button Initiative](https://www.healthit.gov/patients-families/about-blue-button-movement) to over 150 million consumers across the country, providing secure, electronic access to their personal health records in order to make more informed decisions about their health care.
* At Veterans Affairs, PIFs helped develop an online [GI Bill Comparison Tool](https://www.vets.gov/gi-bill-comparison-tool) that makes it easier for Veterans, service members, and dependents to calculate their Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits and learn about VA’s approved colleges, universities, and available education and training programs across the country.

[[Replace above text// embed other projects from here: https://presidentialinnovationfellows.gov/projects]]

##### How it Works

Begun in 2012, the Fellowship is a 12-month program during which Fellows are embedded within a Federal agency to collaborate on challenges with innovators inside government. Fellows, whose salaries are funded by their agency partners, operate with wide latitude for individual initiative in planning and executing solutions to problem, and they spend a significant portion of their time co-working and collaborating with other Fellows. Throughout the program, Fellows receive structured support from partners in the White House and change-agents across various Federal agencies. Agency leaders interested in obtaining a Fellow must first propose a project, with a problem statement and goal. [[Source](https://www.whitehouse.gov/innovationfellows)]

PIF uses a flexible staffing model: Project submissions from agencies are not time-bounded, and hires are continuously recruited and onboarded. ”It’s an on-going project for us to continually match the right projects with the right people and the right skillsets. But there’s also a certain degree that happens organically with the Fellows,” explains Nathan Olson, interim executive director of PIF. The program’s structure allows an unusual degree of fluidity and responsiveness for agency needs; when a project fit is identified, PIFs can be preliminarily deployed to an agency while framework arrangements are formalized.

##### Key Insights

PIF’s experiences have found that agency champions are key for successful collaborations. Time should be invested upfront in adequately scoping projects beforehand, with the goal of building support and buy-in with agency collaborators. Frictions are further lessened when senior leadership (like a CIO/CINO/CTO) is d continually engaged in supporting the collaboration.

**Contact:** Agencies interested in engaging the Presidential Innovation Fellows should email Nathan Olson, Acting Director of the PIF program, at Nathan.olson@gsa.gov

**Read more:** [Meet the Presidential Innovation Fellows](https://medium.com/the-white-house/meet-the-presidential-innovation-fellows-194dec20442b%23.k8dx1gpqp)

**Watch:** [Innovation Fellows talk about their projects](https://presidentialinnovationfellows.gov/assets/videos/andrea-ippolito-video.webm) [1:28]

#### Presidential Executive Fellows (PEx)

The Presidential Executive Fellows (PEx) program identifies and recruits exceptional leaders from private and non-profit sectors into Federal agencies to serve alongside senior leadership in addressing challenges of national importance. Fellows serve as advisors, strategists, and problem solvers, providing unique perspective and transforming how government serves the American people.

##### Key Accomplishments and Impact

Since early 2015, PEx has partnered with Federal agencies to place top talent via temporary appointments to work alongside Federal executives to solve our Nation’s most challenging problems. The program’s initial cohort consisted of five fellows with executive-level finance expertise in support of Federal public-private partnerships. The Program’s focus has since expanded to non-financial initiatives, including service to veterans, cybersecurity, and health care. PEx fellows have been placed at eight agencies, with a growing pipeline of agencies seeking new talent. PEx has expanded its targeted executive “skill set” to include information technology and lean management. Fellowship appointments on the horizon include big data for education, lean management for place based and permitting initiatives, biosecurity preparedness, and water infrastructure.

##### How They Did It

Hosted at the [Federal Executive Institute](https://cldcentral.usalearning.net/mod/page/view.php?id=264) (FEI), PEx is administered by a permanent program office. Program managers assist host agencies to identify appropriate appointment authorities, support Fellows in their transition into Federal service to maximize impact, and provide developmental opportunities to Fellows in order to build their understanding and appreciation for public sector mission and operations.

##### Key Insights

PEx has built upon the prior experiences of Presidential fellowships, like the Presidential Management Fellows. Leveraging the experience and knowledge of existing programs has helped tailor the fellowship segmenting and lower the program’s cost. PEx is interested now in partnering with agencies to help support the creation of agency-specific fellowships under the PEx brand.

#### Food and Drug Administration (FDA) [Entrepreneurs-in-Residence](http://www.hhs.gov/idealab/eir-program/)

An early discrete pilot of Tour of Duty hiring occurred at the FDA, where the Entrepreneurs in Residence (EIR) program created collaborations between world-class entrepreneurs and innovators and highly qualified career employees. The goal was to deliver transformational change by combining the best internal and external talent in testing, validating and scaling what works [[crosslink EBG or EBP]]; the result was the development of new operational procedures to advance innovation. [[Source](https://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/microsites/ostp/openinnovatortoolkit_nstcmemo.pdf)]

##### Key Accomplishments and Impact

At the [FDA’s Center for Devices and Radiological Health (CDRH),](http://www.fda.gov/AboutFDA/CentersOffices/OfficeofMedicalProductsandTobacco/CDRH/CDRHInnovation/ucm456456.htm) entrepreneurs and internal movers-and-shakers jointly advanced solutions to enable patient access to safe and effective medical devices. The CDRH EIR program recruited 20 outside entrepreneurs and innovators to help them create and streamline new devices, and created the [Innovation Pathway 2.0](about:blank) to bring new, breakthrough devices to market more quickly and at lower cost. The Innovation Pathway contributed to new technology being fast tracked, specifically for End-Stage Renal Disease (ERSD). In 2012, three ESRD technologies emerged from a competitive process and would move on for the chance for regulatory approval. The Center’s director at the time, Dr. Jeff Shuren, commented that the EIR pilot “demonstrates that there is a desire from developers of innovative technologies for earlier and more collaborative agency interaction.” [[Source](http://www.govexec.com/magazine/features/2014/05/project-innovation/84115/)] Originally intended as a temporary six-month pilot, the Innovation Pathway was so successful that CDRH has continued its operations. [[Source](http://www.govexec.com/magazine/features/2014/05/project-innovation/84115/)]

##### How They Did It

EIR brings in talented people from diverse backgrounds for no more than 12 months at a time to work on complex projects in a specific division. Flexible hiring authorities enabled the recruitment of exceptional world-class talent like inventor and entrepreneur Dean Kamen, even though Kamen had previously been fiercely critical of the government and of the FDA in particular.

##### Key Insights

Former U.S. CTO Todd Park commented that the FDA EIR program was “phenomenal” for using tour of duty hiring approaches to connect internal innovators with outside entrepreneurs. The program created groups of thinkers and doers that were able to accomplish mission objectives with remarkable agility. The defined time-frame of the “residency” was integral for motivating fast progress, and the hiring structure also attracted talent who otherwise would not have come on board for a public service stint.

##### Read More

* [Making a Difference: Innovation Pathway and Entrepreneurs in Residence](http://blogs.fda.gov/fdavoice/index.php/2012/04/making-a-difference-innovation-pathway-and-entrepreneurs-in-residence/)
* [Project Innovation](http://www.govexec.com/magazine/features/2014/05/project-innovation/84115/)

# Challenges and how to overcome

The most significant challenges to deploying tour of duty approaches are common misunderstandings on the legal boundaries of what is and isn’t permitted.

Key ingredients for successful implementation of “tour of duty” hiring include:

* Navigating hiring authority landscape within
* Finding talent outside
* Investing agency resources into recruitment infrastructure
* Addressing cultural tension: Building collaborative environments between short-tenure hires and career Federal employees
* Supporting innovators during their tenure and institutionalizing change

## Navigating the hiring authority landscape

Agency officials sometimes report hearing from their human capital officers that their agency lacks authority to carry out flexible hiring (typically under Schedule A (r), that OPM needs to approve the use of such authority, or that some other unspecified rule prohibits it. The truth is that **any** agency can leverage flexible hiring mechanisms, like fellowships, to bring in extra support to address high priority initiatives. Agency leadership should work collaboratively with HR officers on the deployment of these approaches; human capital officers are critical to the mission success of Departments, and they may need additional resource support, “air cover,” and encouragement to incorporate new hiring approaches into their work.

## Finding talent outside

The opportunity to engage in public service and work on hard problems at scale has been a compelling recruitment pitch for both technical and non-technical top talent. Contrary to common perception, "Recruitment hasn't been an issue,” reports Jennifer Tress of 18F. “It's been a pleasant surprise how many people have accessed the call in large numbers." USDS reports that in its first two years, USDS has received thousands of applications for less than 200 positions. [[Source](https://shift.newco.co/hands-off-the-keyboard-innovation-lessons-from-inside-the-us-government-1c9f592f8e5e%23.aozinyrvx)] The challenge is not in motivating or exciting domain experts to join for “tours of duty.” The challenge for agencies is to commit to active efforts to identify ideal candidates and build out the necessary hiring infrastructure to bring them onboard quickly. [Crosslink: See more on how to do active recruiting]

## Investing agency resources into recruitment infrastructure

When USDS first began, the full hiring process (from first contact to first day on the job) took 180 days. Now the hiring process takes 23 days – though security procedures still take place after that, the reduced hiring cycle represents a huge improvement. What changed? It took intensive investment in building the right team. Getting to rapid hiring required significant investment in USDS’ hiring infrastructure, Anastasoff explains – there were no quick shortcuts to success. At the same time, she emphasizes, there is no secret sauce for realizing efficiency gains in the hiring process. With commitment and some knowledge, other agencies could achieve similar results. "You can do this too,” she stresses. “We are not super special snowflakes; these are actually authorities that available to every agency in government."

## Addressing cultural tension: Building collaborative environments between short-tenure hires and career Federal employees

Tour of duty hiring can cause tension, especially if long-time career staff perceive new hires’ presence as “swooping in” to fix a problem while devaluing the contributions of civil servants who work day in and day out. Directed efforts by leadership are important to build collaborations between innovators and career Federal employees, which can help to lessen any frictions. To maximize impact, short-term hires and career staff must work together in support of the common mission. It’s also important that “tour of duty” hires bring an attitude of humility and spirit of collaboration to their work; agencies report that prioritizing “emotional intelligence” measures in the interviewing process helps ensure that hires are both technically skilled and well-positioned to make an impact. Career staff must also be open to the value of an outside perspective that can reframe challenges in new ways.

## Supporting innovators during their tenure and institutionalizing change

New hires may not be familiar with Federal regulations and procedures, particularly how the work of government is carried out in areas of hiring, budgeting, and contracting. Thus, to maximize their impact and institutionalize innovations, it’s important to make sure that short-tenure hires are placed with willing partners or receptive teams of embedded career staff. Some early lessons underscored the importance of building a grounding connection with the existing workforce. In several instances, Presidential Innovation Fellows worked only with senior leadership and lacked connection to the broader organization. After their tenure, their projects ceased because the value and goals hadn’t been clearly communicated within the organization. [Source: Nathan Olson]

At 18F, product leads are deliberately paired with so-called “bureaucracy hackers” (program managers, policy experts). At the outset of collaborations, a new perspective can bring many questions, like why a process is run a certain way, or why a particular proposal for a new approach was rejected. “It’s either a rule or a regulation, or the answer is, ‘We’ve just done it like this for so long,” explains Jennifer Tress. Developers aren’t thrown into the deep end to navigate this landscape alone. Taking a holistic, team-based approach helps ensure that innovative work can get greenlit. “If it’s a policy issue, then we bring policy experts who can help figure out the path forward. If it’s a change management issue – then we bring those folks in, too,” she adds.

A structural element of the hiring engagement can also help to address this concern. Since hires classified as expert consultants or under fellowship authorities are by statute not permitted to manage or supervise, they need to work closely alongside agency staff. This “forcing mechanism” for collaboration should be seen as a feature, not a bug, according to hiring experts. Other essential support for outside innovators includes providing them with clearly defined goals and outcomes, executive sponsorship (direct connection to leadership), and some degree of orientation (e.g. Schedule C training). [Source: Bernie Kluger interview]

# How to Do Tour of Duty Hiring

Several flexible hiring authorities exist, including the Intergovernmental Personnel Act (IPA), Direct Hire Authority (with permission from OPM), Schedule A Part R hiring authority (fellowship programs), and Expert and Consultant Pay. The first step is to assess the type of program that fits your agency’s hiring needs:

1. **Internship or fellowship programs** that provide developmental or professional experiences to individuals who have completed their formal education; -
2. **Training and associateship programs** designed to increase the pool of qualified candidates in a particular occupational specialty; -
3. **Professional/industry exchange programs** that provide for a cross-fertilization between the agency and the private sector to foster mutual understanding, an exchange of ideas, or to bring experienced practitioners to the agency;
4. **Residency programs** through which participants gain experience in a Federal clinical environment;
5. **Programs that require a period of Government service in exchange for educational, financial or other assistance. [[link to IDA report – ask VP]]**

In the evaluation process, consider using [HRU’s Hiring Decision Tool](https://hru.gov/Studio_Recruitment/HT_Hiring_Decision_Tool.aspx); the interactive questionnaire can help match potential hiring flexibilities with your agency's needs.

There are several items below that help in an agency’s quest to do “Tour of Duty” hiring:

* [How to pitch to talent in the private sector with a “call to serve”](#_or4p308ob6l)
* [How to adopt private-sector best practices for active recruiting of top talent into government](#_a2a4kbup0n2m)
* [Using “demo day” and roundtable events to build talent pipelines](#_5jaqgyxye8sk)
* [How to recruit for both technical expertise and cultural fit](#_7g51wu9du9c8)
* [How to create a fellowship program – template memo and example for establishing a Schedule A(r) Fellowship Program](#_9r3un22nuzk)

## How to Pitch to private sector talent with a “call to serve”

A “21st century call to serve your country” is a recruiting message that resonates. [[StratAm](https://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/strategy_for_american_innovation_october_2015.pdf)] “There are many people in the private sector who really glom on to that,” notes Jennifer Tress. Those in the private sector and in Silicon Valley may have tremendous skills, but “the work that they’re doing -- the algorithms they’re creating, the product visions – are often to make people money or generate ad sales. That just isn’t as meaningful as the mission of the government.” The call to serve, Tress says, is “such a *powerful* message to people: ‘Wait. I can be coding to help eradicate homelessness, to help serve veterans, to help ensure refugees are coming in and welcomed into our country through a strong vetting process? I’m all in for that.’”

People are eager to serve; the obstacle is often demonstrating to prospective talent that real change can be possible. “From the outside looking in, and from a recruitment message, government has this connotation of being very staid, very traditional, and disruption is not welcome. “

The call to serve is used in conjunction with active recruiting measures that present opportunities to prospective candidates (described in detail below). Effective appeals are anchored by a three-pronged structure:

1. Focus on the **mission**, with an emphasis on outcome-driven goals.
2. Highlight the amount of **impact** an individual can make through the position.
3. Point to **specific examples** **of similarly skilled people** who have already created widespread impact. (An early example for technologists was healthcare.gov, where tour of duty technologists were able to have an immediate impact on 10 million Americans.)

## How to adopt private-sector best practices for active recruiting of top talent into government

[Source: interview of Jennifer Anastasoff, USDS, and draft USDS case study]

Instead of waiting for candidates to come across job openings, agencies can proactively source talent by identifying and recruiting their ideal candidates. While it’s key to invest in a robust hiring team, a common misperception is that active recruiting hinges solely on the talent of the talent teams. “That’s not true,” contends Anastasoff. “The deal is, you have to invest in the infrastructure,” which means also investing in the development of standardized methods that can efficiently move candidates through the pipeline.

Active recruiting is not considered innovative in the private sector; it’s considered common practice, especially with technical positions. How does it work? The process at USDS can be decomposed into several essential stages:

1. **Identify the skillsets that will be most effective for addressing priorities**. This can require considerable internal work to understand and articulate clearly what talent gaps an agency is experiencing.
2. I**dentify who would excel at these skills; most will not be currently looking for a job.** Talent can be identified by using the tools at one’s fingertips, like LinkedIn, industry blogs, and networks. The key is not to look for candidates currently job searching, but instead zero in on who best fits the profile of someone that can address your most important needs right now.
3. **Leverage a network of influencers to discover and refer a diverse pool of candidates.** Active recruiting can be an important tool for boosting diversity. By using a team approach to connect with experts from around the country, a robust and diverse network can tap into the full range of potential talent. Striving for representative talent helps agencies better serve all of America, observes Jennifer Anastasoff.
4. **Build relationships with target individuals.** Invest time in sourcing: Use web resources to identify ideal candidates, including the best in the country – regardless of whether they’re job searching. Initiate contact, present the opportunity, and convey the operating conditions as well as also the amount of impact that is possible.
5. **Communicate candidly, directly and consistently via media and local recruiting events.** Events like demo days and roundtables are key for persuading top talent to consider a public service tour of duty; their mechanics are explained further below.
6. **Create a responsive and strong candidate experience from time of application to first day of work.**
7. **Design internal processes to make it easy to apply**, to allow for incoming applications and hires to be quickly processed, and for applicants to receive frequent communication. USDS has a goal to check in with applicants at least once per week to set up interviews or check on progress, even during the security phase.

## Using “demo day” and roundtable events to build talent pipelines

USDS uses demo days as one piece in their active recruitment process to recruit at scale. USDS travels to the talent, and assembles a cultivated, curated, invited group of approximately 100 to 125 people. Also present are “connectors” – people who can help to further build a diverse referral network in the future. Using approximately five people from five agencies, work is showcased to prospective candidates. Concrete examples of completed projects are shared to emphasize the impact that a prospective candidate could achieve. Through lightning talks (short presentations), visual representations and case studies help overcome any outside perceptions that immediate impact won’t be possible. The demo day concludes with an hour of structured opportunity for prospective talent to talk one-on-one with presenters.

After a demo day, top prospective candidates are identified and invited to a follow-on roundtable engagement. Roundtables are more intimate, with only 10-12 invitees, one case study for discussion, and an anchor from USDS’ talent team. Candidates are directly asked if they are interested in joining. From there, USDS talent team members pursue candidates in one-on-one follow-ups.

While not every agency will similarly recruit for tour of duty positions at scale, elements of USDS’ demo day process could also be usefully incorporated into career recruitment efforts.

## How to recruit for both technical expertise and cultural fit

Technical skills alone aren’t enough for delivering immediate value. Coming into government with no prior public sector context can pose a challenge. Agencies have discovered the best way to mitigate this risk is to interview for both hard and soft skills – including empathy, perseverance, and patience. “We are bringing in people for a short period of time,” Anastasoff notes. “So we have to find people who have EQ (emotional intelligence).” USDS developed an interview process that prioritizes candidates’ abilities to relate to and empathize with others. USDS technical hires must frequently interface with less-technically savvy public servants who may be risk-averse due to compliance concerns. “If you as an engineer can’t explain something to someone in a way that is respectful and enthusiastic,” USDS engineer Marianne Bellotti explained, “or if you’re dismissive….you’re probably not going to work out here.” She added, “There is far less ‘hands on the keyboard’ and a lot more being in room with different stakeholders.” Active listening, respect for other viewpoints, and honest communication – even when uncomfortable – are equally critical skills that must complement technical or domain expertise. So, too, is flexibility: “In the interview process we ask ‘When have things not gone your way, how have you dealt with that?’ “ Anastasoff said. “This is not the kind of work where you can plan for exactly what will happen every day.”” [[Source](https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/you-cant-disrupt-government-can-change-from-inside-john-battelle)] The question of patience and tolerance for bureaucracy is an important element of the recruitment conversation, both for evaluating candidates and for acclimating their expectations of public sector realities.

Investing resources in soft skill evaluation can pay dividends: When 18F changed their hiring process to screen applicants for technical expertise and cultural fit dimensions, the result was an 80 percent reduction in hiring times and six-fold growth in only five months. [[Source](http://dupress.deloitte.com/dup-us-en/industry/public-sector/millennials-in-government-federal-workforce.html)]

**Read more**

* “[Recruiting for cultural fit,”](https://hbr.org/2015/07/recruiting-for-cultural-fit) Harvard Business Review, July 2015.
* [“OPM Pushes for more targeted recruitment](http://federalnewsradio.com/hiringretention/2016/04/opm-pushes-targeted-recruitment-hr-community-bemoans-usajobs/),” Federal News Radio, April 2016.

## How to create a fellowship program under the Schedule A(r) authority

Use of the A(r) authority ([Schedule A- 5 CFR 213.3102 (r)](http://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?rgn=div5&node=5:1.0.1.2.22) )can be a powerful tool for agencies to source talent, but its use is commonly misunderstood. Below, a fact sheet outlines the realities of A(r) usage.

A template memo for establishing a Schedule A(r) Fellowship Program is provided as an example for interested agencies.

[[UPLOAD: Template memo]]

# Future States

Existing hiring authorities that already exist offer considerable flexibility that many agencies could leverage further to fill their talent needs. There are also several frontier possibilities for further transforming “tour of duty” hiring processes, including (in increasing orders of ambition):

* Targeted expansion of fellowship programs, aimed at under-recruited segments of the potential hire population
* Cross-agency investment into active recruiting infrastructure
* Development of a single recruitment point, available to agencies, where qualified candidates are pooled, and hiring selections can occur from a list of qualified candidates

## Fellowship Expansion

Fellowship programs, authorized under the Schedule A(r) authority, have a considerable track record of success in bringing in top talent for stints of Federal service. Several targeted programs like the [Jefferson Science Fellowship](http://sites.nationalacademies.org/PGA/Jefferson/) exist, but more could be done to extensively recruit the “middle layer” technical professionals (e.g. senior engineers, senior biologists, senior finance associates – neither early career nor executive leadership). With the current Presidential Executive Fellows[crosslink back to case] serving as a potential pilot model for further program iterations, future fellowship programs could target middle and upper-middle career technical leaders with deep expertise in critical skill areas, like process improvement, business management, operations, and finances.

Partnering with outside organizations could further enrich the talent pipeline for fellowship programs. It’s a model already proven through several professional societies – including the [American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS)](http://www.aaas.org/) . In this framework, the processes of candidate recruitment and initial selection can be managed by an outside partner, supported by Federal funding. Several exemplar non-governmental organizations (including [FUSE Corps](http://www.fusecorps.org/), [Atlas Corps](http://atlascorps.org/), and [Ashoka](http://www.ashoka.org)) have demonstrated outcomes that illustrate the potential for using more such a models to support Federal fellowships.

## Shared recruiting infrastructure

OPM provides [webinar training](https://hru.gov/Studio_Recruitment/videos/BuildingTalentPipelines/11.2.4_BTP_NM/) to clarify for agencies that [active recruiting is permitted;](https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/hiring-information/hiring-excellence/tools-resources/hiring-excellence-mythbusters.pdf) to go from permission to execution, agencies could consider developing cross-agency agreements to invest in a shared infrastructure for active recruiting, which could include cost sharing for the use of external recruiters. Developing ready templates for inter-agency agreements and MOUs that are needed for sharing resources could facilitate greater cross-agency sharing. Externally positioned entities could assist with recruitment, and agency hiring managers could be deeply embedded in the process to ensure that actual needs are matched with candidates. (Past experiments, which include attempts to develop shared certifications, underscore the importance of closely engaging hiring managers in the enumeration of specifics.)

## Highly integrated recruiting and hiring platform

High level hiring experts report their subjective assessment that the hiring process is deeply fragmented across government, resulting in a fractal problem. Whether the friction point occurs as agencies interface with OPM, as bureaus interface with their headquarters, or as offices interface with bureaus, there are common and recurring hiring obstacles. When each agency conducts its own search and hire process for each position, the process is not being conducted at scale. “I’m not suggesting that we establish civil service exam,” commented one expert, “But we're competing against ourselves all over the place. And when you segment into smaller candidate pools, the result is lower quality and less diverse pools of applicants.” Current efforts – where five identical job openings may be posted five separate times – only further fragments the candidate pool. “There’s no evidence at all that’s successful as a hiring strategy,” the expert elaborated.

One frontier solution is the development of one seat for administrative support to aggregate common hiring elements like marketing, managing resume review, maintaining a global view of the roster of projects and initiatives, and advising on what is permissible. Centralized advising in particular could help standardize repeatable processes and reduce the “mythic folklore” effect that brings confusion. With resume sharing, highly qualified talent not selected at one agency could potentially be referred to other relevant openings. By enhancing the technical capabilities of agencies – and reducing reliance on the random circumstance that the right applicant will stumble upon the right posting – a higher quality pool of candidates is likely to emerge.

# Policies

Congress enacted a number of important new hiring flexibilities as part of the [Chief Human Capital Officers Act of 2002](https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/PLAW-107https:/www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/PLAW-107publ296/pdf/PLAW-107publ296.pdf), and reinforced the strategic role played by human capital officers in the [Government Performance and Results Modernization Act of 2010](https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/BILLS-111hr2142enr/pdf/BILLS-111hr2142enr.pdf).

Section **213.3102**(**r**) of the **Code of Federal Regulations** authorizes agencies to fill positions in support of fellowship and similar programs that are filled from limited applicant pools:

**Authority**

[5 CFR §213.3102(r)](http://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?rgn=div5&node=5:1.0.1.2.22) – “Positions established in support of fellowship and similar programs that are filled from limited applicant pools and operate under specific criteria developed by the employing agency and/or a non-Federal organization. These programs may include: internship or fellowship programs that provide developmental or professional experiences to individuals who have completed their formal education; training and associateship programs designed to increase the pool of qualified candidates in a particular occupational specialty; professional/industry exchange programs that provide for a cross-fertilization between the agency and the private sector to foster mutual understanding, an exchange of ideas, or to bring experienced practitioners to the agency; residency programs through which participants gain experience in a Federal clinical environment; and programs that require a period of Government service in exchange for educational, financial or other assistance. Appointments under this authority may not exceed 4 years.”

[Executive Order 13704—Presidential Innovation Fellows Program](https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2015-08-20/pdf/2015-20801.pdf)

[H.R.5658](https://www.congress.gov/bill/114th-congress/house-bill/5658) - TALENT Act of 2016

# Further Resources

**Contact**

Agencies interested in learning more about incorporating tour of duty hiring approaches into their process can contact:

* Katika Floyd: Katika.Floyd@opm.gov
* Mike Mahoney: Mike.Mahoney@opm.gov

**Key Resources:**

[OPM’s Hiring Excellence](https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/hiring-information/hiring-excellence/tools-resources/) points to an array of existing resources and tools, including the following:

* The [Hiring Toolkit](https://hru.gov/Studio_Recruitment/HT_Hiring_Toolkit.aspx)
* The [Hiring Decision Tool](https://hru.gov/Studio_Recruitment/HT_Hiring_Toolkit.aspx)
* The [Recruitment Policy Studio](https://hru.gov/Studio_Recruitment/Studio_Recruitment.aspx)
* [Hiring Excellence Mythbusters](https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/hiring-information/hiring-excellence/tools-resources/hiring-excellence-mythbusters.pdf)

[The Human Resources Flexibilities and Authorities Handbook](https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/pay-leave/reference-materials/handbooks/humanresourcesflexibilitiesauthorities.pdf) (2013)

[Delegated Examining Authorities Handbook](https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/hiring-information/competitive-hiring/deo_handbook.pdf) (Refer to Chapter 2, Section A for a review of hiring flexibilities.)

**Additional specific resources for flexible hiring include:**

* [Intergovernmental Personnel Act (IPA)](https://hru.gov/Studio_Recruitment/HT_05_Intergovernmental_Personnel_Act.aspx%23pnlToolkit)
* [Schedule D – Pathways Programs](https://hru.gov/Studio_Recruitment/HT_05_Schedule_D_-_Pathways_Programs.aspx%23pnlToolkit)
* [Excepted Service Hiring](https://hru.gov/Studio_Recruitment/HT_04_Schedules.aspx%23pnlToolkit), which includes how-to steps for:
* Making 30-Day Critical Hiring Need Appointment
* Using OPM-approved Schedule A hiring authority for Digital Services
* Appointing individuals under an Agency-specific Schedule A or Schedule B authority

**Other guidance on hiring authorities:**

* [Federal Term Appointment Hiring Authorities for Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics Personnel (2014)](https://www.ida.org/idamedia/Corporate/Files/Publications/STPIPubs/2014/ida-d-5148.ashx)
* [Smarter IT Delivery Schedule Hiring Authority](https://www.chcoc.gov/content/smarter-it-delivery-schedule-hiring-authority)
* [Cybersecurity Hiring, Pay, and Leave Flexibilities](https://www.chcoc.gov/content/cybersecurity-hiring-pay-and-leave-flexibilities)
* [Other Strategies To Meet Hiring Requirements (2005)](https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/human-capital-management/reference-materials/talent-management/strategies.pdf)

**Further Reading:**

* [OPM Needs to Improve Management and Oversight of Hiring Authorities](http://www.gao.gov/assets/680/678814.pdf) : Government Accountability Office (GAO). September 2016 report encourages agencies to make further use of the full range of available hiring authorities
* [Federal Leaders Digital Insight Study - NAPA 2016](http://napawash.org/images/reports/2016/FLDIS_Feb_2016_Report_Final.pdf)
* [“How to organize Modern Employment,”](https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/20141023153633-1213-tours-of-duty-how-to-organize-modern-employment)  Reid Hoffman, 2014