Performance Profile: Research & Development Lead

About the TTS Public Benefits Studio

The TTS Public Benefits Studio is a cross-functional team of technologists with specialized experience working across public benefits programs like Medicaid, SNAP, and unemployment insurance. We collaborate with benefits programs to develop shared technology tools and best practices that reduce the burden of navigating government programs for low income individuals and families.

Role Summary

The Benefits Studio serves as an incubator/accelerator for benefits technology improvements that have the potential to radically improve public benefits delivery but that need federal support to achieve scale across programs. To fill this role effectively, we need to consistently keep a finger on the pulse of what's happening across the benefits technology ecosystem, and identify opportunities where we're especially well-positioned as a federal team to amplify & scale efforts that have shown promise in pockets, but might not otherwise achieve scale across programs & levels of government.

We're looking to hire one or more Research & Development Leads to help the Studio keep that finger on the pulse by developing and maintaining key relationships and connections across the space, identifying opportunities ripe for further exploration and potential scale from our team, and turning research insights into product or service prototypes.

This role is a good fit for you if:
- You are a systems thinker who is comfortable turning research findings into actionable and testable next steps and prototypes.
- You have experience supporting public benefits or other federated programs at the federal, state, or local government level.
- You have a background leading or managing cross-functional, multidisciplinary teams that deliver digital products and services in an incremental, user-focused way.
- You have experience pitching to, collaborating with, and managing executive stakeholders.
- You care deeply about improving access to and outcomes of public benefits programs.

Key Objectives

Objective #1: Keep the Studio well-connected to the broader benefits ecosystem, mapping and nurturing key relationships to inform where the Studio focuses next

- Conduct discovery and market research to identify where similar work is happening in and outside of TTS, and/or other discovery research that should inform decision making
- Stay informed of product/service pilots that can be reused or scaled to solve common problems in the public benefits space and avoid building custom tools if not needed
- Build and nurture relationships with people and organizations across the benefits space to enable shared knowledge and identify potential collaboration opportunities
- Develop and maintain a "living map" of the benefits technology ecosystem and the various forces and players who influence it, to help inform where we're best positioned to have impact
- Sharpen our strategy for selecting Studio bets in a way that is informed by all of the above

Objective #2: Scope, manage, & contribute to R&D/discovery sprints as aligned opportunities arise

- As strategic opportunities arise, clearly scope and define success criteria for research/discovery sprints or early prototyping designed to evaluate potential impact, feasibility, and strategic alignment with the Studio's mission.
- Coordinate & manage the discovery/prototyping sprints you shape, including developing staffing plans, timeline estimates, and business justifications.
- Define, measure, and help report on short, medium, and long-term metrics across our R&D portfolio to demonstrate our team's progress over time to key stakeholders.
- Contribute to the Benefits Studio's culture of transparency by publishing lessons learned and accounts of your successes and failures.

Objective #3: Work effectively in the federal government

- Demonstrate willingness to develop and maintain knowledge of public benefits programs and navigating program administration across multiple levels of government
- Keep up-to-date on policies and trends that affect the organization and shape stakeholders' views
- Skillfully navigate complex organizational relationships both within and outside of TTS
- Cooperatively negotiate disagreements and mediate compromises

- Build inclusive, respectful partnerships with diverse groups of people
- Demonstrate genuine interest in the day-to-day activities that keep our government running