Performance.gov

# Status Report (10/31/2017) 🎃

18F

Table of Contents

Overview

Last week our team focused on conducting interviews with agency staff. We conducted four of the five scheduled interviews and have additional interviews scheduled for this and next week. You can keep track of the interviews on this spreadsheet.

For this phase of the project, our focus is establishing clear user personas and problem definition. Delays in scheduling interviews means that this work will continue into next week. Fortunately, we've adjusted our schedule and have been able to tackle some technical considerations ahead of schedule.

The following **report will be updated and emailed to the team every Wednesday**. We will also have a recurring a conference call every **Wednesday at 4:30pm ET** to discuss this report in more detail and address any questions or concerns you might have.

Project Approach

Below is a high-level timeline of the project approach and key milestones. **The project approach consists of four phases, each approximately 2 weeks in length**. Since the goal for this engagement is to reduce uncertainty and recommend next steps, we will prioritize our activities around the highest value learning opportunities given the timeline and budget available.
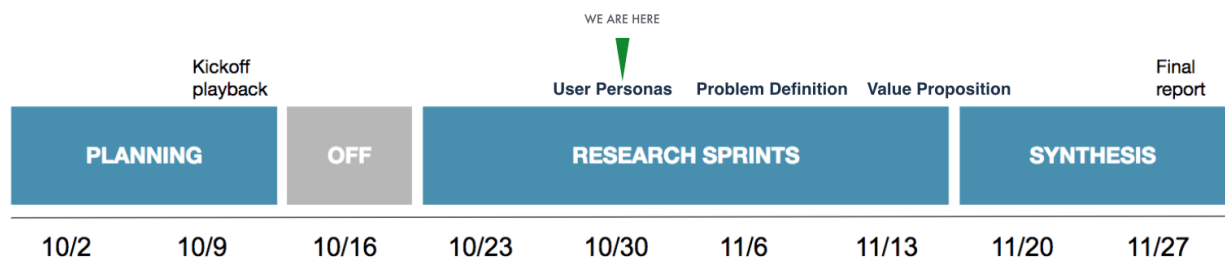
Note: This proposed timeline is based on our budget and will be revised as needed.

We've are currently in the **formative research** phase**.** In this phase we will conduct interviews with a wide range of stakeholders to better understand current state needs, opportunities, and limitations.

The timeline above was updated to reflect the delays in scheduling interviews. The "technical assessment" is no longer reserved for the final week of the research sprint. Instead, we will focus on defining the problem definition & value proposition. We will also conduct a lightweight technical assessment throughout the research phase.

To understand the importance of user personas and in understanding their problems, consider this diagram:
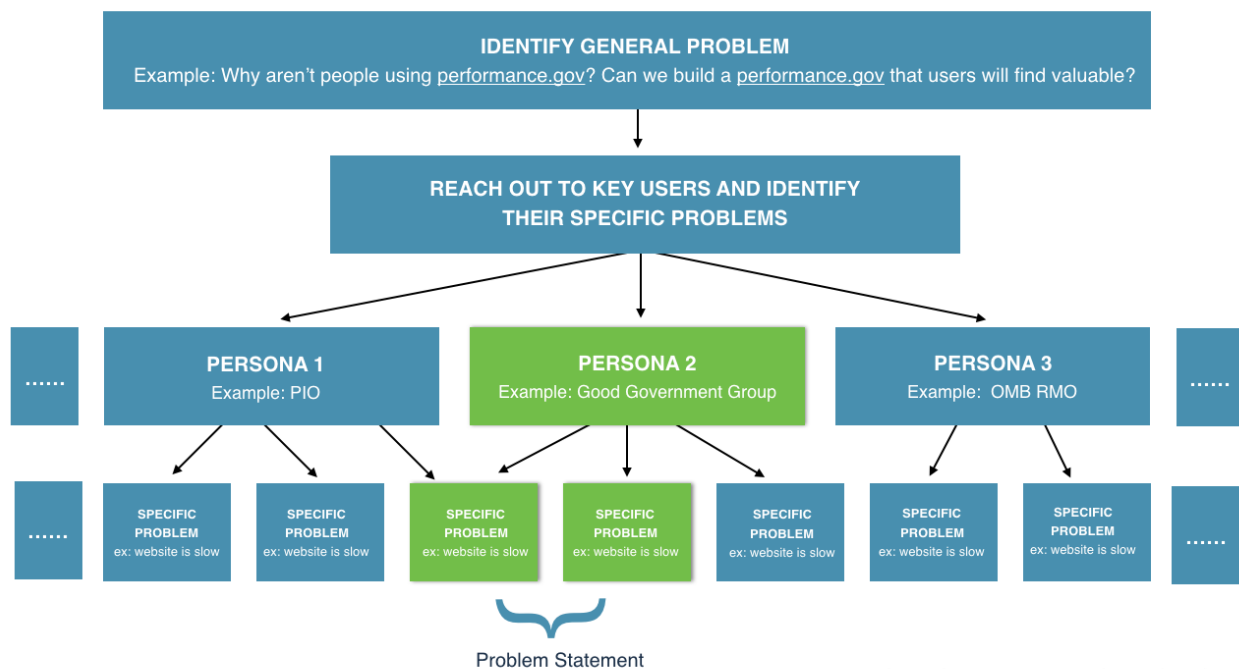
With every interview, we learn about the challenges different users experience. As we develop clear personas and understand their specific problems, we can better define a clear *problem statement*. This problem statement will shape the direction of this project going forward into the *Discovery Phase*.

Summary of Activities:

Last week, the 18F team completed accomplished the following:

- Conducted interviews with the following agencies: Department of Commerce, Social Security Administration, Department of Education, Department of Interior, Department of Housing and Urban Development.
- Rescheduled the interview with Treasury for next week.
- The following are some **key** takeaways from the interviews:
  - None of agencies we've interviewed use Performance.gov, other than submit their reports.
  - Some agencies track as many as 200-300 indicators and only publish about a dozen on performance.gov.
  - The Department of Commerce is building their own performance tracking website and confident this new website will serve their needs. We are scheduling a follow-up to understand this new system and how it connects with our efforts.
- We've begun mapping data flows via different staff and roles (agency, bureau, division, program, etc.). More information on this topic will be provided next week.
- We are using [this spreadsheet](#) to track who we reach out to. So far, none of the recommended external stakeholders have agreed to speak with us. Noting that their organizations don't use performance.gov and do not think they would be able to provide feedback. We are following up with them to let them know their perspective is valuable.
- We've expanded the number of groups and individuals to reach out using our own networks.
- We conducted interviews with the USASpending.gov team (product owner from Treasury and Lead Developer from 18F). Some **key** takeaways:
  - The USASpending.gov team believes that content specialists are undervalued on data projects. There is often a tension between using plain language or using "government-speak", but when speaking to the public, we need to make sure we use language that is accessible to all.
- We reviewed the interviews, surveys and design mockups provided by previous 18F engagements. Overall, we found this work to be comprehensive and it will be useful to us going forward.

This week:

- Schedule interviews with new contacts provided by PIC/OMB.
- Conduct interviews with HUD and reschedule interview with Treasury.
- Develop RMO interview guide; Develop key questions document; Develop NGO interview guide.
- Synthesize user personas related to agencies.

Pending Issues:

☐ **PIC**: Last week, at our weekly meeting between 18F and OMB/PIC, we divided up contact list to schedule interviews. We are waiting for introductions.

☐ **18F/PIC**: As of now, none of the interviews to external stakeholder have agreed to be interviewed. We will need to expand the number of external stakeholders we reach out to.

Key Risks

- **Stakeholder Alignment:** 18F is focused on learning the challenges of an agency and identifying a clear problem before we begin solutioning. This process has been effective on other 18F projects, but stakeholders need to be bought into the process to ensure project success.

- **Managing Expectations:** PIC has expressed interest in focusing 18F's work on the presentation of information instead of reviewing the processes for agency staff. In order for 18F's approach to work effectively, we as for autonomy in our investigations and to allow the research to lead the process.

- **Agency Cooperation:** Our initial assessment has revealed a complex interaction between PIC and the agencies they work with. Lack of cooperation by agency staff will put this engagement at risk.

Further Readings

Links the team may find valuable:

- https://18f.gsa.gov/2017/09/07/opening-the-nations-crime-data/