Performance.gov

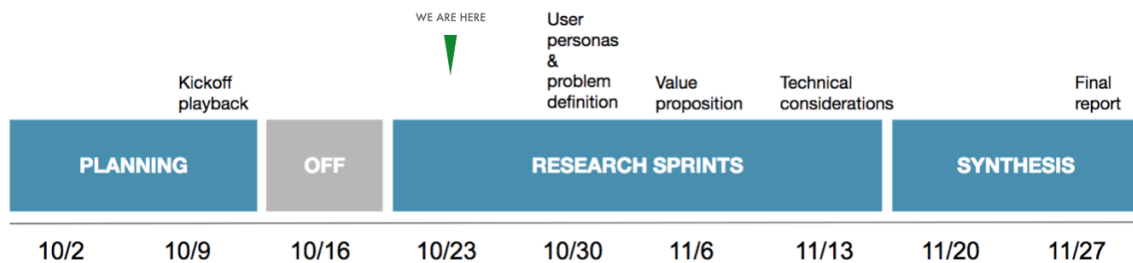# Status Report (10/25/2017)

18F

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Overview

Last week our team was offline for a TTS-wide retreat but we made one exception and scheduled time to discuss the "Playback & Synthesis" with Mark, Amin and Jenny. Mark expressed concern that there was too much focus on agency staff and their existing work, but we clarified that when talking to agency staff we plan to focus on **identifying opportunities and understanding what can we achieve**. We arrived at consensus and moved forward with scheduling interviews.

Since then we've scheduled interviews with a five agencies, the first taking place on Oct 26th.

The following **report will be updated and emailed to the team every Wednesday**. We will also schedule a conference call **Wednesday afternoons** to discuss this report in more detail.

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 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.

Summary of Activities:

Last week, the 18F team completed its kick-off meeting and accomplished the following:

- Our team was offline for GSA/TTS agency retreat
- We scheduled meetings with the following agency staff: Department of Commerce, Social Security Administration, Department of Education, Treasury, and Department of Interior
- Digitized sticky notes from kick-off meeting: Target Users

This week:

- Developed "Interview Guide" to provide structure in our engagement with agency staff.
- Developed Consent form for interviewees to fill out to consent to the interviews.
- Meeting with DATA Act product owner at Treasury to understand the challenges of implementing USASpending.gov from the agency's perspective.
- Meeting with DATA Act / USASpending.gov engineering team to understand the challenges in working with agencies.
- Meeting with Office of Customer and Stakeholder Engagement at GSA to discuss challenges in coordinating with agencies in the development of USASpending.gov.

Pending Issues:

☐ **PIC**: We would like to ensure we talk to a broad cross section of agencies. Can you all connect us with five more agencies?

☐ **PIC**: While we are already interviewing many agency representatives, it would be useful for us to speak with representatives from academia and NGO stakeholders. Amin reached out to a number of them and waiting to hear back. Our goal is to get started with non-government interviews by next week.

Resolved Issues:

✅**PIC**: The 18F teams requires introductions to stakeholders and the agency staff that use performance.gov to publish their reports. PIC will need to help schedule meetings so we can begin conducting interviews by the week of Oct 23rd, 2017.

✅ **PIC**: During our interview with PIC Executive Director, Jenny, recommended we review **BRIEFING TO THE COUNCIL**, an extensive report based on prior research. We will need access to this report before Oct 16th, 2017.

✅**18F**: A report with synthesizing our findings will be provided to PIC staff by Oct 16th, 2017.

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 for the project to be successful.

- **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 will require autonomy in our investigations and 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

A series of links that the team may find valuable:

- https://18f.gsa.gov/2017/09/18/a-day-in-the-life-of-an-18f-product-owner/