

March 2022 product hypotheses + shortlist

Hypotheses informing where the Studio should start

- 1. We will increase our chances of success if we take multiple bets over time, but starting with one now will help us get concrete faster.**

Taking multiple bets will allow the Studio to find where it can make the most impact and balance short term/public facing impact vs longer term potential. We want to ensure that the products we choose are aligned with the needs of the public and the interest of our government partners, but involving stakeholders and community members takes time.

Choosing one opportunity to start with will make the process of engaging stakeholders and community members to confirm that decision and help us prioritize the next products. This will help balance the urgency around showing progress and lay the groundwork for making decisions as a community.

- 2. Starting with a problem area where some open source products, pilots, and potentially underutilized solutions already exist will help us identify good use cases and move towards scaling faster.**

It's important for the Studio to have some quick wins in its first year of operations. Starting with an existing product or service that could be forked could allow the team to start by testing whether that could be reused to meet user needs rather than starting

with greenfield research. Following up on past pilots run will help us identify and consider potential blockers that other teams have faced rather before doing so ourselves.

This approach will also allow the Studio to complement other TTS orgs instead of duplicating effort, and reduce burden on both agency partners and the public by coming to them with *new* questions rather than asking the same ones again.

3. Identifying multiple programs that are interested in using a tool up front and building for reuse from the start will set us up better for scale than building for one program and addressing scaling later.

Many open source projects are accessible but not truly extensible. The Studio's mission is to deliver products and services that support *multiple* programs. We believe that before we start building, we should validate that a product has the potential to meet that goal by asking potential partners (and potentially setting up agreements for pilots/governance across agencies?) and by building with that in mind from the start.

We know it could take more time to set things up for reuse and scale from the start, and we are building that into our assessment timelines. We will also commit to using emergent architecture principles as we go to avoid the trap of building more than is needed up front.

4. We need to keep the capacity of the Studio team in mind when making a decision about where to start.

We are starting hiring processes and will be onboarding and ramping up the team over the next few months, but at the moment we have less than 2 FTEs working on the Studio. Selecting a bet that we can start on with the limited bandwidth we have is crucial. Selecting a bet that others at TTS have already explored or are currently exploring could help us accelerate efforts across the org, especially since many of the efforts are staffed by small teams.

5. There are overarching themes that we'll need to explore along the way; *any* selection will give us a concrete entry point to start unpacking them.

These themes include:

- Data-sharing agreements between agencies and within TTS
- Auth needs for any public-facing products
 - Related: security + consumer protection re: scams
- Determining what agencies are willing to accept as “legit”
 - Ex. self attestation, docs from a certain source, determinations that come through a system that is not their own, if they're willing to communicate via certain channels
- Financial and funding models between levels of government
- Standing up a new team + team practices
- Which governance models will be most appropriate; where there's appetite for collaborative + built to scale software/services vs custom builds

Products + services that align with the hypotheses above

• Notifications as a service

- This represents an opportunity for high public impact—to improve one of the most commonly cited causes of beneficiaries losing their benefits
- There have been past gov pilots that support the potential for lightweight prototyping
- May be especially timely during the upcoming unwinding of the COVID PHE designation, when millions will be contacted to re-certify their eligibility
- The biggest reason TTS said no to this last time around was because there was little interest in TTS owning a solution long-term. There is now expressed interest and support w/in TTS, GSA, and external partners like USDA and DOL
- Alex and Amy can support the 10x research + start coalition building while waiting on the rest of the team to come on board

● Integrated screeners or rules as code

- This represents an opportunity to improve a large pain point for agencies (updating rules) that can result in the public getting incorrect determinations or information about what they are eligible for.
- There are a handful of screener products/pilots that could be evaluated for scale/impact including SnapScreener.com, CiviForm, and ACCESS NYC.
- The Eligibility APIs team continues to get interest from the community the Studio would like to connect with but is not staffed
- Alex and Amy can review the 10x research + start coalition building while waiting on the rest of the team to come on board
- Main hesitation - feels less defined + may be more complicated to start with

● Document uploading + sharing

- This may be more of a policy + adoption play. There are a large number of document uploader tools, but they are inconsistently used across government.
- Document sharing across programs is even less consistent and adds burden to the public to resubmit the same document across multiple programs. This is currently being researched by 10x.
- Alex and Amy could support the 10x research + start coalition building while waiting on the rest of the team to come on board
- Main hesitation - would like to explore starting w/ a product/service vs policy and adoption due to needing to show short term wins