



FROM THE OPPORTUNITY PROJECT

What makes a good problem statement

A great problem statement focuses on a compelling problem that tells a human story, is reasonable enough in scope that digital tools could make a dent in it, but broad enough that there is room for tech teams to be creative and develop a diverse set of solutions. Agencies also have the most success when there is open data available to address the problem.

What does NOT make a good problem statement

Problem statements are typically not focused on federal agencies or employees as the target end users. Instead, problem statements focus on issues or topics facing members of the public - including families, communities, businesses, educators, as well as state and local governments.

Problem statements also do not prescribe specific solutions but rather frame general challenges and leave the tech teams outside of government to develop their own ideas for tech solutions, as they apply their unique expertise and ultimately build and own the products. Finally, identified data sets should include only open data (i.e., no PII, private data, etc.), and any key federal data sets should be public by the time the sprints begin.