

# Abhi Nemani

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**Summary:** Entrepreneur and scholar, Abhi Nemani has over 12 years of experience in technology leadership roles, with expertise in go-to-market, product, talent, and M&A, and he has raised \$40M+ for civic tech organizations. He has built, led, and grown leading GovTech institutions, including Code for America, Los Angeles' Office of Data, and Sacramento's Office of Entrepreneurship. As a consultant, Abhi has helped tech companies grow from a handful of government clients to hundreds, helping tens of millions of people worldwide. A philosophy undergrad, Abhi holds graduate credentials in business from Stanford (eMBA), public administration from USC Price (MPA), and advanced finance from The Wharton School (AFP).

## EXPERIENCE

**Founder & Managing Director**

*February 2017 - Present*

**EthosLabs.us**

- Built and manage a portfolio of government technology (GovTech) startups with a focus on sales, product, and marketing. Ethos companies now cover over 10,000 local governments internationally serving over 150M people, including ZenCity, POLCO, and Camino.
- Drive mergers & acquisition strategy for Private Equity firms (ONEX Partners and Welsh, Carson, Anderson & Stowe - WCAS), advise foundations (Knight Foundation & Arnold Foundation) on grantmaking and metrics/analytics, and consult large firms on enterprise growth (Granicus/GovDelivery) on deals ranging from \$5M to \$2B.
- Advise senior government officials (e.g., New Jersey Attorney General & Governor of California) and non-profits to create and implement innovation strategies for economic development, IT modernization, and transparency.
- Rebuilt an typically in-person social services organization's digital strategy and systems when COVID began, expanding its reach from roughly 30,000/month to ~1.2M/month.
- Developed growth strategy for select partners by embedding for short-term, but operational leadership positions:
  - Innovator-in-Residence, Granicus/GovDelivery
  - Chief Product Officer, SPIDRTech
  - Director, CivicPulse

**Civic Technology Lecturer**

*January 2019 - September 2019*

**University of Chicago**

- Developed and taught the first course and curriculum on Civic Technology for masters students in the Computer Science and Public Policy
- Published lectures and lecture notes have been used by dozens of universities, NGOs, and companies in their government and civic technology training programs.

**Chief Innovation Officer**

*January 2016 - February 2017*

**City of Sacramento**

- Developed and launched the city's landmark \$10M Innovation and Growth Fund (IGF) to promote entrepreneurship and innovation, which was approved by the city council unanimously.
- Created and administered a \$1M grant program—Rapid Acceleration, Innovation, and Leadership in Sacramento (RAILS)—to support local startup enablers, receiving 140 applications, totaling over \$17M in grant requests.
- Led first-of-its-kind investment from a municipal government in a national venture capital fund and program (500 Startups), making the city an LP and encouraging startup relocation to Sacramento.
- Built the Mayor's Office for Innovation and Entrepreneurship, recruited permanent staff (including permanent CIO) and the Mayor's Tech Council of local leaders, and codified policies and budget through City Council.

**Chief Data Officer**  
**City of Los Angeles**

*September 2014 - October 2015*

- Led Los Angeles to #1 ranking for US Open Data cities in under one year, by publishing over 400 datasets; earned the Platinum Open Data Certification from international data consortium, WCCD.
- Built Mayoral Dashboard, which is used regularly by the Mayor and Senior Staff to increase performance and accountability; the dashboard has saved the city over \$180K, and has been freely reused by other cities.
- Set up first-of-its-kind city data GeoHub (GIS) to share over 1,000 geospatial datasets more easily internally and externally, and deployed various critical applications atop this platform.
- Mobilized the local volunteer community to include 10K+ members that host monthly events and app competitions focused on sustainable innovation; ran the largest civic hackathon in the country.
- Supported multiple departments—e.g. Personnel and Fire—in digital transformations through training and consultations to enhance citizen experience and reduce costs; earned LA the ranking of #1 Digital City.

**Co-Executive Director**  
**Code for America**

*May 2010 - March 2014*

*Previously: Chief of Staff, Director of Strategy & Communications*

- Built, launched, and ran an award-winning non-profit designed to transform local governments through technology, leading product, growth, and assessment, which grew work with hundreds of cities and became a model for the White House's digital strategy.
- Created groundbreaking technology fellowship program for local governments in 2011, recruiting over 360 applicants for the inaugural class that created over 20 civic applications in partnership with 3 cities. Over the next three years, the fellowship expanded to 10 cities per year with 30-35 fellows, building hundreds of civic tools.
- Implemented fundraising strategy for a \$15M+ budget, including foundation engagement, corporate sponsorship, and individual philanthropy. Managed and grew multi-million dollar grant relationships with Omidyar Network, Google.org, and other major national foundations, and paired charitable contributions with sales revenue from contracts with dozens of governments.
- Spearheaded development of growth programs: the first-of-its-kind civic startup accelerator, leading to dramatic growth in activity in the space and the CfA Brigade, a now 50,000+ member community of volunteer civic technologists.
- Launched internationalization strategy by building sister NGO, "Code for All" with partners including the World Bank.
- Chaired Code for America Summit, the premier gathering of ~1,000 civic innovators from around the world, leading strategy, editorial, and design, growing attendance 275% and revenue 150%.

**Manager**  
**Rose Institute of State and Local Government**

*September 2006 - April 2010*

- Oversaw 30 student researchers, supervised project work, handled personnel, and coordinated budget of over \$50,000 with senior staff, focused on government innovation and transparency research agenda.
- Led National Ballot Initiative open data project, researching and cataloging over 900 measures for public access, which led to the publication of a scholarly book, "Direct Democracy and the Courts," published by Cambridge University.
- Led the Digital Archiving project of 20 student employees to publish hundreds of political documents online, becoming the first digital political library for the State of California.

**Product Marketing**  
**Google**

*June 2009 - August 2009*

- Led creation of digital strategy for "Gone Google" marketing campaign, conducting marketing research, designing digital assets, and developing reusable online tools, which was featured by AdWeek, Mashable, and VentureBeat; campaign reached over 1M in under 10 days

## COMMUNITY & INDUSTRY INVOLVEMENT

Board of Directors <b>Leading Cities (GovTech Accelerator / NGO)</b>	<i>July 2022 - Present</i>
University Challenge Selection Committee <b>Public Interest Technology University Network (PIT-UN)</b>	<i>May 2022 - Present</i>
Mentor / Judge <b>Innovations in Justice Tech (GovTech Accelerator)</b>	<i>May 2022 - Present</i>
Mentor & Speaker <b>Coding it Forward (GovTech NGO)</b>	<i>Jan 2020 - Present</i>
Leadership Circle <b>SmartCityX (GovTech Accelerator)</b>	<i>May 2019 - Present</i>
Chair, Tech and Innovation Policy Committee <b>Newsom for California (Governor)</b>	<i>August 2017 - November 2018</i>
Board Member / Vice-Chair <b>OpenGov Foundation (GovTech NGO)</b>	<i>May 2014 - May 2017</i>

## HONORS & RECOGNITIONS

- University of Chicago Harris School of Public Policy Mentor of the Year
- GovTech 100 (for various startups), Government Technology Magazine
- Blair Award for State and Local Government
- Partner, Truman National Security Project
- Top 10 CDOs to Watch, Technical.ly
- Member, Future of Urban Development Initiative of the World Economic Forum
- National Fellow, Young Democrats of America
- Edward J. Sexton Fellow; Philosophy, Politics, and Economics
- Harrison Fellow, Salvatori Center for the Study of Individual Freedom in the Modern World
- Berger Award for Top Student, Claremont McKenna College
- All-American Attorney, American College Mock Trial Association
- Breakthrough Publication of the Year: Claremont Port Side (Editor-in-Chief), Center for American Progress

### *Recognition & Honors for Code for America*

- White House Champions of Change
- Government Technology Magazine: Change-makers
- 2012 MDC Partners & Wired Humanitarian Award
- MIT Lynch Award for Urban Affairs
- 2012 Oxford Internet and Society Award

### *Recognition & Honors for City of Los Angeles*

- #1 Open Data City, US Open Data Census
- Platinum Open Data Certification, World Council on City Data (WCCD)
- #1 Digital City, Government Technology Magazine

# PUBLICATIONS

## Articles

- How Cities Can Compete in the Future of Work | USC Price School of Public Policy (Fall 2022)
- Dashboards: The Underbelly of the Smart City | University of Missouri Kansas City Law Review (Spring 2017)
- Engines of Civic Entrepreneurship | Hacker Noon (Feb 2016)
- 7 Tactics for 21st Century Government | Government Magazine (Oct 2013)
- Here's what we need for civic tech to flourish in government | Apolitical (December 2018)
- GIS Hub Vision | ArcNews (April 2015)
- Towards a Code for Africa | World Bank Symposium (Jan 2014)
- Restoring Cities as Engines for Opportunity | CityMinded (Sept 2013)
- Turning Civic Interest into Action | Government Executive (Aug 2014)
- Beyond Transparency (Book / Editor & Publisher) | Code for America Press (June 2012)
- What's Next? | Code for America Press (June 2012)
- Government as a Platform | TechCrunch (June 2012)
- Accelerating San Francisco | Huffington Post (Jan 2013)

## Presentations

- TEDxSacramento, "Hack of the Century: Cities"
- Texas Association of State Systems for Computing and Communications, "How the Smart City Failed"
- Federal Communications Summit (Washington DC), "Government is What We Do Together"
- Leading Cities, "GovTech Tailwinds"
- Fabric of the City (Paris), "Building an Open Data Community"
- National Association of Government Webmasters Annual Conference, "Let's Move Beyond Open Data Portals"
- Coding it Forward "Building a Civic Tech Career"
- SXSW (Austin, TX), "Hacking for Sustainable Cities"
- University of Virginia, "The Politics, Philosophy, and Economics of Civic Tech"
- Big Kansas City, "Disruption as a Public Service"
- MAD (Hong Kong), "Civic Startups"
- PDF (NYC), "Digital Inclusion & OpenGov"
- Digital Cities (Buenos Aires), "A Tale of Two Cities"
- Agile Alliance (Nashville, TN), "The Principles of Agile and of Government"
- World Bank (DC), "Spreading Innovation"

# EDUCATION

## USC Price School of Public Policy

*January 2021 - December 2022*

Masters in Public Administration (MPA)

## The Wharton School

*September 2021 - September 2022*

Advanced Finance Program (AFP)

## Stanford Graduate School of Business

*August 2020 - August 2021*

Executive Masters of Business Administration (eMBA)

## Oxford University

*August 2008 - December 2008*

Philosophy, Politics & Economics (First Class)

## Claremont McKenna College

*August 2006 - May 2010*

B.A. in Philosophy, Politics & Economics (Honors); Magna Cum Laude