18f

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Rationale

There are *so* many subjects you could choose to profile, so why did you choose this one? What drew you into wanting to know more about the organization? How did you/your group decide on and agree?

Organizational Details

Is the subject of your profile a corporate entity?

> No, part of government

What type?

> Organization within the General Services Administration

When was it founded?

> March 19, 2014

By whom?

> GSA Administrator Dan Tangherlini

Original founder(s) still active?

> Aaron Snow

Publicly Traded? Since when? Initial Stock Price? Current stock price?

> No, not even on crunchbase

Has the company made any acquisitions? If yes, which companies, and what were their core products?

> Nope

Has the company made any investments in other companies? If yes, which ones.

> Nope

Number of Employees?

59

Where is HQ?

General Services Administration Building

1800 F Street NW

Washington, D.C.

Does it have any other offices or locations?

No

Website?

https://18f.gsa.gov/

Wikipedia?

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/18f

Does your organization file any annual reports? Please include links to any relevant documents (i.e. 990, Annual Report, Year in Review, etc...)

Doesn't look like it. The github repo speaks for itself

Communications

Does your subject participate in social media? If yes, please list a URL for each account, and reach within that community. (i.e. Twitter: @RedHatNews - 61.9K Followers.

Twitter: https://twitter.com/18f - 8431 followers

What communication channels does your subject use to reach their public? Briefly describe and include a URL for each.

They have several active bloggers, with all their RSS feeds accumulated at https://18f.gsa.gov/news/

Internally, 18f uses Slack for their communication. They have several rooms, such as: #general, #teamops, #wg-working_groups

Does your subject organize or participate in any conferences? If so, list them here, and provide links to any relevant sessions, keynotes, or content.

Not as an organization, but the employees that work there do attend conferences and write blog posts about them.

Community Architecture

Your subject likely runs or contributes to one or more Open Source products or projects. Choose one (or more) of these and answer the following questions:

If applicable, list and provide links to:

a. **The project's IRC Channel**

   N/A

b. **Source Code repository**

   https://github.com/18f/18f.gsa.gov

c. **Mail list archive**

   Don't have a mailing list, but here is there github repo list, with all 75 developers: https://github.com/18f

d. **Documentation**

   They hold multiple repositories for documentation regarding their tools:

   https://github.com/18f/openFEC-documentation

   https://github.com/18f/hub

   https://github.com/18f/api-standards

e. **Other communication channels**

   nope

f. **Project Website and/or Blog**

   https://my.usa.gov/

   https://analytics.usa.gov/

   https://midas-dev.18f.us/

g. **Describe the software project, its purpose and goals.**

   https://18f.gsa.gov/news/

Give brief history of the project. When was the Initial Commit? The latest commit? Who approves patches? How many people?

   They have many projects. To see initial and latest commits, go to the individual repos for their projects. As opposed to other companies, the developers come up with ideas for new projects that can be applied on many levels. Managers then go find other people to work on the projects, and delegate the work amongst them, keeping time and release cycles flowing. analytics.usa.gov is an example of a project that applies to many levels, as there are more sites like it at city and state levels.

Who has commit access, or has had patches accepted? How many total?

   The 75 people viewable from their repo list. https://github.com/orgs/18f/people

Has there been any turnover in the Core Team? (i.e. has the top 20% of contributors stayed the same over time? If not, how has it changed?)

We don't know, their core team isn't so clear since they work on so many projects simultaneously.

Does the project have a BDFL, or Lead Developer? (BDFL == Benevolent Dictator for Life)

Unclear. Aaron Snow is the only listed employee on Crunchbase, was one of the founders, and is still working with them.

Are the front and back end developers the same people? What is the proportion of each?

Many of the developers at 18f are skilled in both frontend and backend roles. Most developers are skilled with HTML, CSS, Javascript, and Python.

What have been some of the major bugs/problems/issues that have arisen during development? Who is responsible for quality control and bug repair?

Healthcare.gov - USDS is the government's sector responsible for quality control and bug repair on all its digital services.

How is the project's participation trending and why?

They are trending well. Several of their repos on github have over 200 stars.

In your opinion, does the project pass "The Raptor Test?" (i.e. Would the project survive if the BDFL, or most active contributor were eaten by a Velociraptor?) Why or why not?

Yes, they have many projects, all spearheaded by different people. Also, the managers are there to find new people for whichever projects they are interested in pursuing, allowing for people to be replaced.

In your opinion, would the project survive if the core team, or most active 20% of contributors, were hit by a bus? Why or why not?

Same as previous answer.

Does the project have an official "on-boarding" process in place? (new contributor guides, quickstarts, communication leads who focus specifically on newbies, etc...)

For developers, 18f has some basic bootstrapping documentation on their [docs page](). For their consulting work within government, the have a repository called [guides]() that details many of their practices (accessability, testing, open-source policies, etc).

Does the project have Documentation available? Is it extensive? Does it include code examples?

https://docs.18f.gov/

18f holds several documentation (or similar) repos on github. See above, since much of their on-boarding and guides can be considered documentation.

If you were going to contribute to this project, but ran into trouble or hit blockers, who would you contact, and how?

The 18f github repositories have fairly active issue trackers. There is also an email: 18f@gsa.gov

Based on these answers, how would you describe the decision making structure/process of this group? Is it hierarchical, consensus building, ruled by a small group, barely contained chaos, or ruled by a single or pair of individuals?

It is a very flat structure, seemingly barely contained chaos. Any member may develop or launch any project of their choosing, and only need consent when forming a "Guild" within 18f. This loose structure of self-organisation was designed to enable flexibility and speed. For more details: http://18f.github.io/grouplet-playbook/

Is this the kind of structure you would enjoy working in? Why, or why not?

Yes, having the ability to work on projects of my choosing would allow me to quickly find (or start) projects that I care about.

Technology/Product

Who invented, created, or sponsored the technology?

The Government

What is the technology designed to do? How is it used?

Create optimal, transparent, and functional software to digitally lead the United States into a better tomorrow.

Who would benefit from using this technology?

Firstly, the U.S. Government. The technology is created to be used by them on whatever level can apply their data into the systems. 18f works with the different branches and groups within the government to create profitable solutions directly for them

What kinds of companies or organizations (stakeholders) might have been concerned about the development of this technology? Why?

Government Associations, groups, organizations, and subsidiaries. 18f was created shortly after the fiasco of Healthcare.gov to prevent new software from encountering such issues. Now, they are the ones creating the new technologies and helping others to learn how

to use and improve their software, which by default is all open source in the U.S. Public Domain.

Does/Did an aspect of copyright law play a role in controversies about the technology? How?

No controversies yet; by default they release software in the public domain, with some exceptions. If they work on code that isn't open source, or is protected by the International Traffic in Arms Regulation, for example, then it would qualify as an exception. The finer details of their policy can be found here:

https://github.com/18f/open-source-policy/blob/master/policy.md

Who are some of the users of this service?

The government is the biggest user of 18f, having created it to bring about digital solutions to their problems to usher us toward a future aligned with their goals.