

Anna Shipman
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Technology leader, technical architect and software developer. International speaker and writer. Particular interest in openness and making things easy for users. I have a deep understanding of technology and recent experience in infrastructure, backend development and open source.

Open Source Lead at Government Digital Service (October 2016 – date)
A team within the Cabinet Office, leading the digital transformation of government

I lead policy, strategy, and delivery on open source across all of government. Having taken a broad view of strategic value of open source to government, I have identified the highest impact problems to solve and have led activities including:

- Supporting open sourcing of the code for high profile government services including GOV.UK Verify, GOV.UK Pay and Register to Vote
- Leading a project to investigate increasing the reuse of open government code
- Sharing vision on the benefits of coding in the open including giving talks, writing blog posts and visiting government departments
- Influencing behavioural change for those wary of open source by various methods including persuasion, peer support, and guidance
- Building a cross-government open source community with around 100 active members
- Engaging internationally, sharing our code, experience and learning with governments including USA, Canada, Australia, France and the Czech Republic

Technical architect at Government Digital Service (September 2014 – date)

I led delivery of the first phase of a PaaS for Government, an infrastructure platform to host digital services across the entire UK government.

- Led the technical evaluation of capabilities of various PaaS solutions, including feature comparison and gap analysis for use by a diverse set of services across government
- Identified the important criteria for a PaaS for the UK government, and led in-depth analysis of Tsuru and CloudFoundry, ultimately selecting CloudFoundry
- Built 15-person team of web operations engineers, including recruitment, setting clear direction, handling poor performance and building a strong, supportive culture
- Shared our vision and learnings by speaking at conferences, including keynoting VelocityEU, and writing several posts about the decision-making process on the GDS blog
- Created a cross-government hosting and infrastructure community to share knowledge and built close ties with US Digital Service and Australia DTO
- Contributed to, and supported the team in contributing to, Open Source projects
- Championed best practice across GDS (e.g. my pull request guidance and explanation)

Previous projects as technical architect at GDS include being TA on the GOV.UK website, responsible for the technical oversight of six product teams and an infrastructure team.

Alongside these roles I have line managed and mentored in the tech community:

- Been senior in the GDS technical line management community, leading on line management process, developer culture and diversity initiatives
- Line management responsibility for between 4 and 15 staff at a time, encouraging them to take on line management themselves and developing them
- Supported an initiative to help underrepresented people develop public speaking skills <https://gds.blog.gov.uk/2017/06/21/breaking-in-a-new-generation-of-public-speakers/>
- Built the first career path for developers and other technologists at GDS (written up here: <https://gdstechnology.blog.gov.uk/2015/07/24/a-career-path-for-technologists-at-gds/>)
- Led on recruitment including chairing panels, improving process and promoting GDS

Boards

Member of the Industrial Liaison Board, Department of Computing at Imperial College London, advising the Department on strategic issues and concerns relating to industry.

Speaking

I am regularly invited to speak at conferences around the world. Notable talks include:

- **A PaaS for Government**, Keynote at VelocityEU, Amsterdam, 29th October 2015
Why the government is building a PaaS and how we are going about it
- **Coding in the open in government**, Turing Fest, Edinburgh, 3rd August 2017
The benefits of coding in the open for government and industry
- **Operations: A developer's guide**, FFCConf, Brighton, 6th November 2015
A clear introduction to web operations to help developers improve their skills

Writing

I am an excellent communicator and published author. I have written several posts on the GDS blogs and also regularly update my own blog. I have written about DevOps at GDS for the book *Build Quality In*. 70% of royalties from this book go to Code Club.

Conferences

I lead the committee and manage the website for SPA (Software Practice Advancement) conference. I am also involved in other conferences: in 2015-16 I was on the committees for O'Reilly Software Architecture 2016, Velocity EU 2016 and Continuous Lifecycle London 2016.

Other interests

I have participated in three /dev/forts, week-long development working holidays, and I have volunteered for IT Can Help, a charity offering free computer support to disabled people.

Previous employment in technology

Senior developer at the Government Digital Service (April 2012 – September 2014)

Led development of GDS's first Open Source project, vCloud Tools, now in use across government and industry. Tech lead for discovery phase of rewrite of central government's licence application service. Performed web operations on the Infrastructure & Tools team, supporting GOV.UK.

Java designer/developer at Corelogic Ltd (March 2008 – March 2012)
SME producing one of the main case-management systems for social services

Various projects including redesigning and rewriting one of the key components of the application for consistency, increased functionality and improved user experience, and developing a prototype for the next version of the application, as well as spending several months on production support.

Application developer at Atos Origin (November 2005 – February 2008)
International IT services company with revenues of over €8 billion and 78,000 staff

Worked on various projects including production support for a multi-million pound project for Defra and team leading for a multi-million pound project for VOSA.

Previous career

Prior to technology I had a career in publishing, including children's books and at a charity. This experience allows me to better understand the needs of those less familiar with computers.

Education & qualifications

MSc IT (Software Systems) with Distinction: Heriot-Watt University
MA honours degree Mental Philosophy. Class: 2.1: University of Edinburgh