

The future of government user experience:

Improving faster with design systems

18F



Hi! I'm Aviva Oskow.

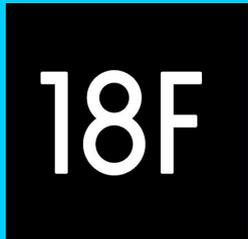


Visual & service designer, working to improve the user experience and digital tools of the federal government.

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Visual & service designer, working to improve the user experience and digital tools of the federal government.



User centered* design and technology agency inside the Technology Transformation Service (TTS) of the General Services Administration (GSA).

**Work iteratively, design for real people, build in the open, and share what we know*

Who are you?



Federal?

State?

City?

Visual or UX Designers?

Content strategists?

Developers?

Product?

**Today we
are talking
about:**

**The US Web Design System
and other reusable
resources for doing our
work better and faster**

**Examples in practice and
use cases**

**What should come next?
(Questions & discussion)**

There were **3.7 billion visits** to
U.S. federal government
websites over the past 90 days.

From analytics.usa.gov

92 Percent of Most Popular Federal Government Websites Fail to Meet Basic Standards for Security, Speed, Mobile Friendliness, or Accessibility, New ITIF Study Finds

March 8, 2017



Lindsay Bednar
lbednar@itif.org
(202) 626-5744

WASHINGTON—Every day, the public relies on federal websites to access information and services from the U.S. government, yet 92 percent of its most popular sites fail to meet basic standards for security, speed, mobile friendliness, or accessibility, according to a [first-of-its-kind study](#) released today by the Information Technology and Innovation Foundation (ITIF).

“Despite years of progress in digital government, a striking number of federal websites do not even meet many of the U.S. government’s own requirements, let alone private-sector best practices,” said Alan McQuinn, ITIF research analyst and the report’s lead author. “Considering that many constituents rely on federal websites to interact with government, it is incumbent upon the new administration, supported by Congress, to make websites more convenient, accessible, and secure.”

McQuinn and co-author Daniel Castro analyzed 297 of the most popular federal websites—all U.S. government websites in the top 1 million websites globally—assessing them on four criteria: security, speed, mobile friendliness, and accessibility. In addition to scoring the sites in each of these areas, the authors ranked them using a composite score to give an overall view of how well the most popular government websites adhere to federal requirements and industry best practices.

MODERNIZATION

Federal IT contract spending reaches new high in fiscal 2018, report says

“Spend on digital services contracts increased 17% governmentwide”

(Getty Images)

Written by [Billy Mitchell](#)

JAN 25, 2019 | FEDSCOOP

Federal spending on IT contracts reached an all-time high in fiscal 2018, according to new Bloomberg research.

Agencies spent \$64.7 billion on IT contracts last year, up 9.5 percent from fiscal 2017, according to Bloomberg Government's [analysis](#) of Federal Procurement Data System data.

This is attributed to growth in unclassified spending in both defense and civilian sectors —11.9 percent and 6.6 percent, respectively.

Things are finally moving in a better digital direction...

but how much time are we spending reinventing the wheel?



Progress!

21st Century IDEA

Integrated Digital
Experience Act

“Government exists to serve citizens, and this bill ensures government leverages available technology to provide the cohesive, user-friendly online service that people around this country expect and deserve.”

Rep. Ro Khanna, D-Calif

Under 21st Century IDEA, federal websites and digital services must:

- **meet web accessibility standards and be mobile friendly**
- **have a consistent appearance**
- **create digital versions of every in-person or paper-based government process—promoting digital forms and e-signatures**
- **have industry standard secure connections**
- **reduce duplicity and legacy websites**
- **be designed and developed around data-driven user needs and be continually tested for usability**
- **Any new websites or redesigns must comply, and any existing must report within a year for how they will improve**

Tall orders! But...

Under 21st Century IDEA, federal websites and digital services must:

meet web accessibility standards

have a consistent appearance

be mobile friendly

have versions of every in-person or paper-based government process—promoting digital forms and e-signatures

have industry standard secure connections

reduce duplicity and legacy websites

Be designed and developed around data-driven (qualitative and quantitative) user needs and be continually tested for usability

meet the standards in one year and continue to report annually

very exciting!



***“Good UX for you
and you and you!”***

**But really, we have a lot
of work to do.**



What should be consistent?
What can be unique?



How do we keep track?



How does it live on past us?

**Design systems,
documentation
& guidance**



**We need to
speak the
same
language!**

**A common system for design
and code**

**Shared methodologies for
user centered design**

Shared design principles

**Documentation of how we've done
it and guides for doing it again**



**A head start making
better user experiences**

The U.S. Web Design System

The USWDS provides design guidelines and code to help agencies quickly create trustworthy, accessible, and consistent digital government services.

The screenshot shows the homepage of the United States Web Design System. At the top, there is a dark blue header with the text "An official website of the United States government" and a link "Here's how you know". Below this is the "United States Web Design System" logo and a search bar. To the right of the search bar are two buttons: "Download v2.0.1" and "View on GitHub".

The main navigation menu includes: Documentation, Components, Design tokens, Utilities, Page templates, and About.

The main content area features a large heading: "A design system for the federal government." followed by the sub-heading: "We make it easier to build accessible, mobile-friendly government websites for the American public." Below this text are two buttons: "Learn about USWDS 2" and "Migrate to v2.0.1". To the right of the text is a collage of various UI design elements, including mobile app screens, desktop layouts, and icons.

Below the main content area, there are four columns, each with a red circular icon and a title:

- Components**: Browse all USWDS components and get UX, accessibility, and implementation guidance. [Browse the components](#)
- Design tokens**: Learn how to get started using design tokens, the building blocks of USWDS component design. [View design tokens](#)
- Utilities**: Adapt your designs and deliver prototypes quickly and consistently, without touching a line of CSS. [Build with utilities](#)
- Page templates**: Use our basic page templates as a starting point for your design and development process. [Start from a template](#)

I've heard the U.S. Web Design System is ...

Just a style guide

Just some reusable digital components

Only for developers

I've heard the U.S. Web Design System is ...

~~Just~~ A style guide *is part of a design system.*

Just some Reusable digital components *are one feature of a full system, plus a lot more.*

Only For developers *who want to have a common*

Components, Design & Code

Accordion

Alert

Border

Button

Color

Flex

Float

Footer

Form controls

Form templates

Grid

Header

Height & width

Icons

Layout grid

Margin & padding

Opacity

Order

Outline

Search

Side navigation

Shadow

Spacing units

Table

Tag

Typesetting

Typography

Z-index

Templates

Landing page

Documentation
page

Documentation

Design principles

For developers

For designers

Accessibility

Performance

guidelines

Code guidelines

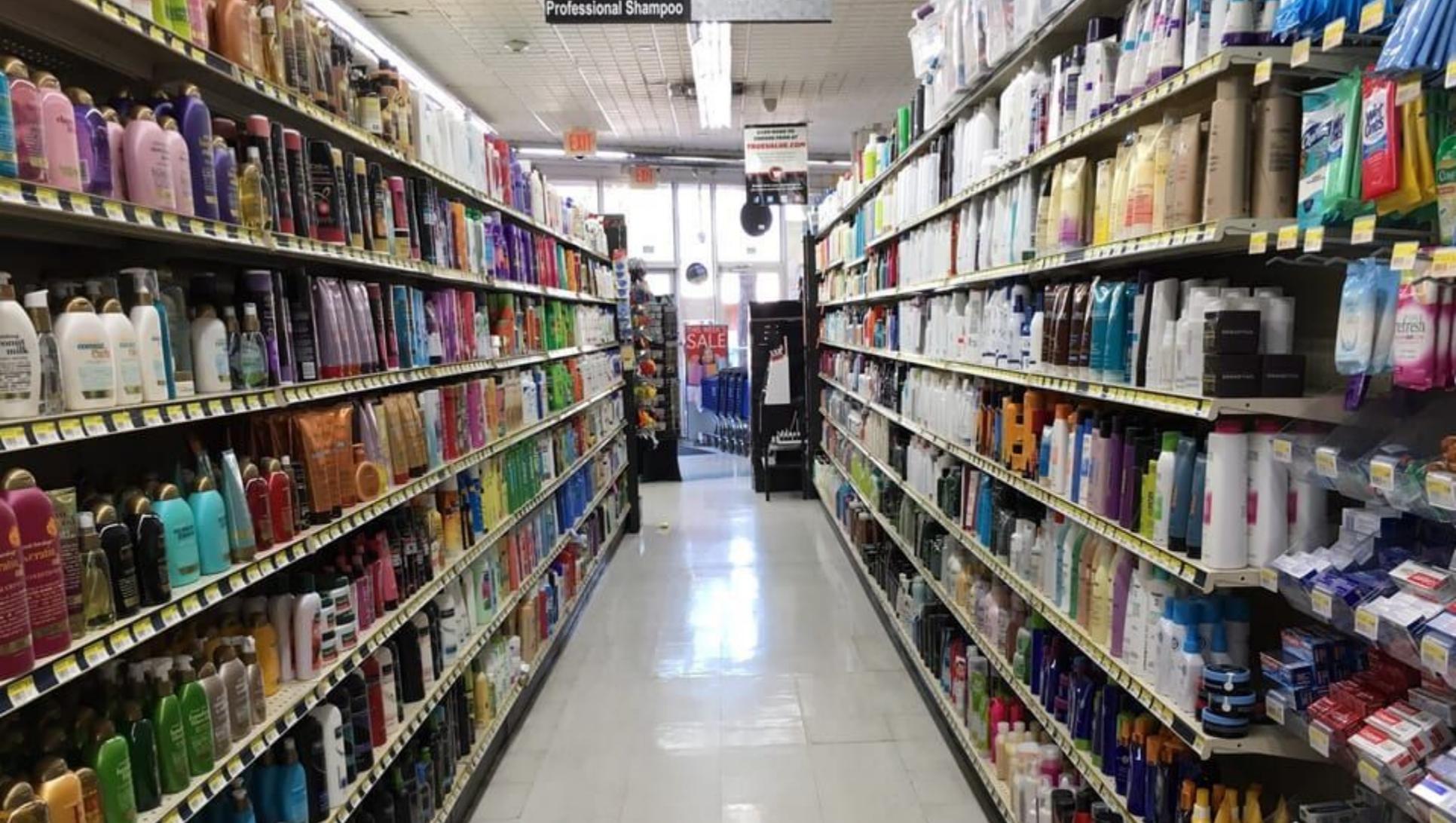
Migration

Video tutorials

Implementations

Examples

Professional Shampoo



Professional Shampoo

**Too many
options!**



SUBMIT

JOIN US

Log in

Register

Search

GET THE LATEST

Apply Now

Get started

Sign In

Subscribe

Create an account

SEARCH ▶

Search

LOG IN

Where's My Refund? ▶

Search



SEARCH

Login



Search

Login

More

Feedback ▶

NEED HELP?

Submit

Apply



Search



Reset

Learn more

SEARCH



go

Login

Get Weather

Search

TRY OUR VISA WIZARD ▶

Search

All Outbreaks ▶

Search

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
Crime Data Explorer

Home Explore Downloads & Documentation About

Improving access to crime data

The Crime Data Explorer makes nationwide crime data accessible to a wide range of users. View trends, download bulk datasets, and access the Crime Data API for reported crime at the national, state, and agency levels.

Explore by type of crime and location

United States All Violent Crimes

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
FOIA.gov

Welcome to the first iteration of the new FOIA.gov. We'll continue to improve upon this site in the future and look forward to your input. [Support feedback](#)

Learn about FOIA Before you request Create a request Agency FOIA data Resources for agencies FOIA API

The basic function of the Freedom of Information Act is to ensure informed citizens, vital to the functioning of a democratic society.

This site can help you determine if filing a FOIA request is the best option for you, and help you create your request when you're ready.

Learn more about FOIA or

Select an agency to start your request or to see an agency's contact information:

If you know you're ready to submit a request, continue below >

- Do research before you request
- Identify the right agency
- What happens after you submit a request

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
SEED FUND

WE INVEST UP TO \$1.5 MILLION IN SEED FUNDING WE TAKE 0% EQUITY

Submit a Project Pitch NOW and find out if your project is a good fit.

- Seed capital for early stage product development**
We offer funding for early stage R&D and take no equity in your company - you retain full control over your team, the direction of your work, and your intellectual property.
- Access to our network of investors and industry experts**
Meet other entrepreneurs, technical experts, industry leaders, and top program directors, and build lasting bonds with future mentors in your industry. Find us at dozens of annual events - conferences, road shows, and more.
- A diverse portfolio**
We fund startups and small businesses across recovering areas and markets including IoT, urban, smart health, robotics, and much more.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Disaster Resource Center

Learn how to prepare, recover, build long-term resilience, and find Federal assistance during disaster events.

We want to hear from you!
Feedback to the Secretary "Helping"

I'm looking for

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

Home and Office Contact us

ABOUT ISSUES NEWS BILLS AND REPORTS MEDIA WITH US

Creating a one-stop shop for space commerce

On Feb 15 Secretary Ross: That Moon Colony will be a Reality Sooner Than You Think

News

MARCH 20, 2019
Remarks by Commerce Secretary Wilbur L. Ross at the Franklin University of Lancaster Medical Center RHO Signing

MARCH 19, 2019
Remarks by U.S. Commerce Secretary Wilbur L. Ross at the SX Innovation Groundbreaking Ceremony in Commerce, Georgia

MARCH 11, 2019
Op-Ed by Secretary Ross: That Moon Colony will be a Reality Sooner Than You Think

Twitter @WilburRoss

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

ABOUT TREASURY SECRETARY MUNCHIN POLICY ISSUES DATA SERVICES NEWS

The Tax Cuts and Jobs Act Is Delivering Results for the American People

FEATURED

Featured Stories

Latest on Twitter

March 20, 2019
Treasury Sanctions Venezuela's State-Owned Oil

March 20, 2019
Treasury Department: Treasury sanctions Venezuela's national government bank, and subsidiaries, in response to illegal actions

March 20, 2019
Treasury Department: Treasury offers additional sanctions against Venezuela's state-owned oil company

FEDERAL ELECTION COMMISSION

Protecting the integrity of the campaign finance process

News and announcements

FEC RECORD
FIS FOR TREASURERS
PRESS RELEASE
WEEKLY DIGEST

Events and deadlines

Next open commission meeting
Next filing deadline
Next training or conference
Next public comment deadline

Get started

Find out how individuals can support federal candidates
Explore financial data for current and past elections and the candidates in those races
Learn about how much contributors can give to different types of committees

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
Natural Resources Revenue Data

Overview Production Revenue Disbursements

When companies extract natural resources on federal lands and offshore areas, they pay bonuses, rents, and royalties to the federal government. The government distributes these funds for public use in a variety of ways.

Explore the data Learn how it works

Learn about extractive industries in each state

Explore production, royalty, and disbursement data for each state.

State or offshore region:

Choose location

Data summary



Consistency *over* conformity

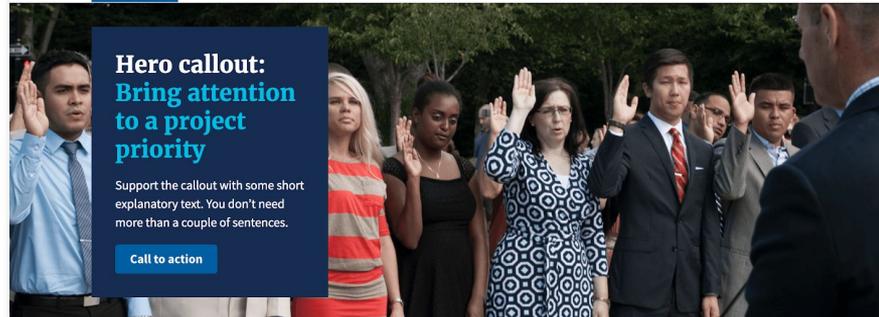
Templates

An official website of the United States government [Here's how you know](#) ▾

Secondary link | Another secondary link

Project title

Current section ▾ Section ▾ Simple link



Hero callout: Bring attention to a project priority

Support the callout with some short explanatory text. You don't need more than a couple of sentences.

[Call to action](#)

A tagline highlights your approach

The tagline should inspire confidence and interest, focusing on the value that your overall approach offers to your audience. Use a heading typeface and keep your tagline to just a few words, and don't confuse or mystify.

Use the right side of the grid to explain the tagline a bit more. What are your goals? How do you do your work? Write in the present tense, and stay brief here. People who are interested can find details on internal pages.

Graphic headings can vary.

Graphic headings can be used a few different ways, depending on what your landing page is for. Highlight your values, specific program areas, or results.

Stick to 6 or fewer words.

Keep body text to about 30 words. They can be shorter, but try to be somewhat balanced across all four. It creates a clean appearance with good spacing.

An official website of the United States government [Here's how you know](#) ▾

Project title Current section ▾ Section ▾ Simple link

- Parent link
- Current page**
- Child link
- Child link
- Grandchild link
- Grandchild link
- Grandchild link
- Child link
- Child link
- Child link
- Parent link

Page heading (h1)

The page heading communicates the main focus of the page. Make your page heading descriptive and keep it succinct.

Section heading (h2)

These headings introduce, respectively, sections and subsections within your body copy. As you create these headings, follow the same guidelines that you use when writing section headings: Be succinct, descriptive, and precise.

Subsection heading (h3)

The particulars of your body copy will be determined by the topic of your page. Regardless of topic, it's a good practice to follow the inverted pyramid structure when writing copy: Begin with the information that's most important to your users and then present information of less importance.

Keep each section and subsection focused — a good approach is to include one theme (topic) per section.

Subsection heading (h4)

Use the side navigation menu to help your users quickly skip to different sections of your page. The menu is best suited to displaying a hierarchy with one to three levels and, as we mentioned, to display the sub-navigation of a given page.

Read the full documentation on our side navigation on the component page.

[Return to top](#)

Primary link Primary link Primary link Primary link Primary link

Reusable elements

UI components

BUTTONS

Primary buttons



Secondary buttons



Buttons on a dark background



Big Button



LABELS

Small

NEW

NEW

SEARCH BAR

Typography—Pairings and styles

DEFAULT

Merriweather headings, Source Sans Pro body

- Merriweather Regular 400
- Merriweather Bold 700
- Source Sans Pro Regular 400
- Source Sans Pro Italic 400

Display 1

Font-family: 'Merriweather'
Font-weight: 700
Font-size: 52px
Line-height: 1.3em/68px

Heading 1

Font-family: 'Merriweather'
Font-weight: 700
Font-size: 48px
Line-height: 1.3em/52px

Heading 2

Font-family: 'Merriweather'
Font-weight: 700
Font-size: 38px
Line-height: 1.3em/39px

Heading 3

Font-family: 'Merriweather'
Font-weight: 700
Font-size: 28px
Line-height: 1.3em/29px

Heading 4

Font-family: 'Merriweather'
Font-weight: 700
Font-size: 17px
Line-height: 1.3em/22px

Heading 5

Font-family: 'Merriweather'
Font-weight: 700
Font-size: 15px
Line-height: 1.3em/20px

HEADING 6

Font-family: 'Source Sans Pro'
Font-weight: 400
Font-size: 13px
Line-height: 1.3em/17px
text-transform: uppercase

Lead paragraph

Font-family: 'Merriweather'
Font-weight: 400
Font-size: 28px
Line-height: 1.7em/54px

Body copy. A series of sentences together which make a paragraph.

Font-family: 'Source Sans Pro'
Font-weight: 400
Font-size: 13px
Line-height: 1.5em/20px

Italic body copy. A series of sentences together which make a paragraph.

Font-family: 'Source Sans Pro'
Font-style: italic
Font-weight: 400
Font-size: 13px
Line-height: 1.5em/20px

Form templates

NAME

Name

Title - optional

First name

Middle name - optional

Last name

PASSWORD RESET

Reset password

Please enter your new password.

i Password information

Length requirements
Character constraints, if any

New password

Confirm password

[Show my typing](#)

Reset password

SIGN IN

Sign in

or [create an account](#)

Username or email address

Password

[Show password](#)

Sign in

[Forgot username?](#)

[Forgot password?](#)

MAILING ADDRESS

Mailing address

Mailing address 1

Mailing address 2 - optional

City

State

- Select -

ZIP Code

DATE INPUT

Date of birth

For example: 07 04 1776

Month Day Year

Personality can vary through tonal shifts: Colors, images, content

Website.gov

Hero callout: Call attention to a current priority.

Learn about what we do

Support the callout with some short explanatory text. You don't need more than a couple of sentences.

A tagline that highlights your approach.

Describe subhead can go here

For anything you need to highlight here, understand what your users know next, and what they'll experience you want from them after they see it.

Section heading

Everything up to this point should help people understand your agency or project: who you are, your goal or mission, and how you approach it. Use this section to encourage them to act. Describe why they should get in touch here, and use an active verb on the button below: "Get in touch," "Learn more," and so on.

Call to action

Footer

Website.gov

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Call to action

Footer

Style variety within one system

Merriweather bold for headers

Merriweather regular sub

Source sans pro regular for body copy. Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit, sed do eiusmod tempor incididunt ut labore et dolore magna aliqua. Ut enim ad minim veniam, quis nostrud.

Range one



Range two



Source Sans Pro Light for headers

Source Sans Pro Regular Sub

Source sans Pro Regular for body copy. Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit, sed do eiusmod tempor incididunt ut labore et dolore magna aliqua. Ut enim ad minim veniam, quis nostrud exercitation ullamco.

Range one



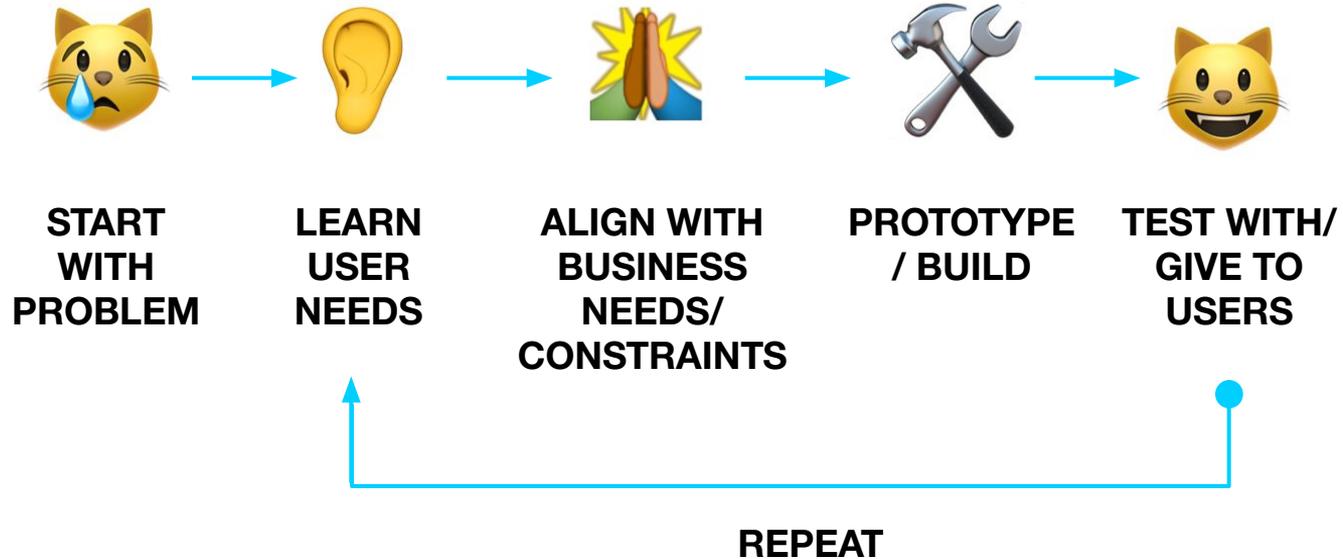
Range one alt



The System in practice:

- 1 Speaking the **same language**
- 2 Accelerating **rapid prototyping**
- 3 Teams with **dedicated visual / UX designers**
- 4 Teams with **limited design support, time or budget**
- 5 Opportunities to **pave the way forward**

Remember: user centered, iterative process



1

**The Design System in practice:
speaking the same language**

Spacing and margins (before)

West Virginia | 2016 state reporting overview

73% of agencies participated in the NIBRS program.

83% of this state's population was covered by the data.

1,831,102 is the state's population.

In 2016, the FBI received NIBRS data from 437 law enforcement agencies out of 528 agencies in West Virginia.

Percent of people covered by NIBRS data by county in West Virginia

Barbour County

70% of people covered by reporting in county.

16,704 is this county's population.

There are 4 agencies covered by Barbour County, but only 1 reporting fully for 2016. To see agencies views, type the county in the agency search bar.

Pop. covered by reporting | State, School, Tribal

Chart source: Chart does not account for State and University departments that do not have a population or chartable geography. To view these and tribal, click option on below.

Offender Demographics

Sex of Offender

INCIDENTS

Male	4,513
Female	1,286
Unknown	65

There were 4,513 reported incidents with a male offender.

Age of Offender

INCIDENTS

OFFENDER AGE

In 2014, out of 3,500 incidents, there were 3,000 incidents involving offender ages 20-24.

Race of Offender

INCIDENTS

White	20,930
Black or African American	10,222
Unknown	934
Other races (3)	93

View by

Spacing and margins (2.0)

Margin

CSS PROPERTY: `margin`

responsive

active

hover

focus

visited

Margin on all sides



`.margin-0`
0



`.margin-1px`
1px



`.margin-2px`
2px



`.margin-1`
8px



`.margin-105`
12px



`.margin-2`
16px



utility suffix	spacing units	pixels	example line	example utility
1px	—	1px		bottom-1px
2px	—	2px		border-top-2px
05	0.5 spacing units	4px		padding-y-05
1	1 spacing unit	8px		padding-x-1
105	1.5 spacing units	12px		margin-top-105
2	2 spacing units	16px		square-2
205	2.5 spacing units	20px		square-2
3	3 spacing units	24px		margin-left-neg-3
4	4 spacing units	32px		u-minh-4
5	5 spacing units	40px		tablet:margin-top-4

Grid and type (before)

1:18 PM

Is it worth us going to a 12 column grid so we can speak the same language. It'd take us only a couple hours at this
Or, does it mean a lot of work for you also?

1:18 PM

where the 1060 browser will see 32px margin on the side (or some other value) and the rest being the content section
(so 998px in this case)

1:19 PM

Second question and you are going to kill me.... after we adjust margins etc, if there are some type sizes that seem too
big, is it hard to adjust? This would be last cuz I don't want anyone spending tons of time tweaking stuff in code.
Honestly, we're trying to figure out why everything feels huge.

1:21 PM

second question — it's quite easy to adjust font sizes, no problem at all
first question — i'm not sure u need to change it at this point

1:34 PM

i don't think it's worth the time at this point, and i also think it's perfectly ok to each use the grid / column concept that
works best for their purpose so long as we both end up at the same point

1:53 PM

i think the biggest difference in how we think about things is that you see one global grid and figure out how to fit each
piece into that system whereas I see mini-grids everywhere on the page — i.e., the "other data sets" section on the
homepage — i see a grid that needs to be divided into 3 equal sections (regardless of width of page) of that grid
neither of these approaches is wrong, just different!

1:57 PM

Cool. Thanks for explaining.

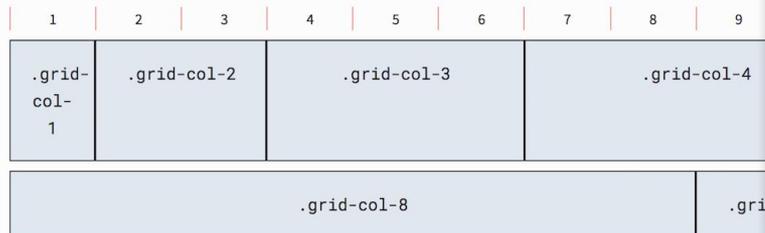
Grid and type (2.0)

Responsive classes

Same at all breakpoints

For columns that should maintain the same proportion at any viewport width, use the `.grid-col` and `.grid-col-*` classes. Specify a numbered class when you need a column of a specific width; otherwise, use `.grid-col`.

`.grid-col-[1-12]` set a fixed width of [n] grid-columns in a 12-column grid.



Code

```
1 <div class="grid-row">
2   <div class="grid-col-1">.grid-col-1</div>
3   <div class="grid-col-2">.grid-col-2</div>
4   <div class="grid-col-3">.grid-col-3</div>
5   <div class="grid-col-4">.grid-col-4</div>
6   <div class="grid-col-2">.grid-col-2</div>
7 </div>
```

Theme tokens

The following chart shows the USWDS default settings for the nine theme size tokens. Customize the output to your project needs in `$uswds-theme-typography.scss` by setting the variables listed below. If your project requires more than nine sizes, use [system size tokens](#) as needed.

Token	Default	Example	Value	Settings variable
'3xs'	2	Tallahassee	13px	<code>\$theme-type-scale-3xs</code>
'2xs'	3	Tallahassee	14px	<code>\$theme-type-scale-2xs</code>
'xs'	4	Tallahassee	15px	<code>\$theme-type-scale-xs</code>
'sm'	5	Tallahassee	16px	<code>\$theme-type-scale-sm</code>
'md'	6	Tallahassee	17px	<code>\$theme-type-scale-md</code>
'lg'	9	Tallahassee	22px	<code>\$theme-type-scale-lg</code>
'xl'	12	Tallahassee	32px	<code>\$theme-type-scale-xl</code>
'2xl'	14	Tallahassee	40px	<code>\$theme-type-scale-2xl</code>
'3xl'	15	Tallahassee	48px	<code>\$theme-type-scale-3xl</code>

**“ There are a lot of conversations
I haven’t had to have because
of the system.”**

Heather Battaglia, 18F Developer

Accessible colors (before)

WebAIM: Color Contrast Checker

Home > Resources > Color Contrast Checker

Color Contrast Checker

Foreground Color: #0000FF
Background Color: #FFFFFF

Contrast Ratio: **8.59:1**

Normal Text
WCAG AA: **Pass**
WCAG AAA: **Pass**
The five boxing wizards jump quickly.

Large Text
WCAG AA: **Pass**
WCAG AAA: **Pass**
The five boxing wizards jump quickly.

Graphical Objects and User Interface Components
WCAG AA: **Pass**
Text Input

webaim.org color contrast checker

Accessible color palette builder



Save changes Cancel

Accessible color combinations

Please don't use these color combinations; they do not meet a color contrast ratio of 4.5:1, so they do not conform with the standards of Section 508 for body text. This means that some people would have difficulty reading the text. Employing accessibility best practices improves the user experience for all users.

	Blue-black text #111C23 Aa	Blue text #284152 Aa	Light Blue text #95AABC Aa	Blue-White text #F1F4F9 Aa	Dark-Red text #702C27 Aa	Bright-Red text #FF5E50 Aa
Bright-Red background #FF5E50	Aa					
Dark-Red background #702C27				Aa		
Blue-White background #F1F4F9	Aa	Aa			Aa	
Light Blue background #95AABC	Aa					
Blue background #284152				Aa		
Blue-black background #111C23			Aa	Aa		Aa

18F accessible color palette builder

Accessible colors (2.0)

Red warm

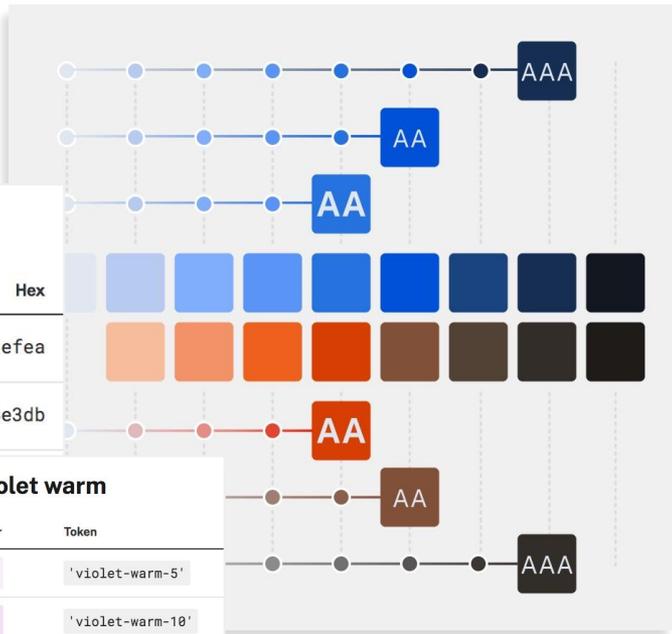
Color	Token	Family	Grade	Variant	Hex
	'red-warm-5'	'red-warm'	5	-	#f6feea
	'red-warm-10'	'red-warm'	10	-	#f4e3db
	'red-warm-20'	'red-warm'	20	-	
	'red-warm-30'	'red-warm'	30	-	
	'red-warm-40'	'red-warm'	40	-	
	'red-warm-50'	'red-warm'	50	-	
	'red-warm-60'	'red-warm'	60	-	
	'red-warm-70'	'red-warm'	70	-	
	'red-warm-80'	'red-warm'	80	-	
	'red-warm-90'	'red-warm'	90	-	

Mint cool

Color	Token
	'mint-cool-5'
	'mint-cool-10'
	'mint-cool-20'
	'mint-cool-30'
	'mint-cool-40'
	'mint-cool-50'
	'mint-cool-60'
	'mint-cool-70'
	'mint-cool-80'
	'mint-cool-90'

Violet warm

Color	Token
	'violet-warm-5'
	'violet-warm-10'
	'violet-warm-20'
	'violet-warm-30'
	'violet-warm-40'
	'violet-warm-50'
	'violet-warm-60'
	'violet-warm-70'
	'violet-warm-80'
	'violet-warm-90'



Accessible colors (2.0)



Red 60 minus Red 5 = **55**

**50+ achieve
AA contrast**

**50+ achieve
AA contrast**

2

The Design System in practice: accelerating rapid prototyping

Opening the FBI's crime data

(+ their first open source project!)

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION
Crime Data Explorer

Home Explorer Downloads & Documentation About

Improving access to crime data

The Crime Data Explorer makes nationwide crime data accessible to a wide range of users. View [trends](#), [download bulk datasets](#), and access the [Crime Data API](#) for reported crime at the national, state, and agency levels.

Explore by type of crime and location

United States All Violent Crime View Results

State and national homicide trend

West Virginia
Homicide, 2004-2014
Explore state data

United States
Homicide, 2004-2014
Explore national data

Maps are only available for state and national-level data.

Homicide incidents reported by Charleston Police Department, 2004 - 2014

How these numbers are calculated

In 2014, there were 42 reported incidents of homicide. There were 26 cleared homicide incidents. Crimes are not necessarily cleared in the year they occur. Reported incidents increased from the previous year.

2014

Reported 42 Cleared 26

Total incidents reported by year

Year	Reported	Cleared
2004	10	5
2005	15	8
2006	12	6
2007	18	9
2008	14	7
2009	16	8
2010	11	5
2011	13	6
2012	15	7
2013	17	8
2014	42	26

Download data

Search: Reported incident found (11/15/14)

Opening the FBI's crime data

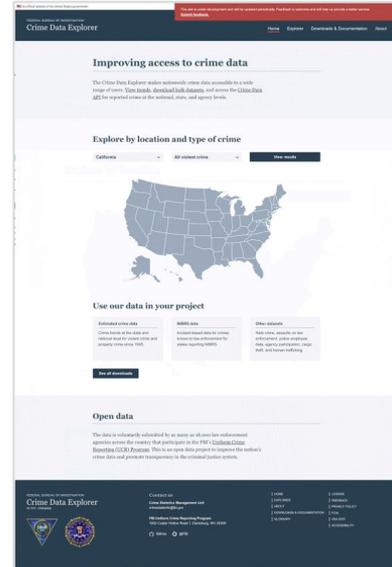
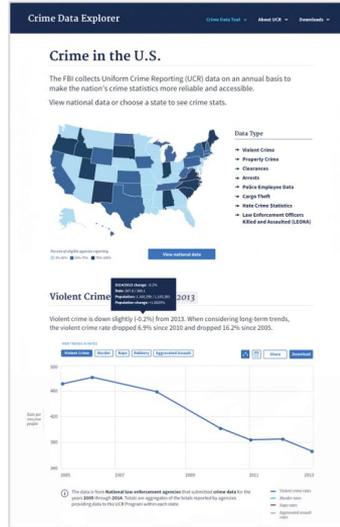
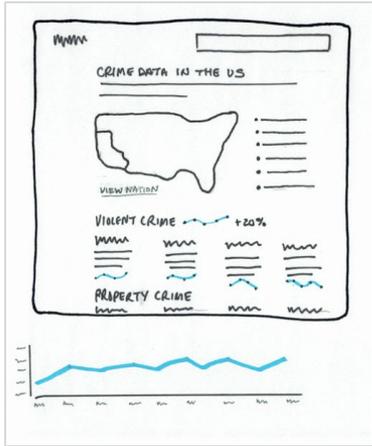
(+ their first open source project!)

The Crime Data Explorer (CDE) was the first attempt to build a **web platform for the public to interact with the FBI's crime data** in a user focused way.

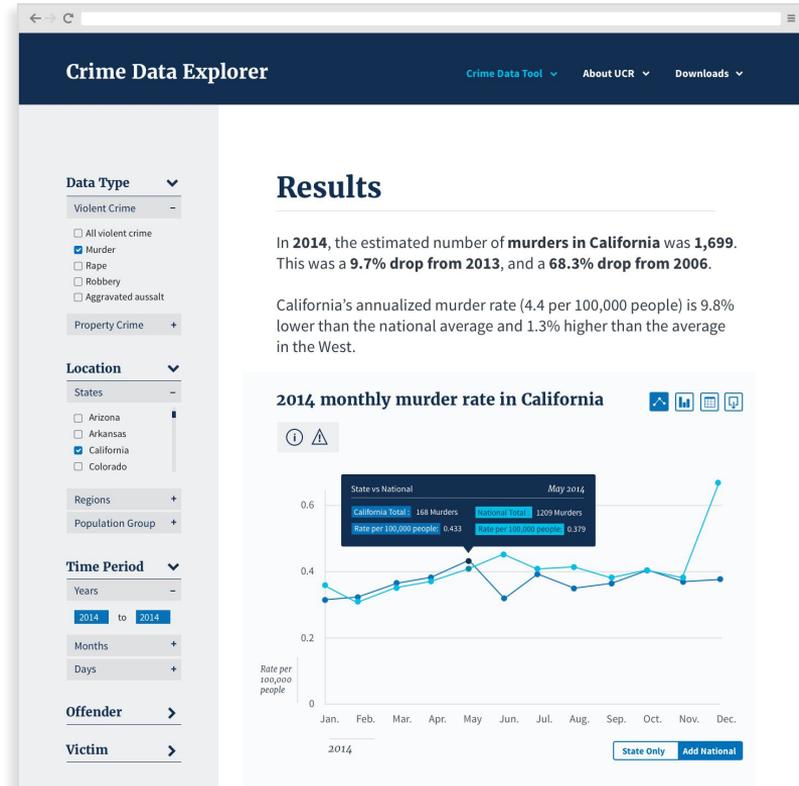
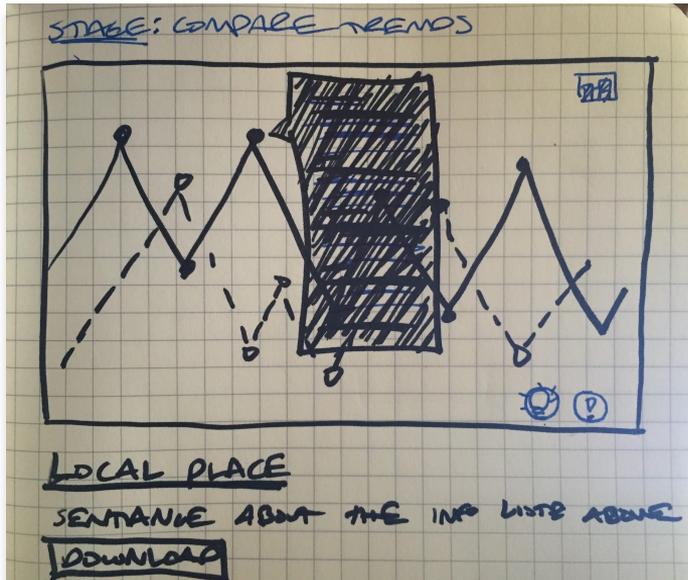
Through research with the FBI and lots of users (data scientists, law enforcement, justice advocates, students, and journalists) **we learned we needed to build something that would meet varying needs:**

- **Exploration of the data through visualizations** for more novice users
- **Easy access to the raw data** through downloads for experienced users

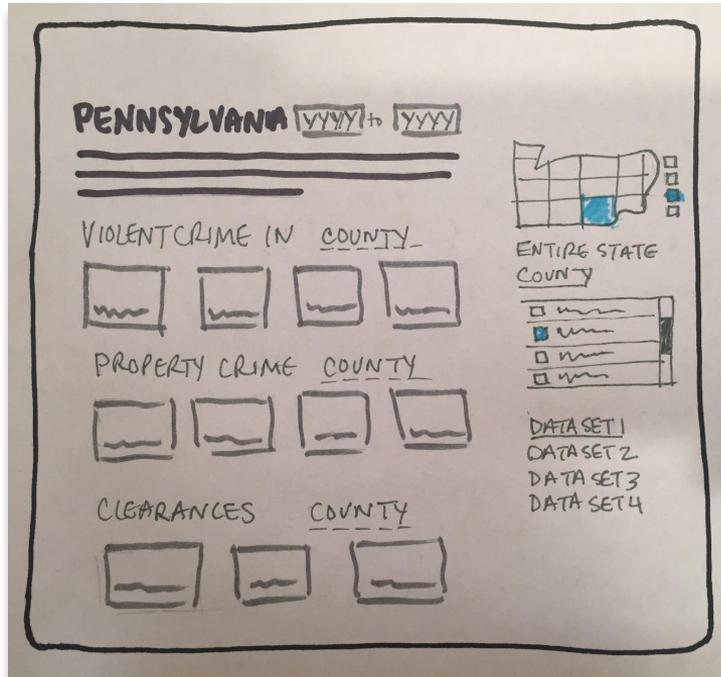
Sketches → USWDS styles for prototyping → CDE visual styles



Rapid prototyping is much easier when you have a starting place.



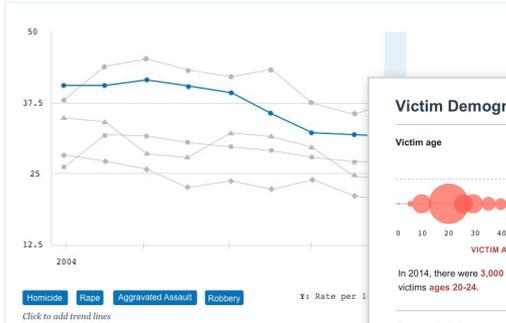
Rapid prototyping is much easier when you have a starting place.



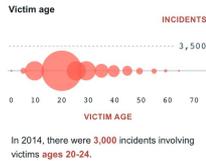
More time to focus on the content

Violent crime in Ohio, 2005-2014

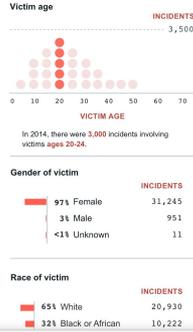
Ohio's rape rate surpasses that of the United States, and in 2014 was at 35.3 incidents per 100,000 people (legacy definition).



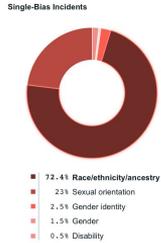
Victim Demographics



Victim Demographics



Bias Motivation

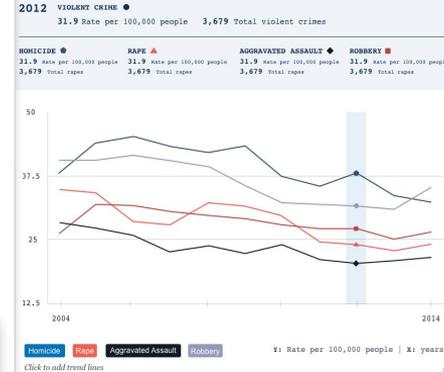


DETAILS

Race/Ethnicity/Ancstry	Incidents
Anti-White	613
Anti-Black or African American	1,745
Anti-American Indian or Alaska Native	966
Anti-Asian	131
Anti-Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	111
Anti-Multiple Races, Group	4
Anti-Arab	113
Anti-Hispanic or Latino	37
Anti/Other Race/	299
Ethnicity/Ancstry	257

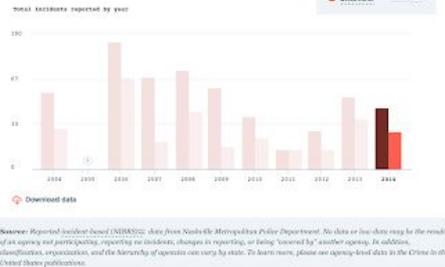
Violent crime in Ohio, 2005-2014

Ohio's rape rate surpasses that of the United States, and in 2014 was at 35.3 incidents per 100,000 people (legacy definition).



Homicide incidents reported by Nashville Metropolitan Police Department, 2004-2014

In 2014, there were 42 reported incidents of homicide. There were 26 cleared homicide incidents. Crimes are not necessarily cleared in the year they occur. Reported incidents increased from the previous year.



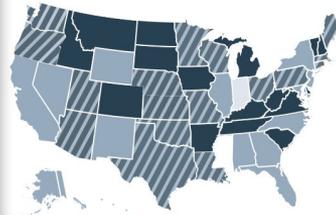
Agency Participation

Summary

Use our application programming interface (API) to search and export Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) data.

NIBRS

Download the latest user manuals, data declarations, and technical specifications for Uniform Crime Data Reporting data.

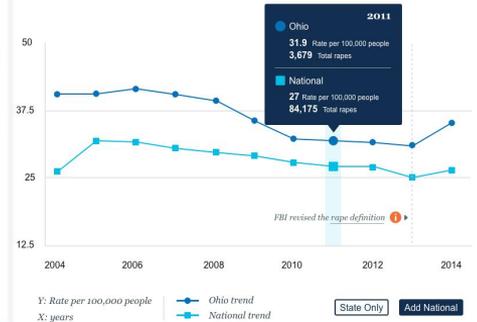


States Reporting

- NIBRS Only
16 states
- Establishing a NIBRS only program
1 state
- Summary Only
14 states
- NIBRS & Summary
17 states
- Summary Only
1 state

Reported rape in Ohio, 2005-2014

Ohio's rape rate surpasses that of the United States, and in 2014 was at 35.3 incidents per 100,000 people (legacy definition).



Skip to [About the data](#)

The ones that worked

State and national homicide trend

Tennessee
Homicide, 2004-2014



Explore state data

United States
Homicide, 2004-2014



Explore national data

Rates are only available for state and national-level data.

Homicide incidents reported by Nashville Metropolitan Police Department, 2004–2014

In 2014, there were 42 reported incidents of homicide. There were 26 cleared homicide incidents. Crimes are not necessarily cleared in the year they occur. Reported incidents **increased** from the previous year.

2014 Incidents
Reported 42
Cleared 26

Total incidents reported by year



Download data

Source: Reported incident-based (NIBRS) data from Nashville Metropolitan Police Department. No data or low data may be the result of an agency not participating, reporting no incidents, changes in reporting, or being "covered by" another agency. In addition, classification, organization, and the hierarchy of agencies can vary by state. To learn more, please see agency-level data in the Crime in the United States publications.

Homicide rate in Tennessee, 2004–2014

In 2014, Tennessee's homicide rate was 5.6 incidents per 100,000 people. The rate for that year was higher than that of the United States.

Year	Rate	Total	Population
Tennessee	6.6	412	6,214,888
United States	5.4	16,465	304,659,724

Rate per 100,000, by year



Download data

Source: FBI, Estimated data for 2014

Homicide incident details reported by Nashville Metropolitan Police Department

This agency reported 965 individual homicide incidents to the FBI between 2004 and 2014.

Download data

Offender Demographics

Sex of Offender

Female	72
Male	779
Unknown	114
Total	965

Age of Victim

0-9	0
10-19	184
20-29	306
30-39	191
40-49	65
50-59	23
60-69	9
70-79	1
80-89	2
90-99	0
Total	892

Race of Victim

Asian	2
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	1
Black or African American	624
American Indian or Alaska Native	0
Unknown	124
White	214
Total	965

Ethnicity of Victim

Hispanic or Latino	8
Multiple	0
Not Hispanic or Latino	53
Unknown	37
Total Offenders	86

Download data

Victim Demographics

Sex of Offender

Female	182
Male	713
Unknown	2
Total	875

Age of Victim

0-9	14
10-19	135
20-29	339
30-39	154
40-49	101
50-59	52
60-69	23
70-79	14
80-89	4
90-99	1
Total Offenders	852

Race of Victim

Asian	1
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	6
Black or African American	515
American Indian or Alaska Native	0
Unknown	10
White	114
Total	673

Ethnicity of Victim

Hispanic or Latino	84
Multiple	0
Not Hispanic or Latino	884
Unknown	37
Total Offenders	805

Download data

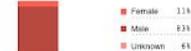
Homicide incidents details reported by Tennessee

There were 5,333 individual homicide incidents reported to the FBI in Tennessee between 2004 and 2014 by 583 law enforcement agencies reporting incident-based (NIBRS) data.

Download data

Offender Demographics

Sex of Offender



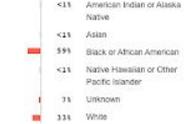
There were X reported offenders.

Age of Offender



There were 1,922 incidents involving offenders with a reported age of 20-29.

Race of Offender



Race was reported for 5,333 offenders.

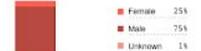
Ethnicity of Offender



Ethnicity was reported for 321 offenders.

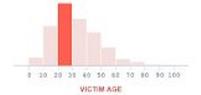
Victim Demographics

Sex of Victim



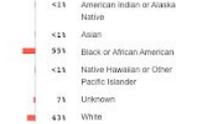
There were X reported victims.

Age of Victim



There were 1,700 incidents involving victims with a reported age of 20-29.

Race of Victim



Race was reported for 5,275 offenders.

Ethnicity of Offender

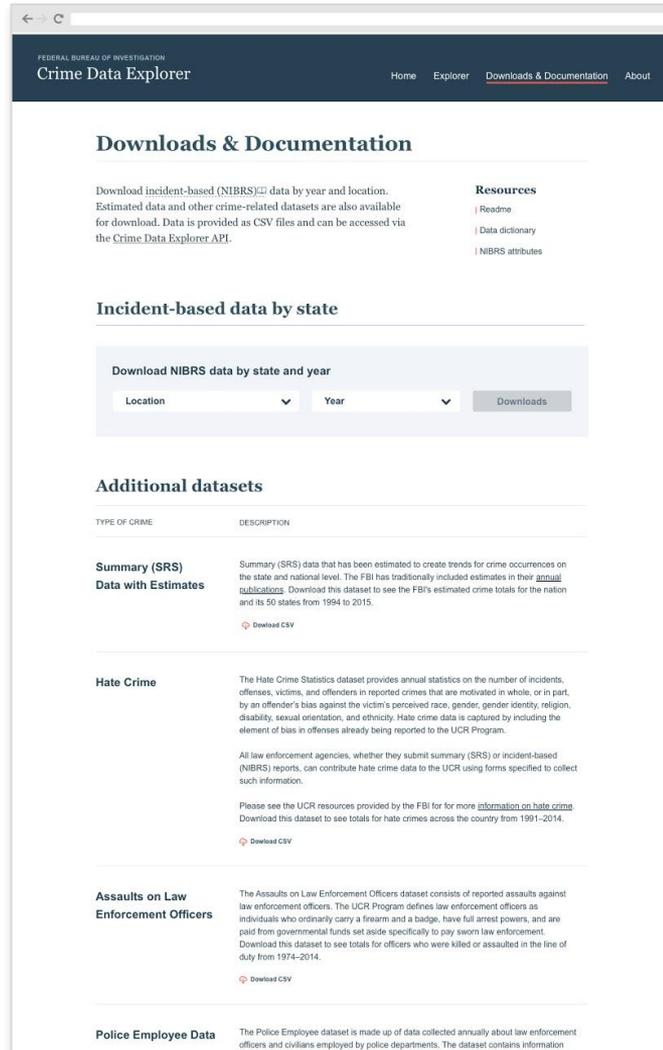
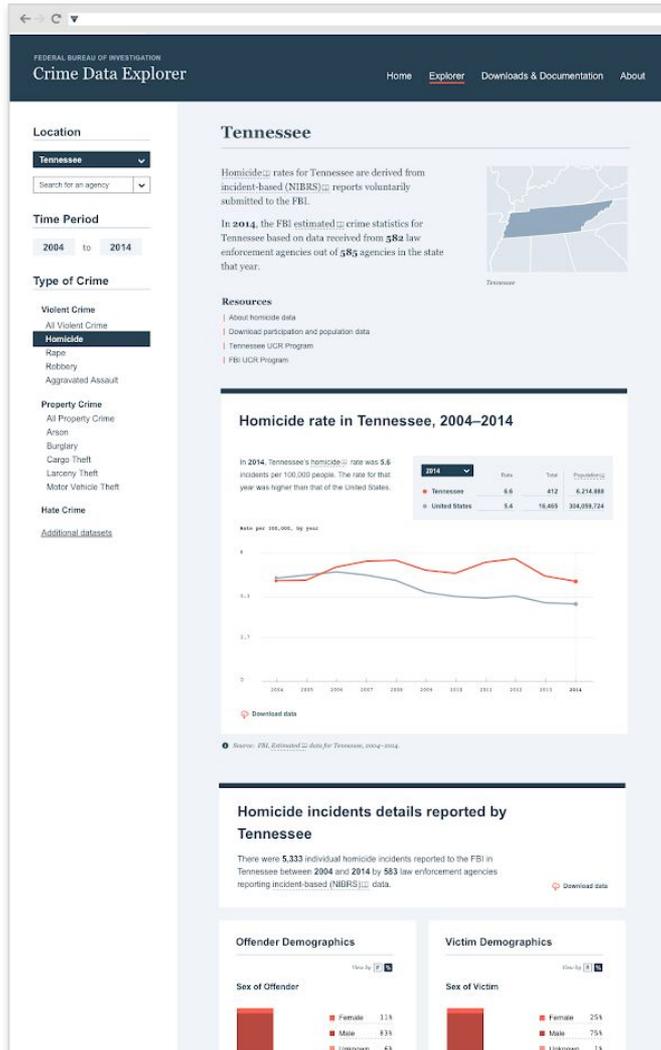


Ethnicity was reported for 5,066 offenders.



When designing and coding for projects with rapid prototyping, the system keeps us from getting bogged down in weeds, leaving more room to focus on solving the most challenging problems.

USWDS base and lots of customization



3

The Design System in practice:
teams with dedicated visual /
UX designers

Improving the process for making Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests.

The screenshot displays the FOIA.gov website interface. At the top, the FOIA.gov logo is visible, along with navigation links: "Learn about FOIA", "Before you request", "Create a request", "Agency FOIA data", "Resources for agencies", and "FOIA API".

The main content area features a dark blue box with the following text: "The basic function of the Freedom of Information Act is to ensure informed citizens, vital to the functioning of a democratic society." Below this, it states: "This site can help you determine if filing a FOIA request is the best option for you, and help you create your request when you're ready." Two buttons are present: "Learn more about FOIA" and "Start your request".

Below the blue box, the text reads: "Select an agency to start your request or to see an agency's contact information:" followed by a link: "If you know you're ready to submit a request, continue below".

Three informational icons are shown:

- Do research before you request:** Before making a request, first look to see if the information you are interested in is already publicly available. You can find a lot of useful information on the FOIA website.
- Identify the right agency:** It's important that you identify the correct agency to send your request to. Each of over 100 agencies is responsible for receiving, processing, and responding to requests.
- What happens after you submit a request:** The agency you've submitted your request to will review and begin processing your request. Generally, this will involve a search for the information you requested.

On the right side, a white sidebar shows a "Request Directions" and "Agency Information" menu. Below the menu, it says "Make your request to the Office of Information Policy" and "Step 1 of 6: Requester contact information". A note states: "The information you supply here will be used to provide a response for your request for information. Please note that not all of these fields are required." Two input fields are visible: "First name" (Required) and "Last name" (Required), with the value "Williams" entered in the last name field.

Improving the process for making Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests.

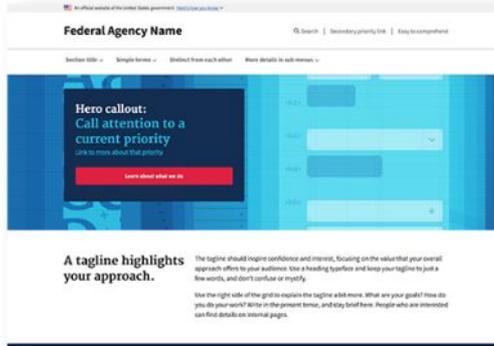
FOIA is the most important law we have for **government transparency**, but it is a notoriously **slow, cumbersome, and mysterious process** for users. 2016 mandated that **one FOIA request collection point** for all agencies be created.

Through research with agency FOIA officers, the most common requesters, and transparency advocates, **we learned:**

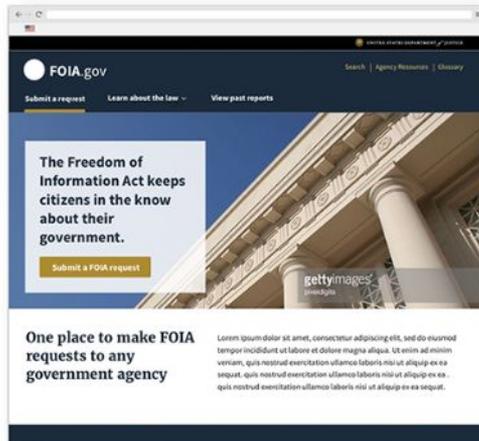
***We couldn't* fix all the issues** with the FOIA process—but **we could help set expectations and create a clearer upfront process** for requesters.



justice.gov



Basic USWDS styles



USWDS + DOJ, "Serious, law oriented"



Old foia.gov



Merriweather bold for headers

Merriweather regular sub

Source sans pro regular for body copy. Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit, sed do eiusmod tempor incididunt ut labore et dolore magna aliqua. Ut enim ad minim veniam, quis nostrud.

COLORS



Basic web design standards: trustworthy, clear, official

TYPEOGRAPHY

Merriweather bold for display and headers.

Source sans pro regular sub

Source sans pro regular for body copy. Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit, sed do eiusmod tempor incididunt ut labore et dolore magna aliqua. Ut enim ad minim veniam, quis nostrud.

COLORS



Trustworthy, clear, official, open, transparent




The Freedom of Information Act keeps citizens in the know about their government.

Submit a FOIA request

One place to make FOIA requests to any government agency

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit, sed do eiusmod tempor incididunt ut labore et dolore magna aliqua. Ut enim ad minim veniam, quis nostrud exercitation ullamco laboris nisi ut aliquip ex ea sequat. quis nostrud exercitation ullamco laboris nisi ut aliquip ex ea sequat. quis nostrud exercitation ullamco laboris nisi ut aliquip ex ea sequat.



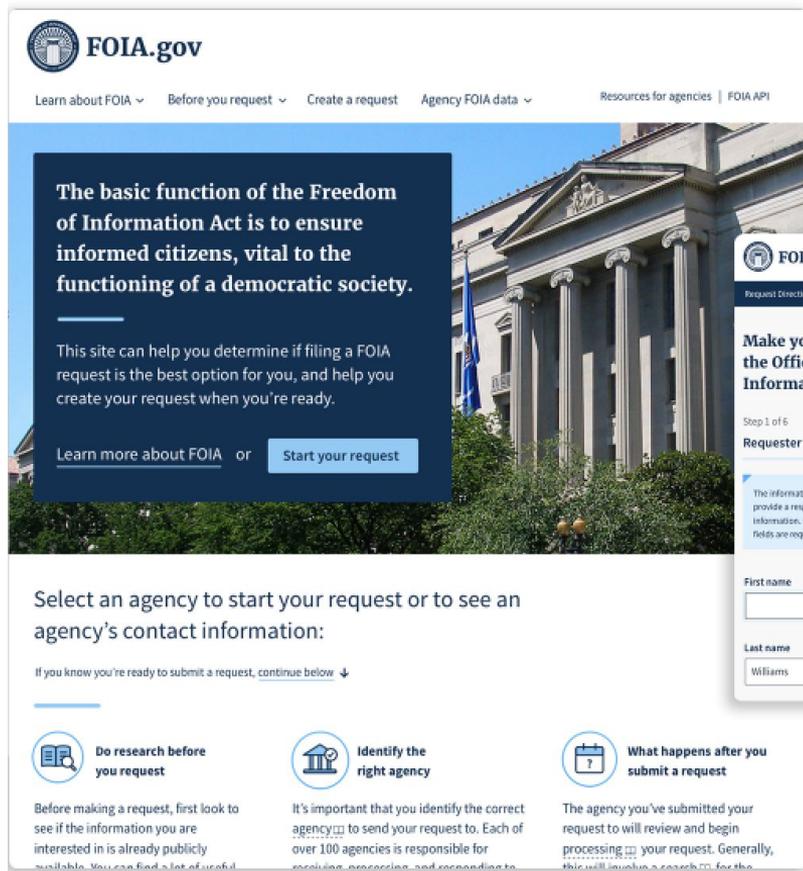
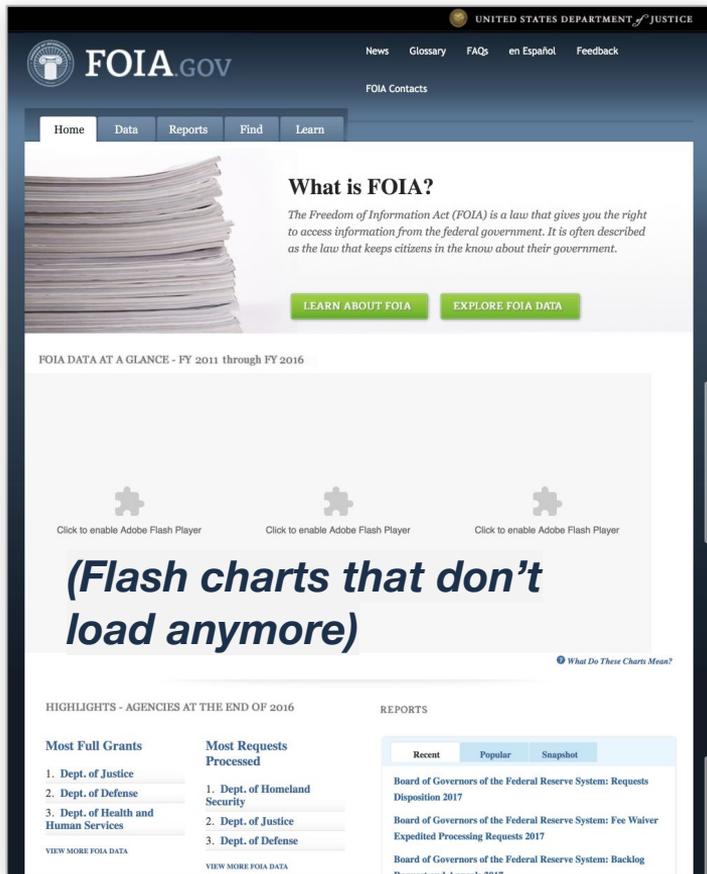
The Freedom of Information Act keeps citizens in the know about their government.

Submit a FOIA request

One place to make FOIA requests to any government agency.

How to make your FOIA request:

- 1 Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit, sed do eiusmod tempor.
- 2 Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit, sed do eiusmod tempor.
- 3 Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit, sed do eiusmod tempor.



A form experience that **guides users** through the steps, with tips and relevant content included along the way.

Built confidence in the dedication to transparency and increase familiarity.

Request Directions Agency information

Department of Homeland Security
Federal Emergency
Management Agency

Requester contact

- Your request
- Additional information
- Fee waiver
- Request for Expedited Processing
- Submission & confirmation

Tips for submitting

The person to reach out to for questions about your FOIA request is:

- Dennis J. Argall, Public Liaison
- 540-868-4516
- foiparequest@ic.fbi.gov

You can ask FOIA personnel about anything related to your request, including whether what you're asking for is clear. You can also reach out to follow up on your request after it's been submitted.

The description of the records you're requesting is very important.

- Be sure your request is clear and as specific as as possible.

Do research before you file.

- Sometime records and information you're looking for is already public. You can find out by reaching out to the agency you're interested in or by visiting their [website](#) or their [FOIA reading room](#).

Make your request

Step 1 of 6

Requester contact information

The information you supply here will be used to provide a response for your request for information. Please note that not all of these fields are required.

First name Required

Last name Required

Email Required

Mailing address 1

Mailing address 2 Optional

City State or province

ZIP or postal code

City

Phone (xxx) xxx-xxxx Required

Organization

Fax number (xxx) xxx-xxxx

Step 1 of 6

Requester contact information

The information you supply here will be used to provide a response for your request for information. Please note that not all of these fields are required.

The description of the records you're requesting is very important.

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- Sometime records and information you're looking for is already public. You can find out by reaching out to the agency you're interested in or by visiting their [website](#) or their [FOIA reading room](#).

FOIA.gov - Freedom of Informa x +

https://www.foia.gov

An official website of the United States government [Here's how you know](#) ^

 **The .gov means it's official.**
Federal government websites always use a .gov or .mil domain. Before sharing sensitive information online, make sure you're on a .gov or .mil site by inspecting your browser's address (or "location") bar.

 This site is also protected by an SSL (Secure Sockets Layer) certificate that's been signed by the U.S. government. The **https://** means all transmitted data is encrypted — in other words, any information or browsing history that you provide is transmitted securely.

“Official website of the United States government” banner

FOIA.gov - Freedom of Informa x +

https://www.foia.gov

An official website of the United States government [Here's how you know](#) v

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

 **FOIA.gov**

Thank you for visiting FOIA.gov, the government's central website for FOIA. We'll continue to make improvements to the site and look forward to your input. Please submit feedback to National.FOIAPortal@usdoj.gov.

Learn about FOIA v Before you request v Create a request Agency FOIA data v Agency login

The basic function of the Freedom of Information Act is to ensure informed citizens, vital to the functioning of a democratic society.

This site can help you determine if filing a FOIA request is the best option for you and help you create your request when you're ready.

Dynamic glossary tool helps with terms people need extra guidance on.



What happens before you submit a request

The agency will search for the records and review them to determine what is disclosed. While FOIA allows records to be released, there are nine exemptions that protect

Do research before you request

Before making a request, information is already available. You can find a lot of information on individual agency websites. You can also search across agencies for information. If the information you want is not publicly available, you can submit a FOIA request.

Identify the right agency

It's important that you identify the correct agency for your request. There are over 100 agencies and each is responsible for handling its own FOIA requests. You can find a breakdown of agencies by topic on USA.gov to help you identify the correct agency. You may also search for agencies using the search bar below.

What happens after you submit a request

The agency will typically search for the records and then review them to determine what is disclosed. While FOIA allows records to be released, there are nine exemptions that protect types of information, such as personal privacy and law enforcement information. The length of time to respond to a request will vary depending on its complexity and any backlog of requests.

Do research and determine if you need to make a FOIA request, then get ready.

Type agency name

Glossary

Filter glossary terms

Agency

The FOIA applies to federal agencies, which are defined as any executive department, military department, Government corporation, Government controlled corporation, or other establishment in the executive branch of the Government (including certain offices in the Executive Office of the President), or any independent regulatory agency. The FOIA does not apply to the Judicial Branch (Courts) or the Legislative Branch (Congress). It also does not apply to state and local governments. Before making a request, it's important that you identify the correct agency where your request should be sent. The FOIA is administered on a decentralized basis, meaning each of over 100 agencies is responsible for receiving, processing, and responding to its own FOIA requests. The resources on this website are designed to assist you in this process.

Glossary

Filter glossary terms

- Administrative FOIA appeal
- Agency
- Agency component
- Agency record
- Annual FOIA Report
- Annual FOIA Report Handbook
- Backlog
- Case management system
- Certification of identity
- Chief FOIA officer
- Chief FOIA Officer Report
- Commercial-use requester
- Compelling need

Other sites using the dynamic glossary tool

The screenshot shows the FBI Crime Data Explorer website. The main content area displays information for the United States, including a map and text about crime data collection. A dark overlay titled "Glossary" is positioned on the right side of the page. It features a search bar with the text "estimated data" and a list of terms under the heading "Estimated data". The text explains that the FBI calculates estimates for participating agencies that do not provide 12 months of complete data. Other sections include "Resources" with links to "About the data", "FAQ", "Download participation and population data", and "FBI UCR Program".

FBI: Crime Data Explorer

The screenshot shows the Federal Election Commission website. The main content area features a large banner with the text "Protecting the integrity of the campaign finance process" and a "More about the FEC" button. Below the banner, there are sections for "News and announcements" and "FEC RECORD". A dark overlay titled "Glossary" is on the right, with a search bar containing "Act" and a list of terms including "Administrative expense", "Advance", "Advisory opinion (AO)", and "Affiliated committees".

Federal Election Commission

The screenshot shows the Digital.gov Guide for the Paperwork Reduction Act. The main content area is titled "Do I need clearance?" and provides information about PRA requirements. A dark overlay titled "Glossary" is on the right, with a search bar containing "clea" and a list of terms including "clearance". The text defines clearance as a "Permission to collect a specific set of data from the American public."

Paperwork Reduction Act (forthcoming)

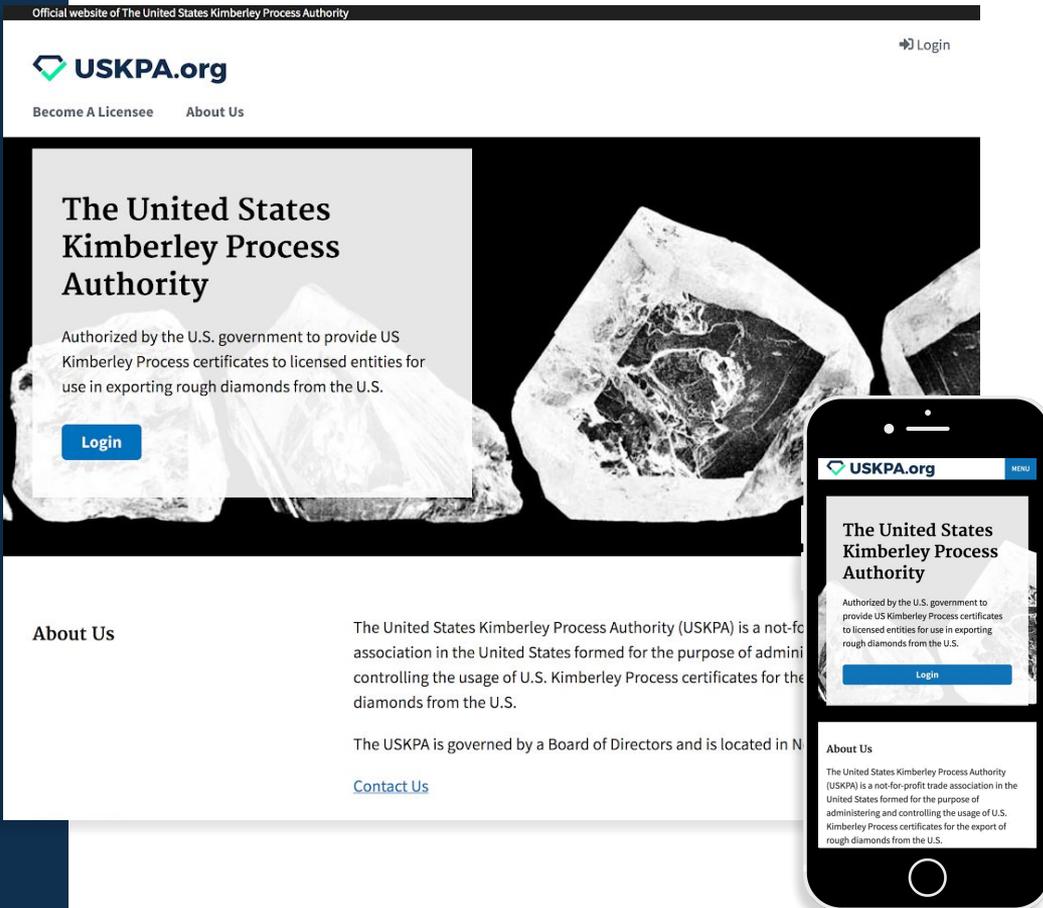
The screenshot shows the U.S. Department of the Interior's Natural Resource Revenue Data website. The main content area is titled "Natural Resource Revenue Data" and includes an "Overview" section with a "Production" tab selected. A dark overlay titled "Glossary" is on the right, with a search bar containing "Big" and a list of terms including "Abandoned mine land fee" and "Acquired lands".

Natural Resource Revenue Data

4

**The Design System in practice:
teams with limited
design support, time or budget**

A quick win
for conflict-
free diamond
certification
and database



A quick win for conflict- free diamond certification and database

The UN's **Kimberley Process Certification Scheme (KPCS)** is meant to **prevent "conflict diamonds"** from entering the mainstream rough diamond market.

18F was brought on by Department of State to **develop a strategy and product vision for a website and database** to manage US Certificates, but with limited time and design budget.

After research, the **team recommended:**
Better security and features for login
Expanded data entry and search
Print and notification capabilities



- Log off
- Add new licensee
- Licensee list
- Reports
- Register sold certificate
- Cert lookup
- Void certificate
- Archived Reports

Reports

Select:

From: Jan 01 2009 to: Jan 01

2009 Display

Save Excel

Contact Us | ©2009 USKPA | The intellectual property, information and data contained on this web site (USKPA.ORG) are for the private consu parties will subject such party to immediate legal action by the owners of this web site. All contents of this web site are protected by US intellectu

US 00000 AES Confirmation Number (ITN): _____
Required for export pursuant to 31 CFR 592

Country of Origin _____

KIMBERLEY PROCESS CERTIFICATE

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

*The rough diamonds in this shipment have been handled
in accordance with the provisions of the Kimberley
Process Certification Scheme for Rough Diamonds.*

Date of Issue _____ Date of Expiry _____ Value in U.S. \$ _____

Exporter _____ NAME _____ ADDRESS _____ Number of Parcels _____

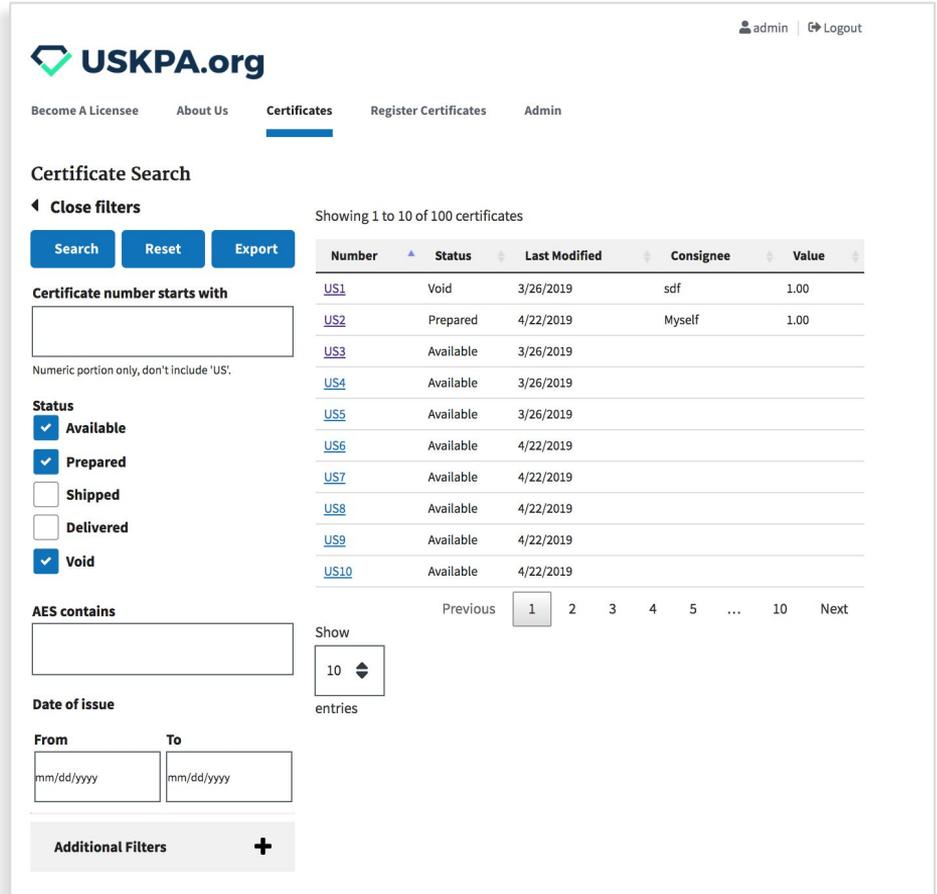
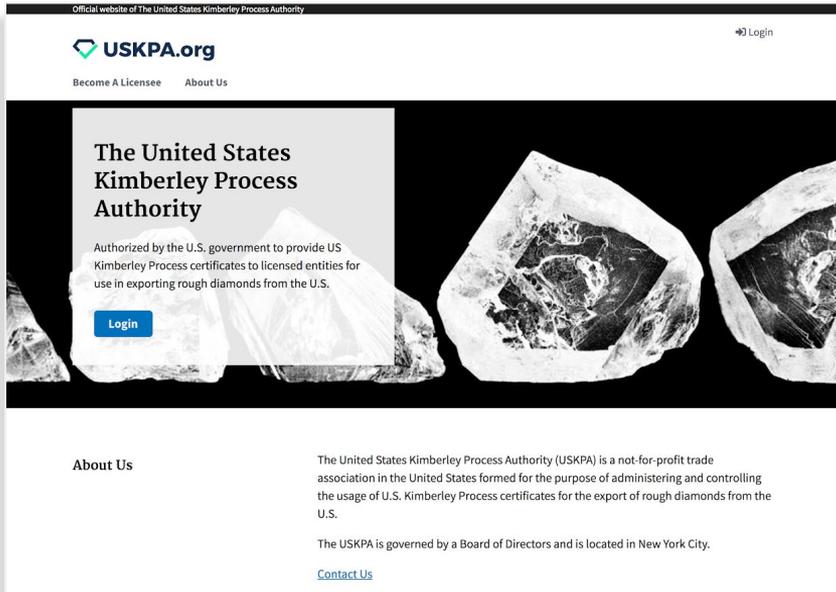
Ultimate Consignee _____ NAME _____ ADDRESS _____ Carat Weight / Mass _____

Harmonized Commodity Code _____

Issuing Authority: United States Kimberley Process Authority

U. S. K. P. A. accepts no responsibility relating to the accuracy of the data recorded on this Certificate.
Retain this document for 5 years from the date of issuance or receipt. See 31 CFR 592.501.
Upon receipt, provide a copy of this certificate to the Kimberley Process office in the jurisdiction of import.


 US00000



5

**The Design System in practice:
opportunities to pave
the way forward**

A new home for Forest Service Permits

(And an accompanying
fresh web design system)

An official website of the United States government [Here's how you know](#)

  **U.S. FOREST SERVICE**
Caring for the land and serving the people
BETA

Buy a Christmas tree permit with Open Forest

The U.S. Forest Service invites you to purchase permits to cut down Christmas trees in some national forests, following certain rules and guidelines.

Choose your forest (required)

[Get started now](#)

What to expect



Choose your forest

Some national forests currently allow you to buy a Christmas tree permit online with Open Forest. Each forest has its own season dates and rules.

Get the details

Whether it's your first time, or a long-standing family tradition, learn more about Christmas tree cutting on the national forest you select above.

Buy a permit

Help us ensure national forest resources into the future by carefully reading and following the rules and guidelines for a Christmas tree permit.

A new home for Forest Service Permits

(And an accompanying
fresh web design system)

The Forest Service (Department of Agriculture) engaged 18F to help with a **new public experience for online permitting**, meant to increase the public's responsible access to public lands.

18F was brought on to help advise the Forest Service in finding and then working with vendors for technical support.

Part of the output from the engagement was a **new web design system for the Forest Service, based directly off of the USWDS.**

A web design system for the Forest Service

The screenshot shows the documentation page for 'Page templates' in the United States Web Design System. It includes a navigation menu with 'Page templates' selected, a search bar, and a 'Download v2.0.2' button. The main content area is titled 'Page templates' and contains text explaining that these templates are for landing pages and documentation pages, which are flexible and can be customized. Below the text is a 'Landing page' section with a 'Demo landing page template' button. At the bottom, there are sections for 'Component code' and 'Usage'.



The screenshot shows the 'U.S. FOREST SERVICE Web Design Standards' page for 'Page templates'. It features the USDA and UAS logos, a search bar, and a 'View on GitHub' button. The page is titled 'Page templates' and contains text explaining that these templates are for landing pages and documentation pages, which are flexible and can be customized. Below the text is a 'Template 1: Landing page' section with a 'Demo landing page template' button. At the bottom, there are sections for 'Code' and 'Documentation'.

The screenshot shows the 'U.S. FOREST SERVICE Web Design Standards' page for 'Colors'. It features the USDA and UAS logos, a search bar, and a 'View on GitHub' button. The page is titled 'Colors' and contains text explaining that this is a flexible, yet distinctly US Forest Service palette designed to communicate warmth and trustworthiness while meeting the highest standards of 508 color contrast requirements. Below the text is a 'Palette' section with a 'Demo landing page template' button. At the bottom, there are sections for 'Code' and 'Documentation'.

“ Our partners are now ahead of the game, they already have a project and a product that complies [with the 21st Century IDEA] that can be built upon.”

Melissa Braxton, 18F UX



***Are you a government design
systems evangelist yet?***

USWDS

cheat sheet

(AKA How to
convince others
why they
should care)



1

The System gives us a **BIG** head start for prototyping, projects with or without design help, leaves more room for solving complex problems, and in complying with the 21st Century IDEA

2

The System is based on user centered research itself and has documentation to back up decisions

3

The System opts for *consistency over conformity*— sites can retain personality while making things easier to use

4

Gives us a common language that promotes better working relationships on design and development teams

5

It's open source (free) and wants your feedback on how to keep improving

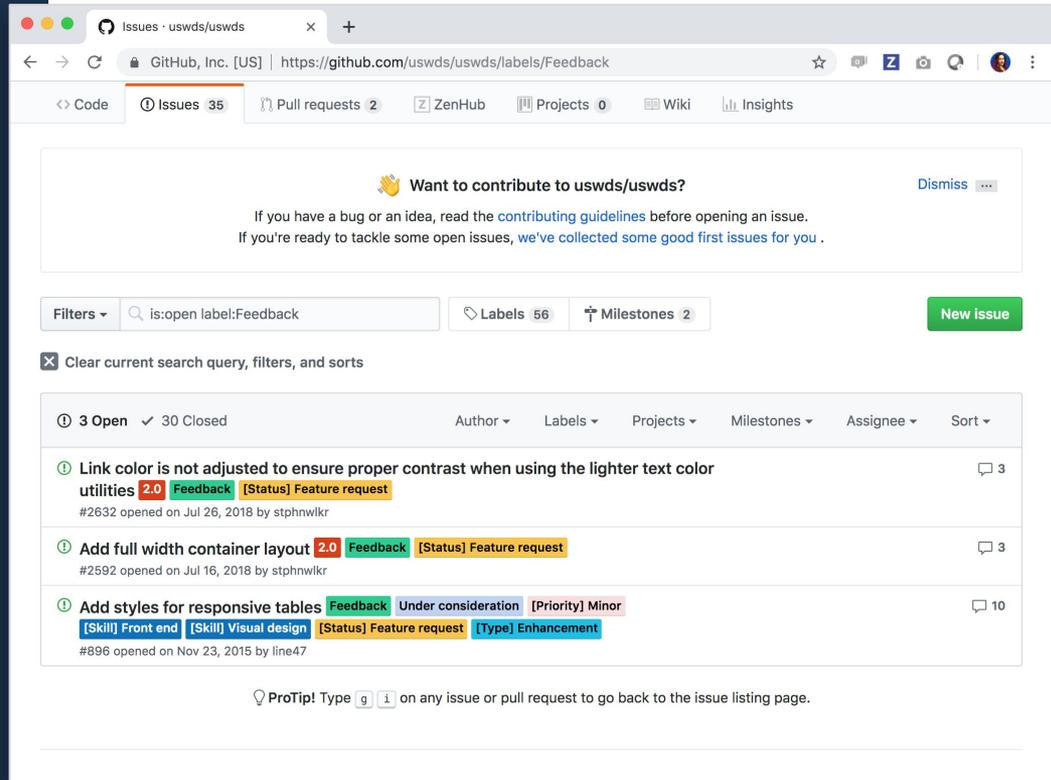
It's a
collaborative
effort

Connect with the team:

Github

Slack

Email



The screenshot shows a web browser window displaying the GitHub Issues page for the repository `uswds/uswds`. The page is filtered by the label `Feedback`. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links for Code, Issues (35), Pull requests (2), ZenHub, Projects (0), Wiki, and Insights. Below the navigation bar, there is a message asking if the user wants to contribute to `uswds/uswds`, with a link to the contributing guidelines and a link to good first issues. The main content area shows a search bar with the query `is:open label:Feedback` and a `New issue` button. Below the search bar, there is a section for filters and a `Clear current search query, filters, and sorts` button. The issue list shows three open issues, each with a title, a status label (e.g., `2.0`, `Feedback`), a status label (e.g., `[Status] Feature request`), and a comment count. The first issue is `Link color is not adjusted to ensure proper contrast when using the lighter text color utilities`, the second is `Add full width container layout`, and the third is `Add styles for responsive tables`. At the bottom, there is a `ProTip!` section with a search icon and the text `Type g i on any issue or pull request to go back to the issue listing page.`

**I HAVE NO
IDEA WHAT
I'M DOING**



Plainlanguage.gov

The home for understanding how to write accessibility for the government—or anywhere. Explains the law and requirements, provide writing guidelines and examples, share training and resources.

The screenshot shows the homepage of plainlanguage.gov. At the top, it features the text "An official website of the United States government" and the site's logo. A search bar is located in the top right corner. Below the navigation menu, a main heading reads "Plain language makes it easier for the public to read, understand, and use government communications." A "Learn more" button is positioned below this heading. The page is divided into four content blocks, each with an icon and a title:

- Law and requirements »**: Learn about the Plain Writing Act, policy memos, and executive orders that require agencies to use plain language.
- Plain language guidelines »**: Official writing guidelines for understanding your audience, being clear and concise, and testing your content.
- Training »**: Request in-person training for your federal agency, or use our videos and materials to create your own class.
- Examples »**: See plain language in action in a variety of regulations, legal documents, handbooks, and publications.

Fungi Hazards and Flood Cleanup

This example was created for training and is not official agency text.

✘ Before

Flood conditions contribute to the growth and transmission of many kinds of fungi, some of which can cause sickness. Cleanup workers are at increased risk of exposure to airborne fungi and their spores because they often handle moldy building materials, decaying vegetable matter, rotting waste material, and other fungus-contaminated debris. The fungal material is carried into the respiratory tract when airborne particles are inhaled.

✔ After

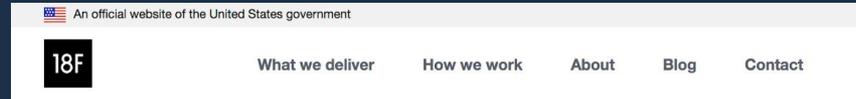
Be careful when cleaning up after a flood. You may be exposed to and breathe in unhealthy mold in:

- The air
- Damp building materials
- Decaying vegetable matter
- Rotting waste material
- Any other damp debris

The 18F Guides

The technical guides that 18F uses in our work with other agencies. Built on user-centered development, testing to validate hypotheses, shipping often, and deploying products in the open, they help us do our day-to-day work and are public domain for anyone to use.

<https://18f.gsa.gov/guides/>



Guides

Principles and standards that shape our work

18F's work with other agencies is built on user-centered development, testing to validate hypotheses, shipping often, and deploying products in the open. **Below are the technical guides that bring those principles into our day-to-day work.**



Accessibility >



Agile >



Content >



Design methods >



Front end >



Product >

The 18F Methods

A collection of activities and practices for doing human centered design. Simplified instructions help other organizations and federal offices adopt these practices into their own projects. They were made for digital services, but can be adapted to non-technical design projects.

methods.18f.gov

18F Methods

Discover - Decide - Make - Validate - Fundamentals

About Print the Methods

A collection of tools to bring human-centered design into your project.

Discover

Build a greater understanding of your problem and the people it impacts.

Use the Discover Methods to build context for the problem you're investigating. Get to know your potential users better and understand your stakeholders' main concerns. The work you do during this phase will inform everything that follows, so take your time.

[See all discover methods](#)

Methods include

- Bodyforming
- Cognitive walkthrough
- Contextual inquiry
- Design studio
- Dot voting
- Hi method
- Stakeholder and user interviews

Decide

Elaborate on research from your Discovery phase.

The Decide Methods help you derive insights from the information gathered during the Discovery phase. You'll validate initial assumptions, develop a deeper understanding of workflows and processes, and develop design hypotheses.

[See all decide methods](#)

Methods include

- Affinity diagramming
- Comparative analysis
- Journey mapping
- Personas
- Task flow analysis
- User scenarios

Make

Create a testable solution.

Once you've learned more about your users' expectations, use the Make Methods to create testable designs. Sketching, wireframing, and prototyping will help you ensure your product reflects your users' needs.

[See all make methods](#)

Methods include

- Design system library
- Prototyping
- Wireframing

Validate

Test a design hypothesis.

Testing (and re-testing) your designs with users will help you build the best possible product. Our Validate Methods cover varied testing scenarios and potential user groups.

[See all validate methods](#)

Methods include

- Card sorting
- Multitask testing
- Usability testing
- Visual preference testing

Fundamentals

Foundational methods for practicing design research.

Our Fundamentals Methods, which combine government-specific protocols and industry best practices, lay the groundwork for successful research, no matter what you're testing. For best results, review them before you start recruiting.

[See all fundamentals methods](#)

Methods include

- Recruiting
- Phrasing
- Recruiting

This project is maintained by 18F. To share your feedback with us, open an issue or pull request on our [GitHub repository](#).

Contextual inquiry

What

The product team unobtrusively observes participants at work, with their permission, then asks questions.

Why

To learn how and why users do what they do; to discover needs and attitudes that might not emerge in an interview; to map how tools, digital and otherwise, interact during complex activities.

How to do it

1. With permission from a supervisor and from the participant, schedule a time to watch a typical work activity and record data.
2. While observing, ask the participant to act normally. Pretend you're a student learning how to do the job. Ask questions to help you understand what the person is doing and why.
3. At the end of the session, explain what you have learned and check for errors.
4. Immediately after, write up your notes.

Example from 18F

A pair of 18F team members visited two Department of Labor/Wage Hour Division investigators as they interviewed home health care workers who were subject to unpaid overtime and other infractions. Since it was a sensitive subject, the 18F team did not question the health care workers directly, but instead asked the investigators clarifying questions in private. 18F staff also made sure that photos did not include faces.

Applied in government research

No PMA instructions. Follow properly. Contextual interviews should be non-standardized, conversational, and based on observation. The PMA explicitly does not include contextual inquiry. See the [PMA](#) for more tips on

level of management. If contact the agency's labor

Journey mapping

What

A visualization of the major interactions shaping a user's experience of a product or service.

Why

To provide design teams with a bird's-eye view of a service that helps them see the sequence of interactions that make up a user's experience including the complexity, successes, pain points, and emotions users experience along the way.

How to do it

1. Document the elements of the project's design context. This includes:
 - People involved and their related goals
 - Their behaviors in pursuit of their goals
 - Information, devices, and services that support their behaviors
 - Important moments in how they experience a service or major decisions they make
 - The emotions associated with these moments or decisions
2. Visualize the order in which people exhibit behaviors, use information, make decisions, and feel emotions. Group elements into a table of "phases" related to the personal narrative of each person. Identify where personas share contextual components.
3. Circulate the map with stakeholders. Point out insights it offers. Use these insights to establish design priorities. Think about how to collapse or accelerate a customer's journey through the various phases. Incorporate this information into the project's scope.

Additional resources

- [Adaptive Path's Guide to Experience Mapping](#), Adaptive Path (PDF)
- [An explanation of journey mapping on Wicked Problems, Wirth Solving](#), Austin Center for Design.
- ["Designing Digital Strategies, Part 1: Cartography"](#), UX Booth.

Applied in government research

No PMA instructions. The PMA explicitly warrants direct observation and non-standardized conversation. See the [PMA](#) for more tips on [Recruiting](#) and [Interviewing](#) for more tips on being open from the public.

PHASE	TIME REQUIRED
Discover	4-12 hours

Content Guide

A new home for understanding how to write accessibility for the government—or anywhere. Explain the law and requirements, provide writing guidelines and examples, share training and resources

content-guide.18f.gov

The screenshot displays the '18F Content Guide' website. At the top, there is a dark blue header with the title '18F Content Guide' and a search bar. Below the header, the main content area is white and divided into sections: 'Introduction', 'Our approach', 'Our style', and 'Content types'. Each section has a brief description and a list of links. A callout box on the right side of the page highlights the 'Content principles' section, listing several key principles: 'Start with user needs.', 'Do the hard work to make it simple.', 'Write for everyone.', and 'Build trust.' The bottom of the page features a navigation bar with the 18F logo and several utility buttons.

18F Content Guide Search

How to plan, write, and manage content at 18F.

Introduction

[How to use this guide](#) [Resources](#)
[License](#)

Our approach

Tips and standards for developing user-centered content.

[Content principles](#) [Structure the content](#)
[Address the user](#) [Keep refining](#)
[Avoid duplication](#) [Giving and receiving](#)
[Be concise](#) [Make content web-ready](#)
[Use plain language](#)

Our style

Grammar, spelling, and mechanics.

[Abbreviations and acronyms](#) [Numbers and percentages](#)
[Active voice](#) [Punctuation](#)
[Capitalization](#) [Specific words and phrases](#)
[Inclusive language](#) [Voice and tone](#)
[Names](#)

Content types

Detailed guidance for web and print elements.

[Forms](#) [Technical and internal](#)
[Headings and titles](#) [Trademarks and branding](#)
[Images](#) [URLs and filenames](#)
[Style guides](#)

Content principles

Start with user needs.

Write in a way that suits the situation. Ask yourself: Who is going to read this? What do they need to know? How might they be feeling?

Help people find the information they need quickly and easily. Guide them through the process.

Do the hard work to make it simple.

Use plain language and simple sentences.

Choose clarity over cleverness.

Write for everyone.

Respect the complexity of our users' experiences.

Be willing to be surprised about who's reading your work.

Build trust.

Talk like a person.

Tell the truth.

Use positive language and concrete examples.

Start small and iterate.

Make sure your content works for users. Don't be afraid to scrap what's there and start over.

Write a draft, test it out, gather feedback, and keep refining.

18F Guides [Navigation tips](#) [Print this guide](#) [Edit this page](#) [File an issue](#)

Accessibility for Teams

A 'quick-start' guide for embedding accessibility and inclusive design practices into a team's workflow. Provides an overview and framework for how to approach accessibility from your discipline and human understand of why it's all important.

accessibility.digital.gov

An official website of the United States government [Here's how you know](#)

Accessibility for Teams

A 'quick-start' guide for embedding accessibility and inclusive design practices into your team's workflow

Everyone who works on government websites has a role to play in making federal resources accessible and inclusive.

Choose the guide that fits your role:

 **Product**

 **Content**

 **UX**

 **Visual design**

 **Front end**

These roles are based on the roles we have at the Technology Transformation Services at GSA.

This guide provides:

- An overview of how each team member's role impacts accessibility
- A framework for thinking about accessibility in your workflow
- An understanding of the human need for accessible digital products

We focus on the issues most likely to impact accessibility. We provide a comprehensive list of all possible issues and work to conduct manual audits to catch them. The [W3C Web Content Accessibility Guidelines](#) ensures all web content is accessible to everyone.

Questions or comments? Please reach out to accessibility@gsa.gov.

 A project of GSA's [Technology Transformation Services](#). This website is hosted on [Federalist](#).

Getting started

- Color and contrast
- Layout and hierarchy
- Typography
- Graphics and images
- Data visualizations
- Forms
- Mobile
- Keyboard access
- Screen reader

GETTING STARTED

Accessibility for visual designers

Everyone benefits from designs that are easier to see. People with different visual abilities see your designs in varying ways—the diverse nature of impairments creates a wide variation in how your designs are perceived. A clean and clear visual presentation helps everyone make sense of a website's information and functionality.

How to use this guide

We recommend planning for accessibility in your design process and regularly conducting accessibility testing throughout the design and development processes.

If you have project-specific questions, ask your agency's accessibility team.

[Continue >](#)



Conclusion

USWDS

cheat sheet

(AKA How to
convince others
why they
should care)

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The System gives us a **BIG** head start for prototyping, projects with or without design help, leaves more room for solving complex problems, and in complying with the 21st Century IDEA

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5

It's open source (free) and wants your feedback on how to keep improving



Resources

[US Web Design System](#)

Design and build fast, accessible, mobile-friendly government websites backed by user research

[18F Guides](#)

Repository for best practices across our teams

[18F Method Cards](#)

A collection of tools to bring human-centered design into your projects

[Plainlanguage.gov](#)

Laws and guidelines for plain language writing

[18F Content Guide](#)

A home for understanding how to write accessibility for the government

[Accessibility for Teams](#)

A 'quick-start' guide for accessibility and inclusive design practices

Special thanks

Dan Williams (USWDS)

Austin Hernandez (18F Visual Design)

Christine Bath (18F Visual Design)

Melissa Braxton (18F UX)

Heather Battaglia (18F Engineering)

Jeremy Zilar (Digital Gov)

Questions & Disco



Thank you! 🙋

18F

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