The future of government user experience:

Improving faster with design systems
Hi! I’m Aviva Oskow.

Visual & service designer, working to improve the user experience and digital tools of the federal government.
Hi! I’m Aviva Oskow.

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?        Visual or UX Designers?
State?         Content Strategists?
City?          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.
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

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

“Spend on digital services contracts increased 17% governmentwide”

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

but how much time are we spending reinventing the wheel?
“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 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

“Good UX for you and you and you!”

very exciting!
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 USWDS provides design guidelines and code to help agencies quickly create trustworthy, accessible, and consistent digital government services.
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
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Components, Design &amp; Code</th>
<th>Templates</th>
<th>Documentation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Accordion</td>
<td>Landing page</td>
<td>Design principles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alert</td>
<td></td>
<td>For developers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Border</td>
<td></td>
<td>For designers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Button</td>
<td></td>
<td>Accessibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Color</td>
<td></td>
<td>Performance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flex</td>
<td></td>
<td>guidelines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Float</td>
<td></td>
<td>Code guidelines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Footer</td>
<td></td>
<td>Migration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Form controls</td>
<td></td>
<td>Video tutorials</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Form templates</td>
<td></td>
<td>Implementations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grid</td>
<td></td>
<td>Examples</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Header</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Height &amp; width</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Icons</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Layout grid</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Margin &amp; padding</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opacity</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Order</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outline</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Search</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Side navigation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shadow</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spacing units</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tag</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Typesetting</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Typography</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Z-index</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Too many options!
Consistency over conformity
Templates

Project title

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.

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.

Subsubsection 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.
Reusable elements

UI components

Typography—Pairings and styles

**DEFAULT**
Merriweather headings, Source Sans Pro body
1. Merriweather Regular 400
2. Merriweather Bold 700
3. Source Sans Pro Regular 400
4. Source Sans Pro Italic 400

**Display 1**

**Heading 1**

**Heading 2**

**Heading 3**

**Heading 4**

**Heading 5**

Lead

paragraph

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

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

Form templates

**Name**

Title - optional

First name

Middle name - optional

Last name

Password

Reset password

Please enter your new password.

Password information

Character constraints, if any

Sign in

or create an account

Username or email address:

Password:

Sign in

Forgot username?

Forgot password?

Mailing address

Mailing address 1

Mailing address 2 - optional

City

State

ZIP Code

Date of birth

For example: 07 04 1776

Month Day Year
Personality can vary through tonal shifts:
Colors, images, content
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.

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.
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

- START WITH PROBLEM
- LEARN USER NEEDS
- ALIGN WITH BUSINESS NEEDS/CONSTRAINTS
- PROTOTYPE / BUILD
- TEST WITH/GIVE TO USERS

REPEAT
The Design System in practice: speaking the same language
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.

Offender Demographics

Sex of Offender

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

Age of Offender

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

Race of Offender

20,430 White
# Spacing and margins (2.0)

**Margin**
CSS PROPERTY: `margin`

## Margin on all sides

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Margin</th>
<th>.margin-0</th>
<th>.margin-1px</th>
<th>.margin-2px</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0px</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1px</td>
<td>2px</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8px</td>
<td>.margin-1</td>
<td>.margin-105</td>
<td>.margin-2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>utility suffix</th>
<th>spacing units</th>
<th>pixels</th>
<th>example line</th>
<th>example utility</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>.margin-0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0px</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.margin-1px</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1px</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.margin-2px</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2px</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.margin-1</td>
<td>0.5 spacing units</td>
<td>4px</td>
<td></td>
<td>padding-y-05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.margin-105</td>
<td>1 spacing unit</td>
<td>8px</td>
<td></td>
<td>padding-x-1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.margin-2</td>
<td>1.5 spacing units</td>
<td>12px</td>
<td></td>
<td>margin-top-105</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.margin-205</td>
<td>2 spacing units</td>
<td>16px</td>
<td></td>
<td>square-2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.margin-3</td>
<td>2.5 spacing units</td>
<td>20px</td>
<td></td>
<td>square-2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.margin-4</td>
<td>3 spacing units</td>
<td>24px</td>
<td></td>
<td>margin-left-neg-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.margin-5</td>
<td>4 spacing units</td>
<td>32px</td>
<td></td>
<td>u-minh-4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.margin-7</td>
<td>5 spacing units</td>
<td>40px</td>
<td></td>
<td>tablet:margin-top-4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Grid and type
(before)

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?

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)

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.

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

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

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!

Cool. Thanks for explaining.
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-<n> classes. Specify a numbered class when you need a column of a specific width; otherwise, use .grid-col.

.grid-col-1 | grid-col-2 | grid-col-3 | grid-col-4
|             |          |          |          |

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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Token</th>
<th>Default</th>
<th>Example</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Settings variable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>'3xs'</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Tallahassee</td>
<td>13px</td>
<td>$theme-type-scale-3xs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'2xs'</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Tallahassee</td>
<td>14px</td>
<td>$theme-type-scale-2xs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'xs'</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Tallahassee</td>
<td>15px</td>
<td>$theme-type-scale-xs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'sm'</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Tallahassee</td>
<td>16px</td>
<td>$theme-type-scale-sm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'md'</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Tallahassee</td>
<td>17px</td>
<td>$theme-type-scale-md</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'lg'</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Tallahassee</td>
<td>22px</td>
<td>$theme-type-scale-lg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'xl'</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Tallahassee</td>
<td>32px</td>
<td>$theme-type-scale-xl</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'2xl'</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>Tallahassee</td>
<td>48px</td>
<td>$theme-type-scale-2xl</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'3xl'</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Tallahassee</td>
<td>48px</td>
<td>$theme-type-scale-3xl</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
“There are a lot of conversations I haven’t had to have because of the system.”

Heather Battaglia, 18F Developer
Accessible colors (before)

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

webaim.org color contrast checker

Accessible color palette builder

Accessible color combinations
Please don't use these color combinations; they do not meet a color contrast ratio of 4:1, 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. Displaying accessibility best practices improves the user experience for all users.

18F accessible color palette builder
# Accessible colors (2.0)

## Red warm

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Color</th>
<th>Token</th>
<th>Family</th>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Variant</th>
<th>Hex</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>'red-warm-5'</td>
<td>'red-warm'</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td>#f6efe6a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'red-warm-10'</td>
<td>'red-warm'</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td>#f4e3db</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'red-warm-20'</td>
<td>'red-warm'</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'red-warm-30'</td>
<td>'red-warm'</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'red-warm-40'</td>
<td>'red-warm'</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'red-warm-50'</td>
<td>'red-warm'</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'red-warm-60'</td>
<td>'red-warm'</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'red-warm-70'</td>
<td>'red-warm'</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'red-warm-80'</td>
<td>'red-warm'</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'red-warm-90'</td>
<td>'red-warm'</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Mint cool

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Color</th>
<th>Token</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>'mint-cool-5'</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'mint-cool-10'</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'mint-cool-20'</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'mint-cool-30'</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'mint-cool-40'</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'mint-cool-50'</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'mint-cool-60'</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'mint-cool-70'</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'mint-cool-80'</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'mint-cool-90'</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Violet warm

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Color</th>
<th>Token</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>'violet-warm-5'</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'violet-warm-10'</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'violet-warm-20'</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'violet-warm-30'</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'violet-warm-40'</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'violet-warm-50'</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'violet-warm-60'</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'violet-warm-70'</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'violet-warm-80'</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'violet-warm-90'</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Accessible colors (2.0)

Red 60 minus Red 5 = 55

50+ achieve AA contrast
The Design System in practice: accelerating rapid prototyping
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
The ones that worked

Homicide rate in Tennessee, 2004–2014

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Free</th>
<th>Non-Free</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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.

Total incidents reported by year:

- 2004: 12
- 2005: 14
- 2006: 16
- 2007: 18
- 2008: 20
- 2009: 22
- 2010: 24
- 2011: 26
- 2012: 28
- 2013: 30
- 2014: 32

Offender Demographics:

- Sex of Offender:
  - Male: 22
  - Female: 20
- Age of Offender:
  - Under 18: 8
  - 18-24: 11
  - 25-29: 13
  - 30-34: 12
  - 35-39: 11
  - 40-44: 8
  - 45-49: 7
  - 50-54: 6
  - 55-59: 4
  - 60-64: 2
  - 65-69: 1
  - 70+: 1
- Ethnicity of Offender:
  - White: 22
  - Black: 19
  - Hispanic: 1
  - Asian: 1
  - Other: 1

Victim Demographics:

- Sex of Victim:
  - Male: 22
  - Female: 20
- Age of Victim:
  - Under 18: 8
  - 18-24: 11
  - 25-29: 13
  - 30-34: 12
  - 35-39: 11
  - 40-44: 8
  - 45-49: 7
  - 50-54: 6
  - 55-59: 4
  - 60-64: 2
  - 65-69: 1
  - 70+: 1
- Ethnicity of Victim:
  - White: 22
  - Black: 19
  - Hispanic: 1
  - Asian: 1
  - Other: 1

Download data

---

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
The Design System in practice: teams with dedicated visual / UX designers
Improving the process for making Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests.
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.
(Flash charts that don’t load anymore)
A form based on the USWDS fields, with additions for more user guidance
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.
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
Dynamic glossary tool helps with terms people need extra guidance on.
Other sites using the dynamic glossary tool

FBI: Crime Data Explorer

United States
Crime data for the nation is derived from 300,000 federal, state, and local agencies.

Resources
About the data
FAQ
Download participation and copy data
FBI UCR Program

The Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Program has updated data as of September 24, 2018.

Federal Election Commission

Paperwork Reduction Act (forthcoming)

Natural Resource Revenue Data
The Design System in practice: teams with limited design support, time or budget
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
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: ___________________________ Number of Parcels: ____________________

Ultimate Consignee: ___________________ Carat Weight/Mass: __________________

Harmonized Commodity Code: __________________________

Issuing Authority: United States Kimberley Process Authority
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)
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

Page templates
These templates for a landing page and a documentation page are built from USDS components. Each of these pages is flexible, you can add or remove components or sub-components to suit your needs. These templates are great starting points for prototyping or for trying out USDS to see if it’s a good fit for your project.

Landing page
Provide an intuitive first impression of your agency or program. When your audience comes in without much content, like a search result or a subgroup email, the landing page needs to be clear, engaging, and contextual.

Template 1: Landing page
A landing page is a key introduction of someone’s first impression of your agency or program. When they see your organization, they must know what services or products you offer. The landing page is a critical factor in earning their attention. A landing page needs to be clear, engaging, and contextual.

Colors
A flexible, yet distinctly US Forest Service palette designed to communicate research and researchworthiness while meeting the highest standards of web color contrast requirements.

Palette
This palette is designed to support a range of distinct visual styles that continue to be connected. The tone of the palette is one of clarity and transparency. It’s light, subtle, and elegant. The palette is executed with a high level of visual quality and distinguished by a deep, rich, and sophisticated shade of red, blue, and gray. These colors are composed with clear hierarchy, good contrast ratios, and ample white space — almost like a warm, vibrant, and welcoming experience.

Primary colors
This palette is free of any red, green, and white. It’s commonly associated with nature, confidence, and trust, and it’s also used to represent authority and responsibility.

Secondary colors
These are accent colors to provide additional lightness and depth to pages looking for a more modern feel. These colors should be used to highlight important features on a page, such as icons, buttons, or visual style elements, such as illustrations. They should be used sparingly and reserved for the page to maintain clear groupings of information at a glance.

Example color palette:
- #0074A2 (Forest Service blue)
- #F5DFD9 (Forest Service yellow)
- #E4E4E4 (Forest Service gray)
- #F2F2F2 (Forest Service white)

 tertiary colors
These are accent colors to provide additional lightness and depth to pages looking for a more modern feel. These colors should be used to highlight important features on a page, such as icons, buttons, or visual style elements, such as illustrations. They should be used sparingly and reserved for the page to maintain clear groupings of information at a glance.

Example tertiary color:
- #F2F2F2 (Forest Service white)
“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?
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.

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

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

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

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

USWDS cheat sheet

(AKA How to convince others why they should care)
It's a collaborative effort.

Connect with the team:

- Github
- Slack
- Email
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.
**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/
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.
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
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
Conclusion
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.

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

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

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

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

USWDS cheat sheet (AKA How to convince others why they should care)
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 aviva.oskow@gsa.gov | 18f.gsa.gov