Establishing a Canadian Digital Service
Informed by similar initiatives in the U.S. (the U.S. Digital Service/18F) and the United Kingdom (the Government Digital Service), the Government will **adopt new ways** of serving Canadians.

**Better use of digital** technologies could improve the ways in which businesses can access government services, speed up immigration processing times through better-integrated information, or make it easier for Canadians to access benefits or tax information online.

– *Budget 2017*
CONTEXT
Canadians expect government services that offer the convenience, ease of use and quality afforded by the private sector.

ISSUE
The current Government of Canada IT ecosystem is fragmented and inwardly focused:

• Leadership for digital adoption is distributed across departments and agencies;
• Capacity to deliver and scale digital innovation is limited;
• Digital projects tend to focus on government back office needs, rather than user needs.

OUTCOME
Better use of digital technologies would make it faster, simpler and easier for Canadians to access benefits or services online.
The concept of establishing a digital delivery team is based on the experience of other jurisdictions...

...and the results of engagement sessions held across Canada

- In **20 cities, 10 provinces**, with over **1,000 stakeholders** including academia, start-ups, entrepreneurs, small firms, civic tech organizations, provinces and municipalities.
Housed at the Treasury Board Secretariat, CDS fulfils three core functions:

- **Projects**: Partnering with departments to deliver ‘hands-on’ solutions to common problems
- **Capacity**: Recruiting top talent, improving digital literacy and offering development opportunities
- **Advice**: Playing an advisory role to help departments create, run and improve digital services

Better use of digital technologies, to better serve Canadians
CDS recruits top talent, both internally and externally, to support departmental priorities and the Service Strategy

Projects
- Helping to drive and scale digital innovations
- Partnering with departments on digital projects
- Mainstreaming state-of-the-art practices like focusing on user needs

Capacity
- Recruiting top talent to support the Service Strategy
- Offering training and learning opportunities to existing IT professionals
- Improving digital literacy in the senior ranks of the Public Service

Advice
- Advising on major IT investments
- Helping departments use data to design better services
- Providing guidance and, over time, developing toolkits and standards
CDS will undertake projects of increasing size and complexity, over time...

- **Beginning in 2017–2018**
  - **‘Quick Win’ Projects**
    - Scaling service innovations across departments.
  - **Service Improvements**
    - Partnering with departments on key service improvement priorities.
  - **Horizontal Enablers**
    - Developing new cross-cutting service platforms.

- **Beginning in 2018–2019**
  - In its early stages, the UK’s Government Digital Service developed simple online calculators to help citizens determine their eligibility for programs and benefits.
  - The Canada Border Services Agency launched an application to replace the paper customs declaration form and equip travelers with a range of on-the-go trip planning and travel tools.

- **Beginning in 2019–2020**
  - France’s digital delivery organization developed a single window for citizens to access government benefits and services online.
CDS is modeled on a lean start up, adopting key operating principles...

Working in the open
To accelerate change, share solutions and engage with users and stakeholders.

Being nimble and iterative
To promote experimentation, fail fast, and allow for course corrections.

Creating the environment
To offer a cutting-edge workplace and tools to compete for and retain top talent.

Acting as a connector
To connect talent with government problems, co-create and find new ways to solve old problems.

Modeling a start-up
To minimize hierarchy, adopt lean processes, and focus on delivery.

Networked

Lean

Modern
CDS supplements the existing IT ecosystem*, with departments continuing to deliver on their existing mandates.

- **Shared Services Canada**: Delivering mandated IT infrastructure services to partner departments.
- **Public Services and Procurement Canada**: Acquiring goods and services on behalf of the Government of Canada.
- **TBS Chief Information Officer Branch**: Providing direction and oversight in IT and service policy.
- **Service Departments**: Owning and operating services to Canadians and businesses.

* A detailed overview of CDS’ role in the existing ecosystem is appended as Annex A.
CDS is being established in phases, over three years…

**Transition Phase**
- Recruiting top talent, both internally and externally
- Delivering ‘quick win’ solutions
- Designing training and learning programs
- Developing an evaluation framework

**Expansion Phase**
- Expanding the number of project teams
- Accelerating key Service Strategy priorities
- Running training and learning programs
- Advising on major IT investments
- Measuring preliminary results

**Scaling Phase**
- Expanding the size and scope of digital solutions
- Developing cross-cutting, horizontal platforms
- Returning to Cabinet to request ongoing, annual funding and to present go forward recommendations

2017–2018

2018–2019

2019–2020
CDS is a digital delivery team *for* Canadians, *inside* government...

**Summary**

The Government of Canada is struggling to keep pace with **rising citizen expectations** for access to state-of-the-art services online.

Budget 2017 signaled the Government’s commitment to **accelerate innovation** in digital service delivery, building on the experiences of other jurisdictions.

The Canadian Digital Service will provide ‘**hands on’ solutions** to common problems, build digital capacity across the Government and advise on major IT investments.
Annex A – CDS Role in the Government of Canada IT Ecosystem

**Shared Services Canada (SSC)**

Delivers mandated **IT infrastructure** services to partner organizations.

- Email services
- Data centre services
- Network services
- Acquisition & provision of workplace devices
- Cyber security infrastructure
  - Proposed cloud brokering service

**Public Services & Procurement Canada (PSPC)**

Acquires **goods and services** on behalf of the Government of Canada.

- Acquisition of goods & services e.g. middleware
- Acquisition policy & guidelines
- Vendor engagement
- Support for innovative Canadian companies
- Acquisition of TOP SECRET IT infrastructure
- Acquisition standards oversight

**Canadian Digital Service**


- Prototyping digital solutions
- Advice on marquee IT projects
- Digital talent recruitment
- Data science & analytics
- User experience & design
- Digital playbooks & toolkits

**Chief Information Officer Branch**

Provides **direction and oversight** in IM, IT, access to information (ATI), privacy, service, open government.

- Service policy & strategy
- IT enterprise architecture
- Web and ID management policy
- PSPC-SSC interface
- Open government
- IM / IT policy & strategy
- IT project oversight
- Cyber & security policy
- IT investment planning
- Privacy & ATI policy

*While these functions currently exist in pockets across the Government, CDS creates dedicated capacity, with a government-wide focus.*