Establishing a
Canadian Digital Service

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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

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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…

Government Digital Service

Organisations: Government Digital Service, Cabinet Office

How we're making GOV.UK work harder for users

Jennifer Allum, 27 February 2017 — GOV.UK

Hacking for good

dta (Australia)

News Release

Ontario Names First Chief Digital Officer

The Mission: Making Online Services Simpler, Faster and Better for People and Business

March 27, 2017 12:30 P.M. | Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Development

18F
@18F (United States)

Changing the way the federal government builds and buys digital services. We're making things better by focusing on you, dear user. Join us!

…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

Capacity

Advice

Partnering with departments to deliver 'hands-on' solutions to common problems

Recruiting top talent, improving digital literacy and offering development opportunities

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
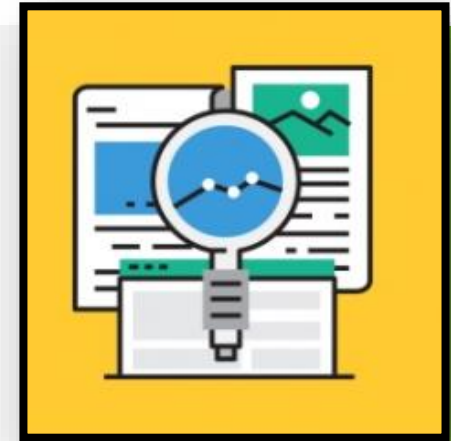
Projects

〉 Helping to drive and scale digital innovations

〉 Partnering with departments on digital projects

〉 Mainstreaming state-of-the-art practices like focusing on user needs
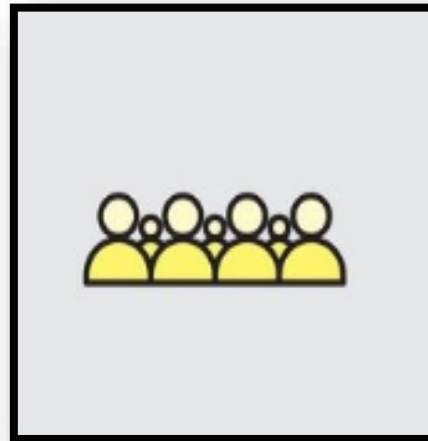
Capacity

〉 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

Beginning in 2018−2019

Beginning in 2019−2020

'Quick Win' Projects

Scaling service innovations across departments.

› In its early stages, the UK's Government Digital Service developed simple online calculators to help citizens determine their eligibility for programs and benefits.

Service Improvements

Partnering with departments on key service improvement priorities.

› 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.

Horizontal Enablers

Developing new cross-cutting service platforms.

› 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.
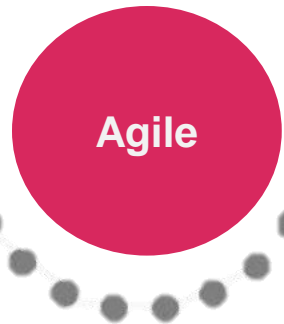
Open

Networked
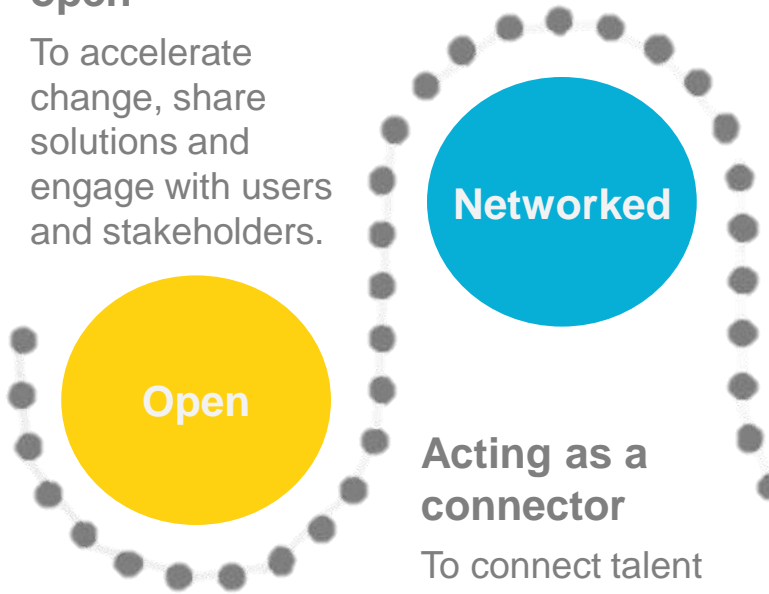
Acting as a connector

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

Being nimble and iterative

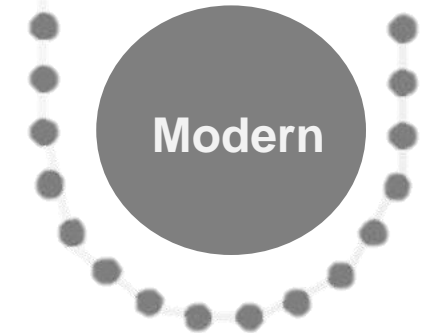To promote experimentation, fail fast, and allow for course corrections.

Agile

Lean

Modeling a start-up

To minimize hierarchy, adopt lean processes, and focus on delivery.

Creating the environment

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

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

2017–2018

Expansion Phase

- Expanding the number of project teams

- Accelerating key Service Strategy priorities

- Running training and learning programs

- Advising on major IT investments
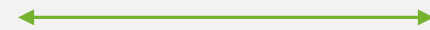
- Measuring preliminary results

2018–2019

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

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.
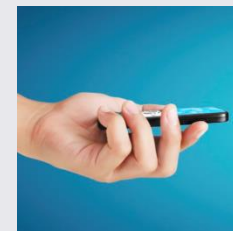
Annex A – CDS Role in the Government of Canada IT Ecosystem

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 of TOP SECRET IT infrastructure
Acquisition policy & guidelines	Acquisition standards oversight
Vendor engagement	Support for innovative Canadian companies

Canadian Digital Service

*Acts as a **digital delivery team** for Government, inside Government.*

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

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

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