Leveraging Civic Design to Advance **Equity** and **Rebuild Trust** in the US Federal Government

How civic design can and should be used to address complex problems government is trying to solve

GSA Aaron Stienstra & Lashanda Hodge

"
The idea of citizen participation
is a little like eating spinach:
no one is against it in principle
because it is good for you...a
revered idea that is vigorously
applauded by virtually everyone.

– Sherry R. Arnstein, "A Ladder of Citizen Participation,"
Journal of the American Planning Association

We'll Talk About:

- The Equity Executive Order

- Its role in shaping the work that we can and should do

- What equity means in this context

- The relationship between equity, Customer Experience, and trust

- Our involvement at different but intersecting and complementary levels

We Are **Designers** Helping Government Agencies **Solve Complex Problems**

Aaron Stienstra
Senior Design Strategist
Office of Customer Experience
General Services Administration

Lashanda Hodge
Managing Director, Customer Experience
Centers of Excellence
General Services Administration

FEDERAL – ADMIN. LEVEL

CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE

EQUITY

Use systems thinking to understand stakeholder needs in the context of other priorities, directives, and obligations

EQUITY LEARNING COMMUNITY PROGRAM

Series of sessions and virtual forum for learning, sharing and guidance

EQUITY

Respond to priorities and directives in the context of agency mission and customer needs

CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE

HUD – AGENCY LEVEL

| FEB '21 | MAR | APR | MAY | JUN | JUL | AUG | SEP | OCT | NOV | DEC |

End of 2020

Tipping Point

COVID-19 Pandemic

Climate Crisis

Civil Unrest

Weakened Policy

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BRIEFING ROOM

Executive Order On Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities Through the Federal Government

JANUARY 20, 2021 • PRESIDENTIAL ACTIONS

By the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America, it is hereby ordered:

Section 1. Policy. Equal opportunity is the bedrock of American democracy, and our diversity is one of our country's greatest strengths. But for too many, the American Dream remains out of reach. Entrenched disparities in our laws and public policies, and in our public and private institutions, have often denied that equal opportunity to individuals and communities. Our country faces converging economic, health, and climate crises that have exposed and

Web link

Executive Orders

8

Affirmatively advancing equity, civil rights, racial justice, and equal opportunity is the responsibility of the whole of our Government

Address the historic failure to invest sufficiently, justly, and equally in underserved communities

A historic movement for justice

Allocating federal resources to advance fairness & opportunity

Comprehensive approach to advancing equity for all

Provide everyone with the opportunity to reach their full potential

Promote equity in the budget

Civil Rights

Develop policies designed to advance equity

Equitable Data

Identifying methods to assess equity

Equal opportunity is the bedrock of American democracy.

Redress inequities

Interagency process

Improvement of communities that have been historically underserved, which benefits everyone

EXEC. ORDER **13985**

An ambitious whole-of-government equity agenda that matches the scale of the opportunities and challenges that we face.

For too many, the American Dream remains out of reach

"Equity" means the consistent and systematic fair, just, and impartial treatment of all individuals

Consult with members of communities

Remove systemic barriers

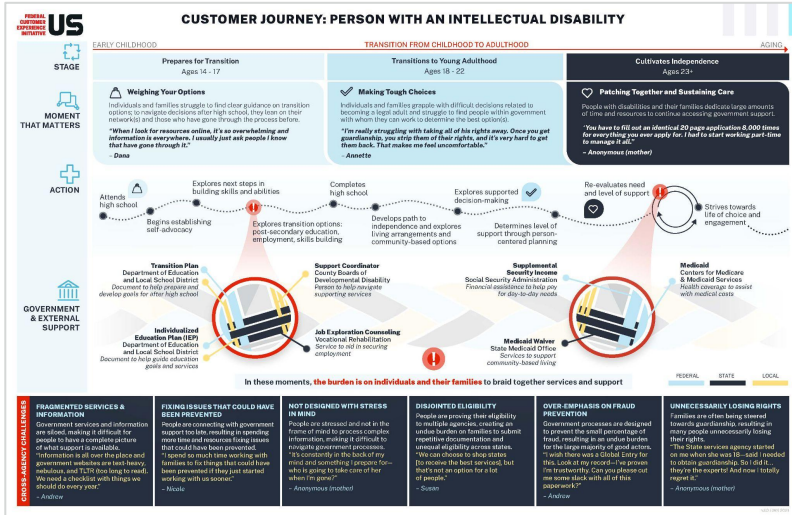Employ pilot programs

Our Orientation to the Equity Work

Federal Customer Experience
Policy, Management, Human-Centered Design

Dep. of Housing and Urban Development
Fair Housing / Systems Thinking

Getting Started and Producing a Program

- Created a 'getting started guide' for looking at equity assessments through a service delivery lens

- Convened a small team of cross-functional experts

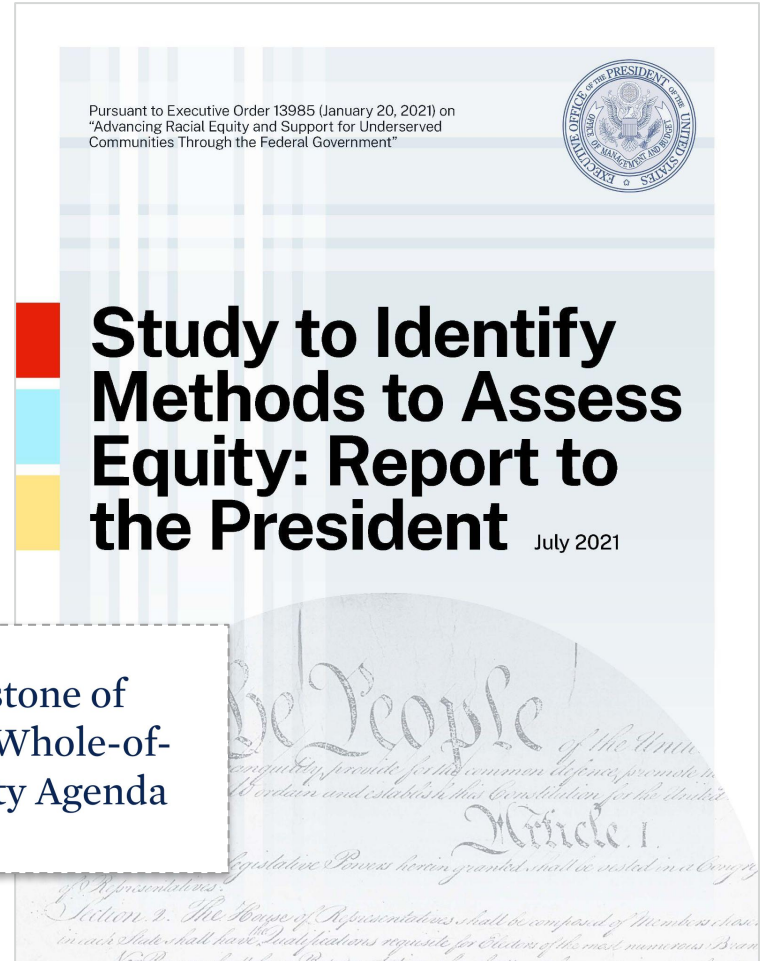- Coordination with the Domestic Policy Council

- Integrated a civic design approach and practices

Start   100 Days   Month 6   200 Days
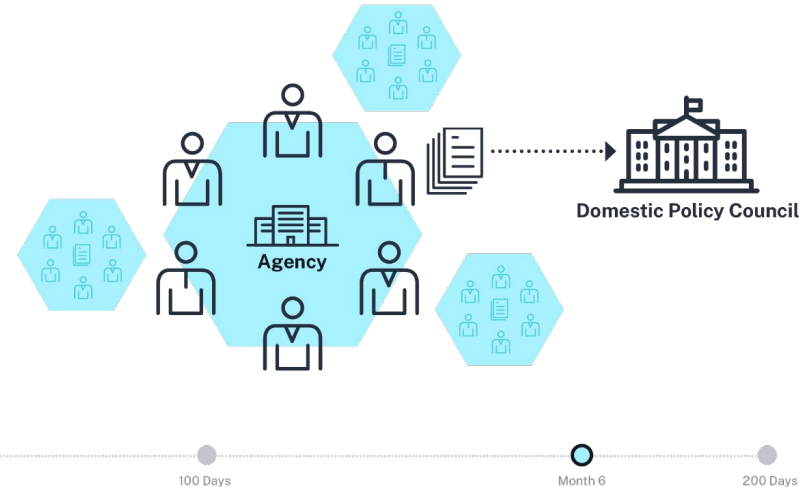
Implementation at Federal Level

Leveraging Design Methods to Meet and Lead this Moment

A centerpiece of the effort is building an ==Equity Learning Community and Program== based on the needs of our Federal agency partner stakeholders

25+ Virtual learning sessions open to every Federal employee

Pursuant to Executive Order 13985 (January 20, 2021) on "Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities Through the Federal Government"

Study to Identify Methods to Assess Equity: Report to the President
July 2021

BRIEFING ROOM

Meeting a Milestone of President Biden's Whole-of-Government Equity Agenda

AUGUST 06, 2021 • BLOGS

Report to the President

FEDERAL – ADMIN. LEVEL

CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE

EQUITY

Equity Learning Session:
Defining a Service Experience

Equity Learning Session:
Stakeholder Engagement

Feedback

Feedback

**EQUITY LEARNING
COMMUNITY PROGRAM**

**Used HUD as an example
illustrate service definition**

**Shared stakeholder engagement
methods used by HUD**

EQUITY

HUD Design Activity:
Map the Customer Experience

**Define Research/Engagement
Goals and Begin Outreach**

CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE

**Define
System Forces**

**Define Agency
Power and Levers**

HUD – AGENCY LEVEL

FEB '21   MAR   APR   MAY   JUN   JUL   AUG   SEP   OCT   NOV   DEC

You can't have **Good Customer Experience** without **Equity**

Traditional CX

OK CX

Good CX

Assume everyone benefits from same support

Everyone gets the support they need
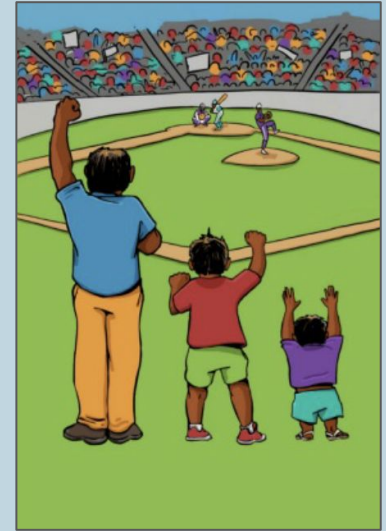
Causes of inequities or barriers are removed

At the Agency Level

1

Develop **shared understanding** and **problem frame** through **collaborative** workshops, thinking about the experience and the system

2

Engage with **people** to understand their experiences and needs first-hand to further **explore the problem** and **build partnerships**

3

Co-develop new ideas and solutions and vet them with **people**

★ We are here

At the Agency Level

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At the Agency Level

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Photo by LinkedIn Sales Solutions on Unsplash

At the Agency Level

3

Co-develop new
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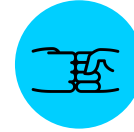**people**

Up Next

Power dynamics can be leveraged for greater good and equitable outcomes
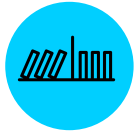
Responsibly Use Our Power
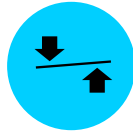
Redistribute Power

Respect Others' Knowledge

Reflect on Our Power

Reciprocate

Repeatedly Use These Principles

Civic Design

Creating drops to have **enormous impact** and **rebuild trust**

Equity and CX

Culture

Business Strategy

Better, More Equitable Experiences

Reflections

The Equity EO has changed how we approach customer experience and service delivery

Civic design will help bring CX and equity together—to include the public we're serving and thus redistribute power

Whole-of-government transformation includes us, working together

Thank you!

Questions?