

Project Overview

Agile Public Policy: Transforming Policy Development, Implementation, and Evaluation

Background

To solve the nation's most pressing challenges, leaders need to embrace new ways of developing and implementing policy across all levels of government. Agile Government is more mission-focused, customer-centric, and adaptive. Agile utilizes dynamic cross-functional teams and active customer participation, with leaders empowering these teams to take swift action and deliver timely, meaningful results.



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Project Description

The National Academy of Public Administration (the Academy) is pleased to announce a new study funded by the Freeman Charitable Trust to deepen the understanding and practice of how Agile Government principles, concepts, and best practices can be incorporated into policy development, implementation, and evaluation at all levels of government.

Our working hypothesis is that Agile Policy includes:

- Bringing together those who develop policy with those who implement policy earlier and more frequently.
- Involving human-centered design and mechanisms to capture user feedback during policy development and implementation.
- Leveraging behavioral insights about how the public interacts with policy and programs to ensure they are designed and delivered in ways that meet the needs of the public.
- Creating iterative processes for continuous learning throughout implementation to be updated in real-time to meet user needs.

The project is expected to conclude in Summer 2025.

[Click Here to Learn More About the Study](#)



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EXPERT ADVISORY GROUP

David Bray* is a Distinguished Fellow with the Business Executives for National Security and a keynoter for the U.S. Air Force and U.S. Space Force on AI & Trust since 2022. He is also a Representative Member on the International Digital Economy and Telecommunication Advisory Committee for the U.S. State Department. As Principal & CEO at LeadDoAdapt (LDA) Ventures since 2021, David has been an influential speaker at global boards, Fortune 500 companies, the United Nations, and the World Economic Forum. His academic affiliations include Carnegie Mellon University, Harvard, MIT, GMU, and the Institute for Human-Machine Cognition. David has received the Global Business Transformation 150 award twice and has served in various executive roles, including as a Senior Executive and Chief Information Officer at the Federal Communications Commission. He was named one of the top "24 Americans Who Are Changing the World" by Business Insider in 2016.

Don Kettl* is a Professor and Academic Director at the Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs at the University of Texas at Austin. He has previously served as a Professor and Dean at the University of Maryland's School of Public Policy and held significant roles at The Brookings Institution and The Volcker Alliance as a Nonresident Senior Fellow. Don's career includes leadership positions at the University of Pennsylvania, the University of Wisconsin-Madison, Vanderbilt University, and the University of Virginia, where he has made substantial contributions to public policy and administration education.

Jen Pahlka* is the Founder of U.S. Digital Response and the Founder and Former Executive Director of Code for America. She has also served as the U.S. Deputy Chief Technology Officer in the Office of Science and Technology Policy at The White House. In addition to her work with Code for America, Jen has held several prominent roles in the tech industry, including GM and Co-Chair of the Web 2.0 Expo at TechWeb, Conference Director at MediaLive International, President and Founder of Tiny Media, and Director of the Game Group at CMP Media.

Courtney Phillips currently serves as the Louisiana Department of Health Secretary, a role she was appointed to during the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. Prior to this, she served as Executive Commissioner for the Texas Health and Human Services Commission, the largest state department. In 2015, she was selected as Chief Executive Officer of Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services, guiding all health-related departments and leading numerous initiatives to help better the lives of NE residents. She previously worked for the State of Los Angeles for 15 years, holding progressive roles at multiple agencies.

Dr. David Wilson* is the Dean of the Richard and Rhoda Goldman School of Public Policy and a Professor of Public Policy at the University of California, Berkeley. As a political psychologist, he specializes in survey-based experiments to study political behavior and policy preferences, focusing on justice-related biases. He authored the 2022 book "Racial Resentment in the Political Mind" and has published in various research outlets. Before joining UC Berkeley, he held leadership roles at the University of Delaware and worked as a statistical researcher at the Gallup Polling Organization. He holds a BA from Western Kentucky University and an MPA and PhD from Michigan State University.

SENIOR ADVISORS

G. Edward DeSeve* is currently the Coordinator of the Agile Government Center and an Executive Fellow at the IBM Center for the Business of Government. He has served at all three levels of government and in the private sector during his illustrious career. At the federal level, he was responsible for implementing the \$800 billion American Recovery and Reinvestment Act as a Special Advisor to President Barack Obama. He was also Deputy Director for Management and Controller at the Office of Management and Budget and Chief Financial Officer of the Department of Housing and Urban Development. At the state and local levels, Mr. DeSeve was a Special Assistant to the Governor of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and Director of Finance for the City of Philadelphia. In the private sector, he was a managing director at Merrill Lynch Capital Markets and the founder and president of Public Financial Management, which is the nation's largest independent financial advisor to the government.

Dr. Richard Callahan* serves as the Chief Learning Officer for the National Academy of Public Administration's Center on Agile Government. He is full-time faculty, as a tenured Professor at the University of San Francisco. He is also a Principal and Partner in TAP International, a consulting firm for training, analytics and program evaluation. His presentations, research, teaching, and consulting focus on strategy and leadership behaviors that are effective in complex, demanding, and dynamic environments in the public and nonprofit sectors. He previously had leadership positions in county and city government operations and policy. And he is currently the lead consultant for the Milbank Fund's national Emerging Leaders Program for state legislators and executive staff in health policy and population health from over 42 states since 2016 and also is a consultant for the National Association of Medicaid Directors. Dr. Callahan is an elected Fellow and serves on the Board of Directors of the National Academy of Public Administration (NAPA). He currently Co-chairs a NAPA working group on the intergovernmental dimensions of homelessness responses.

PROJECT STAFF

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