



FEDERAL FUTURES LAB

The Partnership for Public Service envisions a dynamic and innovative federal government that effectively serves our diverse nation. For two decades, we have helped transform the way government works and we continue our mission to build a better government that can effectively serve the public's needs and solve pressing national challenges.

To deliver value to its constituents, our government needs to continuously adapt to ever changing realities. Yet, government's inability to prepare itself for change means it often ends up lagging behind at best and at worst overreacting to predictable events.

The Partnership's Federal Futures Lab seeks to help government be better prepared for the future by:

- Helping government break-free of its present-bound biases and creating opportunities to imagine different futures and possibilities in a solutions-oriented way.
- Determining whether government is currently prepared to take advantage of, or mitigate, impending changes.
- Identifying opportunities for government to maximize strengths and build resilience and capability.
- Equipping government leaders with the tools needed to act today.

Many well-understood trends will fundamentally change how, why and to whom government provides services. Others are highly uncertain and will present significant shifts in public needs and expectations. While many federal agencies have embraced futures and foresight methodologies when considering threats or scientific innovations, few embrace it around the shape, design and services of government itself.

The Federal Futures Lab will enable the Partnership to pursue a forward-thinking research agenda to support the demands of the current moment and lay a foundation for democratic government renewal in the years to come. By helping the government not only understand, but also prepare for the future, the Lab has the potential to influence how the federal government defines its role, relationships and opportunities.

In order to achieve these outcomes, the Lab will undertake the following activities:



Integrating foresight into our existing work: The Lab will be an agile internal consulting body that will enable us to investigate and elevate our own work, facilitation, programming and research through a futures lens. The Lab will also seek to partner with foresight experts and practitioners such as those at the School of International Futures, the Government Accountability Office's Center for Strategic Foresight, and the Federal Foresight Community of Interest - just to name a few - on specific, strategic projects that leverage our and our partners' strengths, networks and priorities.



Building a public service futures field: The Lab will elevate the practices and promise of futures work with events that feature foresight experts, agency leaders and other practitioners to debate and consider the impact of trends on critical elements of the public sector. We also will showcase the Partnership's growing capacity in foresight, generate a broader community of interest, and develop insights and thought leadership to inform other elements of work.



Developing content for government leaders: The Lab will develop content to be incorporated into relevant leadership training programs with the goal of introducing government leaders to the practice of foresight, its uses and how they can use it themselves or empower their teams to do so.



Partnering with agencies: The Lab will work with agencies on high-engagement participatory projects to help them incorporate foresight into their strategic planning, budgeting, human resources, training, or procurement as a tool to help facilitate the achievement of long-term goals. This work could be end-to-end and include all stages of the foresight process or focus on a specific stage of the process depending on the agency's needs.



Providing fee-for-service work: Building on the expertise and recognition from our agency partnerships, the Lab could—at a later stage—offer foresight services as fee-for-service work. Doing so would ensure the Lab's financial sustainability over the long term, keep our offerings fresh and relevant, and further our reputation in this space with our partners in government.