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# Transforming Government Spending Information: Status of the DATA Act

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# Federal Financial Transparency

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- Federal Financial Accountability and Transparency Act
  - Established USASpending.gov in 2006
  - Publish data for contracts, grants, other financial assistance
- Digital Accountability and Transparency Act (DATA Act) passed in 2014

# DATA Act Overview

- Expands USAspending.gov to include agency expenditures
- Requires consistent data standards
- Requires recommendations to reduce recipient burden for contract and grant recipients
- Enables the data to be used by multiple communities

# DATA Act Vision

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***Better Data, Better Decisions, Better Government***

## **DATA Act Vision:**

Provide reliable, timely, secure, and consumable financial management data for the purpose of promoting transparency, facilitating better decision making, and improving operational efficiency.

# Using the data

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- Federal executives and program managers
- Federal CFOs
- State and local government officials
- Private entrepreneurs
- Academics/ researchers
- General public

# Implementation Progress



Established **first cross-council committee** on Federal spending transparency



Developed **implementation approach** founded on Data-Centric Extraction, Agile Development, and User-Centered Design



Launched **Open Beta site for USAspending.gov** using all plays in the US Digital Services Playbook



Established **foundational policies and requirements** for agency implementation



Established **standards** for consistent display of Federal spending data through a transparent process with public input



Launched **pilot program** to explore opportunities to reduce awardee reporting burden

# Governance & Implementation Structure



Established first cross-council committee on Federal spending transparency

## Executive Steering Committee – OMB and Treasury

Inter-Agency Advisory Committee – OMB, Treasury, OSTP, GSA and Representatives from: CFOC, BOAC, ACE, COFAR, CAOC, CIOC, PIC

### Lead

**Treasury**  
(Data Transparency PMO)

**OMB**

### Design and Implement

**OMB**  
Data Definition Standards

**Treasury**  
Blueprint/roadmap between data elements

**Treasury**  
Data Exchange Standards

**OMB & HHS**  
Pilot to Reduce Admin Burden

**Treasury**  
Data Analytics

### Support

Senior Accountable Officials from Federal Agencies

### Consult

**Industry**

Non-Federal stakeholders

Federal Lines of Business

# Implementation Approach



Developed implementation approach founded on Data-Centric Extraction, Agile Development, and User-Centered Design

- **Data-Centric Extraction:** Use technology to minimize costly systems changes
- **Agile Technology Development:** Build systems in 2-weeks sprints to reduce risk and improve outcomes
- **User-Centered Design:** Develop the new website in the public domain with real-time collaboration with users



# Launched Open Beta Site

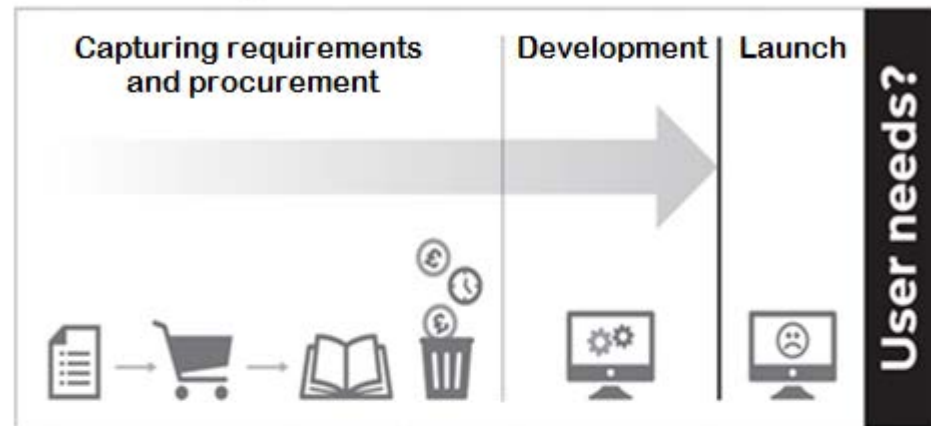


Launched Open Beta site for USAspending.gov using all plays in the US Digital Services Playbook

- **Goals:**

- **Provide the data** to the public in clear, consistent manner
- **Recognize the varying needs of users** and display the data in new ways to meet them
- **Incorporate user input** throughout the development process

## Old way



## New way



# Guidance



Established foundational policies and requirements for agency implementation

- M-15-12
  - Outlines policy requirements to improve data quality and adhere to DATA Act
  - Requires reporting of financial data at appropriations account level
  - Establishes requirement to link financial and management systems
  - Lowers award reporting requirement to micro purchase threshold
- Controller Alert:
  - Document available through the CFOC website which clarifies previous DATA Act related policy for the Financial Assistance Community

# Data Standards



Established standards for consistent display of Federal spending data through a transparent process with public input

- This summer, we issued standards that agencies are now implementing to improve the consistent display of data.
- The financial data standards required by the DATA Act were issued in May, and an additional set of data standards, chosen and standardized by government-wide councils, were completed by August 31.

# Pilot to Reduce Recipient Reporting Burden



Launched pilot program to explore opportunities to reduce awardee reporting burden

Section 5 of the DATA Act requires the Federal Government to establish a Pilot program that will generate recommendations for standardizing reporting elements, eliminating duplication in financial reporting, and reducing compliance costs for Federal award recipients. The pilot program:

- Runs from May 2015 to May 2017
- Includes data to be collected during a 12-month reporting cycle
- Requires a report to Congress on the results of pilot in August 2017

The Office of Management and Budget has asked the Department of Health and Human Services to provide tactical leadership for Section 5 Grants Pilot in the areas of:

- Governance and Recipient Outreach
- Technology
- Analysis of Grants Data Standards

Starting in May 2015, the rollout launched:

- The National Dialogue Tool, a web-based technology designed to provide opportunities for grants and contractor recipient feedback - <https://cxo.dialogue2.cao.gov/>
- The Learn Grants tab on Grants.gov was created to promote greater transparency and easier access to grants' lifecycle information - <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/learn-grants.html>
- The Common Data Element Repository Library (designed to be a federal-wide, authoritative source to facilitate consistency of federal financial and business terms and definitions) inclusive of agreed-upon standardized data elements - <https://repository.usaspending.gov/poc-tool/>

# Grants-Specific Pilot to Reduce Recipient Reporting Burden

## Common Data Elements Repository Library (C-DERL)

A federal-wide, online repository for data standards, definitions, and context.

**Test 1:** Provide grantees with data element definitions to improve accuracy and speed of SF-424 form completion.

**Test 2:** Identify form duplication and update/reduce forms to reduce grantee burden.

## Single Audit (OMB A-133 Audit)

A financial statement audit of an organization's federal funds.

**Test 1:** Provide grantees with 2016 expanded Single Audit form (SF-SAC only).

**Test 2:** Provide grantees with the common Notice of Award (NOA).

## Consolidated Federal Financial Reporting (FFR)

A test model that will allow grantees to submit the FFR form in one system, rather than in multiple entry systems

**Test:** Provide grantees with one Consolidated FFR to reduce the time it takes to complete and submit two separate components of the FFR.

## Learn Grants – GIG

An online web portal that provides information for grant recipients to access federal grant lifecycle information.

**Test:** Determine users' level of understanding on the grants lifecycle after using Learn Grants – GIG.

## Legislative Alignment

Addresses implementation of **standardized reporting** elements and can be leveraged to reduce unnecessary duplication in reporting, which reduces grantee burden.

Addresses **standardized reporting** for grantees, reduced duplication in financial reporting, and reduced grantee burden.

**Reduces** grantee burden by eliminating unnecessary duplication.

**Engages** a diverse set of stakeholders and provides more **comprehensive training** earlier in the grants lifecycle process to help enhance recipient compliance during post-award activities.

# Resources

- USASpending.gov
- Github site:  
<http://fedspendingtransparency.github.io/>
- HHS DATA Act PMO page:  
<http://www.hhs.gov/asfr/data-act-program-management-office/index.html>