



# The Opportunity Project 2025 Sprints Guidelines for Submitting a Sprint Topic Proposal

## What is The Opportunity Project?

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**The Opportunity Project (TOP)** is a technology development sprint program that unlocks the value of open data for the economy and people nationwide. To date, TOP's technology development sprints have catalyzed over 250 data-driven digital products including apps, websites, games, AI tools, mapping tools, and even some non-digital solutions. Our sprints have leveraged open data to address **70+ sprint topics**, such as employment, entrepreneurship, disaster response, health, rural development, and more. Sprints have been led by federal agencies including; including the U.S. Departments of Labor, Agriculture, Veterans Affairs, Housing and Urban Development, Health and Human Services, Treasury, and Commerce, universities, NGOs, and more.

## What is a sprint topic?

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[Sprint topics](#) are the challenges that teams focus on in our technology development sprints. We created a template for federal agencies and nonprofits to submit ideas for 2025 sprint topics, allowing you to propose pressing challenges in need of cross-sector innovation. View all our past sprint topics and learn more about the sprint process on [The Opportunity Project website](#).

## What makes a good sprint topic?

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A good sprint topic focuses on a compelling problem that tells a human story, is reasonable enough in scope that digital tools could make a dent in it, but broad enough that there is room for tech teams to be creative and develop a diverse set of solutions. Agencies also have the most success when there is open data available to address the problem.

## How can I propose a sprint topic?

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This year, we're holding an open call for 2025 sprint topics beginning in June 2025. We will review topics on a rolling basis, but all 2025 sprints must begin no later than the week of September 15, 2025. We have identified four key themes to consider when developing a sprint topic:

→ **Made in America**

Subtopics could include: manufacturing, trusted capital, enabling local sourcing, helping local suppliers and makers break into markets, lab to market activity, helping researchers transform the latest technology developments into commercial viability, and promoting American manufacturing capacity and efficiency.

→ **Make America Healthy Again**

Subtopics could include: removing systemic influences that harm health, enabling Americans to pursue their best possible health, preventing disease, limiting negative influences on the quality of our food and healthcare systems, and combating the opioid/fentanyl health crisis.

→ **Rural Prosperity**

Subtopics could include: promoting business growth, access to capital, and investment in rural America and Indian Country, as well as advancing skills, career opportunities, and educational choices for families and members of the workforce in rural America.

→ **Building U.S. Artificial Intelligence (AI) Infrastructure for the Future**

Subtopics could include: ensuring that the United States technology ecosystem is set up for AI success, including both physical and technical infrastructure, and data readiness.

We're especially interested in topics under these broad themes, but you're also welcome to submit another topic on any subject of interest. Once the final sprint topics are selected, companies, start-ups, universities and non-profits will sign on to build solutions. In past sprints, tech teams have included companies like IBM, Google, Microsoft, Palantir, Citi Ventures, Visa, the Mastercard Center for Inclusive Growth, Mapbox, Esri, Redfin, Airbnb, LinkedIn, as well as dozens of small businesses, startups, universities and more.

## What should I avoid in my sprint topic?

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TOP is not intended for topics that focus on internal federal agency challenges (e.g. federal IT) or with federal employees as the primary end users. All sprint topics should focus on issues facing members of the public – for example, families, communities, businesses, educators, or state, local and tribal governments. Please avoid prescribing specific solutions to the tech teams. Instead, frame a general challenge, and leave the tech teams and communities to apply their unique expertise to develop tech solutions which they will ultimately build, own, and maintain. Finally, we only work with open data (i.e., not with PII or restricted use data), and any key federal data sets need to be available to the public by the time your sprint begins.

## What makes agencies successful in TOP sprints?

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The agencies who have the best experience and outcomes in this process have identified an executive champion, as well as at least 2-3 staff-level agency points of contact who have support and bandwidth to work with us and participating teams on a weekly basis throughout

the development and execution of the sprints. We also find agencies are most successful when they are open-minded about possible sprint outcomes, and willing to think creatively about solutions.

## What is required if my topic is selected?

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If your topic is selected, the TOP team at the Census Bureau will work with your agency to lead a TOP sprint this year. A sprint can be completed with or without funding, but does require time and attention. To get a sense of the time commitment, please refer to the [TOPx Toolkit for Federal Agencies](#). If your team will need a significant amount of assistance to facilitate the sprint, it may require a reimbursable interagency agreement. Please contact our team to discuss this further. For all sprints, we ask each agency to identify a lead point of contact and other contributing team members who will work on the sprint on a weekly basis, as well as an executive champion who is aware and supportive of the sprint.

If you are not familiar with The Opportunity Project and how the process works, please [visit our website](#) for more information and/or contact us at [census.opportunityproject@census.gov](mailto:census.opportunityproject@census.gov).

## When do the sprints take place?

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- We will review sprint topics on a rolling basis beginning in June 2025. All 2025 sprints must begin no later than the week of September 15, 2025.
- After sprint topics are finalized, tech teams, user advocates, product experts, and additional data sources will be identified for each sprint.
- Most 2025 sprints will take place between **September–December 2025**, but note we can make exceptions on a case-by-case basis.

## How can I submit a topic?

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To propose a topic, please download the proposal template document and submit to [census.opportunityproject@census.gov](mailto:census.opportunityproject@census.gov) with subject line “Sprint Topic Proposal”.

**Submissions** will be reviewed on a rolling basis. All 2025 sprints must begin no later than the week of September 15, 2025.