

ONE TEAM GOV PRESENTS

ONE
TEAM
GOV

RADICAL VISIONS

UP TO THE YEAR 2030

"IMAGINATIVE"

"CHALLENGING"

"OPTIMISTIC"

"RADICAL"



IN 2017, TWO CIVIL SERVANTS CREATED ONE TEAM GOV. WHAT BEGAN AS A HYPER-LOCAL COLLABORATION HAS TURNED INTO A GLOBAL COMMUNITY OF DIGITAL AND PUBLIC POLICY PROFESSIONALS PASSIONATE ABOUT COLLECTIVE COLLABORATION AND PRACTICAL ACTION.

They developed a set of principles, held regular meetups and organised an 'unconference', an event which subverts hierarchy through being participant led, all with the aim of bringing that community together.

Attendees at meetups and events were encouraged to start thinking of change through the lens of a 'micro-action' – doing the smallest thing you possibly can. This low bar to entry caused a ripple effect, with attendees sharing stickers, wearing lanyards, and telling colleagues about the principles. The community grew quickly, attracting a diverse group of people driven by an interest in reform, collaboration and change.

By design, One Team Gov has no central point or management. It is a collective, providing individuals with the reputation and permission they need to investigate what they believe is important – which is often outside their everyday work.

The community is also creating a framework for inclusive events – we want to bring people together to solve problems, sharing knowledge beyond traditional organisational boundaries. In 2019, the community held events to "hack" bureaucratic processes, took look at wellbeing and inclusion, and held a global unconference of public servants in Canada. The movement continues to attract changemakers in the UK and further afield, and we are proud to be a small part of this group of engaged, motivated and proactive public servants.

To build our Radical Vision, we called upon this network, receiving 45 submissions from eight countries in audio, video and written form. It is those contributions we report below.





MOMENTUM

Our journey to 2030 will bring unprecedented change. While change is nothing new, it is something that public servants are uniquely suited to deal with, with most referencing the pace of change as a key consideration. The changes our contributors described also tended to be rooted in the anxieties and uncertainties of now: climate, technological, and intergenerational change.

Some spoke about emerging tech such as AI and predictive analytics, imagining that by 2030 they will have both become normalised and the skills required to use them ingrained within the public sector.

Our respondents also considered the impact of this technology on the efficiency of service delivery for the public, giving them immediate access to a range of information across organisational boundaries, in real time, while driving cost savings for the taxpayer. One contributor even declared "I want *all* information to be available to me!".

Another considered how by 2030 we may need to fix some of the decisions we are making now: "...in 2030 we might be dealing with the problems that we caused by offloading formerly human-managed processes," they said. A number of contributors felt it would be necessary to slow down this pace, even suggesting "two speeds of government": delivering services for both citizens and for the environment.

Others considered how generational differences will change our workplaces as people live and stay in their jobs for longer, and what effect this mix of older and younger people will have. "Our institutions will need to work out how to mediate between generations who will have different expectations of their workplace and environment," one wrote.

COLLABORATION

Perhaps expectedly, many of our contributors felt that by 2030 the principles of One Team Gov will have become commonplace. They described how public servants will be 'compassionate by default', incentivised to empower others, and will continue to work hard to improve outcomes for the public. Achieving this, they said, will require hope and enormous strength of will.

Communication will be key – creating this vision will mean continually adapting, configuring and reconfiguring. Transparency, our contributors say, will be vital to the success of public services – we need to become increasingly confident in saying "I don't know". Our world is too complex for there to be a single right answer.

Many believed we will need to build entirely new expertise in collaboration and working across boundaries. By 2030, entire careers will be focused on being 'connectors' or 'ecosystem orchestrators', as we increasingly prioritise taking time to get to know one another. We will value being open minded, questioning assumptions, and creating the space necessary for new perspectives. We will be increasingly connected to wider communities and networks outside of government as we prioritise co-creation and co-production.

Contributors spoke of how our work will be more flexible and mobile; this will be an expectation, rather than the norm. Work lives and home lives will become more equal, as portfolio careers increasingly encourage more part-time working and shared care obligations.

Our teams will be multidisciplinary by default, focused on bringing key skills together to solve the most complex problems. We will not be restricted to a physical office or city; our future is decentralised and dispersed as more of our time is spent working through networks and virtual platforms.

Many of those who contributed reflected on the fact that 2030 is actually not very far away. If we want our future to be truly different, we will have to be radical, and will have to start now. 2030 is to 2019 as 2019 is to 2008: it will not feel like an alien world.



CO-CREATION

Our contributors also considered the role of government in political and service delivery terms, as well as their roles as public servants or in related fields.

Responses focused on the need for trust, considering what structures or processes would move the country away from the polarisation of politics currently dominant in public consciousness. Some discussed citizen assemblies and other processes of citizen-focused democracy, while others considered how one might represent a population who did not all vote for the same outcome; a clear reflection of current politics.

Perhaps relatedly, a small number of respondents voiced a desire for the delivery of public services to be less closely connected to the politics of the day, or to be charged with greater citizen focus.

Consistently and firmly, contributors discussed their universal desire to be better connected with the public, to work with them more closely, and indeed, to ask whether their engagement should be beyond the usual formal remit of citizens. By 2030, they said, increased participation in service delivery, feedback loops and citizen focused use of data will be the norm.

In close conjunction, contributors felt that by 2030 they and their colleagues would be more reflective of the whole population. They considered the importance of a breadth of diversity – of cultural background or education, for example – and how this would bring different experiences and perspectives to the table. Contributors wanted to see their leaders reflect this breadth of experience.

Others talked about the organisation of government services around life events over and above thematic departments or delivery organisations, with the intention of enabling citizens to remove barriers to achieving their needs.

With a focus on environmental issues, contributors also reminded us that we need to learn from what's gone before, doing a better job of using the institutional memory of government. Practically, by 2030, we should have cracked digital working and findability of information.

The nature of these responses was reflective of the kind of people who self-identify as radicals. Many focused on independence and agency, enabling public servants to both act and be more closely connected to citizens. In collating these responses, we are conscious that a more autonomous society is not necessarily beneficial for everyone.



DISRUPTION

Our contributors called *for*, and were focused *on*, driving change. Many would self-identify as radicals; One Team Gov has become a badge of honour for those who see themselves as early adopters or disruptors. Meetups and events satisfy their need for belonging, especially in an ever-changing world where being a disruptor can be especially lonely.

Being radical is dependent on context. And while continual change is a natural part of our world, contributors have shown they are truly radical in identifying, highlighting and being comfortable with it, harnessing it to the advantage of all citizens. Transformation is also key as we continually evolve to meet ever-changing user needs and respond to new priorities. Change is not a programme that concludes – it is a constant operation of evolution.

As authors of this Radical Vision, as we look ahead to 2030, we need to take a moment of introspection and humility. With any movement, there has to be a moment where someone leads the charge, drives things forward. One Team Gov's original goal was to bring digital and policy closer together, to break down the professional silos that exist across government, and to foster a greater emphasis on users.

Our contributor responses show us this is already happening, and that the principles we strive for are increasingly accepted by people who may not ever see themselves radicals. Even the late Head of the Civil Service Sir Jeremy Heywood actively endorsed One Team Gov as an asset to Government.

So while we call ourselves disruptors, we are becoming less disruptive; our principles are becoming more normalised. And ultimately, we work to make ourselves obsolete. If we cease to be, it will be because we have been successful in our aims.

IT IS 2030, AND ONE TEAM GOV NO LONGER EXISTS. WE WELCOME THE NEXT REBELS!





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<https://www.nesta.org.uk/report/radical-visions-future-government/>