



# Federal Forward: How Government Agencies Can Achieve the Future of Work Today





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Modernization of government operations can seem like a never-ending process. Yet transformation is attainable now. Through an effective work management platform, federal agencies can dramatically improve efficiency, drive innovation, and achieve better outcomes.



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# 1 The Future of Federal Work: Obstacles on the Journey

For years now, federal agencies have chased transformation: better operational performance, new capabilities to serve constituencies more effectively, and tailored citizen experiences that build public trust in government. Yet despite piecemeal advances in digital technologies, this ideal future has long seemed just out of reach.


The reasons will be no surprise to federal executives or their teams. Agencies face a wide range of challenges, starting with federal mandates that continually raise the bar on operational excellence.

The Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA), for instance, requires federal agencies to create and regularly update a strategic plan for achieving, measuring, and reporting on objectives for mission-supporting activities. The President's Management Agenda (PMA), launched in November 2021, defines government-wide management priorities for federal agencies to improve how they operate and perform. Digital transformation and professionalizing the federal workforce are formal requirements, not to mention good strategy.

Simultaneously, agency missions and employee activities are often hampered by roadblocks. At many agencies, aging IT systems are disconnected, inflexible, and limited in their capabilities. Data and workflows are confined to separate projects, processes, and programs. All of this impacts a team's ability to coordinate efforts effectively, achieve common operating models, and benefit from best practices.

In particular, agency leaders and team members lack visibility into projects and associated data. Stakeholders don't know where a project is in the queue, how long it will take to complete, or who owns the current phase. Project tasks are isolated by system and data silos, making them difficult to track and coordinate.

Similarly, project governance and standardization are limited, as different systems require team members to capture and analyze data in different ways. One-off tools require constant training, and they don't enable a consistent way of reporting to leadership. Agency leaders end up making strategic decisions based on outdated data, and they can't respond quickly and accurately when situations change.

**71%** 

**IT decision-makers who are rethinking strategic decisions around workforce technology to improve the flow of information across teams<sup>1</sup>**

## 2 The Promise of Improved Work Management

Technology solutions were supposed to overcome operational challenges. And for many organizations in the private sector, they have.

Chief among them are workforce solutions such as work management platforms. Today, 71% of IT decision-makers are rethinking strategic decisions around workforce technology to improve the flow of information across teams.<sup>1</sup> In fact, organizations have increased the use of collaboration tools by 44% since 2019.<sup>2</sup> It's no wonder investments in collaboration platforms will grow at a compound annual rate of 12% between 2022 and 2028.<sup>3</sup>

But federal agencies must execute against unique use cases and requirements. Few tools are designed to meet federal needs. Implementations require budget, expertise, and time that agencies simply don't have.

Agencies need collaborative tools that enable fast, easy sharing of data while maintaining data privacy. They need visibility into where data resides, transparency

around which individuals and applications have access to it, and robust security controls to keep it protected.

What's more, agencies need solutions that comply with the Federal Risk and Authorization Management Program (FedRAMP) and, where appropriate, requirements of the Defense Information Systems Administration (DISA) and Department of Defense (DoD) Impact Level 4 (IL4).

The good news is that today's federal agencies have access to purpose-built, affordable, and secure work management technology. Increasingly, "data-sharing technologies are helping to break down silos and connect government agencies," according to a recent Deloitte report.<sup>4</sup>

An effective work management platform empowers agencies to finally realize the future of federal work. They can optimize efficiencies, encourage innovation, make smarter decisions, drive better outcomes, and achieve the goals of their missions.

**44%** 

Increase in use of collaboration tools by organizations since 2019<sup>2</sup>

**12%** 

Predicted compound annual growth of investments in collaboration platforms between 2022 and 2028<sup>3</sup>

# 3 Optimizing Operational Efficiency

Your work management platform should optimize operational efficiency. To realize that goal, the solution needs to be simpler and more efficient to use than traditional spreadsheets and productivity suites.

A work management solution should provide a single platform for consistent project management across the organization. You should be able to control every aspect of a project: assigning tasks, tracking budgets, enforcing deadlines, and automating workflows to meet objectives on time, in scope, and at cost.

An effective platform will provide all-in-one, easy-to-use project sheets, forms, dashboards, and reports. Stakeholders should be able to see where a project is, who owns the current phase, and when it will be completed.

The solution should include robust security controls so that only authorized people have access to project data. In fact, security should be automated so that team members can focus on their work, while the data they access remains secure. A platform for federal agencies should also be FedRAMP authorized and compliant with DISA IL4 guidelines where applicable.

These capabilities enable your teams to work faster and more cost-effectively. They bridge data and organizational silos, minimize manual processes and redundant work, and reduce human error and risk – all while maximizing productivity and effectiveness.

Just as important, a work management platform can help

optimize your workforce over the long term. You can improve employee experiences to drive engagement in your organization. You can also attract and retain digital-native individuals early in their careers. These are the employees who will carry your institutional knowledge and culture forward as more experienced staff age out of the workforce.

## Berkeley Lab Optimizes Conference Travel and Expenses

Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory conducts research on energy and the environment to solve pressing scientific problems. Its 3,200 scientists and engineers participate in a wide range of conferences and need a streamlined way to track travel requests, approvals, budgets and reimbursements.

Berkeley Lab was already using the Smartsheet work management platform for a variety of purposes. It made perfect sense to extend use to managing conference processes.

The organization now relies on Smartsheet to manage conference requests and budgets. It has the tools to easily track approvals and which team members are attending which events. It can create a budget in minutes and continually monitor expenses for transparency and consistency.

**“ Many departments across Berkeley Lab have used Smartsheet to coordinate different processes and projects. ... Smartsheet is a perfect mix of flexibility and control. ”**

*—Tom Gallant, Senior Administrative Supervisor, Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory*

## 4 Empowerment and Innovation Through Trust

A work management platform can empower employees and encourage innovation. Given the right capabilities, employees can improve processes to become more engaged and productive. These empowered individuals and teams take ownership of projects to drive continual improvement.

Key to achieving these advantages is trust. The most experienced employees and subject-matter experts closest to the work know what needs to be done and how to achieve their mission objectives. When empowered with “no-code” development capabilities, they can build their own forms, workflows, and automations to optimize internal operations and deliver more effective services to constituencies – even if they don’t have a technical background. This also allows technical development teams to focus on more strategic application development.

Across industries, 41% of non-IT employees now customize or build data or technology solutions.<sup>5</sup>

Federal leaders are taking note, as 89% believe such technology democratization is becoming crucial to igniting innovation across their organization, and 91% say their agencies are now innovating with urgency.<sup>6</sup>

89% 

Federal executives who believe technology democratization is becoming crucial to igniting innovation across their organization<sup>6</sup>

41% 

Non-IT employees who now customize or build data or technology solutions<sup>5</sup>

91% 

Federal executives who say their agencies are now innovating with urgency<sup>6</sup>



## 5 Driving Smarter Decisions and Better Outcomes

A comprehensive work management platform drives smarter agency decisions and better constituency outcomes. By eliminating data, project, and process silos, you gain visibility across the organization. You can understand how your agency is running, identify issues and opportunities for improvement, and quickly pivot when needed.

It is essential that your work management solution provide proper security controls. In particular, you need visibility into where data resides, where it's being shared, and who can access it. That way, you and your constituencies can have confidence that sensitive information will remain protected.

The key to driving smart decisions and outcomes is a single environment for gathering, sharing, and analyzing project and process data. Your solution should enable you to track leading indicators to identify bottlenecks, measure improvements, and course-correct if necessary.

Easy-to-use dashboards should provide real-time information to all stakeholders. On-demand data analysis should enable further insights that support timely, accurate decision-making. Integrations should bring together data and information from multiple tools into one place to create a single source of truth.

Finally, your work management solution should enable both on-demand and automated reporting to agency executives. This ensures that leadership and team members have visibility into day-to-day performance and leading indicators, operations become more

transparent and accountable, and stakeholders have the knowledge they need for better outcomes. You achieve the results you want, and you help drive public trust in government.

### GSA Streamlines Project Communication and Visualizations

The U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) helps manage the basic functioning of federal agencies. Its Integrated Award Environment (IAE) facilitates the awards process for conducting government business – including special programs such as the American Recovery Plan Act of 2021 (ARPA-21).

IAE depends on the Smartsheet work management platform to streamline communication, visualize project data and status, and provide clear and timely reporting to leadership.

For instance, the solution enables a single tracking number for ARPA-21 across the organization, saving time and avoiding confusion. It also brings together data from literally thousands of disconnected spreadsheets for easier and better insights.

Dashboards are continually updated with real-time data for always-accurate insights and a foundation for briefings and presentations. And with Smartsheet, updates and reminders are fully automated, avoiding time-consuming manual workflows.

**“ Automating the process of sending out reminder emails for me and the four directors has saved 2 1/2 hours a day. ... That’s \$71,500 a year that can now be redirected toward actual project management or developing new projects. ”**

*—Tracie D. Strack, Special Projects Manager, U.S. General Services Administration*



# 6 Benefiting From a Work Management Platform

Smartsheet Gov enables federal agencies to manage work, projects and programs at scale. Purpose-built for the federal government on AWS GovCloud, Smartsheet Gov provides a FedRAMP and DISA IL4 authorized modern work management platform. It's the first collaboration solution built with the strict security and compliance standards of the federal government in mind.

## Enabling end-to-end project management, Smartsheet Gov gives you the tools to:

- Digitize and automate workflows to eliminate manual process steps, manual errors, and redundant work.
- Improve process efficiency and team productivity.
- Execute projects faster and more cost-effectively.
- Scale to meet changing needs.

## For team and executive decision-making, the solution empowers you to:

- Bridge data and workflow silos across systems and organizations.
- Deliver easy-to-understand dashboards and reports to key stakeholders.
- Digitally connect dashboards to where work is actually executed.
- Meet requirements for data reporting to provide executive-level insights.
- Support real-time, data-driven stakeholder decisions.

With Smartsheet Gov, your agency can eliminate organizational silos, accelerate workflows, make more informed decisions, and achieve the future of federal work today.

## Army Corps of Engineers Integrates Project Systems and Data

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers designs and constructs military and civil projects to strengthen national security and protect against disasters. As part of its operations, it obtains rights of entry (ROE) from landowners to conduct property surveys.

The Corps sought a more sophisticated way to manage more than 2,000 ROEs. In particular, they needed to integrate ROEs with geospatial information system (GIS) used for mapmaking. The ROEs also had to include detailed, real-time notes for field workers – in one case, alerting them to the presence of a large alligator on a property.

Smartsheet provided a transformative solution. The Corps was able to quickly incorporate all its ROE data into the platform. APIs enabled various datasets in Smartsheet and the GIS to talk to one another. The result? The team's work is now more accurate, collaborative and effective.

## For data-sharing and collaboration, the solution enables you to:

- Keep track of all aspects of projects.
- Capture and share project data.
- Drive collaboration within teams and across organizations.
- Gain full visibility from one location.

**“ Now we have live data in Smartsheet and in our GIS ... [and we're] able to report in a way we weren't before.**

*—Kelsey Ciarrocca, Cartographer, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers*

# Ready to achieve the future of work right now?

Learn how your agency can benefit from the work management platform purpose-built for the federal government.

Smartsheet Gov Demo

[smartsheet.com/contact/smartsheet-fed-gov-demo](https://smartsheet.com/contact/smartsheet-fed-gov-demo)

## About Smartsheet

Smartsheet (NYSE: SMAR) is a modern work management platform that empowers companies of all sizes to scale and deliver value as business requirements evolve. Backed by enterprise-grade security, Smartsheet is used by more than 80% of the companies in the Fortune 500 to implement, manage, and automate processes across a broad array of departments and use cases.

To learn more about Smartsheet, visit [www.smartsheet.com](https://www.smartsheet.com).

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<sup>1</sup>"Get Ahead of Change by Empowering Employees With New Operational Cultures and Tooling Strategies," 451 Research, February 2021

<sup>2</sup>"Gartner Survey Reveals a 44% Rise in Workers' Use of Collaboration Tools Since 2019," Gartner, August 2021

<sup>3</sup>"Global Enterprise Collaboration Market Size, Share and Industry Trends Analysis Report," KBV Research, April 2022

<sup>4</sup>"Linked-up Government: Building Connections for Greater Impact," Deloitte, March 2022

<sup>5</sup>"Gartner Forecasts Worldwide Low-Code Development Technologies Market to Grow 23% in 2021," Gartner, February 2021

<sup>6</sup>"Empowering Innovators in the Workforce," Accenture, August 2021



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