



JOHNS HOPKINS
UNIVERSITY

GovEx

Unlock the
power of **data**
for public good.

2022
ANNUAL
REPORT

CONTENTS

Opening Letter from Executive Director Amy Holmes	1
About GovEx	3
Our Team	
Our Impact	
2022 in Review	5
Director Spotlights	
The world's most trusted data surveillance tool - Coronavirus Resource Center (CRC) - evolves	
GovEx Portfolio	7
Strategic Focus	
• Building data leadership tailored to city needs	
• Partnering to catalyze progress and lessons	
• Deploying research and analytics tools that help leaders solve and serve	
• Forging a data-fluent workforce	
Hometown Touchstones	
What's Ahead: Priorities for 2023	13

Letter from Executive Director Amy Edwards Holmes

In June, 2022, I was honored to be asked to lead the Bloomberg Center for Government Excellence (GovEx). Since our founding in 2015, GovEx has become a global leader empowering governments to get smarter and make better decisions with data.

Like many of my colleagues at GovEx, my enthusiasm for data is rooted in seeing firsthand the human impact of direct service delivery and the avoidable disconnect between government and the people. Well-intended programs are often designed without data and direct input from the residents that they are designed to serve.

A case in point – early in my career, I worked for a Head Start program in rural Appalachia and was quickly overwhelmed by the unmet needs of the children and families we were serving. I was privileged to work with innovative social workers and teachers who developed unconventional ways to meet our families' needs. We found creative sources for food, services, and supplies from the community to augment the program to help children. These early lessons have fueled my career.

I've never been willing to accept the status quo – always believing that we could better meet the needs of our communities by gathering data and talking to the people we serve. These simple steps can make powerful change in communities. After all data represents critical information, shedding light on who is impacted, what is needed, where, when, and often why. Simply put, data-driven governance is governing with the lights on.

Over time, I learned that many governments have large volumes of data that are locked away in antiquated systems stranded from decision-makers, leaving them blind to valuable information and insights about the people they serve. As technology has evolved to free and merge data, this disconnect is no longer a barrier. The real barrier is that not



“I’ve never been willing to accept the status quo – always believing that we could better meet the needs of our communities by gathering data and talking to the people we serve.”

enough public officials know how to use data to help people and solve problems. And when they do, the lights turn on and everything changes. This realization has fueled my mission for more than 20 years to help governments unlock the power of data to design and improve programs to meet people's needs.

This path led me to imagine and implement groundbreaking reforms in the U.S. and to inspire more open, accountable data-informed governments across the globe. I was privileged to lead the Task Force on Government Performance at the Senate Budget Committee, which steered important reforms across the U.S. Federal Government. While in the Senate, I helped elected leaders advance policies that modernized the performance management framework for all Federal agencies to produce more timely data targeted to the highest-priorities. This included helping to write the first open-data law in the U.S. – \$6 trillion of financial transactions annually to allow taxpayers to clearly trace how funds are allocated and then distributed to communities. To be sure the goals of the law were met, I went to the U.S. Department of the Treasury to successfully lead the implementation of this historic law.

My career has taken me from the rural frontlines of family services to the top levels of government, providing a raft of lessons, experiences and insights about what is possible. I am so excited to bring that experience to the mission of GovEx. I look forward to working with all our partners to continue to help the public sector use data to improve people's quality of life and address intolerable disparities in opportunity and equity.

Amy Edwards Holmes

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

**Bloomberg Center for Government Excellence
Johns Hopkins University**

“My career has taken me from the rural frontlines of family services to the top levels of government, providing a raft of lessons, experiences and insights about what is possible.”

About GovEx

GovEx helps governments use data to make informed decisions and improve people's quality of life.

In April of 2015, Johns Hopkins University launched GovEx to support [What Works Cities](#), a [Bloomberg Philanthropies](#) initiative that helps cities use data and evidence to tackle their most pressing challenges. Since that time, GovEx has worked with more than 410 governments around the world, and shared a wealth of information about best data practices and policies.

Our Team

Adam Lee, Akeish Forsythe, Alexx Baerwald Simard, Andrea Calderón, Andrew Nicklin, Angel Aliseda, Angela Czerlanis, Ashley Howell, Beverly Williams, Chance Carter, Cortni Desir, Dane Galloway, Diana Estefania Estrada Alamo, Emily Pond, Evan Serpick, Gabriel Alvaro, Heather Bree, Jacquie Greiff, Jessica Arends, Kel Wang, Kristina Baiamonte, Latricia Boone, Lauren Kaskey, Laurie Sears, Lisa Twiss, Mark Woo, Marlene Caceres, Mary Colleen Buettner, Mary Conway Vaughan, Meg Burke, Melanie Veneron, Melissa Schigoda, Michael Benison, Mykella Auld, Promise Maswanganye, Rachel Bloom, Randy Tan, Rodolfo Santamaria, Rudy de Leon Dinglas, Sara Bertran de Lis, Sarah Buzogany, Stephen O'Connor, Tiffany C. Davis, Tim Mincey, Tim Dodd, Tomeria Jordan, Vidushani Jayalal

Our team of proud “data nerds” are passionate about government and believes it can accomplish great things for residents when given the tools and skills to use data to inform the best decisions. We know the more government can collect, manage, and analyze quality data, the more clearly City Halls can see and know what's needed and deliver better results.



About GovEx

Team Leadership



TIFFANY DAVIS

**Director, Bloomberg Center for Government Excellence
Oversees technical assistance and training to local governments**

“Now more than ever, city leaders must be committed to using data and evidence to solve their city’s most pressing challenges and willing to establish routine practices that put data at the forefront of all policy decisions. My work focuses on equipping city leaders with the skills and tools to be responsible data stewards and build a data collective that goes beyond City Hall and engages residents to make effective and equitable policy decisions.”

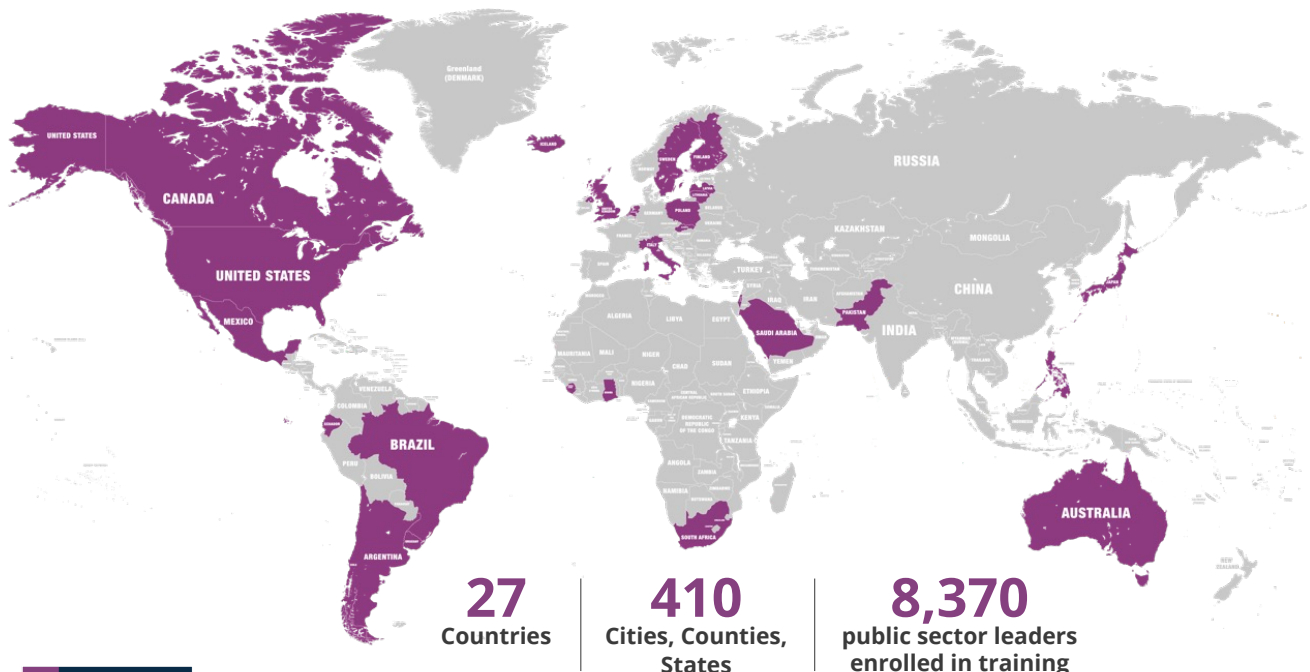


SARA BERTRAN DE LIS

Director of GovEx Analytics | Responsible for developing GovEx tools, resources, and knowledge sharing through advanced analytics

“With vast amounts of data available and collected daily from citizens, local governments have the opportunity and duty to make responsible use of this data to improve services, policies, and ultimately to support their residents. Through the work that we do here at GovEx, I am proud to lead and support the efforts to empower public servants with tools, resources, and knowledge to extract value out of this data so that communities throughout can thrive.”

Our Impact



2022 in Review

As global and national-level political leaders become more divided and hamstrung, mayors and local leaders have become the level of government more people trust to innovate, solve, and serve. GovEx is privileged to support a growing number of city leaders who are harnessing the power of data to identify and respond to challenges and opportunities.

GovEx helps equip City Halls to use data to succeed in incredibly challenging and critically important jobs. Cities investing in data infrastructure, tools, and workforce capacity are in a much better position to anticipate needs and opportunities and make the kinds of connections that deliver change and progress.

It's no surprise that a recent [survey](#) found that cities with higher public-sector innovation capacity and data use practices have higher levels of city and life satisfaction. When mayors know what is needed, where, when, and why, City Halls can deliver value.

To advance public sector data use, GovEx is focused on building the critical capacities needed to unlock the power of data. The strategy focuses on four areas:

1. Building data leadership tailored to city needs
2. Deploying research and analytics tools that help leaders solve and serve
3. Forging a data-fluent workforce
4. Partnering to catalyze progress and lessons

As this report will show, cities' investments in data to better understand and respond to needs is paying off in powerful ways for residents. Using the power of data, mayors are making remarkable progress on a spectrum of issues from trash to transportation, safety, and even climate change. Unlocking the power of data for public good is now widely recognized as imperative for successful governing.

As this report will show, cities' investments in data to better understand and respond to needs, is paying off in powerful ways for residents.

Nowhere was this more obvious than in government's role in the COVID pandemic response, recovery, and now building resilience and addressing the long-standing inequities exacerbated during the pandemic. The pandemic forced a reckoning over how government and academic leaders collect, manage, and share critical public health data in real time to meet immense, high-stakes demand.

This reckoning informed GovEx's work to create the Johns Hopkins University Coronavirus Resource Center (CRC), which became the world's most trusted surveillance tool for reliable, real-time data about the pandemic (see sidebar, page 6).

The data's infinite value fueled short-term and long-term decision making at personal and public levels.

This kind of public engagement around data for high-stakes decision making has the potential to turn the tide on government's ability to engage the public, and build and maintain trust. This is the next frontier and vision for what's possible with data-informed governance – civic engagement in data to hold the public sector more accountable and restore trust and participation.

The following GovEx Annual report highlights key accomplishments and lessons from 2022 and how they're shaping GovEx's work in 2023 and beyond.

World's Most Trusted Data Surveillance Tool: Coronavirus Resource Center (CRC)

In March, 2023, Johns Hopkins University will cease the ongoing collection and reporting of COVID-19 data as part of the Coronavirus Resource Center (CRC), three years after the institution embarked on the unprecedented effort of tracking an unfolding pandemic in near real time.

The CRC became the world's most trusted surveillance tool for reliable, real-time data about the pandemic, sustaining 1.2 billion total site views among 165 million users. The pioneering public service has operated since the novel coronavirus first began spreading globally in January 2020 to provide the public, journalists, and policymakers across the United States and around the world with visualizations of cases and deaths as they were being reported.

GovEx led the creation of the CRC's searchable COVID-19 dashboard, which mapped virus cases, infection rates, deaths, vaccinations and other key trends, such as disparities in the rate of disease spread and health outcomes related to factors like race, income, and access to health insurance. The data's infinite value fueled short-term and long-term decision making at personal and public levels.

The CRC initiative was led almost entirely by women and drew on the expertise and collaboration of researchers and faculty from across Johns Hopkins, including the Bloomberg School of Public Health, Whiting School of Engineering, Applied Physics Laboratory, School of Medicine, and Sheridan Libraries, in addition to GovEx.



The trailblazing resource won the prestigious [Lasker-Bloomberg Public Service Award](#) for lighting “a path toward informed policy guidelines and personal choices amidst a morass of misinformation.”

Johns Hopkins' [comprehensive pandemic data will remain free and accessible](#) to researchers, journalists, and the public for all data reported between Jan. 22, 2020, and March 10, 2023. In addition, the [interdisciplinary group of faculty](#) and experts in data science, epidemiology, medicine, public health policy, and vaccinology that advised and led the CRC will continue to provide analysis and guidance regarding the ongoing pandemic.

GovEx Portfolio

GovEx's growing group of talent is leading a portfolio of programs that build the critical problem-solving capacities needed to unlock progress and prosperity in cities and beyond. Our strategy focuses on four key areas:

1. Building data leadership tailored to city needs

GovEx is a proud partner on Bloomberg Philanthropies City Data Alliance (CDA), expanding its work to help cities supercharge data capacity to better serve residents' needs. In 2022, GovEx collaborated with Bloomberg Philanthropies to convene the inaugural class of 22 mayors from North, Central, and South America to create a force of city leaders using data to inform municipal operations and improve services.

CDA's goal is to identify a total of 100 mayors who are the most sophisticated, ambitious, and advanced at harnessing data, and help them set a new standard for local governments committed to using data to power better results for residents.

Participating mayors receive a six-month acceleration program, including executive education and individualized city coaching and consultation, as well as an up-to-12-month investment to improve critical data practice.

CDA's Mayoral and Senior Team Training is helping cities establish a comprehensive citywide data strategy, which:

- Creates a standard for when and where to disaggregate data to better understand needs
- Deploys a data workforce plan to assess, build, recruit, and sustain the capacity to use data.
- Develops or expands a centralized city data platform.



The progress and potential of the mayor's work in the City Data Alliance continues to gain steam. All are building something few city governments have—a citywide data strategy with detailed plans for training municipal workers at all levels to use data in their work. These and other policies are getting hardwired into City Halls.



2. Partnering to catalyze progress and lessons

The City Data Alliance is a prime example of how GovEx partners with an ecosystem of powerhouse academic and philanthropic leaders to deliver value to City Halls. Bloomberg Philanthropies convenes this network, which includes Johns Hopkins University, The Government Performance Lab at the Harvard University Kennedy School, Public Digital, and the Behavioral Insights Team. We are proud of our ability to be a nimble, “go-to” player and partner, collaborating in ways that maximize talent and economize resources to create initiatives that unlock data for public good.

This innovative work in our hometown of Baltimore (see “Hometown Touchstones,” page 12) grounds us in “the why” of focusing on data use. These touchstones are proof points for what is possible worldwide and fuels our sense of purpose.

The academic and nonprofit world is teeming with talent, experience, ideas, and innovation to help the public sector deliver better results for residents. Following are just a few examples of GovEx partnerships across the academic and nonprofit sectors:

What Works Cities certification

What Works Cities (WWC) certification is the standard of excellence for well-managed, data-driven local governments. GovEx has partnered with Results for America to help 55 cities move towards certification by supporting local leaders leverage “what works” to increase government effectiveness and deliver stronger results for their residents. In 2022, GovEx facilitated four 4-week trainings focused on helping city participants become WWC certified. GovEx provided technical assistance focused on data governance, data quality, performance analytics, and data sharing.

Opportunity Accelerator

Led by Results for America, the Opportunity Accelerator (OA) initiative is a new collaboration with GovEx, Code for America, the Harvard Kennedy School Government Performance Lab, and the W. Haywood Burns Institute.

OA provides local governments with support to build their capacity to understand and advance key community priorities, centered on economic mobility and racial equity. For example, in Oakland-Alameda County, Calif, OA is helping city and county governments to reduce homelessness, support individuals exiting the criminal justice system, and improve housing stability and economic wellbeing of Black families and individuals.



CITY IMPACT SPOTLIGHT

Baton Rouge

Baton Rouge continues to build on its award-winning [Open Data BR](#), which makes data more accessible across departments for more efficient, equitable city services.

Working with GovEx, leaders developed a citywide data strategy, which helps ensure data-informed decision making only grows stronger in the future. This includes:

- Formation of a subcommittee of the Data Governance Committee for developing a demographic data standard
- Full city data inventory and quality assessment to create an internal data platform
- Launch of Performance Management program and data upskilling training program

“Working with the City Data Alliance, fellow mayors, and my senior team has been invaluable in sharpening my vision for a data-driven Baton Rouge and the role I play in that effort. The Data Alliance continues to provide highly specific training, resources, and guidance for how to make our visions a reality. [The citywide data strategy] will improve our work with data and analytics for years to come.”

MAYOR-PRESIDENT
SHARON WESTON BROOME

StriveTogether

GovEx was pleased to partner with StriveTogether, a nonprofit focused on cradle-to-career strategies to improve outcomes and reduce racial and socioeconomic disparities.

The collaboration created the Data Track Pilot – an initiative to understand how current data functions perform in place-based partnerships and whether current GovEx courses, geared toward government audiences, could help improve data competencies at both individual and organizational levels of place-based partnerships.

Bloomberg Harvard City Leadership Initiative Data Track

GovEx works with Bloomberg Center for Cities at Harvard University to help city leaders use data to set goals, improve performance, monitor and evaluate progress, and communicate results to make city operations more effective, efficient, equitable, and accountable to residents they serve.

3. Deploying research and analytics tools that help leaders solve and serve

Having the right tools for the data use job is imperative for success. GovEx is working to provide City Halls with a sophisticated instrument panel of research and analytics tools to help them better understand what’s needed, for whom, where, when, and why.

The Johns Hopkins University Coronavirus Resource Center (CRC) is an excellent example of a valuable analytics tool for decision making. Having become the world’s most trusted surveillance tool for reliable, real-time data about the pandemic with millions of users and more than a billion views. The dashboard demonstrated how a full spectrum of stakeholders from residents and employers to school administrators, health care, transportation, and law enforcement leaders all accessed data on an almost daily basis to make informed decisions.

CITY IMPACT SPOTLIGHT

Rio de Janeiro

Rio is a model for creating a data ecosystem that is scalable and processes data effectively. The city has learned a lot about the importance of training people and making a strong case to political leaders about the value of CDA-supported exchanges between cities. Rio mayor Eduardo Paes and his staff will continue to focus on building the capacity of the city departments’ data teams.





As COVID data became more erratic and complicated, the [Center's decision to slow publishing information](#) became an important teachable moment about the importance of reliable reporting and high-quality source data (see page 6).

Perhaps its most important legacy is its example of government's ability to build and maintain public trust. Research showed that people accessing the data relied on the information to make decisions to protect themselves and others and better understood, supported and trusted evidence-based government policies and mandates.

GovEx looks forward to developing more research and analytics tools for City Halls to use to guide equity-focused decision making and solve long-standing public sector problems.

4. Forging a data-fluent workforce

The job of harnessing data for public good is continually evolving and advancing. Public sector leaders face the challenge of human resource policies and regulations that are being outpaced by advances in technology and data-use innovation. The antiquated structure of government is reflected in the workforce - reinforcing silos and missing opportunities to collaborate and maximize talent.

Through CDA, GovEx is helping cities create workforce plans to assess, build, recruit, and sustain workforce capacity to use data. The goal is to mobilize the municipal workforce across departments to collect, analyze, and use data to improve outcomes for city residents.



CITY IMPACT SPOTLIGHT

Fortaleza, Brazil

Fortaleza is a leader in creating a centralized data platform accessible by departments citywide.

The city is integrating more than ten systems related to solid waste management. Mayor José Sarto Nogueira and his team are creating three products to make key data actionable:

- A dashboard with the main indicators for the integrated management of Urban Cleaning;
- A city map of the solid waste collection circuit in real time via GPS;
- Integration of information from different channels of communication between residents and City Hall about waste management.

“In City Data Alliance, ‘data’ means information, knowing who we are, how many we are, so that, with this data, we can make qualified decisions. Here, we reap very positive results to apply in a short and medium space of time.”

—José Sarto Nogueira Moreira, Fortaleza Mayor

Baltimore’s comprehensive effort to create and sustain a data-driven workforce provides an instructive example. To better understand and address opportunities for retention of existing data talent, a collaborative group, including representatives from Human Resources, the Office of Performance Innovation, Information Technology, and the Chief Data Officer, undertook a review of data positions across the city, and surveyed staff to identify common concerns about and ideas for creating more opportunities for improvement. One issue that widely surfaced was the lack of opportunities for advancement within data roles.

The group proposed a new structure, with tiered job categories for data analysts, data scientists, data engineers, and data managers, among many others, which received approval from the Board of Estimates and is anticipated to go into effect in 2023, drastically increasing retention opportunities. The career advancement proposal complements the citywide data curriculum the city created with GovEx to continually increase internal data knowledge across the municipal workforce.

Preparing all levels of the city’s workforce to value and use data ensures a culture of continuous improvement and accountability.



CITY IMPACT SPOTLIGHT

Detroit

Mayor Mike Duggan and his team have created a standard for disaggregated demographic data, allowing the city to surface biases and disparate impact.

Using ARPA funding and reporting requirements as a catalyst, Detroit is working on creating a Demographic Data Standard that establishes recommended methods for collecting self-reported information on race, ethnicity, gender, language, disability status, sexual orientation, income, and education.

CITY IMPACT SPOTLIGHT

Chattanooga, TN

The City of Chattanooga has drafted a “Data and Equity Governance toolkit.” The toolkit provides multiple resources to center equity in the city’s data-informed work. The next step will be for their data governance community of practice to review and offer feedback and to work collaboratively with their Office of Equity to align efforts. Mayor Tim Kelly will also share the toolkit with the public for feedback before finalizing and launching the guidance.



Hometown Touchstones

GovEx's work to unlock the power of data in our own backyard is rewarding and grounding.

Following are a few examples of the work underway and accomplishments in GovEx's hometown ecosystem.



Baltimore Work

As Baltimore's largest anchor institution, Johns Hopkins University has long recognized that its success is inextricably linked to the success and well-being of its city and its neighbors. GovEx's work in Baltimore started in 2015 with the Cities Outcome/Stat project that created a set of measurable indicators aligned to the mayor's priorities. The work continued with a series of evidence-based governance projects through four mayoral administrations. GovEx partnered with the city to provide technical assistance and data and performance management training to spur innovation within City

Hall, leverage data and evidence to improve resident outcomes, and better engage with the community.

For example, GovEx partnered with the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health to inventory the condition of Maryland schools, revealing serious disparities in the condition of Baltimore City schools compared to the rest of the state. The results can help target budgets to areas of highest need.

GovEx also worked with Baltimore City's Chief Data Officer, Justin Elszasz, to develop a workforce strategy for recruiting, retaining, and upskilling data talent across the city's workforce. This work included developing a four-course data practices curriculum that will be marketed and deployed across the city. This is the first effort of its kind, and can be a model for other cities to ensure that data use in service of the public is central to every employee's work.

Baltimore's Chief Data Officer is also launching an AI and Ethics committee, and has asked GovEx to consult on best practices and policy guidance.



Johns Hopkins University/SNF Partnership

To bolster the Coronavirus Resource Center's (CRC) publicly accessible and actionable data created during the pandemic and leverage it to address long-standing health disparities, the Stavros Niarchos Foundation's (SNF) Nostos Conference featured a JHU-branded Interactive Health Data Experience that provided a 3-D, 360° tour of the JHU CRC data maps.

The dynamic, interactive datasets in the exhibit highlighted acute health inequalities and was designed to encourage discussions among the international gathering of health and technology experts about how to address them.

The dynamic, interactive datasets in the exhibit highlighted acute health inequalities and was designed to encourage discussions among the international gathering of health and technology experts about how to address them.

What's Ahead: Priorities for 2023

As we reflect on the kind of emerging data leadership that unleashes the power of data for public good, we see more and more opportunities to equip City Halls with more resources and knowledge to succeed in exceptionally challenging and important jobs—at scale.

By the numbers, mayors effectively using data have the power to move the world forward, galvanizing equity, talent, and big ideas. Consider that [more than half the global population \(68% by 2050\) is affected by policies established by mayors and carried out by city leaders.](#)

Over the next year, GovEx will be focused on the following key priorities:

- Deliver world-class training, coaching, and technical assistance to public sector leaders that will increase the use of data to improve resident outcomes and services.
- Conduct research to examine the current data workforce capacity for municipal governments and examine the post-pandemic workforce culture.
- Deepen our bench of subject matter experts to help validate and advance our work.
- Modernize and improve the GovEx Academy – our online training platform – and offer more courses to support global learners.
- Release data analytic products and tools that will guide equity-focused decision making and solve long-standing public sector problems.
- Develop tools and public sector guidelines to ensure the equitable use of data that will prevent bias and disparities in opportunity.

The past year demonstrated how public engagement around data for high-stakes decision making has the potential to turn the tide on government's ability to engage the public, and build and maintain trust. Accessible, relevant, actionable data is empowering at the personal and public levels.

This is the next frontier and vision for what's possible with data-informed governance – civic engagement in data to hold the public sector more accountable and restore trust and participation.

Mayors using data-informed governance are at the vanguard of problem solving, and creating equity and opportunity. GovEx is proud of our work with City Halls to leverage data to make progress against some of the world's most intractable problems.