



# Directive on Digital Talent

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# Directive on Digital Talent

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## 1. Effective date

1.1 This directive takes effect on April 1, 2023.

## 2. Authorities

2.1 This directive is issued under the authority of section 7 of the *Financial Administration Act* and section 31 of the *Public Service Employment Act* and subsection 4.5.1.1 of the *Policy on Service and Digital*.

2.2 This directive must be read in conjunction with other policy requirements, including but not limited to, the *Policy on the Planning and Management of Investments*, the *Directive on the Management of Procurement*, the *Appointment Policy* and the *Policy on People Management*.

## 3. Objectives and expected results

3.1 The objective of this directive is that the Government of Canada has a strong and diverse digital public service workforce to deliver digital services in a modern, secure, cost-effective, coordinated, data-informed, and sustainable way.

3.2 The expected results of this directive are as follows:

3.2.1 The Government of Canada has the workforce capacity it needs to deliver digital services in accordance with the objectives of the *Policy on Service and Digital*;

3.2.2 Departments apply a cohesive, consistent approach to talent sourcing that bridges and balances the various requirements associated with human resources, procurement, finance and operations, and is in line with central guidance;

3.2.3 Departments have the data needed to enable evidence-based decisions on talent management and workforce development;

3.2.4 Departments are supported in meeting digital talent requirements through government-wide guidance, business intelligence, services and tools; and

- 3.2.5 The Government of Canada's digital community demonstrates measurable progress in diversity, inclusion, and equity advancement in the areas of recruitment, retention, development, and career progression.

## 4. Requirements

### Planning and reporting

- 4.1 Departmental chief information officers (CIOs) and senior designated officials responsible for information technology (IT), cybersecurity, digital, data or service, in collaboration with other departmental officials, as appropriate, are responsible for the following:
- 4.1.1 Participating in annual government-wide planning and reporting exercises for digital talent, in accordance with the *Mandatory Procedures on Digital Talent*, including completing the annual digital talent survey; and
  - 4.1.2 For new digital initiatives that expect or require a substantial digital talent component for delivery, engaging with the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat, Office of the Chief Information Officer of Canada (TBS-OCIO), throughout the planning process, in accordance with the *Mandatory Procedures on Digital Talent*.

### Digital talent sourcing

- 4.2 Departmental CIOs and senior designated officials responsible for IT, cybersecurity, digital, data, or service, in collaboration with heads of human resources and other departmental officials as appropriate, are responsible for:
- 4.2.1 Being familiar with TBS-OCIO-led centralized services and tools for digital talent recruitment, mobility, training and development, executive appointment and placement, and generic work streams and standardized job descriptions related to digital talent, in accordance with the *Mandatory Procedures on Digital Talent*;
  - 4.2.2 Collaborating with TBS-OCIO in the coordination of government-wide recruitment and upskilling efforts, in accordance with the *Mandatory Procedures on Digital Talent*; and
  - 4.2.3 Implementing measures identified by TBS-OCIO and collaborating with TBS-OCIO in the advancement and progress tracking of diversity, inclusion and equity in the recruitment and development of the Government of Canada's digital community.
- 4.3 Departmental CIOs and senior designated officials responsible for IT, cybersecurity, digital, data, or service, in collaboration with senior designated official for the management of procurement and other departmental officials as appropriate, are responsible for:

- 4.3.1 Ensuring that TBS-OCIO is informed, in accordance with the *Mandatory Procedures on Digital Talent*, at the time when any contract for digital talent or IT-related services (including call-up against an established contracting vehicle) is submitted to departmental procurement authorities for processing; and
- 4.3.2 Engaging TBS-OCIO, in accordance with the *Mandatory Procedures on Digital Talent*, prior to concluding that a shortage of available or qualified digital talent is the primary rationale for contracting-out.

## **Digital talent development**

- 4.4 Departmental CIOs and senior designated officials responsible for IT, cybersecurity, digital, data, or service, in collaboration with other departmental officials as appropriate, are responsible for:
  - 4.4.1 Enabling employee development, training, and upskilling, including encouraging employee participation in TBS-OCIO coordinated training and upskilling opportunities;
  - 4.4.2 Encouraging employees to participate in government-wide digital talent management activities identified by TBS-OCIO, in line with departmental talent management processes; and
  - 4.4.3 Ensuring that diversity, equity and inclusion are prioritized in the development of departmental digital talent strategies, and progress is made against any existing equity gaps.

## **Digital executive roles and structures**

- 4.5 In support of deputy head responsibilities for EX group organization and classification, and in support of the requirement in subsection 4.5.2.3 of the *Policy on Service and Digital* to consult with the CIO of Canada before appointing, deploying, or otherwise replacing the departmental CIO, the delegated authorities responsible for the appointment of the departmental CIO, the designated senior official for IT, or equivalent senior digital role are responsible for:
  - 4.5.1 Engaging TBS-OCIO, in accordance with the *Mandatory Procedures on Digital Talent*, on the appointment, deployment, or otherwise replacement of the departmental CIO or equivalent senior digital role, including in cases where the role is filled by non-EX employees; and
  - 4.5.2 Engaging TBS-OCIO when making changes to digital executive organizational structures, particularly at the C-suite level, to help ensure clarity and consistency on roles and relationships of C-suite digital leaders.
- 4.6 Managers, for each subordinate executive, are responsible for the following:

- 4.6.1 Supporting government-wide talent management of digital leaders by taking TBS-OCIO guidance into account and collaborating with TBS-OCIO on executive performance management for those falling under the purview of the CIO of Canada's mandate.

## Enabling conditions

- 4.7 Departmental CIOs and senior designated officials responsible for IT, cybersecurity, digital, data, or service, in collaboration with heads of human resources, senior designated officials for the management of procurement and other departmental officials as appropriate, are responsible for the following:
- 4.7.1 Taking TBS-OCIO guidance on generic roles and levels into account when determining requirements related to the recruitment and appointment of digital talent and the establishment of organizational structures;
- 4.7.2 Enabling managers to leverage flexibilities as allowed by legislation, policies, and standards, including those outlined in *Mandatory Procedures on Digital Talent*, to plan for, develop, and source the talent necessary to deliver digital services in a timely way;
- 4.7.3 Ensuring managers, human resources officials and contracting authorities, to whom responsibility is assigned or authority is delegated, are familiar with the requirements in this *Directive* and in the *Mandatory Procedures on Digital Talent*; and
- 4.7.4 Balancing risk as a cohesive whole, meaning that the risk of applying certain flexibilities or solutions is carefully weighed against the impact of failing to deliver digital services.

## 5. Roles of other government organizations

- 5.1 The roles and responsibilities of other government organizations are described in section 5 of the *Policy on Service and Digital*.

## 6. Application

- 6.1 This directive applies to the organizations listed in section 6 of the *Policy on Service and Digital*.
- 6.2 This directive does not apply to separate agencies as defined in section 11.1 of the *Financial Administration Act* (Schedule V):
- Canada Revenue Agency
  - Canada Energy Regulator

- Canadian Food Inspection Agency
- Canadian Institutes of Health Research
- Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission
- Canadian Security Intelligence Service
- Communications Security Establishment Canada
- Financial Consumer Agency of Canada
- Financial Transactions and Reports Analysis Centre of Canada
- Invest in Canada Hub
- National Film Board
- National Research Council Canada
- National Security and Intelligence Review Agency Secretariat
- Natural Sciences and Engineering Research of Canada
- Northern Pipeline Agency Canada
- Office of the Auditor General of Canada
- The Correctional Investigator Canada
- Office of the Intelligence Commissioner
- Office of the Superintendent of Financial Institutions Canada
- Parks Canada
- Polar Knowledge Canada
- Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada

## 6.3 Agents of Parliament

6.3.1 The following organizations are considered agents of Parliament for the purposes of the directive:

- Office of the Chief Electoral Officer
- Office of the Commissioner of Lobbying of Canada
- Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages
- Office of the Information Commissioner of Canada
- Office of the Privacy Commissioner of Canada
- Office of the Public Sector Integrity Commissioner of Canada

6.3.2 Agents of Parliament are solely responsible for monitoring and ensuring compliance with the policy within their organizations, as well as for responding to cases of non-compliance in accordance with any Treasury Board of Canada instruments that address the management of compliance.

6.3.3 With regard to agents of Parliament, the following subsections do not apply:

- subsection 4.1;
- subsection 4.2;
- subsection 4.3; and
- subsection 4.5.

6.3.4 The following agents of Parliament do not appear listed under the schedules to the *Financial Administration Act*, and are considered fully exempt from the directive:

- Office of the Conflict of Interest and Ethics Commissioner
- Office of the Parliamentary Budget Officer

## 7. References

7.1 The references in relation to this directive are described in section 8 of the *Policy on Service and Digital*.

## 8. Enquiries

8.1 For interpretation of any aspect of this directive, contact Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat Public Enquiries.

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# Appendix: Mandatory Procedures on Digital Talent

## A.1 Effective date

A.1.1 These procedures take effect on April 1, 2023.

## A.2 Procedures

A.2.1 These procedures provide details on the requirements set out in section 4 of the *Directive on Digital Talent*.

A.2.2 These procedures apply to any person whose primary or contracting function supports the development or delivery of Government of Canada (GC) digital initiatives, products or services. For the purpose of these procedures, digital talent does not refer to those supporting other mandate areas whose daily work requires the use of digital skills and tools. For the purpose of these procedures, scope of digital talent includes:

- any employee that is classified in the IT group;
- any person whose primary work function is or is expected to be covered under the mandate authorities of the Chief Information Officer of Canada, including all chief information officers and heads of information technology (IT), but not including corporate support functions, such as administrative professionals and finance;
- cybersecurity;



- information management;
- data management for the development or delivery of a GC digital initiative, service or product;
- data science and analytics for the development or delivery of a GC digital initiative, service or product; and
- user-experience research or service design for the development or delivery of a GC digital initiative, service or product.

## Planning and reporting

- A.2.3 Departments are required to complete and submit the Annual Digital Talent Survey in accordance with instruction provide by the Office of the Chief Information Officer at Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat (TBS-OCIO) and are encouraged to use TBS-OCIO provided tools for data collection. The survey and the tools will be circulated in a manner and timeframe determined by TBS-OCIO.
- A.2.4 Business owners of digital initiatives are required to submit a Digital Initiative Forward Talent Plan template to TBS-OCIO if the following thresholds are passed. The forward talent plan does not in any way commit the business owner to any staffing, training, or procurement actions.
- A.2.4.1 The digital initiative is net new and requires the addition of the equivalent of 10 or more net new digital talent full-time equivalents (FTEs) to a single department; or
- A.2.4.2 An existing digital initiative is being substantially expanded or upgraded and requires the addition of the equivalent of 10 or more net new digital talent FTEs in a single department.
- A.2.5 The Digital Initiative Forward Talent Plan template must be submitted to TBS-OCIO by the business owner of the digital initiative if either of the conditions in 2.4 is met at the time when any of the following steps occur:
- A.2.5.1 When the new, upgraded or expanded digital initiative receives approval to proceed from the relevant departmental authority (for example, chief information officer, architecture review board, internal finance committee or internal human resources (HR) committee) and prior to initiating digital talent sourcing steps related to the net new portion of the digital initiative;
- A.2.5.2 If a concept case for digital projects is required for the initiative, submit the forward talent plan when the concept case is submitted;
- A.2.5.3 If a Government of Canada enterprise architecture review board (EARB) proposal is required for the initiative, submit the forward talent plan when the EARB proposal is submitted; or

- A.2.5.4 If a Treasury Board submission is being prepared for the initiative, submit the forward talent plan when the Treasury Board submission is submitted.
- A.2.6 Revisions to a submitted Digital Initiative Forward Talent Plan are required under the following conditions. TBS-OCIO must be notified by email at [GCTalentGC@tbs-sct.gc.ca](mailto:GCTalentGC@tbs-sct.gc.ca) of these changes:
  - A.2.6.1 If a forward talent plan was submitted for an initiative along with the concept case for digital projects, an updated plan is required when an EARB proposal is submitted for the same initiative;
  - A.2.6.2 The business owner is aware that there have been substantive changes to the forward talent plan after the initial plan is submitted; or
  - A.2.6.3 A department elects not to proceed with a substantive component of a talent plan. This is to prevent TBS-OCIO from launching recruitment campaigns or training activities on the basis of outdated needs assessments.

## **Digital talent sourcing**

- A.2.7 The manager or the delegated authority overseeing the digital talent sourcing process, in collaboration with their HR advisor or contracting authority, is required to take the following actions:
  - A.2.7.1 Prior to launching a department-specific recruitment process for digital talent or initiating a contract for digital services:
    - A.2.7.1.1 Check with TBS-OCIO-led centralized talent recruitment and talent management pools to verify the availability of existing talent;
    - A.2.7.1.2 In instances where the intent of a recruitment process is to make multiple hires or create a pool of qualified candidates, consult with TBS-OCIO on the option to run a jointly coordinated recruitment process, leveraging TBS-OCIO's talent tools and processes;
    - A.2.7.1.3 Where a jointly coordinated recruitment process is not optimal or viable, inform TBS-OCIO using the [Department-specific Recruitment Process template](#) at the time the recruitment process is posted;

- A.2.7.1.4 TBS-OCIO reserves the right to request follow-up information on the outcome of these staffing processes. If TBS-OCIO requests follow-up information, the Department-specific Recruitment Process Follow-up Questionnaire will be used. This is expected to be a step that TBS-OCIO pursues only in rare cases;
- A.2.7.1.5 Departments are strongly encouraged to use the IT Generic Work Streams and standardized job descriptions. If a department-specific job description is created, departments are required to share a copy with TBS-OCIO by sending it to the [GCTalentGC@tbs-sct.gc.ca](mailto:GCTalentGC@tbs-sct.gc.ca) mailbox.
- A.2.7.2 In instances where the manager or the delegated authority overseeing the talent sourcing process intends to initiate a contract for digital services, the manager or the delegated authority, in collaboration with the contracting authority, is required to take the following actions:
  - A.2.7.2.1 Complete and submit the Digital Services Contracting Questionnaire to TBS-OCIO by email ([GCTalentGC@tbs-sct.gc.ca](mailto:GCTalentGC@tbs-sct.gc.ca)) at the time when any contract for digital talent or IT-related services (including call-up against an established contracting vehicle) is submitted to departmental procurement authorities for processing.
  - A.2.7.2.2 Prior to concluding that a shortage of available or qualified digital talent is the primary rationale for contracting out, managers or delegated authorities must confirm with TBS-OCIO that there is no available pre-qualified talent in a TBS-OCIO-coordinated talent pool that could meet the need in the timeframe provided.
- A.2.7.3 Implement measures identified by TBS-OCIO to advance diversity, inclusion and equity in the recruitment and development of the GC digital community, as appropriate.
- A.2.7.4 Check relevant Digital Initiative Forward Talent Plans (as required under section A.2.4) for your department.
- A.2.7.5 Ensure your division or unit's long-term talent plans are included in the departmental Annual Digital Talent Survey (as required under section A.2.3).

## Digital executive roles and structures

- A.2.8 The delegated authorities responsible for the appointment of the departmental CIO, the designated senior official for leading IT, or equivalent senior digital role are required to take the following actions:
- A.2.8.1 Engage TBS-OCIO by email ([GCTalentGC@tbs-sct.gc.ca](mailto:GCTalentGC@tbs-sct.gc.ca)) when a department becomes aware that a departmental CIO position or equivalent senior digital role will become vacant, prior to the selection of an HR vehicle for replacement or candidate selection.
  - A.2.8.2 Engage with TBS-OCIO by email ([GCTalentGC@tbs-sct.gc.ca](mailto:GCTalentGC@tbs-sct.gc.ca)) prior to making significant changes to the digital executive organization structure.
  - A.2.8.3 Prior to finalizing the executive performance management agreement for the departmental CIO or equivalent senior digital role, engage with TBS-OCIO to identify and verify government-wide commitments.
  - A.2.8.4 Encourage employee participation in TBS-OCIO-led executive talent management initiatives.

## **Enabling conditions**

- A.2.9 Business owners of digital initiatives must work with their financial management advisors or equivalent to ensure that the fiscal parameters of an initiative, project, program, service, or operation reflect the intentional selection of the best options to support delivery through staffing or contracting.
- A.2.9.1 In the planning of new digital initiatives, programs, services or operations, every effort must be made to ensure the necessary financial flexibilities to allow for expenditures in staffing, where appropriate, and to avoid unnecessary dependence on contracting due to financial constraints.
  - A.2.9.2 In cases where new or revised funding support is being sought for the digital initiative, all scoping and approval documentation, including memoranda to Cabinet and Treasury Board submissions, must allow the necessary flexibility to source digital talent as needed, including fiscal structures to support staffing options.
  - A.2.9.3 In cases where finance-related barriers are identified that prevent departments from sourcing digital talent using staffing, engage TBS-OCIO to verify if there are flexibilities or alternatives, as well as to report the situation for aggregated trend analysis.
- A.2.10 Managers and business owners of digital initiatives must work with their HR advisors to ensure that the organizational structure and staffing options available support digital service delivery and operations, balancing any HR-related risks carefully

against the risks of non-delivery or artificial dependence on contracting out. Further guidance on flexibilities is provided in the *Guidance on Enabling Human Resources Support for Digital Talent*.

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