Governance for the Future: An Inventor’s Toolkit

Today’s governments are stuck using 18th century tools to solve 21st century problems. These failures not only perpetuate suffering today, they ripple through time, constraining choices for generations to come.

But while governments remain stuck, people are evolving. We are witnessing the rise of a global movement to rethink the relationship between citizens and governance. Now is the time to explore the widest range of future possibilities and to reimagine society for an age of planetary challenges and human responsibility.

This toolkit will lead you through a governance design process and help you become a more effective social inventor. Start with these four steps, then continue designing, testing, and iterating new forms of governance where you see opportunities.
investigate.
re-think.
design.
prototype.
investigate.
re-think.
design.
prototype.
What You Can Do Next

CHECKLIST

- Teach others the process
- Communicate your design
- Run a workshop
- Convene a community
- Solicit feedback

AUTHORS
Jake Dunagan, Bettina Warburg-Johnson, Rod Falcon, David Evan Harris

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER
Jean Hagan

SPECIAL THANKS TO
Dr. James Dator for providing the inspiration and methodological foundation for this toolkit.

INSTITUTE FOR THE FUTURE
is an independent, nonprofit strategic research group celebrating 45 years of forecasting experience. The core of our work is identifying emerging trends and discontinuities that will transform global society and the global marketplace. We provide our members with insights into business strategy, design process, innovation, and social dilemmas. Our research generates the foresight needed to create insights that lead to action and spans a broad territory of deeply transformative trends, from health and health care to technology, the workplace, and human identity. The Institute for the Future is based in Palo Alto, California.

GOVERNANCE FUTURES LAB
brings social inventors and futures thinking to the challenge of designing better systems of governance. The Lab’s mission is to reimagine and experiment with the basic architectures and processes of governance. The Governance Futures Lab, as part of the Institute for the Future, will utilize the Institute’s deep expertise—in rigorous foresight methods to explore the widest range of future possibilities, participatory systems to harness the wisdom and insight of the crowd, and innovative media and visualization tools to make alternative futures tangible and actionable—to reimagine the future of governance.

- Share your design or prototype with us at govfutures.org
- Support the Lab by going to govfutures.org

Four Steps to this Deck

1. **INVESTIGATE** | Understand the context of governance in a complex world where institutions are failing, and ready yourself to actively participate in improving it.

2. **RE-THINK** | Examine your foundational assumptions about how the world works, how people behave, and what values you would like to see instilled in your society.

3. **DESIGN** | Create a design for operational governing processes, structures, and architectures that embodies your values and will influence positive outcomes according to the standards put into place.

4. **PROTOTYPE** | Test your design by having others critique it, find weaknesses, or try to break it. If appropriate, find opportunities to try out new designs in community group processes, organizations, or local governments. Learn from this feedback, then re-evaluate and revise your design.
Determine the Core Challenges

Government is something citizens have handed over to a specialized group of elected officials and bureaucrats to run. Governance is broader and deeper—it is something we must all engage in. Our responsibility is to design, influence, and improve our systems of governance. We must begin by understanding where government is failing us and determining the core challenges we face in making it work for today’s and tomorrow’s realities.

STEP 1: Examine the core weaknesses of government today, and how it is failing to meet the needs of people and the planet. In Step 2, you will rethink the foundational assumptions of governance.

Undemocratic

Where does democracy exist? Although “democracy” is used to describe many political systems, there are in fact few places where all people have a real voice in the decisions affecting their lives. Most governments overwhelmingly favor the participation of a powerful few over the powerless many. Social and economic inequality, and the corruption that maintains that inequality, are highly destabilizing forces that destroy public trust and the meaning of the word democracy.
Determine the Core Challenges

Government is something citizens have handed over to a specialized group of elected officials and bureaucrats to run. Governance is broader and deeper—it is something we must all engage in. Our responsibility is to design, influence, and improve our systems of governance. We must begin by understanding where government is failing us and determining the core challenges we face in making it work for today’s and tomorrow’s realities.

**STEP 1** Examine the core weaknesses of government today, and how it is failing to meet the needs of people and the planet. In Step 2, you will rethink the foundational assumptions of governance.

Undemocratic

Where does democracy exist? Although “democracy” is used to describe many political systems, there are in fact few places where all people have a real voice in the decisions affecting their lives. Most governments overwhelmingly favor the participation of a powerful few over the powerless many. Social and economic inequality, and the corruption that maintains that inequality, are highly destabilizing forces that destroy public trust and the meaning of the word democracy.
INVESTIGATE

Unfuturistic

Are present generations harming future generations? Structural incentives in politics today reward short-term returns at the expense of long-term benefits. The future doesn’t vote and there are rarely reasons, strategically, for an elected official to commit “electoral suicide” by serving the future. Hard problems can easily be kicked down the road. Responding to climate change is one example of a problem that needs long-term leadership, yet most government action is piecemeal and incremental at best.

INVESTIGATE

Patriarchal

Are males preferred as leaders? In leadership style, language, and decision-making processes, a stereotypically masculine and adversarial stance is favored. Patriarchy is so deeply ingrained in our institutions that male-dominated leadership is often taken as “natural” and universal. But historically, matriarchal forms of power have also been effective. We must move beyond gender hierarchies in search of a fairer, more representative governing paradigm.
**Unfuturistic**

Are present generations harming future generations? Structural incentives in politics today reward short-term returns at the expense of long-term benefits. The future doesn’t vote and there are rarely reasons, strategically, for an elected official to commit “electoral suicide” by serving the future. Hard problems can easily be kicked down the road. Responding to climate change is one example of a problem that needs long-term leadership, yet most government action is piecemeal and incremental at best.

**Patriarchal**

Are males preferred as leaders? In leadership style, language, and decision-making processes, a stereotypically masculine and adversarial stance is favored. Patriarchy is so deeply ingrained in our institutions that male-dominated leadership is often taken as “natural” and universal. But historically, matriarchal forms of power have also been effective. We must move beyond gender hierarchies in search of a fairer, more representative governing paradigm.
INVESTIGATE

Nationalistic

Is the nation-state a viable governing model? The nation-state is an invention that is only a few hundred years old, and yet it carries thick symbolism. Ignoring the historical tragedies spawned by rampant nationalism, the implied stability of the nation-state has made even limited experiments with new types of governance difficult. Sovereignty and territorial integrity have not fared well against modern strategic threats nor have they created peace among societies, but we cling to these ruling arrangements.

Bureaucratic

Can a system be fair and personalized at the same time? Bureaucracies were created to remove politics and bias from the administration of government. This neutral execution of public business has made administration more efficient, but it has also alienated citizens from their governments. The mechanized system of bureaucracies that we see today is our own creation, yet we often resent its impersonal and complex way of functioning.
INVESTIGATE

Nationalistic

Is the nation-state a viable governing model? The nation-state is an invention that is only a few hundred years old, and yet it carries thick symbolism. Ignoring the historical tragedies spawned by rampant nationalism, the implied stability of the nation-state has made even limited experiments with new types of governance difficult. Sovereignty and territorial integrity have not fared well against modern strategic threats nor have they created peace among societies, but we cling to these ruling arrangements.

Bureaucratic

Can a system be fair and personalized at the same time? Bureaucracies were created to remove politics and bias from the administration of government. This neutral execution of public business has made administration more efficient, but it has also alienated citizens from their governments. The mechanized system of bureaucracies that we see today is our own creation, yet we often resent its impersonal and complex way of functioning.
Violent

How do we best ensure our safety and protection? Thomas Jefferson believed that revolution should occur every generation to remind rulers that their people preserve a spirit of resistance. However, most citizens remain complacent in the face of government abuse of power. Giving the monopoly on violence to our governing bodies might keep citizens protected, but it has also allowed much violence and oppression in the name of security.

Unjust

Who can be counted? Because only officially recognized persons or groups can participate in the formal processes of political engagement, many voices go unheard. This isn’t limited to subjugated groups of people such as the poor and displaced; it includes other entities such as non-human living creatures, aspects of nature, and future generations. This lack of representation threatens their rights and even their existences.
Violent
How do we best ensure our safety and protection? Thomas Jefferson believed that revolution should occur every generation to remind rulers that their people preserve a spirit of resistance. However, most citizens remain complacent in the face of government abuse of power. Giving the monopoly on violence to our governing bodies might keep citizens protected, but it has also allowed much violence and oppression in the name of security.

Unjust
Who can be counted? Because only officially recognized persons or groups can participate in the formal processes of political engagement, many voices go unheard. This isn’t limited to subjugated groups of people such as the poor and displaced; it includes other entities such as non-human living creatures, aspects of nature, and future generations. This lack of representation threatens their rights and even their existences.
Can governments keep up? Social and technological change far outpace the speed at which laws can be legislated and implemented. Legal conflicts arise with little statutory guidance or legal precedence. In order to keep up with change, many governmental decisions are made by executive order, subverting democratic processes and public consent. Combined with the tendency toward short-term results, this inability to keep pace severely limits the capacity of governments to meet the needs of their constituents.
Build the Foundational Framework

Government has seen little structural change in 200 years. For example, the U.S. Constitution was created in the 18th century, and while novel and in many cases admirable, it couldn’t have anticipated 21st century social, technological, and political realities. Societies must re-examine the principles upon which governments are based, and think carefully about the values, beliefs, and metrics upon which to build governance for the future.

**Step 2:** Build the foundational framework for your governance system. This framework will provide the structure upon which you will design operational governing processes in Step 3.

Values

Values provide a moral compass for the governing systems you will create. Do you want a society that manifests freedom, happiness, justice, harmony, equality, security, well-being? Some absolute values may conflict with others. For example, freedom often affects safety or equality. But to thrive, a society must understand and express a vision of its common goals.

**Your Task:** Clearly state the values that will guide the way governing processes and institutions are created. Don’t try to solve the tensions between values at this stage.

In the preamble of the U.S. Constitution, the framers explicitly mention justice, tranquility, security, welfare, liberty, and even acknowledge future generations. These aspirations form the clear expression of a values-driven mission for the Constitution.
Build the Foundational Framework

Government has seen little structural change in 200 years. For example, the U.S. Constitution was created in the 18th century, and while novel and in many cases admirable, it couldn’t have anticipated 21st century social, technological, and political realities. Societies must re-examine the principles upon which governments are based, and think carefully about the values, beliefs, and metrics upon which to build governance for the future.

**STEP 2**: Build the foundational framework for your governance system. This framework will provide the structure upon which you will design operational governing processes in Step 3.

Values

Values provide a moral compass for the governing systems you will create. Do you want a society that manifests freedom, happiness, justice, harmony, equality, security, well-being? Some absolute values may conflict with others. For example, freedom often affects safety or equality. But to thrive, a society must understand and express a vision of its common goals.

**YOUR TASK**: Clearly state the values that will guide the way governing processes and institutions are created. Don’t try to solve the tensions between values at this stage.

In the preamble of the U.S. Constitution, the framers explicitly mention justice, tranquility, security, welfare, liberty, and even acknowledge future generations. These aspirations form the clear expression of a values-driven mission for the Constitution.
Cosmology

Beliefs about how the universe works and our relationship to reality are critically important for governance design. Even if this belief system is contested within a society, clarity about what we take as fact, and how facts are created, will serve the processes of group decision-making, collaboration, and argumentation.

YOUR TASK: Think about your beliefs about the nature of reality and express these beliefs as clearly and concisely as you can.

Most of the framers of the U.S. Constitution believed that the world was designed by a creator to run like a perfect clock. The structures of government, therefore, if designed correctly, would produce repeatable, predictable, optimal outcomes.

Political Subject

What is the fundamental political subject? Rights and responsibilities could be tied to single individuals, families, clans, nations, species, or other forms. Given new understandings about how societies function, could a DNA sequence, a super-organism, or non-human intelligence be a more appropriate unit than individual humans?

YOUR TASK: Think about and decide on a political subject(s) that provides the most appropriate level of governance to achieve your desired values and outcomes.

Building on philosophies from John Locke and other Enlightenment thinkers, the framers of the U.S. Constitution put formal laws and structures into place to protect the individual from other individuals, and from the tyranny of government or other powerful entities.
Cosmology

Beliefs about how the universe works and our relationship to reality are critically important for governance design. Even if this belief system is contested within a society, clarity about what we take as fact, and how facts are created, will serve the processes of group decision-making, collaboration, and argumentation.

YOUR TASK: Think about your beliefs about the nature of reality and express these beliefs as clearly and concisely as you can.

Most of the framers of the U.S. Constitution believed that the world was designed by a creator to run like a perfect clock. The structures of government, therefore, if designed correctly, would produce repeatable, predictable, optimal outcomes.

Political Subject

What is the fundamental political subject? Rights and responsibilities could be tied to single individuals, families, clans, nations, species, or other forms. Given new understandings about how societies function, could a DNA sequence, a super-organism, or non-human intelligence be a more appropriate unit than individual humans?

YOUR TASK: Think about and decide on a political subject(s) that provides the most appropriate level of governance to achieve your desired values and outcomes.

Building on philosophies from John Locke and other Enlightenment thinkers, the framers of the U.S. Constitution put formal laws and structures into place to protect the individual from other individuals, and from the tyranny of government or other powerful entities.
Human Nature

Why do people behave the way they do? Are we naturally good? Naturally bad? Or is there nothing “natural” about our behavior? We now have advanced scientific theories and massive amounts of data to understand human behavior, even as it evolves in unpredictable ways. The more we learn, it seems, the more complicated the human story gets.

YOUR TASK: Provide a logical, compelling, theory- and evidence-based explanation of human behavior and decision-making, or an argument for why there is no “human nature.”

The framers of the U.S. Constitution were influenced by Adam Smith’s view of humans as rational, self-interested beings, as well as by biblical teachings of the innate evil and corruption of man. They believed that one could design a system wherein greed could counterbalance greed (separation of power + “checks and balances”) for the benefit of society as a whole.

Territory

Bounded nation-states are a relatively recent invention, but geography has always been at the heart of how groups are defined and governed. From neighborhood to galaxy, the shape and scope of the community that is to be governed is a critical factor in design. Even if choosing a non-spatial, non-geographic territory, it is important to decide what scale(s) and constituents are included, or not, in your design.

YOUR TASK: Delineate the territory or territories that are subject to your governing system and who it would include.

After a decade of failures from the Articles of Confederation, the U.S. Constitution had to satisfy the needs of the 13 colonies individually, while providing a layer of government above each state, leading to the design “solution” of the federalist system.
Human Nature

Why do people behave the way they do? Are we naturally good? Naturally bad? Or is there nothing “natural” about our behavior? We now have advanced scientific theories and massive amounts of data to understand human behavior, even as it evolves in unpredictable ways. The more we learn, it seems, the more complicated the human story gets.

YOUR TASK: Provide a logical, compelling, theory- and evidence-based explanation of human behavior and decision-making, or an argument for why there is no “human nature.”

The framers of the U.S. Constitution were influenced by Adam Smith’s view of humans as rational, self-interested beings, as well as by biblical teachings of the innate evil and corruption of man. They believed that one could design a system wherein greed could counterbalance greed (separation of power + “checks and balances”) for the benefit of society as a whole.

Territory

Bounded nation-states are a relatively recent invention, but geography has always been at the heart of how groups are defined and governed. From neighborhood to galaxy, the shape and scope of the community that is to be governed is a critical factor in design. Even if choosing a non-spatial, non-geographic territory, it is important to decide what scale(s) and constituents are included, or not, in your design.

YOUR TASK: Delineate the territory or territories that are subject to your governing system and who it would include.

After a decade of failures from the Articles of Confederation, the U.S. Constitution had to satisfy the needs of the 13 colonies individually, while providing a layer of government above each state, leading to the design “solution” of the federalist system.
Metrics for Success

To evaluate the success of your design, you need define how you will measure success and failure. Are your values being reinforced? By what metric is this determined? If your main value is security, will you measure it by the number of violent crimes, or by the levels of fear expressed in social media streams? How you measure your values will influence how you achieve them.

YOUR TASK: Provide a measurement tool or explicit guidelines for measurement to determine how successfully or un成功fully your values are being represented.

While not mentioned in the U.S. Constitution, and subject to much criticism, the default metric of a nation’s success is economic growth, as measured in gross domestic product.
Mechanisms to Execute Your Design

You now have a framework for designing a new governance architecture. To make this architecture functional, you’ll need to think about the broader social, legal and technological mechanisms at your disposal. People have used markets, laws, culture, the built environment, and commons to achieve desired social and behavioral outcomes. No single mechanism will provide a complete or unproblematic solution, so try to find ways to weave together strategies that will encourage the positive outcomes you seek while minimizing negative impacts.

**STEP 3** Each card contains a mechanism that has been used by societies to influence behavior. Choose mechanisms that will help you operationalize your values within your governing system. In Step 4 you will prototype your design.

Commons

The 21st century has brought a renewed culture of sharing, cooperation, and “commons-thinking” that generates participatory and networked responses to civic challenges. These commons are disrupting traditional markets and government programs and providing human-centered innovations that contribute to sustainability—and a new civic society.

**QUESTION** What commons (or self-organized and participatory solutions) would support the values and desired outcomes of your chosen governance system?

**VALUE: DIVERSITY** You could encourage diversity of inputs to a knowledge commons, like Wikipedia, by recruiting a wide mix of contributors representing regional, ethnic, gender, or age differences.
Mechanisms to Execute Your Design

You now have a framework for designing a new governance architecture. To make this architecture functional, you’ll need to think about the broader social, legal and technological mechanisms at your disposal. People have used markets, laws, culture, the built environment, and commons to achieve desired social and behavioral outcomes. No single mechanism will provide a complete or unproblematic solution, so try to find ways to weave together strategies that will encourage the positive outcomes you seek while minimizing negative impacts.

STEP 3: Each card contains a mechanism that has been used by societies to influence behavior. Choose mechanisms that will help you operationalize your values within your governing system. In Step 4 you will prototype your design.

Commons

The 21st century has brought a renewed culture of sharing, cooperation, and “commons-thinking” that generates participatory and networked responses to civic challenges. These commons are disrupting traditional markets and government programs and providing human-centered innovations that contribute to sustainability—and a new civic society.

QUESTION: What commons (or self-organized and participatory solutions) would support the values and desired outcomes of your chosen governance system?

VALUE: DIVERSITY You could encourage diversity of inputs to a knowledge commons, like Wikipedia, by recruiting a wide mix of contributors representing regional, ethnic, gender, or age differences.
Markets

Markets allow for rapid and fluid exchange, encouraging competition and novelty. While markets can lead to innovation, they can also create incentive structures that cause inequalities, anti-competitive practices, and environmental destruction.

**QUESTION:** What market-driven offerings and experiences could you introduce that would represent the values and support the citizens of your new governance architecture?

**VALUE: DIVERSITY** You could implement a voucher system to promote more integrated interactions, or create an alternative currency market (like a reputation system) that rewards those who meet diversity goals.

Law and Policy

The use of laws is a direct and effective way to mandate certain behaviors. But rules and laws are often oppressive, indiscriminate, and disproportionately affect the powerless. While laws can be the most forceful mechanism for governance, they can also be the least flexible, and readily abused by those in power.

**QUESTION:** What laws and regulations will strengthen the architecture of your new government so that it supports your citizens without overriding your core values?

**VALUE: DIVERSITY** You could implement laws that mandate diversity quotas in housing, workplaces, schools, etc. Those who do not abide by the laws would be fined or imprisoned.
Markets

Markets allow for rapid and fluid exchange, encouraging competition and novelty. While markets can lead to innovation, they can also create incentive structures that cause inequalities, anti-competitive practices, and environmental destruction.

QUESTION: What market-driven offerings and experiences could you introduce that would represent the values and support the citizens of your new governance architecture?

VALUE: DIVERSITY You could implement a voucher system to promote more integrated interactions, or create an alternative currency market (like a reputation system) that rewards those who meet diversity goals.

Law and Policy

The use of laws is a direct and effective way to mandate certain behaviors. But rules and laws are often oppressive, indiscriminate, and disproportionately affect the powerless. While laws can be the most forceful mechanism for governance, they can also be the least flexible, and readily abused by those in power.

QUESTION: What laws and regulations will strengthen the architecture of your new government so that it supports your citizens without overriding your core values?

VALUE: DIVERSITY You could implement laws that mandate diversity quotas in housing, workplaces, schools, etc. Those who do not abide by the laws would be fined or imprisoned.
Technology

Science and technology can introduce new conceptual and physical tools into the practice of governance. These resources can create alternative pathways for solving problems but also generate unforeseen dilemmas for governing society.

**QUESTION:** What technologies can you employ to improve governance, participation, or decision-making processes?

**VALUE: DIVERSITY** You could program socialbots to forge new connections among different networks with the purpose of creating more diverse partnerships across those groups.

Built Environment

“Change the environment, change the brain, change behavior,” notes neuroscientist Fred Gage. Whether it’s as broad as the layout of city streets or as targeted as the ergonomics of our office furniture, our built environment affects how we feel, act, and relate to others.

**QUESTION:** What aspects of the physical environment could you create or alter that would influence behavior to support your values?

**VALUE: DIVERSITY** You could design environments that promote social interaction, for instance, by channeling people toward central meeting areas through signage or architecture.
Technology

Science and technology can introduce new conceptual and physical tools into the practice of governance. These resources can create alternative pathways for solving problems but also generate unforeseen dilemmas for governing society.

**QUESTION:** What technologies can you employ to improve governance, participation, or decision-making processes?

**VALUE: DIVERSITY** You could program socialbots to forge new connections among different networks with the purpose of creating more diverse partnerships across those groups.

Built Environment

“Change the environment, change the brain, change behavior,” notes neuroscientist Fred Gage. Whether it’s as broad as the layout of city streets or as targeted as the ergonomics of our office furniture, our built environment affects how we feel, act, and relate to others.

**QUESTION:** What aspects of the physical environment could you create or alter that would influence behavior to support your values?

**VALUE: DIVERSITY** You could design environments that promote social interaction, for instance, by channeling people toward central meeting areas through signage or architecture.
Cultural Norms

“Minds” can be changed through the soft power of public discourse, educational campaigns, entertainment, marketing, and peer pressure. Norms can be an effective way to shape behaviors, but are often not sufficient for large-scale change.

**QUESTION:** What medium could you use to influence the cultural norms of your society to promote your chosen value structure?

**VALUE: DIVERSITY** You could promote diversity using public awareness campaigns, broadcast media, children’s stories, and religious sermons that solidify this value among youth and the general culture.
Prototype your System

In Step 2, you laid out a conceptual framework for your design. In Step 3, you used design mechanisms to encourage behaviors in line with your values. In Step 4, you will begin to prototype or represent what your system will look and feel like. You can use a traditional method, such as writing a constitution, or you can find new ways to express your governance design. Could your system be expressed as a software algorithm? A performance piece? An architectural blueprint? A speech? A graphic novel?

STEP 4: Use these example templates to help take your governance design from idea to expression. Don’t limit yourself.

Create an Artifact from the Future

Artifacts from the future are visual or tangible representations of possible worlds. Use this template to create certain objects or scenes that reflect the experience of living in your society.

CHOOSE THIS PROTOTYPE IF...

- you want to create a visual image of life in your society
- you want to make your governance design feel “real” and achievable

**Billboard:** How will a 2023 billboard amplify your success?

**Bulletin board flyer:** What will a local bulletin board tell us about your success?

**Bus stop:** How will a bus stop sign board in 2023 advertise your success?

**Mobile phone:** What is the latest mobile app that will convey your action plan and goal in 2023?
Prototype your System

In Step 2, you laid out a conceptual framework for your design. In Step 3, you used design mechanisms to encourage behaviors in line with your values. In Step 4, you will begin to prototype or represent what your system will look and feel like. You can use a traditional method, such as writing a constitution, or you can find new ways to express your governance design. Could your system be expressed as a software algorithm? A performance piece? An architectural blueprint? A speech? A graphic novel?

**STEP 4:** Use these example templates to help take your governance design from idea to expression. Don’t limit yourself.

---

Create an Artifact from the Future

Artifacts from the future are visual or tangible representations of possible worlds. Use this template to create certain objects or scenes that reflect the experience of living in your society.

**CHOOSE THIS PROTOTYPE IF:**
- you want to create a visual image of life in your society
- you want to make your governance design feel “real” and achievable

- **Billboard:** How will a 2023 billboard amplify your success?

- **Bulletin board flyer:** What will a local bulletin board tell us about your success?

- **Bus stop:** How will a bus stop sign board in 2023 advertise your success?

- **Mobile phone:** What is the latest mobile app that will convey your action plan and goal in 2023?
Launch a Crowd-funded Campaign

If you’re inspired to undertake a creative project with a team—whether it’s an art performance, a documentary, or an engineering project—you may want to mock up an application at Kickstarter.com or Changby.us. Although this requires a lot of planning and iteration, prototyping an application is a great way to see if your governance design is worth taking to the next stage.

CHOOSE THIS PROTOTYPE IF ...

• your governance design is best initiated with a creative project
• you want to create a community of collaborators
• you need financial resources to launch your project

Publish a Preamble

A preamble or mission statement is a time-honored way to clearly state your goals. At its core is a manifesto for a new way to organize society. When you publish a preamble, you are also issuing a call to action. Your preamble should express a persuasive rationale for your design.

CHOOSE THIS PROTOTYPE IF ...

• you want to build a following around your governance design
• you want to change the way people think about a problem
• you want to give others a rationale for creating their own design

NAME YOUR PREAMBLE & DESIGN A LOGO

Log: ____________________________

Go to Kickstarter.com or Changby.us and create a campaign to collect your project’s financial resources. Then go to nameyourpreamble.com to create a glimpse of your governance design. You can use this glimpse to promote your campaign and encourage people to back your project.

WHAT’S NEEDED?

[ ] Team
[ ] Financial resources
[ ] Community of collaborators

WHEREAS

[ ] The problem
[ ] The solution
[ ] The governance design

WE BELIEVE

[ ] Our vision
[ ] Our values
[ ] Our mission

NAME YOUR PREAMBLE:

THE ____________________________ PREAMBLE

CALL TO ACTION:

[ ] Ask for support
[ ] Explain rewards

PROTOTYPE YOUR VIDEO

Once you have your prototype, create a video message to promote your project. You can use a video message to bring your prototype to life and to help potential backers understand what your design will achieve. Use your camera phone to record one or more group members speaking the script. Then use your computer to edit the video and add any additional text or graphics.

1. Introduce yourselves
2. Tell your story in 3 key points
3. Ask for support
4. Explain rewards
Launch a Crowd-funded Campaign

If you’re inspired to undertake a creative project with a team—whether it’s an art performance, a documentary, or an engineering project—you may want to mock up an application at Kickstarter.com or Changby.us. Although this requires a lot of planning and iteration, prototyping an application is a great way to see if your governance design is worth taking to the next stage.

CHOOSE THIS PROTOTYPE IF...

- your governance design is best initiated with a creative project
- you want to create a community of collaborators
- you need financial resources to launch your project
Draft a News Headline

It's 2023. You get out of bed and check the morning news on your iScroll. What do you see? A news headline offers a big-picture view of the current systemic challenges or activities that matter for a given society.

**CHOOSE THIS PROTOTYPE IF...**

- you want to quickly and concisely express a snapshot of your design
- you want to imagine how your design affects the world at large

---

**HEADLINE:**

April 27, 2023

**LEAD PARAGRAPH:**

Headline:

April 27, 2023

Extra credit: video or image sketch/title

Blog paragraph:
investigate.
re-think.
design.
prototype.
investigate.
re-think.
design.
prototype.
What You Can Do Next

CHECKLIST
- Teach others the process
- Communicate your design and solicit feedback
- Run a workshop
- Convene a community of social inventors

AUTHORS Jake Dunagan, Bettina Warburg-Johnson, Rod Falcon, David Evan Harris

EXCLUSIVE PRODUCER Jean Hagan

SPECIAL THANKS TO Dr. James Dator for providing the inspiration and methodological foundation for this toolkit.

INSTITUTE FOR THE FUTURE is an independent, nonprofit strategic research group celebrating 45 years of forecasting experience. The core of our work is identifying emerging trends and discontinuities that will transform global society and the global marketplace. We provide our members with insights into business strategy, design process, innovation, and social dilemmas. Our research generates the foresight needed to create insights that lead to action and spans a broad territory of deeply transformative trends, from health and health care to technology, the workplace, and human identity. The Institute for the Future is based in Palo Alto, California.

GOVERNANCE FUTURES LAB brings social inventors and futures thinking to the challenge of designing better systems of governance. The Lab’s mission is to reimagine and experiment with the basic architectures and processes of governance. The Governance Futures Lab, as part of the Institute for the Future, will utilize the Institute’s deep expertise—in rigorous foresight methods to explore the widest range of future possibilities, participatory systems to harness the wisdom and insight of the crowd, and innovative media and visualization tools to make alternative futures tangible and actionable—to reimagine the future of governance.

- Share your design or prototype with us at govfutures.org
- Support the Lab by going to govfutures.org

Four Steps to this Deck

1. INVESTIGATE | Understand the context of governance in a complex world where institutions are failing, and ready yourself to actively participate in improving it.

2. RE-THINK | Examine your foundational assumptions about how the world works, how people behave, and what values you would like to see instilled in your society.

3. DESIGN | Create a design for operational governing processes, structures, and architectures that embodies your values and will influence positive outcomes according to the standards put into place.

4. PROTOTYPE | Test your design by having others critique it, find weaknesses, or try to break it. If appropriate, find opportunities to try out new designs in community group processes, organizations, or local governments. Learn from this feedback, then re-evaluate and revise your design.