Project Let's Talk Privacy
Recommendations One-Pager

Overview
[Project Let's Talk Privacy](#) explores how the implementation of privacy and data governance policies might impact people and communities in practice. Our project title reflects our work in engaging a more diverse set of voices into conversations around privacy and data governance. How do these policies translate in practice? How they might affect us? To find out, we interviewed 41 people – including lawyers, designers, engineers, advocates, policymakers, and stewards of sensitive data (social workers, pediatricians) – about three draft data and privacy related bills.

Recommendations for policymakers
1. **Build on existing policymaking resources and processes.** There are many existing efforts to bridge technology practice and policy: [TechCongress](#), [The Aspen Tech Policy Hub](#), [AAAS Fellows](#), and more. The Congressional Research Service or the Office of Technology Assessment (if revived) may be well positioned to house staff to prototype policies.
2. **Talk to stakeholders who may experience data-related harm and integrate their perspectives into the policymaking process.** Gather insights directly from *individuals from* marginalized communities who may be most adversely impacted by policy *and/or data stewards* (pediatricians, social workers, librarians) who understand and work with these communities.
3. **Continue to collaborate directly with individuals and privacy minded experts in advocacy organizations, industry, academia, and government** *throughout your iterative policy process.* We have created a [[How-To] Policy Prototyping Guide](#) that provides a roadmap for the roles needed and the step-by-step process that policymakers can follow to pilot bills.
4. **Recognize the need for precision and evidence: our interview insights led us to highlight a strong desire to link policy action to research.** Articulate the problems and associated harms they are trying to solve and ensure the regulations that they are attempting to create are viable.
5. **Implement human-centered practices in the policy design process.** Broaden engagement with industry practitioners, test policy prototyping processes in small, low-risk environments, and continuously integrate feedback throughout policy development.
6. **Strike a balance to avoid being overly specific and future-proof for evolving technologies**. Include examples and common use cases. Avoid being overly specific. E.g., a term like "sensitive data" may not have applied to location data a decade ago as it was not as easily aggregated with other platforms as it is now.

Recommendations for design practitioners and technology organizations
1. **Recognize that individuals want control over data without having their platform experience diminished.** Consider the impacts of changing individual controls between passive (requiring users to manage privacy settings) and active (embedding privacy settings for users by default). Enhance transparency practices by informing people about their rights and offering data protection choices throughout the platform. Codify choice: enshrine individual decisions into the design of the system (ex. provide granular controls for individual information sharing, practice data minimization, or restrict data collection unless explicit consent is received).
2. **Develop shared vocabulary and patterns across industries.** Work across sectors to develop a common vocabulary that can be useful for understanding and explicating data governance and privacy. For example, [the U.S. Web Design System](#) created a "shared design vocabulary" for building accessible government websites, which includes components, design tokens, utilities and page templates.

We decline to offer recommendations to users (and non-users) beyond contacting their representatives, in recognition of the power asymmetries between individuals and platforms, governments, and other organizations. It cannot be incumbent upon individuals to protect themselves from technologies deployed upon them, particularly when they are increasingly required to use several forms of technology to navigate several aspects of everyday life.