



# Tech Executive Leadership Initiative

Syllabus  
January - April 2021



# Tech Executive Leadership Initiative

## Winter 2021 Syllabus

The Tech Executive Leadership Initiative (TELI) is a 10-week skills-building initiative to prepare experienced technology leaders to engage effectively with public sector challenges. TELI provides senior technology professionals with a unique leadership opportunity to strengthen their executive skills through real-world engagement with government problems. Through experiential learning with real government technology policy challenges, leaders hone their skills to work effectively with dedicated public servants and mitigate risk on technology projects.

### Course Format and Procedures

**Duration:** 10 weeks, part-time from January 23 to April 1, 2021

**Location:** Remote via Zoom

**Meetings and time commitment:**

- **Weekend Immersion:** January 23 and 24, 8am PT-3pm PT/11am-6pm ET
- **Evening Weekly Session:** Tuesdays from 4pm-5:30pm PT/7pm-8:30pm ET from January 26 to March 30
- **Programming Tracks** (you will be asked to pick one track; 4 weeks in total):
  - **Policy Track:** Wednesdays from 4pm-5:30pm PT/7pm-8:30pm ET from January 27 to February 17
  - **Technology Track:** Thursdays from 4pm-5:30pm PT/7pm-8:30pm ET from January 28 to February 18
- **Project Team Meetings:** Thursdays from February 25 to April 1 from 4pm-5:30pm PT/7pm-8:30pm ET

**Instructors:** Betsy Cooper and invited guest speakers

**Partner Organizations:** Aspen Tech Policy Hub and Tech Talent Project

## Goals

Through this program, we hope that TELI leaders will learn to:

- Understand how government structures differ from industry
- Lead and manage stakeholders, peers, and direct reports without formal authority in high risk, highly political contexts
- Design, research, analyze, and execute policies in ambiguous, complex, and fast-paced environments
- Drive projects to successful delivery within entrenched bureaucracies and under-resourced partners with limited financial tools
- Communicate effectively via concise, accurate, accessible, and timely written materials
- Operationalize ethical, fiduciary, and legal responsibility to the American people
- Build a healthy culture of collaboration, learning, risk creation, direct feedback, and leadership development for public servants

## Course Overview and Schedule

The TELI course is divided into two segments: (1) a four-week policy bootcamp that teaches leaders the basics of government service, including a choice of two tracks (one on policymaking and one on government technology); and (2) a final project where TELI leaders put their lessons to work on a policy challenge on teams with a client organization. During the last six weeks of the program, one of the two class sessions a week will allow leaders to work with their teams on their challenge project.

See below for a tentative course overview and schedule. **We note that the course schedule below is tentative and subject to change. We will plan to update this syllabus weekly as we confirm speakers and readings.**

We note that most of the readings for the program will be provided for you in digital format. There are a few *optional* readings that require you purchase a book. These books include:

- Eugene Bardach, [\*A Practical Guide for Policy Analysis: The Eightfold Path for More Effective Problem Solving\*](#)
- Cyd Harrell, [\*A Civic Technologist's Practice Guide\*](#)
- Sarah Hudson and Hana Schank, [\*The Government Fix\*](#)
- Andrew Pennock, [\*The CQ Press Writing Guide for Public Policy\*](#)
- Nicole Tisdale, [\*A Right to Petition. A Practical Guide to Creating Change in Government with Political Advocacy Tools and Tips\*](#)

## FULL CLASS SCHEDULE (WEEKS 1-10): IMMERSION + TUESDAYS 4-5:30pm PT/7-8:30pm ET

Date	Topics	Required Readings + Assignments	Optional Readings + Assignments
<p><b>Immersive Weekend, Day 1:</b> Saturday, 01/23/2021</p> <p>11-6:00PM ET</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Introductions (<i>Cass Madison</i>)</li> <li>● Expectations and Program Overview (<i>Cass</i>)</li> <li>● Policy 101 (<i>Betsy Cooper</i>)</li> <li>● Translating Technical Concepts into Plain Language (<i>Mai Sistla</i>)</li> <li>● Guest Speaker: <a href="#">Jen Pahlka</a></li> <li>● Team Drinks</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Betsy Cooper, Book Manuscript Draft Chapter 1, Understanding Policy Impact (not for distribution)</li> <li>● Ginny Fahs, Anil Dewan, Steven Buccini, Ora Tanner, <a href="#">Protecting Older Users Online Project</a></li> <li>● Jen Pahlka, <a href="#">Delivery-Driven Policy</a></li> </ul>	
<p><b>Immersive Weekend, Day 2:</b> Sunday, 01/24/2021</p> <p>11-6:00PM ET</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Government Policy and Reading 101 (<i>Betsy</i>)</li> <li>● How Government Structures Differ from Industry: <a href="#">Mina Hsiang</a></li> <li>● Types of Government Jobs Panel: <a href="#">Robin Carnahan</a>, <a href="#">Brooke Pearson</a>, <a href="#">Alexander Romero</a>, <a href="#">Charles Worthington</a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <a href="#">US Constitution</a></li> <li>● Nick Sinai et al., <a href="#">Human-Centered Policymaking</a></li> <li>● Partnership for Public Service, <a href="#">Mobilizing Tech Talent</a> (An overview of relevant tech positions in government and roles.)</li> </ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tech Policy 101: <a href="#">Chris Riley</a></li> <li>• Review of Policy &amp; Technology Tracks: Selection (<i>Betsy</i>)</li> <li>• Office Hours (<i>Betsy, Mai, Cass</i>)</li> </ul>		
<b>Week 1:</b> Tuesday, 01/26/2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Writing for Government: Betsy Cooper and <a href="#">Alan Cohn</a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aloni Cohen, <a href="#">Probabilistic Identifiers for the CCPA</a></li> <li>• Steven Buccini, <a href="#">NC Risk Limiting Audits</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">2014 Quadrennial Homeland Security Review</a> (<i>skim to understand the structure of the report</i>)</li> <li>• <a href="#">Executive Order 13873</a></li> </ul> <p>Assignment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Draft email assigned, <b>due 1/29</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Betsy Cooper, Book Manuscript Draft Chapter 3, Communicating for Policy (not for distribution)</li> <li>• The CQ Press Writing Guide for Public Policy, Chapters 1-7</li> </ul>
<b>Week 2:</b> Tuesday, 02/02/2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Getting a Job in Government: <a href="#">Tina Sung</a> and <a href="#">Jill Hyland</a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Browse <a href="#">GoGovernment website</a></li> <li>• Browse <a href="#">Ready to Serve website</a></li> </ul>	

<p><b>Week 3:</b> Tuesday, 02/09/2021</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Procurement: <a href="#">Florence Kasule</a>, <a href="#">Jennifer Bradley</a>, <a href="#">Shannon Sartin</a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Eric Hysen, <a href="#">Lessons Learned from the Government's Biggest Attempt to Fix Tech Procurement</a></li> </ul> <p>Assignment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Policy Memo Draft 1 <b>due 2/11</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Robin Carnahan, et al., <a href="#">De-risking Government Technology Projects</a></li> </ul>
<p><b>Week 4:</b> Tuesday, 02/16/2021</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ethics: <a href="#">William Minor</a></li> </ul>	<p>Assignment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Policy Memo Trade and Feedback <b>due 2/16</b></li> </ul>	
<p><b>Week 5:</b> Tuesday, 02/23/2021</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Defining a Problem in Government (Betsy)</li> </ul>	<p>Assignment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Policy Memo Final <b>due 2/23</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Betsy Cooper, Book Manuscript Draft Chapter 4, Defining a Policy Problem (not for distribution)</li> <li>Bardach xi-12, <a href="#">A Practical Guide to Policy Analysis</a>, (Defining a Problem)</li> <li>Tom Kalil, <a href="#">Magic Laptop</a></li> <li>Colorado Dept of Transportation, <a href="#">Problem Definition</a></li> </ul>

<p><b>Week 6:</b> Tuesday, 03/02/2021</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stakeholder Mapping (Betsy &amp; class exercise)</li> <li>Getting Things Done in Government: <a href="#">Kathy Pham</a>, <a href="#">Greg Gershuny</a>, <a href="#">Amen Mashariki</a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Betsy Cooper, Book Manuscript Draft Chapter 7, Mapping Power Players (not for distribution)</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Week 7:</b> Tuesday, 03/09/2021</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Policy Solutions: Betsy and <a href="#">Zaki Barzinji</a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Betsy Cooper, Book Manuscript Draft Chapter 6, Selecting a Solution (not for distribution)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>NDIA, <a href="#">Limiting Broadband Investment to "Rural Only" Discriminates Against Black Americans and other Communities of Color</a></li> <li>The Californian, <a href="#">Community fights digital divide, donates thousands of backpacks and school supplies</a></li> <li><a href="#">Bardach</a> 18-71 (Selecting options) Appendix B-C (Selecting options)</li> <li>Tom Kalil, <a href="#">Increasing Policy Readiness</a></li> </ul>
<p><b>Week 8:</b> Tuesday, 03/16/2021</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Policy Advocacy and Outputs (Betsy)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Betsy Cooper, Book Manuscript Draft Chapter 8, Policy Outputs (not for distribution)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="#">Bardach</a>: 71-83 (Presenting), Appendix D (Getting It Adopted)</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Alex Soble and Mike Gintz, 18F, <a href="#">Rapid Implementation of Policy As Code</a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tom Kalil, <a href="#">Building an Innovation Toolkit</a></li> <li>Marc Hebert, <a href="#">A Pilot Is Not A Prototype</a></li> </ul>
<b>Week 9:</b> Tuesday, 03/23/2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Telling an Effective Story: Guest Speaker: <a href="#">Gina Stahl-Haven</a></li> </ul>		
<b>Week 10:</b> Tuesday, 03/30/2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Additional Project Check-in and Work Session</li> </ul>		

**POLICY TRACK (WEEKS 1-4): WEDNESDAYS 4-5:30pm PT/7-8:30pm ET**

Date	Topics	Required Readings + Assignments	Optional Readings + Assignments
<b>Week 1:</b> Wednesday, 01/27/2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Executive Branch Policymaking: Betsy and <a href="#">Doug Rand</a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tom Kalil, <a href="#">Policy Entrepreneurship in the White House</a></li> <li><a href="#">International Entrepreneur Rule Proposal</a>: <i>Skim to get a sense of structure and content</i></li> <li><a href="#">International Entrepreneur Rule Final</a>: <i>Skim to get a sense of structure and content</i></li> </ul>	



<p><b>Week 2:</b> Wednesday, 02/03/2021</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Writing a Policy Memo (<i>Betsy and Mai</i>)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aloni Cohen, <a href="#">Probabilistic Identifiers for the CCPA</a></li> <li>• Neal Parikh memo on <a href="#">Deep Fakes</a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The CQ Press Writing Guide for Public Policy, Chapter 10</li> </ul>
<p><b>Week 3:</b> Wednesday, 02/10/2021</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Policy Research (<i>Betsy &amp; class exercise</i>)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Betsy Cooper, Book Manuscript Draft Chapter 5, Investigating the Policy Ecosystem</li> <li>• Erika Hall, <a href="#">Research Questions Are Not Interview Questions</a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bardach: 12-18, 83-111 (Evidence)</li> <li>• <a href="#">Code for America Qualitative Research Guide</a></li> <li>• Sarah Fathallah, <a href="#">Lessening the Research Burden on Vulnerable Communities</a></li> <li>• Harrell, Cyd and Chisnell, Dana. <a href="#">Researching the Safety Net During the COVID Crisis: Approaches for Urgent and Respectful Reviews</a></li> </ul>
<p><b>Week 4:</b> Wednesday, 02/17/2021</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Budgeting: <a href="#">Tina Sung</a> and <a href="#">Chantelle Renn</a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, <a href="#">Introduction to the Federal Budget Process</a></li> </ul>	

## TECHNOLOGY TRACK (WEEKS 1-4): THURSDAYS 4-5:30pm PT/7-8:30pm ET

Date	Topics	Required Readings + Assignments	Optional Readings + Assignments
<b>Week 1:</b> Thursday, 01/28/2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Human-Centered Design in Government 101: <a href="#">Dana Chisnell</a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>US Digital Service, <a href="#">Digital Service Playbook</a></li> <li>Dana Chisnell, <a href="#">When "Fail Fast" Isn't an Option</a></li> <li>Dana Chisnell, <a href="#">Transitioning from Private Sector to Public Sector</a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Anita Cheng, <a href="#">GovTech: The Job You Never Thought You'd Love</a></li> <li>Cyd Harrell, <a href="#">A Civic Technologist's Practice Guide</a> (on how to work as a civic technologist in government; see especially Chapter 6 on the regulated environment and Chapter 9 on working with policy)</li> <li><a href="#">Digital Service Discovery Sprint Playbook</a></li> </ul>
<b>Week 2:</b> Thursday, 02/04/2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Broadband and Communications Policy 101: <a href="#">Gigi Sohn</a></li> </ul>		
<b>Week 3:</b> Thursday, 02/11/2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>IT Systems in Government 101: <a href="#">Brandon Bouier</a></li> </ul>		
<b>Week 4:</b> Thursday, 02/18/2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cybersecurity in Government 101: <a href="#">Greg Touhill</a></li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Alberto Rodriguez Alvarez and Dana Chisnell, <a href="#">Bringing Design to the Public Policy Process</a></li> </ul>

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Josh Gee, <a href="#">What I Learned in Two Years of Moving Government Forms Online</a></li> </ul>
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**PROJECT CHECK-IN AND WORK SESSIONS (WEEKS 5-10): THURSDAYS 4-5:30pm PT/7-8:30pm ET**

Date	Topics	Required Readings + Assignments	Optional Readings + Assignments
<b>Week 5:</b> Thursday, 02/25/2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Project Check-In and Work Session</li> </ul>	<i>Assignment</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Project Problem Statement <b>due by 3/4</b></li> </ul>	
<b>Week 6:</b> Thursday, 03/04/2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Project Check-In and Work Session</li> </ul>	<i>Assignment</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Project Stakeholder Map <b>due by 3/11</b></li> </ul>	
<b>Week 7:</b> Thursday, 03/11/2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Project Check-In and Work Session</li> </ul>	<i>Assignment</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Project Solution Proposal <b>due by 3/18</b></li> </ul>	
<b>Week 8:</b> Thursday, 03/18/2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Project Check-In and Work Session</li> </ul>	<i>Assignment</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Project Output and Advocacy Plan <b>due by 3/25</b></li> </ul>	
<b>Week 9:</b> Thursday, 03/25/2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Project Check-In and Work Session</li> </ul>	<i>Assignment</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Project Output Demo <b>due by 4/1</b></li> </ul>	

<b>Week 10:</b> Thursday, 04/01/2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Project Check-In and Work Session</li></ul>	<i>Assignment</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Final Project Submissions <b>due by 4/8</b></li></ul>	
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