Your AI Blueprint: 12 Key Considerations as States Develop Their Artificial Intelligence Roadmaps

With the mass availability of generative AI (GenAI) tools and large language models in the last year, states are updating or creating new policies and road maps for artificial intelligence (AI).

The NASCIO State CIO Top Ten Priorities list for 2024 includes artificial intelligence for the first time ever. As AI becomes increasingly integrated into the technology infrastructure of government agencies, an AI roadmap will emerge as an indispensable tool for states in the months and years ahead. An AI roadmap not only facilitates the seamless adoption of AI but also enhances efficiency for an already strained state government workforce.

There are several benefits to creating an AI roadmap including improving stakeholder and executive buy-in for AI initiatives, flexibility to adapt as the technology changes, efficient resource allocation and cost savings, risk management and improved service delivery.

Here are a dozen considerations states should include in their AI roadmaps for 2024 and beyond:

1 **Align AI initiatives to strategic drivers for the organization.** First determine how AI fits into the overall goals of the state IT strategic plan. Don't assume AI will solve every problem or help you reach every goal. In addition, don't go looking for a problem to solve with AI. Identify the business case and overall strategic goals of the organization before deploying an AI tool.

2 **Establish governance and oversight processes.** Absence of proper AI governance exposes states to potential risks such as data leakage, violations of privacy laws and erosion of citizen trust. To navigate these challenges, it is crucial to adopt established AI governance frameworks such as the NIST AI Risk Management Framework, OECD Recommendations on Artificial Intelligence and the European Union AI Act.

3 **Inventory and document existing AI applications.** Discover the extent of AI tools employed by agencies, both knowingly and unknowingly. Some long-standing technology tools have undergone updates to incorporate new AI functionalities.

4 **Address data quality and sourcing.** Prioritize data governance and classification to ensure the highest quality data available is used. Evaluate data sources, mindful of potential biases.
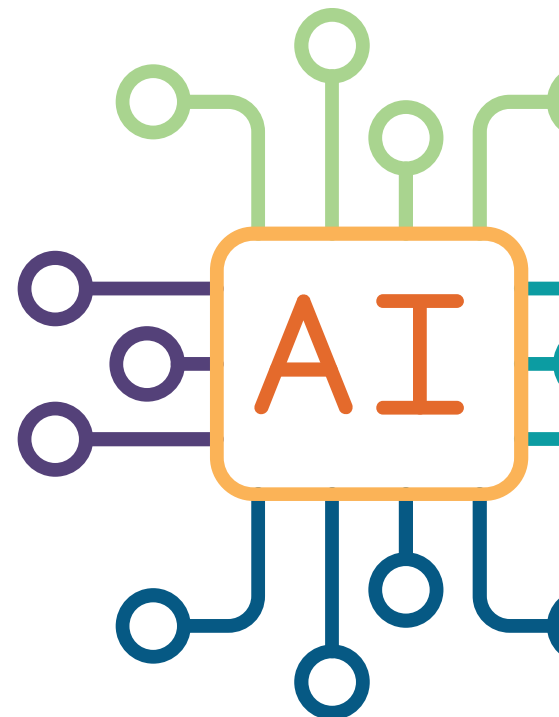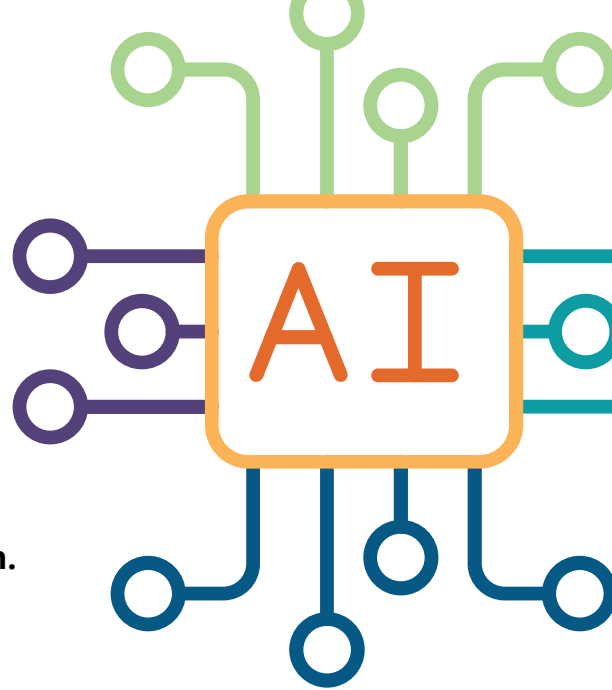
5 **Collaborate with stakeholders and industry partners.** Create an advisory board or task force with key stakeholders such as agency heads, the chief information officer, chief privacy officer, chief information security officer, chief artificial intelligence officer, chief information accessibility officer, general counsel and those with expertise in AI ethics. Build industry partnerships to leverage expertise and innovation.

6 **Assess privacy and cybersecurity risks of AI adoption.** Consider performing privacy and security impact assessments for new AI technologies. Again, the NIST AI Risk Management Framework can be a useful tool.

7 **Infrastructure and technology.** Assess the current state of the technology infrastructure and identify areas for improvement. Legacy infrastructure has been a common roadblock for states in the adoption of AI.

8 **Create acquisition and development guidelines.** Develop best practices and guidelines for acquisition/procurement, development and operation of secure AI systems. Update procurement language as needed to cover AI and generative AI concerns, while also incorporating considerations for accessibility.

9 **Identify potential use cases.** Research potential use cases of AI by learning from other government entities, organizations and AI leaders. Concentrate on use cases that align most closely to the strategic goals of the state.

10 **Expand AI workforce expertise and training.** Identify and amplify existing staff expertise, recruit interns and staff, partner with local educational institutions and provide training and educational opportunities for employees. This includes not only technical expertise but also coverage of legal, ethical and policy considerations. Assess positive and negative workforce impacts.

11 **Create guidelines for responsible use, ethics and transparency.** Ensure that users of AI systems are informed about the risks associated with discrimination and bias. State government should prioritize transparency measures to foster trust among citizens.

12 **Measure and communicate effectively.** Have clear metrics in place to measure progress and success of AI initiatives. Communicate the outcomes of the metrics with key stakeholders, legislators and other policymakers.

While each state's AI roadmap will be unique to its specific needs, strategic plans and priorities, including these important considerations ensures the establishment of a solid foundation for the seamless integration of AI into state IT initiatives.

Resources

State Executive Orders on AI

- Virginia Executive Directive on Artificial Intelligence
- Pennsylvania Generative AI Executive Order
- New Jersey Executive Order to Establish AI Task Force
- Wisconsin Executive Order Creating the Governor's Taskforce on Workforce and Artificial Intelligence
- Oklahoma Executive Order Creating an Artificial Intelligence Task Force

State Generative AI Policies

- Kansas
- New Jersey
- South Dakota
- Utah
- Washington

Other Government Resources

- Biden White House Executive Order on the Safe Secure, and Trustworthy Development and Use of Artificial Intelligence
- Cybersecurity & Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) Roadmap for AI
- State of California Benefits and Risks of Generative Artificial Intelligence Report
- City of Boston Interim Guidelines for Using Generative AI
- New York City AI Strategy
- Santa Cruse County AI Policy
- National Conference of State Legislatures Resource on AI Legislation

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