

Michelle Hertzfeld, MPA/MA

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AREAS OF EXPERTISE

- Product management
- Quantitative and qualitative research
- Interaction design
- HTML, CSS, and some JavaScript
- Data visualization, maps, and storytelling
- Government and policy
- Natural resource management
- International studies, China specialist

CORE COMPETENCIES

- Creating alignment around product vision
- Facilitating workshops for team alignment and design solutions
- Managing and building product teams
- Leading cross-discipline teams to build products that meet user needs
- Solving tough data and science communications problems
- Promoting transparency and fostering collaborative environments

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS

OpenCities, Melbourne, Australia, and Albury-Wodonga, Australia (remote) Engineering Manager + Interim DevSecOps Manager, 2020 - 2021

OpenCities is an Australian-American fast-growing company that supports local governments to transform their digital citizen experience via its website, forms, and intranet products.

Experience

- Serve as agile delivery champion by continuously measuring and addressing areas of process maturity, and coach as needed
- Help teams work efficiently, jumping in where needed, and fading into the background as the team succeeds, with developers, designers, product managers, and QA engineers collaborating well, mentoring each other, and communicating effectively
- Manage and plan technical, staffing, and project dependencies within and across squads and OpenCities verticals as member of the leadership team
- Work with developers and designers across the company to build out cross-team engineering and design best practices and standards that support maintainable, secure, and performant products
- Directly manage all engineering Team Leads, product designers, and DevOps team members at OpenCities, supporting their professional development
- Created my role as part of a two-person management team that reports directly to C-level executives, and is entrusted with guiding the direction of all OpenCities product strategy
- Identified the need for, and then established, the first OpenCities DevSecOps team and practice
- Supported OpenCities as it grew from around 40 people to 80, and then grew again through an acquisition that saw us join a 1000-person, private-equity-backed American company

Protocol Labs, San Francisco, California, and Tucson, Arizona (remote) Product Manager + Interim Head of Design, 2018 - 2019

Protocol Labs is an open-source R&D lab that aims to build protocols, tools, and services to radically improve the internet. I helped build the design and product practices at Protocol Labs, and served as product manager for [IPFS Cluster](#), one of Protocol Labs' most effective technologies and teams. My research area was Decentralized Data Stewardship.

Tomorrow Partners, Berkeley, California, and Tucson, Arizona (remote)

Experience Design Director, 2017 - 2018

Tomorrow is an innovation and design firm. I worked as part of the Tomorrow team to partner with corporations, non-profit organizations, and government agencies to collaboratively create better services and experiences for their customers and stakeholders.

Experience

- Led user research and discovery sprints for multiple state and city government service design initiatives, including New York City and the State of Florida
- Planned, managed, and executed kickoff and alignment design and strategy workshops with groups of stakeholders ranging from a half-dozen to many-dozens

18F, General Services Administration, Washington, D.C., and Tucson, Arizona (remote)

Front End Design Supervisor, 2016 - 2017, UX Developer, 2014 - 2016

As a cutting-edge startup inside the federal government, 18F builds effective, user-centric digital services focused on the interaction between government and the people it serves. As one of 18F's first hires, I helped the organization grow from a few dozen to nearly 200 employees in less than three years by independently identifying and then collaboratively resolving team blockers. At the same time, I delivered design research, code, and product management that impacted millions across the country.

Experience

- Advised multiple federal government departments on design and innovation techniques (such as user research, open source, inclusive design, plain language, lean and iterative product development and project strategy, agile product release) through workshops, building together, and strategic partnerships
- Directed research and product strategy on multiple projects, including those for the Department of the Interior, NASA, and the General Services Administration
- Led front end code development and rapid iteration on multiple projects, including those for the Department of Education and the General Services Administration
- Managed a multi-year project budget of approximately one million dollars
- Led a project comprised of an 18F cross-functional team of between 3 and 6, two contractor teams, and a [Federal Advisory Committee](#) of over 30 people
- Coordinated project staffing for a team of approximately 40 designers in four specialty areas (UX, content, front end, and visual design) that resulted in projects that generated nearly \$15 million in revenue in FY17 (October through March)
- Advised business units across the organization on scoping projects for success, writing deliverable Statements of Work, and managing client expectations
- Managed and promoted the professional development of a team of eight front end designers in a matrixed organization
- Advised and led the 18F Experience Design Chapter as part of a five-person supervisory team that reported to the Experience Design Director

Selected achievements

PRODUCT STRATEGY AND TEAM LEADERSHIP

- As product manager and lead researcher for the [U.S. Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative](#) (USEITI), I worked with the Department of the Interior to move from what was traditionally a once-a-year report of hundreds of pages to a user-centered interactive website. Data visualizations and plain language explanations made complex extractive policy simple.

- The USEITI website has become a model for other countries working on their own Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative reports. The Office of Natural Resources Revenue, the Interior office responsible for the report, has also adopted user-centered design and plans to apply it to their other digital services.

“We set a challenge a few years ago to envision the future of EITI, seeing this is like closing the loop. You’ve really over-delivered here.”

- Sam Bartlett, Technical and Regional Director at EITI International Secretariat

- My teams have a great time working together. This is in part because I value leadership techniques that promote team cohesion and flow, such as assuming best intentions, addressing concerns early, and adapting processes to inevitable project or life changes.

“Working with Michelle [and team] on this latest version of the site is the most fun I’ve ever had making a thing.”

- As lead researcher on a project with the NASA Small Business Innovation Research Program, I built alignment at our kickoff meeting, and explained design processes throughout our work to build stakeholder trust. We moved from doubt to delivery in 8 weeks, creating a service blueprint and customer journey map that showed NASA the bigger service delivery picture that linked the disparate process improvement programs they already had underway.

“Michelle is really good at walking people back [to design and project goals] in a kind, yet forceful, way.”

RAPID PROTOTYPING AND DELIVERY

- As one of two front end developers on [College Scorecard](#), I was a key part of the delivery team that successfully released new college outcomes data in time for the 2016 school year. For the first time, students could compare colleges based on outcomes-based data (such as average student debt, graduation rate, and average post-graduation income) to help make informed choices about where to pursue higher education. 18F partnered with the U.S. Digital Service and the Department of Education to deliver this project in only three months.

“This is government working for us. My first thought was, ‘Go Department of Education,’” says Sara Goldrick-Rab, who teaches education policy at the University of Wisconsin, Madison.

“We had some information college by college before, but we didn’t have most of these outcomes here.” - [NPR](#)

- Because of my broad skillset, I was instrumental in suggesting and implementing several last-minute pivots over the course of development for College Scorecard because I didn’t need to wait for visual design assets.
- Though we had limited time, I made sure [our HTML and CSS](#) was built to modern standards; was documented so that whoever took over the project could continue without problem; and was accessible and progressively-enhanced.

STRATEGIC ORGANIZATIONAL PROCESS IMPROVEMENT

- I founded the 18F commitment to distributed work. I wrote the team’s first distributed work guidance, and convinced our Executive Director that supporting a distributed workforce benefited the organization. The [blog post I co-wrote on tips for distributed work](#) is still one of 18F’s most shared publications.
- I was one of a team of three that created an [18F lean product design methodology](#) that is now a highly-valued process for documenting project goals/metrics across 18F.
- I wrote the recommended retrospective format used at 18F.

“I really ❤️ the lo-fi high-output retro format [from Michelle].”

- I worked with 18F business units to develop processes that ensure that our projects are set up for success in timelines and promised deliverables. I was also a part of a small core team (selected by the Executive Director) that developed the 18F staffing process.

The White House, Washington, D.C.
Presidential Innovation Fellow, 2013 - 2014

The Presidential Innovation Fellows (PIF) program pairs top innovators from the private sector, non-profits, and academia with top innovators in government to collaborate during focused 6-13 month “tours of duty” to develop solutions that can save lives, save taxpayer money, and fuel job creation. For my “tour,” I advised Department of the Interior senior leadership on open data topics such as metadata policy, citizen engagement, and building/designing in the open, and implemented solutions to aid citizen discovery and use of science information.

Selected Achievements

- Through community building, helped inspire, create, and build both the DOI Data Service Team and a DOI open source developers group
- Worked with Interior’s Office of Natural Resources Revenue to strategize and implement ways to make government data from oil, gas and other extractive leases on public land more transparent, accessible, and usable
- As a one-person team, used agile design techniques such as wireframing, rapid prototyping, and usability testing to build a version zero USEITI website
- Served as a Department of the Interior representative to the cross-agency White House Open Data Working Group. We promoted Federal open data so that important datasets could be used by innovators inside and outside government to build businesses and provide public services.
- Adapted the U.S. government data portal (a CKAN instance at data.gov) for the Department of the Interior, and served as connection between the Interior and the data.gov team

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Silver Spring, MD
International Relations Specialist, 2010 - 2013

The NOAA Satellite and Information Service launches and maintains the satellites and data that feed atmosphere, ocean, and space predictions; they’re how you get your daily and long-term weather report. I represented and negotiated for the Satellite Service on data-sharing-related working groups, such as the international Group on Earth Observations and the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy. I also served as China Desk Officer, and was lead designer and developer for the International and Interagency Affairs Division website and communication materials.

Arizona Remote Sensing Center, University of Arizona, Tucson, AZ
Research Specialist, 2002 - 2006

ARSC is the home to the University of Arizona’s Geospatial Extension Program, which teaches ranchers, farmers, and agency personnel how to better use geospatial technology. I prepared outreach workshops, assisted in research using satellite imagery, and developed, edited, and designed office websites and logos.

SELECT INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCE

Language Skills: Mandarin (full professional proficiency), Uyghur (elementary proficiency), and Spanish (elementary proficiency)

People’s Republic of China

- Peking University-Lincoln Institute of Land Policy Center, Beijing, summer 2008
- USDA Foreign Agricultural Service, Beijing, summer 2006

- [Tibet Paleolithic Project](#), Qinghai Province (Historic Tibet), summer 2004
- Mandarin language study, Yunnan and Heilongjiang Provinces, 2003 - 2004

EDUCATION

MPA Environmental Policy and Natural Resource Management, MA East Asian Studies
Indiana University, Bloomington, GPA: 3.9

BA East Asian Studies and Environmental Studies
University of Arizona, Honors College, GPA: 3.9

PRO-BONO AND VOLUNTEER WORK

Panelist/Speaker: csv,conf,v3; Doris Duke Conservation Scholars Retreat; Flinn Scholars Career Weekend; UX Meetup San Diego; Women TechMakers Tucson; DC API Meetup

Code for Tucson (Co-Captain and Founder) • **Tucson UX Rally** (Lead Organizer and Founder)

ADDITIONAL SKILLS

- Excellent oral and written communication skills
- Experience with project management and collaboration tools such as Slack and GitHub
- Experience with various frameworks and libraries (e.g., Jekyll, Bourbon, jQuery)
- Experience building and managing distributed teams and projects
- SAFe (Scaled Agile Framework) certification