



# Sharing Knowledge Across Silos

**Building Communities that Accelerate  
Improvement in Government**

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# Outline



- Hidden cost of fragmented expertise
- Building communities of practice
- Creating a subject matter expert directory
- Sharing improvements across the organization
- Tips for creating your own knowledge sharing system
- Q&A

# Hidden Cost of Fragmented Expertise



Isolated problem solving



Reinventing the wheel



Wasted capacity



Slow innovation



Inconsistent practices



Overloaded “go-to” experts



# Building Communities of Practice

# Why Communities of Practice?



**Community of Practice (COP)** - Group of practitioners who share a common role, discipline, or challenge and commit to learning from one another over time



Connect people doing similar work



Build capability through peer exchange



Share tools, templates, lessons learned



Get answers to common questions



Identify gaps and common problems statewide



Feel less alone in your work

# Continuous Improvement Network



Public Microsoft Team where employees can learn more about and share improvements

- CI speaker series (monthly)
- Share & learn (monthly)
- Advanced practitioner meetings (bi-monthly)
- Book discussions (ad-hoc)
- Topic channels for Q&A

1,584 members

18% of workforce

# TechHub



Public Microsoft Team where employees can learn more about how to better leverage technology to innovate processes

- Tech training series (monthly)
- Open office hours (monthly)
- Community demos (bi-monthly)
- Topic channels for Q&A

2,687 members

31% of workforce

# Functional Communities of Practice



Accessibility

Artificial  
Intelligence

Financial  
Services

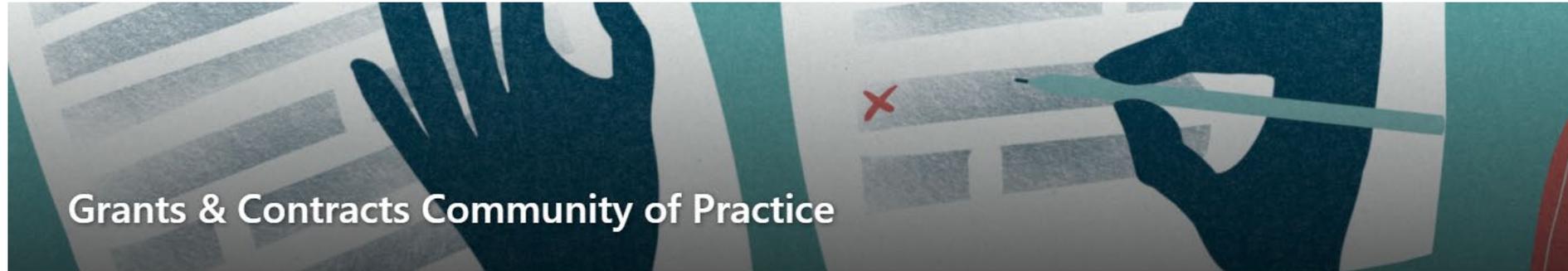
Data  
Management  
& Analysis

Grants &  
Contracts

Project &  
Change  
Management

Workforce &  
Organizational  
Development

# Functional COP SharePoint Pages



## Purpose

The purpose of the Grants and Contracts Community of Practice (COP) is to foster collaboration and shared learning among professionals managing grants and contracts. This community provides a forum to exchange best practices, explore innovative strategies, and address challenges specific to grants and contracts, including development, compliance, reporting, and stakeholder communication.

By promoting a culture of continuous improvement and knowledge sharing, the community aims to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of grants and contracts management, support transparency and accountability, and strengthen professional competencies across state government. Together, we strive to advance skills, develop practical solutions, and build a robust network of expertise to elevate the impact of grants and contracts administration.

# Functional COP Channels

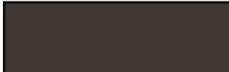


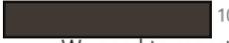
 **Grants and Contracts** Posts Shared COP Website OneNote Whiteboard G&C Stories   

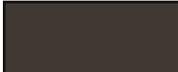
## Reporting Program Income on Federal Program

Hello - Does anyone have experience reporting "Program income expended in accordance with the deduction alternative"?

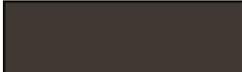


 /2025 8:18 AM Edited  
Good morning. I've got nothing on this one, but let me know and I can try and find some resources for you! Bumping this up hoping someone in the Community might know.

 10/28/2025 8:49 AM  
We need to report program income in accordance with the deduction alternative and I've never had to do this before. I know where to put the income on the FFR but I'm struggling with knowing if there is any other impact to the report or our draws... 🤔

 /18/2025 8:19 AM  
do you have an answer to this Program Income question, by chance? I am not familiar with 'deduction alternative' but DHCD does report on program income from federal HUD Community Development Block Grant.

 Reply in thread

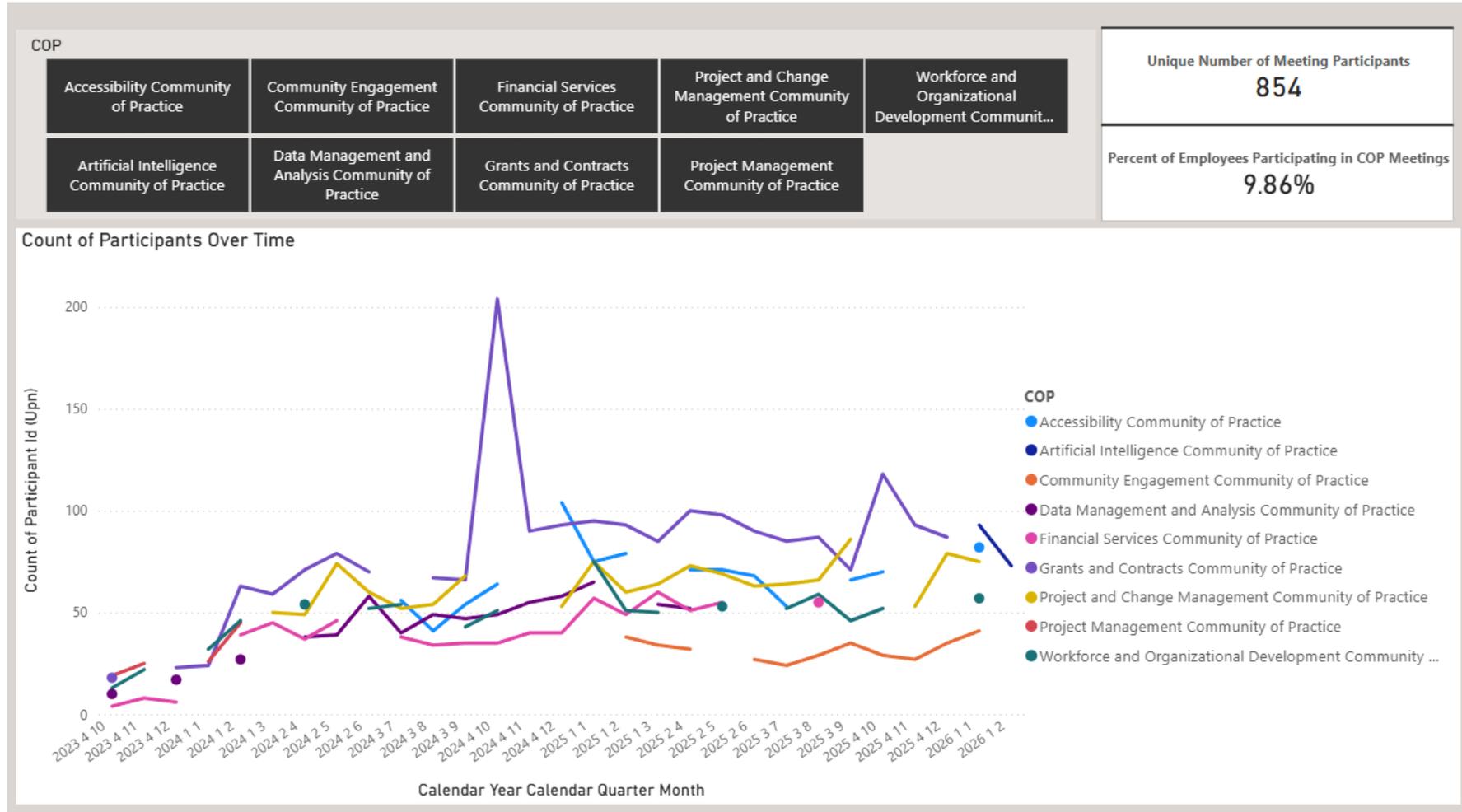
 9/9/2025 11:25 AM

## Tracking Subrecipient Monitoring Across State Government

Good morning Grants & Contracts COP!

I was recently speaking with a colleague who brought up a good point - **how do we, as individual Agencies and Departments, communicate to the rest of our colleagues which Subrecipients and Grantees we monitor?** I believe this is an important question to ask for several reasons:

# Trends Over Time



# Lessons Learned



- Start with a pilot first to see what groups will be productive
- Automate registration and meeting management
- Support facilitators in meeting design
- Facilitators will drop off over time if it's a volunteer role
- Recognize your facilitators as much as possible
- Attendance mostly “knowledge work” roles



# Creating a Subject Matter Expert Directory

# Why Create a SME Directory?



Make expertise visible



Help people find the right expert fast



Speed up problem solving



Expand functional networks



Create mentoring relationships



Encourage peer-to-peer learning

# Subject Matter Expert Directory



## Subject Matter Expert Directory

[See all](#)

[+ Add new item](#)



Edit in grid view



Share



Copy link



Export to Excel



All Items



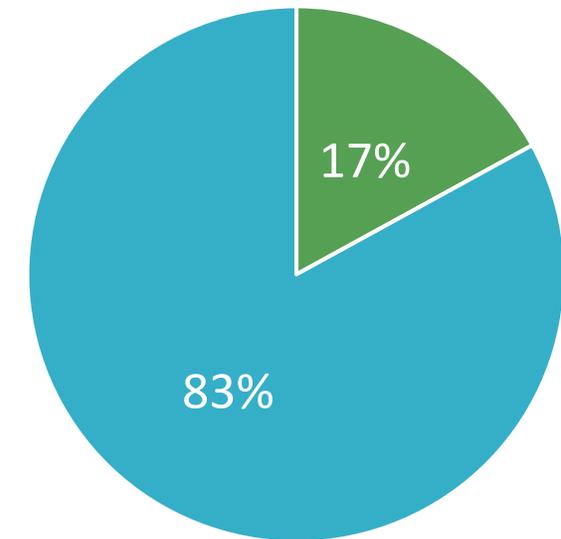
SME Name	Agency	Email	Field(s)	Expertise Description
[REDACTED]	Other	[REDACTED]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Project Management</li> <li>Change Management</li> <li>Communications</li> <li>Organizational Development ...</li> </ul>	<p>Communications // BFA in graphic design and marketing. 20+ years of communica</p> <p>Change Management and Organizational development // Cultivating space for cre- problem defining, prototyping, testing, and storytelling resulting in unique, relevan facilitated workshops on topics ranging from creativity and innovation, design thin to use methods like design thinking when working on ambiguous projects/problen --MS in Emergent Media, IDEO certifications/classes (so far): Storytelling for Influencer</p> <p>Project Management // Certified ScrumMaster (CSM) since 2016</p>
[REDACTED]	Department of Liquor an	[REDACTED]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Data Analysis</li> <li>Microsoft Power Platform</li> </ul>	<p>Data Analysis - Proficient in Data transformation and Analysis using Python and Po creation, Algorithm development, Machine Learning, and connections of many typ data, and excel.</p> <p>Other data tools include R, Excel, Tableau, and MySQL.</p> <p>Power Platform - Automation and implementation of data source collection and re and implementation of forms using Power Apps to streamline bid processes and ar</p>
[REDACTED]	Agency of Human Service	[REDACTED]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Workforce Development</li> <li>Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, an...</li> <li>Organizational Development ...</li> </ul>	<p>Inclusive workplace practices, culturally responsive supervision and leadership, gen management, building trust, trauma-informed workplaces</p>
[REDACTED]	Agency of Human Service	[REDACTED]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, an...</li> </ul>	<p>I am an expert in data equity, which includes the topics of small number analysis, d confidentiality, and demographics, queer data theory, and equitable data visualizat</p>

# Lessons Learned



- High usage at first, but declines over time
- Requires continuous communication
- Continuous refinement and addition of categories
- Not all SMEs are responsive when contacted

Have you used the SME Directory?



■ Yes ■ No



# Sharing Improvements Across the Organization

# Why Share Improvements?



Make improvements visible to everyone



Spread good ideas instead of keeping them siloed



Save time and effort by not reinventing the wheel



Learn from others before you try something



Recognize great improvements and top performers



Create a culture where improvement is noticed

# Collection Process



1. Report Title
2. Description of Problem
3. Improvements Made
4. Lessons Learned
5. (Optional) Hours Repurposed
6. (Optional) Attachments



# Example



1. **Report Title:** GMCB Annual Evaluation Tracker
2. **Description of Problem:** Annual evaluation dates were tracked in an Excel spreadsheet and there were no automated reminders to supervisors or staff about deadlines.
3. **Improvements Made:** Annual Evaluation dates are now tracked in a SharePoint list with automated reminders at one-month prior, on the due date, and one-week prior to the 45-day deadline. Once a review is checked as completed, the notifications are turned off for that year. Once the 45-day deadline is past, the dates get updated to the next year and the completed box is unchecked.
4. **Lessons Learned:** Capitalizing on small wins to build a culture of CI. The power of our available MS stack of tools for automation.

# Improvement Dashboard



## Improvements & Success Stories



Find Problems, Improvements, or People by Keywords

Agency

Share Your Improvements & Success Stories!

Page



Descriptive Title	Name	Agency	Description of Problem	Improvements Made	Lessons Learned	Submitted
GMCB Annual Evaluation Tracker & Reminders	[REDACTED]	GMCB	Annual evaluation dates were tracked in an Excel spreadsheet and there were no automated reminders to supervisors or staff about deadlines.	Annual Evaluation dates are now tracked in a SharePoint list with automated reminders at one-month prior, on the due date, and one-week prior to the 45-day deadline. Once a review is checked as completed, the notifications are turned off for that year. Once the 45-day deadline is past, the dates get updated to the next year and the completed box is unchecked.	Capitalizing on small wins to build a culture of CI. The power of our available MS stack of tools for automation.	12/23/2025
GMCB Process Improvement Request Intake	[REDACTED]	GMCB	GMCB uses many manual processes that could benefit from process improvement. Prior to the request intake process being implemented, there was not a standard way for staff to submit ideas and no standard way to approve and prioritize those ideas for implementation.	A Process Improvement Request intake form was created that links to a SharePoint list. The intake form asks requestors to rank their request from 1-5 for Impact, Urgency, Effort, Cost, Risk Reduction, and Strategic Alignment to come up with an automated Priority Score which allows leadership to prioritize the efforts that are approved for implementation.	Automation work, in particular, can be easier and quicker than expected with the tools we already have access to our MS stack. One small success, like implementing this request intake, can spur many more ideas and kickstart a more robust culture of CI.	12/23/2025
Community of Practice (CoP) Meeting Signup and Invite Flow Fix	[REDACTED]	AOA	Participants who changed jobs and re-registered for Community of Practice (CoP) monthly meetings did not receive a new calendar invitation. Because their old email address was still associated with the original meeting invite, the system treated them as already invited and did not send an updated invitation. This resulted in missed or outdated calendar entries, confusion for participants, and manual troubleshooting by facilitators.	We updated the signup automation flow to check whether a registrant already exists on the meeting invite list. If an outdated record is found, the flow now removes the old entry and replaces it with the participant's current information. As part of this process, users may receive a cancellation notice followed by a new meeting invite, ensuring the meeting appears correctly on their calendar.	Feedback from users is critical for identifying edge cases that may not appear during initial testing.	12/23/2025

# Dashboard Use Cases



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*“Has anyone else already solved this problem?”*

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*“Who should I talk to before starting this work?”*

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*“What tools or technology are others using for this problem?”*

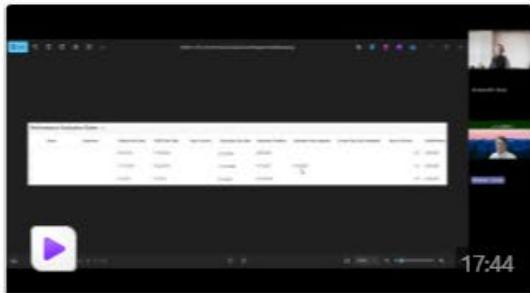
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*“What improvements has our agency made recently?”*

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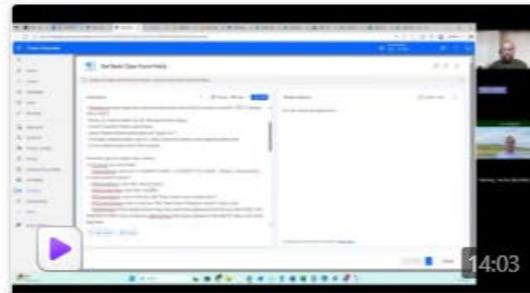
*“What problems keep showing up across agencies?”*

# Improvement Spotlight Interviews



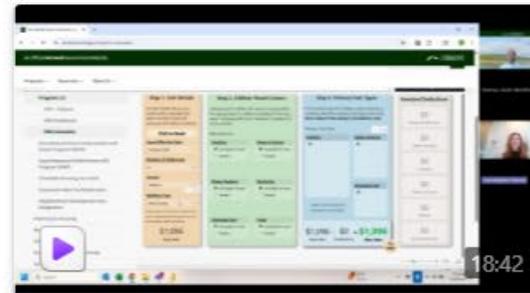
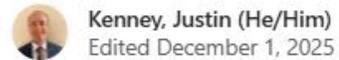
SOV - Continuous Improvement

Trisha Watson - Automated Performance Evaluation Reminders



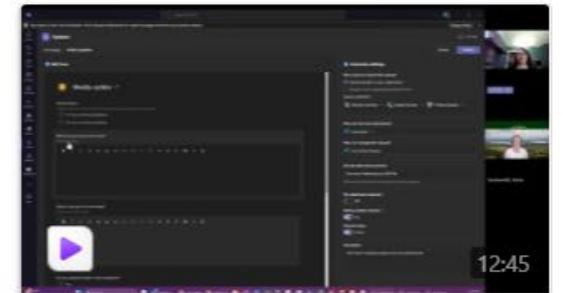
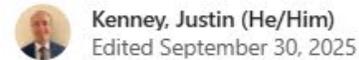
SOV - Continuous Improvement

Raifer Allen - Intelligent Document Processing



SOV - Continuous Improvement

Noami Cunningham - Fair Market Rent Calculator



SOV - Continuous Improvement

Jen LaClair - Microsoft Updates Tool



# Improvement Recognition



## Continuous Improvement Success Stories

Discover the latest improvements from across state government! Here's a glimpse of all of the improvements shared in the [Success Stories Form](#) in December. Explore these and other improvements on the [Success Stories Dashboard](#), and don't forget to contribute your own success stories using the form below. The improvements you share can help and inspire others with similar problems or processes!

Title	Name	Agency	Learn More
OAPD Outcomes & Metric Adaptation for Legacy System Compliance	Walker, Garth	AHS	<a href="#">Click Here</a>
AHS Performance Accountability Committee SWOT-TOWS	Holden, Jaclyn	AHS	<a href="#">Click Here</a>
Departing Employee Feedback Automation	Basilieri, Jae	AHS	<a href="#">Click Here</a>
Community of Practice Meeting Signup and Invite Flow Fix	Kenney, Justin	ADM	<a href="#">Click Here</a>
ANR Healthy Homes - Form Improvement	Jones, Kait	ANR	<a href="#">Click Here</a>
District Office Visits 2025	Mann, Littia	AHS	<a href="#">Click Here</a>
AI-Assisted Data Transformation Tool for Power BI (GCC Copilot Alternative)	Allen, Raifer	DLL	<a href="#">Click Here</a>
Gamifying Internal Controls	Cohen, Stephanie	TRE	<a href="#">Click Here</a>
GMCB Process Improvement Request Intake	Watson, Trisha	GMCB	<a href="#">Click Here</a>
GMCB Annual Evaluation Tracker & Reminders	Watson, Trisha	GMCB	<a href="#">Click Here</a>

# Improvement Recognition



## 2025 Annual Improvement Award Winners

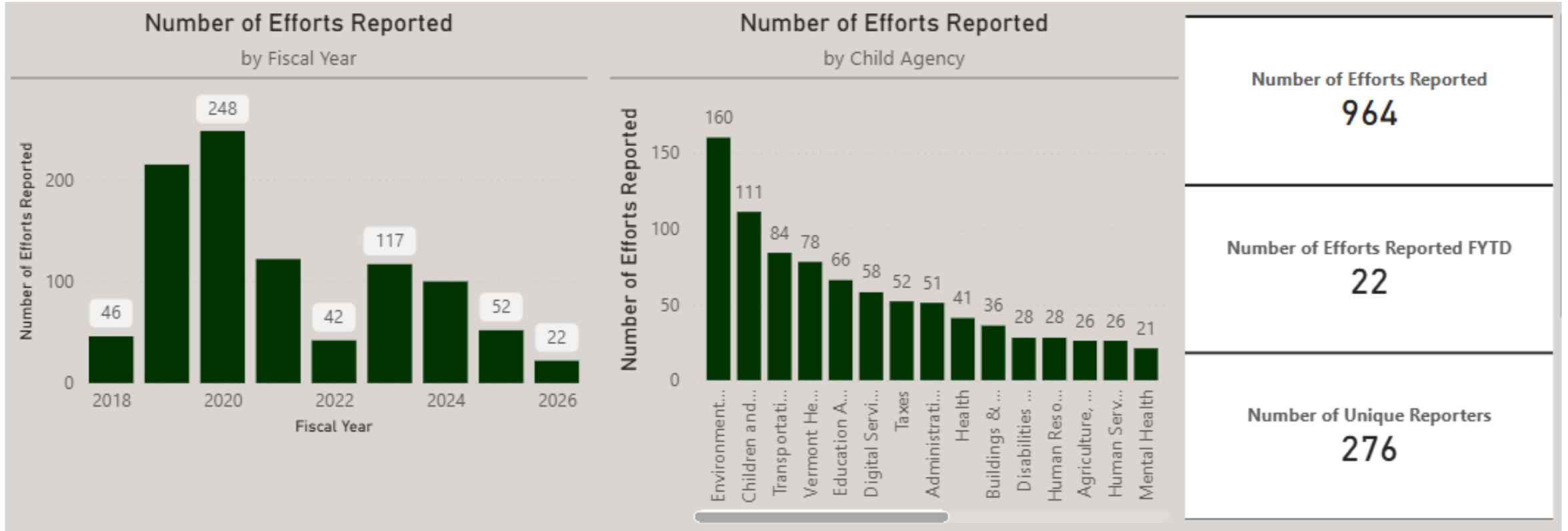
3 min read

We're thrilled to announce the winners of the **2025 Annual Improvement Awards** - a new recognition program launched by the Chief Performance Office to celebrate the spirit of continuous improvement across Vermont state government.

This award honors employees and teams who submitted powerful improvements through the [Success Stories Form](#), highlighting efforts to make state services more effective, efficient, and inclusive. From rethinking systems to elevating customer voices, these stories are a testament to your dedication to better public service.

This new tradition is part of our celebration of **Public Service Recognition Week** - a time to honor the impact, creativity, and commitment of state employees like you. Please join us in congratulating this year's three incredible recipients!

# Trends Over Time

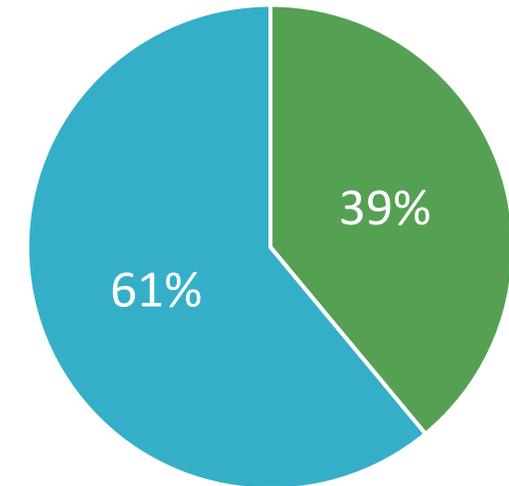


# Lessons Learned



- Simplified our form greatly over time
- Submissions were highest when we had a requirement for Green Belts
- Requires continuous communication and reminders to get voluntary submissions
- The “WIIFM” doesn’t always resonate
- Awards increases submissions just temporarily

Have you used the Success Stories Dashboard?



■ Yes ■ No



# Tips for Designing Your Own Knowledge-Sharing System

# Getting Started



- Pilot one COP around a shared pain point
- Align with enterprise priorities and strategy
- Keep it lightweight
- Embed recognition
- Communicate a lot
- Get management and leadership involved:



Questions?

