

**BLOOMBERG
HARVARD**

City
Leadership
Initiative

Taking Risks Responsibly and Innovating in Real Time

Possibility Government in a Pandemic

Mitchell Weiss

PROBABILITY GOVERNMENT

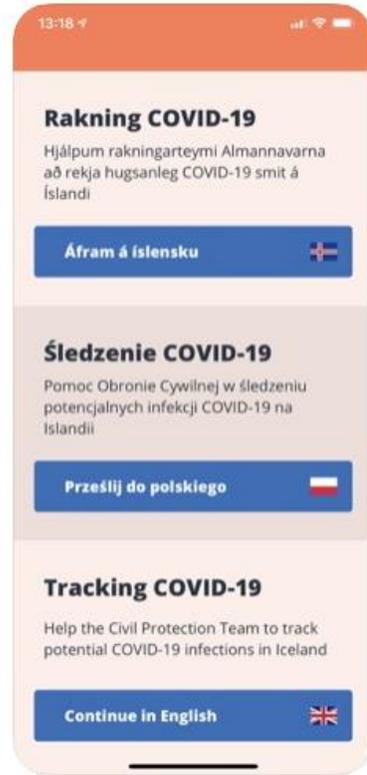
POSSIBILITY GOVERNMENT

POSSIBILITY
LEADERSHIP + POSSIBILITY
CITIZENSHIP

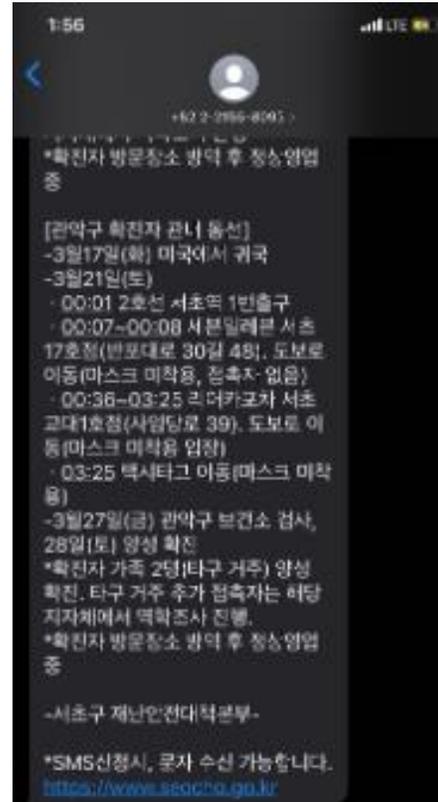


**What's hard about trying new things?
What has been challenging for you in
generating ideas and taking on risk?**

A Proliferation of Approaches Supporting Testing, Tracing



Private Kit



A Proliferation of Approaches Supporting Testing, Tracing

Individual

Who (Bluetooth)

Centralized Tracing

Aggregate

Where (GPS)

Decentralized Tracing

TraceTogether in Singapore, One Experiment Among Many



MINISTRY OF HEALTH
SINGAPORE



Mobile app that supports Singapore's efforts to mitigate the spread of COVID-19

Uses the exchange of short-distance Bluetooth signals between mobile phones with the installed app

Estimates the distance and duration of encounters among users

Encounters are encrypted and stored on each user's phone for 21 days

If a users are interviewed by a contact tracer, they can upload their data to the Ministry of Health (MOH)

MOH will decipher the data and acquire the mobile numbers of close contacts to assist with contact tracing

<https://www.tracetgether.gov.sg>

TraceTogether in Singapore, One Experiment Among Many



TraceTogether

January 23 – First confirmed COVID-19 case in Singapore

Late January – Developers at GovTech Singapore begin dedicated work on what would become TraceTogether

March 20 – TraceTogether launched

April 1 – One million Singaporeans (~1 in 5) had downloaded the app

April 9 – TraceTogether and its underlying protocols are made open source

<https://bluetrace.io/policy/>

TraceTogether in Singapore



TraceTogether

TraceTogether - an overview

Since the launch of TraceTogether on 20 Mar 2020, we have received many suggestions and requests for the app to be shared with other countries and organisations. We were unprepared for the overwhelming level of interest. We apologise for not being more responsive to those who have reached out, but rest assured that we are trying our best.

The COVID-19 pandemic is a global problem that knows no boundaries. We recognise that a Bluetooth contact tracing app like TraceTogether can be helpful in other countries. However, the biggest and most important caveat is that we are still in the very early stages of using TraceTogether to help with Singapore's contact tracing operations, and **it is too early to tell how effective TraceTogether actually is**. Nonetheless, we have decided to open source the app and the underlying BlueTrace protocol in the hope that it could be useful, so that the global software development community can collectively improve it, and so that governments and public health authorities may adapt it.

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- **Centralised contact tracing operations.** When a person is diagnosed with COVID-19, he/she will be contacted by the Government's contact tracing team under the charge of the Ministry of Health. All contact tracing operations are centralised in this team.
- **Decentralised recall.** The contact tracer will ask the person to recall all the places he/she has been to in the last 14 days, as well as the persons they have been contact with. This activity mapping process is tedious but necessary, in order to identify all the close contacts whom they may have exposed the SARS-CoV-2 virus to, as well as identify close contacts they may have caught the virus from, so as to establish links between clusters of COVID-19 cases. To aid the recall, individuals usually refer to their schedules, social media history, etc. However, what is usually impossible to know, is close contact with unacquainted contacts, such as at restaurants, large social/work events, or even on public transport. **TraceTogether and other Bluetooth-based contact/proximity tracing solutions attempt to plug this gap, by recording *who* you have been in contact with, but not *where*.**

<https://bluetrace.io/policy/>

TraceTogether in Singapore, One Experiment Among Many



<https://tracetgether.zendesk.com/hc/en-sg/articles/360046475654-20-April-2020-One-Month-On>

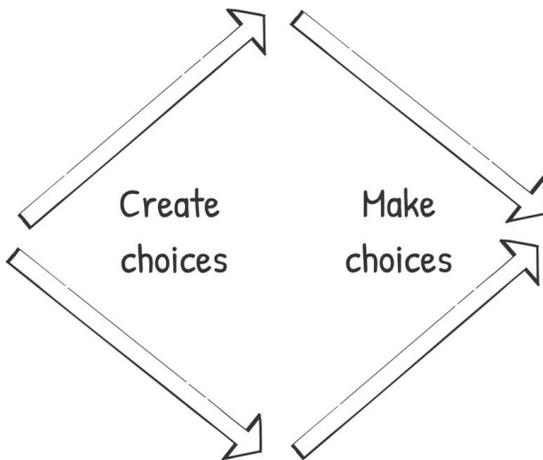


What can we learn from Singapore's approach to experimenting?

POSSIBILITY GOVERNMENT

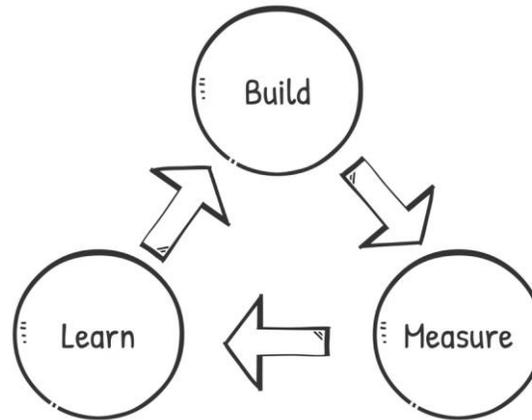
GOVERNMENT THAT CAN IMAGINE

HUMAN-CENTERED DESIGN¹



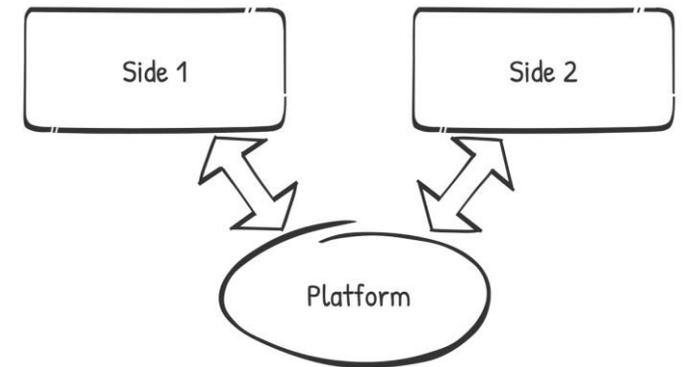
GOVERNMENT THAT CAN TRY

LEAN STARTUP² IN PUBLIC



GOVERNMENT THAT CAN SCALE

GOVERNMENT AS A PLATFORM³



¹IDEO, ²Eric Ries, ³Tim O'Reilly

POSSIBILITY GOVERNMENT

GOVERNMENT THAT CAN IMAGINE

- Cast a wide net. More ideas + diverse ideas = better ideas

GOVERNMENT THAT CAN TRY

- Get started with minimally viable products/services
- Promise quick learning, not success
- Push for portfolios of experiments

GOVERNMENT THAT CAN SCALE

- Build and preserve trust in any platforms
- Design platforms so that users make each other better off

WE, THE POSSIBILITY.



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