# Tomorrow’s Impact

## Why it matters

While today’s benefits matter, leaders also want to see the longer-term potential.

A strong use case shows that the AI system is not just a one-off fix, it’s an investment in building a smarter, faster, more resilient and connected public service. Leaders want to understand how a solution could scale, evolve, and deliver lasting value, across an agency, across government, and for Aotearoa New Zealand as a whole

AI in the public service is about more than technology, we also consider:

* Strengthening services for the long term
* Supporting a more productive, innovative public service
* How AI can be leveraged to grow the economy
* Building systems that can adapt and grow responsibly
* Protecting public trust through careful, future-focused governance.

Thinking carefully about tomorrow’s impact ensures that innovation leads to real, sustained public value, not short-term fixes or unintended harms.

## How to describe tomorrow’s impact

When preparing the Tomorrow’s Impact section, your team may consider the following:

* Describe how the AI system could scale beyond the pilot: Could it be reused by other parts of your agency? Could it be adopted across other agencies or service lines?
* Think about long-term relevance: How will the AI system stay accurate, fair, and useful as data, services, and society change? How will model updates, retraining, and system improvements be managed?
* Envision bigger public value creation: How could wider adoption drive better service equity, support innovation, or strengthen public trust?
* Plan for governance and ownership at scale: As more agencies or services use the system, who will maintain it? Who will ensure it remains ethical, effective, and transparent over time?
* Consider sustainability and adaptability: Is the AI system flexible enough to grow or adapt to new challenges, new data, or new needs? How will funding and stewardship be sustained?

## Example of Strong Tomorrow’s Impact Description

* Scaling Potential:
  + AI-assisted document summarisation piloted at Agency A could be adapted for Agency B. (for hypothetical situation).
  + Shared services platform proposed to enable use by multiple agencies, reducing duplication and costs.
* Long-Term Relevance:
  + Model retraining planned annually to reflect policy changes and evolving community needs.
  + Regular fairness audits and independent ethical reviews scheduled.
* Public Value Creation:
  + Improved service speed and equity across multiple agencies for Māori, Pacific peoples, and disabled communities.
  + Staff freed from administrative tasks focus more on complex, human-centred service delivery.
* Governance and Ownership:
  + Central stewardship proposed under GCDO-led consortium with agency participation. Centralised governance structure
  + Clear ownership of roles and responsibilities
  + Ethical oversight and transparency
  + Continuous improvement and feedback

Funding model includes cost-sharing across adopting agencies to ensure sustainability.

**Example of Poor Tomorrow’s Impact Description**

* Tomorrow’s impact: If successful, the AI might just keep running and maybe be used elsewhere someday
* Why this is poor:
  + No vision for scaling.
  + No plan for relevance, governance, or funding.
  + No link to public value, innovation, or trust.

**Common Traps**

* Assuming technology scales itself: Scaling AI responsibly takes governance, investment, retraining, and engagement, not just plugging it into more services.
* Ignoring public trust as systems grow: Scaling can magnify risks (bias, opacity, exclusion). Ongoing transparency and fairness must be designed in.
* Underestimating maintenance needs: AI systems need monitoring, retraining, and adaptation to stay accurate, ethical, and aligned with changing policy and public expectations.

## Expert Tip: Think beyond your agency.

The strongest AI use cases show how a system can create public value across agencies, sectors, and communities, and how it will stay fair, trustworthy, and future-ready as it grows.

**Summary Checklist**

1. Question: How could the AI system scale across agencies or services?

Purpose: Demonstrates bigger public value potential

1. Question: How will it remain relevant, accurate, and fair over time?

Purpose: Shows sustainability and adaptability

1. Question: How will wider adoption support innovation, equity, and trust? Purpose: Strengthens case for broader public good
2. Question: What governance and funding structures will be needed to remain relevant?

Purpose: Ensures responsible scaling and stewardship

1. Question: How will success be measured as the system grows?

Purpose: Keeps focus on real outcomes and public trust