<2%
EXPOSING THE TECHNOLOGY NEEDS OF PUBLIC DEFENDERS
Process

Results

Key Takeaways
A Walkthrough / Phase 1

GOAL: SUPPORT SECURE JUSTICE EFFORTS TO REDUCE SURVEILLANCE & MASS INCARCERATION
+ EMPOWER PUBLIC DEFENDERS & THEIR CLIENTS

BUILDING A TECHNICAL TOOL FOR PUBLIC DEFENDERS

CHALLENGE
/
PHASE 1

Discover

TIMELINE: JAN 2020
A Walkthrough / Phase 1

GOAL: SUPPORT SECURE JUSTICE'S EFFORTS + EMPOWER PUBLIC DEFENDERS & THEIR CLIENTS

BUILDING A TECHNICAL TOOL FOR PUBLIC DEFENDERS

CHALLENGE / PHASE 1

Semi-structured Interviews
9 Participants
45+ min sessions/each

Discover

TIMELINE: JAN 2020
A Walkthrough / Phase 1
GOAL: SUPPORT SECURE JUSTICE’S EFFORTS + EMPOWER PUBLIC DEFENDERS & THEIR CLIENTS

BUILDING A TECHNICAL TOOL FOR PUBLIC DEFENDERS

CHALLENGE / PHASE 1

Semi-structured Interviews
9 Participants
45+ min sessions/each

Discover

Define

Data Analysis
Transcription, Coding
(Modified Ground Theory Approach)

TIMELINE: JAN 2020 - MID-MAR 2020
A Walkthrough / Phase 1

GOAL: SUPPORT SECURE JUSTICE'S EFFORTS + EMPOWER PUBLIC DEFENDERS & THEIR CLIENTS

BUILDING A TECHNICAL TOOL FOR PUBLIC DEFENDERS

CHALLENGE / PHASE 1

- Semi-structured Interviews
  - 9 Participants
  - 45+ min sessions/each

OUTCOME

- Data Analysis
  - Transcription, Coding
  - (Modified Ground Theory Approach)

- Convergence
- Define
- 1 WHITE PAPER + 2 NEW CHALLENGE!

TIMELINE:
- JAN 2020
- MID- MAR 2020
- JUNE 2020
A Walkthrough / Phase 1-2

GOAL: SUPPORT SECURE JUSTICE’S EFFORTS + EMPOWER PUBLIC DEFENDERS & THEIR CLIENTS

OUR NEW CHALLENGE / PROBLEM STATEMENT

How might we encourage civic engagement from technologists & policy advocates and present opportunities for them to address public defender’s needs?

TIMELINE:
JAN 2020
MID- MAR 2020
JUNE 2020
A Walkthrough / Phase 2

GOAL: SUPPORT SECURE JUSTICE’S EFFORTS + EMPOWER PUBLIC DEFENDERS & THEIR CLIENTS

CHALLENGE / PHASE 2

Focused Needs assessment & Participatory Research, 13+ Participants = 16 Key Problems

Develop

CHALLENGE

PHASE 1

Semi-Structured Interviews

Data Analysis (Modified Ground Theory Approach)

TIMELINE:

JAN 2020

MID-MAR 2020

JUN 2020

SEP 2020
A Walkthrough / Phase 2

GOAL: SUPPORT SECURE JUSTICE’S EFFORTS + EMPOWER PUBLIC DEFENDERS & THEIR CLIENTS + EDUCATE, MOTIVATE, DEVELOP, INSPIRE.

CHALLENGE / PHASE 2

Focused Needs assessment & Participatory Research,
13+ Participants = 16 Key Problems

Design Thinking Cycle Scoped to 3 Needs
Ideation - wire-framing, testing - stakeholder input

Develop
Iterate

OUTCOME

The Public Defense Project
Deliver

FOR TECHNOLOGISTS & POLICY + PRIVACY ADVOCATES

TIMELINE:
JAN 2020
MID-MAR 2020
JUN 2020
SEP 2020
JAN 2021
MAY 2021

CHALLENGE PHASE 1

Semi-Structured Interviews
Data Analysis (Modified Ground Theory Approach)
Three Important Areas of Need

We present user stories, highlighting opportunities for technical and policy work, touching on three major problem areas.

- **Novel Surveillance Data**
- **Information Sharing**
- **Database Management**
Public defenders receive a huge amount of data through subpoenas or from prosecutors during discovery.

“We get a lot of cases where the feds have gotten a warrant to Instagram. And they will send us a [25,000 page PDF] which is not usable.”

- Public Defender
Public defenders may hire experts to go through the data

“This guy was good. Why was he good? That’s the challenge – understanding the background of a person and if they’re reliable and trustworthy.”

- Public Defender
Public defenders also have paralegals organize the data

“I spend **3-7 hours** a day just standardizing file formats”

- Paralegal in a Public Defense Office
Public defenders try to find what, in the data, is relevant to their case and combine it with other data.
Public defenders present the data in court

“I don’t really feel qualified explaining that [how a technology works] to a judge.”

- Public Defender
Process

Results

Key Takeaways
Technical Solutions

Tools Specific to public defenders for **processing novel surveillance data**

Better case management and organizational tools

Social computing platform for public defenders to share information

(Eg. Transcription & Sorting for body worn cameras; Automatic social media data processing)
Policy Solutions

I feel [with some of the technical solutions] ... like it'd be great to have a system where people are texted before their court date, but even better would be a system where ninety percent of the court dates don't happen because they're totally useless”
- Bay Area Public Defender

1. Transparency in acquisition of new surveillance systems (see work of Oakland Privacy Commission)
2. Exceptions to trade secrets and copyright laws that require technology used to process or present evidence in the courtroom be accessible to public defenders
3. Consider public defenders in privacy legislation

Big Picture: Reduce caseloads & Increase funding for public defense offices
PSA for All Technologists!

Make a plan for responding to warrant and subpoena requests.
It’s not privacy laws or technical hurdles that prevent me from getting social media data, it’s Facebook [...] They will give law enforcement stuff without a warrant but they won’t respond to our subpoenas very often!”

- Bay Area Public Defender
Our Work in Action!

This project has recruited & supports a number of technologists building systems for public defenders & advocating for their needs

Prof. Parameswaran & Prof. Chasins are working on **tools to manage police misconduct, court record, and case-specific data** for public defenders using **this need finding**

Prof. Abebe, Prof. Wexler and others **providing consulting on algorithmic systems for Public Defenders**

We have connected a startup called “JusticeText” which makes **transcription tools for Public Defenders** with the SF Public Defenders

Secure Justice is using this to **guide policy work developing privacy and transparency ordinances** through the Bay area, and hope to use the website to drive action supporting the needs of public defenders
Our Team

JYEN YIEE WONG  RACHEL WARREN  SNEHA CHOWDHARY  TIFFANY PHAM

Special thanks to our Advisor, Mentors & contributors along the way

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https://sites.ischool.berkeley.edu/publicdefense/