

Interoperability in the governmental context enables organizations to share information and other resources as necessary to serve the needs of citizens and society. Creating this interoperability requires government leaders to take responsibility for improving the capabilities of government agencies to effectively partner with other agencies and governments as well as the private sector, non-profit groups, and research institutions.

Governance—defined as the existence of appropriate decision making rules and procedures to direct and oversee government interoperability initiatives that are planned or underway—is a foundational capability for creating and improving government interoperability. In the context of interoperability, building effective governance is both more critical and more difficult because it involves multiple organizations and levels of government.

Having the necessary governance capabilities across the boundaries of organizations is necessary to ensure government interoperability investments align with priorities and goals defined in strategic plans or by legislative and executive leadership. Recent research conducted by the Center for Technology in Government draws on a comparative case study of *IT governance* to illustrate that while effective governance structures include a consistent set of elements or capabilities, there are also a wide range of context specific issues that must be responded to in the governance design, development, and implementation processes.

---