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Navigating AI Risks: Part 2

July 2025

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- Recap
- AI risk level determinations
- Use case prioritization
- AI impact assessments

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Recap

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Common Ways AI Shows Up

Generative AI

Creates content when prompted by the user. Learns from data to generate more targeted content over time (e.g. Co-Pilot, chatGPT)

Agentic AI

AI agents that are designed to perform tasks in the service of human goals, without direct human intervention (e.g. chat bots, virtual assistants)

Computer Vision

Processes, interprets, and provides insights into visual information (e.g. eel grass scanning, wildfire tracking)

Natural Language Processing

Understands, interprets, and generates human language in a meaningful way. (e.g. language translation)

Sources: WA State Generative AI Report ; Responsible AI in the Public Sector

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AI in Our Technology

Intentional AI

- Solutions that are acquired and used specifically for their AI capabilities

Incidental AI

- New or existing solutions that have generative AI embedded, but it’s not their primary purpose

3rd Party AI

- Solutions that are used by entities that interact with, but are not a part of WA state government

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Common Public Sector Adoption Challenges

Content Accuracy

- Align responsible AI training with the use of AI technology
- Conduct thorough testing of outputs created by a newly adopted AI tool
- Conduct QA on all generatively created content

Staff Adoption

- Develop a strategy and training plan for your workforce
- Invest in training and upskilling of staff that are impacted by AI
- Ensure adoption of AI is in alignment with statewide principles and policies

Customer Adoption

- Conduct organizational change management and public engagement activities for internal staff and external customers
- Ensure all public-facing AI technology is clearly aligned with the WA State Agency Privacy Principles

Data Maturity

- Align AI-related initiatives to modernization and/or data management activities
- Leverage existing technology evaluation and adoption processes for all AI solutions

Sources: WA State Generative AI Report ; Responsible AI in the Public Sector

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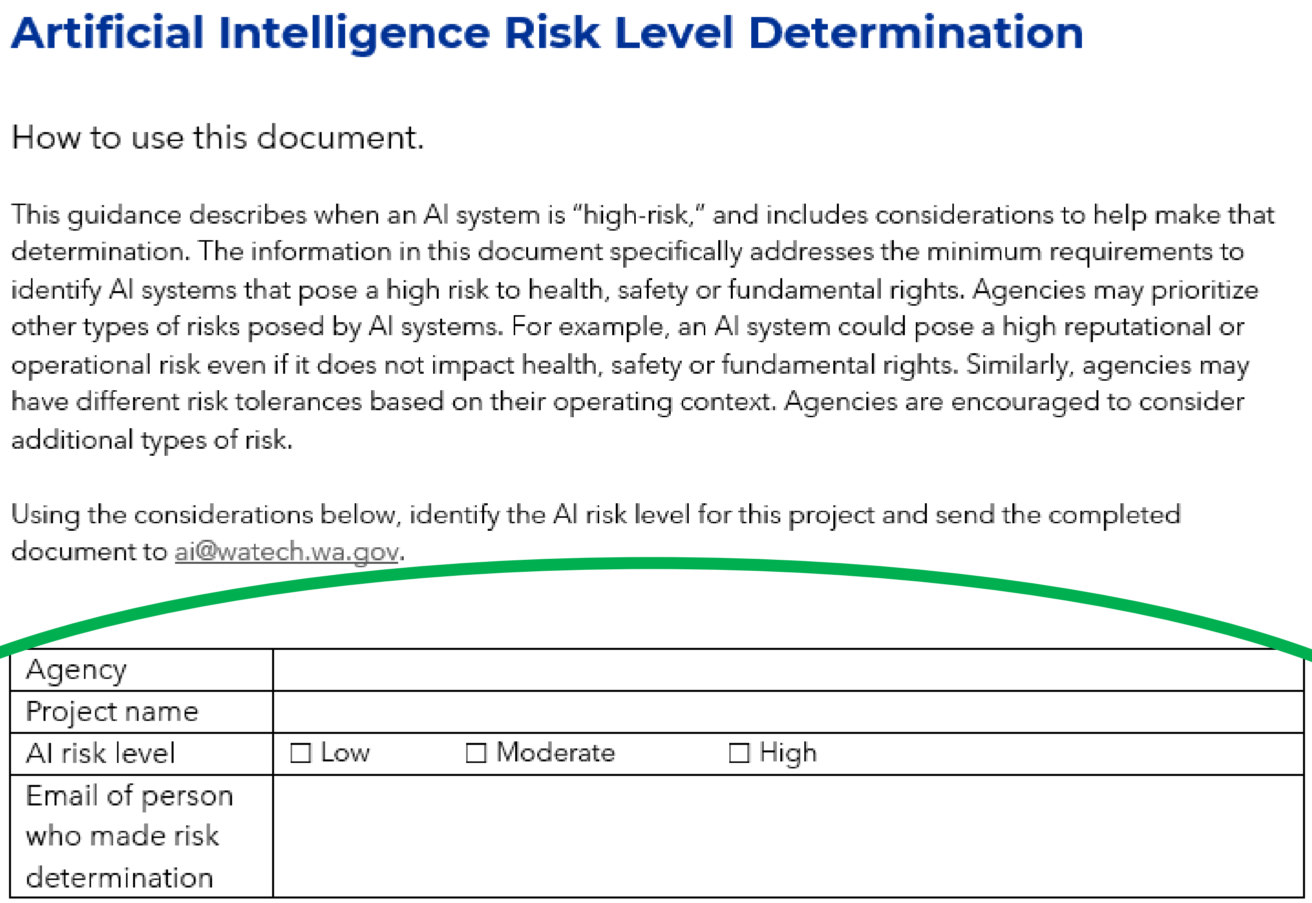
Washington AI Principles

- Safe, secure, and resilient
- Valid and reliable
- Fairness, inclusion, and non-discrimination
- Privacy and data protection
- Accountability and responsibility
- Transparency and auditability
- Explainable and interpretable
- Public purpose and social benefit



Artificial Intelligence Risk Level Determination

How to use this document.

This guidance describes when an AI system is “high-risk,” and includes considerations to help make that determination. The information in this document specifically addresses the minimum requirements to identify AI systems that pose a high risk to health, safety or fundamental rights. Agencies may prioritize other types of risks posed by AI systems. For example, an AI system could pose a high reputational or operational risk even if it does not impact health, safety or fundamental rights. Similarly, agencies may have different risk tolerances based on their operating context. Agencies are encouraged to consider additional types of risk.

Using the considerations below, identify the AI risk level for this project and send the completed document to ai@watech.wa.gov.

Agency			
Project name			
AI risk level	☐ Low	☐ Moderate	☐ High
Email of person who made risk determination			

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Risk level determinations

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High-risk definition

A high-risk AI system is a system using AI technology that creates a high risk to natural persons' health, safety or fundamental rights. These risks include:

- Direct impacts, such as when an AI system is used to determine eligibility for benefits, and
- Indirect impacts, such as when an AI system is used to allocate resources in a way that impacts the people in a particular community.

Whether a system creates a high risk is dependent on (1) the magnitude of an impact to natural persons' health and safety or fundamental rights and (2) the likelihood of that impact occurring.

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Risk determination considerations

Intended use and operating context

- Who will benefit and who might be adversely impacted?
- What is the role of humans?
- Who are the intended users?
- What laws apply?

Data characteristics

- What type of data is processed, considering the entire AI lifecycle.
- How appropriate is the data for the intended use?

System characteristics and safeguards

- What measures are in place to address unreliable outputs?
- Are there filters or monitoring to detect harmful outputs or misuse?
- Is the system explainable and transparent?

Sources: Artificial Intelligence Risk Level Guidance

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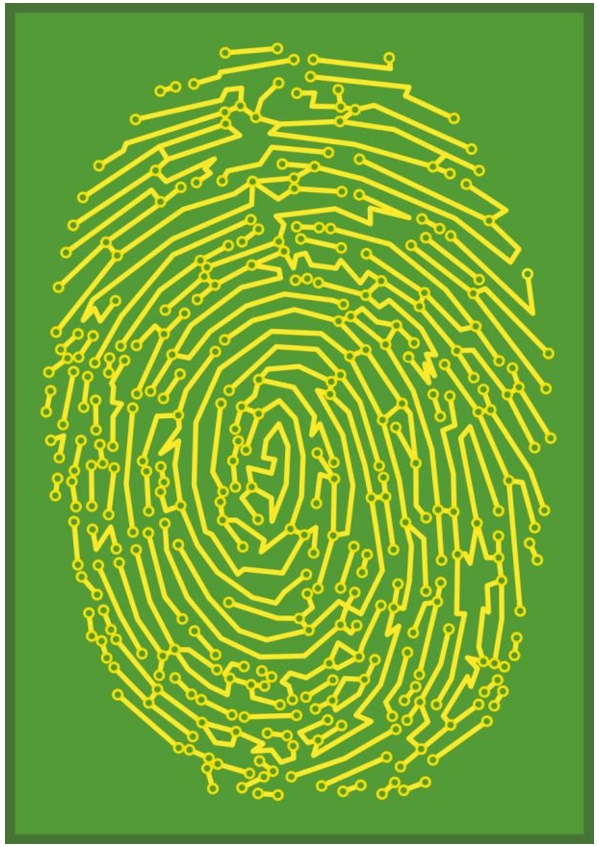
Potential high risk uses

Biometrics

- Categorizing people based on biometrics

- Creating biometric databases based on publicly available information

- Using real-time remote biometric identification



Impact type – fundamental rights

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Potential high risk uses

Law enforcement

- Predictive profiling
- Crime prediction
- Forensic analysis
- Immigration or border control

Impact type – safety, fundamental rights

Potential high risk uses

Critical infrastructure

- Digital infrastructure
- Some traffic and transportation uses
- Utilities (e.g., water, gas, electricity supplies)

Impact type – health, safety

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Potential high risk uses

Employment

- Hiring
- Performance monitoring and review
- Emotion detection

Impact type – fundamental rights

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Potential high risk uses

Administration of justice

Uses by judiciary or law enforcement to:

- Research facts
- Interpret the law
- Analyze evidence

Impact type - safety, fundamental rights

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Potential high risk uses

Access to public services

- Evaluating eligibility for public benefits and services
- Automated management of public benefits and services
- Assessing risk and pricing for benefits

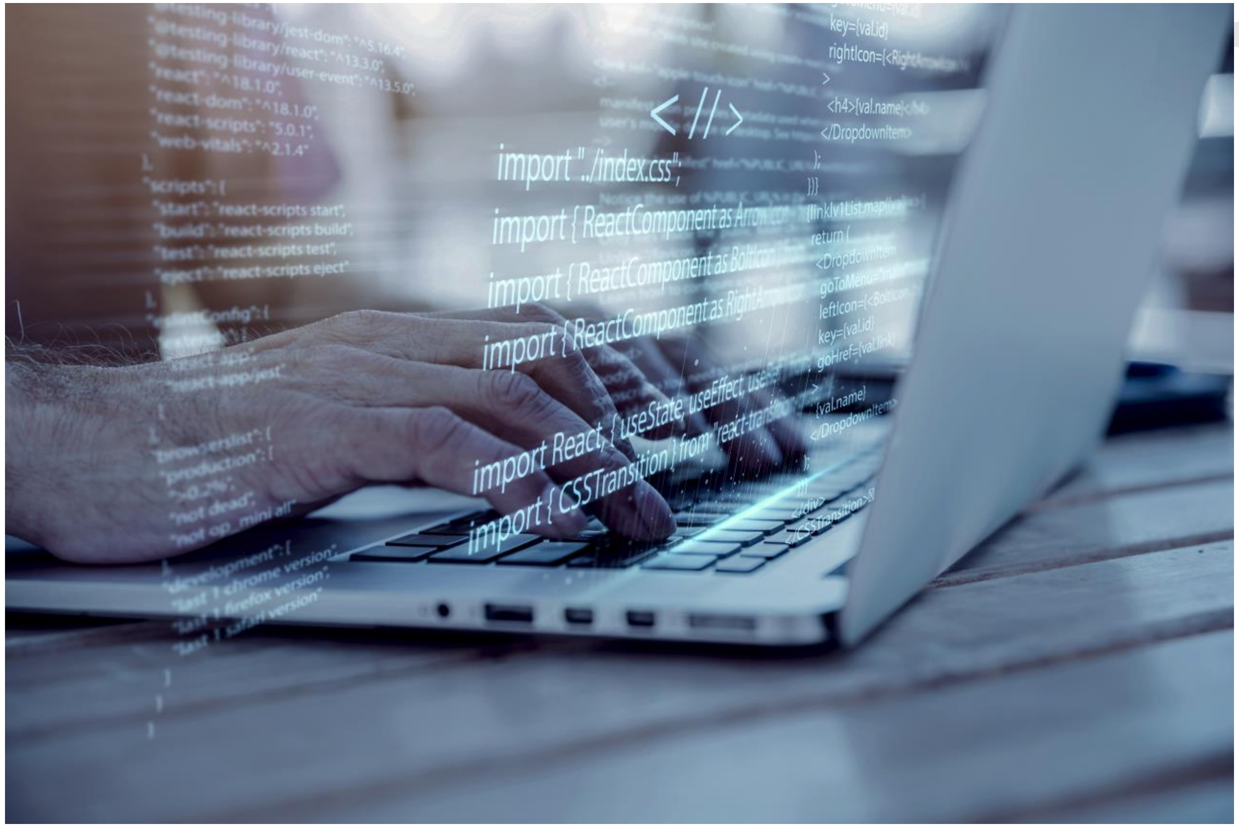
Impact type – health, safety, fundamental rights

Low risk examples

- Autocorrect and text prediction
- Document summarization
- Some environmental monitoring
- Some recommender systems

Consider all factors

- Chatbots
- Language translation
- Transcripts and dictation
- Spam filters and threat detection
- Natural environment forecasting
- General purpose models



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Use case scoring tool

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What is a Use Case?

A **use case** is a contextual narrative that describes how a user achieves a goal within a broader system, shaped by business objectives, environmental conditions, and technological interactions.*

Common characteristics of a use case:

- *Problem to solve*: What problem is this use case addressing? Who's impacted by the problem and how? What are the needs, goals, motivations, and frustrations of the users impacted?
- *Business and Strategic Context*: Why is this use case important, what value does it generate? What strategic outcomes does it support and what are the success criteria? What change management and readiness needs should be considered? What is the user journey?
- *Operating Context*: Where and when is this use case happening? What technology, regulations, services, or other users shape the experience? What are the internal and external constraints and requirements to consider? Where does it touch other interfaces (technical or human)?

**This definition was developed with assistance from ChatGPT*

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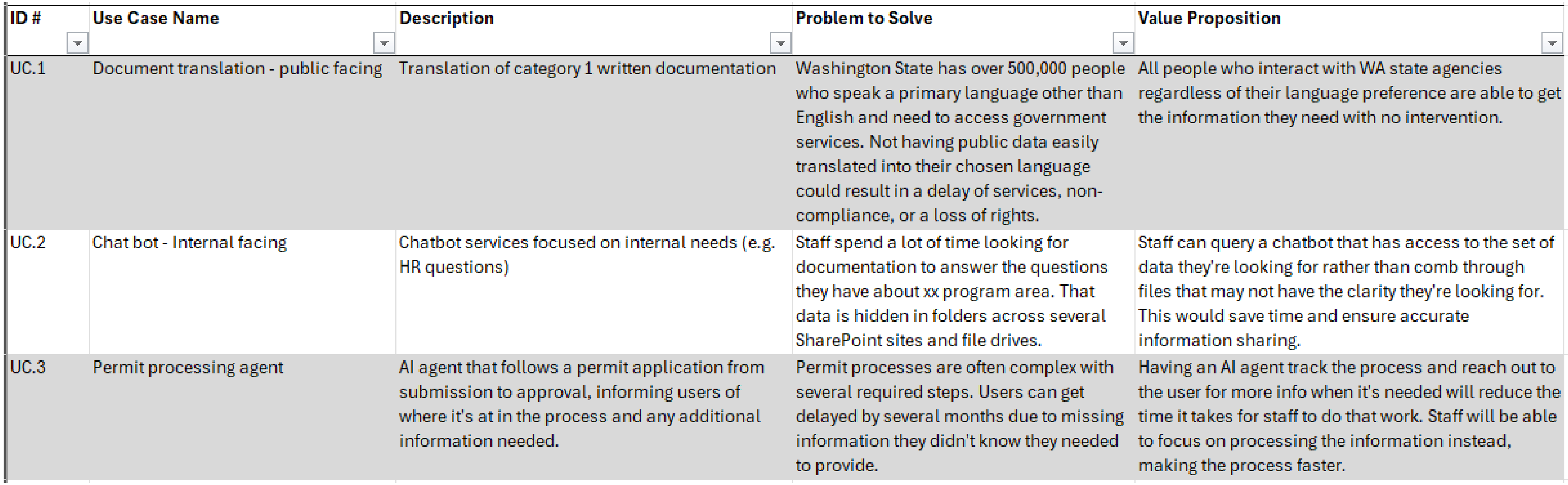
How to Find and Catalog Use Cases?

- Brainstorming activities and discovery workshops
- Listening for program needs, agency/state goals, customer desires
- Use Case Inventory



ID #	Use Case Name	Description	Problem to Solve	Value Proposition
UC.1	Document translation - public facing	Translation of category 1 written documentation	Washington State has over 500,000 people who speak a primary language other than English and need to access government services. Not having public data easily translated into their chosen language could result in a delay of services, non-compliance, or a loss of rights.	All people who interact with WA state agencies regardless of their language preference are able to get the information they need with no intervention.
UC.2	Chat bot - Internal facing	Chatbot services focused on internal needs (e.g. HR questions)	Staff spend a lot of time looking for documentation to answer the questions they have about xx program area. That data is hidden in folders across several SharePoint sites and file drives.	Staff can query a chatbot that has access to the set of data they're looking for rather than comb through files that may not have the clarity they're looking for. This would save time and ensure accurate information sharing.
UC.3	Permit processing agent	AI agent that follows a permit application from submission to approval, informing users of where it's at in the process and any additional information needed.	Permit processes are often complex with several required steps. Users can get delayed by several months due to missing information they didn't know they needed to provide.	Having an AI agent track the process and reach out to the user for more info when it's needed will reduce the time it takes for staff to do that work. Staff will be able to focus on processing the information instead, making the process faster.

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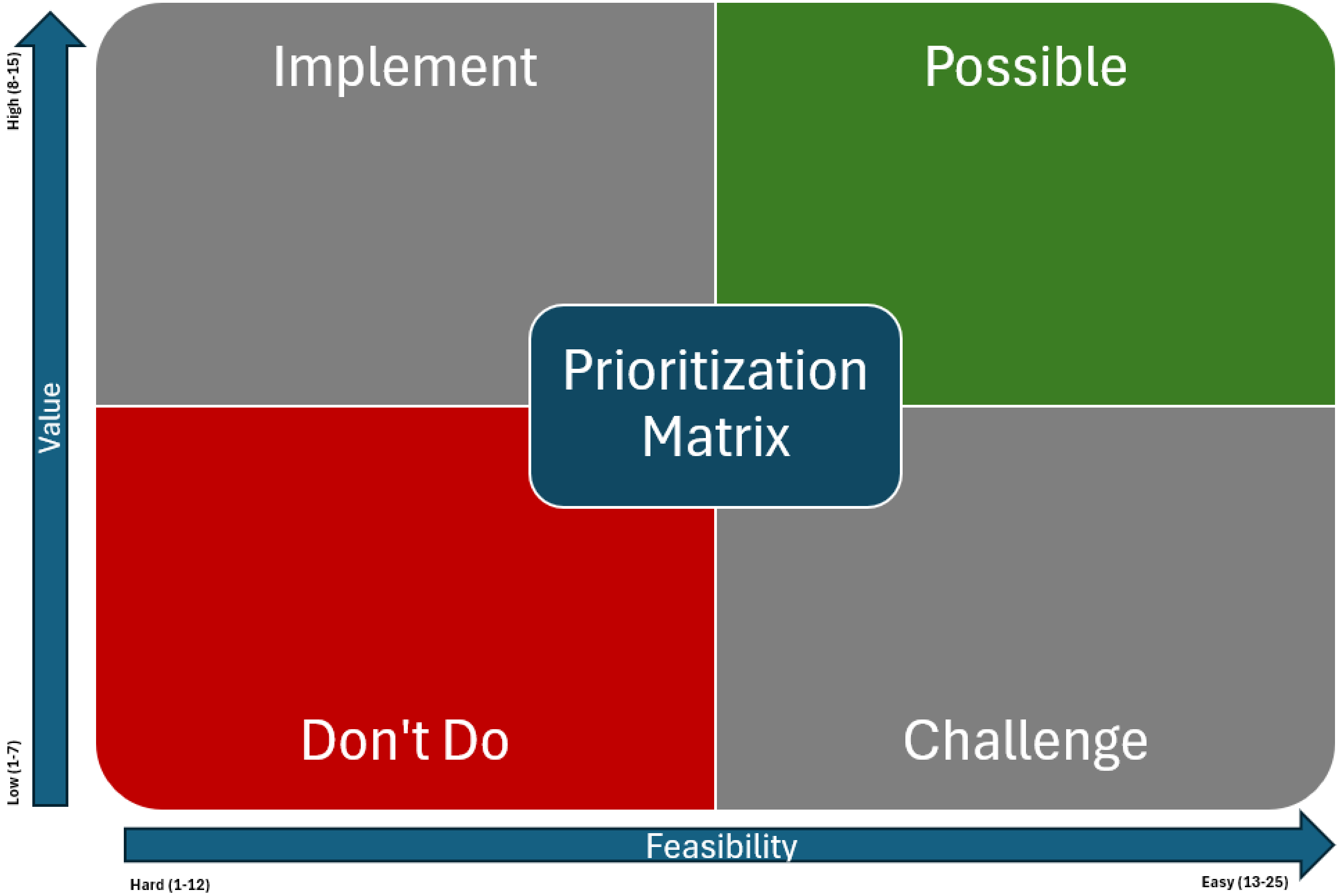
Prioritization Matrix



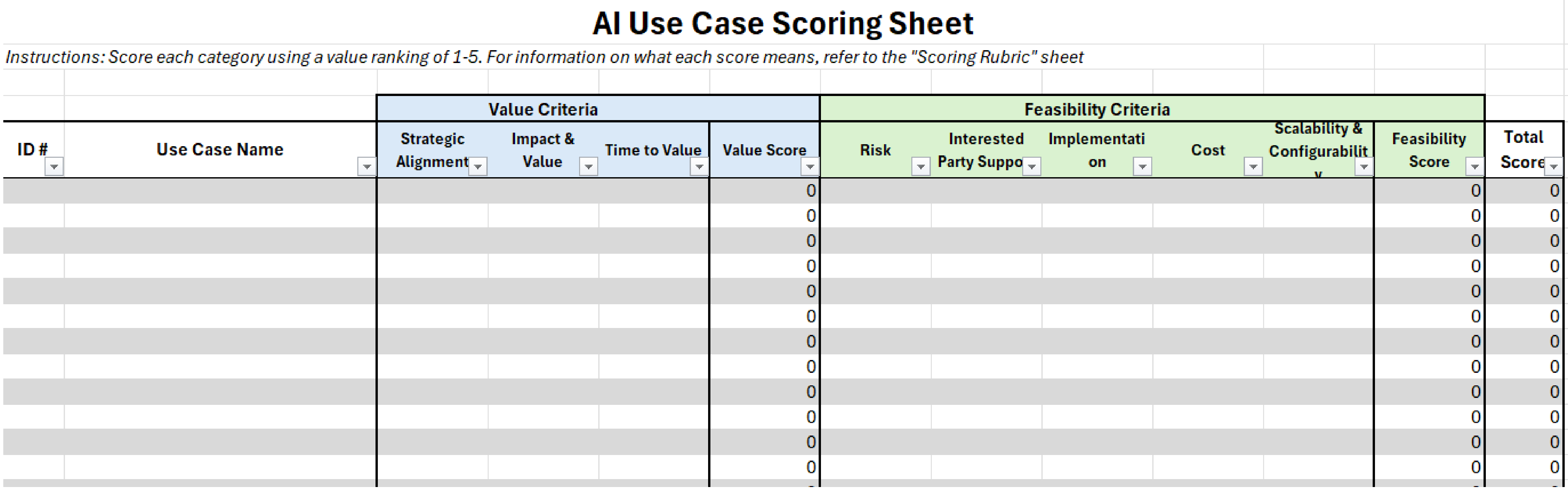
Possible: High value and easy to implement. These are the use cases to prioritize first

Implement: High value but requires a lot of effort to implement and maintain

Challenge: Easy to implement and maintain but does not provide a lot of value

Don’t Do: Low value and difficult to implement and maintain. Not worth investing in

Example Scoring Sheet



AI Use Case Scoring Sheet

Instructions: Score each category using a value ranking of 1-5. For information on what each score means, refer to the "Scoring Rubric" sheet

		Value Criteria				Feasibility Criteria						
ID #	Use Case Name	Strategic Alignment	Impact & Value	Time to Value	Value Score	Risk	Interested Party Suppo	Implementation	Cost	Scalability & Configurability	Feasibility Score	Total Score
					0						0	0
					0						0	0
					0						0	0
					0						0	0
					0						0	0
					0						0	0
					0						0	0
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Proposed Scoring Criteria - Value

Strategic Alignment (1-5)

The degree to which the AI use case supports the agency's and/or state's overarching strategic goals, such as enhancing member experience, improving operational efficiency, enabling personalization, or complying with regulatory requirements.

How well does this use case align to agency or state strategic goals and initiatives?

Impact & Business Value (1-5)

The potential measurable benefit the AI use case can deliver—such as cost savings, revenue growth, improved risk management, or enhanced decision-making capabilities—within targeted business units or across the enterprise.

How significant is the potential measurable benefit to the agency/state?

Time to Value (1-5)

The expected time frame in which the AI use case will begin delivering tangible results or benefits, including early wins or proof points that can build momentum and justify further investment.

How long will it take for this use case to deliver measurable benefits to the agency/state?

Example: Public-Facing Document Translation (Total Value Score: 12)

Strategic Alignment (3)
Aligned to IT strategic goal 1 – Leave no Community Behind. Moderate alignment to operational goals. Some leadership support

Impact & Business Value (4)
Increases LEP customer's ability to access information, access services, and comply with regulations. Improves xx KPI.

Time to Value (5)
Measurable benefits should be delivered almost immediately. Web metrics will be able to identify tangible results with no need to develop a new metric tool.

Proposed Scoring Criteria - Feasibility

Risk Level (1-5)

The extent of risk associated with the AI use case, including data privacy concerns, model bias, ethical implications, regulatory compliance, and potential user impact. A higher-risk project may require more governance and scrutiny.

What is the extent of risk associated with this use case?

Interested Party Support (1-5)

The level of enthusiasm, commitment, and sponsorship from key internal parties, including business leaders, IT teams, and risk/compliance functions, which can accelerate adoption and ensure sustained impact.

How committed is the agency/state to implement this use case?

Implementation Feasibility (1-5)

The estimated level of effort required to implement the use case successfully, including data readiness, required skill sets, technology stack compatibility, and change management considerations. Lower effort typically means quicker deployment and scalability.

How prepared is the agency/state to implement this use case?

Example: Public-Facing Document Translation (Total Feasibility Score: 22)

Risk Level (5)
The scope is limited to category 1 information that's available on a website. It is not generating new information.

Interested Party Support (5)
Several agencies are actively involved in and championing this use case

Implementation Feasibility (4)
Existing toolsets are available to do this work with very low development needs. Data formats and types are understood and ready

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Proposed Scoring Criteria - Feasibility

Cost

The total estimated cost to implement and sustain the AI use case–including technology, licensing, data acquisition/prep, external services, and internal staffing. Used to assess financial feasibility and funding requirements.

What is the total cost of implementation and ongoing support and does the agency have capacity to pay for it?

Scalability & Configurability

The ability for an AI solution to be quickly adapted and scaled to support different agencies seeking similar outcomes. Allows an accelerated path to adoption after the first agency deployment.

How quickly can the use case be adapted and scaled to support additional business areas or agencies?

Example: Public-Facing Document Translation (Total Feasibility Score: 22)

Cost (4)
Solution can be implemented with the existing tools that most agencies have already. Additional tool can be acquired using direct-buy

Scalability & Configurability (4)
Solutions available are already specialized to accommodate language translation, minimal changes necessary

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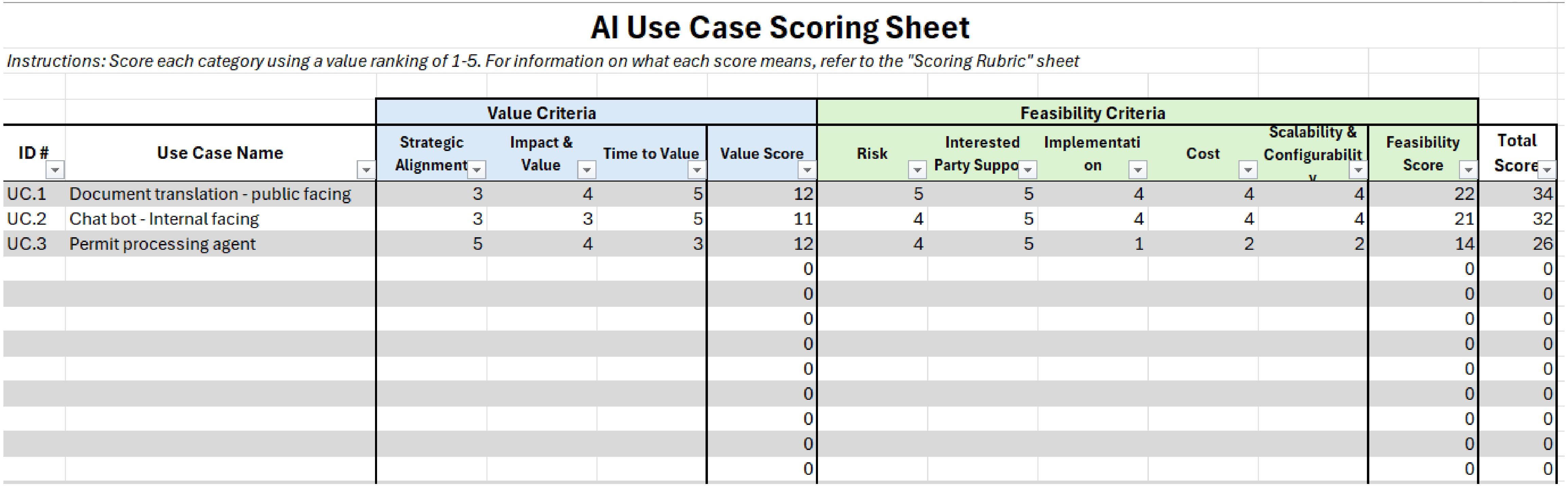
Example Scoring Sheet



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UC.2	Chat bot - Internal facing	3	3	5	11	4	5	4	4	4	21	32
UC.3	Permit processing agent	5	4	3	12	4	5	1	2	2	14	26
					0						0	0
					0						0	0
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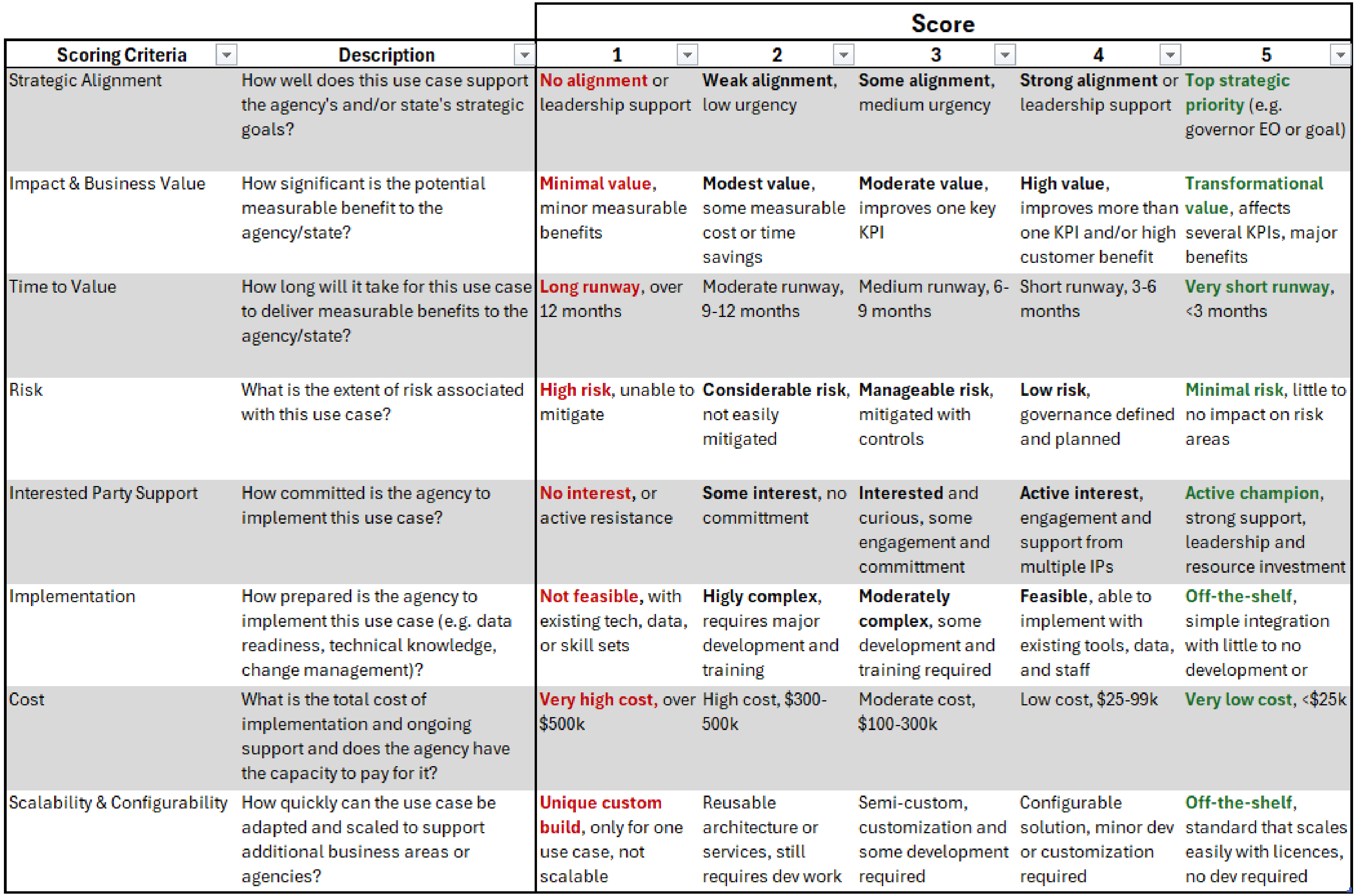
Scoring Criteria Rubric



		Score				
Scoring Criteria	Description	1	2	3	4	5
Strategic Alignment	How well does this use case support the agency's and/or state's strategic goals?	**No alignment** or leadership support	**Weak alignment**, low urgency	**Some alignment**, medium urgency	**Strong alignment** or leadership support	**Top strategic priority** (e.g. governor EO or goal)
Impact & Business Value	How significant is the potential measurable benefit to the agency/state?	**Minimal value**, minor measurable benefits	**Modest value**, some measurable cost or time savings	**Moderate value**, improves one key KPI	**High value**, improves more than one KPI and/or high customer benefit	**Transformational value**, affects several KPIs, major benefits
Time to Value	How long will it take for this use case to deliver measurable benefits to the agency/state?	**Long runway**, over 12 months	Moderate runway, 9-12 months	Medium runway, 6-9 months	Short runway, 3-6 months	**Very short runway**, <3 months
Risk	What is the extent of risk associated with this use case?	**High risk**, unable to mitigate	**Considerable risk**, not easily mitigated	**Manageable risk**, mitigated with controls	**Low risk**, governance defined and planned	**Minimal risk**, little to no impact on risk areas
Interested Party Support	How committed is the agency to implement this use case?	**No interest**, or active resistance	**Some interest**, no committment	**Interested** and curious, some engagement and committment	**Active interest**, engagement and support from multiple IPs	**Active champion**, strong support, leadership and resource investment
Implementation	How prepared is the agency to implement this use case (e.g. data readiness, technical knowledge, change management)?	**Not feasible**, with existing tech, data, or skill sets	**Higly complex**, requires major development and training	**Moderately complex**, some development and training required	**Feasible**, able to implement with existing tools, data, and staff	**Off-the-shelf**, simple integration with little to no development or
Cost	What is the total cost of implementation and ongoing support and does the agency have the capacity to pay for it?	**Very high cost**, over $500k	High cost, $300-500k	Moderate cost, $100-300k	Low cost, $25-99k	**Very low cost**, <$25k
Scalability & Configurability	How quickly can the use case be adapted and scaled to support additional business areas or agencies?	**Unique custom build**, only for one use case, not scalable	Reusable architecture or services, still requires dev work	Semi-custom, customization and some development required	Configurable solution, minor dev or customization required	**Off-the-shelf**, standard that scales easily with licences, no dev required

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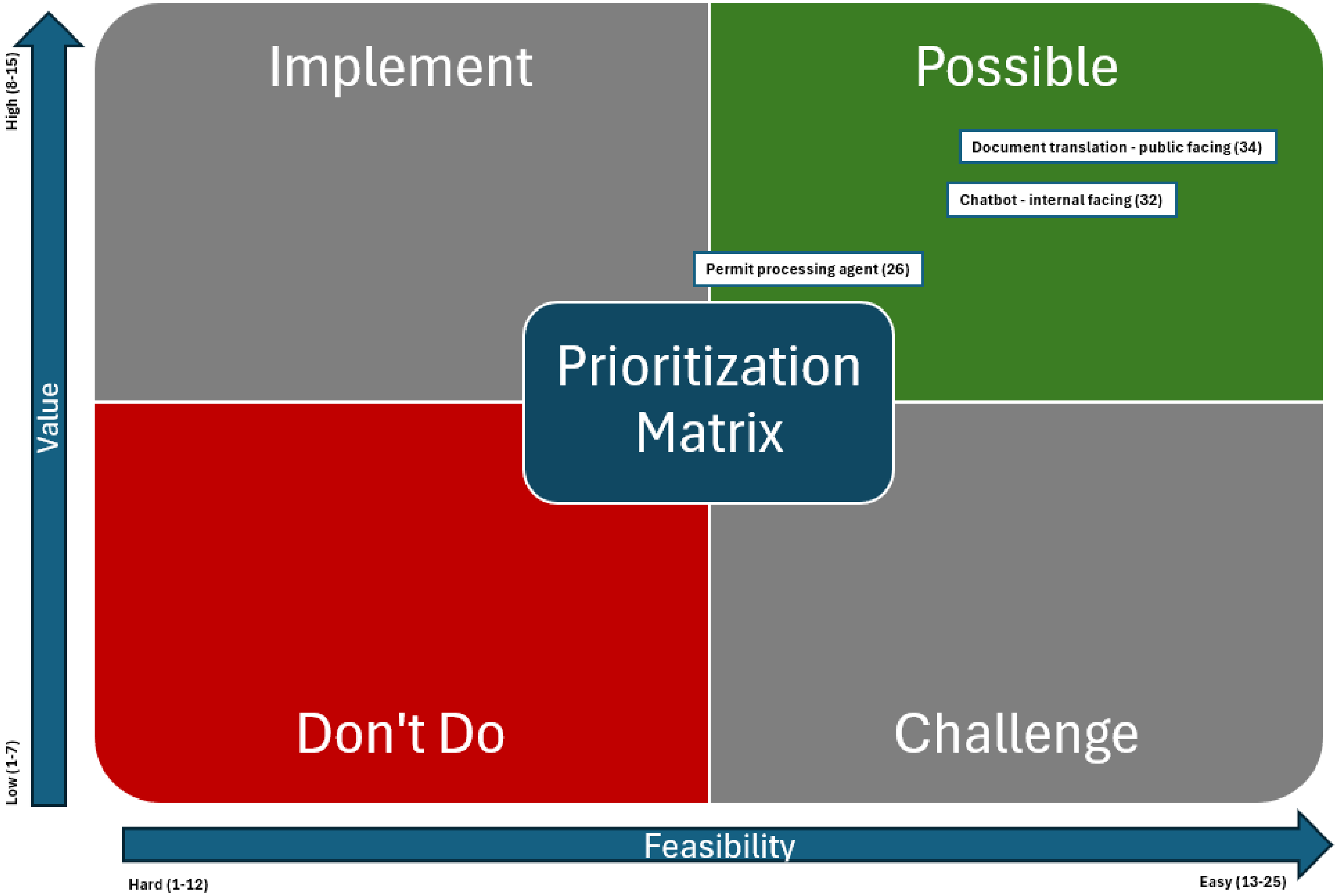
Prioritization Matrix



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AI Risk Assessments

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Sections 2 – Operating Context

Type of technology

- What type(s) of artificial intelligence does the system use?

Project purpose

- How does the project support agency goals?

Legal or policy requirements

- What laws apply?
- What specific requirements apply to stay consistent with agency mission and values?

Resourcing

- Are funds available for successful deployment, ongoing operation, and potential scaling?
- Is there appropriate expertise available?

Sources: Artificial Intelligence Risk Level Guidance

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Section 3 – Public purpose and social benefit

System beneficiaries

- Who is the system intended to benefit?
- How will success be measured and monitored?

Why this solution?

- Why is AI the preferred option? Why this type of AI?

System users

- Are users internal or external?
- Will outputs impact individuals or communities who not system users?

Section 4 – Safe, secure, and resilient

Role of humans

- How much autonomy does the system have? Range from little to no review, to reviewing within certain parameters, to reviewing and modifying all outputs.
- What is in place to ensure humans understand their responsibilities?

Output filtering and monitoring

- How are harmful outputs detected?
- How is misuse prevented?

System interdependencies

- What other systems are involved in deployment and operation?

Section 5 – Valid and reliable

Measuring accuracy

- Are there metrics that measure performance throughout the system lifecycle?
- How are metrics monitored?

Incident assessment and response

- Have malicious or inappropriate uses been assessed?
- How are incidents identified?
- How are incidents remediated?

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Section 6 – Fairness, inclusion, and non-discrimination

Adversely impacted individuals

- Who is adversely impacted?

Bias

- Does data appropriately represent impacted communities?
- What metrics are used to identify and address biases?
- What controls are in place to avoid introducing bias into system?

Community engagement

- Are impacted communities involved in system design?
- Are there mechanisms to gather and incorporate feedback?

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Section 7 – Privacy and data protection

Data types and privacy reviews

- Does the system process personal information?
- What types of personal information?
- Has a privacy impact assessment been completed?

Transparency and opt-out

- Are individuals notified that their information is being processed by the AI system?
- What mechanisms exist to opt-out?

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Section 8 – Accountability and responsibility

Feedback mechanisms

- How is feedback gathered and acted on?

Due diligence

- What contractual assurances are in place?
- Have vendors certified they have an AI governance program consistent with the NIST AI Risk Management Framework?

Natural environment impacts

- What environmental impacts exist, such as water use, carbon emissions, or high-tech waste?

Section 9 – Transparency and auditability

User notification

- Are users notified they are not interacting with a human?
- Are intended uses and limitations clearly explained?

Opt-out

- Are alternatives available and explained?
- Do alternatives create additional burdens for users?

Logging

- Are inputs and outputs logged?
- What records retention and public records requirements apply?

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Section 10 – Explainable and interpretable

System explainability

- To what extent is functionality explainable?
- Have model cards been reviewed?

Output justification

- Does the system provide citations or other resources to allow human confirmation?

Takeaways

- Level of risk depends on intended use and operating context, data characteristics, and system characteristics and safeguards
- A few types of uses are almost always high-risk, most other uses require careful consideration of all factors
- Using a use case scoring tool can help identify high-value, highly-feasible uses while avoiding low impact and high risk uses
- AI risk assessments are required for high-risk uses, but the concepts addressed in risk assessments are widely applicable to other uses

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Thank you!

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