



Thoughtworks joins DPGA: Impact, Influence and Inclusion

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Chicago

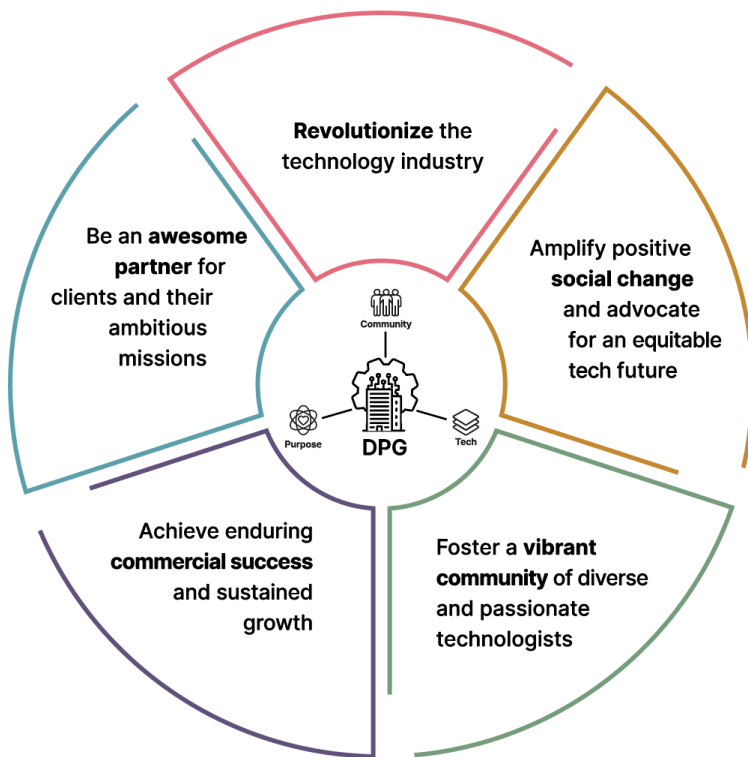
By: [Vinod Sankaranarayanan](#), Digital Public Goods Lead, Thoughtworks

Thoughtworks has long been a pioneer in advocating for and creating open source software. We're [excited to join the Digital Public Goods Alliance](#) and be a part of a larger global network committed to advancing high-quality, open source digital solutions.

Since our founding 28+ years ago, our contributions to diversity, equity, inclusion, sustainability and social change are also very well known. So it's no surprise that we found a common purpose when we could marry our passion for open source software towards public goods. Even though the term digital public goods itself came into being in 2017, Thoughtworks had already been deeply invested in this space.

[Public goods](#) are a commodity or service that are provided, without profit, to all members of a society, either by the government or by a private individual or organization. Typical examples of public goods are public order, roadways and in many countries public health. Extending the same, one can see the relevance of digital public goods as a foundation on which countries progress.

DPGs connect directly with Thoughtworks' purpose: To create extraordinary impact through our tech excellence and culture.



We believe that investing in Digital Public Goods allows us to achieve impact at scale, influence the future and drive equity and inclusion through the use of deep tech.

Digital Public Goods, given their relevance in citizen services across multiple geographies, truly reflect Thoughtworks' commitment to Social Change, globally.

Digital Public Goods enables Thoughtworks to...

IMPACT AT SCALE Serving million+ population Building context independent, extensible foundational digital infrastructure	INFLUENCE THE FUTURE Shaping "interactions of future" between govt. and people Facilitating borderless transactions. e.g Commerce, travel, policing	DRIVE INCLUSION THROUGH TECH Improving lives of <u>underX</u> population (x=privileged, represented...) Implementing cutting edge tech and bringing those to the mainstream. e.g. voice driven commerce
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Our contributions to Digital Public Goods

One of our most significant, and proudest, contributions in this space has been Bahmni. An open source Hospital Information Management System (HIMS), Bahmni today runs in more than 500 clinics across 50 countries. It is the first open source HIMS product that has obtained India's stringent NDHM certification and is being explored by various states in the country for implementation. Bahmni was recognised as a Digital Public Good in 2021.

Behind the scenes, our Engineering for Research (e4rTM) practice has made significant progress in partnership with Ashoka University and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation on [BharatSIM](#) (a DPG Nominee), a agent-based simulation model which helped envision the spread of COVID 19 in India and develop policy interventions. In parallel we have worked on [Epirust](#), a framework for modeling epidemics in large-scale cities on simple hardware such as laptops – explore the details [here](#).

While tech can support advances in Global health issues, there are still millions of people who have no access to tech whatsoever, and this excludes them from the related health and civic services. We believe there is great opportunity to use deep tech and bridge the digital divide that has come to be. To this end, the work we are doing with EkStep on [Vakyaansh](#) - promoting open source Speech to Text in [Indic languages](#), will open up the digital world to non-English speaking, non-literate people around the world. These technologies will now allow for everyone to engage in digital content, but also transact, and contribute to the Digital World without being limited by language or literary barriers. This can potentially bring 6.4 billion people - non English speakers - onto the same digital platform. Vakyaansh sits on Sunbird, which is a Digital Public Good.

We also see enormous opportunities to advance the UN [global development goals](#) using Digital Public Goods. For example Digital Public Goods are a great way for Governments to set-up the GovStack and rapidly launch [citizen services](#).

The first clutch of Government initiated Digital Goods are beginning to be open sourced. We recently saw the [Cowin platform](#) being open sourced by the Indian Government. Thoughtworks is closely collaborating with another Government entity and helping them open source a payment platform.

DPGs have the environment as well as society in mind. If the internet were a country it would be the sixth largest carbon emitter so the technology industry has a large impact to manage. To help businesses tackle their carbon footprint, we have developed an open source [Cloud Carbon Footprint](#) tool – also a DPG nominee. The calculator provides visibility and tooling to measure and monitor cloud usage data and help teams produce carbon savings, it also estimates cloud emissions and provides recommendations to reduce carbon & costs.

Our primary approach to social change is to amplify the impacts of organizations on the front line of the issues; in terms of decarbonisation one example is the development of [openCEM](#): a free tool for modeling Australia's energy market. OpenCEM demonstrates how an advanced industrial economy can run reliably on renewable energy and energy storage (a 2019-2020 project).

Moving forward as partners

We are [thrilled to become a member of the Digital Public Goods Alliance](#). We see this as a logical extension to our existing commitments, and long held values and purpose. We are excited to join hands with the alliance and other members in order to amplify and extend the reach of Digital Public Goods to all of Planet Earth.

1 <https://www.babbel.com/en/magazine/how-many-people-speak-english-and-where-is-it-spoken>

2 <https://serving.green/#usage-stats>