New Jersey Hires GovLab Founder as Its First Chief Innovation Officer

Theo Douglas | August 13, 2018

The state of New Jersey has created a new C-level innovation post and hired a former federal tech leader to make government services more responsive and jumpstart its innovation economy.

New Jersey has hired Beth Simone Noveck as the state's first-ever chief innovation officer, Gov. Phil Murphy announced Aug. 13 and Christine Lee, press assistant, confirmed to *Government Technology*.

Noveck is founder and director of The Governance Lab (GovLab) at the New York University Tandon School of Engineering in Brooklyn and was the first U.S. deputy chief technology officer, and director of the White House Open Government Initiative under the Obama administration according to LinkedIn.

A graduate of Harvard University and Yale Law School, she was named one of the " World's 100 Most Influential People in Digital Government 2018" by *Apolitical* and was named one of the "Top Women in Technology" by the *Huffington Post*, the state said.

Creation of the state chief innovation officer position is aimed at advancing Murphy's "promise to spur and expand innovation" across New Jersey and within its government, the state said in a news release. In a statement, the governor said Noveck, one of *GT*'s Top 25 Doers, Dreamers and Drivers of 2010, will help the state lead in "government effectiveness."

Creation of the state chief innovation officer position is aimed at advancing Murphy's "promise to spur and expand innovation" across New Jersey and within its government, the state said in a news release. In a statement, the governor said Noveck, one of *GT*'s Top 25 Doers, Dreamers and Drivers of 2010, will help the state lead in "government effectiveness."

Noveck, a transparency advocate under Obama, will have state responsibilities including creating "more effective and agile" government services; collaborating with other agencies, educational institutions and the private sector; utilizing new technologies to resolve "public problems"; and creating a "21st-century government" capable of making decisions using "high-quality data and diverse collective intelligence," the state said.

"Governor Murphy is a strong champion for using technology and innovation to seize the opportunities of the future, namely to spur economic growth, educate our children, increase health and wellness, and create new jobs," Noveck said in a statement, calling it "an honor" to work for the administration and advance these goals for residents of her home state.

Data analysis is a topic with which Noveck is intimately familiar and wrote about for *GT* in 2017, announcing the launch by GovLab and the Justice Management Institute of the Data Justice Network, a knowledge-exchange platform aimed at accelerating data-driven justice reforms by enhancing collaborations between lawmakers and criminal justice officials.

"When analyzed and used appropriately, data allows for a better understanding and segmentation of relevant populations, matching people to programs more effectively, and measuring what works," Noveck and co-author Batu Sayici wrote, calling the network "a means to an end," and "the surest and fastest route to genuine reform."

In 2016, she discussed the somewhat cyclical power of open data — with the availability of data drawing researchers to work on it, driving partnerships between cities and universities and how those collaborations prompt governments to open more data.

"I think what you're seeing is not just open data, but kind of shades of open — the desire to make the data open to university researchers, but not necessarily the broader public," Noveck said at the time.

Also that year, Noveck and GovLab spearheaded " Smart Crowdsourcing," a multinational attempt to rethink strategy on the Zika virus, partnering with public health departments, waste management firms and officials in four South American countries to dissect larger issues for smaller, actionable findings.

http://www.govtech.com/pcio/articles/New-Jersey-Hires-GovLab-Founder-as-Its-First-Chief-Innovation-Officer.html