

Friends From The City

A  UX Strategy

B  UX Research

C  UX / UI Design

D  Content Strategy

E  Product Management

F  Software Development



About Friends

Chicago, Illinois —
Remote Team

We're a civic tech company working with state and federal partners to make public services easier to use. We start by listening to the people using the services and the teams delivering them. Our teams have worked on disability claims forms at the VA, user research for Maryland, AI-powered tools at CMS, and clinical decision support tools across VA health systems. We do the work, and we measure success by what changes for the people we serve.

We are an SBA-certified 8(a), Woman-Owned, and Service-Disabled Veteran-Owned Small Business, and a member of the Digital Services Coalition.

Clients: VA, CMS, HHS, Maryland Digital Service, IRS, NYS Parks and Rec

Differentiator .01

1

A Research That Drives Decisions

Our researchers don't hand off reports. We stay in the room as decisions get made, shaping what gets built based on what we learn from users.

Differentiator .02

2

B Accessibility From The Start

We design for the people most likely to be left out. Every decision we make accounts for how people with disabilities will experience the service.

Differentiator .03

3

C Capacity Over Dependency

We transfer knowledge as we go. We document decisions and train agency staff so your team can maintain the work after the contract ends.

Let's Make An Impact Together.

We focus on services where the details matter. The ones people use when they're already stressed, confused, or running out of options.



Selected Works

A (↻) CMS SEAS-IT

Research, Design and Front-End Development

CMS needed to modernize how staff find and use internal knowledge. We led research, design, and front-end development for an AI-powered platform that became CMS's first chatbot, giving staff faster access to answers.

B (↻) VA Financial Management

Research and Product Design

Veterans were navigating a debt system that was confusing and created unnecessary hardship. We led research, design, and usability testing to simplify the experience. Satisfaction scores improved and waiver submissions increased 88%.

C (↻) VA Clinical Decision Support Applications (CDS-Apps)

Front-End Development

VA needed to reduce the burden on clinicians working across multiple electronic health record systems. We delivered front-end engineering for modular clinical decision support tools that work across EHRs and fit into existing workflows.

D (↻) VA Data Visualization Design Patterns

Research and Product Design

VA needed consistent patterns for building internal data visualization tools. We led research on new design components for clinical decision-making applications and documented reusable patterns contributed to the US Web Design System.

E (↻) HHS ACF ORR

Product Management

ORR's post-release services needed to better support unaccompanied children and their sponsors. We led product management for the PRS portal redesign, improving safety monitoring and service connections through a trauma-informed approach.

F (↻) CMS Quality Payment Program - HCD

Research and Product Design

Healthcare providers were spending too much time searching for reporting requirements on the QPP website. We led research using help desk analysis, card sorting, tree testing, and user interviews to redesign the experience. Task completion times dropped 30%.

G (↻) Maryland State Applicant Research

Discovery Research & Strategy

Maryland needed to understand how residents apply for state services. We led their first user research study. The findings are now guiding improvements statewide.

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Certifications
SBA 8(a) Business Development,
SDVOSB, and WOSB

SAM UEI
RA62AG44CFZ8

Cage
8TOK1

GSA MAS
#47QTCA23D0076

NAICS

541511 Custom Computer Programming Services
541512 Computer Systems Design Services
541519 Other Computer Related Services

GSA MAS SINS

54151S - IT Professional Services
541910 - Marketing Research and Analysis Services
541611 - Management and Financial Consulting
518210C - Cloud Computing and Cloud IT Professional Services