

UK Government

# Discovery as a Service.





# Discovery as a Service (DaaS).

## Background

In August 2020, a large government department designed a new operating model to become a business aligned, product-centric, portfolio-managed organisation. The vision for this transformation was to meet the needs of the business and ensure better public outcomes.

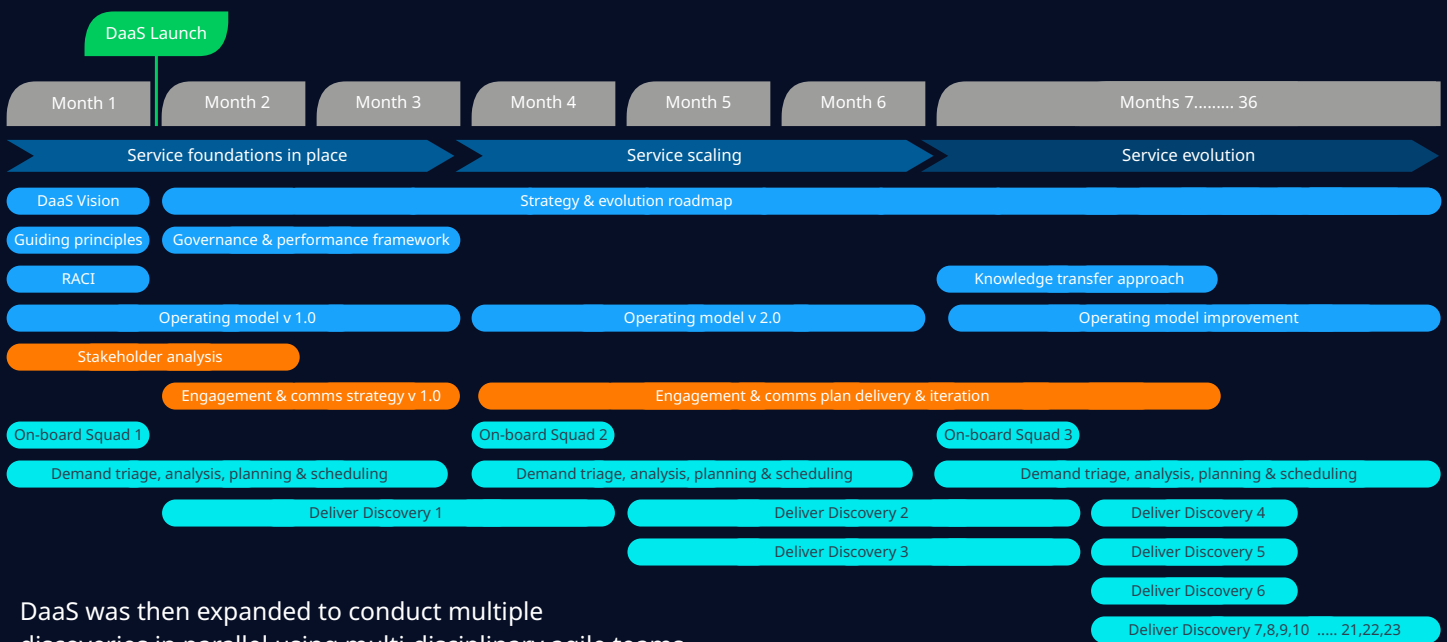
The operating model identified several priority capabilities that required development, including a capability to provide consistent evidence-based discoveries using Digital and Data Profession best practice to de-risk future delivery and investment decisions. This capability was termed 'Discovery as a Service' (DaaS) and a procurement process started for a delivery partner to help set up and deliver this new service. In August 2021, NTT DATA was successful in the procurement to set up and deliver DaaS.

## Initial set up of DaaS

NTT DATA landed an experienced team to rapidly define the DaaS capability. This provided an initial flexible structure for DaaS and a framework for early discoveries to operate within. This team was structured to ensure user, business and technology viewpoints were embedded in DaaS from its inception. This team, alongside civil servant colleagues:



- Co-created the vision, purpose, guiding principles, and ambition for DaaS.
- Defined the minimum viable product version of the DaaS operating model (incl. service catalogue, ways of working, processes, performance management framework).
- Compiled discovery methods and standards in a playbook to support consistent and high-quality discovery outcomes.
- Defined the stakeholder engagement strategy and comms plan to raise awareness of the service and create a continuous pipeline of work.
- Prepared for the first discovery, agreed the scope, and put in place the right team for it.



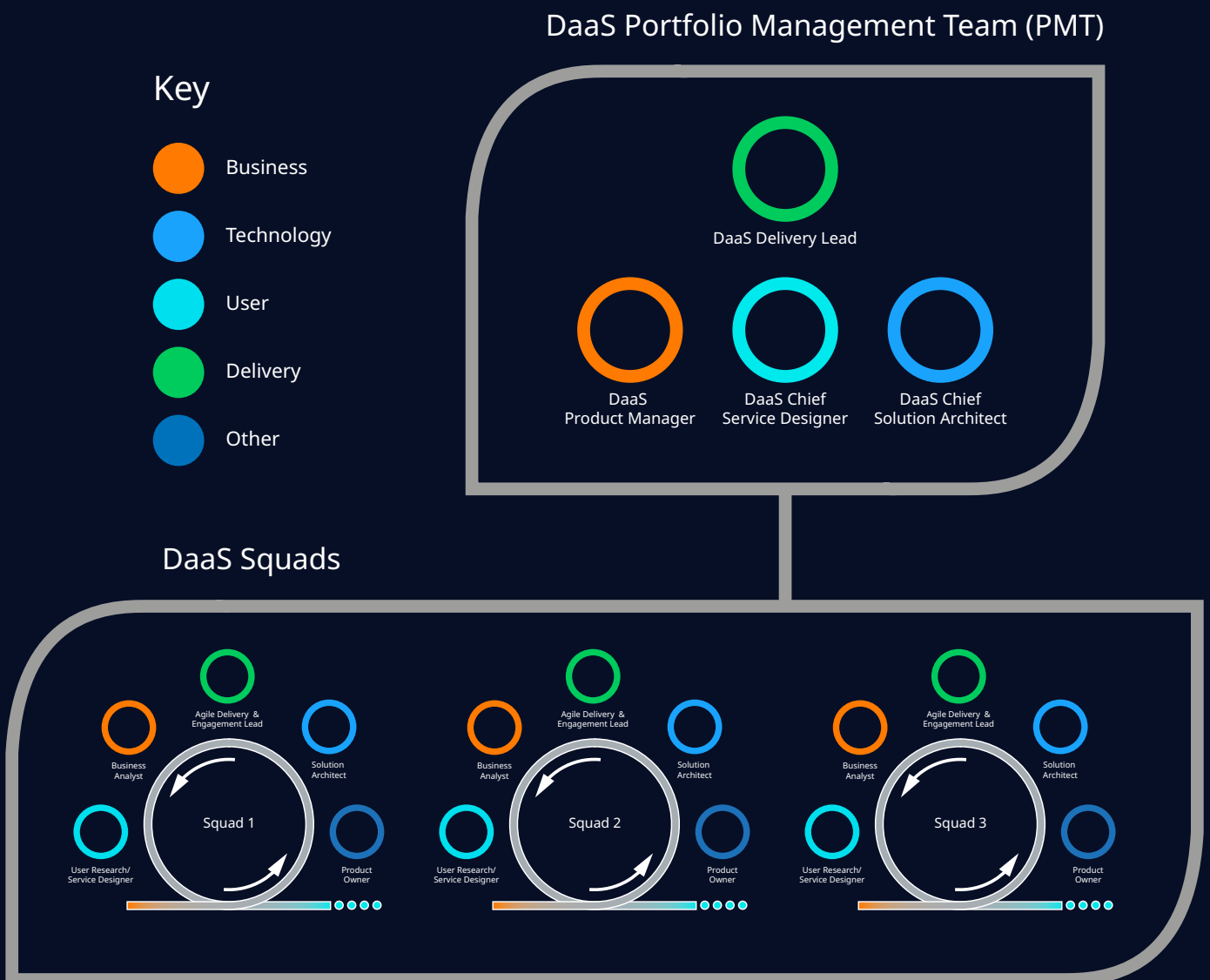
DaaS was then expanded to conduct multiple discoveries in parallel using multi-disciplinary agile teams. Our teams engage with a wide range of stakeholders and end users to plot the best course of action for a given problem and lay the groundwork to successfully mobilise delivery.

## Discoveries the DaaS way

Discovery as a Service enables well informed investment decisions to be made across government and its partners. Through 6–12-week discoveries, the service provides evidence-based recommendations that are value for money, deliverable, user focused, commercially viable, and support wider strategic goals.

The service is built to be scalable, it regularly flexes between 1 and 3 multi-disciplinary teams and can go further based on demand. Each discovery team is set up to operate as a blended team of NTT DATA and civil servants with the exact team structure dependent on required discovery outcomes.

DaaS also has a management layer to triage demand, manage resources, ensure discovery quality, and continuously improve the service (also a blend of NTT DATA and civil servants). Because demand triage is essential, by working closing with discovery sponsors, we develop a deep understanding of the problem which ensures right-sized discoveries. It also sets up teams for success with concise discovery scope, timeline and deliverables.

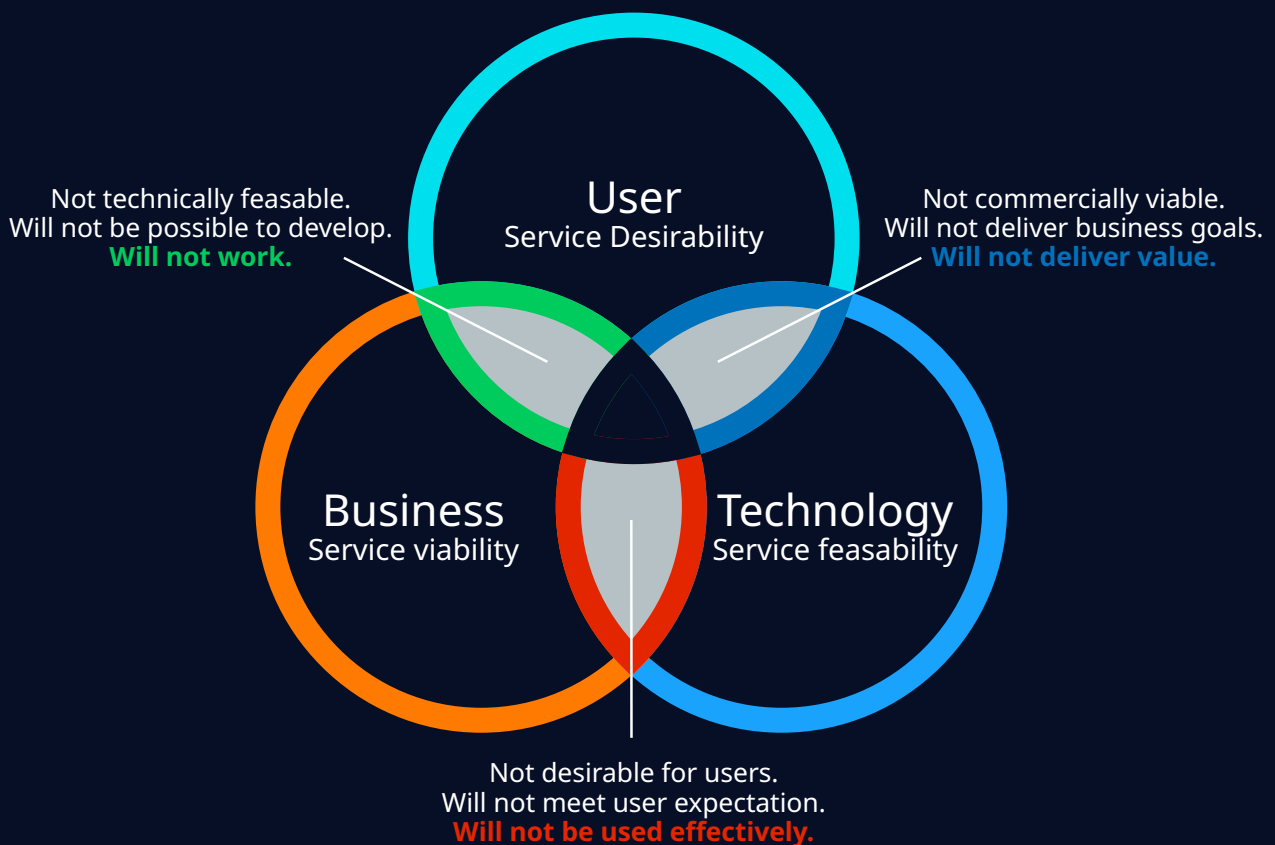


## What makes DaaS successful?

DaaS has been operational for over 3 years and delivered 23 discoveries with excellent feedback from end users and civil servants. The key reasons for our success are:

- Agile ways of working: At the heart of each DaaS discovery, we use Agile ways of working to iterate scope and foster collaboration, alignment, and transparency. We work closely with customers to bring them on the journey, demonstrating insights and recommendations early and acting on feedback.
- Multi-disciplinary teams: All DaaS teams follow our three-lens approach to have roles that represent technology, business and user. This combination gives us a well-rounded, holistic view when providing recommendations.

## Three-lens approach



- Blended teams: DaaS operates as a blend of NTT DATA and civil servants. However, we also provide the opportunity for customers to include their own staff in the discovery team. This builds trust, transparency and helps transition to delivery.
- Discovery experts: We provided a fresh perspective by bringing in broader Public Sector experience, Subject Matter Expertise and our wider NTT DATA 'know-how'. This, alongside best practices gained from previous discoveries, means that our teams are experts at what they do.



## What value has DaaS provided?

- DaaS has now completed 23 consistent evidence-based discoveries to accelerate and de-risk future significant investments.
- Supported increases and decreases in demand by scaling up and down between 1 and 3 discovery teams.
- Better decision-making from fresh perspectives alongside proven methods.
- A proven ability to consistently provide the right discovery outcomes within a set timeframe and budget.
- Increased user experience and adoption through a focus on user research and designing recommendations aligned to their needs.
- Upskilled and supported the development and growth of numerous civil servants.
- Quality through Kaizen: We apply continuous feedback loops and reflect on lessons learnt to continuously improve our templates, approaches, and ways of working.
- Set standards and assurance: There are mechanisms in place to ensure quality and value of discovery outputs. From repeatable methodology, quality assurance from the management layer, and early visibility to customers, to risk management.
- Accessible best practice: All DaaS best practice was made accessible to everyone in this large government department and shared with additional agencies, with training and upskilling progressed actively.
- Supportive Environment: We have built a supportive environment for people to learn and develop from each other working as a badgeless team.

