






Appendix: List of 21 Red Flags



THEORY OF CHANGE AND VALUE PROPOSITION




-  (1) The project does not offer a clear Theory of Change – or, if offered, it is tenuous, misguided, or oversimplified.
-  (2) The proposal is a strategic misfit; the product is not related to other projects/grants that the potential grantee works on.
-  (3) The project is merely a new product with no prospect of policy, cultural, or systemic change. The solution promises to provide a quick fix (“band-aid”) to a long-standing issue.

BUSINESS MODEL AND FUNDING





-  (4) The product generates revenue from affected communities.
-  (5) The project depends on harmful surveillance – either by corporations or government agencies – regardless of framing.



ORGANIZATIONAL GOVERNANCE, POLICIES, AND PRACTICES

-  (6) The governing body and the team behind the project are homogeneous in demographic, background, and expertise; the team is structured in such a way that the knowledge or decision-making power is concentrated within a small group of individuals.
-  (7) There is insufficient disclosure about the project’s privacy policy, terms of service, and algorithmic use policies (if applicable). Furthermore, there is no process for obtaining meaningful informed consent from communities.


-  (8) There is no formal process for conducting a human rights or algorithmic impact assessment and/or a mechanism to track, report, and remediate harms.
-  (9) There is not enough knowledge about technology standards and regulations that apply to vendors’ practices.
-  (10) Based on the vendor’s current policies, there are not enough safeguards for preventing harm during organizational restructuring, spin-offs, merges, or dissolution.

PRODUCT DESIGN, DEVELOPMENT, AND MAINTENANCE



-  (11) The product claims to be completely new, “disruptive,” or different in all relevant facets.
-  (12) The product replaces an existing product with an interface that is very different from the one that users are accustomed to or the user interface/design is inaccessible to people with disabilities or intimidating to those lacking technical or digital literacy.
-  (13) The proposed project does not sufficiently follow industry best practices including security, privacy, openness, interpretability, and non-discriminatory design.
-  (14) Vendor is not able to explain how the product/service works in an accessible manner, without using technical terms.

-  (15) The product locks you in and/or is not easily repairable.
-  (16) Developers don’t make explicit how a certain technology or product will be maintained or adapted in the future.



THIRD-PARTY RELATIONSHIPS, INFRASTRUCTURE, AND SUPPLY CHAIN

-  (17) Vendor lacks sufficient knowledge about the hidden labor that goes into the design, development, and maintenance of a service.

GOVERNMENT RELATIONSHIPS

-  (18) Vendor is not transparent or does not set red lines in its data sharing practices with government agencies.
-  (19) Due to trade secrecy, intellectual property rights, or proprietary software, the vendor has excessive confidentiality clauses to their contracts with public agencies, or has many non-disclosure agreements they require the agency to sign.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

-  (20) Tokenism in community engagement where engagement is not meaningful and is treated as a checkbox.
-  (21) Products are not designed with the impacted communities centered. There is no meaningful community engagement in the process of needs assessment, development, and implementation.