Australian Government Design System — A Cautionary Case: DTA Withdrew Support in 2021, Leaving 100+ Sites to a Volunteer Fork (GOLD)

Digital Inclusion · Good practice · Australia

Quality score: 48/100

Evidence strength: Moderate

Summary

Australia's open-source government design system, released by the DTA in 2018, was used by 100+ government sites. The DTA decommissioned it with little warning in 2021, and volunteers relaunched it as GOLD. A cautionary case of shared inclusive-design infrastructure left unowned.

Key dimensions

Dimension	Score
Demonstrated reach	1/1
Innovation level	2/5
Sustainability (ongoing)	0/1
Evaluation evidence	0/1
Documented learning	1/1

Evaluated by C-NAPSE

Data sources

C-NAPSE web research — accessed 2026-11-11

Digital Transformation Agency (DTA); since 2021 the volunteer collective Design System AU — accessed 2026-11-11

iTnews — DTA abandons open source govt design system (17 Aug 2021) — accessed 2026-11-11

Design System AU — press: DTA decommissions government design system — accessed 2026-11-11

Design System AU — Celebrating the launch of GOLD Design System — accessed 2026-11-11

govau/design-system-components (archived GitHub repository) — accessed 2026-11-11

Cite this — Evidoria. *Australian Government Design System — A Cautionary Case: DTA Withdrew Support in 2021, Leaving 100+ Sites to a Volunteer Fork (GOLD)*. Persistent ID: 2e9ae68d-fc41-40e7-9779-293c932dd083.