# The NASSS-CAT tools: a short guide

The NASSS-CAT tool are still under development. We have produced four versions for further testing.

**NASSS-CAT SHORT** is a ‘taster’ version which only takes a few minutes to complete. It has been designed to illustrate the general idea of a multi-domain analysis of a complex technology challenge. It could, for example, be distributed in a seminar for people to try. It includes 3-5 questions in each domain, plus some space to make free-text notes. If a group of stakeholders finds NASSS-CAT SHORT useful, they may be motivated to plan a more specific, full-day meeting to apply the longer version.

**NASSS-CAT LONG** is a more detailed version of the tool, which will eventually be available in in paper/PDF and online format. This version is intended to be used at the stage when there is an idea, suggestion or broad goal to introduce a technology but there is not yet a formal, agreed project. It includes the same high-level questions as the short version but also a second level of detail (2-5 additional sub-questions) on each question. NASSS-CAT LONG can be used for detailed reflection, due diligence and preliminary project planning, usually (though not necessarily) with support from a trained facilitator.

Importantly, each domain in the NASSS-CAT LONG includes a section for a free-text narrative: what does the responder think are the key issues – and how does he or she frame them? Almost certainly, more than one person from the organisation/partnership will need to complete this instrument – and there should be opportunities for different stakeholders to discuss their different perspectives on each domain. A technology designer, a nurse, and a patient, for example, will each have a different perspective on the value proposition of a new technology. They don’t have to agree – but they do have to learn about everyone else’s point of view!

There are many possible ways of using the NASSS-CAT LONG:

* Distribute it for people to fill out before a workshop (or as the first session in a workshop)
* Ask a researcher or facilitator to conduct a series of phone interviews with different stakeholders, and populate the NASSS-CAT with their responses
* In a workshop or other interactive session, the facilitator might summarise people’s responses to the NASSS-CAT and highlight areas of consensus and divergence
* Use design approaches (e.g. exploring personas, working through scenarios, collective brainstorming) to work adaptively through challenges

**NASSS-CAT PROJECT** is a 35-item instrument for assessing, monitoring, reducing and responding to the perceived complexity of a technology project over time. Project teams may use this tool in a variety of ways – perhaps in an initial in-depth kick-off workshop followed by periodic reviews – and usually with a trained facilitator or project consultant.

**NASSS-CAT INTERVIEW** is a set of semi-structured interview prompts based on the NASSS-CAT LONG. It is intended for people who want to do research or detailed qualitative evaluation of a technology implementation project. It was originally developed in response to a request from a PhD student who wanted use the NASSS-CAT tools to guide a detailed study of a change project involving a new technology. The questions are not intended to be fixed or exclusive (i.e. researchers and evaluators should modify them as appropriate, acknowledging the original source).

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