

# EMILY BINET ROYALL

Advancing ethical and inclusive smart cities



## HELLO!

I work at the intersection of public administration, data and technology to build inclusive futures for cities. I believe people should be at the center of smart cities, and my work focuses on creating greater public oversight over smart city technologies and the data that powers them.

## AREAS OF EXPERTISE

Smart Cities  
Program Administration  
Municipal Procurement  
Public Private Partnerships  
Data, Privacy & Statistical Analysis  
Digital Rights  
Digital Inclusion  
Public Speaking  
Community Engagement

## LANGUAGES

English (fluent), French (fluent)

## ORGANIZATIONS

United for Smart & Connected Cities  
(Vice Chair)  
GovAI (Co-Chair, Policy Working Group)  
Women in Smart Cities  
(Steering Committee)  
Cities Coalition for Digital Rights (member)  
Urban AI (member)

## CONTACT ME:

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## EXPERIENCE

### **Smart City Administrator: 2021-Present**

The Office of Innovation, City of San Antonio

### **Affiliate People Centred Smart Cities Programme: 2021-2022**

United Nations, UN Habitat

### **Smart City Coordinator: 2018-21**

The Office of Innovation, City of San Antonio

### **Data Director: 2017-18**

The San Antonio Report, San Antonio, TX

### **Policy Data Analyst & Researcher: 2016-17**

Massachusetts Office of Information Technology, Boston, MA

### **Research Scientist: Smart Cities - 2014-15**

City Form Labs, Singapore, SG

### **Junior Planner - 2012-13**

McCann Adams Studio, Austin, TX

## EDUCATION

### **Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT)**

Masters City Design & Development  
Department of Urban Studies & Planning

### **University of Texas at Austin**

B.S. Neuroscience, B.A. Plan II (Philosophy)

## ACHIEVEMENTS

- Co-chair Policy Working Group of the GovAI coalition delivering streamlined policy, guiding principles, and governance through consensus building across 100+ US city governments.
- Supervised a team of 4, execution of 30 smart city projects, and managed a 7.9M USD budgeted municipal Smart Cities Program. (2023)
- Led team to develop and launch City of San Antonio Smart Cities Strategy and Smarter Together initiative. (2023)
- Primary Author on six Playbooks for UN Habitat's People-Centered Smart City Program. (2022)
- Led a two-day training on people-centered smart cities for 25 city leaders representing ten African local governments in partnership with ASToN. (2022)
- Led City of San Antonio team on “Smart Streetlight” IoT pilot with local utility, impacting 119K nodes. (2021)
- Developed and executed the City of San Antonio’s first Data Governance Policy “AD 7.12”, including “Principles of Data-Informed Government.”
- Negotiated 8 utility & public sector orgs to execute Data Sharing Protocol for SmartSA Interlocal Datasharing Agreement resulting in increased public sector data sharing. (2021)
- Co-developed San Antonio's Digital Divide Assessment and Digital Inclusion Initiatives (2020)
- Led interdepartmental team to develop and launch City of San Antonio CoVID-19 Open Data Platform. (2020)
- Created and managed the “SmartSA Sandbox” smart cities community engagement program, partnering with 25 agencies to provide over 2,000 youth and families access to free STEM education activities, and to opportunities to provide input to municipal smart city policy.
- Led Civic Technology Program “CivTechSA” Year 2 with 50 challenges, 15+ community events, and two Municipal Residency Programs for local technology start-ups. (2019)
- Authored 75+ data analytics articles for local news outlet, the San Antonio Report. (2018)
- Completed Master’s thesis at MIT using Markov Modeling to predict gentrification in four Boroughs in New York City. (2016)
- Developed a new data-driven planning norm for the provision of commercial facilities in Singapore Housing Authority’s (HDB) public housing towns. (2015)
- Conducted and managed participatory planning workshops engaging 50–60 city government members, professional planning practitioners, and academics, working collaboratively as part of the City Planning Lab Initiative in Indonesia. (2014)
- Supported municipal staff to launch a City Planning Laboratory in Denpasar, Indonesia including support with geospatial mapping and participatory planning to improve municipal services in informal settlements. (2014)

## PUBLIC SPEAKING & PODCASTS

- “AI In the City”, University of Pennsylvania Institute for Urban Research. (2023)
- “Generative AI for Urban Governance Symposium”, Urban AI. (2023)
- “Enhancing Municipal Services: Emily Royall's Insights on San Antonio's Smart Cities Roadmap”, Big City Small Town Podcast. (2023)
- “Operationalizing the NIST AI Risk Management Framework”, Block Center for Technology and Society, Carnegie Mellon University. (2023)
- “City Spotlights: Next Level Community Engagement”, Smart Cities Connect Denver. (2023)
- “Special Session on People-Centred and Green Technology Innovation”, World Urban Forum 11th Session. (2022)
- “Building Smart Cities that Work for People: An Introduction to UN Habitat's People-Centred Smart City Approach,” World Urban Forum 11th Session. (2022)
- “The Journey Toward a People-Centered Smart City,” Government Technology “ICYMI” Podcast. (2022)
- “Centering People in Smart Cities: A Roadmap”, Smart City Expo World Congress. (2022)
- “Tech Therapy: Re-Imagine Smart Technology for our Community,” San Antonio Start Up Week. (2021)
- “Advancing Equity in Smart Cities with Emily Royall,” Smart Communities Podcast. (2020)
- “Who Should Build Cities of the Future?” City of the Future. (2019)
- “Smart Cities: No Brainer,” Transforming Local Government. (2019)
- “Lead, Follow or Get Out of Electrification: Government Policy and Regulation,” Plug Me In: Smart. Charged. Electrified. (2019)
- “Data & Co-Creation in the Smart City,” AAGIS Conference. (2019)
- “Our Changing Urban Environment: How Tech is Disrupting the Transit Fabric in Cities,” San Antonio Start Up Week. (2018)
- “Privacy, cyber-security and the consequences of emerging technology for connected cities,” Informa Smart Cities Summit. (2018)

## SELECT PUBLICATIONS

- Royall, Emily. “Centering People in Smart Cities: A Playbook for Local and Regional Governments,” United Nations People-Centered Flagship Program, United Nations. November 2021, <https://unhabitat.org/programme/legacy/people-centered-smart-cities/centering-people-in-smart-cities>.
- Royall, Emily. “Assessing the Digital Divide: Understanding internet connectivity and digital literacy in cities and communities,” United Nations People-Centered Flagship Program, United Nations. November 2021, <https://unhabitat.org/programme/legacy/people-centered-smart-cities/assessing-the-digital-divide>.
- Royall, Emily. “Addressing the Digital Divide: Taking action towards digital inclusion,” United Nations People-Centered Flagship Program, United Nations. November 2021, <https://unhabitat.org/programme/legacy/people-centered-smart-cities/addressing-the-digital-divide>.
- Royall, Emily. “Shaping Co-Creation and Collaboration in Smart Cities,” United Nations People-Centered Flagship Program, United Nations. November 2021, <https://unhabitat.org/programme/people-centered-smart-cities/people-centered-smart-cities-playbooks>

- Royall, Emily. "Building and Securing Digital Public Infrastructure," United Nations People-Centered Flagship Program, United Nations. November 2021, <https://unhabitat.org/programme/legacy/people-centered-smart-cities/building-securing-digital-public-infrastructure-a>.
- Royall, Emily. "Building Capacity for People Centered Smart Cities," United Nations People-Centered Flagship Program, United Nations. November 2021, <https://unhabitat.org/programme/legacy/people-centered-smart-cities/building-capacity-for-people-centered-smart-cities-a>
- Royall, Emily. "Renegotiating the Social Contract in Smart Cities," Some Thoughts Editorial with Bianca Wylie, Zhara Ebrahim, and Matthew Claudel. 2019, <https://some-thoughts.org/>
- Royall, Emily. "Move Smart and Build Things: Defining Digital Rights for a Changing World," Smart Cities News Australia. November 2020, <https://councilmagazine.com.au/move-smart-and-build-things-defining-digital-rights-for-a-changing-world/>.
- Royall, Emily. "Towards an epidemiology of gentrification: modeling urban change as a probabilistic process using k-means clustering and Markov models," MIT D-Space. 2016, <https://dspace.mit.edu/handle/1721.1/103263>.
- Royall, Emily. "Planning for Digitally Mediated Public Space: Policy Implications for Internet of Things Frameworks in Urban Environments" Responsive Cities Symposium, Institute for Advanced Architecture of Catalonia, 2016.
- Royall, Emily. "Slum Settlements and Housing in Denpasar: Data Management for Policymaking." City Form Labs. 2016, <http://cityform.mit.edu/projects/denpasar-cpl>.