

## The Impact Project

The Impact Project helps the public understand how government funding decisions affect real communities. Its website uses interactive maps where each dot represents a real policy event, such as a funding cut or program pause.

However, thousands of news articles appear each day, making it difficult to identify the most useful ones. To address this challenge, The Impact Project partnered with the Data Science Clinic to build tools that review articles and extract important details.

First, we built a scoring system that measures whether an article provides enough information to map a real policy impact. The system checks for clear government actions, identified actors, and concrete details such as dollar amounts. We also developed a second method that assigns each article a letter grade based on criteria flags such as vague claims or clear timeline. These signals help reviewers identify the most informative reporting, as seen below.

Title	Score	Grade	Model Grade	Criteria Flags
President Trump wants to break California's sa...	4.6	A	B	[Vague Claims, Numbers Without Context]
The Temperature   Colorado's health insurance ...	4.6	A	B	[No Dates, Numbers Without Context, One Source...
Donald Trump has big plans for second term; op...	4.6	A	B	[Numbers Without Context, Vague Claims, Sensat...
Trump targeting of federal workers creates job...	4.6	A	D	[No Attribution, Vague Claims, Numbers Without...
Trump offers federal workers 8-month pay exit ...	4.6	A	D	[No Named Authority, No Attribution, Vague Claims...

**Table 1:** Shows how the system rates different articles. Higher-scoring articles include concrete numbers and clear descriptions of policy actions, while lower-scoring ones tend to be vague or leave out key details.

In addition, we explored methods for identifying anecdotal quotes that describe how policies affect people's lives. In testing, the system processed hundreds of articles at once, automatically flagging sources credible and noncredible with measurable impacts. This allows the Impact Project to reduce manual screening time and surface the reporting that matters most.