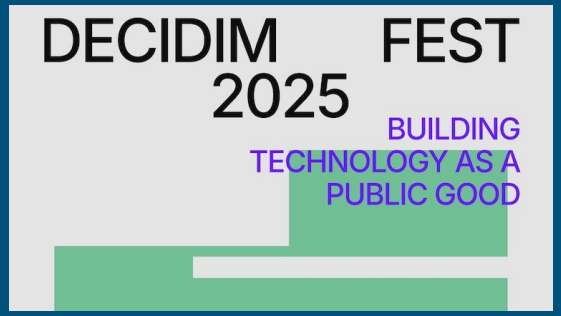

Affordances and Constraints of Decidim usage during Democratic Restoration

Decidim Fest

November 6, 2025

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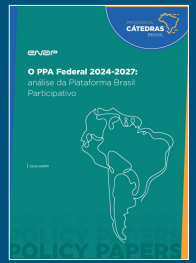
Overview of the research agenda

1

Evaluation of digital participation at the national level: the Brasil Participativo platform



2

Digital Participation: Affordances and Constraints during Democratic Restoration

3

Design Science Research (DSR) applied to digital participation

Proposes design principles for digital participation processes in order to be inclusive, interactive and effective

Research questions

1) What are the affordances and effects offered by a digital participation platform in the process of democratic restoration?;

2) What are the constraints hindering effective participation?

Research methods

Case study

Observation of the digital platform

Semi-structured interviews with public servants

Theoretical approach: Affordances & Constraints

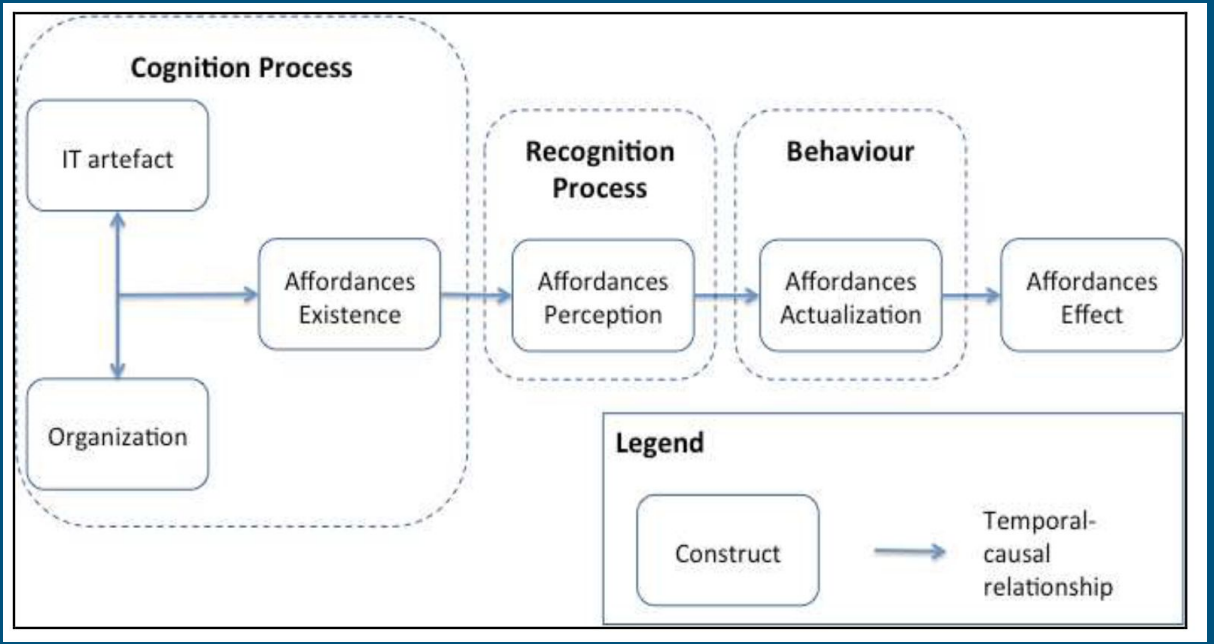
Affordances and constraints are not properties of the technology, nor properties of the individual, but they exist in the relationship of the individual (oriented by a goal), and the technology.

Gibson (1977); Norman (1990); Dini, Wahid and Saebo (2016)

Technology Affordance and Constraint Theory (TACT)

Affordances Theoretical Framework

Pozzi et al. (2014, p.3)



Affordances Theoretical Framework

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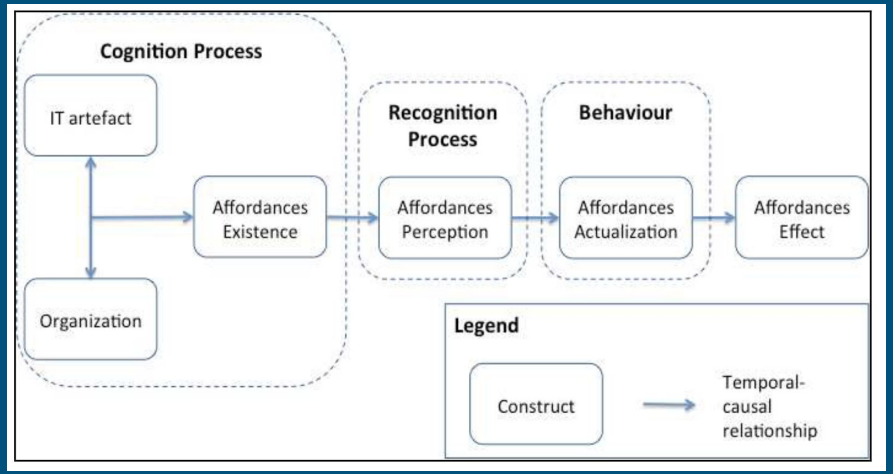


Brasil Participativo - PPA 2024-2027

Context: democratic restoration

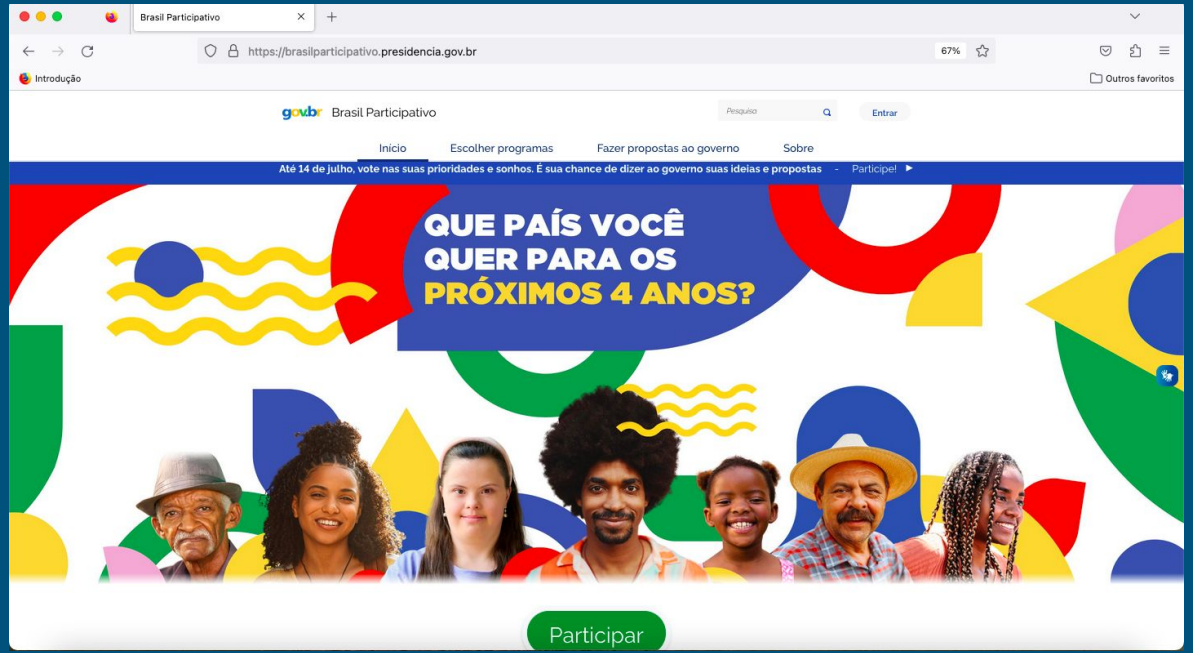
11/05 - 16/07/2023

8.130 proposals

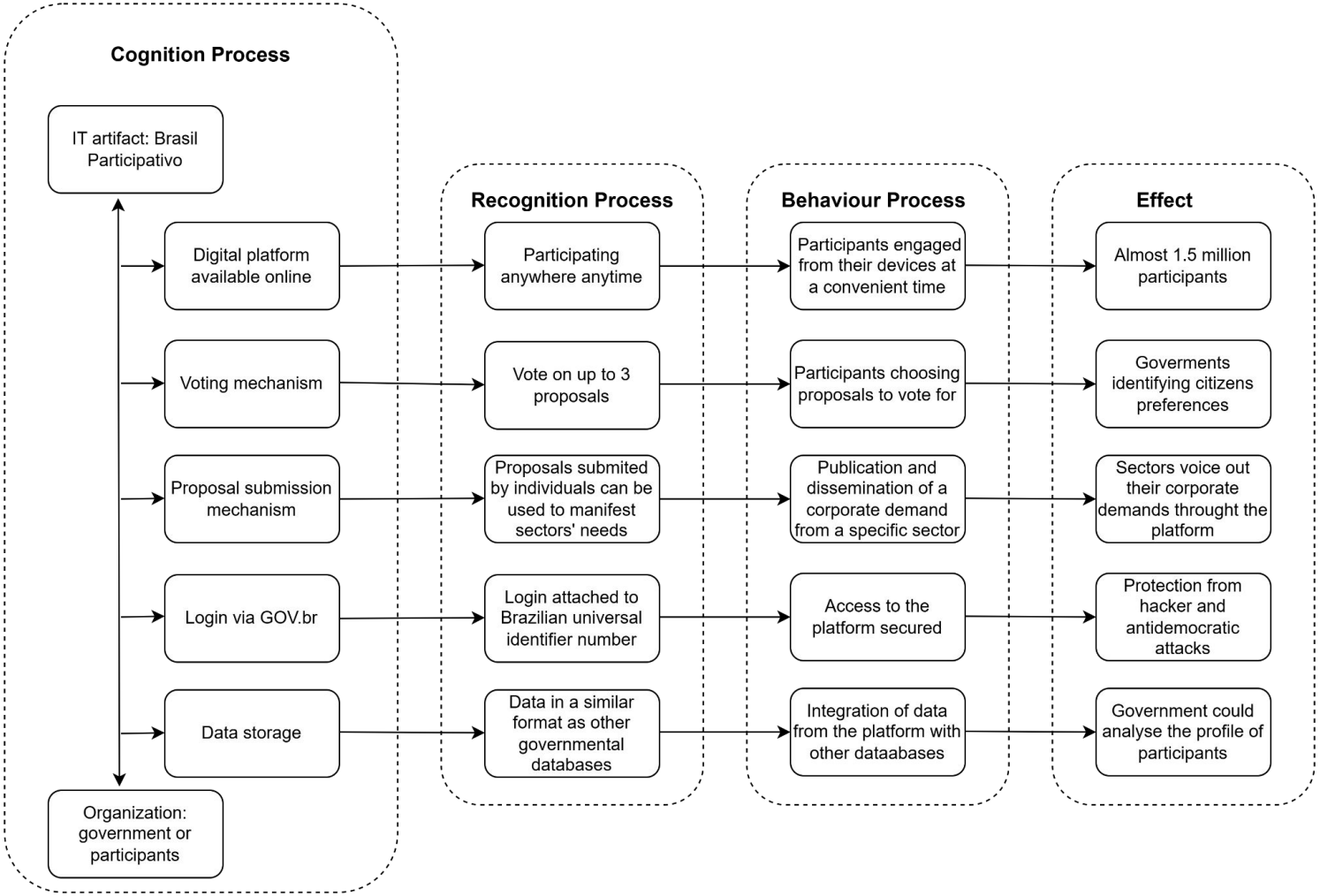
1.419.729 participants

1.529.826 votes

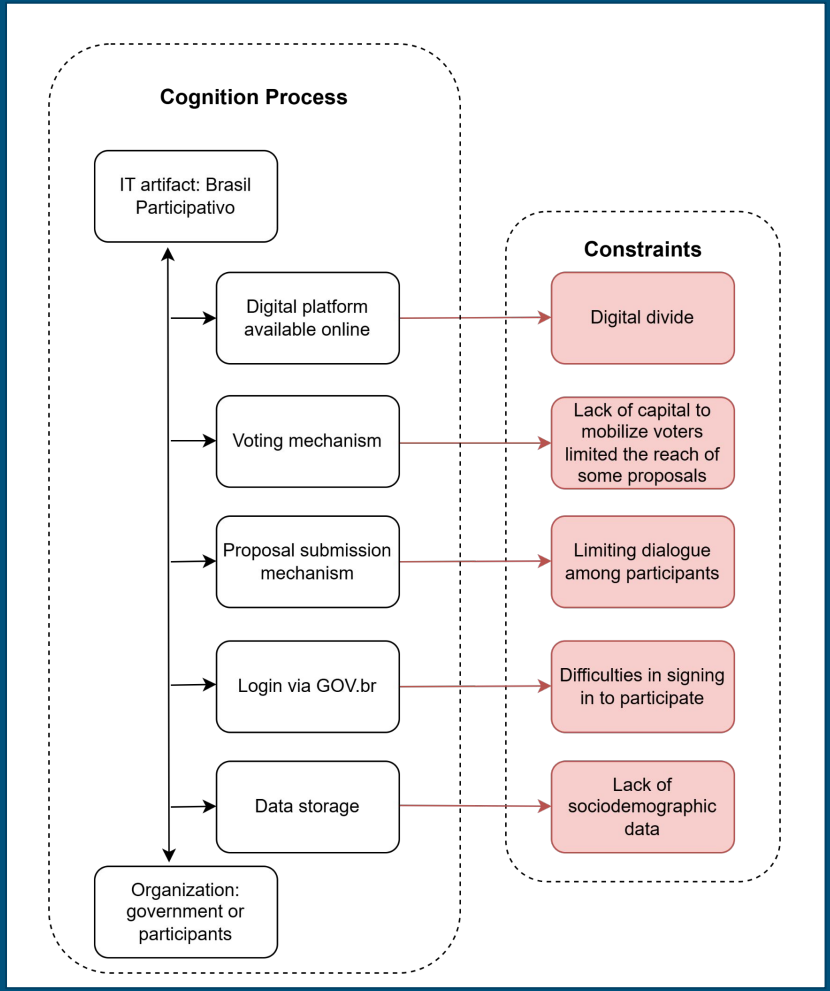
Login via gov.br



AFFORDANCES

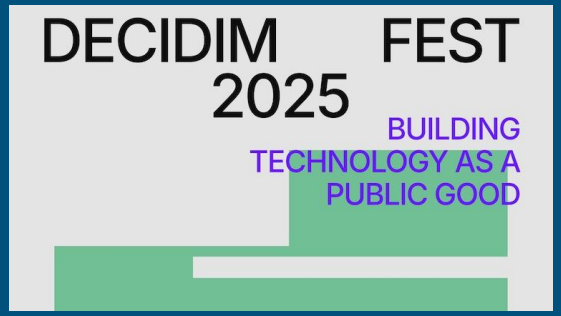


Constraints



Final considerations

- Some of the affordances were planned, some unpredicted, and some were constraining their effective participation
- How can we bring affordances and constraints to the design of the process?
  - Policymakers and technology designers should be building affordances that users can easily perceive (Leonardi, 2011).
  - It’s not necessarily about changing the technology, as the same thing can both enable and constrain an action for actors oriented by different goals.
  - In this case, some of the constraints were imaginable, so how can this be embedded in the process design?



Thank you.

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