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# THE OPEN GOVERNMENT PARTNERSHIP

THIRD OPEN GOVERNMENT  
NATIONAL ACTION PLAN FOR  
THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

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October 27, 2015

## Introduction

Open government has long been a cornerstone of democracy in the United States. Principles of transparency and an accountable, responsive government are embedded in Federal law and the U.S. Constitution, and the United States was one of the first countries in the world to adopt an access to information law — the 1966 Freedom of Information Act. Building on this longstanding tradition, President Obama early in his Administration launched the Open Government Initiative that has catalyzed significant steps to open up the Federal government, make government more efficient, and provide citizens with unprecedented access to government information. The United States reached another important open government milestone in 2014 when President Obama signed legislation passed unanimously by the U.S. Congress, requiring Federal agencies to publish their spending data according to clear standards that will help improve the quality of government information, help inform government decisions, and make government work more efficiently for the American people.

As a founding member of the Open Government Partnership (OGP), the United States has worked both domestically and internationally to promote transparency, empower citizens, fight corruption, and transform the way the Federal government serves and engages with the American people. The Obama Administration published the [first U.S. Open Government National Action Plan](#) (NAP) in 2011, with 26 commitments that have increased public integrity, enhanced public access to information, improved management of public resources, and given the public a more active voice in the U.S. Government's policymaking process. In 2013, the Administration released the [second U.S. Open Government National Action Plan](#), announcing 23 new or expanded open government commitments. In 2014, the Administration [added](#) three additional commitments to the second NAP and further expanded one existing commitment, bringing the total for that plan to 26.

The Administration is now issuing the third U.S. Open Government National Action Plan, which includes a wide range of actions the Administration will take over coming months to strengthen, deepen, and expand upon U.S. efforts to date. In putting together the third NAP, the United States engaged in unprecedented consultations inside and outside of government, including with a broad range of U.S. departments and agencies and subnational governments as well as the general public, civil society groups, foundations, academia, and the private sector. Consultations on the third NAP began with a collaborative workshop with government agencies and civil society organizations and included small and large-scale meetings to discuss and refine the commitments in this document. The Administration also sought input via the White House's [Open Government blog](#) and other interactive online platforms. Civil society has provided valuable feedback throughout the implementation of both the first and second NAPs through regular progress reports and a model action plan that informed many of the commitments in this third NAP.

The work of open government is never complete, and this report includes a subset of the full spectrum of ambitious efforts underway to promote transparency and accountability in government. As work to deepen and expand open government continues, the United States will continue to view this NAP as a work in progress and look for opportunities to further expand and deepen the below commitments, and will remain committed to engaging with civil society stakeholders to build a more open government.

# U.S. National Action Plan Initiatives

Creating a more open government requires a sustained commitment by public officials and employees at all levels of government; it also requires an informed and engaged citizenry. These new open government commitments build on previous commitments and expand into new areas of open government. They cut across a broad spectrum of government activity and seek to promote the principles of transparency, openness, accountability, and improved and more efficient public services.

## Open Government to Improve Public Services

### **1. Reconstitute USA.gov as the Front Door to the U.S. Government**

For a government to truly be open, the public must be able to find information about government activities and services. Established by the e-Government Act of 2002 as the official web portal of the U.S. Government, [USA.gov](http://USA.gov) has a long history of connecting millions of citizens to the government information and services they need. Recently re-launched to be more responsive to users, USA.gov has become a more efficient and adaptive publishing platform for Federal, state, and local governments. Going forward, the General Services Administration will implement additional user-centered enhancements, including delivering enhanced content, and will work with agencies to help the public identify and receive services they need based on their own goals rather than government structure.

### **2. Increase Accessibility of Government Information Online**

Developing and adopting accessible, universally-designed programs and websites is critical to making sure every American has access to public services. Additionally, Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act requires that people with disabilities have access to and use of information and data that is comparable to the access and use by people without disabilities. The U.S. Access Board promulgates the Section 508 standards that specify what is required by Section 508 for websites. To increase accessibility of government information online, the United States will:

- **Implement and Improve Upon the U.S. Web Design Standards.** In September 2015, the U.S. Digital Service launched a [set of design patterns and tools](#) as best practices to improve design of the hundreds of websites across dozens of agencies to provide consistent, visually appealing, and easy-to-use government websites that are compliant with Federal disability access requirements. Focusing on the user experience, the U.S. Digital Service worked with an interagency team to create a common visual style that is applicable across a broad range of government platforms. The team will use open platforms to work to improve upon the design standards, making regular releases in the coming months.
- **Review and Report Accessibility Compliance of Federal Websites.** By creating and implementing software code that can assist in evaluating the accessibility of websites across the government, the United States will increase the government's ability to assess accessibility of Federal information for citizen consumers and Federal workers with disabilities. The General Services Administration will expand the transparent reporting platform [pulse.cio.gov](http://pulse.cio.gov) to measure performance of all Federal web domains against web policy requirements and industry best practices, while connecting domain owners to information and resources to better ensure that their sites comply with the requirements of Section 508.

- **Develop Limited-English-Proficiency Policies and Programs.** The United States will ensure that public-facing programs and activities, including recipients of Federal financial assistance through the General Services Administration, have policies and practices in place to provide meaningful access to limited-English-proficient individuals. The General Services Administration will conduct outreach and training efforts with its employees and recipients of Federal assistance to inform these policies and programs.

### **3. Expand Access to Educational Resources through Open Licensing and Technology**

Open educational resources are an investment in sustainable human development; they have the potential to increase access to high-quality education and reduce the cost of educational opportunities around the world. Open educational resources can expand access to key educational materials, enabling the domestic and international communities to attain skills and more easily access meaningful learning opportunities. The United States has worked collaboratively with domestic and international civil society stakeholders to encourage open education initiatives. Building on that momentum, the United States will openly license more Federal grant-supported education materials and resources, making them widely and freely available. In addition to convening stakeholders to encourage further open education efforts, the United States will publish best practices and tools for agencies interested in developing grant-supported open licensing projects, detailing how they can integrate open licensing into projects from technical and legal perspectives.

### **4. Launch a Process to Create a Consolidated Public Listing of Every Address in the United States**

Although address information for residential and commercial properties is collected across the United States by all levels of government and industry, it isn't currently compiled in an open, easily accessible format. Additionally, much of the information collected at the Federal level is prohibited from public release due to various privacy laws. This non-private address information can be crucial to first responders and emergency service providers and can also be useful to innovators who might use it to build tools or launch services to improve communities. The Department of Transportation will begin coordinating across the public and private sector; connecting agencies, industry and innovators to gain consensus on an open standard for public address information; pursuing open data strategies for sharing certain address information — excluding names and other private information; and exploring uses of this information that drive innovation and inform the public.

### **5. Help Students Make Informed Decisions About Higher Education.**

Completing higher education can provide huge benefits to students that last throughout their lives. Compared to those with a high school diploma, college graduates earn \$1 million more over their lifetimes and have an easier time finding a job. Research shows that when students have better information they make better choices about their education. To arm prospective students and their families with better information on college costs and quality, the Administration launched the new [College Scorecard](#), providing comprehensive data on costs and student outcomes at nearly all U.S. post-secondary institutions that is also [available](#) through an application programming interface (API) to increase the ways that the public can get access to and interact with the information. The Department of Education will continue testing the Scorecard with students and counselors to optimize features and capabilities, release annual updates to the data, form technical review panels to explore how to strengthen data collection and use, and create new capabilities with the open API to better serve all users, from those choosing colleges to those working to improve college quality.

## **6. Make it Easier for Individuals to Access Their Own Information**

In addition to providing protections for Federal information, including information about individuals, the government has certain obligations to give individuals the ability to review information about themselves that the government has collected. When members of the public seek information about themselves from government agencies, they traditionally submit signed statements to authenticate that they are legitimate requesters. However, as agencies move toward digitization, new approaches can digitally authenticate individuals requesting information. To improve the public's ability to request and access information about themselves, the Administration will explore new authentication tools to enhance protection of individual privacy while providing individuals with information about themselves. An interagency team including the Office of Management and Budget, the General Services Administration, and the National Institute of Standards and Technology in the Department of Commerce will work to develop new authentication tools to protect individual privacy and ensure that personal records go only to the intended recipients.

## **7. Support Open311 to Enhance Transparency and Participation**

Open311 is a transparent, participatory way for governments to deliver services to citizens. Its name comes from the commonly used 311 phone number that residents can dial in some cities to report non-emergency complaints or request services. Open311 is a shared open platform that can be integrated either online through a city's website or via a smartphone application. It allows citizens to find government services and report problems in the open, providing a simple and consistent way to contact government and get something fixed. To reduce the burden of navigating the separation between local and Federal government, the USA.gov Contact Center at the General Services Administration will use Open311 to expand avenues for public participation and provide more transparency in government service delivery across both local and Federal governments. More than a dozen cities have already adopted Open311 and additional cities are committing to implement it including San Diego, Philadelphia, and New York City.

## **8. Empower Americans and Improve Health with Data-Driven Precision Medicine**

The President's Precision Medicine Initiative (PMI) seeks to enable a new era of medicine through research, technology, and policies that empower patients, researchers, and providers to work together toward development of individualized care, and ultimately help improve public health outcomes. PMI is a cross-governmental effort driven by the White House, the Department of Health and Human Services, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and the Department of Defense. Under PMI, the United States commits to building a volunteer research cohort of more than one million participants who are centrally involved in the design and implementation of the cohort, and to link genomic data, biological samples, data from mobile devices, and lifestyle data with clinical data from electronic health records. The Administration will also promote "direct-from-participant" functionality allowing patients to directly access and donate their health data for research. A priority under PMI is to ensure inclusion of low-income and underserved populations that have traditionally been underrepresented in scientific research — both improving the quality of research and ensuring that existing health disparities are not exacerbated.

## **9. Increase Access to Workforce Data to Promote Employment**

The U.S. government spends billions of dollars each year to support many different groups in finding pathways to employment — from veterans to disconnected youth to the unemployed. Until now, however, there has been no easy way for American job seekers, employers, and Federal agencies to get a full picture of the workforce ecosystem to understand challenges and opportunities for these initiatives, as well as to create more effective programs. Through the Workforce Data Initiative, the Administration will increase interoperability of and access

to the workforce data ecosystem, establishing a new baseline from which a new generation of workforce innovation can develop. To achieve this, the United States will focus on improving the Occupational Information Network by defining a schema that establishes interoperability among training, skill, job, and wage listings across the Internet and working with search providers and aggregators to build application programming interfaces to index and make available that same data.

#### **10. Promote Evidence-Based Policy for More Effective Service Delivery**

Using evidence and concrete data to evaluate government programs and policies can improve public service delivery at all levels of government. In July 2015, the Administration launched an interagency evidence-based policymaking group to promote more effective government service delivery and better results for families and communities in need. The group will work with agencies to build capacity to make better use of evidence and to make more transparent decisions about service delivery programs. The group will catalyze specific actions across Federal agencies that are designed to advance the use of evidence in decision-making and strengthen the use of data and evidence to develop and implement more impactful service delivery programs.

#### **11. Expand Use of the Federal Infrastructure Permitting Dashboard**

In September 2015, the Office of Management and Budget and Council on Environmental Quality issued [guidance](#) directing the 11 Federal agencies that play a significant role in the permitting, review, funding, and development of large-scale infrastructure projects to begin developing coordinated project review schedules and posting them publicly on the [Federal Infrastructure Permitting Dashboard](#) by 2016. Expanding use of the Dashboard to infrastructure projects involving complex permitting processes and significant environmental effects will improve communication with project applicants and sponsors, increase interagency coordination, and increase the transparency and accountability of the Federal permitting and environmental review process.

#### **12. Consolidate Import and Export Systems to Promote the Economic Competitiveness of U.S. Businesses**

The Administration will launch a consolidated single-window platform to streamline and speed import and export transactions, increasing economic efficiencies and effectiveness. Using the single window, industry trading partners will be able to file required information only once, replacing the current system of manual, paper-based submissions made multiple times to multiple agencies. The Department of Homeland Security is leading development and implementation of the single window according to global standards and best practices designed to facilitate the exchange of information across government systems, including with businesses and foreign governments.

## Access to Information

### **1. Improve Management of Government Records**

The backbone of a transparent and accountable government is strong records management. Modernization of records management improves performance and promotes openness and accountability by better documenting the actions and decisions of the Federal government. The Managing Government Records Directive requires agencies to manage all of their email in electronic form by the end of 2016. To support these requirements and expand upon them, the United States will:

- **Increase Transparency in Managing Email.** The National Archives and Records Administration will release a public dataset of positions of government officials whose email will come to the National

Archives for permanent preservation under the [Capstone](#) approach. This dataset will increase transparency and accountability in the recordkeeping process, while facilitating public participation in the ongoing dialogue over records that document key actions, policies, and decisions of the Federal government.

- **Report on Agency Progress in Managing Email.** The National Archives will also introduce targeted questions regarding email management to agencies through new and existing reporting mechanisms, and will report publicly on agencies' progress, allowing stakeholders to track progress on agencies' email management efforts.
- **Improve the Records Control Schedule Repository.** The National Archives currently posts information about recordkeeping time frames in a records control schedule repository. The Archives will seek feedback from civil society to improve access to the data contained within this repository.

## **2. Modernize Implementation of the Freedom of Information Act**

As the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) approaches its 50th anniversary in 2016, the Administration will continue to build on its commitment to improve the implementation of FOIA to increase efficiency and effectiveness for Federal government employees charged with carrying out the law and for customers who use the law to access information about government activities. To further this work, the Administration will:

- **Expand the Services Offered on FOIA.gov.** The Administration will harness technology to improve the services offered on [FOIA.gov](#). Building upon the commitment from the second NAP to launch a consolidated online FOIA service, the Department of Justice will collaborate with agencies, seek public input, review existing technologies such as [FOIAonline](#), and leverage technological tools to expand on the existing FOIA.gov. Additional new features will also be explored, including a guided request tool, online tracking of request status, simplified reporting methods for agencies, improved FOIA contact information, and tools that will enhance the public's ability to locate already posted information.
- **Improve Agency Proactive Disclosures by Posting FOIA-Released Records Online.** The Department of Justice will lead a pilot program with seven agencies to test the feasibility of posting FOIA-released records online so that they are available to the public. The pilot will seek to answer important questions including costs associated with such a policy, effect on staff time required to process requests, effect on interactions with government stakeholders, and the justification for exceptions to such a policy, such as for personal privacy. As part of the pilot, the Department of Justice will get input from civil society stakeholders, including requesters and journalists. Upon completion of the pilot, the Justice Department will make the results available to the public.
- **Improve Agency FOIA Websites.** The Administration will issue guidance and create best practices for agency FOIA web pages, including developing a template for key elements to encourage all agencies to update their FOIA websites to be consistent, informative, and user-friendly.
- **Increase Understanding of FOIA.** The National Archives will develop tools to teach students about FOIA, drawing upon real-world examples to foster democracy and explain how the public can use FOIA to learn more about the government's actions. The National Archives will seek partnerships with outside educational and library organizations to create and promote standards-compatible curriculum resources

that teachers can use in government, history, or civics classes. All developed resources will be posted online.

- **Proactively Release Nonprofit Tax Filings.** Tax filings for nonprofit organizations contain data that is legally required to be publicly released. Accessing the filings generally requires a request from the public, which can include a FOIA request, and results in more than 40 million pages provided in a non-machine-readable format. The Internal Revenue Service will launch a new process that will remove personally identifiable information before releasing the public information within electronically filed nonprofit tax filings. The electronically filed tax filings will be released as open, machine-readable data, allowing the public to review the finances and other information of more than 340,000 American nonprofit and charitable organizations.

### **3. Streamline the Declassification Process**

While national security interests require that certain information be protected as classified, democratic principles require government to be transparent, wherever possible, about its activities. Declassification is a time-consuming and costly process that often involves manual review of records. In order to identify processes and tools to help automate and streamline declassification, the Administration will:

- **Develop a Plan to Implement Technological Tools to Help Automate Declassification Review.** The interagency Classification Reform Committee will develop a plan to expand the use of technological tools that were piloted by the Central Intelligence Agency and the National Archives to help automate declassification review.
- **Pilot the Use of a Topic-Based Interagency Declassification Guide.** When reviewing documents for declassification, multiple agencies may have had a stake in the creation and classification of those documents, and ordinarily each must review them prior to declassification. The Classification Reform Committee will work with agencies to pilot a declassification guide based on a topic or event in order to enable trained interagency staff to review this information where it resides, rather than referring the classified information to multiple agencies, avoiding the sometimes lengthy interagency review process.
- **Establish a Special Systematic Declassification Review Program.** The National Declassification Center at the National Archives will implement a special systematic declassification review program for previously reviewed and exempted historical Federal records that were accessioned to the National Archives and reviewed prior to the creation of the National Declassification Center in 2010.
- **Declassify Historical Intelligence Records in the Public Interest.** The Central Intelligence Agency will lead an interagency project to declassify no-longer-sensitive Presidential Daily Briefs from the Nixon and Ford administrations. Working with Intelligence Community agencies and the Classification Reform Committee, the Central Intelligence Agency will manage a line-by-line review of these important historical documents and post them online in machine-readable formats.

### **4. Implement the Controlled Unclassified Information Program**

The National Archives will continue implementation of an open and unified program for managing unclassified information that requires safeguarding or dissemination controls that are consistent with law, regulations, and government-wide policies, which is known as Controlled Unclassified Information (CUI). The National Archives



will issue implementation guidance, establish phased implementation schedules, and publish an enhanced CUI Registry that designates what information falls under the program. In addition, the National Archives will work with the Federal Acquisition Regulatory Council to propose a Federal Acquisition Regulation rule to apply the requirements of the CUI program to contractors, grantees, and licensees.

#### **5. Improve Transparency of Privacy Programs and Practices**

Federal information must be protected, and the protection of privacy is of utmost importance. The Administration, led by the Office of Management and Budget, will revise certain guidance on Federal agencies' responsibilities for protecting personally identifiable information. The revised guidance will include principles that agencies should use to promote fair information practices, such as transparency and accountability. The guidance will also emphasize the importance of using privacy impact assessments to analyze how agencies handle personally identifiable information and ensure that agency processes conform to all applicable privacy requirements. In addition, revised guidance will direct agencies to take a coordinated approach to information security and privacy, including requiring agencies to develop and maintain a continuous monitoring strategy to ensure that privacy and security controls are functioning properly.

#### **6. Enhance Transparency of Federal Use of Investigative Technologies**

As law enforcement and homeland security agencies have harnessed the use of new technologies, such as unmanned aircraft systems, the Administration has recognized that these technologies — which have proven to be safe and low-cost alternatives to traditional methods for criminal investigation, identification, and apprehension — must be used in a manner that protects the privacy and civil liberties of the public. Consistent with the goals of the President's February 2015 [memorandum](#), law enforcement agencies are encouraged to develop and make publicly available a privacy analysis for advanced technologies and undertake periodic privacy review of their use.

#### **7. Increase Transparency of the Intelligence Community**

Building on steps the Administration has taken to reform U.S. signals intelligence activities, the Administration will increase its efforts to make information regarding foreign intelligence activities more publicly available, while continuing to protect such information when disclosure could harm national security. In 2015, the Director of National Intelligence issued Principles of Intelligence Transparency for the Intelligence Community to enhance public understanding of the intelligence community by making information available through authorized channels. The principles also emphasize the importance of intelligence officials diligently exercising both their classification and declassification responsibilities. Furthering these commitments, the United States will:

- **Publish an Open Government Plan for the Intelligence Community.** The Office of the Director of National Intelligence will publish an Open Government Plan for the Intelligence Community. Among other efforts, the plan will call on the Intelligence Community agencies to describe their governance frameworks in readily understandable terms, supported with appropriate releases of corresponding legal and policy documents; develop and apply criteria for identifying other information about the Intelligence Community that can be feasibly released to enhance public understanding; and establish an Intelligence Community transparency council consisting of officials responsible for coordinating agency transparency efforts.
- **Expand and Improve Public Electronic Access to Information About the Intelligence Community.** The Office of the Director of National Intelligence will establish [Intelligence.gov](#) as the primary portal for the

intelligence community's public information. Intelligence.gov will provide a single venue to present information from across the intelligence community, including plain language descriptions of its mission, activities and governance framework, and links to other relevant intelligence community websites.

- **Develop a Structure for Engagement with Civil Society.** The Intelligence Community will hold regular meetings with civil society to better inform transparency efforts in light of the Intelligence Community's mission, responsibilities, priorities, and challenges. In addition, the Office of the Director of National Intelligence will lead a process to identify and update applicable processes and guidelines so that the use of social media can become fully integrated in each intelligence community agency's public communications efforts.
- **Reinforce the Principle that the Intelligence Community Workforce Can and Should Raise Concerns through Appropriate Mechanisms.** The Intelligence Community will enhance efforts to ensure that its workforce understands how to use authorized channels for submitting workforce concerns about potential misconduct. In addition, the Civil Liberties and Privacy Office of the Office of the Director of National Intelligence will leverage the National Intelligence Award program to recognize outstanding achievement by an intelligence professional in effectuating change through conduct that exemplifies the professional ethics principles of speaking truth to power or reporting misconduct through authorized channels.

#### **8. Advance Open Science through Increased Public Access to Data, Research, and Technologies**

By providing access to government-funded scientific information and data, Federal agencies leverage scientific investments while catalyzing American innovation and novel applications for business and entrepreneurship. Federal agencies can also take steps to make the research they support more open. In September 2015, the Office of Science and Technology Policy [encouraged](#) Federal science agencies, in designing citizen science and crowdsourcing projects, to take steps to ensure that datasets, code, applications, and technologies generated by such projects are transparent, open, and freely available to the public. To continue momentum and collaborations for open science, the Office of Science and Technology Policy will:

- **Increase Public Access to Results of Federally Funded Scientific Research.** In 2013, the Office of Science and Technology Policy [directed](#) Federal science agencies to develop plans to increase access to the results of unclassified research supported wholly or in part by Federal funding. The public's ability to search, retrieve, and analyze both scientific publications and research data leverages Federal investments and provides new opportunities for scientific advancement and economic growth. The Office of Science and Technology Policy will work to ensure that all Federal agencies that spend more than \$100 million per year on research and development finalize plans and implement policies and programs to make scientific publications and digital data resulting from Federally funded research accessible to and usable by scientists, entrepreneurs, educators, students, and the general public.
- **Encourage Increased Public Participation in Open Science Using Low-cost Scientific Instruments.** One step that the Federal government could take to increase participation in citizen science and crowdsourcing is to develop hardware and software tools that are affordable, easy to use, and easy to improve. The Administration will kick off an interagency dialogue to identify best practices for how the Federal government can foster the development of low-cost scientific instrumentation and work with stakeholders through workshops and ideation challenges to identify opportunities for getting them into

the hands of volunteers, such as air-quality monitors or wearables for monitoring personal health. Using these low-cost scientific instruments, volunteers can contribute their expertise to help advance a variety of scientific and societal goals

## **9. Open Data to the Public**

Data must be accessible, discoverable, and usable to have the desired impact of increasing transparency and improving public service delivery. The United States continues to promote open data best practices, connect experts through working groups and roundtables, and produce resources for both agencies and the public. The first and second NAPs included commitments to make government data more accessible and useful to the public. To build upon these successes as well as launch new initiatives to help fulfill open data's potential, the United States will:

- **Develop National Open Data Guidelines.** The Director of the Office of Management and Budget and the U.S. Chief Technology Officer will work with Data.gov, the Federal Open Data working group, representatives from Federal, state, and local governments, and civil society stakeholders to create Open Data National Guidelines on key issues for Federal open data.
- **Promote Public Feedback Tools to Facilitate the Release of Open Data.** The U.S. [Open Data Policy](#) directs agencies to engage with data users to prioritize release of open government data, and agencies approach this requirement in a variety of ways. The Office of Management and Budget and the General Services Administration will work with Federal agencies to promote consistent, customer-friendly feedback mechanisms on opening new datasets and improving existing datasets.

## **10. Increase Transparency of Trade Policy and Negotiations**

In September 2015, the Administration appointed a Chief Transparency Officer in the Office of the United States Trade Representative who will take concrete steps to increase transparency in trade negotiations, engage with the public, and consult with Congress on transparency policy. This work builds on previous steps to increase stakeholder engagement with trade negotiators, expand participation in trade advisory committees, and publish more trade information online. To further increase public access to U.S. trade policy and negotiations, the Office of the United States Trade Representative will also continue to promote transparency and public access to international trade disputes in the World Trade Organization and under regional trade agreements, and encourage other countries to similarly increase transparency in this regard. The Office of the United States Trade Representative will also continue to encourage posting video of trade dispute hearings to give the public insight into these processes.

## **11. Develop a Machine Readable Government Organizational Chart**

The United States Government Manual, published by the National Archives, has provided access to agency organizational information and charts since the 1940s. To facilitate access to government agencies, the General Services Administration will work with the National Archives' Office of the Federal Register to capture agencies' organizational directories as machine-readable raw data in a consistent format across the U.S. Federal government. Documentation for this format will be made available so that other government bodies, including local governments, can also publish their office names, organizational structure, and contact information as standardized open data. Making this data public and consistently available across the Federal government will help the public to find the offices and officials that serve them in a simple and straightforward manner.

## Public Participation

### **1. Raise the Voice of Citizens through Improved Public Participation in Government**

The creativity and energy of the American people have a critical role to play in helping to tackle the greatest challenges facing our nation today. The Administration recognized this by launching and expanding new opportunities for public participation in government. In furtherance of public participation in government, the United States will:

- **Increase Responsiveness and Encourage Reuse of *We the People*.** The [We the People](#) petitions platform gives Americans a direct line to the White House to raise issues and voice concerns. The Administration commits to leading a more responsive petitions process and will strive to respond to petitions that meet the signature threshold with an update or policy statement within 60 days of meeting the threshold wherever possible. A dedicated White House team will take petitions that get enough support to the appropriate policy experts for their review and to issue an official response. The *We the People* team will also open the software code behind the platform to allow outside collaborators to more easily collect and contribute signatures from third-party platforms and to reuse the software code to adapt the petitions site for their own uses.
- **Improve and Report on Implementation of the U.S. Public Participation Playbook.** In 2015, the Administration launched the [U.S. Public Participation Playbook](#), a template providing best practices, resources, and performance metrics to encourage public participation in government decision-making. The United States will update and improve the U.S. Public Participation Playbook based on feedback from agencies, civil society, and the public, and begin publicly sharing how the playbook's resources are implemented in order to improve public participation in government.
- **Expand Civil Society Participation in Open Government Efforts.** Open Government efforts including National Action Plans are stronger and more effective when governments work alongside civil society to develop and implement them. The United States will continue expanding opportunities for government agencies to engage with civil society online and in person to create new commitments and to seek input and feedback throughout implementation processes. The Administration will also strive to include members and sectors of civil society and the public who have not previously been engaged in this work.
- **Encourage Public Participation in Policymaking.** Providing opportunities for citizens to participate in government policymaking processes allows diverse stakeholders to contribute to decision-making, leading to more meaningful and effective policies. Several agencies, including the Office of Management and Budget, the Department of the Treasury, the Department of Justice, and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, successfully engage with and obtain views from stakeholders outside of government during the policymaking process. The Office of Management and Budget will share with U.S. agencies its processes for soliciting informal public comments on proposed policies and will assist interested agencies in implementing this approach.

### **2. Expand Public Participation in the Development of Regulations**

Public participation in Federal rulemaking is important, providing individuals who are affected by Federal regulations with an opportunity to comment and have their voices heard. Rulemaking covers the full spectrum

of public policy issues, including energy, education, homeland security, agriculture, food safety, environmental protection, health care, tax administration, and transportation safety. In order to make regulations easier to read and navigate, the Administration will expand the open source [pilot](#) developed by the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau to additional agencies. By leveraging the Regulations.gov website, application programming interfaces, and the Federal Docket Management System, the Administration will develop and pilot applications to make commenting on proposed rulemakings easier and will find ways to promote commenting opportunities.

### **3. Engage the Public on our Nation's Greatest Challenges**

Creating a more open government and successfully addressing our nation's greatest challenges requires the active participation of an informed and active citizenry representing all sectors of society. Facilitating the participation of a broader range of stakeholders through new avenues can help leverage fresh perspectives and empowers communities to help solve problems. By enabling and scaling the use of open innovation methods, including through challenges, citizen science, and crowdsourcing, the United States will harness the ingenuity of the public to accelerate innovation across government and improve the efficiency and effectiveness of government, including through commitments to:

- **Increase the Impact of Open Innovation Activities.** Over the last five years, as agencies have used and designed open innovation programs more effectively, such programs have become more ambitious in design, making a greater impact across sectors. Some examples include the Department of Health and Human Services, which will expand the Climate and Health Innovation Challenge Series, a public-private partnership launched in June 2015 to build awareness, knowledge, and action at the intersection of climate change and human health. In addition, the Environmental Protection Agency will expand the use of citizen science approaches in environmental research by engaging amateur beekeepers to provide data to better understand the effects of environmental stressors and by engaging citizen scientists in research on harmful algal blooms using smartphone microscopy. The U.S. Geological Survey will roll out Science Cache, a web and mobile-based app for engaging the public in citizen science projects, such as finding huckleberry plants in Glacier National Park and taking pictures and recording data to inform research on climate change impacts. The National Archives will expand its citizen archivist program that makes records more accessible online to include citizen-scanning of Federal records in the agency's new Innovation Hub.
- **Redesign Challenge.gov as a Platform.** [Challenge.gov](#) is the government's website that catalogues opportunities for the public to provide solutions to issues that government is working to address such as providing better access to services for veterans and empowering women and families. In 2016, the United States will launch a new version of [Challenge.gov](#) to make it easier for the public to discover, understand, and participate in prizes and challenges. The General Services Administration will also release an open source version of Challenge.gov to enable implementation by governments around the world to improve citizen engagement, encourage entrepreneurship, and develop breakthrough solutions to meet national needs.
- **Coordinate Open Innovation Opportunities Across Government.** Federal agencies will catalog their current open innovation activities including prizes, challenges, citizen science, and crowdsourcing activities. Agencies will list all prizes and challenges on [Challenge.gov](#). In addition, the General Services Administration will create a new project database that lists citizen science and crowdsourcing projects

from across government. To continue to build the evidence base for open innovation, agencies will contribute metrics-driven case studies for open innovation activities to the [Open Innovation Toolkit](#).

#### **4. Collaborate with Citizen and Global Cartographers in Open Mapping**

Engaging communities to use open mapping platforms ensures the widest possible benefit of geographic data and improved public services for individuals and communities using that data. The Administration will expand interagency collaboration and coordination with the open mapping community to promote the use of open mapping data in both domestic and international applications. Specifically, the State Department will continue and expand its public diplomacy program for open mapping, [MapGive](#). Additionally, the Peace Corps will train volunteers to collaborate with their host communities on using and contributing to open mapping platforms. The U.S. Agency for International Development will promote the use of open mapping platforms in its programs and through data creation and youth engagement initiatives like Mapping for Resilience. The Department of the Interior will continue to promote the use of open mapping technologies to manage and share data in interactive map capabilities, including in production of the National Park Service's digital map program's web and mobile products. The U.S. Geological Survey will also continue crowdsourcing mapping efforts.

## Government Integrity

#### **1. Track Agency Progress of Open Government Plan Implementation**

The Office of Management and Budget and the Office of Science and Technology Policy will work with an existing interagency open government group made up of individuals from across the Executive Branch to develop guidelines for Federal agencies as they update their Open Government Plans in 2016. These guidelines will require agencies to publish annual progress reports describing implementation progress and will include updating agencies' Open Government web pages. The Administration will solicit input from civil society organizations for the updated guidance.

#### **2. Strengthen Whistleblower Protections for Government Employees**

The Administration has continued to increase support for Federal employees who report waste, fraud, and misconduct through appropriate, legally authorized channels. Ensuring that employees, contractors, and the public understand the roles and responsibilities during the whistleblower process is key to properly protecting employees who act as whistleblowers. In furtherance of these efforts, the Administration will:

- **Develop a Common Training Program on Whistleblowing Rights and Duties.** The Director of National Intelligence will coordinate with other departments and agencies to develop a common whistleblower training curriculum that can be used by all Federal agencies covered under the presidential directive protecting whistleblowers with access to classified information, [PPD-19](#). The training program will include disclosure procedures, applicable protections from unlawful retaliation for protected disclosures, and best practices for managers and supervisors. The Intelligence Community will seek input from civil society in developing the program and its compliance will be reviewed by agencies' inspectors general.
- **Improve the Adjudication Process for Reprisal Claims by Department of Justice Employees.** The Department of Justice will propose revisions to its regulations providing whistleblower protection procedures for employees of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, including proposing to expand the list



of officials to whom protected disclosures may be made. Findings of reprisal will be reported to the Federal Bureau of Investigation's Office of Professional Responsibility and to the Federal Bureau of Investigation Director for appropriate action. Additionally, the Department of Justice will continue to evaluate and update its mandatory training program to ensure all employees understand their rights and responsibilities under whistleblower protection laws.

- **Oversee Compliance with the Presidential Directive on Protecting Whistleblowers.** The Inspector General for the Intelligence Community will create a peer review process to oversee reprisal reviews under [PPD-19](#), creating a single point of contact to develop criteria for peer reviews. These criteria will include common review standards and reporting requirements for reviewing reprisal allegations within the Intelligence Community.

### **3. Increase Transparency of Legal Entities Formed in the United States**

The Administration is committed to increasing transparency of legal entities to combat high-level corruption, money laundering, and other financial crimes. The Department of the Treasury and the White House will continue engaging Congress to build bipartisan support to require that meaningful beneficial ownership information be disclosed at the time a company is formed. The Department of the Treasury will also work towards finalizing a rule to clarify customer due diligence requirements for U.S. financial institutions.

### **4. Implement the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative**

Since the launch of the Open Government Partnership, the Administration has been committed to implementing the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI), an international standard aimed at increasing transparency and accountability in the payments companies make and the revenues governments receive for their natural resources. The United States continues to work toward fully complying with the EITI standard, including publishing the first United States EITI report in 2015, and to achieve EITI compliance no later than 2017. The United States will also:

- Work with the EITI Multi-Stakeholder Group (MSG) to define tiers of subnational engagement, including working with state and tribal governments to formally nominate representatives as members of the MSG and encouraging enhanced integration of state and tribal information into U.S. EITI reporting;
- Create and implement a process to conduct stakeholder outreach and assessment of issues related to disclosure of forestry revenues; and
- Continue implementing project-level reporting and satisfy the beneficial ownership requirements consistent with the relevant provisions under the EITI standard.

## **Fiscal Transparency**

### **1. Increase Transparency in Spending**

The Administration continues to look for new ways to increase transparency in Federal spending. In 2015, the Budget of the U.S. Government was made available in an open-source format for the [first time](#), allowing the public to explore it in new and creative ways. In addition, the Administration finalized data standards as required by landmark legislation mandating transparency of spending data, the Digital Accountability and Transparency Act of 2014 (DATA Act). These data standards provide a basis to improve the quality and consistency of Federal spending data, and as a result, help provide the public with valuable, usable information on how Federal dollars

are spent. Better understanding of U.S. government finances will increase public confidence and increased use of the data will drive innovation and economic growth. In addition to continually engaging stakeholders from inside and outside of government on expanding Federal spending transparency efforts, the United States will:

- **Publish Standardized, Reliable, and Reusable Federal Spending Data.** The Department of the Treasury and the Office of Management and Budget will leverage technology to engage stakeholders and adopt a highly participatory and innovative approach to develop a re-imagined [USAspending.gov](https://www.usaspending.gov) to make spending data more accessible and searchable. This will also include an expansion of the data disclosed to include all account-level expenditures in a structured industry format. The Administration will provide regular progress updates to give both Federal agencies and taxpayers a better understanding of the impact of Federal funds.
- **Improve the Usability of Public Procurement and Grants Systems and Make it Easier to Identify Awardees.** The United States will leverage digital technologies and stakeholder feedback to improve the effectiveness of the public procurement and grants systems and foster openness and competition. This includes modernizing the online environment in which contract opportunities can be found and where grant programs are catalogued, and establishing a transparent process to explore alternatives for how Federal awardees are identified.
- **Centralize Integrity and Ownership Information of Contractors.** The Administration will facilitate the display, in a unified view, the integrity information of Federal contractors and grant recipients. For contractors, this will include additional information on labor violations, identification of parent and subsidiary organizations, and information about corporate contractor performance in order to give acquisition officials a comprehensive understanding of the performance and integrity of a corporation in carrying out Federal contracts and grants.

## **2. Improve the Quality and Enhance the Use of U.S. Foreign Assistance Information**

Greater transparency and quality of foreign aid data promotes effective and sustainable development by helping recipient governments manage their aid flows and by empowering citizens to hold governments accountable for the use of assistance. Increased transparency also supports evidence-based, data-driven approaches to foreign aid. The first two NAPs called for agencies administering foreign assistance to publish their aid information in line with the internationally agreed-upon standard. Agencies have published information and data to [ForeignAssistance.gov](https://www.foreignassistance.gov), with plans for incremental progress to address the quality and completeness of the data. However, producing additional, higher-quality data does not address the capacity of stakeholders to use the data, nor does it ensure that stakeholders know the data even exists. To raise awareness, increase accessibility, and build demand for foreign assistance data, the United States will:

- **Improve the Quality, Comprehensiveness, and Completeness of Foreign Assistance Data.** U.S. agencies will substantially improve the quality and increase the comprehensiveness and completeness of the data reported in accordance with the internationally recognized Busan common standard, emphasizing the reporting of commonly established subnational geographic information, project documents and information, results, and sector codes as priority data needs for users.
- **Build Capacity to Use Data.** The Administration will support selective capacity-development efforts in partner countries to make it easier to use U.S. foreign assistance data for effective decision-making,



including in pursuit of achieving the goals of the [2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#). The United States will explore ways to promote and increase data accessibility and the dissemination of data to stakeholders through offline methods and will promote existing foreign assistance information sources and raise awareness for aid transparency efforts to contribute to increased data use by U.S. Government and civil society and the international community.

### **3. Empower Americans through Participatory Budgets and Responsive Spending**

Participatory budgeting promotes the public's participation in spending taxpayer dollars by engaging citizens in a community to help decide how to allocate public funds. To advance participatory budgeting in the United States, the White House will work with communities, non-profits, civic technologists, and foundation partners to develop new commitments that will expand the use of participatory budgeting in the United States. As a first step, the White House will convene an action-oriented Participatory Budgeting Workshop in 2015 to garner commitments that support community decision-making for certain projects using public funds.

## **Justice and Law Enforcement**

### **1. Expand Access to Justice to Promote Federal Programs**

Equal access to justice helps lift individuals and families out of poverty, or helps to keep them securely in the middle class, and bolsters the public's faith in the justice system. The White House Legal Aid Interagency Roundtable, which currently includes 20 Federal offices and is co-led by the White House Domestic Policy Council and the Department of Justice, works to raise awareness about the profound impact that legal aid programs can have in advancing efforts to promote access to health and housing, education and employment, family stability, and public safety. These agencies work diligently to determine which programs that help the vulnerable and underserved could be more effective and efficient, and produce better outcomes for the public when legal services are among the supportive services provided. On September 24, 2015, President Obama issued a [memorandum](#) intended to institutionalize this Roundtable, expand the participating agencies, and include consideration of equal access to justice for low-income people in both the civil and criminal justice systems. The Roundtable will seek input from civil society, and will annually report on the progress of this work.

### **2. Build Safer and Stronger Communities with Police Open Data**

In response to recommendations of the President's [Task Force on 21st Century Policing](#), the United States is fostering a nationwide community of practices to highlight and connect local open data innovations in law enforcement agencies to enhance community trust and build a new culture of proactive transparency in policing. The Office of Science and Technology Policy and the Domestic Policy Council have been working on the Police Data Initiative in collaboration with Federal, state, and local governments and civil society to proactively release policing data, including incident-level data disaggregated by protected group. This work aims to improve trust, bring better insight and analysis to policing efforts, and ultimately co-create solutions to enhance public safety and reduce bias and unnecessary use of force in policing. Currently, 26 participating jurisdictions including New Orleans, Knoxville, and Newport News, are working side-by-side with top technologists, researchers, data scientists, and design experts to identify and overcome existing barriers to police efficacy and community safety. The Office of Science and Technology Policy and the Domestic Policy Council will continue to expand the Police Data Initiative to include additional jurisdictions. They will explore opportunities to work more closely with state partners and work to build out more resources such as playbooks and technology tools to help jurisdictions easily extract and publish data.

## Support Open Government at the Subnational Level

### **1. Open Federal Data to Benefit Local Communities**

State and local governments are increasingly using Federal open data to deliver value and improve citizen services at the local level. For example, cities use postal data compiled by the Department of Housing and Urban Development to benchmark the successes of blight eradication initiatives, and to borrow effective practices from cities experiencing success. Urban planners use data from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration on projected sea level rise, in concert with elevation data from the U.S. Geological Survey, to set zoning and building standards that account for climate change. Additionally, state and local emergency planners rely on data feeds from the National Weather Service to trigger protocols that protect critical infrastructure as severe weather approaches. In 2015, the Administration published an [online map](#) containing open datasets from community-based initiatives across more than 15 Federal agencies to help citizens discover the work taking place in their own communities. The Administration will continue to update the map with datasets on new initiatives to help citizens, researchers, journalists, and other stakeholders identify and track the progress of this work in a single, accessible location. The Administration will release additional Federal data to fill crucial information gaps at the local level and spur civic innovations that foster economic growth, access to healthcare, community resilience, and other entrepreneurial efforts.

### **2. Support the Municipal Data Network**

Local governments have the ability to enact change and revolutionize services and efficiency by using data analytics and encouraging transparency and the economy through open data. However, municipal governments face challenges in leveraging the data economy — challenges that range from legacy systems to limited resources, capacity, and skills in data. Cities and counties across the country will join to establish a Municipal Data Network, led by San Francisco, Los Angeles, Chicago, Philadelphia, and Pittsburgh, and supported by [Data.gov](#) within the General Services Administration. This network will identify methods to sustainably share and scale data successes related to open data, analytics, performance management, data culture and capacity, data infrastructure and tools, and data standards, so that local governments across the country can accelerate their efforts. In addition, this network will identify opportunities for cross-city partnerships as well as ways to join with the philanthropic and private sector and relevant Federal and state agencies to accelerate data efforts in a repeatable and scalable manner.

### **3. Foster Data Ecosystems**

Local data about topics ranging from crime statistics, to transportation, to the availability of fresh foods can be combined with Federal data to help policymakers identify and implement community outreach programs, aid people with disabilities in getting around, and eliminate food deserts. The Census Bureau has led initial efforts to work closely with cities and rural communities and open-source communities to establish interoperable software development frameworks, such as [CitySDK](#). This tool addresses local concerns while bridging data gaps that can sometimes occur among Federal, state, and local data. In order to accelerate local solutions that are developed with open data, the White House will host the first-ever Open Data Impact Summit to recognize innovative solutions and create new pathways to leverage technology and data to address important civic problems.

#### **4. Extend Digital, Data-Driven Government to Federal Government’s Support for Communities**

The Administration has been expanding work in digital, data-driven government to support better Federal agency service delivery. A next phase of this work will leverage technology and innovation tools and open data to extend, embed, and fill gaps in the Federal government’s work with local communities. The Administration commits to working across Federal agencies to increase access to tools that ease collaboration across Federal agencies and with local partners, build Federal teams to develop lasting local capacity and increase partnerships between the Federal government and local innovators, and tailor high-value open data sets and visualization tools for the needs of local communities. These efforts will add capacity at the local level, improve the effectiveness of Federal support for communities, and spur civic innovation that improves economic growth, access to services, access to opportunity, and community resilience.

## Open Government to Support Global Sustainable Development

### **1. Promote Open and Accountable Implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals**

In September 2015, world leaders including President Obama adopted the [2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#), the successor framework to the Millennium Development Goals, which set out a vision and priorities for global development for the next 15 years. The Administration is committed to ensuring that efforts to implement the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are open, transparent, and undertaken in partnership and consultation with civil society. With the inclusion of Goal 16, promoting peaceful and inclusive societies and access to justice, this new set of global goals recognizes the foundational role of transparent, accountable institutions for global development. Consistent with the 2015 Joint Declaration on Open Government for the Implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, this National Action Plan includes commitments to harness open government and promote progress toward the SDGs both in the United States and globally, including in the areas of education, health, climate resilience, air quality, food security, science and innovation, justice, and law enforcement. Building on these efforts, the United States will continue to work alongside the partner governments, and private foundations, civil society organizations, private sector companies, and multilateral partners on next steps for the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development Data, a group of like-minded actors committed to creating and using data to support progress toward the SDGs. The United States will also convene interagency stakeholders and consult with civil society to take stock of existing U.S. government data that relates to each of the 17 SDGs, and to propose a strategy for tracking progress toward achieving the SDGs in the United States.

### **2. Promote Open Climate Data Around the Globe**

The United States is a leader in providing information about climate, including through the [Climate Resilience Toolkit](#) comprising 40 tools, five map layers, and case studies in key areas of climate change risks and vulnerability, and with the [Climate Data Initiative](#), an online catalog of more than 250 high-value climate-related datasets and data products from a dozen Federal agencies. Building on the success of these domestic initiatives, the United States will work to expand the availability and accessibility of climate-relevant data worldwide and promote the development of new technologies, products, and information services that can help solve real-life problems in the face of a changing climate. To promote open climate data globally the United States will:

- **Manage Arctic Data as a Strategic Asset.** The United States currently chairs the Arctic Council, the intergovernmental forum for addressing environment, stewardship and climate issues convened by eight Arctic governments (Canada, Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Russia, Sweden, and the United

States) and the indigenous peoples of the Arctic. In an effort to make Arctic data more accessible and useful, the United States will encourage Arctic Council member countries and the global community to inventory relevant government data and publish a list of datasets that are public or can be made public.

- **Work to Stimulate Partnerships and Innovation.** The United States will work with other countries to leverage open data to stimulate innovation and private-sector entrepreneurship in the application of climate-relevant data in support of national climate-change preparedness. This will be pursued through partnerships such as the Climate Services for Resilient Development, which the United States [launched](#) this summer with more than \$34 million in financial and in-kind contributions from the U.S. Government and seven other founding-partner institutions from around the world.
- **Strive to Fill Data Gaps.** The United States will seek international opportunities to help meet critical data needs. For example, the United States is creating the first-ever publicly available, high-resolution Digital Elevation Model (DEM) of the Arctic to support informed land management, sustainable development, safe recreation, and scientific studies, as well as domain-specific challenges. DEMs can also serve as benchmarks against which future landscape changes (due to, for instance, erosion, sea level rise, extreme events, or climate change) can be measured. Moving forward, the United States will explore creating similarly valuable resources for parts of the world where publicly available, reliable, and high-resolution data are currently not available.
- **Create a National Integrated Heat Health Information System.** Heat early-warning systems can serve as effective tools for reducing illness, death, and loss of productivity associated with extreme heat. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention are building a new [National Integrated Heat Health Information System](#), which will provide a suite of decision-support services that better serve public health needs to prepare and respond. This effort will identify and harmonize existing capabilities and define and deliver the research, observations, prediction, vulnerability assessments, and other information needed to support heat-health preparedness. To inform the development of Integrated Heat Health Information Systems, the Administration will work closely with industry stakeholders and with other countries to implement a series of pilot projects that facilitate joint learning, co-production of knowledge, and the generation information and tools based on open data. These pilot activities will focus on collaborations at the city, regional, national, and international scales and are aimed at preparing citizens, communities, and governments to be more resilient to extreme heat events.

### **3. Make Additional Air Quality Data Available**

To promote the efficient use of government resources, help protect the health of our personnel overseas, create partnerships on air quality with other nations, and contribute to the global scientific community, in February 2015, the Department of State and the Environmental Protection Agency launched a new partnership with a number of U.S. diplomatic missions overseas to enhance the availability of outdoor air quality data and expertise. The Department of State and the Environmental Protection Agency will expand that effort to include 20 global cities and will begin making that data available on the Environmental Protection Agency's [AirNow](#) website, which provides air quality information for more than 400 U.S. cities.

#### **4. Promote Food Security and Data Sharing for Agriculture and Nutrition**

The United States co-founded the Global Open Data for Agriculture and Nutrition (GODAN) initiative in 2013 to make agriculture and nutrition data available, accessible, and usable to address the urgent challenge of ensuring world food security. In just two years, the Administration has helped expand that work to include more than 135 partners and a centralized secretariat. In 2016, the United States will help lead a GODAN Summit and co-chair a working group focused on filling critical global nutrition data gaps. The United States will also promote creation of a working group focused on improving data availability for, and global adoption of, precision agriculture practices.

#### **5. Promote Data Sharing About Global Preparedness for Epidemic Threats**

The United States will undergo and publicly release an external assessment of capability across public and animal health systems to prevent, detect, and respond to epidemic threats, utilizing the 11 targets of the Global Health Security Agenda (GHS). Through the GHS, participating countries including the United States and international organizations have developed a voluntary, flexible, sustainable external assessment process to measure country capacity to achieve a strong laboratory system, infectious disease workforce, rapid disease detection and reporting, a national biosafety and biosecurity system, and other elements that are central to rapidly addressing infectious disease threats. The assessment relies on quantitative and qualitative data, including country self-reporting as well as the external assessment and is meant to be shared in order to provide a better understanding of global needs and a better targeting of global resources to fill gaps. The United States is also providing technical assistance to countries in using this tool to develop a baseline, and will continue to provide experts to participate in external assessments of other countries' efforts.

## Conclusion

Maintaining an informed and involved citizenry is a bedrock principle of American democracy. Throughout this National Action Plan, important themes such as improving public services, access to information and public participation have been highlighted. In the coming months, the U.S. Government will continue to work with partners in government, as well as the public and civil society organizations, to implement these commitments and to continue to build a more open, participatory government. Since 2011, the United States has been a champion of the Open Government Partnership and remains committed to its success. The United States will also remain committed to building a strong open government through this National Action Plan and all open government efforts.

