

FIFTH U.S. OPEN GOVERNMENT NATIONAL ACTION PLAN

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THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

INTRODUCTION

The American people have strived for a more inclusive, accountable, transparent, and responsive government since our Nation's founding. That spirit is embodied in key milestones across U.S. history, including expansions of the right to vote, broadening of basic civil rights protections to ensure dignity and equal treatment, improving protections for press freedoms, and expanding public access to government information.

This spirit is also embodied in the leadership role that the United States has played in promoting open government around the world, including as a founding member of the [Open Government Partnership](#)—the international collaboration that coordinates the production and implementation of Open Government National Action Plans among civil society and governments across nearly eighty countries.

This document—the Fifth U.S. Open Government National Action Plan, developed in collaboration between the Federal Government and U.S. civil society—reflects the United States' longstanding commitment to open government at home and abroad, and includes over 30 commitments from across the Federal Government to: ensure, consistent with law, that the public has access to Federal Government data, research, and information; empower citizens to participate in the work of Federal Government; transform the way Federal agencies interact with the public; fight corruption and support the integrity of Federal Government programs; and ensure that the Federal Government upholds the rule of law fairly for all people. These broad themes, and the commitments included in each theme, reflect contributions from a wide range of individual civil society voices as well as priorities of the Biden-Harris Administration.

While U.S. support for open government has always been crucial, it is especially vital today. The publication of the Fifth U.S. Open Government National Plan comes at a time when the principles of equality and democracy are threatened across the United States and around the world. [According](#) to the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance, more than half of all global democracies have experienced a decline in at least one aspect of their democracy over the last ten years, including the United States. Just as concerning, people around the world [indicate](#) that governments could do more to meet their needs, and voice frustration with not having a say in decision-making. This [drives](#) a lack of trust in government institutions—and society.

It is therefore imperative that the United States lead by example: to show that democracies can be inclusive, responsive, transparent, and accountable to all their citizens, including by supporting the basic rights necessary for full participation in social, economic, and civic life. The work of preserving and promoting an inclusive, responsive, accountable, and transparent democracy is never complete, and the Fifth U.S. Open Government National Action Plan includes only a subset of the full range of ambitious efforts underway across the Federal Government to achieve that goal. As the Federal Government implements the National Action Plan and other related efforts, we remain committed to working together with civil society to realize the promise of a truly open, equitable, and inclusive democracy for all.

A CROSS-CUTTING THEME: ADVANCING EQUITY AND INCLUSION FOR UNDERSERVED COMMUNITIES

In drafting the Fifth Open Government National Action Plan, the Biden-Harris Administration has prioritized a cross-cutting focus on advancing equity for, and inclusion of, communities that have experienced marginalization, exclusion, and discrimination—reflecting the centrality of equity as an Administration priority and a demand from civil society to advance inclusion and support for underserved communities.

As President Biden has [explained](#), our country has never fully lived up to our founding principle: that all people are created equal and have a right to be treated equally throughout their lives. For far too long, people of color, immigrants, women, persons with disabilities, LGBTQI+ individuals, religious minorities, rural communities, communities facing persistent poverty, and others have faced barriers to full participation in social, economic, and civic life. The toll of this exclusion has not just been felt by members of underserved communities; it has left us all worse off.

Attention to underserved individuals and communities is particularly important given the ongoing crisis of democracy, here and abroad. All too often, underserved communities bear the brunt of democratic backsliding, experiencing threats of violence and erosion of basic rights, protections, and access to government services.

For these reasons, the Biden-Harris Administration has embarked on an historic, government-wide initiative to advance equity for underserved communities. On his first day in office, President Biden signed [Executive Order 13985](#), which directs agencies to pursue a comprehensive approach to advancing equity for all, including people of color and others who have been historically underserved, marginalized, and adversely affected by persistent poverty and inequality. E.O. 13985 charges each Federal agency with comprehensively assessing how well their benefits, protections, and services reach all individuals and then taking steps to improve how each agency delivers for underserved communities. A critical part of Executive Order 13985 is improving how Federal agencies engage with the public, especially members of underserved communities, drawing on the first-hand experiences and needs of those communities to understand how agencies can better design and administer their programs and policies.

This government-wide commitment to supporting historically underserved communities has informed both how the Federal Government has approached drafting the Fifth Open Government National Action Plan, as well as the substance of the commitments included in this document.

As part of our engagement with civil society, the Federal Government has attempted to expand the voices the Biden-Harris Administration heard from to include previously excluded communities. To do that, the Federal Government has aligned drafting of this Plan with implementation of Executive Order 13985, drawing on the engagement the White House and agencies have conducted over the past two years.

For instance, in drafting the commitments for this plan the Federal Government drew from recommendations and inputs provided through multiple channels of engagement between the U.S. Government and civil society. These include multiple Requests for Information [issued by](#) the White House Office of Management and Budget and the Office of Science and Technology Policy. The Federal Government heard best practices and suggestions for new tools for conducting equity assessments, new means of engaging the public in the work of government, and new channels for producing and delivering data that allows for greater transparency and accountability. Those Requests for Information have collectively received over 700 responses from the public—including local, Tribal, territorial, and State governments; researchers; businesses; community-based organizations, advocacy groups; and individual members of the public.

In drafting the National Action Plan, the Biden-Harris Administration also built on engagements, listening sessions, and town halls with members of the public, equity-oriented civil rights and advocacy organizations, and outside experts on equitable delivery of public services. And most importantly, the Administration has built on new strategies that Federal agencies have been using to more regularly engage members of the public in their work, including the design and delivery of benefits, grants, procurement, and rulemaking.

This extensive public engagement has complemented additional outreach conducted specifically for the Open Government National Action Plan, including six virtual open engagement sessions to share ideas between Federal Government and civil society, as well as ideas shared from the public online through the [U.S. Open Government portal](#) and email inbox. In all of these efforts, the Federal Government has encouraged individuals to share their own diverse perspectives and feedback rather than seeking consensus recommendations.

In all, our hope for the Fifth Open Government National Action Plan is that this document reflects the voices of more communities that have not typically participated in the work of government before, as well as new commitments to improving those communities' inclusion in social, economic, and civic life. Advancing equity, like supporting and promoting democracy, is an ongoing process—one that requires a sustained commitment from both government and civil society. The Biden-Harris Administration is eager to work collaboratively with all parts of civil society to realize the goal of an American democracy that is open, responsive, and inclusive of all people.

THEMES FOR THE FIFTH OPEN GOVERNMENT NATIONAL ACTION PLAN

Drawing on public engagement, including through Executive Order 13985, as well as alignment with Biden-Harris Administration priorities, this plan features commitments across five themes:

- Improve Access to Government Data, Research, and Information
- Increase Civic Space to Engage the Public
- Transform Government Service Delivery
- Counter Corruption and Ensure Government Integrity and Accountability to the Public
- Ensure Equal Justice Under the Law

IMPROVE ACCESS TO GOVERNMENT DATA, RESEARCH, AND INFORMATION

Transparency is a cornerstone of open government and can be an important driver of more-equitable outcomes, innovation, and accountability. By making available information about the condition of society, the economy, and the environment, as well as government decisions, activities, data collections, and program outcomes, the public can hold the Federal Government accountable. When information is broken down by key demographic variables, like race, ethnicity (including region of national origin), language spoken, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, income, geographic location (including rural or urban), veteran status, and age, among other categories, members of the public better understand how the benefits of government programs and policies are distributed across society. With sufficiently disaggregated information on Federal actions and outcomes, civil society and government can work together to better assess and remove barriers to more-equitable outcomes.

Public release of Federal Government research, information, and data can also enable greater evidence building, civic engagement, and public and private sector decision-making; accelerate private-sector breakthroughs for scientific innovations; and identify novel business opportunities. Federal statistical agencies, which have a mission of informing the public by disseminating high-quality statistical information, continue to have an important role to play in enabling these important outcomes. Other Federal agencies, particularly those involved in research and data collection, also have an important role to play in supporting a vibrant data and research ecosystem spanning the public and private sectors, as well as civil society.

No less important, facilitating greater access to public data and agency activities, consistent with applicable law, can result in a more-responsive Federal Government. Transparency about Government spending, for instance, means that civic organizations, journalists, and individual citizens can track Federal agency activity and decision-making, as well as how agencies are managing public resources—and then hold policymakers accountable where funding is not meeting local needs. In a similar vein, building greater visibility into Government agency performance can help members of the public understand how well specific programs are delivering for individual communities. Furthermore, the Government has an important role to play in ensuring that public websites, meetings, and documents are

accessible and compliant with Sections 504 and 508 of the Rehabilitation Act (Public Law 93-112) to enable the full participation of individuals with sensory and mobility disabilities in Federal Government—and civil society.

To improve public access to Government data, research, and information, the Federal Government will:

- [Expand the Federal Government’s Production, Dissemination, and Use of Equitable Data](#). The President’s Executive Order 13985 called for the formation of a cross-agency Equitable Data Working Group to study existing Federal data collection policies, programs, and infrastructure to identify inadequacies and provide recommendations for increasing data available for measuring equity and representing the diversity of the American people. In April 2022, the Equitable Data Working Group [issued a report](#) to the President with five key recommendations: (1) making collection and analysis of disaggregated data the norm while protecting privacy; (2) building on existing Federal infrastructure to leverage underused data, including through interagency data sharing; (3) building capacity for robust equity assessment for policymaking and program implementation, including by investing in statistical, evaluation, and data science expertise; (4) galvanizing diverse partnerships across levels of government and the research community, especially through opportunities for mutually beneficial uses of data; and (5) being accountable to the American public by providing tools that allow for civil society organizations and communities to use and visualize government data and chart progress towards more equitable outcomes.

The Federal Government commits to implementing these recommendations, including by rechartering the Equitable Data Working Group as a subcommittee of the Office of Science and Technology Policy’s National Science and Technology Council. In support of these recommendations, the Subcommittee on Equitable Data issued two Requests for Information from the public to inform efforts on how the Federal Government [can better](#) measure and share data about the LGBTQI+ community, as well as how Federal agencies [can create](#) partnerships and collaborations to share data with local communities, Tribal, territorial, State, and local governments, and researchers.

The Subcommittee has also conducted a series of listening sessions with city Chief Data Officers in the Civic Analytics Network and local data practitioners in the National Neighborhood Indicator Partnership. Engagement with data practitioners in Federal, State, Tribal, territorial, and local government and local data intermediaries has revealed a strong demand for capacity building and clear guidance on effective practices for responsibly-disaggregated data. The Subcommittee is planning future, regular sessions with additional stakeholders. These will include engagement with additional networks of local data practitioners and data journalists, among others.

The Federal Government commits to assessing the responses received from these engagements and exploring how they can inform new strategies for equitable data collection and distribution. Specifically, the Subcommittee on Equitable Data will commit to publishing a public report synthesizing its findings on how Federal agencies can better collaborate with members of the public, especially from underserved communities, in collecting, analyzing, and using equitable data.

To develop and share effective equitable data practices—including around improving feedback loops between public data users and Federal data stewards, public engagement, transparency, and accountability—the Subcommittee on Equitable Data commits to creating a government-wide community of practice, including a listserv, learning assets such as “how to” guides, and regular webinars to share lessons learned across agencies. To pilot data feedback loop strategies, over the next year the Subcommittee on Equitable Data commits to sharing public recommendations to individual Federal agencies received through past Requests for Information, and then sharing back publicly whether agencies can implement the recommendations and any relevant barriers to doing so. The Subcommittee on Equitable Data commits to publishing a progress report in early 2023 on agency adoption of the recommendations of the Equitable Data Working Group, including agency case studies and recommendations to reduce barriers and accelerate equitable outcomes.

Further, the Subcommittee on Equitable Data Interagency Working Group on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity, launched through the [Executive Order](#) on Advancing Equality for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, and Intersex Individuals ([Executive Order 14075](#)), commits to publishing a Federal Evidence Agenda on

LGBTQI+ Equity and sharing the Agenda with public stakeholders; State, Tribal, local, and territorial governments; and academic researchers. This Evidence Agenda will include a summary of LGBTQI+ data needs; a set of research questions that the Federal Government needs to answer to more effectively understand, support, and improve the lives of LGBTQI+ individuals; and guidelines for collecting Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity data on administrative forms. Recommendations for best practices for collecting sexual orientation and gender identity (SOGI) data on Federal statistical surveys, published by the office of the Chief Statistician of the United States in the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), are forthcoming.

In addition, the Director of OMB, through the Chief Statistician of the United States, is evaluating SOGI data practices across agencies, and plans to update reports, guidance, or directives, as needed, based upon the latest evidence, research, and stakeholder input, per Executive Order 14075.

- Revise the Federal Standards for Collecting and Reporting Race and Ethnicity. The Office of Management and Budget (OMB), through the Chief Statistician of the United States, [has announced](#) a formal review of the Federal Government's standards for maintaining, collecting, and presenting data on race and ethnicity ([Statistical Policy Directive No. 15](#)). Directive No. 15 provides minimum standards that ensure the ability to compare information and data across Federal agencies, and also to understand how well Federal programs serve a diverse America. OMB has convened an interagency technical working group representing agencies that collect or use race and ethnicity data. The Working Group will examine relevant research and engage in meaningful ways with the public on its work. Because these Standards are designed to, among other things, understand how well Federal programs serve a diverse population, the Working Group has been holding listening sessions to hear directly from organizations and members of the public, and has committed to soliciting public input on the Working Group's recommendations.
- Ensure Transparency in Federal Procurement through Made in America Waivers. A key priority of the Biden-Harris Administration is ensuring that wherever possible, the U.S. Government procures goods, products, materials, and services from sources that will help American businesses compete in strategic industries and help America's workers thrive. As part of implementing this priority, and as directed by the Executive Order on Ensuring the Future is Made in All of America by All of America's Workers ([Executive Order 14005](#)), the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) is publishing agencies' requests for exceptions from Made in America laws [online](#). These requests include a justification for why agencies are not using goods, products, or materials from the United States, as well as OMB's decision on the waiver. By making these waivers available online in an easy-to-access format, the Government can help members of the public better understand what their tax dollars are supporting. This transparency can also help with accountability for requested waivers and members of the public can make comments on waivers listed on the website, empowering civil society to understand where the Federal Government is meeting its Made in America goals and where the Federal Government could be doing more to realize those objectives. Over the next year, the Federal Government commits to expanding the coverage of waivers reported on the Made in America website, including by expanding to public interest and unreasonable cost waivers, as well as making it easier to search for waivers related to both procurement and Federal financial assistance (such as grants).
- Broaden Public Access to Federally-Funded Research Findings and Data. Many important scientific and technological discoveries, including those that have helped mitigate the COVID-19 pandemic, have been supported by American tax dollars. Yet frequently, the results of such Federally-funded research are out of reach for many Americans, available only for a cost or with unnecessary delays. These barriers to accessing Federally-supported research deepen inequalities, as funding disadvantages faced by under-resourced institutions like minority-serving colleges and universities prevent communities from accessing the results of research that taxpayers have funded. To tackle these obstacles and unlock new possibilities for further innovation and participation in science, the Federal Government previously delivered [guidance](#) to agencies to develop plans for greater public access to taxpayer-funded research.

Looking forward, the Biden-Harris Administration is [taking new steps](#) to expand and accelerate access to publicly-funded research results by ensuring that publications and associated data resulting from Federally funded

research are freely and publicly available without delay after publication. Making data underpinning research publications more readily available improves transparency into Federally-supported work, enabling others to replicate and build on research findings. Going forward, the Government commits to supporting access to Federally-funded science and data through several mechanisms, including through the National Science and Technology Council's Subcommittee on Open Science; by permitting researchers to include publication and data sharing costs in their research budget proposals to Federal grant programs; by launching programs aimed at awarding more grants to early-stage researchers as well as encouraging a diverse pool of award applicants; and by exploring new incentive structures to recognize institutions and researchers who are supporting public access to data and research.

- Streamline Researcher Access to Confidential Federal Data for Evidence Building. Leaders of the Federal statistical system, led by the Chief Statistician of the United States, recently launched a Standard Application Process, as required under the Foundations for Evidence-Based Policymaking Act (Public Law 115-435). This critical first step creates a single front door for finding and requesting access to restricted, confidential data from Federal statistical agencies for evidence building purposes—without needing to already know which agency houses the needed data, or having to navigate various agency websites and request processes. This significant achievement is a launching pad for additional seamless support for greater evidence building—by local, Tribal, territorial and State governments, researchers, businesses, community-based organizations, advocacy groups, and individual members of the public—as recommended by the Advisory Committee on Data for Evidence Building that envisioned a National Secure Data Service Demonstration, recently authorized by the CHIPS and Science Act (Public Law 117-167).
- Expand Online Access to the National Archives, Including for Underserved Communities. The National Archives Catalog is the Federal Government's online portal to records held at the National Archives. Access to the Catalog helps members of the public find documents and materials produced and held by the Federal Government. The Catalog describes over 95% of the records in the National Archives' vast holdings and provides access to digital copies of more than 200 million pages of records—and as such, offers an important resource for research, transparency, and accountability. The National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) commits to improving the Catalog over the next two years by launching a new site with improved search experience and a new optical character recognition tool and by enhancing the Catalog with expanded user contribution types. In addition, NARA commits to using shared Federal web design standards and a human-centered design approach to update its flagship website, [archives.gov](https://www.archives.gov), over the next two years. Last, NARA commits to engaging with underserved communities and working with community points of contact to identify and prioritize records in NARA's holdings that are important and impactful to those communities. This effort, organized over the next two to four years, will result in meeting with community points of contact, identifying pertinent records, and prioritizing records for processing, description, digitization, bulk download, transcription, or potentially other collaborative projects.
- Set Government-Wide Federal Sustainability Goals and Establish Agency Plans, Targets, and Reporting. President Biden's [Executive Order 14057](https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2021/05/14/2021-09847/executive-order-14057) on Catalyzing Clean Energy Industries and Jobs Through Federal Sustainability established government-wide goals for net-zero emissions. Under the Federal Sustainability Plan, major Federal agencies will set annual progress targets toward reaching topline goals. Annual public reporting is foundational to this approach so that members of the public can track progress and hold Federal agencies accountable for sustainability targets and management of climate-related risks and vulnerabilities. Federal agencies were called upon to develop annual climate adaptation and resilience plans that evaluate the most significant climate-related risks and vulnerabilities for agency operations and missions, and identify actions to manage those risks and vulnerabilities. Agencies will track and report progress through key metrics and annual sustainability reports. The Federal Government commits to implementing this Executive Order and making these annual reports, data, and scorecards measuring progress available to the public at www.sustainability.gov.
- Building Public Tools and Data to Advance Environmental Justice. Many communities across the country—and especially those that are disadvantaged, marginalized, and underserved communities—face environmental risks, including exposure to pollution and toxic waste, lack of access to clean drinking water, and insufficient protec-

tion from storms and floods, among other harms. The Biden-Harris Administration is committed to ensuring that all Americans live in healthy, thriving communities and is acting on that commitment in several important environmental justice initiatives.

[Executive Order 14008](#) on Tackling the Climate Crisis at Home and Abroad launched the first-ever White House Environmental Justice Advisory Council (WHEJAC) to provide recommendations on how to address current and historic environmental injustice as well as to advance environmental justice, including in the area of climate change mitigation, resilience, and disaster management. Initial recommendations from the WHEJAC will inform the design of a new public Environmental Justice Scorecard, which will track the environmental justice advances across the Administration. The scorecard will be produced by the Office of Management and Budget, the Council on Environmental Quality, and the U.S. Digital Service, and informed by public input from a [Request for Information](#) published in August 2022. The Federal Government commits to implementing this scorecard as a tool for the public to help hold Federal programs accountable for equitable environmental justice investments. The public scorecard will complement the recently-released public [Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool](#), called for in E.O. 14008, which will help Federal agencies identify disadvantaged communities for the Justice40 Initiative, which seeks to direct 40% of the overall benefits of investments in climate and related areas to disadvantaged communities. It also helps members of the public visualize environmental and economic disadvantage present in their communities.

INCREASE CIVIC SPACE TO ENGAGE THE PUBLIC

Increasing the information, research, and data that the Federal Government makes available to the public is one important component of open government. So too is engagement of local communities by Federal agencies to ensure that members of the public have an opportunity to participate in decisions that affect their lives. More meaningful engagement of the public in the work of government results in better policy design and program administration—as policies more closely reflect and respond to the needs of individual communities—and also builds virtuous cycles of public trust and confidence in the Federal Government and in democratic institutions.

In implementing this vision of greater participation, proactive engagement is critical to ensure that communities—including those communities that have experienced marginalization, exclusion, and discrimination in the past—participate in the process. Proactive engagement strategies build on the relationships that communities already hold—for instance, with trusted civic organizations or other intermediaries—and meet community members where they are, by using methods of communication that are familiar and accessible given individual community needs. Just as important is engaging through the full cycle of Government functions—not simply after key decisions are made. Public engagement can inform the setting of priorities, development of policy proposals, implementation of programs, and evaluation of program performance and effectiveness.

Government programs are better designed and administered when agencies engage in this kind of proactive, meaningful, and sustained engagement with the public—as government programs reflect local needs and experiences of individual communities and as members of the public trust government to deliver on the benefits and services they need.

To advance a vision of proactive, continuous public engagement across Federal programs, the Federal Government will:

- [Improve Public Engagement Related to Agency Regulatory Actions](#). Regulations are a critical way that the Federal Government makes and implements policy, ranging from how benefit programs are administered to how the Federal Government enforces workplace safety and health protections, and touching countless other areas of Americans' lives. The Federal regulatory process provides opportunities for members of the public to offer their perspectives on specific proposals, including through written comments and meetings during regulatory review.

However, Federal agencies do not always hear from communities that might be affected by proposed regulatory actions—especially historically underserved communities. The Federal Government has taken several important steps to broaden the voices that agencies hear from in the regulatory process.

First, President Biden has [issued a memorandum](#) calling on the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) to lead an effort to modernize the regulatory review process, including by exploring opportunities to broaden public engagement. In addition, OMB has recommended that agencies engage the public when developing their annual regulatory agendas—that is, lists of regulatory actions that agencies are considering in the coming months and years. Beyond those measures, individual Federal agencies are also using innovative tools to engage the public in the rulemaking process, including through improved public resources, regional townhalls, Requests for Information, and collaborations with community-based organizations to share regulatory priorities and solicit community input. Over the next year, the Federal Government [commits to supporting](#) greater community engagement in the rulemaking process, including through its efforts to modernize the regulatory review process, through tools, guidance, and other resources.

- [Support Community Engagement in Agency Equity Action Plans](#). As part of [Executive Order 13985](#), Federal agencies were called upon to develop and implement equity action plans. These plans summarize the obstacles that underserved communities face in accessing Federal Government benefits, services, and contracting opportunities. The action plans also detail affirmative steps that agencies are taking to address those barriers. Many agencies [are committing](#) to new ways of engaging with the public in these plans. Importantly, these action plans include efforts that go beyond passive collection of public input to propose more proactive community engagement across all agency functions. For example, the Environmental Protection Agency and U.S. Department of Energy have announced a new joint grant initiative—the [Thriving Communities Technical Assistance Centers Program](#)—that will provide funding to non-profit organizations to support communities in building capacity to address environmental justice concerns, including by facilitating local community engagement with the Federal Government. For its part, the U.S. Department of Transportation has [forecasted](#) a 2023 grant opportunity for place-based initiatives jointly co-designed with communities most impacted by poor transportation access and climate change. The U.S. Department of Energy also committed up to \$102 million in funding and support for Historically Black Colleges and Universities and other Minority Serving Institutions as foundations for world-class talent in the fields of science, technology, engineering and math. The Federal Emergency Management Agency has [committed](#) to developing an agency-wide Community Engagement Plan that will include best practices for public outreach across agency functions designed to ensure equity in policy and program delivery activities. The U.S. Department of Labor has [committed](#) to developing new partnerships with community-based organizations to improve awareness of, and compliance with, Federal wage and hour protections for vulnerable, low-paid workers most at risk of violations. In May 2022, the Associate Attorney General issued a [Comprehensive Environmental Justice Enforcement Strategy](#) for the Department of Justice, urging Department personnel to host and participate in community listening sessions, and to develop case-specific community outreach plans. And the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development has [committed](#) to increased engagement with non-traditional lenders, including community-based institutions, to better reach underserved communities as part of a broader effort to eliminate the racial homeownership gap. The Federal Government commits to supporting agencies as they pursue additional community engagement efforts as part of implementation of their equity action plans.
- [Encourage Greater Public Participation in Science](#). Public participation in the scientific process by individual citizens—including through Federal prize competitions, challenges, and crowdsourcing—can help connect a wide range of the American public to their communities, to the environment, to Federal agencies, to the science and technology innovation ecosystem, and beyond. These participatory tools can help us to better understand both what science is capable of and its limitations. Citizen science, prize competitions, challenges, and crowdsourcing also have the potential to change communities’ relationships to science and innovation for the better by creating two-way streets of communication. Local communities can tell us what is important to them and

establish solutions that work for them. At the same time, scientists can make their research more relevant and grounded in those communities, increasing the reach and impact of Federal science and innovation efforts. For these reasons, the Biden-Harris Administration is [committed](#) to supporting citizen science efforts, such as the challenge [launched earlier](#) this year in partnership with the U.K. Government to develop privacy-preserving solutions for training artificial intelligence models. Looking ahead, most agencies implementing prize competitions and challenges in recent years have [indicated](#) that they will continue to leverage such competitions and challenges, and the Biden-Harris Administration will commit to supporting these efforts to stimulate innovation, develop solutions to challenging problems, and advance core Administration and agency priorities.

Federal agencies have also published their multi-year Learning Agendas and Annual Evaluation Plans as required by the Foundations for Evidence-based Policymaking Act. These evidence-building plans transparently describe agencies' priority research questions and are available on agency websites and linked in a central location on the new [evaluation.gov](#) website. Evaluation.gov also includes a Learning Agenda Question Dashboard that compiles all agency questions in one place so that researchers and members of the public can explore where evidence is most needed. This allows those external to government to consider how their own research can be most policy-relevant, as well as how they might collaborate with Federal agencies to build evidence in priority areas.

- [Develop Open Innovation Techniques to Engage the Public in Federal Procurement Policymaking](#). The Federal Government must ensure that it spends money wisely and eliminates waste and abuse of taxpayer dollars. With approximately one out of every three dollars of Federal Government discretionary spending going to contractors, it is imperative that contract actions result in the best value for taxpayers. This creates an opportunity to leverage procurement, consistent with applicable law and regulations, to take on our most pressing challenges as a country, such as advancing equity and securing domestic supply chains. In order to identify and develop the best ideas for how procurement can be used to address our most pressing complex and crosscutting challenges, the Office of Federal Procurement Policy in the Office of Management and Budget is using open innovation crowdsourcing with the support of an online platform to collaborate with the public on ways to improve government procurement. As a result of crowdsourcing campaigns undertaken over the last 18 months, the Federal Government was able to (1) expand our reach to allow a greater number and diversity of voices to participate in the procurement process, (2) gain new insights and perspectives, (3) explore problems and solutions, and (4) accelerate the process of identifying the most promising ideas for reforming Federal procurement. During Fiscal Year 2023 the Federal Government commits to continuing to use open innovation techniques and crowdsourcing tools to foster meaningful dialogue with individuals and organizations with expertise and interest in Federal procurement matters.

TRANSFORM GOVERNMENT SERVICE DELIVERY

An open government should strive to make it as easy as possible for individuals to interact with public agencies, particularly when seeking to access vital services and benefits. Government services and benefits provide critical assistance for families, businesses, and other organizations. When individuals struggle with complicated forms, lengthy wait times, or overly burdensome or stigmatizing requirements, they miss out on access to much-needed support. The lost time also operates as a kind of tax—a “time tax”—on people. All too frequently, this time tax falls most heavily on members of communities who have also experienced discrimination, marginalization, and exclusion, and who are already operating with limited resources. People can be effectively shut out from their government by the difficulties of navigating its processes and procedures. What is more, these barriers to timely benefits and services undermine public trust and confidence in government services, making it more challenging for the Federal Government to reach those communities in the future and eroding faith in the performance of democratic institutions.

Every interaction between the Federal Government and the public—whether it involves renewing a passport, calling for a status update on a farm loan application, or any number of important steps and tasks—should be seen as an opportunity for the Government to save time and to deliver the level of service that the public expects and deserves.

Every interaction also provides opportunities for the Federal Government to hear directly from the public on how well we are administering those programs, building feedback loops to ensure that the design and delivery of public benefits and services reflects the need and experiences of individuals who use them.

Doing so can support individuals, businesses, and others in accessing much-needed support and advance equity for historically underserved communities. By demonstrating that its processes are effective and efficient—in addition to being fair, transparent, and protective of privacy interests—the Federal Government can also build public trust and confidence, especially among communities that have been underserved by Government in the past, and strengthen the public’s commitment to democracy.

To improve the ability of public programs to deliver services and benefits in an accessible, timely, and effective manner, the Federal Government will:

- **Implement the Executive Order on Transforming Federal Customer Experience and Service Delivery to Rebuild Trust in Government.** On December 13th, 2021, the President signed [Executive Order 14058](#), directing Federal agencies to put people at the center of everything the Government does. Specifically, the Executive Order includes 36 customer experience improvement commitments across 17 Federal agencies, all of which aim to improve people’s lives and the delivery of Government services. The Executive Order also creates a sustained, cross-government service delivery process that aligns to the moments that matter most in people’s lives, with an initial focus on (1) approaching retirement; (2) recovering from a disaster; (3) navigating the transition to civilian life following military service; (4) giving birth and early childhood for low-income women and their children; and (5) facing a financial shock and becoming newly eligible for critical supports. As part of this effort, [Federal agencies will report publicly each quarter on their progress](#), allowing the public to understand how well agencies are meeting stated goals. A series of “[discovery sprints](#),” conducted by cross-agency teams representing more than 10 Federal agencies, delivered insights on priority opportunities, grounded in customer pain points, for improved service delivery. In 2023, specific implementation projects will be selected by agency leaders and shared on [www.performance.gov](#) with appropriate measures of success. The Federal Government commits to continuing implementation of Executive Order 14058.
- **Improve High Impact Service Providers and Ensure Ongoing Accountability.** [Thirty-five government agencies](#) have been identified as “high impact service providers,” or HISPs, recognizing the role these entities play in providing services to the public on a significant scale and scope. HISPs lead initiatives like food assistance to children through the U.S. Department of Agriculture, trademark registration applications through the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, and homeownership information provided by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. HISPs have completed capacity assessments (also [available online](#), so that others may use and adapt), which are in turn informing action plans that are released to the public annually to permit greater transparency and accountability as they work to improve their services. Members of the public can also track the performance of HISPs, including by viewing feedback data on survey measures of public satisfaction, confidence, and trust, along with the option to download more detailed, raw data for analysis for each program. This data provides simple and direct measures of the experiences that individuals have with Federal Government that agencies and civil society can use to improve delivery of public services and benefits. Already, some civil society groups have used this raw data to conduct their own audits of HISP program performance. As part of the 2021 President’s Management Agenda, the Administration has further set specific [priority-level success metrics](#) on reducing burden and increasing post-transaction trust in Federal service providers, which will be reported on in 2023. The Federal Government commits to continuing to take steps to improve service delivery by HISPs.
- **Prioritize Administrative Burden Reductions through the Paperwork Reduction Act.** In April 2022, the Office of Management and Budget [released a memorandum](#) to the heads of all Federal agencies reminding them of their responsibility under the Paperwork Reduction Act (Public Law 104–13) to reduce the burdens faced by the public in accessing Government benefits and services, with a focus on reducing burdens faced by members of underserved communities. The memorandum calls on agencies to comprehensively and transparently assess the burdens faced by applicants to benefits and services, taking into account not just the time and resources required to complete necessary paperwork, but also the costs individuals may expend in learning about public programs

as well as the psychological costs individuals may experience through their interactions with the government. Agencies should then use these assessments of costs to inform burden reduction strategies, paying close attention to programs that involve benefits and services for underserved communities. Over the coming year, the Office of Management and Budget commits to supporting Federal agencies in both of these steps, including by developing and sharing burden assessment and reduction tools and resources with Federal agencies and through the review of paperwork requests under the Paperwork Reduction Act. The Administration also commits to applying a burden-reducing lens to implementation of major initiatives, as it did with the implementation of the application for student loan debt relief launched in October 2022. The Administration will engage with civil society to identify high-priority programs to target for administrative burden reduction efforts, including engagement through the U.S. Department of Justice’s [Legal Aid Interagency Roundtable](#), as further outlined in the Equal Justice Under the Law section below. These efforts will also be informed by analyses of disaggregated data on participation in programs and services, consistent with the recommendations of the Equitable Data Working Group and Executive Order 13985.

- Develop and Implement Agency Equity Action Plans. As part of Executive Order 13985, Federal agencies were called upon to develop and implement equity action plans. Consistent with Executive Order 13985, over 90 agencies are implementing equity action plans—and made these action plans public to promote transparency and accountability for their commitments. In addition, the Office of Management and Budget has [published a report](#) that it issued to President Biden, taking stock of methods and strategies that agencies can use for equity assessments, as well as the findings from a Request for Information issued to better understand the tools available to agencies for implementing their equity action plans. Over the next year, the Federal Government will continue to support agencies as they implement their equity action plans.
- Pilot New Forms of Public Engagement to Inform Policy and Program Implementation. Stories of possibility can provide opportunities to express emerging challenges and opportunities through creative and engaging narrative. At their best, stories can inform our collective imagination and create inclusive space for meaningful conversations—and then drive action to choose new possibilities. The General Services Administration will work with civil society and experts in scenario planning and speculative fiction to develop a challenge and prize competition that will engage diverse and inclusive public participation to better define and imagine emerging challenges, opportunities, and possibilities for our shared future.

COUNTER CORRUPTION AND ENSURE GOVERNMENT INTEGRITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY TO THE PUBLIC

Corruption erodes public trust and the ability of governments to deliver for their citizens. It exacerbates social, political, and economic inequality and polarization, impedes the ability of governments to respond to public health crises and to deliver quality education, among a wide range of other public goods, degrades the business environment and economic opportunity, drives conflict, and undermines faith in government. Those that abuse positions of power for private gain steal not just material wealth, but human dignity and welfare.

Underscoring the connections between our anti-corruption efforts at home and abroad, in today’s globalized world corrupt actors bribe across borders, harness the international financial system to stash illicit wealth abroad, and abuse democratic institutions to advance anti-democratic aims. Emerging research and major journalistic exposés have documented the extent to which legal and regulatory deficiencies in the developed world offer corrupt actors the means to offshore and launder illicit wealth.

Beyond efforts to counter corruption, government integrity and accountability requires reliable scientific research and technological information. Improper influence over, or distortion of, knowledge production threatens the development of sound policies and the implementation of effective programs that equitably deliver services and benefits to the population.

Recognizing the importance of tackling corruption and improper influence on government decisions and processes, particularly given that the costs of corruption often fall most heavily on underserved communities, the Federal Government will:

- Implement Open Government Components of a New Government-Wide Strategy on Countering Corruption. Launched as part of the [first Summit for Democracy](#) in December 2021, the U.S. Strategy on Countering Corruption [lays out](#) a comprehensive approach for how the United States will work domestically and internationally, and with governmental and non-governmental partners, to prevent, limit, and respond to corruption and related crimes. The Strategy places special emphasis on the transnational dimensions of the challenges posed by corruption, including by recognizing the ways in which corrupt actors have used the U.S. financial system and other rule-of-law based systems to launder their ill-gotten gains. As part of the Strategy, the Federal Government committed to implementing the following five pillars: (1) modernizing, coordinating, and resourcing U.S. Government efforts to better fight corruption; (2) curbing illicit finance; (3) holding corrupt actors accountable; (4) preserving and strengthening the multilateral anti-corruption architecture; and (5) improving diplomatic engagement and leveraging foreign assistance resources to advance policy goals.

There are several commitments in the Strategy that advance open government and thus are included in this National Action Plan. In support of Pillar 2 of the Strategy and ongoing Federal efforts to strengthen the integrity and transparency of the U.S. financial system, the U.S. Department of the Treasury issued a Final Rule in September 2022 [establishing](#) a beneficial ownership reporting requirement for certain corporations, limited liability companies, and other entities registered to do business in the United States. This rule, issued with public input through the rulemaking process, implements the Corporate Transparency Act (CTA; Public Law 116-283), enacted to help combat illicit finance, and meets recommendations [in several past](#) U.S. National Action Plans calling for the Federal Government to enact beneficial ownership legislation. The U.S. Department of the Treasury is continuing to build the infrastructure and database for beneficial ownership reporting, and will issue further rulemakings to implement the CTA. As set forth in the Strategy, additional measures designed to protect against illicit finance in U.S. real estate markets and other vulnerable sectors are underway or will be undertaken. Consistent with the transnational nature of corruption, tax evasion, and money laundering, and under Pillars 2 and 4 of the Strategy, the Federal Government commits to working with international partners to further elevate international standards and practices against illicit finance, and continue to build the cooperative relationships to combat such conduct. Finally, the Strategy commits to improving information sharing within the U.S. Government, with non-U.S.-Governmental entities, and internationally; bolstering the ability of civil society, media, and private sector actors to safely detect and expose corruption, increase public awareness, and pursue accountability; using innovative methods in the fight against corruption; and improving coordination and risk analysis across foreign assistance. The United States will continue to implement elements of the U.S. Strategy on Countering Corruption related to open government and report on progress towards these objectives.

- Revitalize the United States' National Action Plan on Responsible Business Conduct. It is crucial that the United States lead by example in establishing and reinforcing responsible business practices in the global economy. In 2021, U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken [announced an initiative](#) to update and revitalize the United States National Action Plan on Responsible Business Conduct (RBC). This ongoing effort is engaging the U.S. private sector, civil society groups, and worker organizations to promote RBC by U.S. businesses operating and investing abroad. Building upon existing frameworks and with contributions from diverse stakeholders, a revitalized RBC National Action Plan will ensure that the United States continues to prominently promote responsible business conduct to strengthen economic, environmental, and social progress, including in U.S. supply chains. The Federal Government commits to implementation of this RBC National Action Plan.
- Bolster Trust in Government through Scientific Integrity and Evidence-Based Policymaking. A robust, open, inclusive, and responsive democracy requires reliable information. The American public has the right to expect from its Federal Government accurate information, data, and evidence and scientifically-informed policies, practices, and communications. This requires scientific integrity—rigorous scientific research that is free from politically motivated suppression, inappropriate influence, or distortion. Violations of scientific integrity would

damage trust in both science and government, undermine public integrity, and can result in the waste or misuse of valuable public resources. Such lapses would be contrary to the core ideals of the U.S. scientific enterprise, including openness, transparency, honesty, equity, and objectivity. Violations of scientific integrity would diminish the effectiveness of Federal programs that rely on objective data for standards and guidance, and erode the morale and innovation of Federal scientists, program staff, and technologists.

To support greater scientific integrity and evidence-based policymaking, the Biden-Harris Administration issued a [Presidential Memorandum](#) establishing a Task Force on Scientific Integrity as part of the National Science and Technology Council. In turn, this Task Force [reviewed](#) Federal agency scientific integrity policies, identified opportunities to strengthen those policies, and is working with individual agencies to update their policies to improve scientifically informed, evidence-based decisions. The Federal Government commits to continuing implementation of this Presidential Memorandum, including by supporting Federal agencies as they revise and implement respective policies on the scientific process.

In response to the Presidential Memorandum, the Office of Management and Budget released [OMB M-21-27](#), which reaffirms and expands on previous guidance on Learning Agendas and Annual Evaluation Plans. It articulates that Federal agencies are expected to use evidence whenever possible to further both mission and operations, and to commit to build evidence where it is lacking. Agencies are also expected to meaningfully engage a diverse array of stakeholders to ensure they are asking the most relevant and urgent questions, and generating needed information that will be used.

The Administration also launched the Year of Evidence for Action to share leading practices from Federal agencies to generate and use research-backed knowledge to advance better, more equitable outcomes for all of America; strengthen and develop new strategies and structures to promote consistent evidence-based decision-making inside the Federal Government; and increase connection and collaboration among researchers, knowledge producers, and decision makers inside and outside of the Federal Government. The Year of Evidence included a kickoff [Summit](#) and a series of Evidence Forum [events](#) with non-profits and academic organizations.

- [Bolster the Trust and Independence of Federal Statistical Agencies and Federal Statistics](#). The Federal statistical system collects and transforms data into useful, objective information and makes it readily and equitably available, while protecting the responses of individual data providers. Federal, State, territorial, local, and tribal governments; businesses; and the public alike rely upon Federal statistics to inform evidence-based decisions and enhance the equitable delivery of services and programs. It is because of the trust placed in the Federal statistical system that users derive such enormous value from these Federal statistics. Each entity within the Federal statistical system must be diligent in upholding this trust. Data providers must trust the system to protect the confidentiality and exclusively statistical use of the information they provide. Meanwhile, data users must trust that the resulting statistics are free from political bias, generated with quality inputs, available equitably, and reliable. Office of Management and Budget (OMB) [Statistical Policy Directive No. 1](#) identified four fundamental responsibilities that recognized statistical agencies and units must fulfill: 1) relevance and timeliness, 2) accuracy and credibility, 3) objectivity, and 4) confidentiality and exclusive statistical use of data. Importantly, it also describes how Federal agencies must support, enable, and facilitate statistical agencies to meet these responsibilities, emphasizing the importance of conducting their statistical activities autonomously to maintain trust of data providers, data users, and the public.

The Confidential Information Protection and Statistical Efficiency Act (CIPSEA; Public Law 115-435) incorporated those responsibilities into statute, and as required by CIPSEA, OMB is committed to developing and publishing the Trust regulation—formally referred to as “The Fundamental Responsibilities of Recognized Statistical Agencies and Units”—to further guide and support agencies’ fulfillment of these responsibilities.

- Invest in Core Federal Management Functions for Payment Integrity. The Biden-Harris Administration is committed to working with Federal agencies and the oversight community to continue to prevent and reduce improper payments. Consistent with the Office of Management and Budget's [implementation guidance](#) for the Payment Integrity Information Act of 2019 (PIIA; Public Law 116-117), the Administration will continue to take steps to cost-effectively reduce fraud, waste, abuse, and mismanagement of Federal funds without negatively affecting the program mission, agency efforts to advance equity, efficiency, customer experience, or the overall operations of the agency. As part of these actions, agencies will have access to new toolkits, training materials, and additional support for the Federal workforce. In addition, the White House will continue to engage with the head of each agency that has a High Priority Program as defined by PIIA to report on actions taken to prevent improper payments. These engagements, participatory training, and tools will help the Federal Government to reduce improper payments and be better stewards of Federal funds, and the Biden-Harris Administration commits to ongoing efforts to improve annual reporting.
- Manage Federal Funding with Accountability, Transparency, and Stewardship. The Biden-Harris Administration remains committed to supporting the effective implementation, transparency, and strong stewardship of funds related to financial assistance, including the continued execution of the American Rescue Plan Act (Public Law 117-2), the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (Public Law 117-58), and the Inflation Reduction Act (Public Law 117-169). As outlined in the President's Management Agenda, the Administration will continue to take proactive steps to foster accountability, performance, and public trust in the administration of financial assistance programs, while implementing sound financial management of these resources. To further the accountability and transparency of Federal spending, the Administration is committed to advancing the Federal Program Inventory efforts as outlined in the Office of Management and Budget's 2021 [report to Congress](#). In addition, President Biden signed the Congressional Budget Justification Transparency Act on September 24, 2021 (Public Law 117-40), making more budget information open, transparent, and accessible. These efforts demonstrate this Administration's commitment to transparency and accountability of Federal spending. The Biden-Harris Administration commits to quarterly reporting against success metrics and milestones on performance.gov/pma and to advancing Federal Program Inventory efforts on an ongoing basis, contingent on availability of appropriations.
- Affirm the Independence of Federal Inspectors General. Results and accountability go hand-in-hand. To deliver results for all Americans, now and in the years to come, the Federal Government must undertake its work, and support appropriate oversight of its activities, in a manner deserving of public trust. The community of Federal Inspectors General (IGs) plays a critical role in providing that oversight and building public trust. Recognizing that role, the Biden-Harris Administration has taken a number of steps to ensure that Federal agencies restore and respect the integrity and independence of their respective agency IGs and work with Congress to ensure that those offices can exercise their vital role. In December 2021, the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) [released guidance](#) to Federal agencies and departments, calling on agency heads to establish productive and cooperative relationships with agency IGs. In support of that objective, OMB built on recommendations from the Council of the Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency and called on agency leaders to communicate regularly and consistently with their staff about the role of their respective IGs and the importance of cooperation between agency and IG staff. In addition, OMB provided agencies a number of best practices for fostering cooperation between agencies and IGs, including through steps like establishing routine meetings outside of audit-related engagements, facilitating candid discussions about IG resource needs, designating a senior official to serve in a liaison role within the agency to smooth interactions between agency and IG staff, and creating work environments in which employees feel comfortable voicing concerns and reporting wrongdoing without fear of retaliation. The Biden-Harris Administration commits to ongoing implementation of the December 2021 guidance.

- Collaborate with the Council of the Inspectors General and the Oversight Community. The Biden-Harris Administration's experience administering the historic American Rescue Plan Act included the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) working closely with agencies to ensure that programs prioritized equity and incorporated robust and transparent reporting. This included partnering with the [Pandemic Response Accountability Committee](#) to provide feedback on program design prior to implementation. These practices from the American Rescue Plan Act implementation have influenced other implementation guidance. In April 2022, OMB [released guidance](#) to agencies on implementing the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA; also known as the BIL or Bipartisan Infrastructure Law) to deliver the best results, protect taxpayer dollars, and ensure public trust. The initial guidance will ensure that there is minimal fraud, waste, and abuse in the implementation of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, and that projects are delivered on time and on budget by delivering results with accountability, effectiveness, equity, and transparency, collaborating with IGs and the oversight community, and providing technical and financial assistance for communities. For the duration of implementation of programs in BIL, the Biden-Harris Administration commits to implementing this guidance by using data and evidence to guide infrastructure investments and track progress; reporting on awards and subawards; collaborating with the IG and oversight community, including by engaging with IGs on the front end of program design and holding regular joint program review meetings with IGs; and reducing barriers faced by State, local, Tribal, and territorial governments in accessing infrastructure funding opportunities, including through outreach, engagement, and technical assistance.
- Support Strong Whistleblower Protections. The Biden-Harris Administration is committed to ensuring that Federal employees are comfortable voicing their concerns and reporting wrongdoing without fear of retaliation. Consistent with the guidance that the Office of Management and Budget released in December 2020, Federal agencies will communicate and provide training about whistleblower rights and protections to supervisors and employees. Those protections and trainings will emphasize that agencies and supervisors cannot retaliate against employees who report concerns, cooperate with IGs, or otherwise blow the whistle. The Biden-Harris Administration commits to ongoing implementation of this guidance.
- Strengthening Access to Government Information through the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). FOIA (Public Law 89-487) is a fundamental tool of our democracy that helps citizens understand the Federal Government's work. On average, agencies receive and process over 800,000 requests a year from journalists, civil society advocates, students, and other individuals interested in their own records or other information about government operations. Recognizing the importance of this law, on March 15, 2022, the Attorney General of the United States issued new [FOIA Guidelines](#) that direct agencies to apply the FOIA with a presumption of openness and focus on proactive disclosures, remove barriers to access and reduce backlogs, and ensure fair and effective FOIA administration.

The Administration has already taken several steps to implement the Attorney General's Guidelines. The U.S. Department of Justice has incorporated the principles detailed in the Guidelines into its live FOIA trainings that serve over 5,000 government professionals from around the country every year. Additionally, recognizing that FOIA is "everyone's responsibility," the Department recently developed and publicly released three separate [e-Learning FOIA training modules](#) for the Federal workforce. Going forward, the Department will issue additional implementation guidance and keep agencies accountable through their publicly filed Chief FOIA Officers Reports.

Furthermore, the U.S. Department of Justice commits to the following additional steps to bolster openness and transparency through the FOIA:

1. Issuance of an updated FOIA Self-Assessment Toolkit, originally issued in 2017, to reflect, among other things, additional milestones for proactive disclosures, use of technology, and requirements of the Attorney

General's new FOIA Guidelines.

2. Leading a Chief FOIA Officer Council working group that will collaborate with the Office of Government Information Services at the National Archives and Records Administration, the Office of Shared Services & Performance Improvement at the Government Services Administration, and the Business Standards Council to develop shared FOIA business standards. The shared business standards will make it easier for agencies to acquire FOIA technology and, in turn, improve efficiency and consistency in processing requests across the Federal Government. Having established standards will also help industry create new solutions to meet agencies' needs.
 3. Enhancement of the user experience on [FOIA.gov](https://www.foia.gov), the Federal Government's central website for FOIA, by developing an interactive tool to help members of the public more easily locate records that are already available online or find the right agency to submit their FOIA requests when information is not already posted online.
- Ensure Public Accountability and Transparency Among Administration Officials. A core mission of the Biden-Harris Administration is to earn and keep the trust of the American people through the actions of Federal officials. On his first day in office, President Biden signed [Executive Order 13989](https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2021/01/20/2021-01139) requiring Administration officials to take a stringent ethics pledge, which extends post-employment restrictions, institutes a lobbyist gift ban, limits shadow lobbying, and makes ethics pledge waivers more transparent. Executive Order 13989 also limits the "revolving door," including limits with respect to former employers and clients when entering government service and on Administration officials working as registered lobbyists or registered Foreign agents after their government service concludes. In addition, the President and Vice President released their 2020 and 2021 Federal income tax returns, as well as their financial disclosure reports, and they will continue to do so every year they are in office. President Biden also reinstated a policy to voluntarily disclose White House visitor logs, ensuring that the American public knows with whom the President, the Vice President, and their staffs meet at the White House. As part of the Biden-Harris Administration's commitment to public transparency, we will continue to provide public financial disclosure forms, ethics pledge waivers, White House visitor logs, and the President and Vice President's tax returns on an ongoing basis [online](#).
 - Strengthen Agency Procurement Forecasts to Achieve Stronger Transparency in Future Contract Opportunities. As part of the Administration's equity efforts to reverse the decline in the number of small businesses contracting with the Federal Government, an Office of Management and Budget (OMB) [memorandum](#) emphasized the need for greater consistency across the Federal Government in the availability and quality of procurement forecasting information. Currently, there is no consistency in the content or format of agency forecasts and no one place to search consolidated forecasting information. To strengthen transparency about expected contract opportunities and accessibility to this information, agencies are working with OMB to identify a common list of procurement information to include in agency forecasts of contracting opportunities in order for potential contractors, and especially those in underserved communities, to effectively prepare for future Federal contract competitions. Promising practices are being assessed for moving from a static posting of forecasting data at the beginning of the fiscal year to a timelier and more dynamic model that involves more regular posting of new information on a rolling basis as requirements are identified. User friendly search and filter functions are being explored to improve visibility and accessibility across agency forecasts over time so that entities interested in particular market segments can find relevant information more easily in the official System for Award Management ([SAM.gov](https://sam.gov)). The Biden-Harris Administration commits to implementation of these initiatives over the next two years with quarterly progress reporting on www.performance.gov/pma.
 - Continue Implementing the Presidential Initiative for Democratic Renewal. At the first Summit for Democracy in 2021, President Biden announced the establishment of the Presidential Initiative for Democratic Renewal (PIDR), [a landmark set](#) of policy and foreign assistance initiatives that build upon the U.S. Government's sig-

nificant, ongoing work to bolster democracy and defend human rights globally. The commitments made as part of the PIDR center on five areas of work crucial to the functioning of transparent, accountable governance: (1) supporting free and independent media, (2) fighting corruption, (3) bolstering democratic reforms, (4) advancing technology for democracy, and (5) defending free and fair elections and political processes. The PIDR represents a significant, targeted expansion of U.S. Government efforts to defend, sustain, and strengthen democratic resilience with likeminded governmental and non-governmental partners. The Summit for Democracy’s Year of Action has given initial impetus for the PIDR initiatives. The second Summit for Democracy in 2023 will help us take stock of progress on existing commitments and set a direction for further actions. The Open Government Partnership’s principles closely align with the spirit of the Summit for Democracy and the Federal Government anticipates some of the programs launched under the PIDR will flow into future U.S. Government National Action Plans.

ENSURE EQUAL JUSTICE UNDER THE LAW

Equal justice and treatment under the law is a key part of the American creed—and of an inclusive and accountable democracy. Far too often, Americans are denied the opportunity to lead full and meaningful lives because of the fear of violence in their communities. Many Americans also face unduly harsh sentences and disparities in who is prosecuted and who is not, entrenching racial and ethnic disparities in exposure to the criminal justice system. In turn, individuals with exposure to the criminal justice system face exclusion from housing, education, social supports, voting, and job-related opportunities for years after they have served their time—limiting social, economic, and civic inclusion. Advancing equal justice under the law thus requires combining support for greater public safety with fairness in how our criminal justice system treats individuals before, during, and after time in jail or prison.

The Biden-Harris Administration rejects a false dichotomy that pits public safety against criminal justice reform. In fact, they are mutually reinforcing. Without trust, victims do not call for help, witnesses do not step forward, crimes go unsolved, and justice is not served. It is also true that we rely too much on law enforcement to solve social crises. Time and again, we turn to the police to respond to and solve mental health crises, addiction, and family disagreements. A fairer and more equitable public safety system would ease the burden on law enforcement and provide alternative ways to address systemic crises faced by underserved communities, preventing unnecessary involvement of law enforcement and the criminal justice system when appropriate.

To advance a more equitable criminal justice and public safety system, the Federal Government will:

- [Invest in Community Violence Intervention and Alternatives to Address Social Crises](#). The formal law enforcement system has a critical role to play in making communities safer, and the U.S. Department of Justice, Department of Health and Human Services, Department of Education, Department of Homeland Security, and other Federal agencies are focusing their resources on individuals most likely to engage in or be victimized by gun violence; intervene in conflicts; and connect people to social, health and wellness, and economic services to reduce the likelihood of violence as an answer to conflict. This work has been supported by the passage and implementation of the [Bipartisan Safer Communities Act](#) (BCSA; Public Law 117-159)—the most meaningful gun legislation passed in thirty years. But the formal justice system alone cannot address the epidemic of gun violence and its social, economic, and civic consequences. For that reason, the Biden-Harris Administration has [committed](#) to expanding the use of Community Violence Intervention (CVI), an evidence-informed approach that uses partnerships with civil society—trusted community-based organizations and messengers—to reach people who are at high risk for involvement in gun violence in their communities and prevent conflicts from escalating. In Fall 2022, the U.S. Department of Justice [awarded](#) \$100 million to support CVI in 47 sites across the country, and provided intensive assistance to build capacity and promote effective implementation of these life-saving strategies in neighborhoods nationwide. This effort also includes plans for rigorous evaluation of CVI approaches. The Federal Government commits to continuing to support CVI strategies like these, including through funding made available under the BCSA, and developing evidence on effective interventions.

In a similar vein, we know that a law enforcement response is not always the appropriate solution for many crises. This is particularly true for individuals who experience a behavioral health crisis. For that reason, the Federal Government commits to expanding alternative strategies to address the mental health and substance use crises, like funding mobile crisis response units; supporting the implementation of a dedicated 988 suicide and crisis care hotline; expanding access to prevention; harm-reduction, treatment, and recovery support for people with substance use disorders, including in prisons and jails; and broadening access to social workers, psychologists, and mental health counselors in schools and communities across the country.

- Improve Conditions of Confinement and Addressing Unjustly Long or Severe Sentences. While the Federal Government is committed to preventing crimes and violence, we also recognize the need to improve the conditions faced by individuals who enter the criminal justice system and serve sentences in prison. Through [Executive Order 14074](#), President Biden has already directed the U.S. Bureau of Prisons (BOP) to restrict the use of solitary confinement, to improve COVID-19 health and safety protocols, and to fully implement the First Step Act, which reforms Federal prisons and sentencing laws. In addition, in May 2022 President Biden [appointed](#) seven individuals who are committed to reform to the U.S. Sentencing Commission to help ensure that courts are not inflicting unduly harsh sentences on individuals who appear before them. Going forward, the U.S. Department of Justice will commit to continuing to implement rules that allow individuals to earn credits for good conduct and for participating in programming designed to reduce recidivism. These rules have already resulted in the release of individuals from BOP custody, and the Administration commits to continuing to assess where it can improve conditions of confinement and reduce unjustly long or severe sentences.
- Expand Social and Economic Supports for Justice-Impacted Individuals. Research suggests that individuals re-entering society after time in the criminal justice system often lack the support they need to find and maintain stable housing, employment, and social connections—entrenching social, economic, and civic disparities and contributing to recidivism. In April 2022, more than a dozen Federal agencies [took over](#) 20 actions designed to help returning citizens get back on their feet. The U.S. Bureau of Prisons continues to provide robust programming designed to prepare adults in custody for re-entry. That programming is being supplemented through a first-of-its-kind partnership between the U.S. Department of Justice and the U.S. Department of Labor to invest in additional job training and intensive reentry supports for justice-impacted individuals—in Federal prisons, residential reentry centers, and in communities as part of implementation of the First Step Act (Public Law 115-391). Additionally, the U.S. Department of Education expanded the Second Chance Pell program—which provides Pell Grants to incarcerated students—to 73 more schools that will educate thousands more students, and is partnering with the U.S. Department of Justice to prepare for the full reinstatement of Pell Grant eligibility within correctional facilities in June 2023. The Small Business Administration (SBA) expanded access to SBA loan programs to people with non-financial related crimes. Further, the Administration has invested hundreds of millions of dollars in registered apprenticeships and other job training programs through the U.S. Department of Labor that train people for high-quality, in-demand jobs. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development is also comprehensively reviewing its existing regulations and guidance to identify how the agency’s housing programs can increase inclusivity for people with arrest and conviction records. And the Administration is accounting for the digital economy by ensuring that incarcerated and formerly incarcerated persons are included in programs to expand high-speed internet access, technology, and digital education and access programs to close the digital divide. The Federal Government commits to continue this work to ensure that reentering citizens have the supports and resources necessary for successful participation in social, economic, and civic life.
- Implement the President’s Historic Commitment on Marijuana-Related Federal Offenses. The criminalization of marijuana possession has upended too many lives for conduct that is now legal in many states. While White, Black, and Brown people use marijuana at similar rates, research has shown that Black and Brown people have been arrested, prosecuted, and convicted at disproportionate rates. This has contributed to racial disparities both within the criminal justice system and with respect to the collateral consequences that flow from incarceration, such as exclusion from economic opportunities, housing, and civic life. In October 2022, the President issued a [proclamation](#) granting a full pardon to citizens and legal permanent residents who committed the offense of simple possession of marijuana in violation of the Controlled Substances Act (Public Law 91-513) or D.C. Code. The pardon affected thousands of people with prior Federal convictions—and thousands more convicted under local

law in Washington, D.C.—for simple marijuana possession. The Federal Government commits to implementing this proclamation, including by issuing certificates to eligible applicants who were convicted or charged with marijuana possession.

In addition, President Biden has asked the Secretary of Health and Human Services and the Attorney General to initiate a process to review how marijuana is scheduled under Federal law. Last, the Federal Government will continue to encourage Governors to follow the Federal Government’s lead with regard to State offenses, since most marijuana prosecutions take place at the State level.

- Improving Data Availability to Promote Effective and Accountable Policing and Criminal Justice Practices. As President Biden underscored in [Executive Order 14074](#) on Advancing Effective, Accountable Policing and Criminal Justice Practices to Enhance Public Trust and Public Safety, an effective criminal justice system depends on public trust, and public trust in turn requires transparency and accountability. To support greater transparency and accountability in our criminal justice system, the Executive Order directed the Attorney General to establish the National Law Enforcement Accountability Database as a centralized repository of official records documenting instances of law enforcement officer misconduct as well as commendations and awards for all Federal law enforcement agencies. The U.S. Department of Justice will also encourage State, Tribal, territorial, local, and other law enforcement agencies to contribute to and use the database. In coming years, the Federal Government commits to assessing the feasibility of what database records may be accessible to the public, taking into account the critical need for public trust, transparency and accountability, as well as safety, privacy, and due process concerns. This includes publishing regular public reports based on anonymized data from the database once the database is established.

The Administration commits to meeting the data-related objectives of Executive Order 14074 through the Subcommittee on Equitable Data, described above. In turn, the Subcommittee commits to launching an interagency working group on Criminal Justice Statistics with representatives from relevant offices across the Federal Government. The Working Group and the Assistant to the President for Domestic Policy commit to issuing a report to the President and the public that assesses current data collection, use, and transparency practices with respect to law enforcement activities, including calls for service, searches, stops, frisks, seizures, arrests, complaints, law enforcement demographics, and civil asset forfeiture. To inform that report, the Working Group will launch a 60-day comment period and host a series of listening sessions to solicit input from members of the public across the nation. The Working Group will look for feedback on how to improve law enforcement agency data collection, use, and transparency to inform policies, protocols, and procedures that will result in more equitable, effective, and accountable policing outcomes.

- Increase Access to Justice. Legal services are crucial to the fair and effective administration of U.S. laws and public programs, and the stability of our society. Low-income Americans receive inadequate or no professional legal assistance in the majority of the civil legal problems they face in a given year. All too often, unaddressed legal issues push people into poverty. In the criminal legal system, those who cannot afford private counsel often receive a lower-quality defense because public defender caseloads are overburdened. Recognizing the Federal Government can drive innovation and best practices that promote meaningful access to justice, President Biden issued a [Presidential Memorandum](#) in May 2021 to reinvigorate the White House Legal Aid Interagency Roundtable (LAIR), and in October 2021, the Attorney General reestablished the Office for Access to Justice (ATJ) within the Department of Justice. In September 2021, the Legal Aid Interagency Roundtable issued a report highlighting the growing justice gap in the United States as a result of the pandemic. The Legal Aid Interagency Roundtable will soon release its 2022 report focused on simplification of government forms and processes to increase access to justice and Federal services and benefits. ATJ and LAIR commit to continue work across agencies to increase access to justice for individuals.

CONCLUSION

An inclusive, open, and responsive democracy does not happen by accident. As President Biden has explained, the work of democracy is the work of our time, for all time. The commitments detailed in this Open Government National Action Plan are intended to help support a more equitable and accountable democratic government for all Americans—by improving how the Federal Government delivers benefits and services, providing its citizenry with broadened access to information and data, fostering greater participation in the work of Federal Government, countering corruption and promoting governmental integrity, and ensuring equal justice and fairness for all. In the coming months, the U.S. Government will continue to work with partners across government, as well as the public and civil society organizations, to implement these commitments and to continue the work of our time, for all time.