

NAP 5 Making Government More Inclusive and Responsive

The below NAP 5 Co-Creation Input Summary was originally shared with the public on December 2 2022 on open.usa.gov. Links to websites that are no longer active have been removed.

Over the past year, we've invited members of the public to share ideas about how the Federal Government can be more inclusive and responsive—including in the ways Federal agencies can develop regulations and share data to create more equitable policies. We've reviewed hundreds of responses to our public Requests for Information, and discussed commitments with hundreds of individual members of the public, small businesses, and civic organizations that have attended our public engagement sessions.

These individual ideas will inform the development of public commitments in the Federal Government's Open Government National Action Plan to support a more equitable, transparent, and accountable government, and deliver on the Biden-Harris Administration's commitment to advancing equity for underserved communities.

Before we finalize these areas of work, we want to share summaries of what we've heard in four important areas of work—and corresponding commitments that we're considering for inclusion in the National Action Plan. These areas include 1) [increasing public participation in the regulatory process](#); 2) [collecting and sharing data with the public](#); 3) [making government records more accessible to the public](#); and 4) [transforming government service delivery](#).

We invite you to read and share these summaries and let us know what you think by December 9, 2022 by emailing opengov@ostp.eop.gov.

Area 1: Engaging the Public in the Regulatory Process

We heard from members of the public that the Federal Government could improve its engagement with the public in the regulatory process. More specifically, we heard that the Federal Government should help the public understand the regulatory process and opportunities for engagement; ensure that regulatory materials are more accessible and usable by members of the public; and proactively engage communities early on—and throughout—the regulatory process using a variety of in-person and online formats, recognizing and addressing barriers that communities may face to participation. We are exploring a potential commitment to address these comments that could include developing tools, guidance, and resources for Federal agencies to support greater public engagement in the regulatory process. We're exploring possibilities like in-person or online townhalls, Requests for Information, online materials like infographics and videos, collaborations with community-based organizations to share regulatory priorities and solicit input, and greater use of the Regulatory Agenda planning process for public engagement.

In addition to supporting greater public engagement in the regulatory process, we are exploring commitments related to the following areas:

- encouraging greater public participation in science, including through Federal prize competitions, challenges, and crowdsourcing; and
- developing open innovation techniques to engage the public in Federal procurement.

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Area 2: Broadening Access to Data to Improve Government Accountability

Members of the public shared with us a number of ideas for how the Federal Government can better collaborate with civil society in collecting, producing, and sharing data that can improve government accountability. Comments suggested improving the ways that Federal agencies collect data on different demographic groups, including:

- capturing characteristics like race/ethnicity, sexual orientation, disability status, and gender identity and information on those who fall into multiple groups;
- making more data sets accessible and useable through easy-to-use online tools and user-friendly tables, charts, and filters that accompany standardized, machine-readable detailed data files;
- providing training to help community-based organizations and state, local, Tribal, and territorial governments better access data;
- ensuring that Federal funding can be used to support building data infrastructure in community-based organizations and state, local, Tribal, and territorial governments; and
- creating stronger accountability feedback loops between civil society and Federal agency data stewards.

We are exploring potential commitments to address these comments that could include providing guidance, tools, and resources to agencies to encourage stronger equitable data collaborations and partnerships with community-based organizations and state, local, Tribal, and territorial governments; revisiting data standards; and supporting the creation of new channels for communication between local communities and Federal agency data stewards.

In addition to the potential commitments described above, we are exploring commitments related to the following areas:

- ensuring greater public access to Federally-funded research findings and data; and
- using new data to promote effective and accountable policing and criminal justice practices, including through the implementation of the Executive Order on Advancing Effective, Accountable Policing and Criminal Justice Practices to Enhance Public Trust and Public Safety Executive Order 14074.

Area 3: Making Government Records More Accessible to the Public

In our public engagement sessions, stakeholders expressed interest in strengthening access to government information through the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). Specifically, members of the public noted that more information should be publicly available to reduce the need for some of the most common FOIA requests. They additionally noted that the user experience for engaging in the FOIA process could be improved to make requesting information easier, and to clarify what is and is not made available through FOIA.

We are exploring potential commitments to strengthen the implementation of FOIA and the U.S. Attorney General's [2022 FOIA guidelines](#), which emphasize that the proactive disclosure of information is fundamental to the faithful application of FOIA. We are also exploring how the Federal Government can increase proactive disclosures of commonly-requested material, including by sharing best practices.

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Last, we are exploring how the Federal Government can improve the experience of users on FOIA.gov, the central website for FOIA, including for locating published records and identifying the right agency to which a FOIA request should be directed.

Area 4: Transforming Government Service Delivery

In our engagement with the public, we heard concerns about how the Federal Government communicates with recipients of government services. We also received ideas from stakeholders about how the government can improve those communications, regarding the content and design of communications, the channels through which they are distributed, the reading level of the content, language accessibility, and other elements. We also heard ideas about how the Federal Government can reduce the burdens and barriers that individuals face when trying to access public benefits and services. Finally, stakeholders expressed a desire to be able to “see” government processes that they’re involved with, including knowing when the government has received their information and being offered better explanations of the steps involved in the process from start to finish.

We are exploring potential commitments to address these comments, by leveraging the processes and structures created by the Executive Order on Transforming Federal Customer Experience and Service Delivery to Rebuild Trust in Government Executive Order 14058. We are also looking to reduce the burdens and barriers faced by the public in accessing public benefit and services. Along these lines, we are considering developing guidance, tools, and resources to support agencies in better estimating and addressing administrative burdens and by continuing to identify high-impact burden reduction opportunities through data analysis and engagement with the public.

In addition to the commitments described above, we are exploring additional commitments related to the following areas:

- improving the operation of High Impact Service Providers; and
- supporting agencies in the development and implementation of Agency Equity Action Plans as part of the implementation of the Executive Order on Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities Executive Order 13985.