The Open Government Partnership

Announcing New
Open Government Initiatives

as part of the

Second Open Government
National Action Plan for
the United States of America

September 2014

New U.S. National Action Plan Initiatives

The United States is building upon the commitments in the existing [Second Open Government National Action Plan](#) to include four new and expanded initiatives that align with the Open Government Partnership (OGP) grand challenge areas of Improving Public Services and Increasing Public Integrity. These additional initiatives will contribute to existing efforts to make the United States government more open, transparent, and accessible to the public.

Promote Open Education to Increase Awareness and Engagement

Open education is the open sharing of digital learning materials, tools, and practices that ensures free access to and legal adoption of learning resources. There is a growing body of evidence that the use of open education resources improves the quality of teaching and learning, including by accelerating student comprehension and by fostering more opportunities for affordable cross-border and cross-cultural educational experiences. The United States is committed to open education and will:

- **Raise open education awareness and identify new partnerships.** The U.S. Department of State, the U.S. Department of Education, and the Office of Science and Technology Policy will jointly host a workshop on challenges and opportunities in open education internationally with stakeholders from academia, industry, and government. The session will foster collaboration among OGP members and other interested governments and will produce best practices to inform good policies in open education.

- **Pilot new models for using open educational resources to support learning.** The State Department will conduct three pilots overseas by December 2015 that use open educational resources to support learning in formal and informal learning contexts. The pilots' results, including best practices, will be made publicly available for interested educators.

- **Launch an online skills academy.** The Department of Labor (DOL), with cooperation from the Department of Education, will award $25 million through competitive grants to launch an online skills academy in 2015 that will offer open online courses of study, using technology to create high-quality, free, or low-cost pathways to degrees, certificates, and other employer-recognized credentials. This academy will help students prepare for in-demand careers. Courses will be free for all to access on an open learning platform, although limited costs may be incurred for students seeking college credit that can be counted toward a degree. Leveraging emerging public and private models, the investments will help students earn credentials online through participating accredited institutions, and expand the open access to curriculum designed to speed the time to

credit and completion. The online skills academy will also leverage the burgeoning marketplace of free and open-licensed learning resources, including content developed through DOL's community college grant program, to ensure that workers can get the education and training they need to advance their careers, particularly in key areas of the economy.

Deliver Government Services More Effectively Through Information Technology

The Administration is committed to serving the American people more effectively and efficiently through smarter IT delivery. The newly launched U.S. Digital Service will work to remove barriers to digital service delivery and remake the experience that people and businesses have with their government. To improve delivery of Federal services, information, and benefits, the Administration will:

- **Expand digital service delivery expertise in government**. Throughout 2015, the Administration will continue recruiting top digital talent from the private and public sectors to expand services across the government. These individuals — who have expertise in technology, procurement, human resources, and financing — will serve as digital professionals in a number of capacities in the Federal government, including the new U.S. Digital Service and 18F digital delivery team within the U.S. General Services Administration, as well as within multiple Federal agencies. These teams will take best practices from the public and private sectors and scale them across agencies with a focus on the customer experience.

- **Build digital services in the open**. The Administration will expand its efforts to build digital services in the open. This includes using open and transparent processes intended to better understand user needs, testing pilot digital projects, and designing and developing digital services at scale. In addition, building on the recently published Digital Services Playbook, the Administration will continue to openly publish best practices on collaborative websites that enable the public to suggest improvements. Building digital services in the open will allow for collaboration with the public on improvements and enable reuse by entrepreneurs, nonprofits, other governments, and the public.

- **Adopt an open source software policy**. Using and contributing back to open source software can fuel innovation, lower costs, and benefit the public. No later than December 31, 2015, the Administration will work through the Federal agencies to develop an open source software policy that, together with the Digital Services Playbook, will support improved access to custom software code developed for the Federal government.

Increase Transparency in Spending

The Administration has made an increasing amount of Federal spending data publicly available and searchable, allowing nationwide stakeholders to perform analysis of Federal spending. The Administration will build on these efforts by committing to:

- **Improve USAspending.gov.** In 2015, the Administration will launch a refreshed USAspending.gov website that will improve the site's design and user experience, including better enabling users to explore the data using interactive maps and improving the search functionality and application programming interface.

- **Improve accessibility and reusability of Federal financial data.** In 2015, as part of implementation of the [DATA Act](), the Administration will work to improve the accessibility and reusability of Federal financial data by issuing data element definition standards and standards for exchanging financial data. The Administration, through the Office of Management and Budget, will leverage industry data exchange standards to the extent practicable to maximize the sharing and utilization of Federal financial data.

- **Explore options for visualization and publication of additional Federal financial data.** The Administration, through the Treasury Department, will use small-scale pilots to help explore options for visualizing and publishing Federal financial data from across the government as required by the DATA Act.

- **Continue to engage stakeholders**. The Administration will continue to engage with a broad group of stakeholders to seek input on Federal financial transparency initiatives including DATA Act implementation, by hosting town hall meetings, conducting interactive workshops, and seeking input via open innovation collaboration tools.

Use Big Data to Support Greater Openness and Accountability

President Obama has recognized the growing importance of "big data" technologies for our economy and the advancement of public good in areas such as education, energy conservation, and healthcare. The Administration is taking action to ensure responsible uses of big data to promote greater openness and accountability across a range of areas and sectors. As part of the work it is doing in this area, the Administration has committed to:

- **Enhance sharing of best practices on data privacy for state and local law enforcement.** Federal agencies with expertise in law enforcement, privacy, and data practices will seek to enhance collaboration and information sharing about privacy best practices among state and local law enforcement agencies receiving Federal grants.

- **Ensure privacy protection for big data analyses in health.** Big Data introduces new opportunities to advance medicine and science, improve health care, and support better public health. To ensure that individual privacy is protected while capitalizing on new technologies and data, the Administration, led by the Department of Health and Human Services, will: (1) consult with stakeholders to assess how Federal laws and regulations

can best accommodate big data analyses that promise to advance medical science and reduce health care costs; and (2) develop recommendations for ways to promote and facilitate research through access to data while safeguarding patient privacy and autonomy. These recommendations will inform potential legislative efforts, regulatory guidance, and policy actions.

- **Expand technical expertise in government to stop discrimination.** U.S. Government departments and agencies will work to expand their technical expertise to identify outcomes facilitated by big data analytics that may have a discriminatory impact on protected classes.