

NATIONAL TECHNICAL INFORMATION SERVICE FY 2023 ANNUAL FEDERAL ADVISORY BOARD REPORT

INTRODUCTION:

National Technical Information Service Advisory Board (NTIS Advisory Board or Board) is a statutory Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA) Board. The Secretary of Commerce, pursuant to Section 212(c) of the National Technical Information Act of 1988 (15 U.S.C. 3704b(c)), established the NTIS Advisory Board, in accordance with the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA), as amended, 5 U.S.C. App. The NTIS Advisory Board shall review and make recommendations to improve NTIS programs, operations, and general policies in support of NTIS's mission to advance Federal data priorities, promote economic growth, and enable operational excellence by providing innovative data services to Federal agencies through joint venture partnerships with the private sector.

NTIS senior staff participants included Mr. Greg Capella, Acting Director*; Ms. Elizabeth Shaw, Associate Director, Office of Program Development (OPD); Mr. Wayne Strickland, Associate Director, Office of Program Management (OPM); Dr. Chakib Chraibi, Acting Associate Director, Office of Data Services (ODS); Ms. Leigh Anne Levesque, Office of the Chief Information Officer (OCIO); and Ms. Andrea Patterson, Deputy Financial Officer, Office of the Financial Officer (OCFO).

* Mr. Capella attended only the November 9, 2022, meeting.

BOARD MEMBERSHIP:

- Dr. Ajit Gaddam, Advisory Board Chair
- Mr. Aaron D. Burciaga
- Ms. Diana M. Zavala
- Dr. Kitty Chan
- Dr. Stoney Trent*

* Attended only the May 22, 2023

BOARD ACTIVITIES:

- Public Meeting: November 9, 2022, hosted virtually
- Public Meeting: May 22, 2023, hosted onsite

BOARD RECOMMENDATIONS

November 9, 2022, Recommendations:

1. Dr. Gaddam started with opportunities information on the Death Master File (DMF) to enhance the data. He shared gaps within the data sources and the way data is contributed back at the state level provided single sign on like ID.me
 - a. Mr. Capella recognized the DMF has been truncating over time. He shared that most of the states are using these records as a source of income and there is no centralization of the data. NTIS is constrained to share anything other than the current form of the DMF. Mr. Strickland affirmed the current model sharing that previously, all the state information was centralized.
2. Dr. Gaddam asked if there is a way to tap into capabilities from a shared service model. This would resolve a level of complexity for the users of the DMF data.
 - a. Mr. Capella shared this would take legislative action. NTIS suggested this type of model to SSA as a value add. Mr. Strickland stated he would provide this as feedback to SSA.

3. Ms. Zavala had a general question to the NTIS team sharing that the federal government is further along in the data space - couple years in Evidence Act, Data Strategies and CDO representation. She shared insights from DOD Chief Digital and Analytics Officer who essentially stated much of the focus is not only on trustworthy AI but getting the data house in order. Moving to the basics is needed for good data to really impact data driven decisions. She asked if we were seeing this movement in the federal space and what is the impact for future projects?
 - a. Mr. Capella shared that there is more of a movement to incrementally absorb all solutions into the mainstream, so AI becomes a part of the mix. Often it is not recognized that there are AI tools in the background. Ms. Shaw stated there is a movement toward the fundamental building toward the full solution. Ms. Zavala recognized the discussion on RPA and the role NTIS could play. In the RPA space, NTIS could have part of the portfolio as the “everyman’s AI.” Mr. Burciaga shared the trend of hiring the CDO then CDAO and now the Chief Data Analytics and Automation Officer (CDAAO) supporting a broader base approach.
4. Dr. Chan shared it was amazing to see the accomplishments of NTIS with such a lean team. She recognized that all projects could be similar yet there are unique differences that are dependent on the organizations. She followed this by asking if there are common reasons for agencies to keep coming back. She asked about bringing on new customers through a new ecosystem. This could be accomplished through events where every month or two months agencies could have discussions with other current customers so they can learn from each other.
 - a. Mr. Capella shared there were three organizations that were not part of the “repeat customer” category. He segmented these into three groups. One used a third party to develop a contract after we helped them grow to a maturity level. The second agency was still working toward their data science capabilities. The last one matured then decided to go inhouse. They came back to NTIS and now we are doing higher level AI efforts. Dr. Chan stated that it was good to see that agencies come back even after they have matured recognizing that NTIS has expertise in data innovation solutions. Mr. Capella shared we have tried several approaches and liked the idea of workshops, IG outreach, and engaging our services to assist agencies in the preliminary stages. Word of mouth has been strong in breaking the barrier for new work. Dr. Chan asked if others could contribute or charge a fee toward the effort of forums. Mr. Capella said he would need to discuss options further with legal.
 - b. Ms. Zavala added to the discussion, asking about the ability to give data literacy training as well as a workshop on data discovery session. This would assist with a more targeted pipeline.
 - c. Mr. Burciaga shared he could get us in touch with Jordan Morrow, the “Godfather of Data Literacy.” It was shared Mr. Morrow has provided sessions with the Department of the Army.
5. Mr. Burciaga appreciated the list of the JVPs and looked to see if there was industry recognition then asked about success metrics and what the results yielded.
 - a. Dr. Chraibi began by sharing that NTIS was proud of the outcome of the projects citing several examples. There have been a few agencies that report out their results so absent their permission it is difficult to quantify. Mr. Burciaga acknowledged and suggested for us to begin with a basic count and duration of projects against each JVP for internal discussion. Mr. Capella shared there may be another metric that includes how many JVPs bid on a project. He will verify with legal who the data can be shared with or if it can be

published.

6. Dr. Gaddam asked if there could be a more in-depth survey created that could be generated for specific projects after the work is completed.
 - a. Mr. Capella affirmed that we could have that information; however, shared that it was a relatively small sample base.

May 22, 2023, Recommendations:

1. Mr. Burciaga suggested a revised business plan with a focus on the vision to support the changing landscape in AI. “What is NTIS mission in the age of AI?” He also shared that NTIS should leverage the AB and their networks to create awareness of leadership positions. (Wayne)
2. Develop collateral support pieces to include update on Fraud paper, competitive analysis, and short impactful case studies. Adding to the competitive analysis white paper the comparison to Commercial Solutions Offerings (CSO) and Partnership Intermediary Agreements (PIA) stating these were more of a competitor than OTA. (Liz)
3. Develop additional metrics/data points to track (Chakib):
 - a. for the JVP the likelihood the partner would get business.
 - b. the outcomes such as the overall percentage that ended up as studies, pilots, minimum viable projects (MVP), and those that converted into operational assets.
 - c. inventory of outcomes and repeatable processes that could be shared with other agencies.
4. Reassess the business model to include separate process for lower project funding threshold and incorporating colleges (Wayne):
 - a. Threshold reduction - a different model with boiler plates to reduce the cost of entry. (Wayne)
 - b. A future role to take a lead role by monitoring the programs and offer to other agencies evaluation on the impact of AI on people, technology, and data. NTIS could provide the as-is scenario then a roadmap for improvement as a 3rd party evaluator. (Wayne/Chakib)
 - c. Expand focus from AI building on the data aspect. Agencies would benefit from data management and data readiness strategies. There are cloud data management assessment programs that could be explored. Edge AI is another option that NTIS should explore. (Chakib)
 - d. Mr. Burciaga asked NTIS to follow-up with him for contacts within the AI programs he helped set up (Wayne)
5. Outreach and research to include expansion to Chief Experience Officer (Liz).
6. Expansion of resources through colleges and discussion with the AB (Wayne)
7. DTA strategy to incorporate future market needs and update on FRN (Wayne)
8. JVP program refresher (Wayne):
 - a. Incorporate Historical Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) and graduate programs should be part of the JVP strategy.
 - b. JVP must deliver a case study at the end of the project. Ms. Shaw shared she will check with legal if this is an option moving forward. (Liz)
 - c. Dr. Gaddam asked for the plan to align to strategic direction and focused domains to evolve the JVP capabilities.

Item #	Action Status	Action Numbers
1	Actions Completed	7
2	Ongoing	10

3	Pending Director/resources	6
4	New items	8
5	Total	31

Estimated Annual Operating Costs and Staff Years

The 2023 YTD expense was \$81,148.91 which included both virtual and non-virtual sessions. The difference between the estimate and actual expense is approximately \$26,000. The bulk of the cost difference between FY 22 and FY 23 occurred in the total labor costs with 317.25 and 628.25 hours reported, respectively. This is roughly a 98% increase from the previous year.

A review of the increased labor indicated an increase of 9 people from the previous year charging against the FACA project code. This is likely due to increased awareness and communications of insuring proper charges to FACA project code. Additionally, when comparing the previous year’s charges to the current year, 84% of the employees from the previous FY increased their hours charged from the previous year.

Both the DFO and Alternate DFO charges increased from a cumulative total of 196.75 hours in 2022 to 327.25 hours in 2023. The increase over Same Period Last Year (SPLY) was impacted by the hours required for the onsite meeting vs. virtual, the additional work associated with filling two 2 new Board members vacancies, tracking and centralizing access to the Board recommendations, the hours associated with review and approval of the FACA Charter and Balance Plan renewal as well as training and reporting efforts.

Minutes from FY 23 FACA meetings:

- See link (November 9, 2022, Public Meeting)
[FACA NTIS Advisory Board Minutes Nov 9 2022 FINAL.pdf](#)
- See link (May 22, 2023, Public Meeting)
[FACA NTIS Advisory Board Minutes May 22 2023.pdf](#)

Wayne Strickland
 Acting Director
 National Technical Information Service (NTIS)
 Department of Commerce