Openness Floor
8/20/2010 Version

We believe there are core items that all agencies should disclose to ensure consistent transparency, accountability, and informed participation across the government. The Open Government Plans should serve as agency tools for going beyond these core items to build transparency, collaboration and participation that meet the specific needs of the agency and the public, as well as reflect how to implement these standards in ways consistent with the mission of the agency. In order to increase openness and accountability, we urge agencies to adopt the detailed list below, which is comprised of important elements of transparency, participation and collaboration. These items should be easily accessible from the agency's Open Government Webpage. Just like agency Open Government Plans, this floor will continue to evolve and become more robust over time.

A. Accountability & Influence

1. Agency telephone and email directories so that citizens can contact employees concerning specific matters at each agency.
2. Visitor logs for each of the agency's decision-makers, to be made public in timely (every 3 months at a minimum) fashion. If the agency is not currently keeping such records, the agency should have a system in place to both store and make public visitor logs within three months. Exemptions could be established to address privacy issues and other concerns related to non-policy meetings, such as job interviews.
3. Lobby disclosure forms and data, including forms which government contractors and grantees must file when lobbying for additional funds.
4. Communications with Congress, including but not limited to reports, responses to inquiries, testimony before committees and legislative proposals.
5. A list of all Inspector General reports, with online access to all unclassified reports.
6. Calendars (with identification of people, companies and topics involved in meetings), correspondence logs, and ethics disclosure of top-level agency officials (e.g., the Secretary, Deputy Secretary, and Assistant Secretary).
7. Federal Advisory Committees, their members and recent (or all) meeting minutes as well as opportunities for public input.
8. Ethics Program Reviews conducted by the Office of Government Ethics.

B. Spending

1. Agency budget justification documents submitted to Congress with the annual budget request.
2. Information about agency spending: who gets how much money, performance information about contractors, lobbying information about contractors, and audits of grant/contract recipients.
3. Contract and award documents including but not limited to Requests for Proposals, Contracts, Task Orders and Contract Modifications.
4. Disclosure of contacts by the public to influence spending or financial awards.

C. Records and Data

1. A list of all FOIA requests and any documents released as a result of a FOIA request must be posted to the web in an organized, searchable manner, on a timely basis, starting with electronic records.
2. Reports to the Information Security Oversight Office on agency classification and declassification activity, and other reports required by the executive order on classified national security information.
3. Audit of agency data sets with a public listing and metadata and, at a minimum, online publication of the data dictionary for each database.
4. Comprehensive, well-maintained, and searchable archive of documents, including those that have been removed from the Web site.
5. Proposed rules, regulations and other documents (NOIs, NPRM, etc) and an effective mechanism so that the public can easily submit comments.
6. Current Privacy Impact Assessments and existing systems of records under the Privacy Act.

D. Policies

1. Public policy and implementation plan for managing and preserving electronic records, including but not limited to email records.
2. Public policy and implementation plan to ensure the permanent access and preservation of content made available to the public through the agency Web site.
3. Agency guidance or directives on national security information, controlled unclassified information, open government and freedom of information policy.
4. Records retention policy along with records schedules (GRS or SF 115), a schedule of records that will be declassified and the timetable for such action.
5. Public policies that clearly state the right of agency scientists and researchers to publish results without requiring policy review or approval by government officials.
6. Written and publicly available policies explaining how agency staff should communicate with the public and the media, and detailing the official procedures for peer review, clearance and release of agency information.
7. Strong whistleblower protections that guarantee employees that disclose information about waste, fraud, abuse, mismanagement and other accountability issues will not be retaliated against.
8. Scientific integrity policies that prevent political interference in the development of scientific research.

E. Participation

1. Employee incentives (e.g., budget, professional recognition; criteria for professional advancement) to encourage personnel to change entrenched methods and pursue more open and participatory approaches to planning, decision making and program implementation.

2. Employee training programs that provide agency personnel with skills needed to involve the public in planning, decision making and program implementation, and to ensure agency personnel are briefed on latest requirements of openness and participation as well as the latest developments in agency goals.
3. Inventory and evaluation of public participation tools and techniques used by the agency and a public participation framework that provides adequate guidance for employees about how to decide when different face-to-face and online tools should be used.
4. Evaluation of agency's participation practices (e.g., how many people participated; diversity; how participants felt about their engagement).
5. Programs to build capacity of national, state and local groups to better engage the public in agency efforts.
6. Formal open government structures, such as a FACA committee or review panel, comprised of agency stakeholders that ensures feedback from the public. Proceedings and materials of these groups should be publicly accessible.

F. Collaboration

1. Mechanism to share all materials, results, tools, training, etc. that could be transferable to other agencies. There should also be a public record of these materials.
2. Identification of barriers to transferability and collaboration between agencies (formats, metadata, definitions, etc.) that would be shared with other agencies and the public.
3. Development of list of needs for best practice policies, materials, programming, etc. on open government as well as barriers to potential new policies and practices that would be shared other agencies and the public.
4. Programs to build capacity of national, state and local agencies and government offices to better collaborate with each other.
5. Formal collaborative structures, such as an interagency working group or committee, comprised of agencies that address related issues (e.g., public health, science, security, etc.) to serve as vehicles for collaboration discussions. Proceedings and materials of the groups should be made public.