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OSTP Releases Open Government Plan

*Document Highlights White House Office's Structure, Operations
Builds on Government-Wide Effort to Boost Transparency, Participation, and Collaboration*

OSTP today released its inaugural Open Government Plan, the latest milestone in a string of advances towards the Obama Administration's goal of making the Federal government more accessible to the public and more effective and accountable in its operations.

The 56-page document describes in unprecedented detail the structure, inner workings, and open-government efforts underway at OSTP—the White House office that provides scientific and technological analysis and judgment for the President and is home to the Administration's Open Government Initiative. That initiative, launched by President Obama on his first full day in office, led to the release of an Open Government Directive that, among other requirements, called upon all Cabinet agencies to develop and release Open Government Plans by April 7, 2010. Every such agency, including OSTP, fulfilled that mandate today.

"OSTP is bound by the Open Government Directive to write an Open Government Plan. But this is no mere box-checking exercise for us. Openness is core to the mission and culture of OSTP," said OSTP Director John P. Holdren in a written introduction to the OSTP plan. Openness is of particular importance in the domain of science, Holdren noted, where the line between fact and opinion is protected by the constant distillation of evidence in the crucible of transparency. "In his inauguration address, the President promised to restore science to its rightful place in American policymaking," Holdren said. "The OSTP Open Government Plan is a critical element of getting that done."

The OSTP Open Government Plan describes a number of novel programs within OSTP that express and build upon the three major pillars of openness: transparency, participation, and collaboration. Among them:

Transparency

- **OSTP IN THE OPEN:** OSTP has begun posting on its web site profiles of its employees, written in their own words and in some cases presented as online videos.

- R&D DASHBOARD: Building on the work of USASpending.gov and IT.USASpending.gov, OSTP is developing an R&D dashboard that will make it possible for anyone to track the government's investment in basic research across the Executive Branch.

Participation

- OSTP BULLET-POINT BOOT CAMP: OSTP is publishing a template to help members of the public submit policy proposals in the same format that OSTP staff uses to brief senior officials.
- PARTICIPATORY PCAST: OSTP is using new media tools to enable greater public participation in the President's Council of Advisors on Science and Technology (PCAST).
- GEEKS FOR WONKS: This public-private partnership with the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) will connect science and engineering students with government officials to promote civic engagement by designing and building prototypes of civic software.

Collaboration

- OSTP BULLPEN: To foster greater internal collaboration, OSTP has revamped some of its office space, tearing down walls that had divided people working in related areas.
- NSTC COLLABORATION PLATFORM: OSTP is using new tools to connect people from the various agencies that work together through the OSTP-administered National Science and Technology Council.
- S&T EXPERT NETWORK: OSTP is exploring a possible new public-private collaboration to bring scientific and technical advice to government from more sources, faster.

“Through these and other initiatives, OSTP is helping to create a new model of government—a more democratic model that is not just of, for, and by the people but is also *with* the people,” said Aneesh Chopra, U.S. Chief Technology Officer and Associate Director for Technology at OSTP. “What is more, by integrating the principles of open government into the Federal enterprise, we create conditions where innovation can take root and thrive. That in turn fosters new efficiencies and advances that promise to strengthen our economy and our nation.”

OSTP's Open Government Plan is available at: <http://www.whitehouse.gov/ostp>

To see all the Open Government plans released today, please visit: <http://www.whitehouse.gov/open>

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OSTP was created by Congress in 1976 to serve as a source of scientific and technological analysis and judgment for the President with respect to major policies, plans, and programs of the federal government. Specifically, OSTP is authorized to:

- Advise the President and others within the Executive Office of the President on the impacts of science and technology on domestic and international affairs
- Lead interagency efforts to develop and implement sound science and technology policies and budgets
- Work with the private sector to ensure that federal investments in science and technology contribute to economic prosperity, environmental quality, and national security
- Build strong partnerships among the federal government; state and local governments; other countries; and the scientific community
- Evaluate the scale, quality, and effectiveness of the federal effort in science and technology.