



EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
OFFICE OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY POLICY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20502

03/25/2022

To: Heads of Executive Branch Departments and Agencies
Re: Next Steps for Protecting Scientific Integrity

It has been over a year since President Biden issued the [Memorandum on Restoring Trust in Government Through Scientific Integrity and Evidence-Based Policymaking](#) (Memorandum), directing the Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP) to evaluate current policies and practices, and recommend improvements to ensure scientific integrity guides the conduct, management, communication, and use of science to inform decision-making in the Executive branch. OSTP is pleased to convey that, working together, we have accomplished much in responding to the Memorandum through leadership, collaboration, and expertise from nearly five dozen scientists across Departments and Agencies (agencies). Foremost among these achievements is the January 2022 release of the National Science and Technology Council (NSTC) report on [Protecting the Integrity of Government Science](#).

Building on previous work from OSTP and across Federal agencies, the report sets forth six key principles that will foster a culture and practice of scientific integrity in the Federal government. These principles include: valuing dissent in scientific discourse; acknowledging that scientific integrity applies to *all* Federal agencies and *all* Federal employees – including political appointees and contractors; ensuring that science and scientists have an explicit and transparent role in policy-making; promoting transparency in the sharing of science; and, putting in place effective mechanisms for accountability for violations of scientific integrity.

I encourage you to read and share the full report, and consider how best to implement its findings and strengthen scientific integrity at your agency. The report is available on the OSTP website [here](#).

OSTP is now implementing the second phase outlined in the Memorandum: establishing a framework for regular assessment and iterative improvement of agency scientific integrity policies and practices. OSTP expects to complete this work by the deadlines set in the Memorandum: 120 days from the NSTC report release, or May 11th, 2022. As with the NSTC report, OSTP will call upon agencies for input and deliberation on the development of the framework.

Several agency obligations were included in the Memorandum. We take this opportunity to remind you of those, especially since some are now past due. Specifically, each agency head is directed to:

- Designate a Scientific Integrity Official (all agencies);
- Designate a Chief Science Officer, to whom the Scientific Integrity Official will report (applies to agencies that fund, conduct, or oversee scientific research); and,
- Submit a summary report to OSTP and OMB, via ScientificIntegrity@ostp.eop.gov, with agency recommendations as to Federal scientific and technological advisory committees (all agencies).

Additionally, the Memorandum also instructed your agencies to internally review and update, as needed, any other agency website content, reports, data, and materials since January 20th, 2017, that remain in use but are inconsistent with the principles set forth in the Memorandum.

OSTP emphasizes the importance of making sure that the above responsibilities have been discharged.

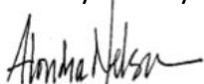
These initial agency steps represent critical pillars on which agency scientific integrity will be built and strengthened. If your agency has not already completed these important obligations, **please respond to me in writing within 30 days of this letter**, and if you cannot comply, explaining the nature of the delay and identifying actions for remedying it. For your convenience, you may submit your responses to the OSTP Scientific Integrity mailbox: ScientificIntegrity@ostp.eop.gov with the subject line "Memo Response." **Please be sure to include the following items in your response:**

1. **Designee of agency Scientific Integrity Official;**
2. **Designee of agency Chief Science Officer** (if applicable per above);
3. **Status of summary report on scientific and technological advisory committees;** if that report remains outstanding, attach agency report to your response; and,
4. **Result of agency review of agency website content, reports, data, and materials** since January 20th, 2017, that remain in use but are inconsistent with the principles set forth in the Memorandum.

Looking ahead, the Memorandum **also instructs the heads of agencies to submit to OSTP an updated draft scientific integrity policy** (for those agencies with existing policies) **or to submit a draft of a new policy** (for agencies which did not have one previously). Both are due within 180 days of the NSTC report release or **by July 10th, 2022**. Thus, agencies should plan for a 60-day period between the release of the Scientific Integrity Framework and the deadline for Scientific Integrity Policy submission to OSTP. As a result, please be prepared to respond to the framework as expeditiously as possible. Your agencies are welcome to engage OSTP on the framework development through the ScientificIntegrity@ostp.eop.gov mailbox and through planned interagency meetings. Please encourage your staff to begin drafting their scientific integrity policies now, well ahead of the upcoming deadlines.

As we move forward in the pursuit of protecting the integrity of government science, I thank you and your dedicated staff for their valued contributions to these efforts. I am confident that together we can strengthen Federal scientific integrity, public trust in science, and the protection of Federal employees in support of advancing health, safety, security, and equity across the Nation and the world.

Thank you for your service,



Alondra Nelson, Ph.D.

Deputy Assistant to the President

Performing the Duties of Director

The White House Office of Science and Technology Policy