

US EPA ARCHIVE DOCUMENT

EPA'S COLLABORATION NETWORK NEWS



"Public Involvement brings the pieces together"

This is the seventeenth *Network News* and it is also the last issue in the format and coverage you have come to expect on a quarterly basis.

I hope you have enjoyed reading the issues as much as I, Leanne Nurse, Daria Willis, many feature article authors and a few interns who worked in the National Center for Environmental Innovation [within the Office of Policy, Economics and Innovation] have delighted in putting them together.

Perhaps an EPA organization will decide to continue Collaboration *Network News* in some form. Should that happen, I would like to provide the mailing list for notification that the publication is posted to the Internet. ***If you prefer that your name not be included, please send me an e-mail [bonner.patricia@epa.gov] and I'll delete your entry before transferring the list.***

If no EPA organization takes over *Network News*, you might find it useful to remain or become connected with practitioners outside EPA by signing up for the monthly Update of the National Coalition for Dialogue & Deliberation (NCDD) or the Deliberative Democracy Consortium's (DDC) monthly e-Bulletin. NCDD's monthly notice keeps over 20,000 people aware of what's happening and what opportunities are available to them in dialogue, deliberation and public engagement. If you're interested, just email ncdd@thataway.org and asked to be subscribed to the Updates list. You may subscribe to the DDC e-Bulletin @ <http://69.89.31.237/~deliber3/> where you can also find a link to the Journal of Public Deliberation.

Providing *Network News* has been a privilege as well as a lot of fun, plus, cursory reading of many newsletters, journals, news releases and so much more helped me continue to learn. It also enabled me to link thousands of people on six continents with one another through their shared interests.

Pat

In This Issue:

- See what's happening on the Open Government front in the US, Great Britain and Australia
- Learn about the project that won the Green Your School Contest
- Read about new web-based way to participate in EPA rule making
- Review the Great Lakes Action Plan priorities

- Find new resources, opportunities [What's New], courses or conferences [Events]



What's New?

Since this is the last *Network News* that is sure to be issued, you are invited to subscribe to the **National Coalition for Dialogue & Deliberation [NCDD]'s monthly email Updates or the Deliberative Democracy Consortium's (DDC) monthly e-Bulletin**. The NCDD keeps over 20,000 people up-to-date on what's happening and what opportunities are available to them in dialogue, deliberation and public engagement. If you would like to receive the update, e-mail to ncdd@thataway.org and asked to be subscribed to the Updates list. You may subscribe to the DDC e-Bulletin @ <http://69.89.31.237/~deliber3/> where you can also find a link to the Journal of Public Deliberation.

The **International Journal of Public Participation's** latest edition asks the question: Has Obama made a difference to P2? Read the articles and begin your own conversations - log on www.iap2.org and follow the links from there.

Apply for Environmental Community Grants Due Date: March 9 -- EPA is making \$2 million available in 2010 to reduce pollution at the local community level through the **Community Action for a Renewed Environment (CARE)** program.

CARE is a community-based program that works with county and local governments, tribes, nonprofit organizations, and universities to help the public understand and reduce toxic risks from numerous sources, including those found in water. Since 2005, the grants have reached 68 communities in 34 states and territories.

EPA will award CARE cooperative agreements in two levels. Level I awards range from \$75,000 to \$100,000. These awards will help establish community-based partnerships to develop local environmental priorities. Level II awards will range from \$150,000 to \$300,000 each. Grants at this level will support communities that have established broad-based partnerships, have identified the priority toxic risks in the community, and are prepared to measure results, implement risk-reduction activities, and become self-sustaining.

Applications for the CARE grants are due March 9, 2010. To learn more, visit <http://www.epa.gov/care>

4th Annual Rachel Carson Contest Applications due June 16 - EPA invites the public to submit creative projects to the 4th annual Rachel Carson intergenerational “**Sense of Wonder**” contest. The categories are poetry, photography, essays, and dance. The contest seeks to instill a sense of wonder for the environment among all generations and spur environmental stewardship. Carson is considered to be the founder of the contemporary environmental movement through her landmark book, *Silent Spring*. Its publication is credited with reversing the nation's pesticide policy.

Entries must be from a team of two or more persons from both younger and older generations. EPA is working with the Liz Lerman Dance Exchange, the Rachel Carson Council, Inc., and Generations United to sponsor this contest. The deadline for team entries is **June 16**, 2010. The winners will be announced in October 2010. The public will have the opportunity to vote among the finalists for the winners in each category. Learn more at www.epa.gov/aging/resources/thesenseofwonder/index.htm.

The **USDA** has created a [publicly available database](#) that provides:

- 1) measured nutrient load and concentration data and corresponding watershed characteristics from numerous field-scale studies
- 2) readily accessible, easily queried information to support water quality management, modeling, and future research design, and
- 3) a platform allowing user input of additional project-specific data

The primary objective of this effort was to compile measured annual nitrogen (N) and phosphorus (P) load and concentration data representing field-scale transport from agricultural and forest (new September 2009) land uses.

Todd Davies and Seeta Peña Gangadharan edited a new book ***Online Deliberation: Design, Research, and Practice***. This resource for the field is something you can [download at no charge](#). You can also order the book from the [University of Chicago Press](#) or [download individual chapters here](#).

Here's the book description: Can new technology enhance local, national, and global democracy? Online Deliberation attempts to sample the full range of work on online deliberation, forging new connections between academic research, web designers, and practitioners. Since the most exciting innovations in deliberation have occurred outside of traditional institutions, and those involved have often worked in relative isolation from each other, research conducted on this growing field has to this point neglected the full perspective of online participation. This volume, an essential read for those working at the crossroads of computer and social science, illuminates the collaborative world of deliberation by examining diverse clusters of Internet communities.

Everybody's Movement: Environmental Justice and Climate Change
<http://www.envsc.org/esc-publications/ESC%20everybody%20s%20movement.pdf>

features the perspectives and wisdom of twenty-three activists and funders who are engaged in or supporting work to connect environmental justice and climate change. In this report, these leaders from across the United States share their perspectives about how their movement can contribute to climate organizing, policy, and solutions. They also speak about how their movement can be strengthened by better integrating climate issues into the content of environmental justice.

After four years of development and public feedback, the **Sustainable Sites Initiative** has released the nation's first rating system for sustainable landscapes. It developed criteria for sustainable land practices that will enable built landscapes to support natural ecological functions by protecting existing ecosystems and regenerating ecological capacity where it has been lost. This report focuses on measuring and rewarding a project that protects, restores and regenerates ecosystem services - benefits provided by natural ecosystems such as cleaning air and water, climate regulation and human health benefits.

County Health Rankings is a program of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and the University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute. You may find this tool useful in determining, at least from one source, the comparative health of counties throughout the US. <http://www.countyhealthrankings.org/>

<http://www.countyhealthrankings.org/sites/default/files/CHR%202010%20Top%20and%20Bottom%205%20co.png>



Did your nonprofit organization create a video in 2009? If so, enter it into the [4th Annual DoGooder Nonprofit Video Awards](#) for the chance to win \$2,500 for your nonprofit, get your video featured on the [YouTube](#) homepage, receive great prizes from [Flip Video](#) and [NTEN](#), and have your work showcased at a screening in Washington DC, hosted by [Nomadsland](#).

The Case Foundation is excited to be a sponsor of the DoGooder Nonprofit Video Awards, presented by [See3 Communications](#) and YouTube.

Submissions close on March 19, at which point, a set of [nonprofit and media professionals](#) (including Guy Kawasaki, Gary Vaynerchuk and Beth Kanter) will select 16 finalists to compete in a public vote among the YouTube community. Winners will be announced on April 10 at the [Nonprofit Technology Conference](#) in Atlanta.

The categories for submission are: 1. best small organization video, 2. best medium organization video, 3. best large organization video, and 4. Best innovation in video.

For more information, read the [press release](#), follow what's happening on Twitter ([#npvideo](#)), or go straight to www.youtube.com/nonprofitvideoawards.

The Praxis Project is proud to announce the **Call for Proposals for Communities Creating Healthy Environments (CCHE)**-a grant initiative funded by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation to support community organizing and policy advocacy to increase access to healthy food and safe places to play in communities of color. CCHE will provide funding and technical assistance for up to ten local community organizing groups and indigenous nations with grants of up to \$250,000 over three years. Youth led organizing groups in communities of color are strongly encouraged to apply.

As the program embarks on its second year, CCHE is looking to continue to expand the investments to create healthy vibrant communities. This past year ten dynamic groups across the country were awarded with the grants. The groups are developing cutting edge, culturally competent and comprehensive approaches to ensure just and equitable access to healthy food and safe places for recreation.

What kind of organization should consider applying for CCHE funds?

- Local organizations working in communities of color whose leadership and makeup reflect the populations they serve.
- Groups with a successful track record of at least two years in community organizing and policy advocacy work to address health-related problems in communities of color.
- Tribal governmental agencies engaged in health policy

Examples of health-related policy advocacy for local communities include: land use regulation such as zoning limitations that prevent the increased availability and access to healthy food choices; before-and-after school programs that improve access to recreation and increase physical activity levels; increasing access to translation in health care and social services; laws to extend Medicaid eligibility are solid examples on policy advocacy for local communities.

For more information on the Call for Proposals or to become a part of CCHE, please visit www.ccheonline.org where you can download the Call for Proposals, sign up for information sessions and learn about the current CCHE communities!

Communities Creating Healthy Environments is a National Program Office of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation under the leadership of The Praxis Project. The Praxis Project is a national, nonprofit organization that builds partnerships with local groups to influence policymaking that addresses the underlying, systemic causes of community problems. For more information on Praxis and our other initiatives, please visit www.thepraxisproject.org. For more information on other funding initiatives of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and its goal of reversing the childhood obesity epidemic by 2015, please visit them on the web at www.rwjf.org.

The Praxis project also developed "**Open Gov the Movie**," a short film documenting the year since President Obama's Open Government memorandum. The 14-minute film shot over November/December 2009 in Washington DC and via Skype is based around a series of interviews with key players involved in the Open Government initiative, including:

- Beth Noveck - Head of the White House Open Government program
- Tim O'Reilly - Web2.0 commentator
- Dustin Haisler - CIO at Manor, Texas
- Lena Trudeau - Head of Collaboration at the National Academy of Public Administration (NAPA)
- Jeffrey Levy - Head of digital communications at the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
- Jake Brewer - Sunlight Foundation
- Allan Holmes - Editor, NextGov.com
- Steve Lunceford - founder of GovTwit

The Open Gov Movie launched on Thursday 21st January, on the first anniversary of President Obama's issuing the Open Government memorandum, giving an insider's perspective of how the Open Government initiative came about, what's happened over the last 12 months and its effect on both Federal and Local government.

The film's creator Chris Quigley is based in London [UK]. He saw President Obama's memorandum "as a significant move in how government works -- only for the US, but for democracy around the world"...and feels that "The impact that the Open Government manifesto has had on how UK government works has been particularly pronounced. It's no coincidence that since the release of the memorandum in January 2009, both Gordon Brown and David Cameron have announced various schemes to make UK government more open, transparent and participative."

The FCC released a public notice, **FCC Launches Examination of the Future of Media and Information Needs of Communities in a Digital Age**. It quotes the conclusion of the Knight Commission that "[t]he digital age is creating an information and communications renaissance. But it is not serving all Americans and their local communities equally. It is not yet serving democracy fully." The notice goes on to state 42 questions on which the project is conducting research and seeking public input through March 8, 2010. The notice is at http://hraunfoss.fcc.gov/edocs_public/attachmatch/DA-10-100A1.doc. The

project web site is <http://reboot.fcc.gov/futureofmedia>.

Applications are now being accepted for the **2010 National Award for Smart Growth Achievement**. This competition is open to public- and private-sector entities that have successfully used smart growth principles to improve communities environmentally, socially, and economically. The application period is open from February 8, 2010 to April 5, 2010. Up to five awards will be given in the following categories:

- Programs, Policies, and Regulations
- Smart Growth and Green Building
- Civic Places
- Rural Smart Growth
- Overall Excellence

More information is available @ <http://www.epa.gov/smartgrowth/awards.htm>

The **Smart Growth Implementation Assistance Program** is an annual, competitive solicitation open to state, local, regional, and tribal governments (and non-profits that have partnered with a governmental entity) that want to incorporate smart growth techniques into their future development.

EPA recently announced a Request for Letters of Interest [RFLI] which is open for 60 days, closing April. It is available here for your reference: [HTML](#) | [PDF Version](#) (4 pp, 44K, [About PDF](#)). There is also a helpful list of [Frequent questions about the SGIA application process are answered here](#).

Once selected, communities receive direct technical assistance from a team of national experts in one of two areas: policy analysis (e.g., reviewing state and local codes, school siting guidelines, transportation policies, etc.) or public participatory processes (e.g., visioning, design workshops, alternative analysis, build-out analysis, etc.). The assistance is tailored to the community's unique situation and priorities. EPA provides the assistance through a contractor team – not a grant. Through a multiple-day site visit and a detailed final report, the multi-disciplinary teams provide information to help the community achieve its goal of encouraging growth that fosters economic progress and environmental protection.

EPA initiated the SGIA program in 2005 with three goals in mind:

1. To support communities interested in implementing smart growth policies;
2. To create regional examples of smart growth that can catalyze similar projects in the area; and
3. To identify common barriers and opportunities for smart growth development and create new tools that other communities can use.

EPA Administrator Lisa Jackson named **Dr. James H. Johnson, Jr.**, professor emeritus of civil engineering and former dean of the College of Engineering, Architecture, and

Computer Sciences at Howard University in Washington, D.C. **to chair the National Advisory Council for Environmental Policy and Technology [NACEPT]**. The NACEPT is one of EPA's Federal Advisory Act committees. The group advises the agency on a broad range of environmental policy, technology, and management issues.

Dr. Johnson received his B.S. in civil engineering from Howard University, M.S. in sanitary engineering from the University of Illinois and Ph.D. from the department of civil and environmental engineering from the University of Delaware. Dr. Johnson's research interests include treatment and reuse of wastewater sludges, treatment of hazardous substances, the use of nanotechnology tools in the environmental area, the evaluation of environmental policy issues and the development of environmental curricula.

Dr. Johnson is currently a member of the National Research Council's (NRC) Division of Earth and Life Sciences Oversight Committee, the U.S. EPA Science Advisory Board and chair of the Anne Arundel (MD) Community College Board of Trustees. In addition, he serves on several university, private sector and research center advisory committees. Previous board and committee activities include NRC Boards on Radioactive Waste Management and Environmental Studies and Toxicology, American Society for Engineering Education's (ASEE) Engineering Deans Council Executive Committee, Civil Engineering Research Foundation Board, SECME and several NRC, ASEE and ASCE committees (e.g., Remediation of Buried and Task Wastes, DOE Infrastructure Renewal, Assessing the Capacity of the US Engineering Research Enterprise).

Dr. Johnson has published over 60 scholarly articles, contributed to three books and co-edited two books. Memberships in professional organizations include American Water Works Association, fellow of the American Society of Civil Engineers, American Society for Engineering Education, water and Environment Federation and Tau Beta Pi. Dr. Johnson is a registered professional engineer in the District of Columbia and a diplomate of the American Academy of Environmental Engineers. He is the recipient of the National Society of Black Engineers 2005 Lifetime Achievement in Academia Golden Torch Award and the 2008 Water Environment Federation Gordon Maskew Fair Distinguished Educator Award.



Events

Earth Day—The 40th Anniversary Every year on April 22, people around the world mark **Earth Day** by raising awareness of how our lives impact the planet. This year will be the 40th anniversary of the day. Across the nation and globe events will mark the occasion.

To find out what's happening in your area, visit www.earthday.net. If podcasts are your style, check out EPA's Earth Day Green Tips Podcast series. Get tips of the day at www.epa.gov/earthday/podcasts/.

Founded in 1970 by U.S. Senator Gaylord Nelson of Wisconsin, Earth Day attracted the concern and participation of Americans from all walks of life. Students, communities, grassroots groups, politicians and early environmentalists took their messages outside to the streets. Earth Day is now celebrated across the globe as a day of service and environmental awareness.

To learn more about Earth Day and how you can be a part of it, visit EPA's site at www.epa.gov/EarthDay

EDem10 4th International Conference on eDemocracy May 6 – 7, 2010
Danube University Krems, Austria www.donau-uni.ac.at/edem

Call for Papers: Scientific eDemocracy visions and models have been developed since the 1960s, but it is now, during the first decade of the 21st Century, that they are becoming reality, being tested and implemented. Extensive IT provides the necessary basis, but it is not the developments in IT alone that are responsible for successful eDemocracy projects - it is due all those who use and apply them, as they adopt new behaviors and change old ones. The new, digital generation lives and breathes new values: they collaborate, compile content together, share their ideas, create networks on social platforms and organize themselves quickly and simply. The new values held, the new behaviors adopted, the changed mindset, along with improved usability and a still-increasing use of the internet, has led to a rapid and radical change in our society.

The EDem10 focuses on these changes which can be seen occurring in different areas and which are manifest in different way:

- * Transparency & Communication (freedom of information, free information access, openness, information sharing, blogging, micro-blogging, social networks, data visualization, eLearning, empowering, *);
- * Participation & Collaboration (innovation malls, innovation communities, bottom up, top down, social networks, engagement and accountability, collaborative culture, collaboration between C2C, G2C, *);
- * Architecture, Concepts & Effects (access and openness, user generated content, peer production, network effects, power laws, long tail, harnessing the power of the crowd, crowd sourcing, social web, semantic web, ...);
- * Different Fields: open government initiatives, eDemocracy, eParticipation, eVoting, eDeliberation;
- * Approaches and Disciplines: law & legal studies, social sciences, computer sciences, political sciences, psychology, sociology, applied computer gaming and simulation, democratic theory, media and communication sciences;
- * Multidisciplinary and Interdisciplinary Approaches;
- * Research Methods.

The primary aim is to bring together researchers and practitioners from academic, applied and practitioner backgrounds as well as public administration offices, public bodies, NGO/NPOs, education institutions and independent organizations. All are invited to submit their research and project papers.

The main conference language is English; submissions in German (with an abstract in English) are also acceptable. The fees [conference, proceedings and social program

during the conference] are EUR 105,- for authors and PEP-NET Members, and EUR 145,- for others.

Deadlines:

Submission of papers (max. 10 pages): Extended Deadline - 1 March 2010

Notification of acceptance: 2. April 2010

Camera-ready paper submission: 12. April 2010

Conference: 6-7 May 2010

Submissions: To submit a paper, please visit the conference website @ www.donau-uni.ac.at/edem All submissions will be submitted to a double-blind full paper review by at least 2 reviewers. Further Information: michael.sachs@donau-uni.ac.at, or noella.edelmann@donau-uni.ac.at The Proceedings will be published by the Austrian Computer Society. The EDem conference series is jointly organized by the Danube University Krems and the University of Economics and Business Administration, Vienna.

The conference, "Creating the Future We Want to Be: Transformation through Partnerships," the **11th Conference**, promises to be **Community-Campus Partnerships for Health** [CCPH]'s best yet as hundreds of community and campus partners convene for 4 days of skill-building, networking and agenda-setting May 12-15 at The Marriott Downtown Waterfront in Portland Oregon.

Highlights include:

- A stellar line-up of pre-conference workshops covering such topics as service-learning, community-based participatory research and partnerships for policy change:
<http://depts.washington.edu/ccph/conf10-preconf.html>
- An inspiring opening keynote presentation by Elder Atum Azzahir, Executive Director of the Powderhorn Phillips Cultural Wellness Center in Minneapolis that works to "unleash the power of citizens to heal themselves and build community":
<http://depts.washington.edu/ccph/conf10-program.html#KeynoteSpeakers>
- Skill-building workshops, educational exhibits, site visits of exemplary community-campus partnerships, and many opportunities for informal networking:
<http://depts.washington.edu/ccph/conf10-agenda.html>
- Opportunities to meet with staff from funding agencies that include the National Institutes of Health, the Canadian Institutes of Health Research and the Northwest Health Foundation

The International Association for Public Participation will offer "**Emotion, Outrage and Public Participation**" **April 8 – 9, 2010 in Washington, DC**. In these challenging times of environmental, health, cultural, economic and social changes this is a course that will enhance your practice, support your clients and equip you to think about and learn how to apply behaviors that will enhance quality public participation outcomes where communities are emotional or outraged and therefore not yet at the place where they can fully participate in a public engagement process.

During this two-day course, you will discover:

- Six practical strategies for managing outrage
- New behaviors that you can apply immediately
- A new way of thinking and analyzing outrage
- New ways to plan and implement public participation projects where people are outraged

This course is based on the work of **Dr. Peter Sandman**, combined with the International Association for Public Participation's core concepts for meaningful and effective public participation. The development of the course represents a partnership with Dr. Sandman and IAP2. The fee is \$700 for IAP2 members and \$750 for others.



The instructor will be John Godec, a Phoenix-based certified professional facilitator with over 20 years experience in actively designing and managing public involvement projects for environment and natural resources, transportation, land use, urban and regional planning, facility siting and energy.

Upcoming U.S. Institute Training Sessions – 2010

Those interested in learning about environmental collaboration and conflict resolution are welcome to register for the following open training sessions sponsored by the U.S. Institute:

- *IBN101: Interest-Based Negotiation of Environmental Issues*, Denver, CO, April 21-22, 2010

Interest-based negotiation provides the foundation for all training at the U.S. Institute. This highly interactive workshop helps new and experienced resource managers engaged in environmental decision making become more effective in environmental conflict negotiation, prevention, and management. Lessons learned in this training also transfer to many facets of life.

- *CC201: Collaborative Capabilities*, Denver, CO, June 15-17, 2010

To work more effectively and efficiently, federal agencies and others recognize the need to develop collaboration competencies at all levels. This training facilitates staff in acquiring advanced skills in collaboration; multi-party negotiation; conflict prevention, management and resolution; meeting facilitation; and alternative dispute resolution. This training develops essential skills in communication, collaboration, negotiation, and conflict management needed by environmental and natural resource managers.

- *MPN301: Advanced Multi-Party Negotiation of Environmental Disputes*, Denver, CO
September 14-16, 2010

More sessions will be added throughout the year to the website. For additional information and to register for U.S. Institute courses, see the Training tab at www.ecr.gov.

Registration is now open for the 2010 Environmental Information Symposium.

Enabling Environmental Protection Through Transparency & Open Government May 10 - 14, 2009 Philadelphia, PA

The Web site is now live and accepting registrations. Please visit the site at: <http://www.epa.gov/oei/symposium/2010/index.html> for logistical information and to register for the Environmental Information Symposium, IT Operations and Security Conference or the Quality Management Conference. Exhibitors should register early to get the best choice of exhibit space.

If you have any questions or would like to learn more about the 2010 Symposium, please contact Jan Jablonski at 202-564-9922 (jablonski.janice@epa.gov) or Judi Maguire at 202-564-9922 (maguire.judi@epa.gov)

Project on Civic Reflection Facilitation Training Workshop -- From volunteers to educators, nonprofit leaders to community organizers, civic reflection discussions engage participants seeking to make a difference in the world.

If you are interested in learning to facilitate civic reflection discussions, consider attending the Project on Civic Reflection's next Facilitation Training Workshop. The two-day workshop, to be held at Columbia College in downtown Chicago, will begin at noon on Thursday, April 29, 2010 and conclude at 4:00 p.m. on Friday, April 30. The registration fee is \$250.

Workshop participants receive hands-on facilitation skills taught by expert trainers, a facilitation handbook with tips and answers to frequently asked questions, a copy of *The Civically Engaged Reader*, and program consultation and ongoing support. You can access an informational flyer and registration form here:

http://civicreflection.org/resource/d/52331/Training_Flyer_April_October_2010.pdf

Please submit the registration form to Debbie Garbukas at deb.garbukas@valpo.edu or by fax at 219.464.5496. If you have questions, please contact Program Coordinator Liz Granger at liz.granger@valpo.edu or call 312.750.1760. Registration closes on March 26.



Featured Articles

Open Government

United States

EPA -- Several weeks ago EPA launched a new Open Government Web site to showcase our efforts to be more transparent, participatory and collaborative. To learn more about the federal-wide Open Government Initiative visit the White House Open Government Web site <www.whitehouse.gov/open>. Our new site, www.epa.gov/open is a gateway to the Agency's Open Government activities and offers links to current and planned EPA projects and initiatives fostering public participation and collaboration.

Please join us in identify ways in which we can better serve you by making more information available, promoting public participation, and fostering joint efforts with other governmental and non-governmental entities. We are offering a new tool for the public to provide input and ideas for our Open Government Plan. The new tool is available via a link on our Open Government Site and at <www.openepa.ideascale.com>. We welcome your ideas and would specifically like input on the following:

- What information and high-value data should we provide to make our agency more accountable, improve public knowledge of our work, and create economic opportunity?
- How can we make information and data available in a timely and accessible manner?
- How EPA can encourage two-way conversations with the public to share ideas and gather their expertise to improve our work?
- What specific tools and strategies should we use to facilitate public conversations?
- How should we collaborate with individuals, businesses, non-profits, other agencies, or state/local governments?
- What top problems should we tackle together?
- What new technologies and strategies can we use to be more open, efficient and save taxpayer money?

Please visit <www.openepa.ideascale.com> to contribute your ideas and suggestions. This tool will be available until March 19, 2010. Your ideas and comments will help us in developing an Open Government Plan that reflects public priorities and concerns.

Make Your Voice Heard

[NOTE AND CLARIFICATION: – You will not be connecting to Agency Plans – you will be looking at the ideas that the public is generating for possible inclusion in plans now being drafted.]

On February 23, 2010, Tina Tchen, Deputy Assistant to the President and Director of the White House Public Engagement, posted a blog on www.whitehouse.gov encouraging the public to provide feedback on each agency's open government plan.

On February 6, the White House Open Government Initiative launched a government wide public participation opportunity unprecedented in the history of our democracy. As part of the [Open Government Directive](#) issued in early December, every major agency published an [open government website](#). These pages went live in early February complete with the latest news and updates, downloadable data unique to that agency, and information about how each agency is moving to implement the President's call for a more transparent, participatory, and collaborative government. These new websites also incorporate a mechanism for online civic engagement.

These websites will be most effective with broad input from as many members of the public as possible visiting these sites and providing feedback on the development of each agency's open government plan, including ideas for how to make the agency more effective and efficient and suggestions for data that should be published online. These public brainstorms utilize similar free, easy-to-use tools as the White House used in soliciting public engagement in developing its open government agenda. People can post an idea, comment on the ideas of others, and rate and rank ideas to provide the agency with an ordered list of categorized suggestions. This is the first time something like this has been tried across the entire executive branch and we are eager to solicit input.

Now through March 19th, the American people can make a difference by logging on to each agency's open government page and making your voices heard. We hope you will assist us in this historic effort to bridge the gap between citizens and their government. It would be particularly helpful for you to provide specific suggestions for what agencies should include in required elements of their plans. These elements include a strategic action plan to improve transparency, as well as agency proposals to use technology platforms and other innovative methods (e.g., prizes and competition) to improve collaboration.

Start participating today – visit one or more of these websites and provide feedback:

- [Agency for International Development, U.S. \(USAID\)](#)
- [Agriculture, U.S. Department of \(USDA\)](#)
- [Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System](#)
- [Broadcasting Board of Governors \(BBG\)](#)
- [Commerce, U.S. Department of \(DOC\)](#)
- [Council on Environmental Quality \(CEQ\)](#)
- [Defense, Department of \(DOD\)](#)
- [Education, U.S. Department of](#)
- [Energy, U.S. Department of \(DOE\)](#)
- [Environmental Protection Agency \(EPA\)](#)

- [Equal Employment Opportunity Commission \(EEOC\)](#)
- [Federal Communications Commission \(FCC\)](#)
- [Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation \(FDIC\)](#)
- [General Services Administration, U.S. \(GSA\)](#)
- [Health & Human Services, U.S. Department of \(HHS\)](#)
- [Homeland Security, U.S. Department of \(DHS\)](#)
- [Housing and Urban Development, Department of \(HUD\)](#)
- [Interior, U.S. Department of the \(DOI\)](#)
- [Justice, U.S. Department of \(DOJ\)](#)
- [Labor, U.S. Department of \(DOL\)](#)
- [National Aeronautics and Space Administration \(NASA\)](#)
- [National Archives](#)
- [National Endowment of the Arts \(NEA\)](#)
- [National Science Foundation \(NSF\)](#)
- [Nuclear Regulatory Commission, U.S. \(NRC\)](#)
- [Office of Management and Budget \(OMB\)](#)
- [Office of National Drug Control Policy \(ONDCP\)](#)
- [Office of Personnel Management, U.S. \(OPM\)](#)
- [Office of Science and Technology Policy, Executive Office of the President](#)
- [Office of the U.S. Trade Representative \(USTR\)](#)
- [Small Business Administration \(SBA\)](#)
- [Social Security Administration \(SSA\)](#)
- [State, U.S. Department of](#)
- [Transportation, U.S. Department of \(DOT\)](#)
- [Treasury, U.S. Department of the](#)
- [Veterans Affairs, U.S. Department of \(VA\)](#)

To see the top ideas across government, visit OpenGovTracker.com or view the agency contact information for a complete list of all agencies, their contact information, their dialog tool URLs and RSS feeds, and other ways for the public to submit ideas. Ideas and comments that are submitted via email, phone, or other means will be posted on the agency's dialog site by moderators. That will allow others to comment and vote on these ideas.

This is the latest effort by the Administration to make the government more transparent. Our other concrete commitments to openness include issuing the [Open Government Directive](#), putting up more government information than ever before on data.gov and recovery.gov, reforming the government's [FOIA processes](#), providing on-line access to White House [staff financial reports](#) and [salaries](#), issuing an [executive order to fight unnecessary secrecy and speed declassification](#), [reversing an executive order that previously limited access to presidential records](#), and [webcasting White House meetings and conferences](#). The release also compliments our new lobbying rules, which in addition to [closing the revolving door for lobbyists](#) who work in government have also emphasized expanding [disclosure of lobbyist contacts with the government](#). And the President capped the year off by calling in the State of the Union for [bold transparency initiatives \(pdf\)](#) as part of his reform agenda for 2010 and the years ahead.

[Open Government Playbook Workshops](#)

The ongoing Open Government Directive (OGD) Workshop Series is an unpaid, transparent, volunteer effort and a partnership between the public and private sectors. Results, including videos of presentations, of the third [held February 17, 2010] in a series of four collaborative workshops are now available @ <http://opengovdirective.pbworks.com> . .

Each workshop has been spearheaded by a Federal agency and publicized online at OpenGovPlaybook.Org. The purpose of the workshop is to foster meaningful collaboration across agencies and business sectors to transform the relationship between government and its citizenry. The next workshop in April will focus on sharing solutions for overcoming cultural barriers to implementation of the Open Government Directive.

This page has links to many resources to help in understanding Open Government and its principles of transparency, public participation and collaboration.

United Kingdom

The British report, "[Putting the Front Line First: Smarter Government](http://www.hmg.gov.uk/frontlinefirst.aspx)" [http://www.hmg.gov.uk/frontlinefirst.aspx], notes that "Demands for accountability and transparency are increasing," and that citizens want more of a say in shaping public services. The report is reminiscent of President Obama's inaugural address: "The question is not whether government itself is too big or too small, but whether it delivers for people and communities with rising aspirations and expectations."

The British initiative is based on three principles:

- Using technology to create open and accountable public services
- Devolving decision making, in part by changing the way public services are delivered, and
- Renewing focus on "value for money" cost-saving efforts.

The report recommends actions in three areas, along with a detailed plan for moving forward:

- [Action 1: Strengthen the role of citizens and civic society](#)
- [Action 2: Recast the relationship between the centre and the frontline](#)
- [Action 3: Streamline central government for sharper delivery](#)
- [Forward Plan](#)

Australia

The Australian report, "[Engage: Getting on with Government 2.0](http://gov2.net.au/blog/2009/12/07/draftreport/)," [http://gov2.net.au/blog/2009/12/07/draftreport/] is a draft from its Government 2.0 Taskforce. It proposes a "Declaration on Open Government" that reflects principles similar to President Obama's [January 2009 memorandum](#). The draft recommends that the government declare "public information is a national resource," that technology should be used to increase collaboration in making policy and providing services in order to be "more consultative, participatory and transparent," and that "Online engagement by public servants should be enabled and encouraged."

The report is organized around a series of specific recommendations, including:

- An inventory across government agencies identifying barriers that inhibit online engagement, and develop plans to reduce their impact within 12 months.
- Actively encourage and empower civil servants to be engaged online, and “establish awards for individual public servants and agencies” that recognize best practices.
- Make public information more open, accessible and reusable by using open standards, making it easily discoverable and understandable, and making it machine-readable and freely reusable. For example, more material would be published under a Creative Common license.

Other Taskforce recommendations address security, privacy, and accessibility.

Many of the issues raised in both the UK and Australia are part of the U.S. Open Government agenda, so it will be interesting to see how the Obama Administration addresses them.

EPA Increases Transparency of Proposed Regulations

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is launching a new Web site giving the public additional opportunity to participate in the agency’s rulemaking process, demonstrating President Obama’s commitment to more transparent and open government. The online Rulemaking Gateway serves as a portal to EPA’s priority rules, providing citizens with earlier and more concise information about agency regulations. It also allows users to search for EPA rules that relate to specific interests, including impacts on small business; children’s health; environmental justice; and state, local and tribal government.

Rulemaking Gateway provides information as soon as work begins and provides updates on a monthly basis as new information becomes available. Time-sensitive information, such as notice of public meetings, is updated on a daily basis.

Rulemaking Gateway complements Regulations.gov, the federal government’s main portal for tracking rules from all federal agencies, by providing brief overviews of specific EPA rules and additional ways to search rules based on the phases they are in (e.g., pre-proposal, proposal), the topics they relate to (e.g., air, water), and the impacts they might have (e.g., impacts on small businesses or environmental justice). The new Web site offers a distilled “snapshot” of a rule, with just enough information for a citizen to determine his or her interest in the rule. The individual then can use Rulemaking Gateway links to Regulations.gov and to other EPA sources where comprehensive information is available.

In addition, EPA has established a Rulemaking Gateway discussion forum to allow the public to suggest enhancements to the site. The forum will be open through July 16, 2010, after which EPA plans to make enhancements based on ideas received.

More information on Rulemaking Gateway and the discussion forum:

<http://www.epa.gov/rulemaking/>

More information on Regulations.gov Web site: <http://www.regulations.gov>

Green Your School Contest Results

On December 17, 2009, the Student Conservation Association (SCA) and NBC Universal Foundation announced the winning schools for the national "Green Your School" contest. The initiative, launched last spring, challenged eco-conscious high schoolers to submit their school's best green-related projects. Funding for the "[Green Your School](#)" contest comes from the NBC Universal Foundation in connection with NBC Universal's Green Initiative, "Green is Universal."

After reaching out to hundreds of thousands of classrooms nationwide, a panel of distinguished judges, including NBC News' Anne Thompson and environmentalist Simran Sethi, selected West Geauga High School in Chesterland, Ohio as the grand prize winner of \$5,000. Two runner-up prizes of \$2,500 were also awarded to Boston Latin School in Boston, Mass. and Amphitheater High School in Tucson, AZ.



West Geauga High School Environmental Discovery Project Grand Prize Winners

The "Green Your School" contest engaged students in conservation projects that improved, restored, or beautified their school's environment. To be eligible, entries had to be student-led and have been started after August 1, 2008. Projects were judged on their environmental impact on the health of the school, sustainability, and the involvement of other students, teachers, administrators and/or the outside community.

You can see the winning project description @ <http://www.thesca.org/contest/green-your-school-finalists/west-geauga-high-school-environmental-discovery-project>

Administrator Jackson Unveils Great Lakes Restoration Initiative Action Plan

On February 22, 2010, US Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Lisa P. Jackson released an action plan to guide the Obama Administration's efforts to restore the Great Lakes. The action plan, which the administrator unveiled at a meeting with governors from the Great Lakes states, lays out the most urgent threats facing the Great Lakes and sets out goals, objectives and key actions over the next five years to help restore the lakes.

"We have an historic opportunity to restore and protect these waters. This action plan outlines our strategy to protect the environmental, human health, and economic interests of the millions of people who rely on the Great Lakes," said Administrator Jackson. "We're committed to creating a new standard of care that will leave the Great Lakes better for the next generation."

"The Great Lakes are our region's greatest natural resource, and I want to thank President Obama for his commitment to making the restoration of the Great Lakes a national priority," said Wisconsin Governor Jim Doyle, co-chair of the Council of Great Lakes Governors. "Wisconsin is defined by the Great Lakes, and one of our greatest responsibilities is to preserve this important freshwater resource for future generations. This action plan sets a strong course of action as we confront tremendous challenges to not only protect, but also restore the Great Lakes."

"The Great Lakes are one of our country's greatest natural resources and economic assets," said Ohio Governor Ted Strickland, co-chair of the Council of Great Lakes Governors. "We must protect and preserve our lakes for our families and outdoors enthusiasts, as well as the industries that rely on the waterways to transport their goods around the world. I look forward to working with my fellow governors and the Obama administration to continue tackling the challenges facing the Great Lakes now and in the future."

Some 30 million Americans get their drinking water from the Great Lakes, and the lakes also support a multi-billion dollar economy based on fishing, boating and recreational activities. The lakes face significant challenges, including pollution and the threat of harmful species that threaten their health.

President Barack Obama has committed to making Great Lakes restoration a national priority. In February 2009, President Obama proposed \$475 million for a Great Lakes Restoration Initiative, the most significant investment in the Great Lakes in two decades. The action plan, which covers FY 2010 through 2014 and was developed by 16 federal agencies as part of the federal inter-agency task force chaired by Administrator Jackson, will help guide the administration's efforts to implement this historic initiative to restore and protect this natural and economic treasure.

The action plan directs aggressive action under five priority "focus areas" the task force has identified as vital for restoring the Great Lakes. They are:

- **Protection and cleanup of the most polluted areas in the lakes:** The task force will

work with state and municipal partners to clean up toxic hotspots so that these critical “working waterways” are put back to work for healthy fishing and recreation.

□ **Combating invasive species:** Invasive species pose a unique threat to the Great Lakes, and the plan outlines a number of steps to keep such species out of the lakes. For example, recognizing that Asian carp continue to be an emerging threat, we are planning to allocate additional funds under the Initiative to tackle this problem.

□ **Protection of high priority watersheds and reduced runoff from urban, suburban and, agricultural sources:** The Great Lakes are renowned for their beaches. Initiative funding will be targeted toward, among other things, reducing pollution so they can stay open more often for people to enjoy.

□ **Restoration of wetlands and other habitats:** The action plan includes a first-ever assessment of the entire 530,000 acre Great Lakes coastal wetland, to help the task force begin to restore troubled areas; and

□ **Implementation of accountability measures, learning initiatives, outreach and strategic partnerships:** The task force will work closely with the Great Lakes states, non-profits, stakeholder groups and Canada to protect and restore the lakes.

The plan also provides accountability for the administration’s efforts in each of these five priority areas by including measures of progress and benchmarks for success over the next five years.

In November, EPA released a request for proposals (RFP) to solicit applications from a diverse group of participants and partnerships to support the goals of the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative. The deadline for applications was January 29, 2010. Since then, EPA has received more than 1,000 proposals for funding to support Great Lakes restoration activities. Funding through other agencies will be announced separately.

More information on the full plan: <http://www.greatlakesrestoration.us>

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Public Involvement brings the pieces together

