

## **NATIONAL TECHNICAL INFORMATION SERVICE 2020 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.

### **BOARD MEMBERSHIP:**

- Dr. Ajit Gaddam, Advisory Board Chair
- Mr. Aaron D. Burciaga
- Ms. Claire L. Walsh
- Ms. Diana M. Zavala

### **BOARD ACTIVITIES:**

- Public Meeting: June 29, 2020, hosted virtually
- Public Meeting: November 12, 2020, hosted virtually

### **BOARD RECOMMENDATIONS:**

#### **June 29, 2020 Recommendations:**

1. Dr. Gaddam stated that a video conference would be more effective if we needed to continue socially distance and NTIS concurred and state that the video conferencing services was now purchased, and a video conference would be our preferred approach going forward.
2. Ms. Zavala ... mentioned that we should engage with the Executive Leadership Conference in October 2020.
3. Mr. Burciaga stated that to be effective in our outreach NTIS should create case studies that highlighted challenges and results from our work, as well as a one pager that captures potential customer's attention. And NTIS should have a 30 second summary of what we are and why a customer should engage with NTIS. NTIS stated it had case studies and one pager that we would share with the board.
4. Ms. Zavala mentioned that workshops around data literacy, ethics, and privacy assessments are areas that NTIS should consider as potential new target for federal services as these appear to be under served currently.

5. Ms. Zavala proposed putting NTIS in contact with USDA CDO Ted Kaouk, who is USDA CDO and now will lead the federal CDO council. She recommended participation to the ACT-IAC Executive Leadership Conference (Oct. 26-29). Ms. Shaw shared that NTIS had already reached out previously to Mr. Kaouk and would appreciate an introduction.
6. Dr. Gaddam mentioned privacy issues with AI-based face recognition and Ms. Zavala and Mr. Burciaga raised issues as well as about ethics. These are areas that federal agencies would need to tackle as they embrace emerging technologies.
7. Dr. Gaddam stated that NTIS should consider not going to just one Cloud provider so that it could avoid vendor lock in. Ms. McCall agreed that it would be a NTIS goal to avoid lock in and that after the initial migration of NTIS to the Cloud she would look at how NTIS might diversify its Cloud services.
8. Mr. Capella stated that he would be coordinating the minutes of the meeting internally, and then with Dr. Gaddam. He would then post the minutes on the FACA site provided by GSA.

**November 12, 2020 Recommendations:**

1. Ms. Zavala proposed meeting with to discuss approaching the CDO Council and another meeting with USDA CDO Ted Kaouk. Meeting will be scheduled with updates provided at the next FACA meeting
2. Mr. Burciaga offered to assist with the review collateral materials. Current materials will be provided to the Board.
3. Mr. Burciaga asked if NTRL has a future road map for the evolution over the next 3-5 years. Mr. Strickland will share with the Board the 3-year plan once completed.
4. Mr. Burciaga recognized the efforts of the data science team sharing the difference between the June report and the end of year, noting the growth was approximately 500 percent. The data subscription services showed a sharp decline, and he was interested in the background. Ms. Patterson shared that this is in part due the allocation methodology and will research further. Updates will be provided to the Board.
5. Mr. Burciaga asked if there was any thinking toward an NTIS hack-a-thon. He felt that the large trove of data available coupled with the JVP could be the basis for the quarterly or semi-annual hack-a-thon. This may be excellent incubator. This recommendation could allow NTIS to sponsor the “problem du jour” at one of the agencies. NTIS will explore and provide an update at the next FACA meeting.
6. Dr. Gaddam and Mr. Burciaga shared NTIS should explore focusing on cyber specialization and cloud. Further consideration to an IT lead for a Center of Excellence (COE) on automation analytics and AI as well as cyber and cloud. He shared IT should consider having a person lead the COE and supporting the DS team. NTIS will investigate the feasibility of a lead for the COE structure.
7. Mr. Burciaga recommended focusing on awards and applying for them. Nominations could bring NTIS recognition. NTIS should investigate further and incorporate awards into their processes
8. Ms. Zavala recommended the ACT-IAC Innovation Inventory could be incorporated into the project methodology where success stories could be published increasing visibility. NTIS will investigate and provide an update.
9. Mr. Burciaga’s organization focus included the impact of telework. He asked that NTIS consider how post-COVID changed how NTIS operates. He suggested NTIS looks at

provided data for platforms as a JV opportunity – Analytics as a Service; Insights as a Service and Platform as a Service. NTIS will investigate and provide an update.

10. Mr. Burciaga recommended the OPM team meet to whiteboard actions towards the direction of quantified results. He reviewed Slides 22 and 23 recommending what happened as an outcome but shared we did not quantify as “man hours”, “lives saved” or “dollar and cents.” He offered to participate. NTIS will schedule the meeting to include the Board members.
11. Mr. Burciaga recommended NTRL as a Service and NTRL as a governance service. NTIS will investigate and provide an update.
12. Dr. Gaddam focused on the post-COVID actions at NTIS. Post-COVID represents a tremendous opportunity for talent acquisition absent the geographical restrictions. He recommended seeking talent to include new college hire to augment the current staff. NTIS will investigate further and provide an update.
13. Mr. Burciaga shared the largest opportunity should be in the NTRL and data subscription comparing the opportunity to Netflix and iTunes. Mr. Burciaga offered another session to assist with this initiative. NTIS will schedule a session to investigate and explore further.

**Minutes:**

- See Attachment 1 (June 29, 2020 Public Meeting)
- See Attachment 2 (November 12, 2020 Public Meeting)

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Designated Federal Officer  
Acting Director/Deputy Director  
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