RECOMMENDED CHARTER FOR THE IDENTITY ECOSYSTEM STEERING GROUP

1. Identity Ecosystem Steering Group Charter

The National Strategy for Trusted Identities in Cyberspace (NSTIC or Strategy), signed by President Obama in April 2011, acknowledges and addresses a major weakness in cyberspace – a lack of confidence and assurance that people, organizations, and businesses are who they say they are online.[1] Additionally, in the current online environment, individuals are asked to maintain dozens of different usernames and passwords, one for each website with which they interact. The complexity of this approach is a burden to individuals, and it encourages behavior – such as the reuse of passwords – that makes online fraud and identity theft easier. At the same time, online businesses are faced with ever-increasing costs for managing customer accounts, the consequences of online fraud, and the loss of business that results from individuals' unwillingness to create yet another account. Moreover, both businesses and governments are unable to offer many services online, because they cannot effectively identify the individuals with whom they interact. Spoofed websites, stolen passwords, and compromised accounts are all symptoms of inadequate authentication mechanisms.[2]

The Identity Ecosystem envisioned in the NSTIC is an online environment that will enable people to validate their identities securely, but with minimized disclosure of personal information when they are conducting transactions. The vibrant marketplace created by the Identity Ecosystem will provide people with choices among multiple accredited identity providers, both private and public, and choices among multiple credentials. For example, imagine that a student could get a digital credential from her cell phone provider and another one from her university and use either of them to log-in to her bank's website, her e-mail, three social networking sites, four online commerce sites, and so on, all without having to remember dozens of passwords. The added convenience, security, and privacy provided within the Identity Ecosystem will allow additional services to be put online to drive greater economic growth. Notwithstanding the objective to improve identification and authentication in cyberspace for certain types of transactions, not all Internet activities have such needs. Thus, the capacity for anonymity and pseudonymity will be maintained in the envisioned Identity Ecosystem.

A core tenet of the NSTIC is that its implementation must be led by the private sector. The NSTIC calls for the Federal Government to work collaboratively with the private sector, advocacy groups, public sector agencies, and other organizations to improve the processes by which online transactions are conducted. The Strategy itself was developed with substantial input from both the private sector and the American public. The National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST), which has been designated to establish a National Program Office to lead the implementation of the NSTIC, recognizes that a strong and vibrant public-private partnership is necessary to execute the Strategy's vision in a way that supports the wide range of interactions that occur over the Internet. As such, NIST is leading the effort to fulfill the NSTIC's call for government to work in close partnership with the private sector and other relevant stakeholder groups to, "[Establish a steering group to] administer the process for policy and standards development for the Identity Ecosystem Framework in accordance with the Guiding Principles in

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[1] The full Strategy can be found at: http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/rss_viewer/NSTICstrategy_041511.pdf

[2] National Strategy for Trusted Identities in Cyberspace, The White House, April 2011, 1.

[the] Strategy. The steering group will also ensure that accreditation authorities validate participants' adherence to the requirements of the Identity Ecosystem Framework."[3]

1.1. Mission

The Mission of the Steering Group shall be to govern and administer the Identity Ecosystem Framework in a manner that stimulates the development and sustainability of the Identity Ecosystem. The Steering Group will always operate in accordance with the NSTIC's Guiding Principles.

1.1.1. Objectives

The activities and work products of the Steering Group shall be conducted in support of the following objectives:

- Ensure that the Identity Ecosystem and Identity Ecosystem Framework conform to the four NSTIC Guiding Principles (as detailed in section 1.3).
- Administer the process for policy and standards development and adoption for the Identity Ecosystem Framework and, where necessary establish policies standards for the Identity Ecosystem Framework.
- Adopt and, where necessary, establish standards for the Identity Ecosystem Framework.
- Certify that accreditation authorities validate adherence to the requirements of the Identity Ecosystem Framework.

1.1.2. Purpose

The purpose of the Steering Group shall be to develop and administer the process for policy and technical standards development for the Identity Ecosystem Framework. The Steering Group shall bring together all of the interested stakeholders, both in private and public sectors, to confirm that the Identity Ecosystem Framework provides a minimum baseline of privacy, security, interoperability, and ease-of-use through standards and policies, without creating unnecessary barriers to entry. The Steering Group shall facilitate the fulfillment of the NSTIC goals to develop a comprehensive Identity Ecosystem Framework; build and implement the Identity Ecosystem; enhance confidence and willingness to participate in the Identity Ecosystem; and, support the long-term success and sustainability of the Identity Ecosystem.[4]

The Steering Group shall not be a standards development body, but rather an organization that promotes the development of standards and develops policies that serve to accelerate the development and adoption of the Identity Ecosystem.

1.2. Scope of Activities

The activities of the Steering Group shall be limited to achievement of the objectives listed in this charter. Additional activities that are not considered essential to completion of these objectives may

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[3] National Strategy for Trusted Identities in Cyberspace, The White House, April 2011, p. 25.

[4] National Strategy for Trusted Identities in Cyberspace, The White House, April 2011, p. 31.

be conducted when determined appropriate through Steering Group consensus. The scope of the Steering Group's activities is summarized in the sections that follow.

1.2.1. Adopt and Establish Standards

The Steering Group shall establish forums and procedures to review applicable standards and adopt those that support achievement of the NSTIC vision, conform to the Guiding Principles, and meet other established requirements. Additionally, the Steering Group will recommend standards be established when gaps are identified. The Steering Group shall advocate for standards to be established and adopted in a timely manner and be sufficient to keep pace with emerging technology and market trends.

1.2.2. Develop and Maintain Policies

The Steering Group shall establish the mechanisms necessary to develop, implement, and maintain policies that are appropriate for use in the Identity Ecosystem and conform to the NSTIC Guiding Principles. The Steering Group shall support the timely development and implementation of policies.

1.2.3. Develop and Maintain Processes for the Accreditation of Identity Ecosystem Entities

The Steering Group shall develop, foster, and implement a clear process for accrediting entities within the Identity Ecosystem as well as develop clear testing and certification criteria by which adherence to the recommended standards and policies may be measured.

The Steering Group shall ensure that this accreditation process is applied fairly to all Identity Ecosystem participants.

1.2.4. Develop and Maintain Identity Ecosystem Operating Procedures

The Steering Group shall develop, administer, and maintain Identity Ecosystem Operating Procedures to facilitate interoperability between and among the Identity Ecosystem participants. Operating Procedures refers to the set of policies and standards created by the Steering Group as accepted baseline requirements for participating in the Identity Ecosystem Framework.

1.3. *Adherence to the NSTIC Guiding Principles*

The Identity Ecosystem Steering Group, its components, and its members shall at all times operate in accordance with four Guiding Principles set forth in the NSTIC. They are:

Identity solutions will be privacy-enhancing and voluntary. The Identity Ecosystem will be grounded in a holistic, integrated implementation of the Fair Information Practice Principles to promote the creation and adoption of policies and standards that are privacy-enhancing, including the preservation of the capacity to engage in anonymous and pseudonymous activities online. Ideally, identity solutions within the Identity Ecosystem should preserve the positive privacy benefits associated with offline identity-related transactions while mitigating some of the negative privacy aspects. Finally, participation in the Identity Ecosystem will be voluntary: the government will neither mandate that individuals obtain an Identity Ecosystem credential nor that companies require Identity Ecosystem credentials from consumers as the only means to interact with them. Individuals shall be free to use an Identity Ecosystem credential of their choice, provided the credential meets

the minimum risk requirements of the relying party, or to use any non-Identity Ecosystem mechanism provided by the relying party. Individuals' participation in the Identity Ecosystem will be a day-to-day—or even a transaction-to-transaction—choice.

Identity solutions will be secure and resilient. Identity solutions within the Identity Ecosystem will provide secure and reliable methods of electronic authentication by being grounded in technology and security standards that are open and collaboratively developed with auditable security processes. Credentials within the Identity Ecosystem are: issued based on sound criteria for verifying the identity of individuals and devices; resistant to theft, tampering, counterfeiting, and exploitation; and issued only by providers who fulfill the necessary requirements. Identity solutions must detect when trust has been broken, be capable of timely restoration after any disruption, be able to quickly revoke and recover compromised digital identities, and be capable of adapting to the dynamic nature of technology

Identity solutions will be interoperable. Interoperability encourages and enables service providers to accept a wide variety of credentials and enables users to take advantage of different credentials to assert their identity online. Two types of interoperability are recognized in the Identity Ecosystem: there will be standardized, reliable credentials and identity media in widespread use in both the public and private sectors; and if an individual, device, or system presents a valid and appropriate credential, any qualified relying party is capable of accepting and verifying the credential as proof of identity and attributes.

Identity solutions will be cost-effective and easy to use. The Identity Ecosystem will promote identity solutions that enable individuals to use a smaller number of identity credentials across a wide array of service providers. These identity solutions must be cost-effective for users, identity and attribute providers, and relying parties. Furthermore, identity solutions should be simple to understand, intuitive, easy-to-use, and enabled by technology that requires minimal user training.[5]

1.4. Operating Principles

The Steering Group shall adhere to the following four operating principles.

1.4.1. Openness and Transparency

The work of the Steering Group, including all working groups and committees, shall facilitate broad participation and be publically accessible. The Identity Ecosystem Steering Group shall take the following steps to provide openness and transparency in all its proceedings:

- All documents, drafts, and minutes of meetings shall be posted on a publicly available Internet site.
- All meetings of all governing bodies shall be open to public attendance and leverage virtual attendance options to maximize broad and public participation.
- Technologies should be leveraged to create user-friendly and broad avenues for participation in all proceedings and administrative functions.

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[5] National Strategy for Trusted Identities in Cyberspace, The White House, April 2011, 25, 11-14.

1.4.2. Balance

The Steering Group shall strive to achieve balanced representation among all stakeholder groups regardless of their size, financial status, or sector alignment/affiliation.

1.4.3. Consensus

Consensus—general agreement among members—shall be a core value of the Steering Group. All processes instituted by the Steering Group shall require participants to consider all views, proposals and objections, and endeavor to reconcile them Although positions of leadership, such as committee chairs, are likely to serve as the primary drivers of consensus, all Steering Group participants must be (1) cooperative in the consensus process; (2) constructive; and (3) respectful when providing feedback or dissenting opinions. In the event that consensus cannot be reached, voting, by an established method, shall be used to make Steering Group decisions.

1.4.4. Harmonization

The Steering Group shall encourage harmonization of standards and policies and shall always strive to recognize the impacts of policy and standards on all stakeholders in the Identity Ecosystem.

1.5. Membership

Membership in the Steering Group shall be open to organizations and unaffiliated individuals (Members) that have an interest in the development of the Identity Ecosystem. A Member organization may have more than one individual within its organization participate in Steering Group activities; however, it shall designate only one individual as its representative for the purposes of voting in Plenary proceedings.

A Member shall join as a Participating or Observer Member as defined below:

- **Participating Members**. Participating Members are those stakeholders who actively participate in the Steering Group and the work of the Plenary, its Standing Committees, and Working Groups. The criteria for active participation such as attendance quotas or other measurable conduct shall be defined in the By-laws. Participating Members shall have a vote in all Plenary proceedings.
- **Observing Members**. Observing Members are those stakeholders who do not meet the criteria for active participation, but want to maintain a presence in the Steering Group. Observing Members may still contribute to the work of the Plenary, its Standing Committees, and Working Groups, but they shall not be permitted to vote in Plenary proceedings.

1.6. Organizational Structure

The Steering Group shall be composed of two bodies: the Identity Ecosystem Plenary and the Identity Ecosystem Management Council. The Plenary and the Management Council shall be collectively responsible for achieving the Steering Groups objectives.

1.7. Establishment

The NSTIC, which was signed by President Obama in April 2011, called for the establishment of a private sector-led steering group to administer the development and adoption of the Identity

Ecosystem Framework. The Steering Group receives its authority to operate from the active participation of its membership. .

1.7.1. Resources and Duration

The Steering Group shall be initiated with the support of NIST. Following the initiation period, the Steering Group will transition to a self-sustaining organization. The Management Council shall be responsible for managing the Steering Group's resources and procuring services once the Steering Group is self-sustaining, as necessary..

2.   Identity Ecosystem Plenary

Participation in the Plenary shall be open to all Members. The primary responsibilities of the Plenary shall be to review and recommend technical standards for adoption establish and maintain the procedures/policies that govern the Identity Ecosystem, develop, and establish accountability measures to promote broad adherence to these procedures, and facilitate the ongoing operation of the Steering Group. The Plenary will consist of Standing Committees, Working Groups, and individual members. The Participating Members (as defined in section 1.5 and in associated By-laws) of the Plenary shall be responsible for voting on recommendations provided by the Standing Committees and Working Groups and will participate in elections for Management Council Delegates, Management Council Officers, and the Plenary Chair.

2.1.1.   The Plenary Chair

The Plenary shall be headed by the Plenary Chair. The Chair shall be responsible for directing the actions, managing the votes, and providing general leadership to the Plenary. Nominees for this position shall be approved by the Nominations Committee and selected by simple majority vote of the Participating Members that comprise the Plenary.

2.1.2.   Plenary Standing Committees

Standing Committees shall be responsible for addressing and coordinating ongoing/permanent issues. Standing Committees shall produce their own charters and voting procedures which shall be approved by the Management Council. Additional measures may be taken by the Management Council to provide balanced and experienced representation on the Standing Committees. All recommendations proposed by the Committees shall be reviewed and approved by the Privacy Standing Committee prior to submission to the Plenary for approval.

The designated Standing Committees shall be:

- **Policy Coordination Committee.** The Policy Coordination Committee is responsible for coordinating policies to facilitate and promote the establishment of the Identity Ecosystem and the rules for participation.
- **Standards Coordination Committee.** The Standards Coordination Committee is responsible for coordinating, reviewing, and recommending the adoption of technical standards to facilitate interoperability within the Identity Ecosystem.
- **Accreditation Coordination Committee.** The Accreditation Coordination Committee is responsible for coordinating accreditation requirements for Identity Ecosystem participants.
- **Privacy Coordination Committee.** The Privacy Coordination Committee is responsible for seeing that other Committees' and Working Groups' work products adhere to the Privacy-enhancing and Voluntary Guiding Principle. To that end, this group should have a "gatekeeper" function; meaning no recommendations on policies, standards or other work products should be reviewed or approved by the Plenary unless first approved by the Privacy Coordination Committee. This committee should be staffed by individuals with extensive experience in the privacy field, and comprising a balance of viewpoints across a spectrum of experience, including advocacy organizations and the private sector.
- **Nominations Committee.** The Nominations Committee is responsible for evaluating candidate qualifications to serve as the Chair on the Plenary and Management Council or as a Delegate (Stakeholder group and At-Large). Selection criteria outlined in this Charter will

enable the selection of persons that can work for the welfare of the Identity Ecosystem as a whole, while minimizing self-interested conduct that could hinder the effectiveness and legitimacy of the Steering Group.

The Management Council may establish more Standing Committees as necessary to accomplish the work of the Steering Group.

2.1.3. Plenary Working Groups

Members shall establish domain expert Working Groups as necessary to accomplish the work of the Steering Group. Working Groups may be proposed by the Plenary or the Management Council and shall be officially established by the Management Council. Participation in and meetings of the Plenary Working Groups shall be open to Participating and Observing Members; however, only Participating Members may vote on work products and recommendations.

Working Groups shall produce their own charters and voting procedures which shall be approved by the Management Council. Based on their work, Working Groups may propose recommendations and work products for consideration by the Plenary. All recommendations proposed by the Working Groups shall be reviewed and approved by the Privacy Standing Committee prior to submission to the Plenary for approval.

The following Working Groups shall be established by the Plenary and Management Council:

- **Usability and Accessibility Working Group.** This working group is responsible for evaluating technologies and identity solutions within the Identity Ecosystem to confirm that they are easy-to-use and accessible for all potential users, in accordance with the NSTIC Guiding Principles.
- **Security Working Group.** This working group is responsible for evaluating technologies and identity solutions within the Identity Ecosystem to confirm that they meet applicable requirements for confidentiality, integrity, and availability, and are capable of timely restoration after any disruption. The work of this group should be conducted in accordance with the NSTIC Guiding Principle for the security and resilience of identity solutions.
- **International Coordination Working Group.** This working group is Responsible for reviewing and, where appropriate, coordinating alignment with similar international identity standards and policies.

Additional Working Groups may be established by the Management Council or the Plenary as necessary to accomplish the work of the Steering Group.

3. Identity Ecosystem Management Council

The Management Council Management Council shall provide guidance to the Plenary on the broad objectives envisioned by the Strategy; produce workplans to prioritize work items and monitor progress; procure necessary resources; and ensure that Steering Group work activities align with the NSTIC Guiding Principles and Goals.

All recommendations from the Plenary Working Groups and Standing Committees shall be voted on by the stakeholder group delegates elected to the Management Council. The voting process will be structured and defined in the Steering Group By-laws established during the initial meeting of the Steering Group. The Management Council shall also be the final ratification authority in the Steering Group.

3.1. Management Council Composition

The Management Council shall be composed of 14 delegates, who are elected from the stakeholder groups and two at-large delegates. The Management Council may include additional stakeholder groups at any time as necessary.

In addition to Management Council Delegates, the Management Council shall have three (3) officers:

- **The Chair:** This position shall provide general leadership to the Management Council; oversee votes, and direct meetings of the Management Council. The Chair shall be a non-voting officer.
- **The Vice-Chair:** This position shall assist the Steering Group in maintaining alignment with NSTIC objectives and the NSTIC Guiding Principles. The Vice-Chair shall be a non-voting officer.
- **The Ombudsman:** This position shall be responsible for upholding the NSTIC Guiding Principles and Steering Group charter, representing and advocating for consumers or other individuals and underrepresented groups, safeguarding against individual stakeholder groups exerting excessive influence, monitoring and reporting on Management Council activities, managing grievances from the Plenary, and facilitating public comment and citizen outreach. The Ombudsman shall be a non-voting officer.

3.2. Management Council Selection

The Management Council Delegates and Officers shall be selected through the following processes:

- **Delegates:** Management Council Delegates shall be selected through a general election held within each Stakeholder Group represented in the Plenary. The nomination of each candidate for the election will be approved by the Nomination Committee.
- **At-Large Delegates:** The election or selection process of At-Large Delegates shall be determined by the Steering Group during its initial meetings, as with all Management Council Delegates nominees shall be approved by the Nominations Committee.
- **Chair**: The Chair of the Management Council shall be selected through a general election of the Identity Ecosystem Plenary. The nomination of each candidate for election shall be approved by the Nominations Committee.
- **Vice-Chair:** This position shall be filled by the Director of the NSTIC National Program Office

- **Ombudsman:** This position shall be provided by the Secretariat. The criteria for selection shall be established by the Management Council.

Management Council positions, selections, elections, and appointments shall be conducted in accordance with By-laws created by the Steering Group during its initial meetings.

3.2.1. Delegate Selection Criteria

The Management Council Delegates (Stakeholder Group and At-Large) shall be selected in accordance with the following criteria:

- **Visionary Capability**: Delegates shall be capable of understanding and contributing to the multi-disciplinary aspects of the Identity Ecosystem and the specific goals of the Strategy.
- **Team Effectiveness**: Delegates shall be capable of working effectively as a team within the scope of the Management Council.
- **Outreach**: Delegates shall be able to clearly communicate the actions of the Management Council to their individual Stakeholder Group to facilitate consensus building and support the work of the Steering Group.
- **Expertise**: Delegates shall be recognized experts in their fields of endeavor.
- **Commitment:** Delegates shall be able to commit to contribute sufficient time and effort to accomplish Management Council activities.

3.2.2. Stakeholders

For the purposes of Management Council Delegate selections Members shall self-identify into one of the following 14 stakeholder groups:

- **Privacy & Civil Liberties.** This group focuses on the protection of individuals' privacy and civil liberties.
- **Usability & Human Factors.** This group focuses on technologies and solutions that are usable and incorporate the human, cognitive, and social properties unique to the characteristics of humans.
- **Consumer Advocates.** This group focuses on addressing the interests and accessibility of consumers and other individual end-user populations.
- **U.S. Federal Government.** This group focuses on the interests of the departments and agencies that comprise the U.S. Federal Government. Under its various forms and component programs, the government acts as an identity provider, attribute provider, and relying party. This group's Management Council Delegate will be responsible for advocating for the Federal Government as a Stakeholder; unlike the Vice-Chair who advocates on behalf of the NSTIC itself.
- **U.S. State, Local, Tribal, and Territorial Government.** This group focuses on the interests of the various state, local, tribal, and territorial governments that exist within the U.S.
- **Research, Development & Innovation.** This group focuses on research, teaching, and technology development in support of the Identity Ecosystem.
- **Identity & Attribute Providers.** This group focuses on the processes and technologies associated with establishing, managing, and securing digital identities and attributes.

- **Interoperability.** This group focuses on supporting interoperability within the Identity Ecosystem, inclusive of Trust Framework Providers and standards development organizations.
- **Information Technology (IT) Infrastructure.** This group focuses on IT infrastructure relevant to the functioning of the Identity Ecosystem, inclusive of different types of communications and network traffic, as well as virtual and distributed functions that produce and provide hardware, software, and IT systems and services.
- **Regulated Industries.** This group focuses on industries covered by sector-specific regulations that may be affected by the development of the Identity Ecosystem Framework.
- **Small Business & Entrepreneurs.** This group focuses on the impact of the development of the Identity Ecosystem Framework on small businesses and individual business owners/operators.
- **Security.** This group focuses on IT security services that support the confidentiality, integrity, and availability of identity solutions
- **Relying Parties.** This group focuses on transaction decisions based upon receipt, validation, and acceptance of an entity's authenticated credential(s) and identity attributes.
- **Unaffiliated Individuals.** This group consists of any individual who does not self-identify into one of the other stakeholder groups.

The Steering Group shall periodically review the list of designated stakeholder groups to confirm that it accurately reflects the broad array of Identity Ecosystem stakeholders and provides balanced representation for all parties. The Steering Group may add, modify, remove, or otherwise alter the stakeholder groups as it deems necessary.

4. Secretariat

The Secretariat shall serve as the administrative body of the Steering Group. In this role, the Secretariat shall manage the internal operations of the Steering Group to include human and financial resources, meeting coordination, communications, and material support and interaction with external organizations. The Secretariat shall be responsible for maintaining transparency, openness, and alignment with the Guiding Principles in all Steering Group operations. The Secretariat shall appoint an individual to act as the Identity Ecosystem's Ombudsman.