

the policy challenge finale

Responding to the Startup America Policy Challenge

Hosted by
The Center for Policy Informatics
School of Public Affairs
Arizona State University

Monday, May 21, 2012
1:00 to 7:00 PM

The George Washington University

Innovative and viable proposals designed to help federal agencies best enable the use of new technologies in education, clean energy, and healthcare and medicine.

policychallenge.asu.edu



THE POLICY CHALLENGE

Responding to the Startup America Policy Challenge

The Arizona State University School of Public Affairs has been working with 16 [partner institutions](#) to design a national policy proposal competition in response to the [Startup America Policy Challenge](#) from the White House. Through a network of schools and organizations, [The Policy Challenge](#) asks students, faculty, practitioners, and the general public to propose innovative, viable, and actionable plans for administrative change to be implemented at the U.S. Department of Education, U.S. Department of Energy, or U.S. Department of Health and Human Services that will break down barriers to entrepreneurship and best enable the use of new technologies in education, clean energy, and healthcare, respectively. The Policy Challenge Finale is the culmination of the competition where the finalist teams present their proposals to a panel of high-level expert judges and the winners are announced at the awards reception.

The Policy Challenge is an example of a participatory challenge platform with a public intent – an emerging approach that can increase the efficiency, effectiveness, and legitimacy of the public policy development and implementation process in an increasingly complex, interconnected, and resource-constrained governance environment. It seeks to give voice to, tap into, empower, and focus the vast array of expertise, experience, and democratic surplus possessed by diverse individuals throughout the nation in the governance process to develop innovative and practical solutions to shared public challenges. As such, the finale will be followed by an all-day National Science Foundation workshop on *Participatory Challenge Platforms with a Public Intent: Critical Reflections and Future Practices*. This workshop is designed to critically reflect on and envision the future of participatory challenge platforms research and practical applications and implications.

The Policy Challenge Finale consists of about 65 participants ranging from students, faculty, and practitioners from academia, government, and industry from across the nation who have experience and expertise in education, clean energy, healthcare, public policy and administration, technology and innovation, and participatory challenge platforms. In attendance are The Policy Challenge partners, finalist team members, judges, and content experts; representatives from the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy, U.S. Department of Education, U.S. Department of Energy, and U.S. Department of Health and Human Services; and key individuals from interested public agencies, universities, research institutions, foundations and private organizations, such as the National Science Foundation, U.S. Department of Agriculture, U.S. Department of Commerce, U.S. General Services Administration, World Bank, Penn State – Harrisburg, University of Virginia, Virginia Tech, and Alliance for Innovation.

AGENDA

The George Washington University
Cloyd Heck Marvin Center | Continental Ballroom
800 21st Street NW | Washington, DC 20037

Monday, May 21, 2012

Registration 11:00 – 1:00 p.m.

Finalists’ Proposal Presentations and Judging Panel 1:00 – 4:30 p.m.

Eight finalist teams – three in education, two in energy, and three in healthcare (listed on the following pages) – present their final proposals to a panel of high-level expert judges (listed below) from academia, government, and industry.

[Megan Cantwell](#) – Senior Consultant for Special Initiatives, AASCU Grants Resource Center

[Aneesh Chopra](#) – Former U.S. Chief Technology Officer & Associate Director for Technology, White House Office of Science & Technology Policy

[Kannan Grant](#) – Director, Office of Technology Commercialization, University of Alabama – Huntsville

[Elizabeth Hart-Wells](#) – Assistant Vice President & Director, Office of Technology Commercialization, Purdue Research Foundation

[John Karaagac, PhD](#) – Lecturer, School of Public & Environmental Affairs, Indiana University – Bloomington

[Hon. Linda Lopez](#) – Arizona State Senator

[Rick Murray](#) – Chief Executive Officer, Arizona Small Business Association

[Costis Toregas, PhD](#) – Lecturer, Trachtenberg School of Public Policy & Public Administration; Lead Research Scientist, Computer Science Department, School of Engineering & Applied Science; President Emeritus, Public Technology Institute

Awards Reception 5:30 – 7:00 p.m.

The winning teams are announced and remarks are given by individuals central to The Policy Challenge. Attendees have the opportunity to mingle over hors d’oeuvres and drinks.

[Jonathan Koppell, PhD](#) – Dean, College of Public Programs, Arizona State University

[Aneesh Chopra](#) – Former U.S. Chief Technology Officer & Associate Director for Technology, White House Office of Science & Technology Policy

[Carmel Martin](#) – Assistant Secretary for Planning, Evaluation & Policy Development, U.S. Department of Education

[Richard Kauffman](#) – Senior Advisor to Secretary Chu, U.S. Department of Energy

[Farzad Mostashari, MD, ScM](#) – National Coordinator for Health Information Technology, U.S. Department of Health & Human Services

FINALIST TEAMS

** Indicates Presenters*

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Open-Source R&D Investment in Assessment Technology

David Nitkin – MA Candidate in Economics & Education, Teachers College, Columbia University*

Lauren McDade – MA Candidate in Politics & Education, Teachers College, Columbia University*

Data on student learning will play an increasingly important role in 21st century education. However, our current technology for collecting data on student growth is woefully inadequate. The critical thinking, problem solving, and communication skills that students need to succeed in tomorrow's economy simply cannot be assessed through scan and bubble exams. Accordingly, the federal government should invest in basic research for assessment technology and item development for the next generation of student achievement tests. Furthermore, they should award this money through a competitive "crowd-sourced" structure that unleashes the power of networks to drive innovation. Such a policy would draw diverse stakeholders, bring out-of-discipline perspectives to bear, and unleash a tidal wave of innovation – all at a relatively low cost to taxpayers.

Foreign Students Fostering Innovation in the U.S. Labor Market: Removing the "Intent to Return" Clause

Heath Brown, PhD – Assistant Professor, Seton Hall University

Paul "Chip" Palamattam – MPA/MA International Relations Student, College of Arts & Sciences and John C. Whitehead School of Diplomacy & International Relations, Seton Hall University*

Subarna Saha – MPA/MA International Relations Student, College of Arts & Sciences and John C. Whitehead School of Diplomacy & International Relations, Seton Hall University

Smijai Peter – MPA/MA International Relations Student, College of Arts & Sciences and John C. Whitehead School of Diplomacy & International Relations, Seton Hall University*

Alejandro Rodas – MPA/MA International Relations Student, College of Arts & Sciences and John C. Whitehead School of Diplomacy & International Relations, Seton Hall University*

David Smith – MPA/MA International Relations Student, College of Arts & Sciences and John C. Whitehead School of Diplomacy & International Relations, Seton Hall University*

The position of the U.S. as a global technology leader is threatened by an increasingly competitive, high-skilled labor market and our current visa policies put the country under a comparative disadvantage. One particular visa policy creates a barrier which requires students who want to come to the U.S. to pledge their "intent to return" home after they complete their studies. Despite this fact, many students remain in the U.S. after earning degrees from the country's finest universities, and go on to contribute to the Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) sector – creating new patents, products, and companies that employ Americans. In an increasingly competitive global market for

talent, “intent to return” is an unnecessary, unethical, and unproductive policy. Without reducing any threat to national security, the “intent to return” policy threatens to deter foreign students from applying to U.S. universities and instead enroll in universities in Europe, Australia, and Asia. Removing this procedure will send the right message to the best and brightest students in the world that the U.S. is the leading nation for innovation and technology. Then, establishing a more coherent national policy for attracting talent can begin with a public-private partnership between the U.S. Department of Education, social media companies, and universities which will facilitate and accelerate the recruitment of the best foreign students.

Community Compost Collectors – Turning Waste Into Food

Kathleen Walston Pagan, AICP – Senior Planner, Alachua County Growth Management*

Chris Cano – Business Entrepreneur, Gainesville Compost

Ryan Gruanke – MS Student, School of Natural Resources & Environment, University of Florida

With input from staff of Alachua County Sustainability & Waste Alternatives

This project provides sustainability education while benefiting the environment, improving participant health with active living, and providing job training including teamwork and task completion. This proposal urges the U.S. Department of Education’s High Schools Initiative or other similar program to create micro-grants to fund “Community Compost Collectors” – a pedal-powered community compost system providing food scrap collection service to local schools, faith communities and restaurants, turning food waste into premium soil amendments for local community gardeners. With an “all of government” approach there is the potential for Green Schools or a similar program to expand the current work of the “Corps Network” and other similar youth training programs to include food waste composting to restore soil for gardens in urban areas while saving valuable landfill space.

DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

Incentivizing Utility Solar System Leasing Programs

Sam Shannon – MPA Student, Robert M. La Follette School of Public Affairs, University of Wisconsin – Madison*

Sam Harms – MPA Student, Robert M. La Follette School of Public Affairs, University of Wisconsin – Madison*

In order for America to transition from fossil fuels to cleaner sources of energy for electricity, the federal government must promote the adoption of emerging technologies, such as solar PV, that can be prohibitively expensive to purchase. Under our proposal, DOE and FERC would encourage electric utilities to lease solar PV modules to businesses and homeowners, accelerating the transition. Customers would simply pay a monthly fee to use the electricity produced, making renewable power more affordable. Utilities would be able to put any excess onto the grid and apply all generated electricity toward their state or any future federal RPS requirements.

SOLARCONNECT: An Online Social-Media Platform to Reduce the Information Costs for Prospective Adopters of Residential Solar PV

Varun Rai, PhD – Assistant Professor of Public Affairs & Mechanical Engineering, University of Texas – Austin*

George B. McGuirk – Masters Student, Energy & Earth Resources Program, University of Texas – Austin*

Alaina Heine – Undergraduate Student in International & Global Studies, University of Texas – Austin*

Federal, state, and local financial incentives have helped accelerate the adoption of solar photovoltaic (PV) technologies in the residential sector; however, adoption has been slow and currently is below 2% of the market potential. Adopting PV requires substantial time and effort to sort through vast amounts of readily available, but often, contradictory information. Research shows that direct interactions with previous adopters significantly reduces that time and effort and accelerates the rate of adoption. Our solution, SolarConnect, will increase the rate of PV adoption by providing a centralized and authoritative source of information and an online social media platform to facilitate direct peer-to-peer communication.

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

The Sterling Choice Five Year Healthy Lifestyle Program Reduced Cardiac Operative Procedures

Stanley B. Wolfe, MD, FACC – Preventative Cardiologist, St. John Macomb Hospital; Founder & Director, Sterling Choice*

Patricia DeGrazia, RN – Cardiovascular Nurse and Director of CV Services, Grace Hospital; Nutrition Educator, Sterling Choice*

Ruth T. Savoy-Moore, PhD – Director of Biomedical Investigation, Medication Education, St. John Hospital & Medical Center*

Marlaina Dixson – Exercise Physiology Specialist, Sterling Choice

Obesity exacerbates the risks of high blood pressure (BP), high circulating lipids, elevated blood sugar and Type 2 Diabetes Mellitus (DM). Together with inactivity, mental stress, smoking and poor diet choices, these major cardiovascular disease (CVD) risk factors have increased morbidity and mortality from CVD, stroke and many cancers. The leading cause of deaths in the United States is CVD at over 800,000 per year, or about 1 in every 3 deaths. The estimated annual and direct overall costs approach \$273 billion and \$444 billion, respectively. In 2009 the American Diabetes Association (ADA) extrapolated that in the next 25 years, the number of Americans with (diagnosed and undiagnosed) DM will soar from 23 to 44 million and that annual spending will skyrocket from \$45 to \$171 billion. Failure to attenuate risk factors will result in more cases and higher costs. We believe that modest weight reduction through healthy lifestyle changes will empower individuals to significantly reduce their risk for CVD morbidity and mortality, and enable diabetics to minimize the consequences of this disease.

A New Dimension of Service to the Country

Nathan L. Anspach, MA, FACMPE, FACHE – Senior Vice President, Physician Network & Accountable Care, John C. Lincoln Health Network*

Caryn J. Unterschuetz, MHI, RN-BC – Educational Consultant & Organizational Development, John C. Lincoln Health Network*

Nancy Sherman – Director, Network Finance, John C. Lincoln Health Network

Rising healthcare costs make it imperative that our nation takes action to reduce unnecessary readmissions and improve the healthcare of our Medicare community. We believe that significant reductions in healthcare expenses can be achieved through the deployment of healthcare transition coaches. Training recently discharged veteran medics and corpsmen to be transitions coaches will build upon their military skills and can be expected to result in significant savings for the Medicare program.

Utilizing Web-Based Tools to Manage Chronic Illness in the Medicaid Population

Jamille Fields – JD/MPH-HP Student, School of Law/School of Public Health, Saint Louis University*

Natalie Stoltz – JD/MPH-HP Student, School of Law/School of Public Health, Saint Louis University*

The Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) should adopt a web-based tool to assist Medicaid patients diagnosed with pre-diabetes or Type 2 diabetes in managing their illness. Web-based tools empower patients to participate in their care management, have been demonstrated to work in a cost-effective manner, and provide an opportunity for HHS to reduce healthcare spending while improving health outcomes. These aims are particularly timely as the Affordable Care Act will provide Medicaid coverage for an estimated additional 15.9 million Americans by 2019. Further, this web-based tool will help HHS attain its Healthy People 2020 goal of reducing the prevalence of diabetes and its economic burden.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Policy Challenge Partners have been incredible allies along this process and were integral in spreading the word of the policy proposal competition, fostering informed participation, identifying judges and content experts, and supporting the finale: Alliance for Innovation; American Association of State Colleges and Universities; AASCU Grants Resource Center; Association of Public & Land-grant Universities; Center for Policy Informatics at Arizona State University; George Mason University, School of Public Policy; The George Washington University, The Trachtenberg School of Public Policy & Public Administration; Indiana University – Bloomington, School of Public & Environmental Affairs; National Association of Schools of Public Affairs & Administration; New York University, Robert F. Wagner Graduate School of Public Service; State University of New York – Albany, Rockefeller College of Public Affairs & Policy; Syracuse University, Maxwell School of Citizenship & Public Affairs; University of California – Berkeley, Richard & Rhoda Goldman School of Public Policy; University of Maryland, School of Public Policy; University of Washington, Evans School of Public Affairs; University of Wisconsin – Madison, Robert M. La Follette School of Public Affairs.

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University of Wisconsin – Madison, Robert M. La Follette School of Public Affairs

Logistics

The George Washington University, Trachtenberg School of Public Policy & Public Administration

Short-Form Judges

[Osita Afoaku, PhD](#) – Clinical Professor, School of Public & Environmental Affairs, Indiana University – Bloomington

[Dorothy Browne, PhD](#) – Professor and Dean, Ethelyn R. Strong School of Social Work, Norfolk State University

[Megan Cantwell](#) – Senior Consultant for Special Initiatives, AASCU Grants Resource Center
Richard Dunfee, Executive Director, Grants Resource Center

[Elizabeth Hart-Wells](#) – Assistant Vice President and Director, Office of Technology Commercialization, Purdue Foundation

Rene Herron, PhD – Interim Dean and Assistant Professor, Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University – Worldwide

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[Rick Murray](#) – Chief Executive Officer, Arizona Small Business Association

[Anand Radhakrishnan, PhD](#) – Senior Engineer and Principal Investigator, NASA and Department of Defense Contractor

[Richard J. Smith, PhD](#) – Assistant Professor, School of Social Work, Wayne State University

[Caron St. John, PhD](#) – Dean and Professor, College of Business Administration, University of Alabama – Huntsville

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