**Kantara Initiative’s response to
the Department of Commerce’s Notice of Inquiry concerning
Models for a Governance Structure for the National Strategy
for Trusted Identities in Cyberspace
v0.0.8 - 2011-07-13**

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Noting the Department of Commerce’s Notice of Inquiry requesting public comment from all stakeholders on potential models for the formation and structure of the Steering Group, the Kantara Initiative’s *NSTIC Discussion Group* hereby offers this considered contribution to the strategy, in accordance with the Department’s request.
These comments were submitted on 2011-07-21*«or -22 at latest»*

**Background to this contribution**:

The Kantara Initiative has in its mission the fostering of activities whichbridge and harmonize identity communities through actions that will help ensure secure, identity-based, online interactions while preventing misuse of personal information so that networks will become privacy protecting and more fundamentally trustworthy environments. Kantara Initiative stakeholders represent a variety of communities including: enterprise, end-user (consumer), international research, education and government agencies as well as open source initiatives. It is this variety of representation that provides Kantara Initiative with a unique perspective for the NSTIC PO’s consideration.

Driven by this mission and bolstered by the broad spectrum of representation which makes up the Kantara Initiative community, the Kantara Initiative’s *NSTIC Discussion Group* (hereafter KI *NDG*) was formed 2011-06-21 in order to give Kantara members a forum in which to discuss and respond to the publication of the above-referenced NOI.

The responses offered below reflect a consensus position achieved within the KI *NDG*. It is the Discussion Group’s hope that its responses are informative, constructive and valuable to the NSTIC PMO as it determines the way to establish the NSTIC Steering Group. Our responses include example and recommendation based upon subject matter expert experience ranging from domestic to international coverage.

We have been careful to distinguish between an consensus opinion formed by the KI *NDG* and references to other bodies within the Kantara Initiative and the Kantara organization in general. The membership of the KI *NDG* during the period of the preparation of this NOI Response was:

**Contributor Affiliation Rôle**

BRENNAN, Joni Kantara Initiative Executive Directrice

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*1. Structure of the Steering Group*

1.1. Given the Guiding Principles outlined in the Strategy, what should be the structure of the Steering Group? What structures can support the technical, policy, legal, and operational aspects of the Identity Ecosystem without stifling innovation?

KI *NDG*’s response:

The Kantara Initiative community provides one such model that encourages innovation. The development of common standards, assessment criteria, and operational integration is a method of developing the combination of diverse policies, legal requirements into an operational structure of governance. As such our recommendation is to consider the Kantara Initiative as a potential host for the Steering Group and ancillary groups, or should that not find favor, to at least be reflective of Kantara’s model, for establishing the initial structure of the Steering Group.

There will be occasions when the nature of a decision facing the Steering Group will be such that a different set of capabilities are required to advise, and in a very few cases direct, the Steering Group on matters of a geo-political/legal/commercial/governmental nature. Selection of individual able to contribute such required competence should be blind to anything except the best person/organization for the job, regardless of whether they are currently participating in the NSTIC initiative or not.

A Steering Group support structure should comprise representatives from expertise areas (technical, legal, policy, privacy, security, operational) but also stakeholder representation from the ecosystem participants: public sector, private sector, end-user, and international.

The Steering Group itself should not make decisions in the above areas, unless there are conflicts or inconsistencies between the expert groups that would affect the viability of the Identity Ecosystem Framework. In addition to being ultimately responsible for the specification of the Identity Ecosystem Framework, the Steering Group should also facilitate the creation of sub-groups of experts and stakeholders, offer guidance to the sub-groups, and co-ordinate communication and overall direction between the sub-groups.

1.2. Are there broad, multi-sector examples of governance structures that match the scale of the Steering Group? If so, what makes them successful or unsuccessful? What challenges do they face?

KI *NDG*’s response:

The Kantara Initiative Leadership Council is such a body in actual operation which is successful because it’s a ‘light hand on the tiller’. The Leadership Council is comprised of representatives from each of the Work and Discussion Groups, and the Leadership Council serves the needs of the Work and Discussion Groups with the simple guidance of ensuring that activities are within the Kantara Initiative Mission and Operating Procedures. While the activity and guidance are light-touch in nature the Leadership Council operates under the guidance of the Kantara Initiative Operating Procedures. These Operating Procedures are ‘managed’ by both the Work and Discussion Groups and the the Leadership Council and may be amended through an all member vote, which is transparent and each organization, company or government agency has only one vote.

A perfectly rational modification of this model would be to recognize that Steering Group members need not necessarily also be members of any subordinate expert or working group, since the Steering Group’s role is primarily one of oversight and governance, and hence Steering Group members may bring specific skills to facilitate that objective.

One significant challenge (though not necessarily faced at the outset) is that there are occasions when the global  nature and ramifications of a decision facing the Steering Group is such that a different set of capabilities are required to advise and in very few cases direct, the Steering Group. These matters are typically of a geo-political/legal/commercial/governmental nature.  There are existing global forums where 'issues of gravity' are discussed and a consensus generally reached.  The OECD (with its Advisory Committee structures such as ITAC), and ISACA are examples of forums that could be leveraged to act as a Reference Group (a 'UN of Identity' if you will) to advise and if necessary direct to the Steering Group in rare instances.  Since most jurisdictions already contribute funding and expertise, the US Government/NSTIC Program may not necessarily need to provide additional funds, but rather 'directing' existing funds. The World Bank is similar in terms of the way wealthier nations contribute funding (which offers the potential opportunity for these nations to direct some of their funding to the ‘UN of Identity’ notion, although it is not known whether there are formal equivalents to the OECD’s Advisory Committees (e.g. ITAC).

As is generally accepted in these international fora, the Reference Group's capability and competence should be blind to anything except the best person/organization for the job, regardless of whether they are currently participating in the NSTIC initiative or not.

1.3. Are there functions of the Steering Group listed in this Notice that should not be part of the Steering Group’s activities? Please explain why they are not essential components of Identity Ecosystem Governance.

KI *NDG* offers no response.

1.4. Are there functions that the Steering Group must have that are not listed in this notice? How do your suggested governance structures allow for inclusion of these additional functions?

KI *NDG*’s response:

The NSTIC Program Office should provide logistical support and funding for Steering Group activities unless or until there is a reliable, stable, long term and independent funding model to support the continuing functioning of the SG. The Steering Group’s ability to drive the development of an interoperable and trusted Identity Ecosystem should be under-pinned by granting it some key mandates:

a) authority to act as a point of receipt, review, validation and (subject to applicable criteria being met) recommendation for requests for allocation of funds from within the NSTIC Project Office’s budget for larger projects and for pilots.;

b) specific budget expenditure capability enabling the Steering Group to disburse seed money to enable itself to reach a “steady state”;

c) sponsorship of competitions for open implementation (such as the crypto required[[1]](#footnote-1));

d) *«any more??»*

In all cases above, expenditure limits to be determined at the time the Steering Group is formally inaugurated.

Pilots would include establishing standards, infrastructural elements (equivalent to Kantara’s Identity Assurance Framework) and technical conformity ‘test beds’ (e.g. Kantara’s Interoperability Certification Program - <http://kantarainitiative.org/wordpress/programs/iop-certification/> - and the European Telecommunications Standards Institute’s ‘Plug Test’ programme - <http://www.etsi.org/Website/OurServices/Plugtests/home.aspx>). In essence, the Steering Group would oversee the development of the design principles by which NSTIC can be realistically implemented – NSTIC in itself is not, and was not meant to be, detailed enough to provide guidance. The Steering Group provides a single community enabling a centralized policy structure that provides a base for an integrated approach to governance.

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1.5. To what extent does the Steering Group need to support different sectors differently?

KI *NDG*’s response:

It is critical that all sectors be able to effectively review and provide input to Steering Group decisions, and how the Steering Group achieves that may differ by sector. For example, the Steering Group may need to foster public sector participation differently than commercial or LEO or Academic sectors' participation. The Steering Group’s extent of support should however be limited to monitoring balance and weight of representation and assisting the Steering Group sub-groups to achieve such balance/weight.

1.6. How can the Steering Group effectively set its own policies for all Identity Ecosystem participants without risking conflict with rules set in regulated industries? To what extent can the government mitigate risks associated with this complexity?

KI *NDG*’s response:

One method is to ensure sector representation of regulated industries. In addition, by having a set of design principles that will work across all areas, regulated industries should all applaud and embrace strong identity mechanisms that actually work. The Steering Group needs to have a mechanism that ensures decisions are checked by industry sector regulatory authority for compliance prior to implementation / adoption. Implicit in this is acknowledgement that, as the NSTIC fulfillment leads to improved practices, there may need to be made changes in specific industry sectors whereby today’s practices, rules and possibly legislation will be superseded and therefore will require revision accordingly.

Additionally, Government needs to be prepared to support those Steering Group/sub-group proposals, which may require changes in legislation. Whilst conflict with rules (i.e. commonly accepted obligations) may be over-ruled by the Steering Group it clearly cannot ignore or take action which opposes or contravenes existing legislation or regulations, although proposals to revise legislation may be made and appropriately prosecuted through its Government representation.

1.7. To what extent can each of the Guiding Principles of the Strategy–interoperability, security, privacy and ease of use—be supported without risking “pull through”[[2]](#footnote-2) regulation from regulated participants in the Identity Ecosystem?

KI *NDG*’s response:

The Steering Group needs to have in place a mechanism that ensures any decision by a sub-group is checked by industry sector regulatory authority for compliance. Additionally, Government needs to be prepared to support Steering Group / sub-group proposals which may require changes in legislation (e.g. to exonerate liability).

This question is generally addressed by KI *NDG*’s response to Question 1.6.

1.8. What are the most important characteristics (e.g., standards and technical capabilities, rulemaking authority, representational structure, etc.) of the Steering Group?

KI *NDG*’s response:

Above all, the Steering Group must demonstrate experience in consensus-driven governance and proactive/directed communication. Other characteristics e.g. standards and technical capabilities, rulemaking authority, representational structure, etc. of the Steering Group have been answered in previous Questions and the need for these characteristics are understood to have already been brought out.

The Steering Group must be composed of individuals with established expertise and experience in relevant fields, ideally with cross-cutting knowledge.

The Steering Group should be at a reasonable size to enable flexibility and cross communications by global experts in an open and transparent environment that is consensus, and not lobby, driven. The work of the Steering Group should be completely open and transparent to the public. It must be balanced so that the agendas of any one sector do not dominate the legitimate interests and participation of any others.

Decisions should be based on more than a simple majority, so as to ensure strong multi-sector support for critical foundational elements.

1.9. How should the government be involved in the Steering Group at steady state? What are the advantages and disadvantages of different levels of government involvement?

KI *NDG*’s response:

The Federal and state governments certainly represent a stakeholder both for agency applications and security and law enforcement. That stakeholder group should have the same rights as other stakeholder groups represented on the Steering Group, with no disproportional vote or influence over any other participant. More specifically, the government stakeholder should not have any special powers, e.g., veto power, over decisions of the Steering Group.

In addition, the US Government must accept the implications of the NSTIC and endeavor not to invent Federal-specific requirements – a practice which at present imposes unreasonable burdens, including operating inefficiencies, upon many private entities and organizations.

In particular, we are concerned about some legal implications of Government participation in the ‘steady state’. Government participation should avoid to the fullest extent possible any consequential legal ramifications upon the Steering Group (the Federal Advisory Committee Act is one concern), other than normal civil law obligations and implications. The Steering Group should not be seen as a Government contractor – Government should (neglecting its possible role in any legislative revisions) be involved as a peer stakeholder and participant in a public forum in which the Government chooses to participate and from which it makes its own determinations as to what it gleans from its participation and how it chooses to apply that knowledge.

Our concerns regarding legal implications also apply to the initial set-up stage.

*2. Steering Group Initiation*

2.1. How does the functioning of the Steering Group relate to the method by which it was initiated? Does the scope of authority depend on the method? What examples are there from each of the broad categories above or from other methods? What are the advantages or disadvantages of different methods?

KI *NDG*’s response:

Of the options available, KI *NDG* does not support the third (c). The first choice (a) may offer the advantage of a ‘clean sheet’, but might be considered to be somewhat idealistic and would most likely require greater effort to initiate and to frame. In addition with choice (a) there exists the problem, both economic- and personnel-related, of creating yet another identity-centric group in which interested organizations would be expected to participate.

Therefore, option (b) is KI *NDG*’s preferred path, subject to the host organization being open to the responsibilities for enabling the representation which we believe the Steering Group requires. Principle amongst those responsibilities would be the commitment to ensure the openness and democracy which the Steering Group must have.

Such an existing stakeholder would be able to offer a template charter with a common baseline of rules e.g. adherence to Guiding Principles, voting, election process, term, financial support disclosure, balance of representation (in a specified range), activity/performance audit against GPs and specific charter items. Other rules would reflect protocols whereby a Working Group would elect a representative to serve on the Steering Group for a set period (e.g. a year) and similar terms.

Adoption of these principles would employ some of but not all of the Kantara Initiative’s procedures indicated elsewhere in this response.

In its response to Question 1.1, the KI *NDG* has already indicated that the Kantara Initiative be considered a potential host for the Steering Group and its ancillary groups. Such a move would require formal discussion with and agreement from the Kantara Initiative Board of Trustees.

2.2. While the Steering Group will ultimately be private sector-led regardless of how it is established, to what extent does government leadership of the group’s initial phase increase or decrease the likelihood of the Strategy’s success?

KI *NDG*’s response:

Government leadership can be effective as an initial focal point, so long as the Steering Group has appropriate representation and is open to all legitimate interested parties. This should include international representation to ensure that strategies developed do not adopt a ‘bunker’ mentality. Therefore, the government's involvement in the initial phase is essential to ensure that these principles and goals are firmly embedded in the operating rules and subsequent activities of the organization. That said, overly heavy-handed involvement, after initial organization, could stifle independent thinking on the part of the Steering Group and subordinate Working Groups..

The initial development of the Steering Group needs to provide the means to create and underpin the desired infrastructure, principally through investment in infrastructural elements which do not favour any particular provider or consumer entities, groups, interests.

To that extent, the US Government should see itself as a philanthropic benefactor, neither leading nor directing, and should steadfastly resist any group dynamics tending towards looking to the government to take such a role.

2.3. How can the government be most effective in accelerating the development and ultimate success of the Identity Ecosystem?

KI *NDG*’s response:

Essentially, by facilitating, but not leading or directing the Steering Group. As we have indicated elsewhere, sponsoring developments across a wide range of activities, in response to the Steering Group’s recommendations, will provide the seed funding for essential building blocks and long-term components of the strategy.

2.4. Do certain methods of establishing the Steering Group create greater risks to the Guiding Principles? What measures can best mitigate those risks? What role can the government play to help to ensure the Guiding Principles are upheld?

KI *NDG*’s response:

The self-created route suggested might potentially carry greater risks but these can be mitigated by requiring adoption of and adherence to general principles as part of each Working Group’s Charter (see KI *NDG*’s response to 2.1).

Excessive involvement of government, either through a multiplicity of agencies or other representatives, or by the participation of any overly-vociferous representation, would jeopardize the development and operation of an open, representative and democratic process.

Government’s role, therefore, and in keeping with its strong desire for industry to take the lead, should be to observe those same rules whilst acting as the R&D sponsor for the open solutions which must come from this initiative.

2.5. What types of arrangements would allow for both an initial government role and, if initially led by the government, a transition to private sector leadership in the Steering Group? If possible, please give examples of such arrangements and their positive and negative attributes.

KI *NDG*’s response:

We see a phased implementation for the strategy. As it is now, Government is setting itself up to act as a facilitator. In doing so, it is reasonable that it sets initial high-level objectives, but if it seeks industry participation and ultimately a programme which is industry-driven, Government must be prepared to release the reins. KI *NDG* considers that Government’s role therefore has four distinct perspectives:

1. Facilitating the formation of the Steering Group and its associated Work Groups, etc., to ensure the three fundamental principles (openness, democracy, broad representation);
2. Adopting a role as an equal and proportionally-represented partner within the Steering Group and its Working Groups, when the transition in an industry-led group;
3. Managing the NSTIC budget, in response to the recommendations of the Steering Group, in order to foster the development of the desired infrastructure (e.g. to help motivate/fund federal agency relying parties to bring forth participating applications and payments to contracted identity providers);
4. Managing proposed changes to legislation or international agreements and seeing them through the legislative and, potentially, international agreement-making processes.

*3. Representation of Stakeholders in the Steering Group*

3.1. What should the make-up of the Steering Group look like? What is the best way to engage organizations playing each role in the Identity Ecosystem, including individuals?

KI *NDG*’s response:

Given the diverse and extensive number of national and international organizations involved in the identity ecosystem one way to engage these organizations is by engaging the organizations they belong to as a group. A number of industry organizations represent members of the identity ecosystem. At a high level these organization could include organizations that represent:

1. Identity Providers;
2. Attribute Providers;
3. Consumer, Privacy and Civil Liberty organizations;
4. Communication and information technology infrastructure and application providers;
5. Certification and Education Organizations;
6. Standards Development Organizations;
7. The United States Federal Government agencies;
8. State, local, tribal, territorial and other sovereign governments’ agencies;
9. Representatives of industry & government who would bring forward target applications (i.e. Users and Consumers of online services reliant upon being able to trust an identity).

The Steering Group should include the leadership and/or subject matter, policy and operational expertise of these organizations, including CxOs and those with in-depth experience and knowledge, among others. It should include individuals with experience of large scale infrastructure and systems to support users in the millions. If the individuals participating in the Steering Group represent multiple organizations then it will be more representative of the identity ecosystem as a whole. In addition the Steering Group should leverage work groups and think tanks to address particular areas of interest and challenge in establishing an Identity Ecosystem that meets NSTIC’s goals.

3.2. How should interested entities that do not directly participate in the Identity
Ecosystem receive representation in the Steering Group?

KI *NDG*’s response:

The Steering Group should be fully transparent and open to public observation and public comment periods. It should maintain at large seats for individuals who can provide leadership and expertise. These interested entities and their representative individuals should express their interest, be involved in the NSTIC process and be invited to participate as at large members via a selection process to be determined. That being said the nature of the “indirect” participation and the process by which “at large’ members become part of the Steering Group needs further consideration.

3.3. What does balanced representation mean and how can it be achieved? What steps can be taken to guard against disproportionate influence over policy formulation?

KI *NDG*’s response:

Balanced participation means that representation on the Steering Group is spread across the stakeholders in the ecosystem outlined in 3.1. Representatives should apply to be part of the Steering Group. The Steering Group should have a limit to the number of individuals from a particular firm/organization. In addition the Steering Group should look to have members of organizations small and large, for profit and not-for profit, also it should include a balance of providers and users. It can be achieved by allocating seats on the Steering Group to individuals that represent different components of the identity ecosystem. Besides wide representation across the stakeholders of the identity ecosystem a supermajority could be used in order to establish policy and guard against disproportionate influence.

3.4. Should there be a fee for representatives in the Steering Group? Are there appropriate tiered systems for fees that will prevent “pricing out” organizations, including individuals?

KI *NDG*’s response:

The Steering Group will require funding in order to operate. It should be funded at least in part from NSTIC seed funding – it is very likely that fees for membership will preclude representation of the most vulnerable stakeholder group: citizens. One of the values of using an established group as a host for the Steering Group is that start-up costs should be lower.

Fees, if they are put into place at all in later phases, should be structured so that the Steering Group does not discriminate against organizations based on size. Many organizations use tiered pricing in order to make participation open and the Steering Group should make it a policy to achieve this goal.

The Steering group should not require any participant to submit a fee for providing their own service. Not only might a fee dissuade participation but it could also enable “lobbying” activities…. (he who contributes the most money wins,)

3.5. Other than fees, are there other means to maintain a governance body in the long term? If possible, please give examples of existing structures and their positive and negative attributes.

KI *NDG*’s response:

Other and multiple sources of funding can be used, besides or in addition to fees, to maintain the governance body (aspects of this have been previously addressed in KI *NDG*’s response to Question 1.4). These can include:

a) Federal funding:

* 1. Positive - Provides the ability to initiate the Steering Group without worrying about funding;
	2. Positive- Provides an ability to engage best possible organizations and individuals without a concern about ability to pay (e.g. option for “scholarships”);
	3. Negative – Current funding and budget environment;
	4. Negative – Possibly contrary to the concept of “industry led”.

b) Sponsorships, donations, directed funding (unrelated to membership):

1. Positive – Provides additional revenue source and improves the ability to have tiered fees;
2. Negative – Could be seen as potentially commercializing initiative;
3. Negative – Requires administration;
4. Negative – generally one-off and thus not a stable source of sustained funding.

As noted in our response to Question 1.2, leveraging a recognized international body such as the OECD, that already receives funding from the majority of the world’s more wealthy jurisdictions, offers an alternative method for indirect funding. The World Bank is similar in terms of the way wealthier nations contribute funding (which offers the potential opportunity for these nations to direct some of their funding for the ‘UN of Identity’ notion, although it is not presently known whether there are formal equivalents to the OECD’s Advisory Committees (e.g. ITAC).

A further approach would be to encourage other countries and their respective private enterprises to contribute towards the infrastructural and piloting costs, perhaps to the extent of matching the $17.5M budget nominally proposed by the US Government.

As noted in our response to Question 1.2, leveraging a recognized international body such as the OECD or ISACA, that already receives funding from the majority of the world’s more wealthy jurisdictions, offers an alternative method for indirect funding (for the proposed Reference Group at least).

3.6. Should all members have the same voting rights on all issues, or should voting rights be adjusted to favor those most impacted by a decision?

KI *NDG*’s response:

Whatever different weights might be given would inherently bias the outcome. Instead, it is critical to create equal, adequate and effective representation of all stakeholder groups. The voting rights among the Steering Group should be shared equally within the group. Only one vote per participating organization can be made with a pre-determined designated representative. Participants that have a conflict of interest on any subject (such as a vendor voting on a certain proprietary technology or on a topic concerning a competitor) should recuse themselves from any discussion and related voting.

3.7. How can appropriately broad representation within the Steering Group be ensured? To what extent and in what ways must the Federal government, as well as State, local, tribal, territorial, and foreign governments be involved at the outset?

KI *NDG*’s response:

This has been largely answered in KI *NDG*’s responses to Questions 1.2, 1.9, 3.1, and 4.1. However, it should be noted that the subject NOI, though open and publicly available, was only promoted within the US. International input from foreign government agencies and other non-US entities was made possible through organizations such as Kantara that have a significant international membership, and this has enabled them to ‘be involved at the outset’ (i.e. in this phase of NOI’s and workshops). However, the NSTIC program should redouble its efforts to promote the existence of the program and the pending commencement of real work to the broader international community, using commercial industry, academic and diplomatic channels.

In addition, there should be a review, conducted annually, to determine if a significant stakeholder group is not or is under represented. If so, the composition of the Steering Group must be adjusted using the same process that initiated the Steering Group, or its successor process.

*4. International*

Given the global nature of online commerce, the Identity Ecosystem cannot be isolated from internationally available online services and their identity solutions. Without compromising the Guiding Principles of the Strategy, the public and private sectors will strive to enable international interoperability. In order for the United States to benefit from other nations’ best practices and achieve international interoperability, the U.S. public and private sectors must be active participants in international technical and policy fora.

No single entity, including the Federal government, can effectively participate in every international standards effort. The private sector is already involved in many international standards initiatives; ultimately, then, the international integration of the Identity Ecosystem will depend in great part upon private sector leadership.

4.1. How should the structure of the Steering Group address international perspectives, standards, policies, best practices, etc.?

KI *NDG*’s response:

The remit of the Steering Group should be the development of an Identity Ecosystem that can be adopted Internationally (i.e. it would be a US-initiated strategy with international participation and contribution leading to a system that can be implemented internationally).

To this end, the remit, governance and composition of the Steering Group must commit to its eventual deliverables (be they standards, operating rules, MoUs, processes, etc.) being fully open and royalty free with the standards and reference model held in trust for the community by an independent body (either a new body or a suitable existing body). An example is the Open Group holding reference model for UNIX POSIX.

4.2. How should the Steering Group coordinate with other international entities (e.g., standards and policy development organizations, trade organizations, foreign governments)?

KI *NDG*’s response:

In a “light-touch” manner; our belief is that standards and policy development organizations, trade organizations and foreign governments have vested interests in their current standards, solutions and the status-quo, none of which to-date have delivered a strong, trusted, global Identity Ecosystem.

Thus the current direction of listening to and taking submissions from all interested parties is the correct approach and the resultant Identity Ecosystem will need to be new and radically different in approach from anything implemented today.

We stress our view that it is the approach that is the key to NSTIC’s successful fulfillment - we believe that all of the fundamental technology already exists. The current direction should be augmented with a directed, proactive program of outreach and engagement, reporting and interaction.

4.3. On what international entities should the Steering Group focus its attention and activities?

KI *NDG*’s response:

While largely answered in KI *NDG*’s response to Question 3.1, significant experience can be gained from those entities (government agencies, global organizations comprising commercial online businesses and Telcos with IdPs and RPs, EU groups such as ENISA) with deployments currently in play, in pilot and in Proof of Concept situations, together with the relevant SDO’s from which the standards for such deployments emanate.

Other key international groups are those involved in privacy, accepting that the concept of privacy, particularity for the individual citizen, is far more mature outside of the US.

This should probably involve embracing a fundamental design goal of “user centric identity” and the principle of the individual citizen being in control of their identity (please refer to the work by the Jericho Forum in this area[[3]](#footnote-3)), as increased control of identity for individuals (an NSTIC objective) reduces the sharing and exposure of data, and in this way fundamentally provides increased privacy protection.

It must be recognized that, once personal information is shared, the need for privacy transcends national borders and privacy protections will need to be considered in this context.

4.4. How should the Steering Group maximize the Identity Ecosystem’s interoperability internationally?

KI *NDG*’s response:

International interoperability should be a design goal for the Identity Ecosystem. If it can operate as a source of strong identities, trusted internationally, this will benefit governments, global businesses and global e-commerce.

We believe that the Steering Group should, as a priority, set a series of design goals that can be seen as being beneficial by the US government, other sovereign governments, global businesses, citizens, denizens and other interested parties.

We foresee some common goals that would gain international support, these being that:

a) Global governments can consume and trust a strong identity not issued by them;

b) Businesses will being able to accept and trust a strong identity not issued by them;

c) Standards and other deliverables from the Identity Ecosystem are able to be replicated in any country, meaning they are vendor and country neutral, and fully open;

d) All crypto used by the Identity Ecosystem is fully open and royalty-free and all code is published to ensure there is no suggestion of a back-door.

We commend the example of the open competition for AES and a great example of openness fostering the adoption of a new strong crypto standard that rapidly achieved global acceptance and use.

The Kantara membership, which reflects a significant proportion of those with experience of deploying online services, knows that the challenge of interoperability goes deeper (conformance with standards and deployment profiles) and wider than an agreed series of design goals. The European Interoperability Framework offers an insight into this with the matrix (shown below) which should be studied by the Steering Group as it installs itself.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Delivery Processes** | **Interoperability Levels** |
| **Political** | **Legal** | **Organizational** | **Semantic** | **Technical** |
| Business Management |  |  |  |  |  |
| Customer Management |  |  |  |  |  |
| Channel Management |  |  |  |  |  |
| Technology Management |  |  |  |  |  |

4.5. What is the Federal government’s role in promoting international cooperation within the Identity Ecosystem?

KI *NDG*’s response:

This question overlaps considerably with Questions 3.7 and 4.2, and we refer to Kantara’s responses thereto, for a fuller response.

To promote the involvement of people and organizations in the Steering Group and Identity Eco-system based on their ability to contribute rather than factors such as their ability to fund their representatives’ participation or their country of origin.

This may mean that the NSTIC Project Office and the Steering Group will need to fund travel and expenses for people involved including international travel.

the NSTIC Project Office / Federal Government will need to provide seed funding until a reference architecture is agreed – and probably a one year transition funding after the first identities are issued.

1. envisaged here is an open, global competition, as was held for AES. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. NSTIC solutions will ideally be used across all industries, including both regulated and unregulated industries. “Pull through” refers to the concept that when implementing an NSTIC solution that touches some regulated industries, individuals or firms implementing those solutions would then find that they are subject to the specific regulations for those industries. This could create a confusing policy and legal landscape for a company looking to serve as an identity provider to all sectors. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. http://www.opengroup.org/jericho/Jericho%20Forum%20Identity%20Commandments%20v1.0.pdf [↑](#footnote-ref-3)