

Identity Ecosystem Steering Group

Proposed Charter

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Summary:

This is a proposed Charter for the “Identity Ecosystem Steering Group” as initially described by the National Strategy for Trusted Identities in Cyberspace (NSTIC)¹. This proposal takes as input the “Recommendations for Establishing an Identity Ecosystem Governance Structure”² as well as the direct responses to the Notice of Inquiry into the NSTIC Governance Structure such as those provided by PayPal³, the W3C⁴, ISOC⁵, Kantara⁶, and others⁷. Also referenced are the “Recommended Charter for the Identity Ecosystem Steering Group”⁸, the “Comments on U.S. NSTIC Steering Group Draft Charter and Related Governance Issues” released by the Open Identity Exchange (OIX)⁹, the “Identity Ecosystem Steering Group By-Laws Discussion Document”¹⁰ as published by the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST), as well as discussions convened by NIST and held at events such as the Internet Identity Workshop, and ad hoc conversations with various collaborators.

Restrictions:

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¹ http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/rss_viewer/NSTICstrategy_041511.pdf

² <http://www.nist.gov/nstic/2012-nstic-governance-recs.pdf>

³ http://www.nist.gov/nstic/governance-comments/Paypal_Signed_Rev_2011-07-24_NSTIC_Governance_Response.pdf

⁴ http://www.nist.gov/nstic/governance-comments/World-Wide-Web_nsticnoi.pdf

⁵ <http://www.nist.gov/nstic/governance-comments/Internet-Society-nstic-noi-response-jul2011-isoc-final.pdf>

⁶ http://www.nist.gov/nstic/governance-comments/Kantara_Brennan_NSTIC-Governance-NOI-KI%20NDG-response-V200.pdf

⁷ <http://www.nist.gov/nstic/governance-comments.html>

⁸ http://www.nist.gov/nstic/reports/SG_Draft_Charter.pdf

⁹ <http://openidentityexchange.org/sites/default/files/OIXAdvisoryBoardReport2012-1-CommentsonNSTICSteeringGroupDraftCharterandRelatedGovernanceIssues.pdf>

¹⁰ http://www.nist.gov/nstic/reports/Discussion_Draft_By-laws_V2.pdf

1. Preamble

[**TODO:** Insert high-level overview, keeping the text short to allow the Mission, etc. to speak for itself. Clarify the terms: NSTIC, Identity Ecosystem, Steering Group as they are confusing to the naïve reader as well as being misleading even to those involved. Provide a quick high-level introduction to the organization structure. Consider including a rough guide on how work is initiated through to it being published.]

2. Definitions

[**TODO:** Add definitions as needed. Ensure consistency across all foundational documents.]

3. Mission

The overall mission of the Identity Ecosystem Steering Group (“Steering Group”) is to support and otherwise facilitate the operation of an effective, interoperable framework for trusted online identities that is based on open standards and is built and managed by broad multi-stakeholder involvement.

3.1. Purpose

The specific purpose of the Steering Group is to develop and administer the process for standardized policy, operational, and education support for the Identity Ecosystem Framework. It realizes this purpose by convening an ongoing functional body comprised of interested stakeholders that operate in an open and transparent manner such that decisions are achieved via consensus.

3.2. Objectives

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

- Develop a functional Identity Ecosystem Framework that defines a set of interoperable standards, risk models, privacy and liability policies, requirements, and accountability mechanisms that provide a reliable structure to the Identity Ecosystem
- Leverage existing standards and, only where necessary, encourage the establishment of new standards for use within the Identity Ecosystem Framework.
- Administer the process of adoption and ongoing management of the Identity Ecosystem Framework.

- Support relevant accreditation authorities in validating adherence to the requirements of the Identity Ecosystem Framework.

3.3. Adherence to the NSTIC Guiding Principles

The 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 Recommendations for Establishing an Identity Ecosystem Governance Structure 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.

4. Scope of Activities

The activities of the Steering Group shall be limited to achievement of the objectives identified in this charter. Additional activities related to the Mission may be conducted when determined appropriate by the Steering Group. The specified scope of the Steering Group's activities is summarized in the sections that follow.

4.1. Evaluate and Adopt Existing Standards

The Steering Group shall establish forums and procedures to review applicable open standards and adopt those that support the Mission and conform to the NSTIC Guiding Principles. Additionally, the Steering Group may recommend that standards be established when gaps are identified between what is available and what is needed to achieve its Mission.

4.2. Develop and Maintain Operational 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 encourage and advocate for the implementation of applicable policies.

4.3. Develop and Maintain Processes for the Accreditation for Implementers of the Identity Ecosystem Framework

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

4.4. 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.

4.5. Out of Scope Activities

The Steering Group shall not be a technical standards development body, but will rely on open technical standards that are developed at other open, transparent, multi-stakeholder standards development organizations. When necessary, the Steering Group may encourage the development of new technical standards within other organizations, but the development will not take place within the Steering Group.

5. Operating Principles

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

5.1. Openness and Transparency

The Steering Group shall encourage broad participation in its work, including all working groups and committees, and ensure that its work is publically accessible. The 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 available at a location that is accessible via the public Internet.
- All meetings shall be open to public attendance and leverage virtual attendance options to maximize public, multi-stakeholder participation.
- All reasonable efforts shall be made to facilitate public, multi-stakeholder participation in Steering Group work and administrative functions.

5.2. Balance

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

5.3. Consensus

The default means for making decisions within the Steering Group shall be by consensus as typified by general agreement among members and the absence of sustained opposition. Decisions to be made by voting, and the mechanisms thereof, are identified within the By-Laws.

5.4. Harmonization

The Steering Group shall encourage harmonization of existing standards and policies, taking into account their impact across all stakeholders.

6. 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 official representative for the purposes of voting and other processes requiring a delegated authority on behalf of the Member organization.

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 shall be defined in the By-Laws.
- **Observing Members.** Observing Members are those stakeholders who do not meet the criteria for active participation, but want to remain engaged in the Steering Group. Observing Members may still contribute to the work of the Plenary, its Standing Committees, and Working Groups as defined in the By-Laws.

7. Organizational Structure

The Steering Group shall be composed of two bodies: the Identity Ecosystem Plenary and the Identity Ecosystem Management Council. While they each have separate duties, the Plenary and the Management Council shall be collectively responsible for achieving the Steering Groups objectives. These bodies are supported by an administrative organization known as the Identity Ecosystem Secretariat.

7.1. Steering Group Plenary

The Steering Group Plenary (Plenary) is comprised of 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 Framework, develop and establish accountability measures to promote broad adherence to these procedures, and facilitate the ongoing operation of the Steering Group. The principle work of the organization takes place

within Standing Committees and Working Groups chartered for specific purposes within the Plenary. Members engaged with one or more committees or working groups are designated Participating Members. The Participating Members of the Plenary shall be responsible for ratifying the final recommendations provided by the Standing Committees and Working Groups, and will be responsible for seating the Plenary Officers and Management Council.

7.1.1. The Plenary Officers

The Plenary Officers shall provide general leadership to the Plenary as is customary for their positions as well as executing any specific actions defined within the By-Laws. The Officers are to be selected by the Participating Members of the Plenary as defined within the By-Laws.

7.1.2. Plenary Standing Committees

Standing Committees shall be responsible for addressing and coordinating ongoing activities that cross various areas of the Steering Group and its work. Participation in and meetings of the Plenary Standing Committees shall be open to all Members, with approval of Standing Committee output reserved for Participating Members. The Plenary must approve the output from a Standing Committee in order for it to become official output of the Steering Group.

As it is integral to the healthy operation of the Steering Group, the initial Standing Committee shall be:

- **Guiding Principles Standing Committee.** The Guiding Principles Standing Committee is responsible for ensuring the work that takes place within the Plenary adheres to the NSTIC Guiding Principles. This committee shall be comprised of individuals with extensive experience across all stakeholder groups, effectively balancing viewpoints across a spectrum of experience, including advocacy organizations, regulators, and the private sector. Due to the foundational nature of the Guiding Principles, this committee ensures that charters for Standing Committees and Working Groups adhere to the NSTIC Strategy as well as the mission and principles of the Steering Group. The Guiding Principles Standing Committee shall be Chaired by the Ombudsman (see section 7.2.3).

Additional Standing Committees may be created by the Plenary according to the process outlined in the By-Laws.

7.1.3. Plenary Working Groups

Working Groups shall be established as necessary to accomplish specified work of the Steering Group. Participation in and meetings of the Plenary Working Groups

shall be open to all Members, with approval of Working Group output reserved for Participating Members.

Working Groups may propose recommendations and work products that focus on issues related to the broader Identity Ecosystem that are intended for publication beyond the Steering Group itself. The Plenary must approve the final output from a Working Group in order for it to become official output of the Steering Group.

Working Groups are created by the Plenary according to the process outlined in the By-Laws.

7.2. Identity Ecosystem Management Council

The Management Council is responsible for the health and effective balance of the organization and for ensuring the Steering Group works according to its Mission. It shall be comprised of Participating Members of the Steering Group as seated by the Plenary by a process defined within the By-Laws. The Management Council shall provide overall leadership for the Steering Group such as providing guidance on the objectives envisioned by the NSTIC, prioritizing work items, and monitoring as well as reporting on progress. Also included in its remit are the legal and financial responsibilities necessary to ensure the continued operation of the Steering Group.

7.2.1. Management Council Composition

The Management Council shall be composed of Participating Members from the Steering Group Plenary. The Management Council must represent the breadth of stakeholders involved in the Identity Ecosystem, and will endeavor to ensure an effective balance is maintained between their interests in all of its work, deliberations, decisions, and actions. An organization shall not have more than one of its employees or delegated representatives on the Management Council at a time.

7.2.2. Management Council Selection

Participating Members of the Steering Group Plenary selects the members of the Management Council following a process detailed within the By-Laws.

7.2.3. Management Council Officers

The following list of Plenary Officers shall provide general leadership to the Management Council as is customary for their positions as well as executing any specific actions defined within the By-Laws. The selection process of the Management Council Officers is defined within the By-Laws.

- Chair – Elected by the Management Council and is a full voting member of the Management Council.

- Vice-Chair – Appointed by NIST and is a non-voting member of the Management Council.
- Secretary – Elected by the Management Council and is a full voting member of the Management Council.
- Ombudsman – Appointed by the Secretariat and is a non-voting member of the Management Council.
- Plenary Chair – Represents the Plenary activities and is a non-voting member of the Management Council.

7.3. 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 for the Plenary, including its Standing Committees and Working Groups. The Secretariat shall be responsible for maintaining transparency, openness, and alignment with the Guiding Principles in all Steering Group operations. The Secretariat shall report to and operate under the direction of the Management Council.

The Secretariat will be responsible for appointing the Ombudsman, a non-voting Participating Member of the Plenary. The Ombudsman shall ensure effective stakeholder balance across the Steering Group and its work. As such, the Ombudsman will be responsible for representing and advocating for consumers or other individuals and underrepresented stakeholders, safeguarding against individual stakeholder groups exerting excessive influence, managing grievances from the Plenary, and facilitating public comment and citizen outreach. The Ombudsman shall be a non-voting officer of the Management Council and the Chair of the Guiding Principles Standing Committee.

8. 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.

8.1. 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.

Appendix A: Change Log

Date	Name	Comment
June 10, 2012	J. Trent Adams	Version 1 created.
August 7, 2012	J. Trent Adams	Branched to version 2, folding in comments since the previous draft. Changed status to: "Discussion Draft" to support broader circulation.
August 12, 2012	J. Trent Adams	Modified draft to align with current discussions. Changed the distribution notice to allow for unlimited distribution.
August 13, 2012	J. Trent Adams	Minor editorial corrections.
August 14, 2012	J. Trent Adams	Clarified that the Plenary Chair is a non-voting member of the Management Council.