

# Executive summary, roadmap, and recommendations

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Federal Committee on Statistical Methodology

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# A Once-in-a-Generation Opportunity

American Rescue Plan (ARP) and Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) provide unprecedented resources to improve America's infrastructure and support economic resilience and long-term growth

- We need to:
  - Ensure we're using taxpayer dollars wisely and effectively
  - Quickly and accurately aggregate data on program performance
  - Leverage data as a strategic asset
  - Enable evidence-based decision making
  - Advance data sharing and collaboration opportunities
  - Expand model beyond DOC and to future programs (such as CHIPS and Science Act of 2022)

# Department of Commerce Data Governance Working Group (DGWG)

## **Purpose:**

- To identify ways to collect incoming program performance information
- Minimize burden to aid recipients
- Maximize ability to report achievement of program goals and objectives
- Demonstrate lessons learned
- Improve program outcomes
- Foster adoption of promising practices

# Participants

## **Members:**

- Department of Commerce (DOC)
- U.S. Census Bureau (chair)
- Economic Development Administration (EDA)
- National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)
- National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA)
- National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST)
- Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA)

## **Advisors:**

- Office of Management and Budget (OMB)
- Department of Transportation (DOT)
- Staff from the DGWG member agencies

# Scope and phased deliverables

- **Phase 1 (completed)**
  - Develop shared data structure and data quality standards to facilitate data linkages and reduce reformatting complications
  - Describe strategies to ensure availability of high-quality data to support policy and program outcomes
- **Phase 2 (started)**
  - Identify common metadata standards to ensure the DOC's data can be leveraged as strategic asset
- **Phase 3 (coming soon)**
  - Discuss strategies to address barriers to data collection/use
  - Implement systems standards to ensure maximum interoperability at an enterprise level

# DGWG Report

- “Best Practices for Monitoring and Evaluating the ARP, IJA and other programs: Report of the Department of Commerce Data Governance Working Group”
- Available at: <https://www.census.gov/about/what/evidence-act.html>
- Report is the culmination of “phase 1” sprint, and:
  - Establishes goal for program monitoring and evaluation
  - Compares evaluations strategies
  - Identifies data resources and linkage strategies
  - Considers factors such as geographies, socioeconomic factors, equitable delivery, and environmental risk factors

# Recommendations

- Agencies should **follow all applicable standards** issued by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) **for grant awardees to report on geographic locations** of primary and secondary awardees, as well as the point of service delivery. The DGWG supports using census tracts as a standard reporting element.
- Agencies should continue to **measure and monitor program operations** (e.g., timeliness, compliance with regulations) following or exceeding guidance from OMB and their respective agencies.
- Agencies should **leverage existing impact projection models** from industry, academia, or government where possible.

# Recommendations

- Agencies should **implement a measurement and evaluation design** that **emphasizes credible results** within resource, cost, and schedule constraints.
- Agencies should consider implementing **large-scale observational studies** that **link program administrative data to previously collected data** from censuses, surveys, administrative records, commercial vendors, and aggregated indices. The **Census Bureau's Data Linkage Infrastructure** may be particularly useful.
- Agencies should **collect high-quality unique identifiers from aid awardees**, including both primary and secondary awardees to enable linkage to other data sources.



# Recommendations

- Agencies should evaluate programs based on the **phase of program implementation, direct versus indirect program impacts, and projected versus observed program impacts**
- Phases
  - Program Design/Stand Up
  - Pre-Award Program Implementation
  - Post-Award Program Implementation
  - Closeout

# Recommendations

- Agencies should use **metrics and available indices of economic and geographic vulnerability** to determine the equity or bias in program delivery.
- Agencies should consider incorporating program impacts on the **environment and climate resilience** into their evaluation plans.
- Agencies should establish or participate in a **working group** to identify **existing standards and best practices** for managing program operations and evaluation data and develop guidance for use by data practitioners.
- Agencies should create a **community of practice to share lessons learned** from program implementation and foster collaboration.

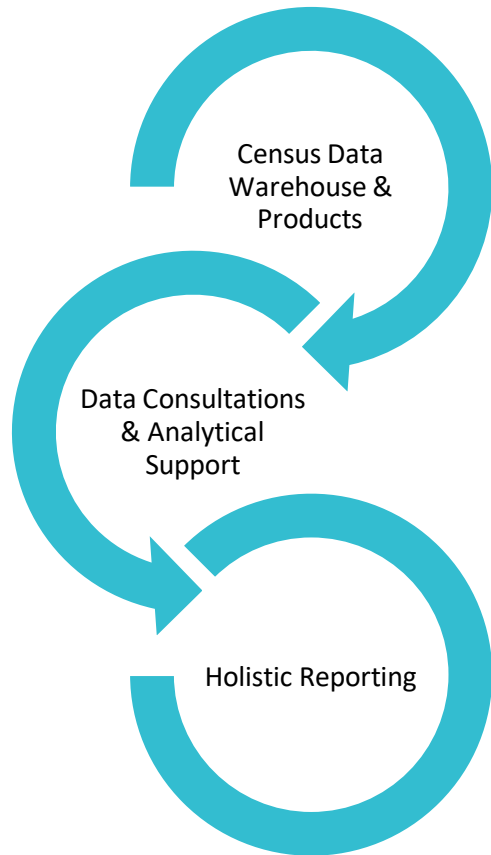
# Framework for program evaluation

	Direct program impacts (D)		Indirect program impacts (I)	
Phase	Projected	Observed	Projected	Observed
Program design/stand up	Identify direct impacts ( <i>D</i> ) and determine how to capture in NOFOs		Identify indirect impacts ( <i>I</i> ) and determine administrative/survey data to measure	
Pre-award program implementation	What is potential benefit of <i>D</i> ?	What is current (baseline) rate of <i>D</i> ?	What is potential benefit of <i>I</i> ?	Baseline: What is current rate of <i>I</i> ?
Post-award program implementation	Compare to initial projection of <i>D</i> ; update projection of <i>D</i> based on observed	Compare to baseline levels of <i>D</i>	Compare to initial projection of <i>I</i> ; update projection of <i>I</i> based on observed	Compare to baseline levels of <i>I</i>
Closeout	Compare to projected levels of <i>D</i> (from each phase)	Compare to baseline levels of <i>D</i> and implementation levels of <i>D</i>	Compare to projected levels of <i>I</i> (from each phase)	Compare to baseline levels of <i>I</i> and implementation levels of <i>I</i>

# U.S. Census Bureau's response

- Create a Center of Excellence
- Develop budget initiative to support “Evidence Building, Evaluations, and Improving Underlying Race/Ethnicity Data” (FY23 DOC budget)

# Center of Excellence model



Provision **central data management, enhancement service, and data products** for decision support and program evaluation.

Collaborate with implementing bureaus to understand how they “define success” and consult on **data tools** to support their efforts.

Evaluate **DOC-wide success metrics**, ensuring that the “whole” of DOC’s efforts are measured, rather than relying on a “sum of the parts” approach.

Census Bureau support must be integrated at front end to coordinate data inputs **supporting policy, implementation, compliance, and oversight decisions.**

# Data should be used across program lifecycle

Data provide insights across **lifecycle** of program implementation, not just in late-stage evaluation.

- Use data from past programs to **establish goals, set baselines, and develop effective grant criteria** to direct funds to intended recipients in early design phases
- Harness data throughout implementation phase to **measure progress towards goals** and possibly **make changes** to stay on track
- Evaluate data post-deployment to understand **programmatic success** and inform **design of future programs**

