



Gov.-led ID plan picks finalists for \$10 million grant program

By John Fontana | April 13, 2012, 11:29am PDT

Summary: *Finalists are picked for the \$10 million pilot program being run by the National Strategy for Trusted Identities in Cyberspace (NSTIC).*

The government-led digital identity strategy known as NSTIC has selected 27 finalists as part of a \$10 million grant program seeking pilot project proposals likely to become the anchors of a standards-based ID infrastructure.

Jeremy Grant, senior executive advisor for identity management at the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST), which heads NSTIC's national program office, said the finalists were culled from 186 proposals. The proposals were focused on building and testing technology, identity models and frameworks to support a standards-based identity infrastructure.

The finalist list included a diverse group of stakeholders, including higher education, large and small commercial businesses and governments, Grant said.

Rules of the Federal Funding Opportunity (FFO) that governed the grant program do not allow NSTIC to disclose the finalists, who are, however, free to make their own announcements.

One group that did was the Transglobal Secure Collaboration Program (TSCP), an aerospace and defense consortium that includes the U.S. Department of Defense and the UK Ministry of Defense, companies such as Boeing and vendors such as Wave Systems.

The group focuses on a number of data security technologies including identity management, secure email, information sharing, and document sharing with identity federation. It has been active with standards such as the Extensible Access Control Markup Language (XACML).

According to a press release, the TSCP proposal "builds on the work of a number of industry standards groups (including the Open Identity Exchange, the Center for Democracy and Technology, and the Trusted Computing Group) to produce a reusable

non-PKI standard suitable for release to the public domain.” The release went on to say, “The model will show how millions of strong credentials that have been issued by federal and state governments, and those in the private sector, can be put to greater use to access sensitive applications at relying parties. Relying parties can securely leverage these assets for use within existing applications for commercial viability.” Relying parties are entities that rely on identity providers, those that issue IDs, to validate their users.

Finalists have until May 10 to submit their final full proposal. Grant says NSTIC hopes to fund five to eight pilots for up to two years with \$1.25 million to \$2 million each. Winners will be announced in August and pilots are slated to start in September.

In November, the government approved \$16.5 million in funding for NSTIC as part of the 2012 federal budget.