



## National Identity Exchange Federation QuickStart Program

Since September 11, 2001, information and intelligence sharing within the criminal justice, emergency management, and public safety community has become more important than ever, and broad-based participation in a trusted, interoperable, and scalable Information Sharing Environment (ISE) is paramount. But participation in an ISE that crosses jurisdictional boundaries is difficult or impossible without a standardized and scalable framework for conveying inter-agency trust, user identities, and user attributes. Conversely, with the appropriate framework in place, agencies can realize their information sharing goals cost-effectively via wide-scale identity reuse, single sign-on (SSO) to resources, and policy compliant access to information resources.

The National Identity Exchange Federation (NIEF) is a trust framework based on the Global Federated Identity and Privilege Management (GFIPM) suite of standards and guidelines for secure exchange of user identities and attributes in support of secure information exchange between agencies. The GFIPM suite was originally developed for the U.S. justice and law enforcement community, but GFIPM is agnostic to the business information being shared among its participants, which makes it ideal for adoption among most or all government agencies. NIEF lowers the barriers to entry and cost of adoption for wide-scale information sharing among agencies at the Federal, State, Local, Territorial, and Tribal levels, as well as their information-sharing business partners.

In addition to full alignment with GFIPM, NIEF is fully committed to participation and alignment with many broader nationwide identity initiatives, including Federal Identity, Credentialing, and Access Management (FICAM), State Identity, Credentialing, and Access Management (SICAM), Personal Identity Verification (PIV) and PIV-Interoperable (PIV-I) high-assurance identities, the Backend Attribute Exchange (BAE) suite of standards, and the National Strategy for Trusted Identities in Cyberspace (NSTIC). These programs are collectively shaping the national identity and trust ecosystem. By aligning with them, NIEF is well-positioned to become the premier operational federation for enabling wide-scale trusted information exchange among agencies at the State, Local, Tribal, and Territorial (SLTT) levels, as well as information exchange between SLTT agencies and Federal agencies. Also, since many SLTT agencies and implementers do not have the resources to track how these broad-based programs could impact them, participation in NIEF allows them to leverage their resources to ensure that their efforts align with new technologies, frameworks, and strategies that may arise at the national level.

The NIEF QuickStart Program is a pilot opportunity for SLTT government agencies to begin participating in NIEF with technical assistance from the Georgia Tech Research Institute (GTRI). The value of an identity framework like NIEF increases with the number of participants, so it is critical that NIEF attracts a sufficiently large number of initial participants and resources to create strategic value for those participants. Achieving this initial value proposition represents a significant challenge, and is critical for driving wider adoption of NIEF in the long term. NIEF participation offers the best available assurance that individual agencies' investments in information sharing infrastructure, including identity and access management capabilities, will not be wasted or under-utilized. And by on-boarding to NIEF now, organizations have an opportunity to help strategically jump-start NIEF adoption, improve NIEF awareness, and drive an increased value proposition for all participants. Initial success of this initiative will lead to more agencies and more services, increasing the NIEF value proposition for all members and making NIEF more attractive as a scalable trust framework for enabling information exchange.

NASCIO and GTRI have begun to engage with SLTT agencies and seek to quickly execute on the process of selecting participants for the NIEF QuickStart pilot. GTRI will assist selected participants by facilitating and shepherding them through NIEF's formal on-boarding process. It is expected that the selected on-boarding projects will be completed in approximately twelve (12) months. Agencies interested in submitting a readiness assessment for the NIEF QuickStart Program can go to [www.surveymonkey.com/s/R8Z7CBN](http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/R8Z7CBN) and submit an assessment profile online. For more details about NIEF, please visit <https://nief.gfipm.net/>.

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