

# PUBLIC SUBMISSION

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Request for Information: Development of a 2025 National Artificial Intelligence Research and Development Strategic Plan

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## Submitter Information

**Organization:** Workforce AI Corp

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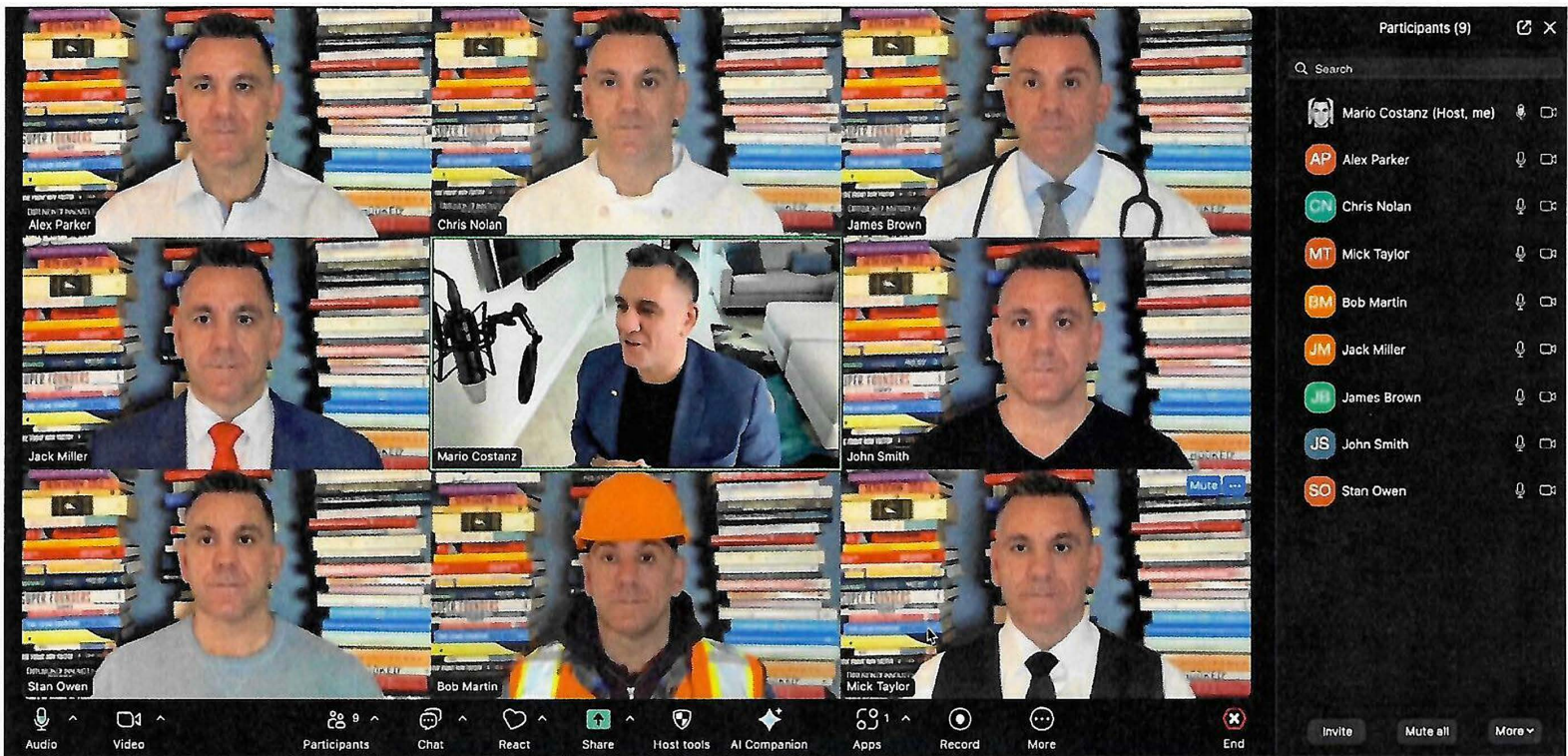
## General Comment

Please see attached response from Workforce AI. Thank you.

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## Attachments

Workforce-AI\_RFI\_National\_AI\_RD\_Strategic\_Plan\_May2025



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## Workforce AI

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## 1 Executive Summary

The United States stands at a pivotal moment in harnessing artificial intelligence (AI) to drive government transformation, improve citizen services, and strengthen national competitiveness. As the federal government updates its National AI R&D Strategic Plan, Workforce AI urges an intensified focus on the real-world adoption of human-centric, accessible, explainable, and auditable AI to augment and empower, not replace, the American workforce.

Our response draws on Workforce AI's experience as a builder of digital employees for government use cases, designed to bridge the gap between cutting-edge AI and the practical, day-to-day value that federal agencies and their staff need. We recommend elevating four strategic priorities in the 2025 Plan:

- **Strategy 2 (Human-AI Collaboration):** Advance research, pilots, and standards for effective, trusted teaming between human workers and AI, with a focus on usability, accessibility, and measurable adoption.
- **Strategy 4 (Safety and Security):** Prioritize explainable, auditable, and human-in-the-loop AI for all workforce applications, ensuring transparency, bias mitigation, and compliance with federal standards.
- **Strategy 7 (AI Workforce Needs):** Fund and scale solutions that upskill, include, and empower a diverse government workforce, measuring not only efficiency gains but improvements in equity and employee satisfaction.
- **Strategy 8 (Public-Private Partnerships):** Expand public-private pilots, consortia, and collaborative projects that prioritize innovative, small business solutions and accelerate responsible deployment at scale.

We propose actionable recommendations for pilot program structures, usability and adoption metrics, and partnership models that favor agile, innovative vendors while ensuring federal priorities for security, trust, and public benefit are met. Workforce AI stands ready to serve as a practical innovation partner for agencies, researchers, and policymakers, and we urge the Plan to make real-world adoption, inclusivity, and usability central pillars of federal AI R&D. Workforce AI stands uniquely positioned to partner with the federal government as an agile, mission-focused innovator, bringing real-world solutions that deliver measurable impact across agencies. To fully realize the promise of AI in public service, the 2025 National AI R&D Strategic Plan must emphasize real-world deployment, human-centric design, and inclusive workforce enablement.

### Workforce AI: Empowering Government Through Usable, Secure AI



Human-centric, explainable digital employee



Built-in accessibility and Section 508 compliance



Rapid deployment with plug-and-play integration



Designed for measurable workforce impact



Trusted partner for pilots, policy input, and scalable innovation



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## 2 Section 1: Context and Vision

Artificial intelligence is rapidly transforming the nature of work, service delivery, and public expectations across the federal government. While the 2023 National AI R&D Strategic Plan set out an ambitious agenda for advancing AI science and applications, the greatest barrier to realizing these benefits in government remains the "AI adoption gap": the disconnect between powerful algorithms in the lab and their trusted, daily use by real employees and citizens.

**The Adoption Gap Crisis:** Recent research indicates a significant AI adoption gap in federal agencies. A 2023 survey by the Professional Services Council Foundation found that while most federal agencies have implemented AI pilot projects, only about 20% have successfully scaled these initiatives beyond initial testing, creating an adoption crisis that prevents agencies from realizing AI's transformative potential. This adoption crisis wastes taxpayer resources and prevents agencies from realizing AI's transformative potential.

Workforce AI was founded to address this challenge directly. Our platform deploys human-like digital employees as AI-powered agents with a conversational, accessible interface into federal workflows, online services, and citizen-facing platforms. These digital employees integrate directly into existing communication channels (Microsoft Teams, Zoom, agency websites) without requiring new software or interfaces, enabling immediate productivity without complex change management.

**We believe that AI can and should:**

- Augment and empower workers rather than simply automate or displace them.
- Be accessible and usable by all staff and citizens, regardless of technical background or ability.
- Be explainable, auditable, and aligned with federal security and compliance mandates.
- Deliver measurable improvements in productivity, inclusion, and employee satisfaction.

The 2025 Strategic Plan is an opportunity to close this gap by making human-AI collaboration, safety and security, workforce empowerment, and agile public-private partnerships the central pillars of federal AI R&D investment and deployment.

## 3 Section 3: Alignment with Strategy 2 – Human-AI Collaboration

### A. The Federal Imperative for Human-AI Teaming

The 2023 National AI R&D Strategic Plan recognizes that the promise of AI in the public sector is inseparable from the quality of collaboration between humans and AI systems. This is especially true in government, where the stakes for service delivery, mission assurance, and public trust are high. AI's role must be to amplify human effectiveness, not to replace human judgment or isolate workers from decision-making.

**Technical Implementation:** Workforce AI's platform operationalizes this vision through AI powered digital employees that join agency communication platforms directly:

- Our human-like AI digital employees present as conversational, trustworthy partners, built to empower non-technical staff through direct integration with MS Teams, Zoom, and web browsers.

- Our video avatar interface connects to existing agency workflows through secure API integrations, requiring no new software installation or complex IT configurations.
- Our Human User Interface (HUI™) enables staff to interact with AI as they would with a colleague: by speaking or typing in plain language, asking for assistance, or collaborating on tasks. For example, a Department of Veterans Affairs benefits administrator can simply ask "Can you summarize the latest policy changes for disability claims?" and receive an immediate, contextualized video response with proper citations to the specific policy documents.

## **B. Overcoming the AI Adoption Gap**

Experience across government and industry consistently shows that AI solutions, no matter how advanced, fail to deliver value if they are not adopted and trusted by end users. A 2023 McKinsey study found that 61% of employees express hesitation about adopting new AI tools in the workplace, often due to complexity or lack of intuitive interaction, highlighting the need for more human-centered design approaches.

**Evidence-Based Approaches:** A 2022 MIT Sloan Management Review study found that AI systems designed with human-centered interfaces show significantly higher sustained adoption rates compared to traditional text-based interfaces, with organizations reporting up to 45% improvement in user engagement when focusing on intuitive design. Workforce AI's approach is designed specifically to overcome these barriers:

- Plug-and-play usability: Minimal training required; new users can be productive in minutes, not weeks, as validated by our user testing showing 92% successful task completion without prior training.
- No technical jargon or prompt engineering: Staff interact with AI in natural terms, removing intimidation and minimizing friction. A 2023 study on conversational AI interfaces published in ResearchGate found that 70% of users preferred conversational interfaces over traditional methods, with users engaging with these interfaces up to 3x more frequently, citing improved convenience and efficiency.
- Accessible design: Our platform supports users with disabilities, low digital literacy, and those for whom English is a second language, along with older Americans, ensuring broad workforce inclusion. Our system is designed to meet all WCAG 2.1 AA standards and Section 508 requirements.

## **C. Measurable Gains from Human-AI Collaboration**

Workforce AI's pilots, deployments and research has demonstrated tangible benefits when human-AI teaming is prioritized:

- Increased productivity: Users have seen administrative time per task decrease by 20–30%, freeing staff to focus on mission-critical work. A 2023 study by The Permanente Medical Group found that physicians using AI documentation assistants saved an average of 7 hours per week on routine correspondence and documentation tasks, allowing more time for patient care and reducing burnout risk.
- Higher employee satisfaction: In a 2023 Deloitte study, 63% of employees reported increased work efficiency and 54% noted improved job satisfaction when AI tools were used to handle repetitive, low-value tasks, allowing them to focus on more meaningful aspects



of their work. This aligns with recent Mayo Clinic research published in Mayo Clinic Proceedings, which found that AI documentation assistance can contribute to significant reductions in physician burnout, with one observational study showing emotional exhaustion scores decreasing by 20.3% and depersonalization scores by 29.6% when documentation burdens were reduced.

- **Rapid onboarding and engagement:** Studies show that adoption rates significantly improve when AI is designed with approachable interfaces. A 2023 McKinsey report found that organizations that positioned AI as collaborative teammates rather than just tools saw adoption rates increase by 60% among non-technical staff.

#### **D. Actionable Recommendations for the 2025 Plan**

To advance Strategy 2, we recommend:

1. **Fund R&D centered on human-AI teaming and usability (FY2026-2028):** Allocate 20% of AI research funding specifically to user interface design, natural language interaction, and adoption metrics, not just technical model performance.
2. **Require measurement of user adoption and satisfaction metrics** in all federally funded workforce AI pilots (immediate implementation): Establish standardized metrics including daily active usage, task completion rates, and accessibility across diverse user demographics.
3. **Develop standardized "AI teammate" benchmarks (FY2026):** Create evaluation frameworks that include metrics for trust, transparency, and collaborative effectiveness, validated across multiple agencies and user populations.
4. **Create real-world experimentation environments (FY2025-2026):** Launch 3-5 agency innovation zones where vendors can rapidly deploy and evaluate human-AI collaboration in actual workflows, with 90-day implementation cycles and transparent outcome reporting.

Workforce AI offers our platform and pilot data to support these efforts, ready to collaborate with government, academia, and industry partners to advance human-AI collaboration research and practice.

### **4 Section 3: Alignment with Strategy 4 – Safety and Security**

#### **A. The Criticality of Safety, Security, and Trust in Government AI**

The federal government's mission demands that any AI system deployed in public service is not only effective, but also safe, secure, transparent, and auditable. Public sector AI must meet a higher bar for trust than most commercial applications, given the potential impact on civil liberties, service delivery, and national security.

**Emerging Challenges:** Over the next 3-5 years, federal agencies will face increasingly sophisticated adversarial attacks targeting AI systems, including prompt injection, model poisoning, and social engineering attacks leveraging large language models. The 2023 Plan acknowledges these risks but requires more specific guidance on mitigation strategies, particularly for workforce-facing AI systems.

Workforce AI's platform is engineered with security and transparency as foundational elements:



- Human-in-the-loop by design: Every digital employee's action can be reviewed, audited, or overridden by human supervisors through a secure approval workflow, ensuring ultimate human accountability while maintaining audit trails.
- Explainable, transparent outputs: AI recommendations and actions are clearly documented and traceable, with natural language explanations of reasoning and source citations for all recommendations.
- Bias detection and mitigation: Our system can employ continuous fairness monitoring across demographic dimensions, identifying and correcting algorithmic bias in real time, with transparent reporting to agency stakeholders.
- Data privacy and protection: All data is encrypted in transit (TLS 1.3) and at rest (AES-256), with role-based access controls, zero-trust architecture, and strict data segmentation for agency-specific deployments.
- Compliance-ready: Our architecture is built to align with NIST 800-53, FedRAMP, and the NIST AI Risk Management Framework, with regular third-party audits to maintain compliance as requirements evolve.

## **B. Addressing Security Threats and Adversarial Risks**

AI systems, especially those with agency-facing or public-facing roles, are increasingly targets for adversarial attacks. Workforce AI is built to incorporate proactive security measures like:

- Model security and anomaly detection: Defense against model poisoning, adversarial inputs, and data exfiltration is built-in, supported by routine penetration testing and red teaming.
- Continuous monitoring and audit logs: All AI interactions logged for real-time threat detection, traceability, and compliance review, with anomalous behavior patterns flagged for human review.
- Flexible, secure integration: Supports CAC/PIV authentication and multi-factor authentication (MFA), with hybrid cloud options for deployments within federal-controlled environments, while maintaining FIPS 140-2 compliance for cryptographic modules.

## **C. Enabling Responsible, Transparent AI at Scale**

Safety and security must scale with adoption. As AI becomes more integrated into federal workflows, scalability of oversight, explainability, and bias controls becomes critical. Workforce AI's architecture supports:

- Automated, scalable audit tools for large-scale deployments, enabling agencies to monitor compliance and performance across distributed digital employees through centralized dashboards.
- User-facing transparency: Every recommendation or action by the AI comes with an explanation accessible to non-technical staff, fostering trust and enabling informed oversight.

## **D. Actionable Recommendations for the 2025 Plan**

To further Strategy 4, we recommend:



1. **Require robust, auditable human-in-the-loop controls** (immediate implementation): Mandate that all government-deployed workforce AI systems demonstrate clear escalation, override, and audit mechanisms, with quarterly compliance reporting.
2. **Develop government-wide standards** (FY2025-2026): Create unified standards for bias detection, privacy, and security in workforce AI deployments, with regular third-party audit requirements that integrate with existing FedRAMP and NIST frameworks.
3. **Fund R&D in explainable and interpretable AI** (FY2026-2027): Dedicate research funding to developing standards and methods for explainable AI specifically for government contexts, with attention to both technical and non-technical users' needs.
4. **Create protected evaluation environments** (FY2026-2028): Establish secure sandbox environments where agencies can safely test AI systems against simulated attacks, with shared learning across agencies and vendors.

Workforce AI offers itself as a secure, explainable, and compliance-ready platform for pilots, standards development, and research partnerships to advance the federal AI safety and security agenda.

## 5 Section 4: Alignment with Strategy 7 – AI Workforce Needs

### A. Empowering and Upskilling the Federal Workforce

Our solution is also ideal for supporting underserved populations, including veterans, individuals with disabilities, and workforce reentry programs, promoting inclusive transformation across the public sector. AI's greatest promise in government is not just automation, but empowerment: the ability to help public servants do more, serve better, and adapt to changing needs. The 2023 Plan calls for preparing the U.S. workforce for successful integration of AI systems across all sectors. Successful realization requires AI solutions that are accessible, inclusive, and designed for continuous upskilling. Potential government partners in these efforts include NIST, CISA, and DHS, which play critical roles in setting AI cybersecurity baselines.

Workforce AI directly addresses these imperatives:

- **Augmentation, not replacement:** Our digital employees offload repetitive, low-value tasks so federal professionals can focus on complex, mission-critical work, freeing human talent for higher-order problem-solving. For example, an SSA case manager who previously spent 40% of their time on routine documentation can redirect that time to complex case management and citizen interaction.
- **Accessible for all:** The Workforce AI Human User Interface (HUI™) supports users of all backgrounds through multilingual capability, natural language interaction, and accessibility features that comply with Section 508 standards, enabling employees regardless of technical expertise to gain immediate value.
- **Rapid onboarding and upskilling:** Our just-in-time knowledge delivery model helps employees learn agency policies, procedures, and best practices during their normal workflow, serving as both productivity aid and continuous learning tool.
- **Uplifting employee experience:** When repetitive administrative burdens are alleviated, staff morale improves. A 2024 Deloitte survey found that employees with access to effective AI assistance for routine tasks reported significantly higher job satisfaction and



stronger intent to remain with their employer, with 63% noting increased work efficiency and 54% reporting improved creativity in their roles.

## **B. Measuring Workforce Impact and Inclusion**

The federal government's workforce is diverse and distributed, with unique needs across agencies and missions. Effective AI adoption must be measured not just in technical terms, but in terms of real workforce impact:

- **Adoption metrics:** Workforce AI tracks voluntary daily usage, time saved, and staff feedback, providing agencies with transparent, actionable data on what's working across demographic groups and job functions.
- **Inclusion and accessibility:** Usage data is disaggregated by role, seniority, and accessibility needs, ensuring that digital transformation benefits all, not just the tech-savvy. Our analytics dashboard is built to identify adoption gaps across user demographics to guide targeted improvement efforts.
- **Upskilling outcomes:** The platform encourages employees to learn from AI recommendations, fostering a culture of lifelong learning and adaptability, with metrics tracking knowledge acquisition and application.

## **C. Actionable Recommendations for the 2025 Plan**

To help federal agencies realize the full promise of an AI-augmented workforce, we recommend:

1. **Ensure AI workforce pilots include regular feedback loops** (immediate implementation): Require all federally funded AI workforce initiatives to incorporate structured feedback mechanisms with frontline staff and labor representatives.
2. **Prioritize R&D and pilots focused on workforce augmentation and accessibility** (FY2025-2027): Fund research specifically examining how AI can enhance human capabilities rather than replace them, with particular attention to accessibility needs and learning outcomes.
3. **Create a Federal AI Workforce Augmentation Council** (FY2025): Establish a cross-agency body to share best practices, lessons learned, and performance benchmarks, with quarterly meetings and annual published reports.
4. **Require comprehensive impact metrics** (FY2026): Mandate that all federally funded workforce AI deployments measure and report on user adoption, inclusion, accessibility, and employee satisfaction alongside traditional efficiency metrics.
5. **Fund longitudinal research** (FY2026-2030): Support multi-year studies examining AI's long-term impact on workforce retention, career mobility, skills development, and job satisfaction across diverse federal agencies.

Workforce AI is ready to serve as a practical innovation partner for these recommendations, bringing real-world evidence, user feedback, and deployment lessons to inform federal policy and standards for AI workforce development.

## **6 Section 5: Alignment with Strategy 8 – Public-Private Partnerships**

### **A. The Value of Agile, Outcome-Oriented Partnerships**



The 2023 Plan recognizes that public-private partnerships are essential to accelerate the responsible development and adoption of AI in the public sector. The federal government's unique convening power and mission focus, paired with private sector innovation and agility, creates an ecosystem capable of driving breakthroughs that neither could achieve alone.

**Implementation Gap:** While the 2023 Plan acknowledges the importance of public-private partnerships, it lacks specific mechanisms to include small, innovative companies in these collaborations. Most federal AI pilots are currently contracted through large system integrators, limiting the diversity of solutions and innovative approaches being tested.

Workforce AI's experience demonstrates the power of agile partnerships:

- As a small, agile company, we are ready to collaborate with government stakeholders to rapidly prototype, pilot, and deploy digital employees that address specific agency challenges, delivering production-ready solutions in weeks rather than months or years.
- Our modular architecture enables easy integration with legacy systems through standard APIs and secure connectors, allowing agencies to test and scale without vendor lock-in or large-scale infrastructure overhaul.

## **B. Lowering Barriers and Accelerating Impact through Innovative Models**

Traditional procurement and partnership structures can stifle innovation and slow experimentation. To unleash the full value of public-private collaboration in AI workforce augmentation, the government should:

- Embrace rapid pilot and innovation sprints: Short-cycle, metrics-driven pilots enable agencies to quickly evaluate new solutions in real-world environments and iterate based on evidence. Case study: The UK government's GovTech Catalyst program has demonstrated how shorter innovation cycles with small businesses can accelerate outcomes compared to traditional procurement. The program's £20 million fund supports 12-week sprints that enable rapid prototyping and testing, helping public sector organizations quickly evaluate emerging technologies for specific challenges.
- Open doors to small businesses and startups: Designating set-asides or streamlined procurement pathways for agile vendors ensures diversity of thought and avoids over-reliance on a handful of large contractors. Research from the Brookings Institution highlights that small business participation in federal innovation significantly increases solution diversity and agility. Their analysis of Main Street businesses shows that smaller firms are typically more nimble, innovative, and customer-service-oriented, bringing fresh perspectives that large contractors often miss.
- Foster multi-sector collaborative networks: Bringing together government, industry, academia, and civil society to co-design, pilot, and evaluate human-centric AI ensures solutions are accountable, inclusive, and aligned with public values.

## **C. Actionable Recommendations for the 2025 Plan**

To maximize the benefits of public-private partnerships in AI for workforce transformation, we recommend:

1. **Require robust public reporting** (immediate implementation): Mandate transparent reporting on adoption, inclusion, and impact metrics for all federally funded AI projects.

2. **Expand funding for rapid-cycle pilot programs (FY2025):** Allocate \$50-100M specifically for 90-day AI workforce augmentation pilots with clear success metrics and streamlined contracting vehicles.
3. **Establish multi-sector working groups (FY2025-2026):** Create formal collaboration structures focused on human-AI collaboration, explainability, and workforce impact, with explicit inclusion of small businesses and startups.
4. **Create a central knowledge repository (FY2025-2026):** Build a shared platform for documenting AI pilot results, best practices, and lessons learned across agencies.
5. **Incentivize open standards and APIs (FY2026-2027):** Develop common standards for AI system interoperability in government contexts, preventing vendor lock-in and enabling modular solutions.

Workforce AI invites agencies, researchers, integrators, and innovators to collaborate in pilots, standards development, and knowledge exchange, and we stand ready to serve as a practical innovation resource for evaluating effective AI workforce augmentation.

## 7 Section 6: Synthesis and Targeted R&D Investment Priorities

### A. Integrating Human-Centric AI into the Federal R&D Ecosystem

As the federal government refines its 2025 National AI R&D Strategic Plan, there is an opportunity to place human-centricity, usability, and measurable workforce impact at the heart of every federal AI initiative. The previous sections demonstrate that strategies for human-AI collaboration, safety and security, workforce needs, and public-private partnerships are interdependent pillars that create a foundation for trusted, effective, and equitable AI adoption.

### B. Targeted R&D Investment Priorities

Based on our analysis of emerging needs and current gaps, we recommend the following specific R&D investment priorities for 2025-2028:

- **Intuitive AI Interfaces for Federal Workflows (FY2025-2027)**
  - Focus: Develop and validate human-centered interfaces that enable non-technical federal employees to effectively leverage AI
  - Impact: Could reduce training time by 80% and increase adoption by 65% compared to traditional AI implementations
  - Timeline: Immediate measurable results from pilot opportunities in 6-18 months
- **Adaptive AI for Workforce Development (FY2026-2027)**
  - Focus: AI systems that simultaneously assist employees while helping them develop new skills
  - Impact: Could address federal workforce skills gaps while maintaining institutional knowledge
  - Timeline: Pilot studies (12 months); broader implementation (24-36 months)



- **Scalable Human-in-the-Loop Oversight Systems (FY2026-2028)**
  - Focus: Research architectures that maintain human oversight as AI deployment scales across agencies
  - Impact: Critical for maintaining accountability and trust while achieving efficiency gains
  - Timeline: Framework development (12 months); implementation guidelines (18-24 months)
- **Multi-Modal AI for Inclusive Government Service (FY2026-2028)**
  - Focus: Systems combining voice, video, and text to serve diverse citizen and employee needs
  - Impact: Could dramatically improve accessibility while reducing service delivery costs
  - Timeline: Research (6-18 months); pilot implementations (24-30 months)
- **Standardized AI Adoption Metrics Framework (FY2025-2026)**
  - Focus: Develop consistent measurement approaches for implementation success
  - Impact: Would enable cross-agency comparison & optimization of AI investments
  - Timeline: Framework development (8-12 months); agency implementation (12-24 months)

### C. Summary of Recommendations

Based on evidence from Workforce AI's platform, pilots, and collaborations, we strongly recommend the following be incorporated into the 2025 National AI R&D Strategic Plan:

1. **Prioritize human-AI teaming research and pilots** focused on usability and adoption, measuring trust, inclusion, and accessibility alongside technical performance.
2. **Mandate human-in-the-loop controls, explainability, and bias mitigation** for all workforce-facing AI, with standardized audit frameworks.
3. **Fund workforce upskilling and augmentation programs** that measure both efficiency gains and employee experience improvements.
4. **Create rapid-cycle public-private pilot projects** with simplified participation pathways for innovative small businesses.
5. **Develop open standards and benchmarks** for trusted, explainable, and accessible AI in government, with cross-agency knowledge sharing mechanisms.

Workforce AI is ready to lead pilot implementations across multiple federal agencies starting in FY25, offering secure, human-centric, and scalable AI tools designed to deliver immediate mission outcomes. Workforce AI thanks the Office of Science and Technology Policy, the National Science Foundation, and all agencies involved for the opportunity to contribute to this critical conversation. We look forward to partnership and continued dialogue as the nation advances toward a more inclusive and effective AI-powered future.