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Submitter Information

Organization: American Lighthouse Inc

General Comment

See attached file.

Attachments

American Lighthouse Inc RFI National AI Strategic Plan

American Lighthouse Inc. Response to the OSTP-NITRD-NCO RFI National Artificial Intelligence R&D Strategic Plan

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American Lighthouse Inc, the Fastest High Skilled Immigration Solution for the Technology Industry

Executive Summary

Government investment in R&D requires government investment in talent development. The U.S. should grow domestic talent through reforming incentive structures, upskilling, and harnessing untapped potential in rural communities. At the same time, the U.S. must play an active role in winning the global competition for elite international AI talent. Our AI talent dominance will not come from relying on a passive influx of international AI talent to universities, but rather from a new silicon valley-inspired precision-engineered AI talent strategy that identifies, recruits, vets, and captures exceptional individuals capable of driving 10x breakthroughs in AI and science. To achieve this, Lighthouse outlines strategies the U.S. can immediately take to win the competition for top AI talent.

Lighthouse (www.lighthousehq.com) plays a critical role in this effort. As the fastest immigration solution for the technology industry, Lighthouse supports companies on the cutting-edge of AI — including Cursor, Ramp, Magic.dev, Goodfire, Reflection, and hundreds of others building frontier technologies. We work daily with top engineers, researchers, and founders navigating the bottlenecks in U.S. immigration and institutional integration. Our platform is uniquely positioned to provide the talent intelligence needed to unlock America's innovation capacity. We bring private-sector speed and standards of excellence to talent qualification in order to compete for global AI technologists at the scale and pace ASAP demands. This frontline insight informs our recommendations.

Recommendations for AI Investment Areas

America's competitive advantage in AI and scientific innovation depends on developing a secure talent intelligence infrastructure that identifies and attracts the world's most capable researchers—not simply the most numerous. Our national security and economic leadership require precision targeting of exceptional individuals whose inventions can deliver transformational advances, yet our current systems lack the sophisticated evaluation mechanisms to distinguish true innovators from credentialed but conventional talent. While other nations develop strategic approaches to talent acquisition, we operate without comprehensive intelligence about where novel capabilities actually reside globally or how to systematically attract them. The solution requires a secure, data-driven talent infrastructure that can identify exceptional individuals, assess their potential contributions to American innovation, vet them for any security threats, and provide them with clear, expedited pathways that match the strategic importance of their capabilities.

To achieve this, the National AI R&D Strategic Plan should prioritize the creation of a National AI Talent Infrastructure Initiative - a federal framework that leverages the comparative strengths of government and industry to identify talent. The initiative would coordinate the following components: U.S. should create a program to identify elite AI researchers (Project Beacon), a fast-track mechanism to onshore AI talent

(Einstein Visa Program), a high standards framework (National AI Corps) and an evaluation team (AI Excellence Councils) to assess elite AI talent, and an incentive and growth mechanism for retaining top talent (America First AI Fellowship). Additionally, the U.S. should create a highly secure vetting program to ensure top AI talent is aligned with American values.

Project Beacon establishes a proactive global recruitment initiative targeting the top 1,000 AI researchers worldwide, using data-driven identification methods to map talent networks and breakthrough contributions across universities, labs, and industry. Rather than waiting for applications, Project Beacon will collaborate with American institutions to actively court these individuals with compelling offers and streamlined processes. The Einstein Visa Program would serve as a new O-1 nonimmigrant visa subcategory specifically for AI and scientific talent, processing applications in under 15 days for researchers who meet objective excellence criteria—a dramatic improvement over current three-to-six month timelines that cost us talent to faster-moving countries. The National AI Talent Corps would function as a specialized designation for researchers with demonstrated impact, requiring metrics such as an h-index above 40, peer recognition, or notable contributions that have advanced their fields, ensuring we attract substance over credentials. The Barrier to Entry to screen for risk of foreign influence from the Chinese Communist Party and other nefarious actors.

AI Excellence Councils would comprise the top 500 technical contributors currently working in America, providing peer review and maintaining rigorous standards for talent identification and evaluation. These councils would operate through structured assessment processes including peer nominations from respected researchers, comprehensive portfolio audits examining actual contributions rather than just publications, technical presentations that demonstrate real depth of understanding, and reproducibility benchmarks that distinguish genuine scientific progress from academic noise. The invitation-only council structure ensures evaluation by true peers who understand cutting-edge work, while private-sector partnership provides operational excellence in identity verification, peer-review coordination, and application processing. This framework leverages industry expertise alongside academic insight, with civil society providing transparency oversight, creating a comprehensive system that identifies and fast-tracks the exceptional individuals whose work will determine America's scientific leadership in the coming decades.

The America First AI Fellowship represents a fundamental shift from traditional academic funding models that reward publication volume toward a merit-based system that prioritizes genuine scientific progress and national competitiveness. These $500,000 annual grants would support researchers whose work demonstrates measurable technical excellence through rigorous peer assessment, reproducible results that other scientists can build upon, and clear pathways to real-world applications that strengthen American technological capabilities. Unlike conventional grants that often fund incremental research or theoretical work with limited practical value, these fellowships would require recipients to meet stringent technical assessments conducted by the AI Excellence Councils, ensuring that funding flows to researchers whose contributions represent actual discoveries rather than academic busy work. The reproducibility requirement addresses a critical weakness in current scientific funding—too much research cannot be replicated or validated by independent teams, undermining the reliability of our scientific foundation. Applied impact criteria would prioritize work that translates into technological advantages, economic growth, or national security capabilities, ensuring taxpayer investment yields tangible returns for American competitiveness. This approach creates powerful incentives for top-tier

researchers to focus on high-impact work while providing them with the resources and stability needed to pursue ambitious, long-term projects that can deliver transformational advances in AI and related fields.

U.S. Government Congressional Actions Alongside a Quality Assurance Framework

- **Project Beacon:** Systematic recruitment of top 1,000 AI researchers globally
- **Einstein Visa Program:** New O-1 subcategory for top 0.1% AI talent with a <15-day processing (versus current 3-6+ months)
- **National AI Talent Corps:** Elite recruitment with stringent requirements (h-index >40, breakthrough contributions)
- **America First AI Fellowship:** $500K/year grants for researchers whose work is tied to technical assessments, reproducibility, and applied impact.
- **Barrier to Entry:** A thorough vetting infrastructure to keep out bad actors and ensure alignment to American values.
- **Execution Strategy:**
    - Partner with a provider that can run the operational layer for identity verification, peer-review coordination, and private-sector speed of application processing
    - Establish AI Excellence Councils by invitation-only of the top 500 technical contributors in the U.S. today across organizations
    - Use structured evaluations: peer nominations, portfolio audits, technical presentations, and reproducibility benchmarks.
    - Form a public-private partnership to use AI and machine learning to vet AI talent.