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Prize Platform Invites Citizens to Solve Nation's Challenges

Challenge.gov Marks Latest Milestone in Administration Commitment to use Prizes to Spur Innovation

U.S. Chief Technology Officer Aneesh Chopra and U.S. Chief Information Officer Vivek Kundra today unveiled Challenge.gov, a new online site and digital platform to help mobilize American ingenuity to solve some of our nation's most pressing challenges. Challenge.gov is an online site where entrepreneurs, innovators, and citizen solvers can compete for prestige and prizes by providing novel solutions to tough national problems, large and small.

Challenge.gov features over 35 challenges posed by more than 15 government agencies. They range from the Environmental Protection Agency's *Game Day Challenge* for the university that best reduces and recycles waste at college football games to a \$10 million prize, sponsored in part by the Department of Energy, for building vehicles with fuel-efficiencies exceeding 100 miles per gallon. Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack used the platform to announce a new challenge today. USDA's *Recipes for Healthy Kids Challenge*—part of the First Lady Michelle Obama's *Let's Move!* Initiative—invites school nutrition professionals, chefs, students, and parents to develop nutritious, kid-approved foods for school menus. Winning teams will be invited to prepare their recipes alongside White House chefs.

“Challenge.gov marks a dramatic departure from business as usual,” said Chopra, noting that prizes allow the government to articulate a bold goal without having to predict which team or approach is most likely to succeed, increasing the number and diversity of minds tackling tough problems and paying only for results. “Prizes engage our nation's top talent as co-creators in the search for solutions, and help the Nation accelerate innovation while achieving better results.”

Challenge.gov, spearheaded by the General Services Administration, makes it simple and free for Federal agencies to post rules and resources for challenges; allows anyone interested to submit a solution; and helps manage the selection process. It showcases virtually any kind of government challenge, regardless of that challenge's technology platform, providing “one stop shopping” for innovators and entrepreneurs looking to compete in government-sponsored challenges.

Speaking at the Gov 2.0 Summit in Washington today, Kundra celebrated the catalytic impact Challenge.gov will have for the President's goal of engaging all Americans to tackle grand challenges. "The challenges featured today are just the beginning," Kundra said. "By making it dramatically easier to administer a prize, Challenge.gov will accelerate public-sector adoption of these innovative tools. By making it simple for the public to find and participate in prizes, Challenge.gov will help ensure their success."

Challenge.gov is the latest milestone in the Administration's commitment to use prizes and challenges to spur innovation. In his September 2009 *Strategy for American Innovation*, the President called on agencies to increase their use of tools such as prizes and challenges to promote and harness innovation and solve tough problems. In March 2010, the White House Office of Management and Budget issued a [memorandum](#) to all agency heads affirming the Administration's commitment to this problem-solving approach and providing a policy and legal framework to guide agencies in using prizes to stimulate innovation to advance their core missions.

Congress, too, has acknowledged the value of prizes and challenges to spur innovation. In July, the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation reported S.3605 – The America COMPETES Reauthorization Act of 2010 - with a section devoted to prize competitions. The President's Science Advisor, Dr. John P. Holdren, [commended](#) Senators Mark Pryor and Mark Warner for their leadership in further empowering agencies across the Executive Branch to conduct prize competitions that stimulate innovation and advance their core missions.

"We are excited about prizes in the social policy sector to bring in new ideas and models for solving some of our nation's toughest challenges," said Sonal Shah, Director of the Office of Social Innovation and Civic Participation in the White House Domestic Policy Council.

For more information about the latest challenges—including the Department of Education's new *Challenge to Innovate*, designed to crowdsource and scale solutions to teachers' most pressing classroom problems, and the Department of Health and Human Services' new competition challenging developers to create new software applications that enable consumers to visualize and assess healthcare quality data in meaningful ways—see www.challenge.gov.

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