YEAR-END REPORT
2022-23

CENTER FOR INTERGOVERNMENTAL PARTNERSHIPS

NATIONAL ACADEMY OF
PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION®

Message from the Academy's President

In the 21st century, no significant public problem fits entirely within one government agency or even one level of government. In our federal system, all levels of government have an important role in the democratic process. Effective problem-solving requires federal, state, and local governments to work together, often with partners in the private and nonprofit sectors. And yet, it remains challenging to build collaborative capabilities to develop and implement effective policies and programs across levels of government and sectors of society.

The Center for Intergovernmental Partnerships has focused on these most pressing challenges by pursuing three primary objectives during its first two years of operation.

Create and communicate knowledge about the importance of intergovernmental partnerships through research. Study policy implementation across levels of government, detailing the importance of collaboration across jurisdictions.

Develop opportunities for dialogue through meetings and events. Bring together officials from different levels and units of government to discuss strategies and shared challenges.

Build relationships through partnerships. Engage and seek opportunities to work with other organizations focused on federal, state, and local policy issues.

The Center has advanced these objectives in concrete ways over the past year by:

- Developing a toolkit that helps government officials navigate the complex process of creating partnerships, identifying a range of examples to help officials see the possibilities.
- Conceptualizing a modern public benefits system that recognizes not only eligible households but also state and local governments as "customers" of the federal agencies operating the programs.
- Documenting state regulatory process adaptations made during the COVID-19 public health emergency, some of which were made permanent.

Current projects focus on addressing homelessness through the intergovernmental system and improving the implementation of environmental laws in Indian Country.

We extend our thanks to the Academy's partners and underwriters who have demonstrated their support for the Center and intergovernmental governance by investing their time and resources in the projects this report describes. Many Academy Fellows have also offered invaluable insight and keen analysis to make the Center's work possible.

Teresa W. Gerton
President and Chief Executive Officer
National Academy of Public Administration

RESEARCH AND ANALYSIS

State Regulatory Compliance Processes: Lessons Learned from COVID-19

As the COVID-19 public health emergency wound down in 2023, the window of opportunity to capture the pandemic's lessons remained open. Many states found ways to innovate in the face of the pandemic's massive disruption, adapting business regulations to allow critical function continuity. Some adaptations led to permanent improvements in administrative processes, while other measures were phased out quickly. This report captures these insights and documents both what worked and how to develop a framework for future crises. The Center appreciates the vital leadership of the Panel members, Neil Kerwin, Aretha Ferrell-Benavides, Stan Meiburg, Shelley Metzenbaum, and Courtney Phillips. This study was supported by a grant from the Pew Charitable Trusts and completed in December 2022.

Modernizing Public Benefits Delivery: How Innovation Can Deliver Results for Eligible Households and Taxpayers

A series of meetings in 2022 brought together researchers, advocates, practitioners, technologists, and public sector associations to develop a vision for a modernized public benefits system and recommend strategies to eliminate obstacles hindering innovation and optimization. This white paper conceptualizes a modernized public benefits system that shifts from a focus on compliance-based administrative functions to a holistic customer-centric experience—emphasizing efficiency, efficacy, and expediency. It also provides a roadmap for policy makers to begin the transformation process. Although centered on the public benefits system, the principles apply to any settings where individuals and administrators must navigate multiple federal projects not designed to work together. The series and white paper were sponsored by The Center for Accountability, Modernization, and Innovation (CAMI) and published in June 2023. The Center appreciates the role of Academy Board Member, Fellow, and Chairman of the Board at CAMI, Stan Soloway, who made this project possible.

RESEARCH AND ANALYSIS

Modern Intergovernmental Governance Toolkit

The toolkit helps government officials navigate the complex process of creating partnerships. The team assembled and assessed a range of exemplars, concluding that the "best" intergovernmental partnership is context-specific. It depends on authorization, resources, and consensus. States can facilitate collaboration by providing training, education, clear information, incentives, leadership, and a platform to foster relationships. The toolkit also presents eight strategies for overcoming the most significant obstacles of the intergovernmental system. It proposes to flip the script, orienting federal partnerships with state, local, tribal, and territorial governments to pursue their objectives while meeting program requirements. The Center appreciates the contributions of the Expert Advisory Group members Basil Gooden, Naim Kapucu, Beth Kellar, and Jan Perry. This study was supported by the Jane G. and Mark A. Pisano Fund and released in July 2023.

IN PROCESS: Homelessness Working Group

The Academy's Intergovernmental Systems Standing Panel formed a Working Group of Fellows to assess efforts to reduce or end homelessness. The working group has met with nonprofits and local government officials in Connecticut, Texas, California, and Massachusetts to examine the intergovernmental dimensions of homelessness strategies. Center staff members provide research and technical support. A white paper will include recommendations for the Executive Branch to tackle homelessness through the intergovernmental system. The Working Group plans to conclude its work in early 2024.

IN PROCESS: Environmental Protection Agency Indian Country Program Implementation Assessment

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Office of International and Tribal Affairs (OITA), and American Indian Environmental Office (AIEO) have contracted with the Academy to develop a plan for assessing the effectiveness of EPA's direct implementation programs in Indian country. The project will continue through September 2024.

IN PROCESS: Housing and Infrastructure Disaster Resiliency

Hagerty Consulting has contracted with the Academy to develop a toolkit of best practices, observations, and recommendations around the short and long-term aspects of housing and infrastructure disaster resiliency. The work will succinctly examine disaster resiliency at all levels of government and across jurisdictions and sectors.

EVENTS

The Center continued participating in, developing, and assisting with external events to pursue its second-year objectives. These events solidified relationships with various stakeholders, provided opportunities for dialogue, and put intergovernmental systems on the agenda. The Center's staff members support the Academy's Elections and Homelessness Working Groups, Intergovernmental Systems Standing Panel, and Grants Management Symposium.

Demystifying the Public Procurement Supply Chain: Lessons from the Pandemic and Improvements for the Future (10/3/22):

Beginning in early 2020 with the COVID pandemic, the sudden surge in demand for personal protective equipment challenged public procurement officials throughout the United States. Southern California officials and suppliers discussed lessons learned. They emphasized preparation, partnerships, ready inventories, and communication technology. The Center cohosted the California Association of Public Procurement Officials (CAPPO) event.

Benchmarking Best Practices (10/21/22):

Academy Fellow and Professor David Ammons described best-practice benchmarking as a constructive means for local governments to learn best practices from top performers. The Center cosponsored the event with the Mid-Atlantic StatNet.

Academy Fall Meeting (11/2 - 11/4/22):

During the Academy's 2022 Fall Meeting, the Center developed three hybrid sessions covering intergovernmental strategies to create meaningful work (detailed below).

Accessibility, Disability, Neurodivergence, and Meaningful Work:

The Center hosted a session on the accessibility of meaningful work as a critical factor in equity and inclusion for neurodivergent individuals and individuals with disabilities. MITRE, Melwood, and the Missouri Division of Workforce Development discussed working with neurodivergent individuals.

Data-Driven Meaningful Work:

The Center and Results for America held a joint panel to discuss changes in how governments are engaging with data to achieve meaningful work outcomes for local communities.

Analyzing to Find Innovation - How Academy Studies Help Localities Provide Meaningful Work:

Center Director Nancy Augustine joined the Academy's Director of Academy Studies, Brenna Isman, and NACo's Chief Research Officer and Chief Economist, Teryn Zmuda, for a fireside chat. They discussed local government challenges through Federal and intergovernmental lenses.

Election Administration and Equitable Voting Access (2/22/23):
The Center held a webinar on the intergovernmental oversight of election administration and equitable voting access. The event was a collaboration with Wayne State University Law School's Levin Center for Oversight and Democracy. The panelists emphasized that workforce recruitment, retention, and training, and broad promotion of accurate information will ensure that future elections are safe, secure, and trusted. Improved intergovernmental relationships between the EAC, SLTT governments, and supporting organizations will help address these problems.

Infrastructure Workforce Roundtable (5/16/23):
Officials representing multiple levels of government, associations, and nonprofits convened to discuss the challenge of recruiting and training the infrastructure workforce. Attendees identified problems, brainstormed solutions, and shared resources, ultimately noting that all infrastructure-related jobs must modernize and innovate to help maintain and expand their talent pools. Infrastructure-related employers must make careers more appealing, equitable, and inclusive to effectively compete and help complete the vital work our society depends upon. The Center organized the event with the National Academy of Construction (NAC) as part of a partnership focusing on infrastructure.

Modernizing Public Benefits Delivery (6/13/23):
Center Director Nancy Augustine presented the principles of a modern public benefits system and the obstacles that must be overcome to achieve it. The presentation was part of a session on the "evolving nature of equity in practice," addressing challenges with operationalizing a shared concept of equity that includes common definitions and data. The event occurred at the Academy's Social Equity Leadership Conference in Kansas City.

Modern Public Benefits Delivery Paper Release Event (6/16/23):
The Center hosted a hybrid event with the Center for Accountability, Modernization, and Innovation (CAMI). This event covered key takeaways from the white paper and hosted a panel discussion about opportunities to modernize delivery systems.

Housing and Infrastructure Disaster Resiliency (8/1/23):
The Center and Hagerty Consulting hosted two roundtable convenings to discuss how effective governance structures can help communities mitigate, prepare for, and recover from disaster events and plan for worsening environmental conditions with the long-term resilience of housing and infrastructure in mind. The first discussion covered federal funding mechanisms and capacity, and the second session focused on community-level issues such as insurance, building codes, and public perception.

Explaining the Academy and its Center - ASPA/SIAM Event (9/13/23):
The Academy and the American Society for Public Administration's (ASPA) Section on Intergovernmental Administration and Management (SIAM) held a joint webinar that detailed resources available through the Academy and discussed options for collaboration through the Center.

COMMUNICATIONS

5441

Individuals reached through the CIP's quarterly newsletter

13

Events hosted, participated in, and supported

The Center continued to create targeted communications to raise its profile and communicate the importance of intergovernmental partnerships.

Throughout Year 2, the Center:

- Posted 17 articles on the Academy's Federalism.US site.
- Utilized LinkedIn and Twitter/X to distribute content, engage with external stakeholders, and highlight accomplishments.
- Reached over 100 followers on LinkedIn in four months; engagement continues to grow.
- Distributed the quarterly e-newsletter, "Intergovernmental Insight," to over 5,000 Academy Fellows, partners, and other stakeholders.

17

Intergovernmental Matters Posts

5

Organizations provided financial support

2

Grants Management Symposiums

LOOKING FORWARD

The Center for Intergovernmental Partnerships asserts that no individual level of government nor lone agency can solve our society's significant challenges. The Center's first two years of operations exhibited a growing capability to bring practitioners together. Its work has supported partners and elevated the importance of addressing all aspects of the intergovernmental system, as emphasized by the Academy's 12 Grand Challenges in Public Administration.

The Center will continue to host discussions and produce original ideas and research for improved intergovernmental systems. It will also continue to facilitate events that elevate intergovernmental perspectives. Support for the Center allows it to take on more research opportunities, collect and share vital intergovernmental solutions, and ultimately become a leader, both in action and thought, in reshaping our governance system into a more efficient, equitable, and transparent model for the future.

Building on the successes of our first two years, the Center will continue to pursue its three objectives:

Create and Communicate Knowledge About the Importance of Intergovernmental Partnerships Through Research

The Center will conduct more original research to assess and develop options to improve policy implementation across levels of government. Current focus areas include disaster resiliency, elections, homelessness, public benefits, and governance systems.

Develop Opportunities for Dialogue Through Meetings and Events

In addition to ongoing outreach, the Center plans to develop several series of meetings that bring together officials from multiple levels of government and sectors to discuss potential strategies for addressing shared challenges.

Build Relationships Through Partnerships

The Center will continue to build relationships with organizations focused on federal, state, and local policy issues, bringing an intergovernmental perspective to discussions. The Center will develop opportunities to collaborate on projects and convenings and increase participation in other organizations' events.

ADVANCING THE ACADEMY'S MISSION

The Academy's third Strategic Goal states, "The Academy will promote collaborative intergovernmental and multi-sector partnerships that further governance in action and build administrative capacity by generating thoughtful, original content recognized for its excellence and reliability." With this critical element of its operations in mind, the Center started to build a network of partners, supporters, and underwriters equally invested in good intergovernmental governance.

The Center utilizes Academy-originated and external events to build relationships, forge connections, and open doors into the complicated, vast, and vital intergovernmental system. The Center provides targeted support to partners and other external groups in developing and executing relevant events. Additionally, the Center can leverage its network of Academy Fellows and professional staff members to moderate/speak at events, give presentations, or keynote events.

The Center aims to expand its network and team further to offer partners, supporters, and underwriters more opportunities, products, and support with their work in the various intergovernmental spaces.

Supporters & Underwriters

CAMI

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION of COUNTIES **NACo**

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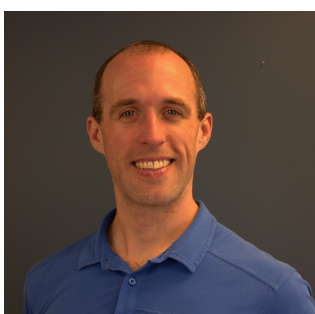APHSA American Public Human Services Association

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ABOUT THE ACADEMY

The National Academy of Public Administration (the Academy) is an independent, nonprofit, and nonpartisan organization established in 1967 and chartered by Congress in 1984. It advises government leaders on building more effective, efficient, accountable, and transparent organizations. To carry out this mission, the Academy draws on the knowledge and experience of its approximately 1,000 Fellows—including former cabinet officers, Members of Congress, governors, mayors, state legislators, prominent scholars, career public administrators, and nonprofit and business executives. The Academy helps public institutions address their most critical governance and management challenges through in-depth studies and analyses, advisory services and technical assistance, congressional testimony, forums and conferences, and online stakeholder engagement. Learn more about the Academy and its work at www.NAPAwash.org.

ABOUT THE CENTER

The National Academy of Public Administration (the Academy) established the Center for Intergovernmental Partnerships (the Center) in September 2021, recognizing that no significant public problem fits entirely within one government agency or even one level of government. The Center identifies intergovernmental gaps and serves as a forum for dialogue and problem-solving on issues that span local, state, Tribal, territorial, and federal levels of government. It brings leaders from every level of government and relevant sectors together to design solutions that create new governance models for the 21st century. Over time, the Academy envisions the Center becoming the nation's hub for problem-solving around the government's biggest challenges.

THANK YOU

The Center and its staff members appreciate the support of its funders, stakeholders, and broader audience.

NATIONAL ACADEMY OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION®

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