Standard Application Process: Portal, Process, and Governance

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National Center for Science and Engineering Statistics

Social, Behavioral and Economic Sciences

National Science Foundation

Presentation Outline

- Basic Premise

- SAP Establishment and Portal Development

- SAP Governance

- SAP Metrics

- Questions for Consideration

Basic Premise

Basic Premise

- We have important research and policy questions

  - Equity

  - Return on Investment

  - Prevalence

- Data exists to inform our questions

- Historically, the process to <u>discover</u> and <u>apply</u> for access to those data has been inefficient and, at times, ineffective

Desired Future State "Visualization"
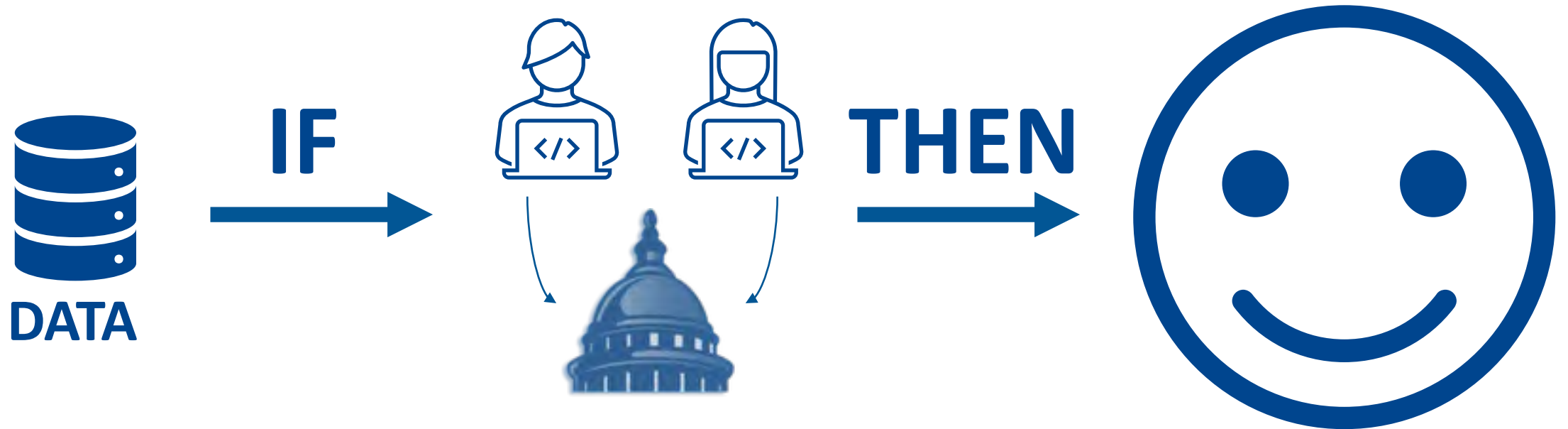
Goal

SAP Establishment & Portal Development

SAP Establishment: Evidence Act

The [Foundations for Evidence-Based Policymaking Act of 2018 (§ 3583)](#) requires OMB establish a process through which agencies, state, local, and tribal governments, researchers, and individuals may apply to access confidential federal data

Standardized process across statistical agencies

Common application form

Standard review criteria for access determination

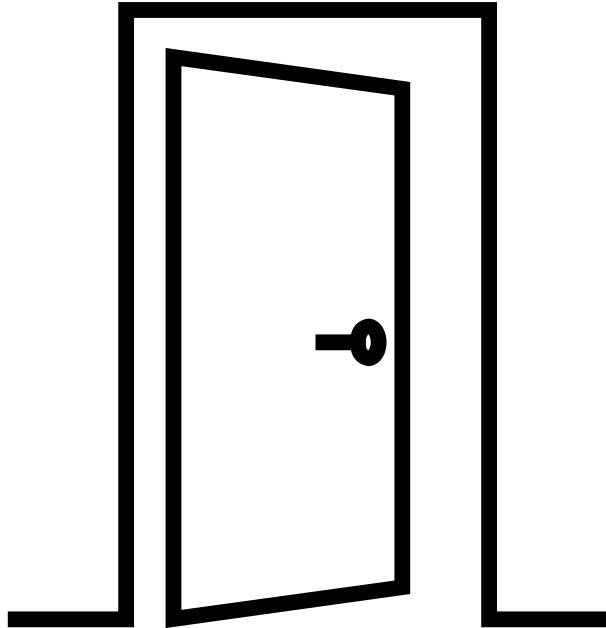Timeframes for prompt determinations

Standards for transparency
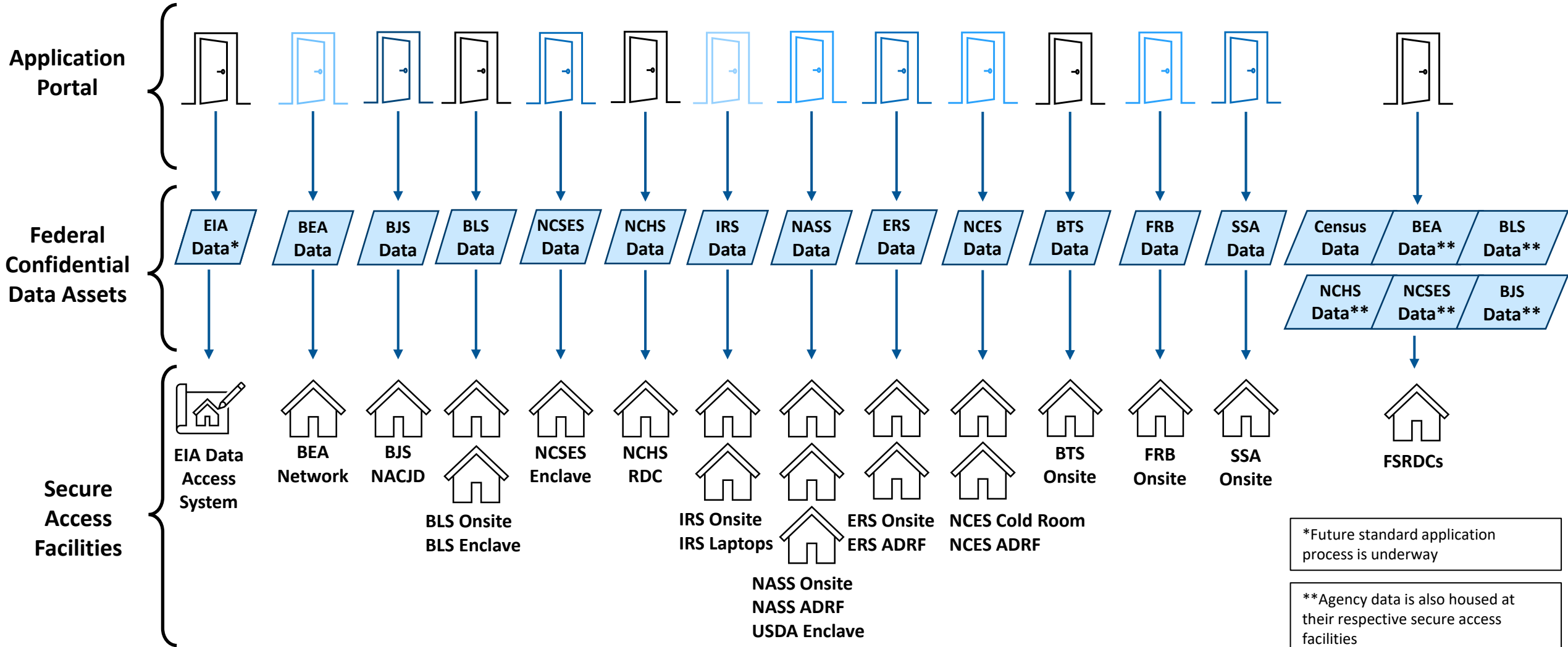
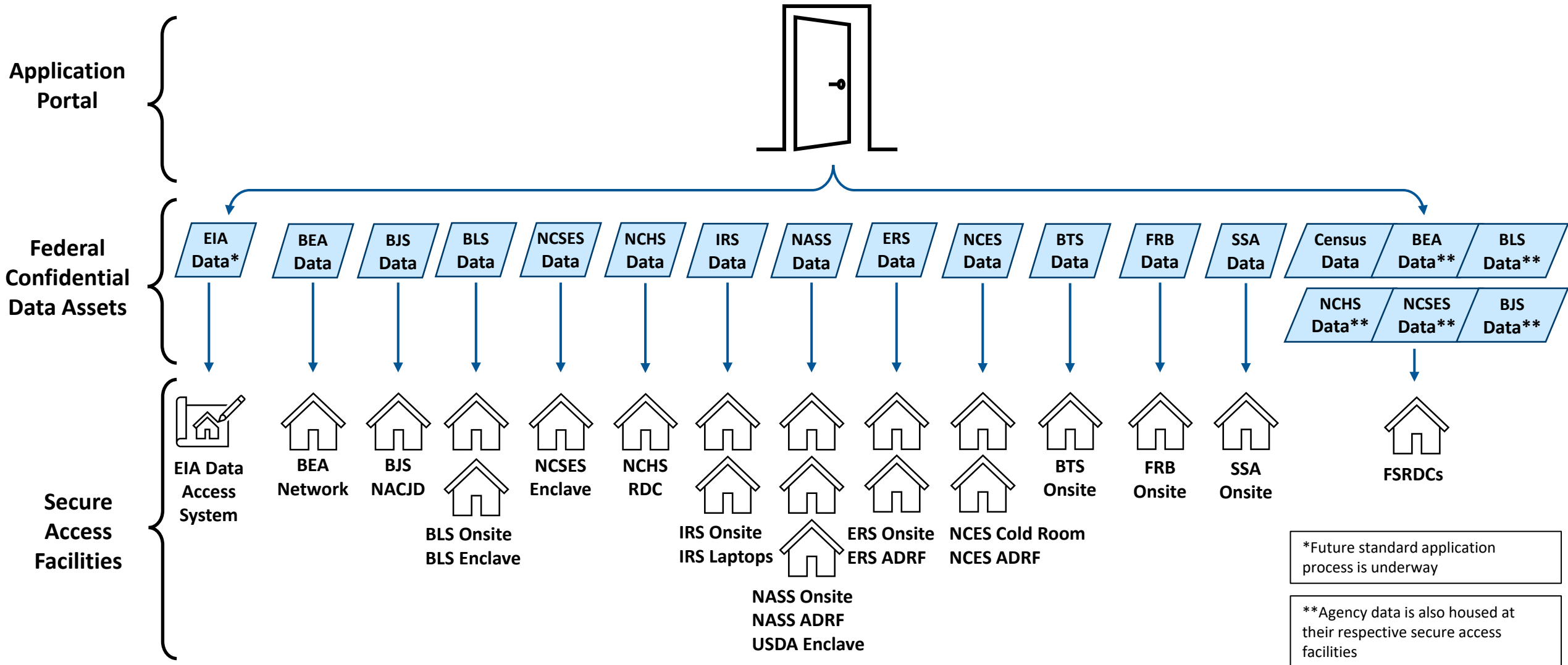An appeals process for adverse decisions

The Door to Discovery

The door represents our ability to:

- **Discover** confidential data

- **Apply** for secure access

The Past – Decentralized Application Process

Application Portal

Federal Confidential Data Assets

EIA Data* · BEA Data · BJS Data · BLS Data · NCSES Data · NCHS Data · IRS Data · NASS Data · ERS Data · NCES Data · BTS Data · FRB Data · SSA Data

Census Data / BEA Data** / BLS Data**
NCHS Data** / NCSES Data** / BJS Data**

Secure Access Facilities

EIA Data Access System · BEA Network · BJS NACJD · BLS Onsite / BLS Enclave · NCSES Enclave · NCHS RDC · IRS Onsite / IRS Laptops · NASS Onsite / NASS ADRF / USDA Enclave · ERS Onsite / ERS ADRF · NCES Cold Room / NCES ADRF · BTS Onsite · FRB Onsite · SSA Onsite · FSRDCs

*Future standard application process is underway

**Agency data is also housed at their respective secure access facilities

Current – Standard Application Process

Application Portal

Federal Confidential Data Assets

EIA Data* · BEA Data · BJS Data · BLS Data · NCSES Data · NCHS Data · IRS Data · NASS Data · ERS Data · NCES Data · BTS Data · FRB Data · SSA Data · Census Data · BEA Data** · BLS Data**

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SAP Development Phases

	Phase 1 – Pilot
Time period	2018-2019
Participating agencies	7
Secure access locations	1
Accomplishments	• Agency coordination • Stakeholder outreach

Phase 1 – SAP Pilot

SAP Development Phases

	Phase 1 – Pilot	Phase 2 – Catalog & Portal
Time period	2018-2019	2020-2022
Participating agencies	7	16
Secure access locations	1	14
Accomplishments	• Agency coordination • Stakeholder outreach	• Expanded participation • SAP Policy • Metadata catalog • Stakeholder outreach • SAP Portal

Phase 1 – SAP Pilot

Phases 2&3 – SAP Portal

SAP Development Phases

	Phase 1 – Pilot	Phase 2 – Catalog & Portal	Phase 3 – Enhancements
Time period	2018-2019	2020-2022	2023 and beyond
Participating agencies	7	16	16
Secure access locations	1	14	14
Accomplishments	• Agency coordination • Stakeholder outreach	• Expanded participation • SAP Policy • Metadata catalog • Stakeholder outreach • SAP Portal	• SAP governance • Portal enhancements • Stakeholder outreach

Phase 1 – SAP Pilot
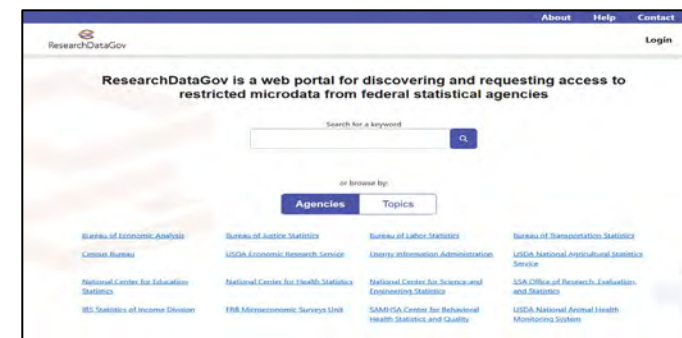
Phases 2&3 – SAP Portal

SAP Development – Phase 2 (2020-2022)

- 16 agencies; 14 access locations

- Expand participation and capabilities from Phase 1

  - Participation from principal statistical agencies and units

  - Included data in the FSRDCs and agency-specific secure data access facilities

- Creation of a policy defining the SAP
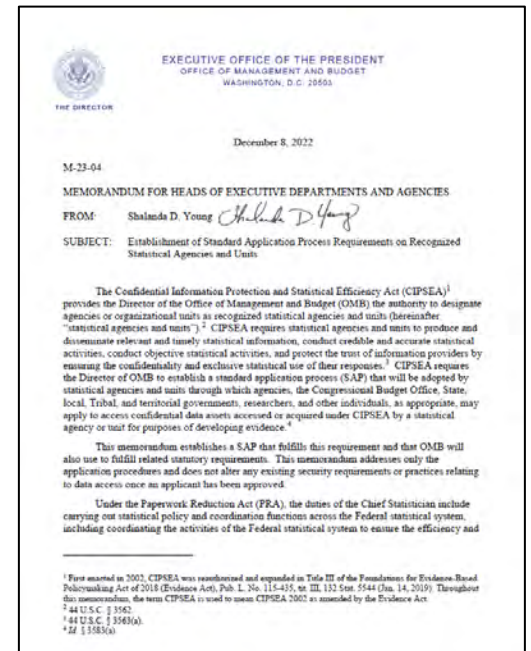
SAP Policy (M-23-04)

SAP Development – Phase 2 (continued)

- Stakeholder outreach and engagement

SAP Logo
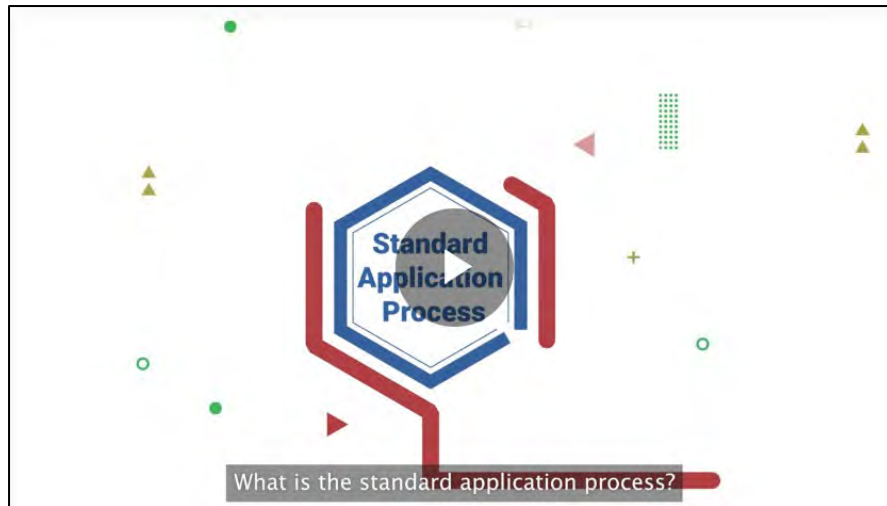
SAP Informational Video
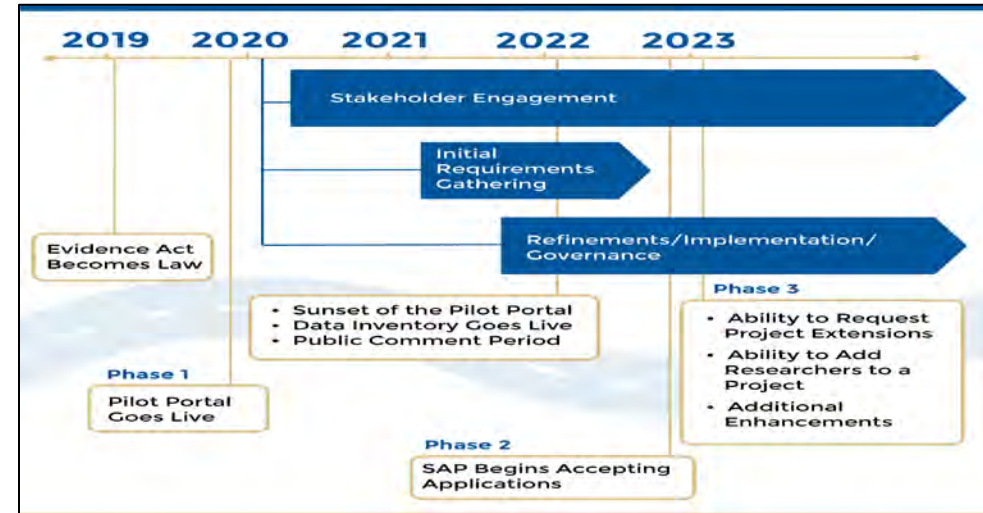
SAP Implementation Timeline

SAP Development – Phase 2 (continued)

- Development of technical requirements

- Launch of the SAP Metadata Catalog (Feb 2022)

- Launch of the SAP Application Form (Dec 2022)

- www.ResearchData.org


SAP Metadata Catalog

SAP Application Form

SAP Governance

SAP Governance Board

- SAP Policy required the establishment of an ICSP subcommittee to serve as the Governance Board for SAP activities

    - Serve as the executive steering committee to oversee the SAP

    - Coordinate the statistical agencies and units accepting SAP applications

- SAP Governance Board is composed of members who have broad knowledge of the federal statistical system

    - ICSP members

    - Representatives from the Evaluation, Privacy, and Chief Data Officer communities

Note: ICSP = Interagency Council on Statistical Policy
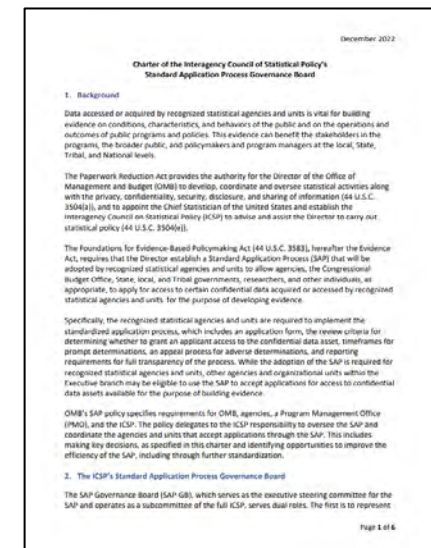
SAP Governance Charter

SAP Governance Board – Working Group Composition

- SAP Governance Board Charter required the creation of three standing working groups

Working Group	Members	Agencies Represented
Budget and Policy	11	9
Communication	11	7
Technical	30	16

- Current working group activities include technical requirements development, SAP communication plan development, and SAP newsletter dissemination

SAP Metrics

SAP Application Metrics: Applications received

- ## 449 applications received between Dec 2022 and Sept 2023
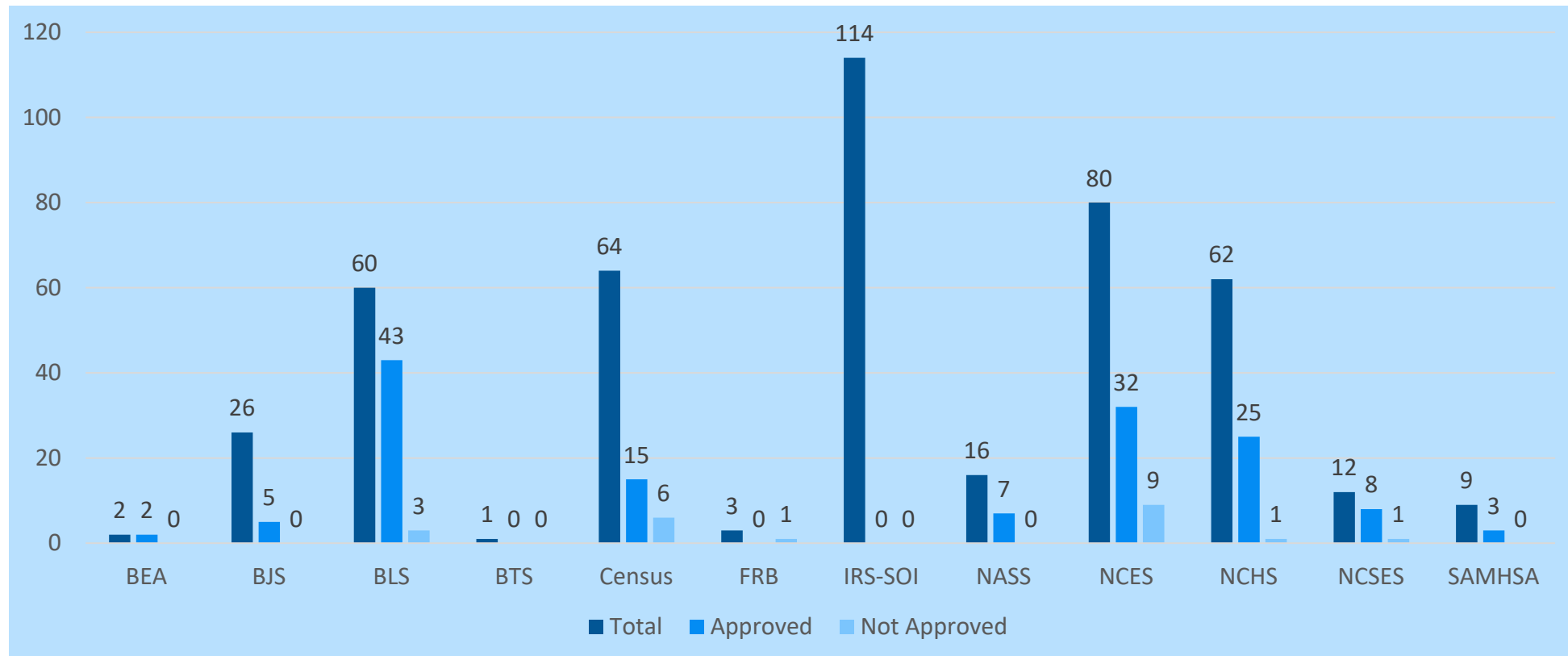
SAP Application Metrics: Decisions rendered

449 applications submitted since launch (12/08/22)

Final Decision Rendered (as of 10/02/2023)	Pending Applications (as of 10/02/2023)

Final decision rendered on **161** applications

288 pending applications

Approved: 140	**Not approved**: 21	**Under Review**: 193	**Changes Needed**: 95

SAP Application Metrics: Review duration

- The average review duration for an approved application is 40 days

Review Duration (as of Sept 15)	
Average review duration	**Adherence to review timeframes***
• Average Approval time: 40.86 days • Average Rejection time: 51.76 days • Average Withdrawal time: 11.76 days	• 156 of 161 applications (97%) had decisions rendered within the review timeframe • 5 projects exceeded the review timeframe (4 project were between 1-5 days overdue)

*Review timeframes:

- 12 weeks (84 days) for single-agency applications
- 24 weeks (168 days) for multi-agency applications
- Applications requesting data that requires approval from a party outside the SAP (e.g., a foundation or state agency) are exempt from review timelines

# Questions for Consideration

Questions for Consideration

- Do shared federal statistical services help you meet your data and research needs?

- How can the SAP Portal better meet your needs?

- What are your suggestions and recommendations as we consider the future of the SAP Portal?

For more information, please contact:
John Finamore at jfinamor@nsf.gov.

Additional slides

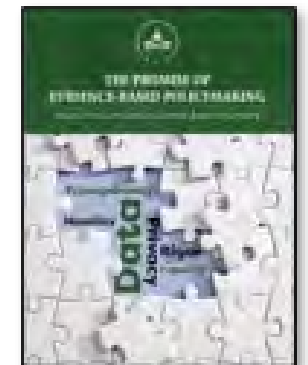# SAP Development – Phase 2 Application Process
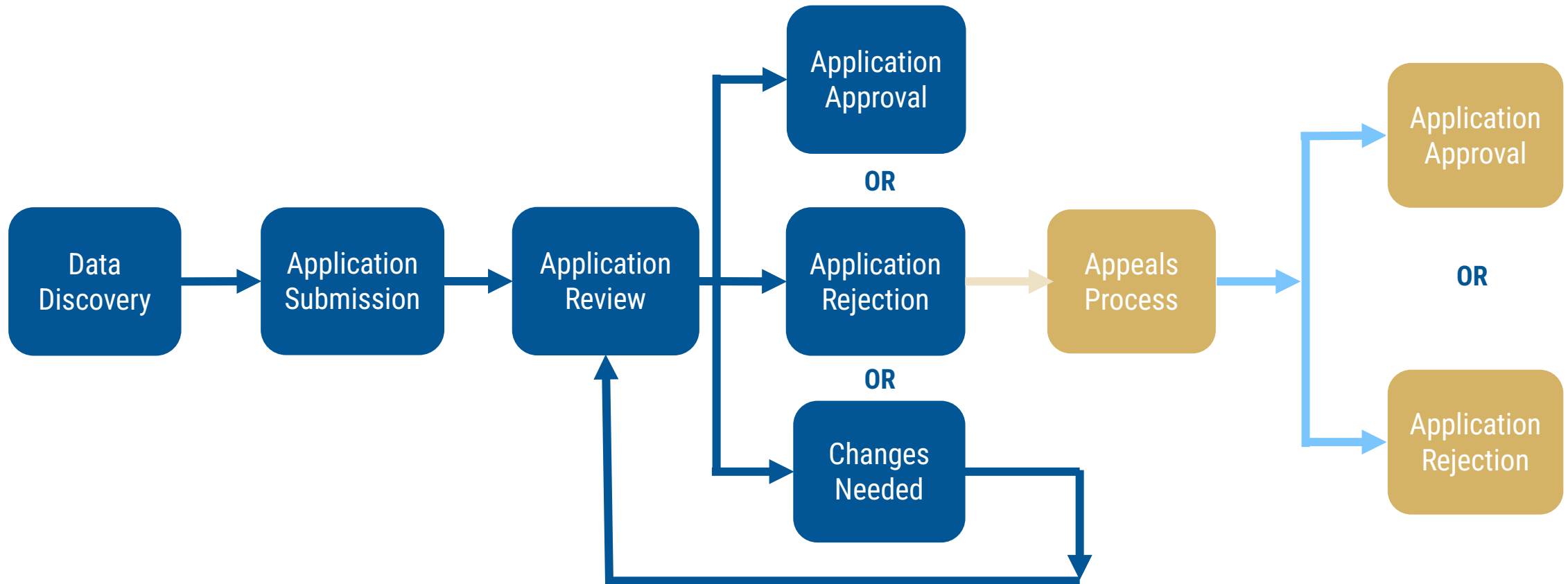
SAP Establishment: Evidence Commission

The Commission on Evidence-Based Policymaking recommended a single process to apply for government data

The Office of Management and Budget should promulgate a **single, streamlined process for researchers** *external to the government* **to apply, become qualified,** *and* **gain approval to access government data that are not publicly available.**

Source: The Promise of Evidence-Based Policymaking, Rec. 2-8, p. 46.

Commission on Evidence-Based Policymaking