U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF STANDARDS AND TECHNOLOGY
MANUFACTURING EXTENSION PARTNERSHIP ADVISORY BOARD
CHARTER

1. **Advisory Committee's Official Designation.** Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MEP) Advisory Board (Advisory Board or Board).

2. **Authority.** The MEP Advisory Board is mandated by 15 U.S.C. § 278k(m), and its charter is being renewed in accordance with the Federal Advisory Committee Act, as amended (FACA), 5 U.S.C. § 1001 *et seq*., except that, as provided by 15 U.S.C. § 278k(m)(4)(B), the termination provision of the FACA (5 U.S.C. § 1013) shall not apply to the Board.

3. **Objectives and Scope of Activities.** The Board provides the Director of the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) advice on the activities, plans, and policies of the Hollings Manufacturing Extension Partnership Program (MEP Program); assessments of the soundness of the plans and strategies of the MEP Program; and assessments of current performance against the plans of the MEP Program.

   In advising on the activities, plans, and policies of the MEP Program, the Board may focus on areas of strategic importance to U.S. manufacturing competitiveness, such as:

   - Advanced manufacturing competitiveness and domestic industrial policy;
   - Domestic supply chain resilience and critical sector manufacturing capacity;
   - Manufacturing workforce development and pipeline strategies; and
   - Adoption of emerging technologies by small and medium-sized manufacturers, including super intelligence-enabled manufacturing and critical emerging technologies.

   As provided by 15 U.S.C. § 278k(m)(4)(A), the Board shall function solely in an advisory capacity, in accordance with the FACA.

4. **Description of Duties.** In addition to the objectives and activities stated above, the Board shall provide an annual report, through the Director of NIST, to the Secretary of Commerce for submission to the Congress not later than 30 days after the submittal to Congress of the President's annual budget request in each year. The report shall address the status of the MEP Program.[1]

5. **Agency or Federal Officer to Whom the Committee Submits Its Recommendations.** The Board reports to the Director of NIST.

[1] *See* 15 U.S.C. §§ 278k(m)(5)(A) and (B). Section 278k(m)(5)(B) contains an additional requirement that the report "describe relevant sections of the programmatic planning document and updates thereto transmitted to Congress by the Director under subsections (c) and (d) of section 278i of this title." However, 15 U.S.C. §§ 278i(c) and (d) were repealed by Pub. L. 114-329, title II, § 204(a)(1)(B)(i), Jan. 6, 2017, 130 Stat. 2998.

6. **Support.** The MEP Program will provide all necessary support for the Board's activities.

7. **Estimated Annual Operating Costs and Staff Years.** The Board's estimated annual operating cost is $426,291.29 (not to exceed $500,000), which includes the work year of one full-time and one part-time staff member. Members of the Board will not be compensated for their services but will, upon request, be allowed travel and per diem expenses as authorized by 5 U.S.C. § 5701 *et seq.*, while attending meetings of the Board or subcommittees thereof, while away from their homes or regular places of business.

    a. Federal personnel and other Federal internal costs: $284,696.29
    b. Proposed payment to members and number of members: $0.00; 15 members
    c. Reimbursable costs: $141,595

8. **Designated Federal Officer.** The Board shall be supported by a Designated Federal Officer (DFO) serving in a full-time capacity and an Alternate DFO (ADFO) serving in a part-time capacity. The DFO and ADFO shall be NIST Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MEP) employees or other NIST federal employees selected by the Director of the MEP Program and appointed by the Director of NIST.

    The DFO shall have overall responsibility for the administration and oversight of the Board and its activities, including recordkeeping and appropriate filings. The ADFO shall support Board operations and may perform DFO duties when delegated by the DFO or when the DFO is unavailable.

    The DFO and ADFO shall coordinate to ensure continuity of Board operations, compliance with the FACA, and fulfillment of all applicable federal requirements governing advisory board activities.

    The DFO (or ADFO) must:

    a. Ensure the Board's activities will comply with the FACA, FACA Final Rule (41 C.F.R. Part 102-3), agency administrative procedures, and any other applicable laws and regulations;
    b. Approve or call all of the Board's or subcommittees' meetings;
    c. Approve all meeting agendas;
    d. Attend all Board and subcommittee meetings for their duration;
    e. Fulfill the requirements under section 10(b) of the FACA (codified at 5 U.S.C. § 1009(b));
    f. Adjourn any meeting when the DFO determines adjournment to be in the public interest;
    g. Chair any meeting when directed to do so by the Director of NIST;
    h. Maintain information on the Board's activities and provide such information to the public, as applicable; and
    i. Ensure Board members and subcommittee members, as applicable, receive the appropriate training (*e.g.,* FACA overview) for efficient operation and compliance with the FACA and 41 C.F.R. Part 102-3.

The DFO (or ADFO) shall ensure that all FACA meeting requirements, including public notice, accessibility, records management, and other applicable compliance obligations, are satisfied regardless of the meeting modality (in-person, virtual, or hybrid).

9. **Estimated Number and Frequency of Meetings.** The Board will meet at least biannually. Additional meetings may be called by the Director of NIST, the DFO, or the ADFO acting under delegated authority. Subcommittee meetings, which may be held separately from the Board's meetings, do not qualify as Board meetings.

   Board meetings may be conducted in-person, virtually, or in a hybrid format, consistent with applicable U.S. General Services Administration FACA guidance.

   The Board's meeting schedule shall be planned with reference to the annual reporting deadline established under Section 4 to ensure the Board has adequate opportunity to deliberate prior to each budget submission cycle.

10. **Duration.** The duration of the Board is continuing, subject to the Termination section below.

11. **Termination.** This charter shall terminate four (4) years from the date of its filing with the standing committees of the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives having legislative jurisdiction of the agency unless earlier terminated or renewed by proper authority.

12. **Membership and Designation.** The Director of NIST shall appoint the members of the Board. Members shall be selected on a clear, standardized basis, in accordance with applicable Department of Commerce guidance. Race or sex shall not be considered in the selection of the Board's membership. Board members serve at the discretion of the Director of NIST.

    The Board shall consist of not fewer than ten (10) members, broadly representative of stakeholders. At least two (2) members shall be employed by or sit on an advisory board for an MEP Center; at least five (5) members shall be from U.S. small businesses in the manufacturing sector; and at least one (1) member shall represent a community college. No member shall be an employee of the federal government.

    In selecting members, in addition to the requirements listed above regarding the composition of the Board, the Director of NIST shall give consideration to the following:

    - Representation from manufacturers engaged in critical emerging technology sectors, including super intelligence-enabled manufacturing, defense industrial base and national security manufacturing, consistent with current MEP Program strategic priorities;
    - Representation from community colleges or workforce training institutions beyond the minimum required, given the MEP Program's emphasis on manufacturing workforce pipeline development; and
    - Geographic diversity across MEP Center service areas to ensure broad national stakeholder representation.

The term of office of each member of the Board shall be three years, except that vacancy appointments shall be for the remainder of the unexpired term of the vacancy. Any person who has completed two consecutive full terms of service on the Board shall thereafter be ineligible for appointment during the one-year period following the expiration of the second such term. Service during the Board's period of dormancy shall count toward a member's term of service for purposes of this provision.

Board members shall serve in a Representative capacity, and not as Special Government Employees (SGEs). *See* 18 U.S.C. § 202. Members shall not reference or otherwise utilize their membership on the Board in connection with public statements made in their personal capacities without a disclaimer that the views are their own and do not represent the views of the MEP Advisory Board, NIST, the Department of Commerce, or the U.S. Government.

The Board's Chair and Vice Chair will be appointed from its membership by the Director of NIST under the advisement of the Director of the MEP Program. The Chair and Vice Chair will serve up to two-year terms, subject to renewal by the Director of NIST.

13. **Subcommittees.** NIST may create Board subcommittees pursuant to provisions of FACA, the FACA implementing regulations, and applicable Department of Commerce guidance. Subcommittee members are to be selected from among the members of the Board. Subcommittees must report back to the Board and will not provide advice or work products directly to NIST.

14. **Recordkeeping.** The records of the Board, formally and informally established subcommittees, or other subgroups of the Board, will be handled in accordance with General Records Schedule 6.2 or other approved agency records disposition schedule. Subject to the Freedom of Information Act, 5 U.S.C. § 552, records presented to or prepared for or by the Board are available for public inspection.

15. **Filing Date.** The charter is filed on the date indicated below.

JENNIFER HESCH

Digitally signed by JENNIFER HESCH
Date: 2026.11.04 08:40:07 -05'00'

11/04/2026

Acting Deputy Assistant Secretary for Administration
Performing the non-exclusive functions and duties
of the Chief Financial Officer and Assistant Secretary
for Administration

Date

11/06/2026

Filing Date