



Heather Wojton Begins Role as IDA's Director of Data Strategy and Chief Data Officer

ALEXANDRIA, VA (September 2021) — Heather Wojton recently assumed duties as IDA's first director of data strategy and chief data officer.

In this newly created leadership position, Wojton will provide strategic leadership, project management and direction for data strategy at IDA's headquarters and two of the Federally Funded Research and Development Centers it operates—the Systems and Analyses Center and the Science and Technology Policy Institute.

"Heather will lead our effort to assess, modernize and sustain IDA's data systems and data management infrastructure," says Norton Schwartz, IDA President. "She will be instrumental in moving IDA forward into an enhanced, data-centric organization that meets sponsors' future research needs and IDA's internal needs for efficient, data-informed business operations."

Wojton is devoted to fostering a culture and capability around data practices that positions IDA to meet its sponsors' needs in an increasingly data-centric world. "Data and the processes and practices surrounding it are at the heart of IDA's mission," says Wojton. "My job is to ensure IDA gets the most value out of its data. In order to get the most value, IDA must know what data we have and where it is and must make it visible and accessible to the staff," she says.

"I am honored that IDA has entrusted me with the responsibility of leading its data strategy efforts," says Wojton. "Data practices and technologies are evolving rapidly and IDA's staff is well-positioned to harness these advancements to create innovations that aid the government in achieving their science policy and national security goals."

Wojton joined IDA as a research staff member in 2015. She has held numerous research and leadership roles, most recently serving as an assistant director in the Operational Evaluation Division (OED) of the Systems and Analyses Center. "The questions we answer at IDA require diverse expertise and skills," she says. "My job as a project leader and later as an assistant director was to understand how to best apply this expertise and skill."

Wojton also led OED's test methods and data practices project team, and has helped train IDA and Department of Defense staff members in research methods and data practices. In recent months, Wojton has worked closely with the leadership of the office of the Director, Operational Test and Evaluation, to develop and implement their strategy for the future.

"I've been blessed with the opportunity to develop professionally among people with diverse military and educational backgrounds who value collaboration," says Wojton. "I'm most looking forward to bringing those who are less data literate along the journey, helping them upskill and allowing them to answer higher level questions about how to improve IDA's processes and practices rather than spending time doing work that could easily be automated. A key part of this new position is understanding who around me has the right expertise and to build a diverse team of experts that can help move us forward," says Wojton.

Wojton earned a doctoral degree in experimental psychology from the University of Toledo in 2015 and a bachelor's degree in research psychology from Marietta College in 2011.



She was the chair and treasurer of usability and system evaluation for the Human Factors and Ergonomics Society and a member of the Association for Psychological Science and the American Statistical Association.

IDA is a nonprofit corporation that operates three Federally Funded Research and Development Centers in the public interest. IDA answers the most challenging U.S. security and science policy questions with objective analysis leveraging extraordinary scientific, technical, and analytic expertise.



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