



**IAI Position Statement on National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) report
"Strategic Opportunities to Advance Forensic Science in the United States: A Path Forward
Through Research and Standards."**

September 6, 2024

On September 4, 2024, the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) published a report entitled "[Strategic Opportunities to Advance Forensic Science in the United States: A Path Forward Through Research and Standards.](#)" This report is based on an 18-month, multi-pronged effort undertaken by NIST to identify the grand challenges facing the forensic science community and the strategic opportunities that can be taken to advance forensic science practices in the years ahead.

The report outlines four overarching challenges, which include opportunities to strengthen the validity, reliability, and consistency of existing methods and techniques for the analysis of forensic evidence; develop new methods to analyze complex forensic evidence; advance the development of science-based standards and guidelines; and promote the adoption and use of these advances by forensic service providers and officers of the court.

The challenges identified in the report are fundamental to those faced by IAI membership, both within the United States and internationally, and the strategic opportunities outlined in the NIST report align with the [IAI strategic priorities](#) identified by the Board of Directors at its 2024 annual meeting in Reno, NV. The IAI echoes the need to address these shared challenges so that law enforcement has the tools necessary to ensure public safety, and courts can ensure forensic science evidence is valid, reliable, and defensible to support a fair and impartial justice system.

The IAI intends to contribute to this agenda by promoting research and innovation, supporting the development of science-based standards and guidelines, and providing a forum for practitioners and stakeholders to convene, collaborate, and partner to support the adoption and use of advances in forensic science, strengthen professional practices, and achieve professional excellence. The IAI also intends working with legislators, administrators, and policy-makers to encourage the direction and funding for government agencies, professional forensic science organizations, academic institutions, and other entities committed to strengthening forensic science to align to this strategy and provide the necessary support to the forensic science community in overcoming these challenges and advance forensic science practices in the years ahead.

Aldo Mattei, PhD

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Aldo Mattei".

IAI President