

# 2013–2014 Call for Research Report Proposals

*Connecting Research to Practice*



IBM Center for  
The Business of Government

# 2012 PUBLISHED REPORTS

## **A Manager's Guide to Evaluating Citizen Participation**

*By Tina Nabatchi, Syracuse University*

## **Social Security in the BRIC Countries**

*By Danny Pieters and Paul Schoukens, K.U. Leuven*

## **Working the Network: A Manager's Guide for Using Twitter in Government**

*By Ines Mergel, Syracuse University*

## **Assessing the Value of Intelligence: Lessons for Leaders**

*By Frank Strickland and Chris Whitlock, IBM*

## **Key Actions That Contribute to Successful Program Implementation: Lessons from the Recovery Act**

*By Richard Callahan (University of San Francisco), Sandra Archibald (University of Washington), Kay Sterner (University of Washington), and Brinton Milward (University of Arizona)*

## **Improving Government Contracting: Lessons from Bid Protests of Department of Defense Source Selections**

*By Steven Maser, Willamette University*

## **Designing Collaborative Networks: Lessons Learned from Public Safety**

*By Jane Fedorowicz (Bentley College), Steve Sawyer (Syracuse University)*

## **Designing Open Projects: Lessons From Internet Pioneers**

*By David T. Witzel, The EdgeLab*

## **Empirically Based Intelligence Management: Using Operations Research to Improve Programmatic Decision Making**

*By Frank B. Strickland, Chris Whitlock, IBM*

## **Recovery Act Transparency: Learning from States' Experiences**

*By Francisca M. Rojas, Harvard Kennedy School*

## **Collaboration Across Boundaries: Insights and Tips from Federal Senior Executives**

*By Rosemary O'Leary, Catherine M. Gerard, Syracuse University*

## **Challenge.gov: Using Competitions and Awards to Spur Innovation**

*By Kevin C. Desouza, Arizona State University*

## **Irregular Warfare at Sea: A Case Study on National Defense Choices**

*By Frank B. Strickland, Chris Whitlock, IBM*

## **Putting Irregular Warfare in Perspective Preparing for the New Norm of Conflict**

*By Frank B. Strickland, Chris Whitlock, IBM*



## Dear Colleagues:

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Since the creation of the IBM Center for The Business of Government over 15 years ago, it has been our goal to help public sector leaders and managers address real-world problems by sponsoring independent, third-party research from top minds in academe and the nonprofit sector. We aim to produce research and analysis that helps government leaders respond more effectively to their mission and management challenges.

The IBM Center is named “The Business of Government” because we focus on the management and operation of government, not the policies of government. Public sector leaders and managers need the best, most practical advice available when it comes to delivering the business of government. We seek to bridge the gap between research and practice by helping to stimulate and accelerate the production of research that points to actionable recommendations.

For this reason, we are pleased to solicit proposals that result in reports that have sound research, insightful findings, and actionable recommendations for government leaders and public managers in the following areas of interest:

- Fostering Innovation and Transformation
- Aligning Mission Support with Mission Delivery
- Developing Cost Savings Strategies That Improve Efficiency and Effectiveness
- Making the Best Use of Performance and Results Management
- Managing Risk in a Rapidly Changing World
- Developing New Models of Public Leadership Within and Across Agencies

We are eager to help communicate what researchers know and learn about what works in these areas to busy government leaders and public managers.

Budget and fiscal issues have dominated headlines—as well as the attention of government executives—over the past year. They will likely continue to do so for the foreseeable future. While cost savings and coping strategies will be important, budget considerations are only one part of a management improvement agenda. The public will continue to expect better services and improved performance, even in the face of austerity. This means public managers will have to turn to other strategies to meet expectations, such as innovation, better management of risks, new approaches to performance and results, and new models of leadership.

Implicit in each of these strategies is the potential of technology and best business practices to help leverage government transformation. Understanding this potential will be an undercurrent in the research we will sponsor. We are looking for proposals that will provide insights, best practices, and practical, actionable recommendations that will have lasting impact on how government works.

We look forward to receiving proposals that continue our partnership with leading public management researchers. Our next deadlines are October 1, 2013; April 1, 2014; and October 1, 2014.

Please let me know if you have any questions regarding this call for proposals, or the IBM Center for The Business of Government.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D J Chenok', written in a cursive style.

Daniel J. Chenok  
Executive Director  
IBM Center for The Business of Government  
chenokd@us.ibm.com

The IBM Center for The Business of Government connects public management research with practice. Since 1998, we have helped public sector executives and managers improve the effectiveness of government with practical ideas and original thinking. The Center seeks to advance knowledge of how to improve public sector effectiveness.

Public sector institutions around the world are at a critical juncture. Fiscal austerity is changing the game for successful leadership at all levels of government. The Center's research priorities are reflective of the challenges and issues that we judge to be the most critical facing government leaders and public managers as they attempt to execute their organizational missions successfully.

**The Center has as its focus practical, actionable recommendations that build from a strong research base, and assist public sector leaders and managers to address mission and management challenges more effectively.**

The Center seeks proposals to prepare reports that address the following six public management topics.

## 1. Fostering Innovation and Transformation

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Leaders need to be able to explain what innovation is to agency employees in the context of their mission and be able to convey the importance of innovation and transformation to employees in ways that will be understood and adopted. Innovation can be viewed as new ideas, or current thinking applied in fundamentally different ways, resulting in significant change in operating models, business processes, or products and services. Transformation refers to broader, and more systemic, changes within an organization.

Both innovation and transformation initiatives rely on the use of a set of processes, tools, and culture. A recent trend is to create offices within agencies to lead innovation and transformation initiatives. Which innovation models lead to true transformation is still unclear, and measures of what constitutes success have yet to be well-defined.

The Center is interested in research that explores these different elements, together or separately, in ways that improve government operations or services to the public.

### **Areas of interest and research questions include:**

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- What emerging innovation trends and models should government leverage to improve operations and services? How do you manage the processes of innovation, including implementation?
- Case studies of agencies or organizations that have undertaken innovation, experimentation, or transformation initiatives, and the tools (such as social media, cloud computing, or big data) and lessons learned that could be applied by others, including how such efforts can be sustained over time.
- Understanding the roles of risk management, leadership support, culture, collaboration, and incentives to undertake innovation or transformation efforts from the organizational, individual, and mission perspectives. For example, how do successful innovators cultivate a culture of risk tolerance?
- Understanding methods for measuring the "return on investment" of innovation and transformation for mission performance, both prospectively and retrospectively.

## 2. Aligning Mission Support with Mission Delivery

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Agency missions cannot be delivered without mission-support functions such as human resources, acquisition, information technology, and financial management. Over the past 25 years, these mission-support functions have been professionalized and oftentimes centralized, with their leaders often referred to as chiefs or CXOs and having statutory compliance, policy implementation, service delivery, and strategic advisory roles.

The Center is interested in research into how effective mission-delivery leaders can leverage the investment and infrastructure of the various mission-support functions to deliver mission results and improve program efficiencies, as well as how effective practices by CXOs in the public and private sectors can foster improved mission performance.

### Areas of interest and research questions include:

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- Case studies of best practices in how mission-support functions have evolved over the past 25 years, and how they have integrated or coordinated across agency and mission boundaries, including through intra- and inter-agency councils.
- Case studies of how federal agencies have defined the roles and responsibilities of mission support functions vs. mission delivery leaders. Understanding the evolving role of chief operating officers in serving as a catalyst or bridge between mission-support functions and mission delivery.
- Approaches—such as training, incentives, and business/organizational alignment—that can help CXOs move from a compliance approach (as defined by statutory or policy requirements) toward a performance-oriented approach (as defined by contributions to an agency’s mission).
- What are the different models of mission support in state governments or other countries (e.g., the use of shared services or operations management councils) that could be applied in the U.S. federal government?

## 3. Developing Cost Savings Strategies That Improve Efficiency and Effectiveness

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Fiscal austerity will be an enduring challenge for public managers for the foreseeable future, but it can also create an environment and incentives to rethink traditional approaches to mission support and service delivery. Public managers can harness major technological shifts and adapt proven, public sector and commercial best practices to make their agencies both more efficient and productive, and to conduct operations and provide services with greater speed.

The Center is interested in research focused on innovative ways to save costs in both mission support and service delivery, across multiple instruments of government spending (e.g., appropriations, user fees, tax expenditures).

### Areas of interest and research questions include:

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- Case studies of spending review strategies used by state governments and other countries, at both the agency level and the government-wide level. Identify patterns, best practices, and cautionary lessons learned.
- Case studies of best practices in the use of specific tools or strategies for accurately measuring and then reducing costs in a way that supports improved outcomes, such as advanced business analytics to reduce improper payments, the use of shared services, or incentives based on strategic sourcing or gain-sharing.
- What strategies are public managers using to adapt to uncertainty in the budget process in order to manage strategically, effectively and efficiently, and how can those strategies be shared and adapted across agencies?
- How can managers use “time” as a key metric to drive both performance improvement and cost reductions through a government that works both faster and better? How can rapid, iterative experimentation improve results and lower costs?

## 4. Making the Best Use of Performance and Results Management

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The federal government has placed sustained attention on improving performance and results for more than two decades. Its strategies have evolved from a focus on agencies and developing a supply of performance information, to a point where today the emphasis is more on selected goals and the effective use of data to inform real-time decision-making. New laws, technologies, and techniques make this possible, but the frontier still seems to be finding ways to integrate performance management into the culture of government, within—and increasingly—across agencies.

The Center is interested in research on incentives and new approaches to make information about performance and results truly impactful in driving agencies toward programs and activities with greatest net benefit.

### Areas of interest and research questions include:

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- What is the evolving role of the use of data and evidence in agency decision-making, in light of new statutory and technological changes, and how are they being linked into existing management systems and funding streams—often to improve performance in new ways while still operating existing activities successfully?
- Case studies of how agencies are using new performance-improvement approaches such as behavioral insights, social impact bonds, performance grants, results contracting, real-time benchmarks/scorecards, and other non-traditional or cutting-edge approaches.
- Case studies of the integration of performance management, program evaluation, portfolio management, and cost information, both within agencies and across agency, intergovernmental, and even sectoral boundaries on common goals.
- Case studies of the use of new tools such as data analytics, data visualization, dashboards, and other “sense making” analytic and presentation techniques of large volumes of data to improve decision-making.

## 5. Managing Risk in a Rapidly Changing World

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Managing risk in the public sphere increasingly takes on new dimensions. These extend from national security risks via cyberattacks, to economic risks from natural disasters, to budget and program risks, to privacy risk. However, government leaders lack an accepted culture and framework to manage, incorporate, and communicate risk, which tends to constrain creativity and innovation. Understanding the spectrum of different kinds of risks, developing strategies and tools to mitigate them—as well as incorporating them into decisionmaking—and developing strategies for communicating risks to appropriate target populations, will be a growing challenge for public managers in years to come.

The Center is interested in research on good models to assess inherent risks facing the public sector, and to act accordingly given those risks.

### Areas of interest and research questions include:

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- What different kinds of risks do agencies and public managers face—from national security and cybersecurity risks to financial and programmatic risks—and what are appropriate strategies for addressing them? How is risk defined by different stakeholders in the public sector, and how does it differ from uncertainty or probability?
- Case studies of strategies for creating a risk-tolerant culture, around the right kinds of risks. What are different models, tools, and strategies for managing risk in the public sector? How is risk balanced with competing values such as innovation?
- Case studies of ways risk is being better managed via analytics, high-performance computing, enterprise risk management, and threat management, both in the national security domain and across government. How are national leaders being engaged in thinking about strategic risk management?
- How can public sector managers and leaders understand risk in the context of programs they deliver, and how can they communicate the reality of that risk to their stakeholders and constituents so that the public understands value being provided relative to risk that is inherent in that value?

## 6. Developing New Models of Public Leadership Within and Across Agencies

Governments today face serious, sometimes seemingly intractable public management issues that go to the core of effective governance and leadership. These issues test the very form, structure, and capacity required to meet problems head-on. As a result, government leaders find it necessary to go beyond established parameters and institutional strictures, working across organizational boundaries in pursuit of multi-layered, networked approaches that are tailored to a specific challenge—often through “shared leadership” models. Since complex challenges confront people with the unknown and unpredictable, they also demand a different style of leadership—one that shapes vision and fosters alignment and commitment through collaborative action.

Understanding these new leadership styles and approaches is of high interest for research by the Center.

### Areas of interest and research questions include:

- What are keys to effective leadership in a modern and rapidly changing world, where technology and demographics are reshaping traditional hierarchies and lines of authority within and across agencies?
- Case studies of leaders facing complex situations, such as the implementation of cross-agency priority goals, or agency-level priority goals.
- Case studies of leaders who face transformational challenges, such as turning around a troubled agency, that highlight the strategies they employed to successfully overcome challenges and transform their organization.
- Case studies of specific leadership techniques, such as the “unity of effort” leadership model, a “shared” leadership model, or the “enterprise” leadership model, and how they can be adapted by leaders today to meet their specific needs.

While the six topics outlined above frame our priorities, the Center also welcomes interesting and timely practical research and actionable recommendations in other current and emerging areas of importance for government, such as acquisition, supply chain, social media, human capital and workforce development, financial management, information technology, healthcare reform implementation, and sustainability.

## **Purpose**

The IBM Center for The Business of Government aims to tap into the best minds in academe and the nonprofit sector who can use rigorous public management research and analytic techniques to help government leaders and public managers improve efficiency and effectiveness. We are looking for sound research design, practical findings and actionable recommendations—not just theory or concepts—in order to assist executives and managers to respond more effectively to mission and management challenges.

## **Eligibility**

Individuals working in universities, nonprofit organizations, or journalism.

## **Description of Stipends**

Individuals receiving a stipend should produce a 10,000- to 12,000-word report. The manuscript should be submitted no later than six months after the start of the project. Recipients will select the start and end dates. The report should be written for government leaders and public managers, providing very practical knowledge and insight.

## **Size of the Stipends**

\$20,000 for each report.

## **Submitting Applications**

Interested individuals can read the research announcement and apply online at: <http://www.businessofgovernment.org/content/research-stipends>:

- New applicants will first need to create a username, password, and profile before completing the online application.
- Applicants will then fill in a series of fields that include the proposal title, proposal summary (700 character limit), the

research report proposal (9,000 character limit) to include the (i) purpose, ii) methodology, and (iii) results of the proposed report, a category for the proposal, and a resume for each author (9,000 character limit per author).

The submission of online applications is preferred. Though it is not a requirement, we encourage all applicants to submit applications and supporting documents online. Attachments are permitted, but should adhere to the constraints described above.

## **Deadlines**

Applications should be received by October 1, 2013; April 1, 2014, or October 1, 2014. Applicants will be informed of a decision approximately six weeks after the deadline.

## **Evaluation Criteria**

Government leaders and public managers want answers to the “So what?” question. They want to know “Why should I care?” and “What do I do next?” Consequently, proposals are reviewed in terms of the following criteria:

- Will the proposed report be of high value and timely to government leaders and public managers?
- Will the report provide practical insight and understanding of the topic?
- Is the report based on a sound research design?
- Does the applicant demonstrate the potential to produce a final report that will be clear, understandable, and highly communicable to government leaders and public managers?
- Does the applicant demonstrate outstanding command and knowledge of the topic, based on a strong track record in the field?



# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

## Application

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### **Can I apply online?**

Yes, online applications are preferred. To apply online, you first need to create a profile in our system. Please visit: <http://www.businessofgovernment.org/content/research-stipends> to learn more and to create an account.

### **How do I log into the system to change my address or password, check the status of my proposal, or to submit a proposal if I already have a username and password?**

Visit our research stipend page and log into the system: <http://www.businessofgovernment.org/content/research-stipends>

### **Can the proposal or resume be more than 9,000 characters (about three pages)?**

No. Your proposal and resume each should be 9,000 characters or less.

### **Does the Center only fund reports that are addressed to federal executives and managers?**

No. While a majority of the Center's reports are targeted to executives and managers in the U.S. federal

government, we are also interested in reports that discuss new approaches to improving the effectiveness of government at state, local, and international levels. The most competitive proposals tend to be those that have a very strong "story" or are clearly generalizable to a very broad audience.

### **Do you need to itemize a budget in the proposal or describe how the \$20,000 stipend will be used?**

No. The researcher can use the stipend however he/she deems appropriate.

### **Can I submit more than one proposal at a time?**

No. Researchers are asked to submit only one proposal.

### **Does the Center accept proposals for topics outside the scope of this announcement?**

Yes. However, most projects that receive stipends will be closely related to the themes outlined in this announcement. While we will consider proposals touching on other government management challenges, these are the areas of most interest to us.

# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

## Stipends

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### **Does the Center provide stipends larger than \$20,000?**

No.

### **Does the Center pay for overhead expenses?**

No. We do not pay overhead, indirect, or operating costs.

### **Can the recipient's institution receive the stipend?**

Yes. Individuals receiving a stipend have the option of requesting that the stipend be paid directly to their institution. As noted above, however, no overhead costs will be included in the stipend.

## Reports

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### **Who is the audience for completed reports?**

Reports should be written for government leaders and public managers, with a goal of providing them practical insights, and where appropriate, actionable recommendations to help them improve the operation and management of government.

### **How quickly must the report be completed?**

Recipients will be asked to select the start and end dates of the project. Recipients are asked to submit a completed manuscript no later than six months after the selected start date. The project should be started no later than three months after the stipend is awarded.

### **How will the report be reviewed?**

Upon receipt of the manuscript, the IBM Center reviews the draft for consistency with the recipient's original proposal. The IBM Center may offer editorial suggestions to better address how government leaders and public managers will read and act upon the report's contents.

### **How will the report be published?**

The IBM Center will publish the report and distribute it to government leaders and managers.

### **Can recipients publish the report in other publications?**

Recipients retain all rights to the research and can publish findings anywhere they wish. The IBM Center must be cited, however, for providing support for the project.

## 2012 PUBLISHED REPORTS (continued)

### **Best Practices for Leading Sustainability Efforts**

*By Jonathan M. Estes, Facilities Solutions Group, LLC*

### **Forging Governmental Change: Lessons from Transformations Led by Robert Gates of DOD and Francis Collins of NIH**

*By W. Henry Lambright, Syracuse University*

### **From Data to Decisions II: Building an Analytics Culture**

*By Partnership for Public Service*

### **Five Methods for Measuring Unobserved Events: A Case Study of Federal Law Enforcement**

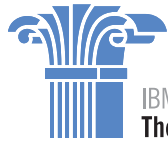
*By John Whitley, Institute for Defense Analyses*

### **The Costs of Budget Uncertainty: Analyzing the Impact of Late Appropriations**

*By Philip Joyce, University of Maryland*

### **Mitigating Risks in the Application of Cloud Computing in Law Enforcement**

*By Paul Wormeli, IJIS Institute*



IBM Center for  
**The Business of Government**

600 14th Street NW  
Second Floor  
Washington, DC 20005

## ABOUT THE IBM CENTER FOR THE BUSINESS OF GOVERNMENT

### About IBM Global Business Services

With consultants and professional staff in more than 160 countries globally, IBM Global Business Services is the world's largest consulting services organization. IBM Global Business Services provides clients with business process and industry expertise, a deep understanding of technology solutions that address specific industry issues, and the ability to design, build and run those solutions in a way that delivers bottom-line value. For more information visit [ibm.com](http://ibm.com)

### For More Information

Daniel J. Chenok, Executive Director  
IBM Center for The Business of Government  
600 14th Street NW  
Second Floor  
Washington, DC 20005  
202-551-9342  
Website: [www.businessofgovernment.org](http://www.businessofgovernment.org)  
Email: [businessofgovernment@us.ibm.com](mailto:businessofgovernment@us.ibm.com)

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