



IBM Center for  
**The Business of Government**

*Connecting Research to Practice*

**CALL FOR RESEARCH  
REPORT PROPOSALS**

# Dear Colleagues:



As the country prepares for a transition to a new presidency, the next administration will need to lead an effective government that can address policy challenges through strong leadership and effective management. Leaders who understand and can leverage effective management tools and practices are better prepared to execute on their priorities and see measurable, positive program results. The IBM Center for The Business of Government is committed to helping identify and distill the lessons learned from the past, identify current and new management initiatives and capacities that will be needed to address key challenges facing the country in the next administration, and offer ideas on implementation.

To that end, our 2017 Call for Research devotes particular attention to the anticipated needs of the next administration. Over the last year, the IBM Center has worked with government partners and stakeholders to assess new research priorities. Our goal is to develop a management roadmap that helps the next administration drive sustained improvement in the government's capacity and effectiveness.

We look to communicate what leading researchers know about “what works” to government leaders and managers in the following areas of interest:

- Developing and managing leadership talent in government
- Improving decision-making
- Enhancing an enterprise approach to improve government
- Harnessing innovation to improve outcomes and productivity

In addition to these areas of focus for a new administration, the Center also seeks research in areas where good management can enable the public sector to deliver on mission priorities and outcomes that agencies strive for on behalf of the citizens they serve. We welcome thought leadership that supports how government can best implement four key mission areas addressing two of the

most important roles for government — to serve the citizen, and to protect the nation. Specifically:

- Engaging citizens to meet evolving needs
- Transforming operations to improve programs
- Strengthening threat prediction and prevention
- Enhancing cybersecurity

These eight research topics also incorporate the themes outlined in our previous research agenda based on our publication *Six Trends Driving Change in Government* (i.e., performance, risk, innovation, efficiency, mission support, and leadership).

We seek proposals on each of these topics that will culminate in reports with insightful findings and actionable recommendations for government executives and managers who need the best, most practical advice available when it comes to delivering the business of government. Our content is intended to stimulate and accelerate the production of practical research that benefits public sector leaders and managers. We look forward to receiving proposals in response to this research announcement and to continuing our work with the world's leading researchers.

We are happy to answer any questions you have regarding the IBM Center for The Business of Government and our research stipend program. Our next deadlines are April 15, 2016 and October 3, 2016.

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



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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.

## MANAGEMENT ROADMAP FOR THE NEXT ADMINISTRATION

### TALENT

#### Developing and managing leadership talent in government

Government performance depends heavily on the quality of its workforce. The Center is interested in research that would advance knowledge of how to strengthen the public sector workforce with a specific emphasis on senior leadership. This research area focuses on identifying strategies and best practices for enhancing the quality and effectiveness of federal senior leadership, including both political appointees and career executives.

- How can the Senior Executive Service (SES) be strengthened?
- How should the SES be organized, trained, and operated?
- What new hiring models can be used and scaled within the federal government?
- How can high performing talent be attracted and retained?
- How can government better align accountability with incentives?
- What development activities/programs would be of value to government leaders?
- 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 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.

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.

## MANAGEMENT ROADMAP FOR THE NEXT ADMINISTRATION

### DECISION-MAKING

#### Improving decision-making

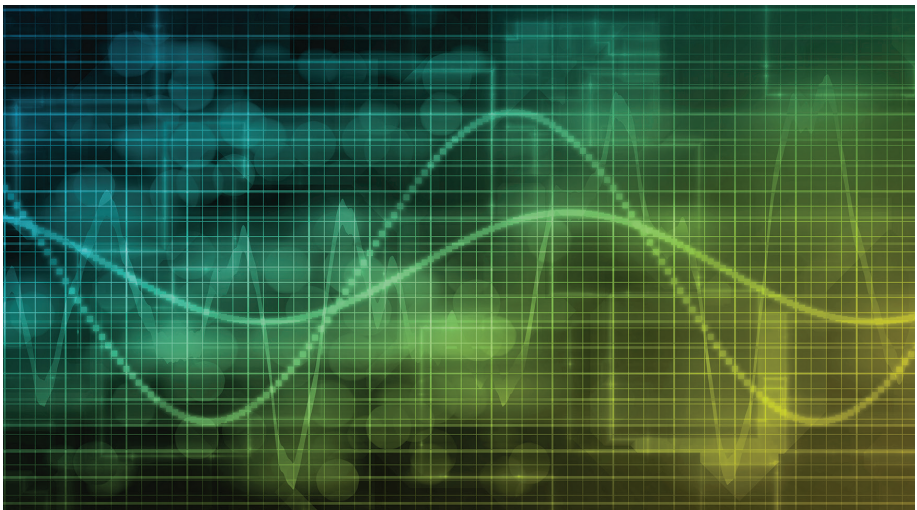
Key to an administration's success, from the transition and through the Presidential term, is the capacity to integrate the decision process with information inputs, analytical processes, and the governance structure. This research area focuses on examining strategies, best practices, tools, and approaches that can improve decision-making in two primary domains — at the departmental or agency leader level and at the governmentwide or “enterprise” level (typically the White House or OMB). The Center is interested in learning more about how analytics and fact-based decision making can make a powerful contribution to the achievement of government missions:

- 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?
- 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 are governments using emerging disciplines such as risk management and strategic foresight to improve decision making?
- How can public sector managers and leaders understand risk in the context of programs they deliver, and how can they communicate and make decisions that account for 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?

- 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 how agencies are integrating performance management, program evaluation, portfolio management, and cost information, both within agencies and across agencies, intergovernmental, and even sectoral boundaries on common goals.
- Case studies of how agencies use new tools such as data analytics, data visualization, dashboards, and other “sense making” analytic and presentation techniques to improve decision-making.
- Case studies of strategies for creating a risk-tolerant culture, and 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.
- Case studies of best practices in the use of specific tools or strategies for accurately measuring and then making decisions to 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.



## ENTERPRISE APPROACH

### Enhancing an enterprise approach to government

For our purposes, the term “enterprise” brings together a variety of concepts for collaborating and integrating operations across agency boundaries. It encompasses strengthening cross-agency governance, improving collaboration, and using enterprise frameworks to build capacity to achieve cross-agency goals, improve operations, and lower costs.

- What are the best ways for an administration to use the GPRA Modernization Act and the new processes it created to heighten focus on targeted mission results via cross-agency priority goals, agency priority goals, and annual strategic reviews?
- How can new leaders leverage these processes to develop and support effective collaboration efforts within and among agencies and departments?
- How can a new administration effectively use existing cross-agency institutions (President’s Management Council and Executive Councils — CIO, CHCO, CFO) to enact their agenda?
- How can the administration establish a governance structure to manage the councils?
- How can best-practices from crisis-driven responses be applied to efforts to drive government collaboration in non-crisis settings?
- How could enterprise approaches to government enhance a citizen-centric approach to service delivery?
- What are some of the challenges government faces that would be well suited for an enterprise approach?
- What models of mission support integration have been used effectively such as shared services or common requirements and standards?
- Case studies of leaders facing complex situations, such as the implementation of cross-agency priority goals, or agency-level priority goals.
- 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.

## INNOVATION

### Harnessing innovation to improve outcomes and productivity

The pace of innovation continues to accelerate. Understanding the changing nature of innovation is vital to harnessing it to make the government more effective. This research area focuses on creating and sustaining disciplined and replicable models of innovation to drive better customer service, increase citizen engagement, deliver efficiencies and improve outcomes.

- 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, big data or innovation labs) and lessons learned that could be applied by others, including how such efforts can be sustained over time.
- Case studies of agencies or leaders who started and sustained innovation initiatives, the challenges they confronted, and the approaches they used to achieve success.
- 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.
- Innovative 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).



*For the next set of priorities, the Center seeks research that focuses on good management practices that can enable the public sector to deliver on mission priorities and outcomes that agencies strive for on behalf of the citizens they serve.*

## ENGAGING CITIZENS

### Engaging citizens to meet evolving needs

Over the last several years, the private sector has leveraged innovative ways to provide services marking a revolution in customer engagement. Advancing self-service innovations, using new approaches to raise customer satisfaction, employing analytics, and cognitive computing platforms have all combined to improve user experiences across the economy and society. Government is starting to do the same with increased use of design thinking and similar techniques, in order to successfully deliver services within an agile enterprise.

These approaches can be used to streamline benefits for citizens, enhance the experience of those working with government to match that which they have grown to expect when interacting with the best companies in the private sector, and involve the public in framing public policy through crowdsourcing, sentiment analysis, and similar innovations. Working with citizens — and with advocacy organizations that represent citizen interests — on how they can take advantage of these new approaches and digital interactions with government will be a key engagement point for agencies.



### TRANSFORMING OPERATIONS

#### Transforming operations to improve programs

Government has moved forward with initiatives that leverage modern operating practices in the private sector to improve productivity, including shared services, IT modernization, data management, and program integrity to reduce fraud and waste. Less clear has been the connection between these best practices and how they help to bring measurable improvements at the program level, especially social programs that deliver critical health, education, workplace, and other benefits. Evolving process and technology platforms that leverage cloud, agile, and cognitive computing can help agencies to improve operations, increase visibility into both current assets and costs, and support compliance with legal and policy requirements. Moreover, modernizing these platforms can enable agencies to understand citizen satisfaction and design better services that make a real difference in the lives of people who interact with government.

### THREATS

#### Strengthening threat prediction and prevention

There is perhaps no more urgent mission for government than public safety and national security. Global threats have local effects that require collaborative approaches to leverage organizational and technical innovation across the national security, homeland security, and law enforcement communities, and involve all levels of government working with civic and community leaders and advocacy organizations. Approaches like image recognition and social media analysis can be managed as part of a larger strategic framework to help identify early warning signs of radicalization threats, better target potential dangerous people and cargo while bettering the speed and experience for the vast majority of travelers, improve management of emergencies and related incidents, and even support enhanced performance in correctional institutions to foster outcomes like reduced recidivism.

## CYBERSECURITY

### Enhancing cybersecurity

The government, like the private sector, must detect and respond to threats in cyberspace at an increasing rate, from a growing and complex landscape of malicious actors, and in a way that enables and does not impede the technologies that serve citizens, businesses, State and local governments, and other partners. These threats range from insiders, to commercial hackers, to organized crime, to foreign actors. Today's CIOs and CISOs have a dual challenge of meeting compliance requirements while achieving effective security protection all within shrinking budgets. In order to evolve from reactive protection into proactive and predictive security, they require capabilities that analyze, predict, and defend against problems in real time; provide protection for large IT systems as well as handheld or other "edge" devices; understand how personnel risks from employees or contractors can manifest into broad cyber risk, and how to identify and respond to minimize those risks; and leverage new approaches like biometrics to enable efficient access for legitimate users while impeding access for those who would bring harm. And all of these responses depend critically on providing for privacy of information held by government on behalf of its citizens.



# Guidelines

## **PURPOSE**

The aim of the IBM Center for The Business of Government is 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 the effectiveness of government. We are looking for very practical findings and actionable recommendations — not just theory or concepts — in order to assist executives and managers to more effectively respond 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 (\$5,000 at award; \$10,000 at submission of an accepted draft; and \$5,000 upon publication).



## 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).
- 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 outlined in the guidelines.

## DEADLINES

Applications should be received by April 15, 2016 and October 3, 2016. Applicants will be informed of a decision approximately eight 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?
- 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?

# Frequently Asked Questions

## APPLICATION

### **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.



## STIPENDS

### **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

### **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.



IBM Center for  
**The Business of Government**

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## ABOUT THE IBM CENTER FOR THE BUSINESS OF GOVERNMENT

The IBM Center for The Business of Government stimulates research and facilitates discussion of new approaches to improving the effectiveness of government at the federal, state, local, and international levels.

The Center is one of the ways that IBM seeks to advance knowledge on how to improve public sector effectiveness. The IBM Center focuses on the future of the operation and management of the public sector.

### **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).

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or, send us your name and e-mail to receive our newsletters.