

IBM Extends Acclaimed Grant Program For Cities And Regions

Building on three years of helping cities improve services, IBM Smarter Cities Challenge invites local government to apply for assistance from IBM pro bono problem solving teams in 2014

PR Newswire

ARMONK, N.Y., Oct. 7, 2013 /PRNewswire/ -- IBM (NYSE: [IBM](#)) today announced that it is extending the Smarter Cities Challenge competitive grants program, which funds the deployment of IBM's top talent to perform pro bono problem solving in municipalities worldwide.

(Logo: <http://photos.prnewswire.com/prnh/20090416/IBMLOGO>)

IBM is now encouraging regional governing bodies -- not only cities -- to also apply for grants that will fund consultative engagements with IBM experts in 2014.

By extending the program, IBM is building on the success of Smarter Cities Challenge's first three years, beginning in 2011. Since that time, IBM has deployed 600 experts on six-person teams who have provided strategic and practical advice to 100 municipalities. These highly prized three-week engagements, each valued at USD \$400,000, have helped cities address key challenges in the areas of economic development; water, energy and environment; health and social services; transportation; and public safety.

During engagements, IBM teams spend three weeks in the winning region gathering and analyzing all available data, then meeting in person with dozens of members of the government, citizen, business, and not-for-profit communities. In doing so, they gather diverse perspectives about the causes and potential solutions to the challenge at hand. At the end of engagements, IBM presents comprehensive recommendations for solving the problem, followed weeks later by a more detailed, written implementation plan. Included in the plan are examples of how other cities have successfully addressed similar issues.

Past grant recipients have implemented IBM's Smarter Cities Challenge recommendations and tangibly improved the lives of their citizens. For example:

- Cheongju, Korea invested USD \$2.7 million to redesign bus routes, and won the national Minister's Citation of Public Administration and Security.
- Da Nang, Vietnam and the Delhi-Mumbai Industrial Corridor are improving the coordination and timeliness of multiple municipal agencies as they manage complex events and projects.
- Eindhoven, Netherlands has reduced crime with strategies that include citizens' use of social media.
- Edmonton, Canada has improved road safety.
- Glasgow, United Kingdom announced a new £1 million fuel subsidy to provide affordable warmth to low-income elderly citizens. The city also won a £24 million grant from the Technology Strategy Board.
- Jacksonville, United States has hired an economic development officer and passed legislation that streamlines city council processes for economic development.
- Ottawa, Canada is developing the neighborhoods near its light rail system by giving incentives to developers and streamlining the permit process.
- St. Louis, United States created a chief performance officer for public

safety; better information about criminals is provided to judges; and voters returned control of the police department to the mayor.

- Syracuse, United States created one of New York State's first land banks, enabling the city to reclaim nearly 4,000 vacant properties and re-purpose them in ways that revitalize neighborhoods and restore the tax base by as much as USD \$11 million over eight years.
- Townsville, Australia earned the prestigious National Smart Infrastructure Award for the IBM / Townsville Smart Water Pilot currently underway to reduce water consumption.
- Tshwane, South Africa launched a project where citizens can report water leaks via text. The data will be used to map their water distribution network.

Smarter Cities Challenge is an elite program, having picked only 100 cities out 400 applicants over the last three years. Strong applications propose projects designed to address high priority problems of critical importance to citizens. The city or region must be able to share detailed information to help the IBM team analyze the issue. Leaders must also guarantee face-to-face access to city, regional, civic and business stakeholders for interviews with IBM team members so that they may comprehensively assess a given problem and recommend solutions.

IBM dispatches IBMers on these engagements who hail from all over the world, and who offer skills in the areas of marketing, communications, technology, research and development, government, human resources, finance, business, legal matters and specific disciplines such as transportation, energy and health.

For the 2014 cycle, the Smarter Cities Challenge is open to local and regional, general purpose governing bodies, including cities, counties, prefectures, boroughs, and districts.

"Effective service delivery in cities requires collaboration of so many stakeholders," said Stanley S. Litow, IBM vice president of Corporate Citizenship & Corporate Affairs, and president of IBM's Foundation. "One of IBM'S goals with Smarter Cities Challenge is to help city leaders gather data and organize a community around a shared set of facts. This is so that in spite of budgetary constraints that are so widespread, real progress can be made."

Jennifer Crozier, IBM's vice president of Global Citizenship Initiatives, and whose team directs the Smarter Cities Challenge, said, "We believe that our program can be an especially valuable resource to new mayors, with whom we can share successful strategies that have been put into place elsewhere. We're humbled by the reception this program has enjoyed all over the world these past three years, and we're pleased that we can continue Smarter Cities Challenge for 2014."

Applications may be submitted to IBM beginning today through November 8, 2013 by visiting www.smartercitieschallenge.org A video summarizing the first three years of IBM Smarter Cities Challenge can be viewed [here](#).





IBM Smarter Cities Challenge is an outgrowth of IBM's Corporate Service Corps program, a pro bono problem solving initiative designed primarily for the developing world. IBM's Corporate Service Corps sends teams of some of IBM's most talented employees with a range of skills from around the world to regions grappling with issues that intersect business, technology, and society. Corporate Service Corps is considered the largest program of its kind. By year's end, approximately 2,400 IBM employees based in 50 countries will have been dispatched on more than 187 engagements, and undertaken 850 team assignments in 34 countries since the founding of Corporate Service Corps five years ago, in 2008.

Follow all of IBM's citizenship initiatives by visiting the CitizenIBM blog at www.citizenIBM.com and on Twitter, at @citizenIBM. For more information about IBM citizenship, please visit www.ibm.com/ibm/responsibility

Contact(s) information:

Ari Fishkind
IBM Media Relations
914-499-6420
fishkind@us.ibm.com

SOURCE IBM

Additional assets available online:  [Photos](#) 
 

<https://newsroom.ibm.com/2013-10-07-IBM-Extends-Acclaimed-Grant-Program-For-Cities-And-Regions,1>