

# International Digital/E-Government Working Groups:

## Call For Proposals

Issued May 23, 2006

### Introduction

This is a *one-time* call for proposals to establish working groups on international or comparative digital/e-government topics.

This call is part of a larger framework for sustaining a global digital/e-government research community sponsored by a four-year grant from the United States (US) National Science Foundation's (NSF) Digital Government Research Program (NSF award #0540069). In addition to the international working groups described in this call, the overall project also supports a reconnaissance study to establish the current status of international digital/e-government research, an annual research institute for doctoral students, and travel support for US investigators and doctoral students to participate actively in international conferences and workshops.

The Principal Investigator (PI) for this grant is Dr. Sharon Dawes, Director of the Center for Technology in Government (CTG), University at Albany. Valerie Gregg, Assistant Director for Development of the Digital Government Research Center at the Information Sciences Institute (ISI), University of Southern California is Co-PI. The project will run through December 2009.

### Background

Growing evidence over the past decade demonstrates the emergence of a global field of inquiry at the intersection of government, society, and information and communication technologies. This domain is often characterized by terms such as "digital government" (DG), "e-government," "e-governance," or "information society."

Because of the relative newness of the field, there is insufficient interaction among researchers in different countries compared to what one finds in more established scientific disciplines. Research in digital/e-government involves multiple disciplines (a challenge within a single country, let alone internationally) and there are very few support mechanisms and forums to engage its researchers with peers working in this domain around the globe. Furthermore, once a potential collaboration starts that could lead to joint research efforts, it is logistically and financially difficult to sustain it to the point of joint research proposals and reliably funded projects. Consequently, comparative and transnational issues in the field, which are of growing importance in an increasingly networked world, are not receiving the attention they deserve.



## Objective

This call for proposals is designed to initiate and encourage multinational working groups devoted to international digital government topics. Proposals should be organized around a digital/e-government research topic that would benefit from a collective effort and close collaboration of U.S. and international research partners to achieve significant scientific progress. Proposals in response to this call should describe how the working group would contribute to creating a hub of international digital/e-government research collaborations.

All proposals will be evaluated in a peer review process. We expect to select three to five working groups. For each group selected, international travel support from the NSF grant described above will be provided for US-based participants, including at least two US-based Ph.D. students per working group. Travel by participants from other countries needs to be supported by other sponsors.

Groups are expected to be relatively small (perhaps 12-20 people) to encourage close cooperation. Proposals should contemplate approximately five face-to-face meetings over the course of 2007-09. The topics, objectives, and meeting locations and formats are up to the proposers. However, there are several requirements that all proposals must meet:

1. Groups must include established researchers *and* doctoral students. At least two of the students must be currently enrolled at US institutions. Involvement of government practitioners is also desirable.
2. Groups must be co-chaired by at least two people from different countries; one co-chair must be a researcher from a US institution.
3. Travel support for participants from non-US institutions must be assured in writing by a sponsor, as part of the proposal package.
4. The first meeting of each group must happen by April 2007. The initial meeting should produce a preliminary research agenda for the topic area including comparative questions (i.e., problems that occur in multiple countries) and/or transnational questions (i.e., problems that are international in scope). These agendas will be published on the Web site of this international project ([www.ctg.albany.edu/dgi](http://www.ctg.albany.edu/dgi)) and will be presented by working group representatives at selected conferences (see below). ...
5. A representative of each group is expected to make a presentation of its progress at the 2007, 2008 and 2009 International Digital Government Research Conferences (dg.o200x) in May of each year.
6. By the end of 2009, each group will produce a jointly authored report that presents its accomplishments and discusses research topics, challenges, and recommended strategies for undertaking international research in its domain. At a minimum, the reports will be published on the Web site of this international project, but further publication in scholarly journals or other outlets is strongly encouraged.



7. Groups must agree to allow the PI and co-PI to observe some of their meetings and interview participants as a way to evaluate the working group strategy for encouraging the formation and continuation of a research community.

## Eligibility Information

No individual may be included as the co-chair of more than one proposed group.

## Funding Available

Funding will vary according to the size and make up of each selected group as well as its proposed plan of work. However, for purposes of estimation, we offer the following *working assumptions*:

- Number of working groups to be selected: 3 – 5.
- Total number of face-to-face meetings of each group: 5 (two each in 2007 and 2008 and one in 2009)
- Total number of US participants in each group: 4 – 7
- Total estimated amount of funds available for each group: \$60,000 – \$130,000 over the period 2007-09.

*Please note that funds are available for travel by US participants only and will be reimbursed as actual travel occurs.*

## Proposal Preparation and Submission Instructions

**Full Proposal Instructions:** Proposals submitted in response to this call should be prepared and submitted by the working group co-chairs in accordance with these general guidelines. Proposals should not exceed 10 pages, plus a one-page abstract and the supplemental information described below.

**Project Abstract (1 page).** Summarize the focus and objectives of the working group. Briefly describe the domain of interest as well as the approach that the group will use to advance knowledge in its domain through international cooperation. Include the names and institutional affiliations of the co-chairs, and the institutional affiliations of the other researchers and Ph.D. students. Abstracts should not exceed one page.

### **Project Description (10-page limit).**

Proposers should describe their domain of interest and its transnational and/or comparative importance. Describe the intellectual focus of the working group and list key research questions that require international cooperation for useful exploration. Describe the nature of the international partnership including arrangements for mentoring Ph.D. students. Explain how the proposed working group will develop international linkages, and develop and promote collaborative research plans and projects. In addition, include:

- Information on the history of collaborative efforts among the work group members, if any, to date.



- Details on the complementary expertise and roles of all partners.
- Expected contributions of each work group member's host institution(s) or external sponsors.
- A description of the proposed division of labor among co-chairs, including a management plan.
- A description of how students and junior researchers will be involved.
- Long-term strategies and plans for continuing the collaboration beyond the support afforded by this effort.
- Tentative time-line, schedule of meetings, tentative meeting goals and objectives, and tentative meeting locations.

**Required Supplemental Information.** Proposals must include the following additional information (not included in the 10 page limit):

- **A travel budget for 2007-09.** Please download and complete the spreadsheet available at [www.ctg.albany.edu/static/dgi/traveleestimate.xls](http://www.ctg.albany.edu/static/dgi/traveleestimate.xls)
- **2-page vita for each work group member**, including students.
- **Letters of commitment** from institutions/sponsors that will provide travel support for non-US participants.

**Optional Supplemental Information.** You may also include letters of support from government agencies, intergovernmental organizations, or others in your domain of interest explaining how your proposal would benefit their missions.

## Additional guidance

### *Working Group Examples*

In scope:

- *Transnational* issues in which government involvement is key. Illustrative domains include emergency response, detecting and preventing spread of infectious disease or invasive species, immigration and border control, monitoring and preventing illegal drug trafficking, sustainable development, etc.
- *Comparative* studies in democratic processes, service delivery, or matters of governance. For example, comparative studies of e-participation, identity management, privacy protections, e-government infrastructure development, impact of ICTs on governmental organizations, etc.

Out-of-scope:

- Working group proposals focusing on any issue that does not substantially address governmental processes, organization, governance or citizen participation will be considered out-of-scope and returned without review. *Examples of this might include proposals to work with international colleagues on a new algorithm or database access method, but that do not demonstrate a direct connection to governmental functions or citizen engagement.*



- Similarly, proposals that address a governmental concern but do not demonstrate the nature and value of international cooperation will not be considered. *Examples might include proposals to describe conditions in different countries, but without substantial efforts to discern universal patterns or evaluate them according to a common framework.*

Strong digital/e-government working group proposals will:

- Make a compelling case for the proposed digital/e-government domain of collaboration.
- Be comprised of a complementary balance of research disciplines and include geographically dispersed membership.
- Exhibit strong potential for the working group to generate long-term research collaborations and find commitments for sustained research support from both U.S. and international sources.
- Involve Ph.D. students in substantive and creative ways.
- Have letters of commitment from institutions supporting international participants' travel costs.

## Reporting Requirements

Co-chairs of working groups selected through this competitive process are expected to:

- Develop and disseminate widely a research agenda for the working group's domain after its first meeting.
- Report progress at the Annual International Conference for Digital Government Research (dg.o2007, dg.o2008, and dg.o2009).
- Submit collaborative papers to the e-government tracks of relevant conferences such as dg.o conferences, DEXA-E-Gov, or HICSS.
- After the final working group meeting, issue a final report.
- Notify the PI and Co-PI (CTG & ISI/USC) of meeting times and locations in advance so that they may attend as their schedules allow.

## Proposal Review Information and Selection Criteria

The PI and Co-PI will seek the advise of experts through a peer review process.

Experts may be drawn from:

- International digital/e-government researchers from many disciplines, including computer and information sciences, public administration and public policy, political science, sociology, organizational behavior, management science, and other social and behavioral sciences.
- Digital/e-government research sponsors, such as NSF program managers, EU E-Gov unit representatives, and World Bank, United Nations, or OECD officials.
- Government executives and program managers.
- Private sector experts.



## Deadlines

*Optional expression of interest: Due July 1, 2006.*

We strongly encourage you to send an email message to [dgi@ctg.albany.edu](mailto:dgi@ctg.albany.edu) stating your non-binding intention to submit a proposal. Please include a one-paragraph description of your topic and a list of potential partners. This information will help us begin to identify appropriate reviewers.

*Submission deadline: 5:00 PM or 1700 hr. local time, Friday August 22, 2006.*

Send via email to [dgi@ctg.albany.edu](mailto:dgi@ctg.albany.edu) . Send items 1-6 combined into a single pdf file. Send item 7 as an Excel spreadsheet. Please include information in the following order:

1. Contact information for co-chairs
2. Abstract
3. Project Description
4. Vitae
5. Letters of Commitment
6. Letters of Support
7. Three-year Travel Budget

*Final Decisions: November 2006.*

*Optional (encouraged) meeting of co-chairs of selected working groups: January 3, 2007 at the HICSS40 e-government symposium. Working group chairs who are able to attend this symposium/conference will participate in a panel discussion about their plans and goals. Special funding may be available to support travel to this symposium.*

## Contact Information

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