

## IBM Invites Cities Worldwide to Compete for Grants to Help Address Their Toughest Challenges

IBM extends Smarter Cities Challenge program with new grants to help cities improve services for citizens

ARMONK, N.Y., Feb. 8, 2017 /PRNewswire/ -- IBM (NYSE:[IBM](#)) today announced that it is extending the annual [Smarter Cities Challenge](#), a worldwide, highly competitive grant program that provides pro bono consulting to help cities improve the critical services they provide to their citizens.

For this next round, IBM is now seeking proposals from city leaders that could benefit greatly from IBM's problem solving assistance and innovative technology, such as data analytics, cloud computing, cognitive computing, and comprehensive weather data. The advice that IBM provides at no cost has helped local governments deliver essential services more efficiently, effectively, and equitably to its citizens.

To be considered, leaders of cities or regional governments must submit brief statements of interest to IBM by February 24, 2017. IBM will then follow up with those with the most compelling proposals, further evaluate the ideas, then announce approximately 10 grant recipients in late spring for pro bono consulting engagements to be performed through mid 2018. IBM typically receives approximately 100 proposals per application period.

Municipalities chosen as Smarter Cities Challenge grant recipients receive a team of five or six of some of IBM's most talented employees. They study the region's issues for at least one month prior to their deployment to the municipality. During their three-week deployment, they work closely with local government and community leadership, gathering additional input. They then analyze that data and use its insights to offer support that can take the form of strategic recommendations, data-driven tools, implementation roadmaps and workshops, and staff training.

Over the past six years, the Smarter Cities Challenge has deployed 800 of IBM's top employee talent to more than 130 cities worldwide to improve inequities and disparities by helping local governments deliver vital services to their citizens. With each Smarter Cities Challenge engagement valued at USD \$500,000, IBM has provided the equivalent of over USD\$65 million in pro bono technology and consulting engagements -- a welcome boon to budget-strapped cities.

Cities have used insights from the data analytics provided by their Smarter Cities Challenge grants to improve affordable housing, economic development, infrastructure and urban planning, public safety, social equity, social services, transportation, and water, energy and the environment. For example:

- **Memphis, USA** and IBM worked to improve health emergency response times and provide preventative healthcare to citizens, particularly to low income residents that disproportionately use hospital emergencies rooms as their primary medical provider.
- **Dublin, Ireland** worked with IBM to assess the feasibility of adopting eco friendly and lower cost solar power, and ultimately installed solar panels on the roofs of nearly all city government buildings.
- **Pyeongchang County, South Korea**, host of the 2018 Olympics, is now developing and promoting new tourism opportunities beyond the Winter Games. This is expected to help close an existing regional socioeconomic gap.
- **Syracuse, USA**, now uses data analytics that identifies neighborhoods at greater risk of home vacancies and foreclosures, and mobilize resources to help stabilize those areas and grow the property tax base.

As a result of implementing IBM's innovative recommendations, cities worldwide have also earned recognition for their efforts. For example, Townsville, Australia earned the prestigious National Smart Infrastructure Award for a project to reduce water consumption. Pingtung County, Taiwan won the 2015 Energy Smart Communities Initiative for its implementation of a smart

microgrid for renewable energy. And Cheongju, Korea received the country's Minister's Citation of Public Administration and Security for best practice in budget efficiency.

"Cities around the world are under enormous, daily pressure to tackle growing challenges with ever more limited resources," said Jennifer Crozier, IBM's vice president of Global Citizenship Initiatives. "Often, they lack access to the most innovative technology solutions and insights that could be applied to solve those problems and improve services. We look forward to sharing IBM's data and analytics and cognitive computing expertise to help make meaningful and lasting improvements."

Interested cities should submit a statement of interest by February 24, 2017 at [smartercitieschallenge.org](http://smartercitieschallenge.org). A select group of applicants will then be invited to submit full applications and participate in scoping and due diligence conversations.

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

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