

APPLICATION FORM

1st May 2007

1. This application form sets out the information required by the DCA to make a decision for funding projects through the Innovations Fund programme. It will also form the basis of a contract should the application be successful.
2. Applications should be made on the attached form and submitted as soon as possible but no later than **15th June 2007**. We hope to announce successful pilots by 29th of June 2007. Applications should be e-mailed to Michelle Lyons on michelle.lyons@dca.gsi.gov.uk.
3. When completing the form please type your answers in the spaces below the question. The space should automatically enlarge as you write. If applicants wish to append additional material, this should be done in a separate Microsoft Word document.
4. Please complete each section where it applies to your project. This information will form the basis for our decision therefore the more information you provide the more consideration of the application will be given. Please clearly state if there is insufficient information to complete any sections of the application at this point.
5. We are more than happy to discuss your application with you at any stage. For all general enquiries please contact: Michelle Lyons at michelle.lyons@dca.gsi.gov.uk or telephone 020 7210 1727.

Evaluation criteria guidelines

Evaluation criteria - guidelines

1. The evaluation criteria for Phase II of the Innovation Fund has been divided into five sections that cover the design, delivery, evaluation and the future development of the pilot. Applicants will need to provide detailed information about how their proposal will meet the below criteria. Additional information can also be provided.

Selection Criteria
Innovative (see below indicators)
Results-driven
Up to 15 months plan
Transferable
Sustainable

Innovative

Over the past few years a lot has been done to encourage increased participation in democratic processes and to facilitate improved government-citizen dialogue. This has resulted in a myriad of online and offline tools and methodologies that exist at a national and local level.

The two main objectives of the next Innovation Fund phase are to:

- a **Expand and build on** existing tools to increase functionality, usability, applicability and take-up of tools that improve democratic engagement in a cohesive and interoperable manner; and
- b **Develop new innovative** tools that improve democratic engagement (see below indicators for further explanation).

The applications must:

- a Include a brief background discussion on the innovation of the concept—including the research that has led to the idea (for example, what similar projects have been done in the past and what makes this particular idea innovative?); and
- b Demonstrate one or more of the following innovation indicators:
 - i) **Integrating activities with decision making (governance):** supports use of existing tools that can assist officials to integrate the outcomes of public engagement exercises into the government decision making process;
 - ii) **Scaling up of existing tools:** support for expansion of tools that have been successful at a local, community or regional level to a national level;
 - iii) **Innovative uses for existing tools:** use of existing technologies in a new and innovative way that improves the approach and process of conducting democratic engagement activities.
 - iv) **Aggregation of tools:** innovative processes that aggregate tools across all levels of government to form a strategic and cohesive approach to democratic engagement; and
 - v) **New tools:** development of new tools that increase democratic engagement.

Results-driven

The Innovation Fund Phase II will fund proposals that will add real value to democratic engagement activities and processes in the UK. The pilots need to be results-driven with a focus on tangible outcomes rather than theoretical reports or frameworks.

The practical application, usability of the tool, cost per participant and scalability (includes small projects that are applicable to national engagement) of each pilot will be considered. The proposal also needs to include an outline of the methodology of how the trial will be conducted and evaluated. Inclusion of an evaluation and dissemination strategy is highly recommended. As part of the evaluation process it is expected that successful recipients develop a case study of their project, which highlights the strengths, weaknesses and practical experiences. The Democratic Engagement Branch will promote and disseminate the case study learnings wherever possible.

Up to 15 months plan

The Innovation Fund Phase II is focused on producing tangible results and a meaningful evaluation within a reasonable timeframe. All applications, therefore, need to have the capability of being piloted and evaluated within a 15 month period beginning from the date the contract is endorsed and the project commences (1st August 2007). The applications should include a specific project-plan outlining the stages and timeframes that need to occur to ensure this deadline is met. If the application is successful, this initial project-plan will inform the drafting of a 'payment milestone' plan that will be negotiated and finalised between the DCA and the successful applicant, prior to the commencement of the pilot. The payment milestones are discussed further below.

Transferable

This criterion comprises two aspects. The tools will need to be transferable both:

- geographically; and
- demographically

Geographical transferability refers to the need for the tools to be able to be replicated nationally at a low cost per participant. Although trials might be small and or focus on a specific area, tools should be broadly applicable. Therefore proposals should maintain a broader, national focus and ensure that their design reflects the need to democratically engage communities across the UK.

Demographic transferability refers to the need for the proposal to be adaptable across gender, race, age, and socio-economic groups. The tool can be tested in one group and targeted to a specific audience, but the proposal needs to include a strategy for expanding the tool to transcend demographic boundaries.

All applications must take account of the equality and diversity terms and conditions as outlined in the department's Equality and Diversity Statement (Schedule 1). Projects should also adhere to the creative commons model (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/2.0/uk/>).

Sustainable

It is expected that the tools produced under the Innovation Fund Phase II will be sustainable and as such applications need to demonstrate that the tools will be capable of being reproduced, expanded upon and rolled-out further. It may be that this sustainability is dependant on further funding (beyond that provided by the innovation fund) and, therefore, a purely theoretical discussion on this topic is acceptable. This criterion will have ensured that a longer-term strategy has already been built into the initial proposal.

2. When completing your application, please be as clear as possible in your description, paying particular attention to covering the depth and breadth of the project.

Contract

3. Following approval of an application, a basic contract that outlines the roles, responsibilities and expectations of all parties will need to be signed by all involved. This process will not be onerous as the project has minimal administrative barriers.
4. We recognise the need to balance reporting and administration requirements with the need to avoid placing undue burden on the successful bidders. To achieve this balance, we will ensure that the project's parameters—including the expectations and responsibilities of each party—are agreed through negotiation at the outset of the project.
5. Note that as of the 9th of May 2007 the Department for Constitutional Affairs will be merging with parts of the Home Office to become the Ministry of Justice (MOJ). Therefore, successful applicants will be entering into a contract with MOJ.

Funding

6. We expect most bids to be within £5k-15k per project up to the total budget. Applications will need to include an outline of proposed expenditure and timeframes. Full details of ***previous and existing funding*** and ***additional funding*** required must be supplied with any application.
7. There are no 'match funding' requirements but proposals that have access to match funding will be taken into consideration. Full details of existing funding and additional funding required must be supplied with any application.

Selection Process

8. The selection of successful bids will be assessed against the above criteria and available budget by a panel of experts consisting of key senior internal and external government officials and stakeholders. A list of the panel members will be released at the end of the application process.

Provisional timetable

9. The following provisional timetable indicates the target dates for key milestones:
 - May Discussions with prospective applicants
 - 15 June 2007 Final deadline for submitting applications
 - 29 June 2007 Decisions and notification on pilot applications
 - 1 July 2007 Drafting of contract commences in consultation with successful applicants
 - August 2007 Initial payment
 - June-September 2008 Completion of pilot and evaluation (depending on the project timeframe)

Additional information

8. You can find useful background to other similar projects in the following documents and links:

- Applicants should be aware of the Electoral Commission's New Initiatives Fund and its objective to increase awareness and understanding of elections and government applicable in the UK. The DCA's Innovations Fund aims to complement, not duplicate, the work done by the Electoral Commission:
<http://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/your-vote/newinitiativesfund.cfm>
- Similarly, the Innovations Fund aims to complement but not duplicate the digital challenge run by Communities and Local Government:
<http://www.digitalchallenge.gov.uk/>
- The 'Hands On' Participatory Symposium was an event to showcase and try out a range of practical 'hands on' tools for participation. A summary of the tools tested can be found at:
<http://www.lse.ac.uk/collections/LSEHousing/pdf/symposiumWriteFinal.pdf>
- For information on what's happening in e-Democracy at local government level, visit:
<http://www.icele.org/site/index.php>
- The Department for Constitutional Affairs, Ministry of Justice from 9th May 2007, has developed a range of projects that seek to:
 - build capacity within central government to use of tools (online and offline) when conducting public engagement exercises;
 - investigate the use of these tools and assess its impact; and
 - encourage dissemination of learnings.

For more information about these projects see the attached documents.

- The Cabinet Office has recently launched the Innovation Exchange programme, which will support a partner to plan, design and deliver innovative mechanisms that encourage peer-to-peer learning. For more information about the programme visit:
http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/third_sector/news/news_releases/070327_partner.asp
- 'Involve' is a not for profit organisation focused on the practical issues of making public participation work. Their first publication *People & Participation: how to put citizens at the heart of decision-making* includes valuable case studies and research:
http://www.involving.org/mt/archives/blog_13/People%20and%20Participation%20final.pdf

Involve also have developed an Objective Setting and Evaluation Framework that provides government officials with guidance about setting and measuring objectives, evaluating impact, and identify lessons for future practice:

<http://www.involve.org.uk/evaluation/>

- The Hansard Society, non-partisan charity, has been instrumental in shaping the e-democracy agenda for parliament and central government. For further information about their edemocracy programme, visit:
<http://www.hansardsociety.org.uk/programmes/e-democracy>
- For information on the Creative Commons approach, see:
<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/2.0/uk/>

ANNEX A

PART I – MANAGEMENT INFORMATION

This section will provide us with the relevant geographic and demographic information on the application.

Name and address of organisation involved in pilot. Please nominate a lead authority if appropriate.
Sussex Community Internet Project (SCIP)
Outline of any relevant innovations in democratic engagement that you have previously piloted.
<p>SCIP has developed the Brighton and Hove Issues Forum, a citizen-led email-list-based experiment in local e-democracy, as one of several UK partners of the US-based charity E-Democracy.Org</p> <p>SCIP has also developed Place2Be, a community search engine; and conducts IT training and technical support for community and voluntary organisations in Sussex and surrounding counties, including taking IT training to council estates.</p> <p>I have personally been involved in many other e-democracy projects, including the founding of VoxPolitics, the UK's first e-democracy think-tank, with Tom Steinberg, James Crabtree and Derek Parkinson.</p>

Please give us the contact details of the person managing the pilot			
Name	Dan Jellinek	Email address	dan@headstar.com
Telephone number (including mobile)	01273 267172 Mob: 07748 988092	Fax number	01273 232179
Please give us the contact details of an alternative contact person			
Name	Mark Walker	Email address	mark@scip.org.uk
Telephone number (including mobile)	01273 234049 M: 07956 627116	Fax number	01273 234731

PART 2 SPECIFIC PILOT INFORMATION

<p>Please briefly outline the project that you wish to develop.</p> <p>We would like some seed-funding to drive the development of the Brighton and Hove email issues forum, a project which has launched and is being maintained by a core group of volunteers but which needs more significant time commitment from someone to enable it to unlock its potential and act as a catalyst for its expansion, success and sustainability.</p> <p>The forum is one of the UK off-shoots of the Issues Forums created in the US by the charity E-Democracy.Org, and expanded in recent years to Brighton, Bristol and Newham in the UK, partly with a previous government grant several years ago from the then Local E-democracy National Project).</p> <p>It allows citizens to freely debate any local issue in a civil environment, and draw in councillors and other local decision-makers to lower the barriers of access to elected officials; help citizens and councillors swap ideas and advice; act as a peer-led community self-help forum; and enable councillors to gauge public views, address issues and state their policy positions without requiring people to write letters or attend town hall meetings.</p> <p>It has been as successful as it can be but in relying on volunteers who can only spare small amounts of time we are unable to run concerted recruitment drives; undertake proper work to engage more councillors; develop the website as we would like it to offer more local links and peer-developed e-democracy content in the form of Wikis; and even just to index the debate that has taken place to date so people can see and learn from the range of valuable discussions that have already taken place and helped citizens and councillors in the forum's first two years.</p> <p>Since the end of the national project's pilot phase, the UK forums have slowly grown and spread demonstrating the models low cost, sustainable structure. This proposal is about accelerating and deepening the model to position it for aggressive scaling across the UK.</p> <p>This application is for money to fund a part-time person for a year to develop the content and tools we have to make them more useful and user-friendly; to recruit and train more citizens and councillors to the forum; to develop generic recruitment materials and techniques that will be useful in other areas including Bristol, Newham (and soon Oxford); to assess the value and effectiveness of work done to date; and also a small amount to fund improvements to the online discussion forum and email interface such as a tool allowing people to easily invite their friends onto the forum along with advanced recruitment tools.</p>
<p>Please describe, in some level of detail, the objectives of the pilot and the anticipated outcomes and benefits in terms of facilitating/promoting democratic engagement. This information will help us make an assessment of the value to be gained from conducting the pilot.</p>

The first objective is to broaden participation in the forum, to a wider and more representative range of citizens and also activists and groups representing local citizens, ensuring a better spread of participants across Brighton and Hove geographically and socially, with particular focus on vulnerable groups, low income groups and minority ethnic groups, and well as broad cross-party political engagement. We would also attempt to engage a much wider range of councillors. If we are successful in recruiting more citizens, citizen groups and councillors then we will be promoting democratic engagement.

The second main objective is to improve the functionality and usability of the Issues Forum tools, making best use of the money to create long-lasting and transferable open source tools that will enhance people's experience; improve ease of use; and be useful in other forum areas. This will also boost democratic engagement, by making the forum easier to understand and use.

The third objective is to use the part-time employee to develop new volunteer groups to take up all aspects of work that will be needed to maintain quality of discussion and the smooth running of the forum beyond the funding period. This will build sustainability into the project and build the platform for sharing the model with other communities.

PART 3 SPECIFIC PILOT INFORMATION – EVALUATION CRITERIA

Please provide high level details of how your pilot would meet the following criteria (see above guidelines for more information).

Innovative: please provide an overview of how your project builds on existing tools.

The issues forum itself is up and running, using an open source web-based discussion, email list and Wiki tool customised for E-Democracy.Org by the New Zealand-based organisation GroupServer. Some of the funding will help E-Democracy.Org leverage its existing extensive investment in the development, improvement and customisation of these tools for use by all current and future UK Issues Forums, such as development of a 'recommend a friend' tool.

The real innovation of this project will come not as technology, however, but in developing unique new processes that will advance the boundaries of local e-democracy and transfer to all and any future work in this field across the UK.

Results-driven: please provide an explanation about what the tangible outcome of the project will be and how it will add real value to the democratic engagement process.

The project will be a catalyst to drive UK email Issues Forums to the next level. At its close, the forum itself will be a more thriving and vibrant place, and a model for others.

Generic forum recruitment publications, both printed and online, will be created, and offered for use openly via the Creative Commons to other areas.

As part of the work assessment work will be carried out to demonstrate the value of Issues Forums: this work will remain as a useful reference point for future projects.

A series of new volunteer groups will be in place to continue the work, set up as part of the project.

A series of Wikis with local information including information and advice on e-democracy will have been built and remain of lasting value, maintained by forum participants into the future.

A "best of" highlights index will be created of past discussion on the forum, which will be hard to create initially but simpler to maintain by the volunteer groups.

New tools and interfaces will be created.

Assessment benchmarks for the project will include numbers participating in the forum; numbers of councillors engaged; reports, publications and software tools created that will be of use elsewhere; councillors' views on the project, which we will canvass.

Timeframe: please provide a preliminary project plan outlining the major milestones that need to occur to have the project completed and evaluated within a 10 to 15 month period.

The project will run for 14 months.

Milestones:

Months 1-2: Recruitment of part-time citizen-based local e-democracy lead manager

Months 3-5: Manager to plan citizen and councillor outreach work and recruitment drive.

Manager to seed discussion on the forum.

Manager to convene monthly steering group meetings.

Manager to build Wikis.

Manager to index past "best of" discussion and present in easy to use format.

E-Democracy.Org to commence work on recruitment 'Invite a friend' tools and review usability of main site interfaces.

Manager to oversee hiring of a designer for recruitment publications and tools, and to coordinate content.

Months 6-8: Citizen and councillor recruitment activity driven forward by manager with help from steering group (leafleting, meetings, work in libraries).

All other work above continues.

Months 9-11: Assess recruitment results against agreed benchmarks.

Develop case studies of success across all activities including councillor testimonies.

All other work continues.

Months 12-14: Complete Wikis and update discussion index.

Assemble several groups of volunteers via the forum and steering group to continue all areas of work beyond grant period.

Conclude all work and hand over to groups.

Transferable: please outline how your pilot would be transferable both geographically and demographically.

We will work with the other UK Issues Forums from the outset to ensure all knowledge gained in the pilot in terms of the effectiveness of various recruitment and engagement methods and strategies for developing the forum are captured and passed on to them in a generic form.

We will also ensure that any forum recruitment documents we design can be adapted and used in other geographical areas if so wished.

Any improvements to the GroupServer technology will automatically be passed on to all other UK Issues Forums both current and future (currently Bristol and Newham; future could include Oxford and others).

To back up these intentions listed above, this bid has been endorsed by both the Newham issues forum (headed up by Richard Stubbs and Gavin Sealey) and the Bristol issues forum (headed up by Carol Hayward). They have all approved this bid and its intentions to work with them and transfer the results where possible, and would very much welcome the opportunity.

The issues forum concept itself is potentially applicable to any community of any size and location, and to any demographic.

Sustainable: please outline how your pilot would be capable of being reproduced and developed for use across local, national and regional levels.

The sustainability of our work stems largely from the ongoing development of Issues Forums which is taking place in any case, driven by E-Democracy.Org and its other UK partners. This will ensure others have the opportunity in future to take advantage of the 'phase two' forum development work which the funding will enable us to pioneer.

Locally we will ensure sustainability by charging our Forum Manager towards the end of their funded year to assemble several groups of volunteers to take on work such as recruitment and councillor engagement; Wiki maintenance and discussion topic indexing maintenance beyond the grant-funded period. We have already found that volunteers can be sourced from the membership of the forum for jobs that do not require too much initial work: in this way the funding will lay the foundations and platform on which the volunteers will then be able to build.

PART 4 SPECIFIC PILOT INFORMATION – FUNDING

Funding: please provide a breakdown of the anticipated costs and savings associated with the project (point form is acceptable). If you are seeking funding in addition to £15K for the project please supply all the details. If the proposed project is a joint initiative that is receiving sponsorship or has received funding in the past please supply all the details.

We are seeking funding of £15,000, breaking down as follows:

£500 for job advertising costs

£9,600 to be passed on as salary to a part-time Forum Manager, working for between 2-3 days a week depending on salary requirement.

£1,500 to SCIP to cover payroll, administration and financial reporting costs plus desk and computer overheads.

£900 design and print costs to develop pdfs, flyers, posters and other forum recruitment materials.

£2,500 technology licensing and improvement costs allocated to E-Democracy.Org and its technical sub-contractors developing GroupServer. This money to include management/oversight costs plus support to the Forum Manager from E-Democracy.Org staff.

PART 5 SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION

Where possible please supply the following appended to your application.

1. The project management approach you intend to adopt, names and roles of key personnel and any additional resources you may require for implementation and evaluation.

Dan Jellinek, SCIP Chair and UK Board member for E-Democracy.Org, will oversee the project as a whole and report on progress to DCA as required against our stated milestones.

Mark Walker, SCIP Director, will manage the local e-democracy manager on a day to day basis in the SCIP offices.

The Brighton and Hove Issues Forum Steering Group, a volunteer body of which Dan Jellinek and Mark Walker are co-chairs, will be consulted on the ongoing development of the project. The forum is an open body whose meetings are open to all forum members, and are free to attend. Councillors are also encouraged to attend.

On technical issues and issues forum website development, Steven Clift and Tim Erickson of E-Democracy.Org will take the lead and liaise with GroupServer's developers on behalf of the Brighton and Hove Issues Forum manager and steering group. Steven and Tim will also be consulted regularly, and at least once a month, on the progress of the project, as will the board of E-Democracy.Org, a US-based international charity of which Dan Jellinek is a board member (board conferences are held monthly by internet and telephone conference).

No additional resources will be required, since the forum already operates under the steering group; and SCIP already has offices and an administrative infrastructure to draw on to site the part-time forum manager.

2. A brief outline of your position regarding the creative commons approach (including the detail of any objection you may have to it).

Both SCIP and E-Democracy.Org have experience with use of the Creative Commons model and it is intended that all products of this project are released under the standard version.

3. A summary of the key risks to the proposed project, and the steps that will be taken to minimise and manage these risks.

The main risks is that we cannot source an appropriate person for the part-time forum manager role with two months of the project start date.

The management of that risk will be as follows:

- Within the 15 month maximum project period, there is a further month we could use for recruitment and still carry out all our planned tasks (our project is currently planned for 14 months).
- We will use a range of local websites and publications to advertise the post, making best use of our £500 budget: both SCIP and Headstar have experience in local recruitment in this field.

- If no suitable person should be found, Headstar could second one of its employees to the project for two days a week: Headstar's employees are already fully aware of the project and would be strong in this field, and Headstar currently has the spare capacity to spare a relevant employee for this amount of time for a year. This strategy could also be employed to cover the risk of the citizen e-democracy manager not continuing for a full year after being engaged, for whatever reason.

Another risk is that recruitment to the forum does not go as well as planned.

To minimise this risk we will:

- Ensure we learn from the other Issues Forums in the UK and the US as to what recruitment methods have proved most effective in the past, before we embark on our own;
- Ensure we continually assess the effectiveness of various methods we try so we can focus on the most effective;
- Focus the Forum Manager strongly on this task throughout their year.

4. Details of existing partners or proposed procurement of any third party services that will be used in your project.

There are two main project partners: SCIP, and E-Democracy.Org.

SCIP is a non-profit body providing IT services exclusively to charities, voluntary and community organisations and other not-for-profit groups in Sussex and surrounding counties. For more information see:

http://www.scip.org.uk/index.php?q=scip/about_scip

E-Democracy.Org is an international charity whose mission is: 'Expanded participation and stronger democracies and communities through the power of information and communication technologies and strategies.' For more see:

<http://www.e-democracy.org/about.html>

5. Any other information you feel will be relevant in helping us to consider your application.

A relevant supplementary benefit is that Headstar, the publishing company founded by Dan Jellinek for which he works most of the time (when not working on non-profit projects with SCIP and E-Democracy.Org), runs a major annual conference on e-democracy. The event has grown into the UK's leading conference on the topic.

The way this will benefit this project is that Headstar is prepared to offer e-democracy.org and all the Issues Forums, including a revitalised Brighton project, a free platform to promote its work across the UK e-democracy sector in the form of a free exhibition stand and free flyers to delegates.

This is a significant benefit that will be packaged into this project, once funding is received.

For more information on this leading annual event see last year's website:

<http://www.headstar-events.com/edemocracy06/>

And for more on Headstar please see:

<http://www.headstar.com/about>

For all enquiries relating to the Innovations Fund, please contact Michelle Lyons at michelle.lyons@dca.gsi.gov.uk or by phone on 020 7210 1727.

Schedule 1 to Specification

THE DEPARTMENT FOR CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY STATEMENT

The Department for Constitutional Affairs serves a diverse society. That is a society made up of men and women; of people of different races, cultures and religions; of people with and without disabilities; of young people and older people; of straight and gay people; of people with and without caring responsibilities; and of people with many other differences.

We recognise, respect and value that diversity and will strive in all we do to serve the interests of people from **all** sections of society. We will also strive to become an organisation that reflects more fully the diversity of the society we serve and truly values the contributions which staff from **all** sections of society make to our work.

In particular we will:

- In the development of our policies, take account of the interests of **all** sections of society
- Ensure that wherever possible the services we provide meet the needs and expectations of **all** our service-users
- Seek to influence others with whom we work, or from whom we purchase goods and services, to share our commitment to valuing the diversity of our society

We will, to meet our business objectives:

- Provide real equality of opportunity in the recruitment, development and promotion of **all** our staff
- Eliminate unfair discrimination and harassment in our workplace
- Extend family friendly working practices
- Develop **all** our staff to their full potential and make best use of their different talents
- Consult staff, including staff from minority groups, about how we can improve equality of opportunity and support diversity.

We will set ourselves goals with measurable outcomes to assess our progress towards becoming a diverse organisation providing excellent service to **all** sections of society. We hold ourselves accountable for their achievement.