



SALT LAKE COUNTY

SMART GOVERNMENT FUND

OFFICE OF DATA & INNOVATION

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What is Smart Government Fund (SGF)?

The purpose of this initiative is to fund ideas that demonstrate a strong return on investment, reduce operating costs, generate new revenue, and/or efficient service delivery to Salt Lake County residents. The SGF funded projects may include but are not limited to technology, process improvement, temporary hiring, equipment, consulting, and professional services that meet the Fund objectives.

Who Can Apply SGF Funding?

All Salt Lake County agencies are eligible to apply for SGF Funds and all employees are encouraged to submit project ideas but must work with their respective agency to formally apply for SGF Funds unless the project idea is a countywide initiative. For a countywide initiative, the ODI staff will coordinate the application submission.

Independent Service Providers and Salt Lake County Contractors are not eligible to apply directly but can partner with a county agency to seek funding from SGF Fund.

Purpose of the Fund

One of the most important purposes of a SGF Fund is to establish a culture of innovation where new, entrepreneurial thinking is welcomed and rewarded. The SGF Fund will invest in new and innovative ideas that disrupt the status quo way of addressing a challenge or delivering a service. However, any existing proven ideas which have resulted in successful implementation throughout the public and private sector are welcome to apply for SGF Fund.

“Existing ways of developing solutions will not suffice in meeting new and upcoming challenges. It is impossible to solve deeply complex problems such as climate change or homelessness in traditional ways. Responses that go beyond incremental improvements are now required. Put simply, innovation in government is required just to keep up with the pace of change – and specially to stay ahead of it.”

Why should government and the public service innovate? – Deloitte.

Funding for the SGF approved projects will be considered if an application meets one or more of the following priorities:

1. Save Money

Money saved can be defined as the difference between the cost of providing a service or program before and after process improvement. This can include savings from reduced labor costs, reduced materials costs, or reduced costs associated with inefficiencies or waste in existing processes. Some ways to define money saved in the public sector include:

- **Direct savings:** This includes savings that can be directly attributed to a specific process improvement, such as reduced labor costs or reduced materials costs.
- **Indirect savings:** This includes savings that are the result of a process improvement, but are not directly related to the process itself, such as increased productivity or reduced customer complaints.
- **Avoidance costs:** This includes costs that would have been incurred if a process had not been improved, such as costs associated with customer complaints or lost business.

It is important to remember that measuring savings can be complex, as it often involves multiple factors and can be influenced by external factors such as budget constraints, political priorities, and legal requirements.

2. Save Time

Time saved refers to the reduction in the amount of time required to complete a task or process because of process improvement or implementation of a new technology. This can include time saved by employees, time saved by citizens, or time saved by the organization as a whole. Some ways to define time saved in the public sector include:

- **Employee time saved:** This includes the time saved by employees as a result of a process improvement or implementation of a new technology, such as time saved by streamlining paperwork or automating tasks.
- **Citizen time saved:** This includes the time saved by citizens as a result of a process improvement or implementation of a new technology, such as time saved by reducing wait times or making it easier to access services.
- **Organizational time saved:** This includes the time saved by the organization as a whole as a result of a process improvement or implementation of a new technology, such as time saved by reducing the need for additional resources or improving coordination between departments.

3. Efficient Service Delivery

Efficient service delivery refers to the ability of the County agencies to provide high-quality services to citizens in a timely, cost-effective, and accessible manner. This can be achieved through a variety of means, such as streamlining and improving processes, and implementing

technology solutions.

- **Streamlining and improving processes:** This can include simplifying application and paperwork requirements, reducing red tape, and automating tasks to make it easier for citizens to access services.
- **Implementing technology solutions:** This can include using online portals, mobile apps, and other digital tools to provide citizens with easy and convenient access to services.
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Return on Investment (ROI)

The SGF Funded initiative must demonstrate a positive return on investment (ROI) in terms of cost-savings, time-saving or efficient service delivery.

In the public sector, ROI is used to evaluate the efficiency and effectiveness of programs and services by comparing the costs of the program or service to the benefits it provides to the citizens.

The basic formula for ROI is: ***(Benefits - Costs) / Costs***

The benefits can include cost savings, increased revenue, increased productivity, improved service delivery, and other benefits that can be quantified in monetary terms. The costs can include the initial investment, ongoing operational costs, and other expenses related to the program or service.

Application Process

Submit an idea

Any county employee can submit an idea. ODI staff vet the idea with the respective agency leadership + employee for consideration. The employee will have an opportunity to pitch their idea to the agency leadership. If the idea gets an approval nod, the lead agency will be asked to complete an invitation-only detailed application for funding consideration.

Online Application

An invitation-only online application will be sent to the lead agency to collect SGF detailed Funding proposals. The application will include the following information:

A. Agency Contact Information

Agency information will include point of contact (POC) information and place of performance (if applicable).

B. Proposal Title

Name of the program or initiative.

C. Proposal Summary

Provide a short summary of the proposal. The summary section is very high-level, easy to understand 30-second elevator pitch about the proposal.

D. Problem Statement

Provide a short, simple, and clear problem statement that the County agency or the County is facing and the desired solution that will fix the problem and finally how it will address one of the SGF Fund priorities (disruptive innovation, customer service, sustainability, ROI, and collaboration.)

E. Proposal Detail

This section of the application should provide a detailed description of the proposal, solution to the problem, implementation approach, and team composition, including supporting research references.

F. Explanation of Priorities Addressed

All funding proposal must select one or more of the SGF priorities and provide priority explanation from the following priorities list:

- *Save Money*
- *Save Time*
- *Efficient Service Delivery*

G. Return on Investment (ROI)

The SGF Funded initiative must demonstrate a positive return on investment (ROI). For the fund, ROI considers monetary value, but it is defined broadly to include:

- Saved money or increased revenue for the County
- Saved time for residents, employees or the organization
- Efficient service delivery to the residents

H. Performance Indicators and Reporting

The proposal should include 1-3 performance indicators including project-specific outcomes and indicator measures. Agencies will be required to submit quarterly performance reports, which will be available on a dashboard on CountyStat.

I. Budget

A detailed line-item budget should be included in the proposal that should account for both one-time expenditures requested through the SGF Fund and ongoing costs beyond the initial SGF investment. The proposal should also include information about other funding sources such as self-finding, grants, or direct investment by an external partner.

J. Timeline

The Proposal must be feasible to launch within 12 months of being funded.

Approval, Reporting and Evaluation

SGF Fund Committee

The SGF Fund committee shall provide oversight and recommendations to manage the Fund. The SGF membership will include representatives from the Council, Mayor's Office, Elected Officials, department representatives, and volunteer employees to ensure broad representation. The ODI will provide staff support to the SGF Fund Committee.

The committee will ensure that funding requests mechanisms are in place, review operational readiness, make recommendations to increase participation, review funding proposals and quarterly performance reports to assess progress on the SGF funded projects.

Proposal Review

Proposals will be accepted on a rolling basis and reviewed quarterly or as needed. The SGF Fund committee will score each proposal on its innovative approach, ROI, customer service focus, sustainability, and collaborative approach.

Any proposal not recommended by the SGF Fund committee may be resubmitted in the future with a clear statement of revisions made in the proposal.

Funding Threshold

The SGF funded projects may not exceed \$100,000. The SGF Fund Committee may revise the funding request within the threshold amount during the proposal review process.

Management of the Funds

The SGF funds will be managed by the Office of Data & Innovation under a new Department ID. All approved projects will have a project and activity ID for project tracking and reporting. Agency fiscal managers will submit payment requests to Office of Data & Innovation. After the review, the ODI will submit payment processing request to Mayor's Finance. Any hiring (temporary or time-limited) will be budgeted in the new organization; however, the recipient agency will manage the employee(s).

If a recipient agency is contributing matching funds, it is the recipient agency responsibility to budget and maintain accounting of the matching funds. However, the project reports must include both the matching and the SGF funding allocations.

In an event of a non-county investment, the requesting County agency should enter into a MOU/agreement with the external partner to define roles, responsibilities and risk associated with their investment.

Project Performance Reporting

The SGF Fund recipient are required to report on their project's progress on a quarterly basis including expenditure, performance indicators and completion status. The performance indicators will be displayed on the County Stat website. Any deviation from an accepted proposal must be approved by the SGF Fund Committee.

The ODI will provide quarterly status report of the SGF Fund Committee, the Steering Committee, and the Council as requested.

Early Termination

To foster a culture of innovation, it is important to factor in failure as an option. Failure to learn is not. Innovation projects are pilot project that could ultimately be continued or replicated without additional SGF Fund investment. As such, agencies are encouraged to evaluate their projects throughout the process, noting lessons learned, and when needed determine if the project will no longer achieve the intended results. The SGF Fund Committee also reserves the right to re-evaluate projects through the quarterly review process and revoke any un-committed funds should the project prove unable to meet its intended objectives as proposed.

Project Evaluation

The SGF Fund recipient must submit an end of the project evaluation report to the SGF Fund Committee to document project implementation, results, lessons learned and the project continuation plan (if applicable) without additional SGF funding. The evaluation report should include but not limited to:

- Did the project address the problem in a new or innovative way?
- Are our customer (internal/external) satisfied?
- What is the current state of the initiative?
- What is the project sustainability plan?
- What is the actual ROI on this project?
- What are the lessons learned?
- How could the project be improved?

Frequently Asked Questions

Who can submit funding ideas?

Any county employee can submit an idea.

What happens after I submit an idea?

We will vet the idea with the respective agency leadership + employee for consideration. You will have an opportunity to pitch your idea to the agency leadership. If the idea gets an approval nod, the lead agency will be asked to complete an invitation-only detailed application for funding consideration.

Who makes the funding decisions?

The Smart Government Fund Committee will review the ideas and make the funding decisions. The Office of Data & Innovation provides staff support to the SGF committee as non-voting members.

Can non-county service providers/contractors apply for SGF funding?

Salt Lake County's independent service providers and contractors are not eligible to apply directly but can partner with a county agency to seek funding from SGF Fund.

What is the deadline for submitting an idea?

There's no deadline. Idea submission is open 24/7 and 365 days a year.

When are you going to make the funding decisions?

The SGF committee will meet on a quarterly basis. Ad-hoc meetings can be scheduled to expedite the funding decisions.

Is there a \$ limit on the SGF funded project?

Yes! The maximum amount you can request is \$100,000

Why don't County agencies bring these innovative ideas directly to the Council?

By increasing the level of formality needed for approval we decrease the number of ideas that are likely to be brought forward. It is critical that the Council be heavily engaged in this process by allocating staff to sit on the SGF Committee and supporting quarterly updates on Council agendas.

Are there other public sector organizations that have a fund like this?

An innovation fund is a key driver in the private and nonprofit sector to spark new ideas. Although a new concept, the public sector is catching up by establishing similar funds around the country to tap into new ways of delivering services. Several public sector entities are now leading the way as mentioned in the

Appendix section of this proposal.

Salt Lake County is considered a leader in developing new and innovative programs. Salt Lake County was one of the first in the nation to launch Pay for Success (PFS) programs such as the Early Childhood program¹, Criminal Justice REACH project², and Homes Not Jail Program ³.

By establishing the SGF Fund, Salt Lake County has once again joined the leading public sector organizations to seek new and innovative ways of delivering services and create a culture of innovation throughout the organization.

¹ Early Childhood Education - <https://www.cdc.gov/nceh/lead/docs/payforsuccessguide.pdf>

² Criminal Justice REACH project - <https://pfs.urban.org/pfs-project-fact-sheets/content/salt-lake-county-s-reach-program>

³ Homes Not Jail - <https://pfs.urban.org/pfs-project-fact-sheets/content/salt-lake-county-s-homes-not-jail-program>

Appendix

Examples of Innovation Fund

City of Philadelphia, PA

Free Library of Philadelphia: “Outdoor Computer Lab” - \$6,945

The Torresdale Library Branch will create the first-ever FLP outdoor computer area, allowing patrons to use laptops and engage with library offerings while maintaining social distance. The outdoor lab devices will not be time-restricted, granting community members the flexibility to fill out job applications, complete unemployment / benefit forms, create resumes, and more. A wireless printer will provide outdoor lab users with printing capabilities, including the option to print directly from their mobile phones (the first Free Library location to provide this technology).

<https://www.phila.gov/2021-08-19-innovation-fund-spring-2021-projects/>

LA Innovation and Performance Commission, CA

HEART Connection (4/29/2020: \$67,000.00)

HEART Connection is a proposed online referral tool that will allow service providers, City agencies, and County of Los Angeles (County) agencies to submit case referrals to the City Attorney’s Office electronically. This electronic referral tool will allow the City Attorney to better address the needs of homeless or at-risk individuals while reducing time spent on administrative tasks. Through this pilot, City Attorney states that HEART’s case management will improve, streamlining communications between City and County partners while improving services for individuals experiencing homelessness or who are at-risk of homelessness.

<https://innovate.lacity.org/>

Tempe City, AZ

Re-Entry Assistance Program (REAP): \$83,343

REAP is a three-year pilot program committed to the successful reintegration of incarcerated individuals and their families. The program will provide intensive case management services to program participants and work with diverse community partners to ensure that the whole family has the support and services they need both during the time of incarceration and upon re-entry into the community.

<https://www.tempe.gov/government/strategic-management-and-diversity/strategic-management/tempe-innovation-fund>

Oakland Fund for Public Innovation, CA

Keep Oakland Housed

In late 2017, the City of Oakland piloted a novel approach initiated by Mayor Libby Schaaf to help people living in street encampments gain security and support: the city found a site location at 6th and Castro streets, funded the operational costs of a site manager, security and supportive social services, then asked the business community to buy and outfit 20 cabins to shelter up to 40 people at a time.

https://www.oaklandfund.org/portfolio_page/addressing-homelessness/
