

Esri and Leica Offer Innovation Grants to Governments



GIS provider Esri has partnered with Swiss-based spatial measurement instrument manufacturer Leica Geosystems to encourage innovation of mobile field data collection within government by offering grants totalling USD143,250 in [goods](#) and [services](#). Known as the 'Smart Communities Innovation Challenge', 10 US governments that submit detailed project proposals demonstrating increased efficiencies in collecting data for decision support or improved productivity in delivering governmental services will be selected to receive a grant.

Project proposals will be accepted from 15 August 2016, until the official submission deadline at 5:00 p.m. (Pacific daylight time) on 14 October 2016. Grant recipients will be announced on 31 October.

To be entered for consideration, proposal submissions must be uploaded in conjunction with the organisation's identifying information through a form on the Smart Communities Innovation Challenge landing page.

So long as operations are based in the United States, [any government](#) or department, whether municipal, regional, special districts, state, city, county, or otherwise, is qualified to receive a grant.

Combining GIS and GPS

To be selected, it is necessary that a project confirm the value of combining GIS and Global Positioning System (GPS) technologies for data collection, optimising workloads, and providing real-time information that supports field mobility. Proposal reviewers will look for ideas that support complete workflows extended to back-office processes such as operational dashboards. Priority will be given to projects that tie GIS and GPS to daily workloads, influence sharing of geographically enabled data across multiple jurisdictions or interdepartmental ventures, and clearly convey a perceived benefit or return on investment.

The intent of the joint program is to supply governments with the tools to succeed as they implement progressive methods to streamline workflows. By providing technology, training, and technical support grants, [Esri](#) and [Leica](#) aim to inspire legislative bodies to devise transformational approaches to improving the efficiency of mobile fieldworkers.

Solving real-world problems

As innovative ideas from the government community are brought forward for solving real-world problems, the best applications will be those of universal appeal and the ability to be shared between governments through an open exchange hub. The challenge's grant winners will be thought-leading governments that have plans in place to jump-start projects such as facility inspections, emergency reporting, asset inventory, environmental management and monitoring, efficient employee routing, code enforcement, population and housing enumeration, mosquito abatement, and/or sign inventory.

To learn more about the Smart Communities Innovation Challenge and other grants sponsored by Esri, [see here](#).