



The e-Government Grants Program

Phase I – Identification

Introduction

The Development Gateway helps improve people's lives in developing countries by building partnerships and information systems that provide access to knowledge for development.

As an enabler of development, the Development Gateway exploits powerful and affordable information and communication technologies (ICT) that were previously unavailable to:

- Increase knowledge sharing;
- Enhance aid effectiveness;
- Improve public sector transparency; and

Build local capacity to empower communities.

Its services and activities include:

- A global web portal of development content;
- An online database of development projects and activities (AiDA—Accessible Information on Development Activities);
- Online public tendering services (dgMarket);
- More than 50 in-country development portals (Country Gateways);
- Research and Training Centers in China, India, Rwanda, and the Republic of Korea; and
- A Grants and Investments Program to support local capacity-building.

Under its Grants and Investments Program the Development Gateway, in collaboration with the Government of Italy, is launching an e-Government Grants Program to assist developing countries and countries with economies in transition in the identification and implementation of e-Government projects. This initiative will support (over an initial two-year period) specific e-Government projects in developing countries, countries in transition, or at a regional level. The e-Government program is divided into two phases:

Phase I

- Identification (provided under Technical Assistance)
- Feasibility Grants

Phase II

- Implementation Grants

Expressions of Interest (EoI) by interested governments are requested by the Development Gateway to apply to Phase I - Identification, which consists of the initial assessment and identification of priority e-Government focus areas and/or projects. This will be made by the Development Gateway and the Government of Italy.

E-Government for Developing Countries and Countries in Transition

Since the mid 1990s, governments around the world have been looking into ICT applications and the Internet as enablers for new organizational models that improve internal operations and services to citizens and businesses, and that facilitate social and economic development. E-Government is the use of ICT applications to streamline government processes and to facilitate the exchange of information, while enabling citizen participation in the governance process, and delivery of services to citizens and business. Moreover, e-Government utilizes technology to foster transparency, eliminating distance and other divides.

Many governments, however, have learned that implementation of e-Government comes not simply from moving services online, but from redesigning government's organizations that place the *citizen* at the centre of their electronic service delivery systems. Processes, policies, and technologies must be integrated and interact across multiple agencies, a task that requires not only technical skills, but also political leadership.

The Government of Italy has developed an 'e-Government for Development' initiative, to provide an effective contribution toward the awareness, planning, and implementation of e-Government in countries that have not or have only partially exploited the potential of ICT for bridging social and economic divides. Through this initiative the Government of Italy has set up three Trust Funds for e-Government related activities with UNDESA, IADB and the Development Gateway.

Structure and Activities of the e-Government Grants Program

Recognizing that e-Government is a process that requires planning, sustained commitment, dedicated resources, and political will, the Development Gateway's e-Government Grants Program, funded by the Italian Government, is designed initially as a two-year program that will be carried out in two phases, as described below.

- **Phase I**
 - Identification: Initial assessment and identification of priority e-Government applications in selected countries;
 - Feasibility Grants: Feasibility studies in the areas and applications identified during Phase I – Identification;
- **Phase II**
 - Implementation Grants: Seed funding for the implementation of pilot e-Government applications identified in Phase I.

The overall objective of the e-Government Grants Program is to support projects where ICT improvements have the greatest potential for initiating and/or improving e-Government activities and ensuring that these activities contribute to the e-Government strategy of that country.

The program will support technology-driven projects focused on the modernization and integration of processes and systems that will increase good governance on relevant areas of e-Procurement, e-Statistics and e-Accounting. Nonetheless, other significant e-Government projects and initiatives that can improve the capability of the Public Administration might also be considered.

The Development Gateway and the Government of Italy will supervise each aspects and activities of the program through a Steering Committee, which provides recommendations to the CEO of the Development Gateway for final approval.

EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST

The Development Gateway will accept EoI (Expression of Interest) from candidate countries from May 1st to June 15th 2004. Each EoI should specify only one e-Government focus area or project of interest for the potential beneficiary country and clearly relate them to the National ICT and e-Government Strategies of the country. Regional applications may also be considered. Selected projects will have access to Phase I: Identification.

PHASE I - IDENTIFICATION

During this phase, e-Government focus areas and eventual projects proposed by the applicant country are appraised on field by a group of experts representing the Development Gateway, in collaboration with local experts. The outcome of this phase is the production of a Project Concept Document (PCD) and a Term of Reference (ToR) jointly agreed with the beneficiary country for the project specified in the EoI and confirmed on field by the experts during the phase. The abovementioned documents (PCD and ToR) will have to be mailed to the Development Gateway in order to be evaluated for Feasibility Grants.

PHASE I - FEASIBILITY GRANTS

Feasibility Grants will be awarded among the applicants on a competitive basis to conduct a feasibility study on pre-identified projects (see Phase I - Identification).

Countries that have successfully completed all activities in Phase I - Identification will be considered priority candidates to apply for the grants. All grants are awarded following an evaluation by the Steering Committee. It is not guaranteed that all countries receiving Technical Assistance under Phase I - Identification will be awarded a Feasibility grant.

Phase I - Identification

A selection of countries among those that submitted an EoI will be granted access to Phase I – Identification. A group of experts will be appointed by the Steering Committee to work closely with their local counterparts in order to identify specific projects in the proposed focus areas and/or assess proposed e-Government projects, taking into account the indications contained in the EoI and integrating them with the experience developed on field. This will result in the production of a Project Concept Document (PCD) and a Term of Reference (ToR) jointly agreed with the beneficiary country for each project specified in the EoI and confirmed on field by the various experts during the phase. The abovementioned documents (PCD and ToR) will have to be mailed to the Development Gateway in order to be evaluated for following phases.

These activities will be funded under the Technical Assistance component of the Grant Program, which is intended to provide for resources and experts to assist selected countries in all phases of the program, and particularly during Phase I – Identification and for Monitoring and Evaluation purposes.

PARAMETERS

All identified projects will be evaluated on a competitive basis by the Steering Committee. The following parameters will be used to assess the projects to gain access to Feasibility Grants:

- **Project characteristics**
 - Quality of planning;
 - Feasibility of implementation.
- **Expected impact**
 - Overall benefits to government processes and benefits to improve governance;
 - Impact of the project on social and economic development, in particular improving the effectiveness of government services.
- **Demonstrated support**
 - Existence of a ministry or agency authorized or mandated to liaise with donor agencies for national ICT or e-Government programs;
 - Endorsement of key government/national ministries, including letters of commitment to the proposed project activities;
 - Political commitment to implement e-Government projects within the areas of intervention of the Development Gateway.

- **Commitment**
 - Government and/or national ministries commitment to allocate resources to the project in cash and/or in kind;
 - Government capabilities to gain financial support from donors/partners to cover the value of the implementation phase of the project supported by letters of commitment for matching funds or in-kind contributions.

- **Demonstrated capacity and management effectiveness**
 - Level of e-Government in the country and in specific agencies;
 - Country (implementing agency) qualifications and capacity to implement project;
 - Relevant experience in similar projects;
 - skills and background of key participants.

- **Partnerships**
 - Strength of the partnerships and management plan of the government agency;
 - Extent of inter-organizational cooperation;
 - Investment in the country by donor organizations.

- **Scalability**
 - Complexity, including cost and scope and duration, of the project;
 - Potential for scaling up and replication.

- **Integration** of the potential e-Government application and/focus areas within the national ICT and e-Government Strategy
- **Compatibility** with national poverty reduction strategies

In addition to the above criteria, the Development Gateway will also consider geographic balance, sector diversity, overall potential development impact, and the likely distribution, replicability, and scalability of societal and business benefits of the projects proposed in the Expressions of Interest, as well as the existence of a national e-Government plan.

For more information read the [Program Guidelines](#).