Operating Policies Regarding New York State Projects

CTG engages in a variety of applied research and problem-solving projects. Our projects with government in New York State represent a unique partnership devoted to research and demonstration efforts that respond directly to the needs of state and local government. These projects are guided by the following policies.

- Characteristics of CTG's New York State Projects
- Roles and Responsibilities of Partners in New York State Projects
- Criteria for Corporate Partner Participation in New York State Projects

Characteristics of CTG's New York State Projects

CTG provides a neutral environment for innovative public sector projects.

With its location in the university, the Center offers government agencies, faculty, and corporate participants a neutral environment for mutual learning and experimentation. The Center is open to all federal, state and local agencies, and related nonprofit organizations, as well as any university faculty and private sector companies.

CTG projects are partnerships.

Each CTG project is carried out through an interorganizational partnership. Project teams usually consist of government agency staff, corporate representatives, and university faculty and students. Each partner should expect to make a significant contribution to the project and each should experience direct benefits from its participation.

CTG projects are conducted according to mutually developed project objectives.

The public, corporate, and academic partners in a project work together with a professional CTG project manager and staff to plan and carry out their objectives. The partners share responsibility for a joint project plan that guides their work throughout the project.

IT applications in CTG projects are prototypes.

Prototyping is a hallmark of many CTG projects. Prototypes focus on those areas within a larger system that have the potential for highest benefit, learning, or leverage. Through the prototyping process, project teams learn about how to use and combine technical tools appropriate to a particular business problem. The prototype and prototyping process give agencies critical experience and information to help them plan and build production-quality systems after they leave CTG. Prototypes are not production quality systems.

CTG projects are limited in scope and duration.

Each project is limited in scope to those elements which appear to have the greatest impact on government programs or operations. As a rule of thumb, projects should be completed in six to twelve months. Project resources from all partners combined generally fall between $250,000 and $750,000 in total value.

CTG supports projects with a variety of resources.

The Center provides a range of resources to each project. These include project planning; best and current practice research; management, modeling, and group facilitation services; hardware, software, and consulting services; use of the CTG Laboratory; access to corporate partners; and faculty and student involvement. CTG does not make cash awards.

CTG projects are conducted in the public domain.

The Center's main purpose is to provide a research and demonstration capacity that benefits the public sector. For that reason, all projects are conducted openly, fully documented, and presented to many audiences in detailed demonstrations and reports. Extensive information is made available through the Center's World Wide Web site.

Roles and Responsibilities of Partners in New York State Projects

All partners have important roles in the Center's program. The roles and responsibilities of project partners are briefly outlined below.

State and local government and nonprofit agencies

- Propose projects either independently or in response to calls for proposals.
- Provide baseline costs and other data to support project selection and evaluation processes.
- Support projects with contributions of staff and other resources.
- Take an active role in project operations and management, including participation in the development of project work plans, reports, and demonstrations.
- Recommend programs or policies that enhance the participation of public sector organizations in the Center.

Corporate contributors

- Suggest potential project topics and respond to specific project proposals.
- Donate or loan technology to the Center's infrastructure or to support specific projects.
- Provide for training and technical assistance appropriate to the products loaned or donated.
- Donate technical, management, or consulting services to the Center or to specific projects.
- Participate in the development of project work plans and reports and serve as members of a project team.
- Recommend programs or policies that enhance corporate participation in the Center.

University faculty

- Suggest potential project topics and respond to specific project proposals.
- Design, conduct, or advise on project research and evaluation activities.
- Recommend and supervise graduate students who work on research and evaluation activities.
- Participate in the development of project work plans, articles, and reports.
- Work actively as members of a project team.
- Recommend programs or policies that enhance academic participation in the Center.

NYS Forum for Information Resource Management

- Maintain a Standing Committee on CTG Operations, which advises the Center on questions related to project proposals, participants, or processes as they relate to state and local government needs and operations.
- Co-sponsor informational and education programs to disseminate project results.

The Center

- Manage the project solicitation and selection processes.
- Provide project coordination and administrative services to support each project.
- Recruit faculty and students to Center projects. Help agencies build working relationships with faculty that will result in effective project teams.
- Invite corporate responses to project proposals, arrange for briefings and other information for interested firms, and select firms to participate in projects.
- Organize project teams to include agency staff, faculty and students, Center staff, and corporate partners.
- Provide a technical environment for project prototypes, including computing platforms, networks, and software tools.
- Provide working space and laboratory infrastructure for projects.
- Evaluate and document project results and produce and disseminate project reports, briefings, and demonstrations.

Criteria for Corporate Partner Participation in New York State Projects

Information technology vendors and other corporate partners are an integral part of many Center projects. Whenever a project could be furthered by the participation of private sector participants, CTG reaches out to the corporate community to invite involvement. This is typically done by posting a call for corporate partners notice in the State Contract Reporter and by sending direct mailings to companies in our database. This is usually followed by an open informational meeting and then by discussions with companies which offer to participate.

CTG staff members review all corporate proposals for individual projects and select proposals that best support the specific project objectives and meet the following general requirements:

- The company can deliver proposed technologies or consulting services to the Center for effective use within the time constraints of the project.
- The company is willing to cooperate with other companies whose products or services are a part of the project.

- The company will provide or help secure adequate training and technical assistance for Center and/or agency staff working on the project.
- The proposed technologies can be integrated with other technologies to be installed as part of the overall project.
- The company will provide complete user and technical documentation for the products proposed.
- Since a primary objective of Center projects is experimentation, the company agrees that donated or loaned equipment and software may be connected to a live environment in the agency and/or to other equipment or systems available in the Center. Additional software may be installed on the company's hardware, and the company's software may be installed onto other Center platforms.
- The company is not subject to any New York State government disciplinary proceedings.

CTG preferences for corporate involvement

Although not required, the Center gives preference to the following situations:

- Ideally, the technical results of a project (e.g., a prototype) should be retained in the Center after the project itself is formally completed. This allows additional agencies the opportunity to work with and learn from the prototype. For this reason, technology donations are preferred over time-limited loans.
- Since most of the Center's work is performed in Albany, the Center prefers to work with companies that have consulting or technical support staff readily available in the Capital District.
- The Center expects that most government systems will operate in a complex, heterogeneous, networked environment. Interoperability, openness, communication, and portability will be important characteristics that we wish to demonstrate in our prototypes. Technologies that operate in an open systems architecture are therefore preferred over closed systems.

Relationship between the CTG and the New York State procurement process

Center projects involve the study, use, prototyping, and demonstration of new and emerging information technologies that are of interest to government. These technologies represent tools for crafting new services and for improving the productivity of government operations. The hands-on experience and documented results of Center projects will greatly increase the amount and availability of reliable empirical information about these technologies.

Any agency may participate in any Center project, with one exception. No agency that has an open RFP for a technology solution that is the subject of a Center project may be a member of that particular project team. No project will be undertaken by the Center unless government agency staff members are also committed to work directly on the project. This requirement ensures that participating agencies have a strong interest in the technology and a reasonable expectation that the technology can be applied to a real business problem.

Although there is no connection between any particular Center project and any particular procurement, the information generated by projects can improve the technology procurement process in the following ways:

- Agencies become more aware of and better understand how technology can contribute to the achievement of agency missions and goals.
- Agencies become more knowledgeable about particular technologies and about the different approaches that can be adopted in applying them to their organizations' needs.
- Requests for Proposals and other procurement vehicles will be developed by better informed individuals. Specifications will be more fully developed and more explicitly defined. Evaluation criteria will be more appropriately structured and applied.

The productivity value of technology solutions demonstrated in the Center will strengthen agency proposals for purposes of internal review and oversight processes where cost savings, cost avoidance, quality improvements, and productivity enhancements are important evaluation criteria.

Staff relationships with corporate partners

CTG staff, (including regular and temporary professional staff, support staff, Research Foundation staff, faculty, and students) all come in frequent contact with companies that are current or potential CTG Corporate Partners. The relationships that staff establish with these companies will affect the success of CTG as an organization in several respects:

- our reputation for integrity,
- our reputation for public service,

- our reputation for customer service, and
- our reputation for competence.

Our policy regarding corporate relationships is as follows:

- The provisions of the NYS Ethics Law, advisory opinions of the NYS Ethics Commission, and the University ethics policy will be provided and explained to all staff when they begin work at CTG. Staff disclosure statements will be filed as required by University and NYS policy.
- No member of the staff shall accept any thing of value for personal use from any corporate partner or any potential corporate partner.
- Corporate partners are our customers and participate in our program voluntarily. All partners will be treated with courtesy and respect and we will strive to meet their needs and expectations.
- All hardware and software loaned to CTG will be used in accordance with agreements that the contributor and the Center jointly specify.
- Every staff member is expected to be familiar with CTG's corporate policies and procedures and with agreements governing the use of loaned or donated hardware and software.
- Supervisors and team leaders are responsible for training and advising their staff and team members. All questions should be referred to supervisors, team leaders, or the Center Director. In complicated cases, we will seek advice from the campus Office of Human Resources, or from SUNY Counsel, or the NYS Ethics Commission. All staff are expected to report and seek guidance from supervisors or team leaders on any matters which might be construed as a conflict of interest.