

NEWS RELEASE

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UAlbany's Center for Technology in Government Announces Selection of Four International Working Groups on Digital Government Research

Financial Support to Foster International Research on Global Collaboration, Urban Livability, Citizen Participation, and Public Health and Safety

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Albany, NY - The University at Albany's Center for Technology in Government (CTG) has selected four groups of international researchers to receive funding to advance digital government (DG) research on issues that cross national boundaries. The groups were chosen through a peer review of proposed research programs that would benefit from close collaboration of U.S. and international partners. U.S. participation in the groups will be supported by \$280,000 over the next three years, made possible through a \$1 million grant to CTG from the National Science Foundation's (NSF) Digital Research Program (DG) earlier this year. The overall goal of that larger grant is to build and sustain an international digital government research community. The international participants in the working groups will receive similar financial support from their home institutions or research programs.

"Over the past decade, we have seen the emergence of a global field of inquiry at the intersection of government, society, and information and communication technologies," said Sharon Dawes, director of CTG. "But because of the relative newness of the field, there is insufficient interaction among researchers in different countries compared to what one finds in more established scientific disciplines. These working groups are a targeted way to encourage advances in DG research topics that cross national boundaries."

The four groups chosen will address transnational and comparative issues of governmental processes, organization, decision making, and citizen participation. The groups include team members from the United States, Australia, Canada, China, England, France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Israel, Italy, Japan, Mexico, Netherlands, Slovenia, and Switzerland.

The U.S. researchers come from a wide variety of academic institutions including American University, Arizona State, Boston University, Clark University, Claremont Graduate University, Columbia University, George Washington University, Harvard, New York Law School, Ohio State, Penn State, Rutgers, University at Albany, University of Massachusetts, University of Pennsylvania, University of Pittsburgh, and University of Washington.

The individual working groups will convene over a three year period to develop joint research agendas on critical international questions, produce white papers on key topics, and initiate joint research projects to continue after the three-year start up period. "Mentoring and development of junior researchers and doctoral students will be an important part of each program," said Valerie Gregg of the Digital Government Research Center at USC, a partner with CTG on the larger grant. "One of our goals is to introduce American scholars to international collaborations early in their careers in a way that will lead to sustained involvement in the global research arena." The four working groups are:

- **Online Consultation and Public Policy Making.** This group will evaluate the policy and other social impacts of online citizen consultation initiatives aimed at influencing actual government decision making, and will examine how the design of these types of initiatives is affected by cultural, social, legal, and institutional contexts. The research will look at the impact of online consultations on government agencies, policy makers, public participants, and civil society organizations. One goal is a jointly authored book to help government and nongovernmental organizations identify, measure, and design successful e-consultations. *Co-chairs: Peter Shane, Moritz College of Law, Ohio State University, and Stephen Coleman, University of Leeds, UK.* >> Full Proposal Abstract and Working Group
- **An Open Platform for Urban Simulation.** The goal of this program is to assist governments in making more informed evaluations of alternative land use and transportation policies, which play a critical role in determining the economic vitality, livability, and sustainability of urban areas. The researchers will develop an Open Source

software modeling platform and set of interacting modeling components that are realistic and credible tools for evaluating a range of policies that governments in Europe and North America need in order to better address the complex problems of transportation, urban development, and environmental quality. *Co-chairs: Paul Waddell, Daniel J. Evans School of Public Affairs, University of Washington, and Michel Bierlaire, Ecole Polytechnique Federale de Lausanne, Switzerland.* >> Full Proposal Abstract and Working Group

- **A Comparative and Transnational Research Agenda in North America.** This project seeks to better understand the role of technology in the ability of individual nations to respond to public problems and in the ability of nations to work together in response to transnational problems. The focus on Canada, Mexico, and the United States will allow the researchers to look at topics that are germane to North America as a whole. They will explore, compare, and test new models of cooperation and collaboration for working across geographic and political boundaries, presidential and parliamentary systems, and both advanced and developing economies. *Co-chairs: Theresa Pardo, Center for Technology in Government, University at Albany, and Luis F. Luna-Reyes, Universidad de las Americas, Mexico.* >> Full Proposal Abstract and Working Group
- **Digital Governance and Hotspot Geoinformatics for Monitoring, Etiology, Early Warning, and Management.** This project will focus on developing a prototype geoinformatic hotspot surveillance system that relies on advanced statistical techniques for detecting hotspots of critical importance to governments around the world in such areas as public health, watershed management, persistent poverty, and networked infrastructure security. By developing a prototype system based on live case studies in both the developed and developing worlds, this group seeks to help governments acquire and assess the information they need to identify emerging problems and develop policies and make decisions involving international impacts and resource allocations. *Co-chairs: G.P. Patil, Department of Statistics, Penn State University, and collaborators in India, Indonesia, Italy, and China.* >> Full Proposal Abstract and Working Group

In addition to supporting the working groups, CTG is also producing a reconnaissance study that summarizes the current state of international digital government research and launching an annual international institute for doctoral students. This project is being carried out in partnership with the Digital Government Research Center (DGRC) at the Information Sciences Institute, University of Southern California. More information on this project can be found at: <http://www.ctg.albany.edu/projects/dgi>.

The Center for Technology in Government is an applied research center devoted to improving government and public services through policy, management, and technology innovation. The Center, located at the University at Albany, works with government to develop well-informed information strategies that foster innovation and enhances the quality and coordination of public services. For more information visit www.ctg.albany.edu.

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