

Digital government (DG) has become a truly global phenomenon, evolving rapidly in both developed and developing countries. CTG has been involved in the international DG arena for more than ten years and is a global leader in the field. Long-standing relationships with colleagues in Canada, Mexico, and Europe and a four-year National Science Foundation (NSF) project launched in 2005 have facilitated a flowering of international partnerships and collaborations with researchers and international organizations that now reaches around the globe. In 2008, CTG's international work included support for several international working groups and an innovative international doctoral institute, as well as work with the United Nations to develop an interactive advisory tool for e-government readiness. Leadership in organizing and participating in international conferences and workshops further strengthened relationships with scholars and governments in China, Europe, and North America.

### **BUILDING A SUSTAINABLE INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH COMMUNITY**

In 2005, CTG embarked on a four-year effort to develop a sustainable global community among digital government researchers and research sponsors. This NSF-funded project includes an international reconnaissance study describing the current status of digital government research, an annual research institute for doctoral students, and support for three international working groups.

#### **iGov Research Institute**



Students and faculty at the 2008 iGov Research Institute in Manchester, UK at the University at Salford.

Students and faculty at the 2008 iGov Research Institute in Manchester, UK at the University at Salford. Digital government is a global phenomenon that is changing the capabilities of government, the expectations of citizens, and the nature of related scholarship. Doctoral students from around the world who are interested in DG research compete to participate in a week-long, intensive residential program focused on ways to advance, study, and understand DG research in an international context.

In 2008, the iGov Research Institute was held in Manchester, UK at the University of Salford. A week of site visits,

research discussions, group projects, and social networking allowed 20 doctoral students and ten faculty, staff, and mentors from around the world to consider DG research problems from an interdisciplinary and cross-cultural perspective. Representing Europe, North and South America, Asia, Africa, and Australia, students came from 15 countries, 13 universities, and six academic fields, including Public Policy, Information Science, Computer Science, Sociology, Environment and Architecture, and Organizational Studies.

### International Working Groups

Three international groups of scholars are working to address transnational and comparative issues of governmental processes, decision making, and citizen participation through a framework of support provided by the NSF grant.

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The North American Digital Government Working Group (NADGWG) was formed to advance electronic government research across the geographic and political boundaries of Canada, the United States, and Mexico. A Border Region subgroup is examining the issues and challenges facing government organizations in terms of information sharing and interoperability in border areas. The Full Information Product Pricing (FIPP) subgroup is investigating the roles of government policy, trust, and information and communication technologies in the promotion of emerging distribution networks in the NAFTA trading region.

- Members of the International Working Group on Online Consultation and Public Policy Making are based in Australia, England, France, Israel, Italy, Slovenia, and the United States. The group is assessing ways to evaluate the policy and social impacts of online citizen consultation initiatives and how they are affected by cultural, social, legal, and institutional context. The group is jointly authoring a forthcoming book based on its work. *Connecting Democracy: Online Consultation and the Future of Democratic Discourse* will address the impact of online consultation on government agencies and policy makers, public participants, and civil society organizations.
- The third working group is addressing Digital Governance and Hotspot Geoinformatics for Monitoring, Etiology, Early Warning, and Management. Members from India, Asia, Europe, and the U.S. are developing case studies and a prototype geoinformatic hotspot surveillance system that relies on advanced statistical techniques for detecting hotspots of critical importance around the world in such areas as public health, ecosystem conditions, watershed management, persistent poverty, and networked infrastructure security.

### E-GOVERNMENT READINESS TOOL: UN METER

In 2008, CTG joined a collaborative team led by the Division for Public Administration and Development Management (DPADM) of the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA) to assist in the development of METER 2, an interactive online advisory tool for e-government readiness. UNDESA selected CTG based on our extensive experience in building capability assessment tools for managing knowledge in government.

“Developing partnerships are key to effectively implementing e-Government policies and programs. The tripartite partnership established among Microsoft, the Center for Technology in Government (CTG) and the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA) has enabled the creation of METER 2, an online interactive tool to assist governments, especially from the developing and the least developed countries, and decision-makers in transforming government to be more citizen-centered.” —*Haiyan Qian, Director, Division for Public Administration and Development Management, United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs*

The objective of METER 2 is to assist governments around the world in monitoring and refining the enabling environment for e-government. METER 2 identifies essential factors, choices, and challenges likely to influence a government's capability to effectively harness technology as an enabling force for government transformation.

As a key partner in the development of METER 2, CTG was responsible for content, identifying relevant case studies to enhance the learning process, and providing UNDESA with advice on the usability of METER 2.

### INTERNATIONAL ADVISORY BOARDS

Theresa Pardo, deputy director, was named to the Advisory Board of the Data Center for Applied Research in Social Sciences (BIIACS) in Mexico. The mission of BIIACS is to address the serious limitations regarding access to information in social sciences research in Mexico and Latin America.

Sharon Dawes, senior fellow, was named to the Advisory Board of the United Nations University, International Institute of Software Technology (UNU-IIST) in Macao. UNU-IIST is the home of the UNU Center for Electronic Governance, which focuses on e-governance topics in developing nations.