

# Service Innovation Certificate Program: Doing More with Less

Local Government Institute

# 2011



The Local Government Institute is introducing a new program designed specifically for local government leaders, staff and elected officials interested in doing more with less. The Service Innovation Certificate Program rewards individuals interested in collaboration, innovation and best practice approaches to service provision with recognition, networking opportunities and additional support for implementing new ideas. Certificate candidates will explore topics such as identifying opportunities, negotiating agreements, communicating with stakeholders and maximizing service efficiencies.



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## **Program Overview**

The program is designed to increase knowledge and awareness of methods to improve local government collaboration, internal processes and service efficiencies. Increasing service efficiency in local government will result in the ability to deliver higher quality service at a lower per unit cost. The Service Innovation program will provide leaders with the tools to educate and motivate. The series of course modules included in the coursework for LGI's Service Innovation Certificate are intended to provide an overview of concepts and techniques necessary for successful implementation of innovative processes and programs, while providing a forum for peer support and guidance as participants implement concepts locally. Course sessions and workshops are designed to be low cost, high value and convenient for participants.

## **Who Should Attend?**

Representatives from governmental bodies of any size with an interest in innovation, customer-focused services, performance management, benchmarking and leveraging collaboration to maximize scarce resources will benefit from the concepts and the foundation for collaborative leadership. Subsequent courses can be selected by participants from various offerings within a set of program modules. Participants will have ample opportunity for open discussion and networking with like-minded individuals.

## **Course Information**

Course modules have been developed to provide local leaders with the basic concepts necessary to transform the way local government services are provided within their regions. The program includes an introductory session which provides an overview of concepts and the foundation for collaborative thinking. Subsequent courses can be selected by participants from various offerings within a set of program modules. These additional modules include courses covering the following topic areas:

- Identifying opportunities for change
- Initiating dialog to act on opportunities
- Analyzing costs and benefits
- Process design and value stream mapping
- Negotiating agreements
- Implementing and maintaining initiatives
- Communicating value with principals and stakeholders
- Maximizing efficiency of government services and processes

Qualifying classes have been identified through a number of partner organizations to provide maximum flexibility for certificate candidates. Many course offerings are available in multiple geographic locations or online, and continuing education credits are also available for many of the courses to serve the needs of individuals needing professional certification credits.

In addition to coursework requirements, Service Innovation Certificate candidates will be expected to implement at least one of the workshop concepts within their organizations as an individual project. This project should address service improvement in their local government through an innovative approach to service delivery and

involving collaboration with other units of government, lean process or quality management.

To provide additional support for these projects, candidates will participate in a peer group. The peer group will provide networking, support and a forum for project discussion throughout the course of the program. Groups will have flexibility to create their own format for interaction, but will at minimum conduct monthly conference calls. Candidates will be expected to play an active role in their peer groups, participating in 75 percent of scheduled calls.

### **Certification Requirements**

To insure that candidates develop important basic competencies as well as a broad understanding of collaboration and shared service practices, the following certificate requirements have been established. Candidates must complete:

- An introductory course (taken in person or viewed online)
- A minimum of one course within 6 of the 8 identified modules
- Participation in at least 75% of scheduled peer group conference calls
- Initiate a project within participant's local community

While there is no firm deadline for completion, it is expected that candidates will complete the entire program within 18 months.

### **Additional Opportunities**

Completion of the certificate program will result in inclusion in a published list of certified facilitators able to serve as resources for others interested in pursuing shared services, lean government or other collaborative initiatives.

Completion of the program can also facilitate discussions for communities interested in applying for the Green Tier Legacy Community program offered through the DNR. Many of the metrics for this program require service efficiency improvements which can be obtained via collaborative service agreements or lean process and quality management procedures.

Candidates who successfully complete the certification process and implement certificate concepts can expand upon their knowledge and skills through workshops held by the Wisconsin Center for Performance Excellence. Ultimate success would be achieving the Wisconsin Forward Award, which is designed to promote organization management practices that ensure the economic vitality of Wisconsin organizations and the communities they serve. Award recipients must demonstrate achievement in each of seven category areas associated with high performing organizations including: Leadership, Strategic Planning, Knowledge Management, Process Management and Results. Award recognition can be achieved at various levels, and is available to all qualifying applicants meeting threshold criteria.

**Enrollment**

Individuals interested in enrolling in the Service Innovation Certificate program can sign up by sending an e-mail to Gary Becker, Executive Director of the Local Government Institute at [exec\\_dir@localgovinstitute.org](mailto:exec_dir@localgovinstitute.org) or calling 608-831-1662.

Once enrolled, participants are responsible for enrollment in individual approved courses. Participants are also responsible for retaining proof of participation in relevant coursework to submit for certification. Courses may be taken individually, or certificate candidates may register co-workers to attend individual sessions that may be specifically beneficial.

**Registering for Courses**

Courses are selected based on their ability to achieve high-value, low-cost results to program participants. Whenever possible, courses are held locally or online, and many also offer continuing education credits for participants with professional certifications. A list of currently approved courses, as well as criteria for receiving program credit for outside coursework, can be found on the Local Government Institute's website at [www.localgovinstitute.org](http://www.localgovinstitute.org). This course menu will be updated as new courses become available. Information provided in the course guide includes relevant module, course or registration date, and offering institution. Costs for individual courses may vary based on candidate membership in offering institutions or geographic location.

Many of the Local Government Institute's partner organizations have committed to providing qualified educational opportunities at their fall conference events. Look for more information on these opportunities this summer. If you are interested in receiving credit for a course not currently listed, or if your organization offers a course you feel would be appropriate for inclusion in the program, please see the list of course criteria posted on the LGI website. Courses which meet these criteria may be submitted to [exec\\_dir@localgovinstitute.org](mailto:exec_dir@localgovinstitute.org).