

**OPM 00-59**

**DATE:** November 14, 2000  
**TO:** All Appointing Authorities  
**FROM:** Oscar B. Jackson, Jr., Administrator and  
Cabinet Secretary of Human Resources  
**RE:** **2001 Innovations in American Government Awards**

The Ford Foundation, the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University, and the Council for Excellence in Government are accepting applications until January 12, 2001, for the "2001 Innovations in American Government" awards. Information on eligibility, deadline, and selection criteria is attached.

The Innovations Program strives to identify and celebrate outstanding examples of creative problem-solving in the public sector. Since its inception in 1986, the program has recognized 280 innovative programs, which have received \$17.2 million in Ford Foundation grants. Of these programs, 145 have received \$100,000 grants and 135 have received \$20,000 grants. In 2001, the Ford Foundation will present \$20,000 to finalists and \$100,000 to award winners.

If you have questions about the program or would like to receive applications, please write or call:

INNOVATIONS  
John F. Kennedy School of Government  
Harvard University  
79 John F. Kennedy Street  
Cambridge, MA 02138  
(617) 495-0558

Attachment

## **2000 INNOVATION IN GOVERNMENT**

### **ELIGIBILITY**

To be eligible for an Innovations award, a program must involve a fresh approach to a problem of significant concern to a portion of the U.S. public, and must:

- Be administered under the authority of one or more governmental entities (federal, state, local, tribal, or territorial) that have played a formative role in designing and initiating the program;
- Be submitted by the government agency responsible for the innovation (nonprofit, private sector and union initiatives are eligible only with significant governmental involvement and oversight);
- Have been implemented before January 1, 2000;
- Certify and be able to document that one of more government institutions currently provide at least half of its funding; and
- Be able to demonstrate that it has progressed significantly toward the achievement of its stated goals.

### **DEADLINE AND DECISION SCHEDULE**

Completed written applications for the 2000 Innovations in American Government awards competition must be received by 5:00 p.m., Friday, January 12, 2001.

Electronic applications for the 2000 Innovations in American Government awards competition must be received by 5:00 p.m., Friday, January 19, 2001. The only acceptable electronic applications are available at [www.innovations.harvard.edu](http://www.innovations.harvard.edu).

- In March 2001, 100 applicants will be selected as semifinalists and asked to submit a supplementary application. Each semifinalist will be required at that time to submit a letter of endorsement by the chief elected official of its jurisdiction or – in the case of federal, judicial, and independent authority programs – the chief executive office of its agency.
- Finalists will be selected and receive site visits late in the spring of 2001. The site visits are used to determine eligibility for a \$200,000 finalist award, as well as to assist the National Selection Committee in selecting the winners.
- The National Selection Committee will choose the \$100,000 award winners and certify the status of the \$20,000 award winners in the fall of 2001.

### **SELECTION CRITERIA**

At each stage in the selection process, a program will be evaluated according to the following four selection criteria.

- Its novelty, judged by the degree to which it demonstrates a leap of creativity;
- Its effectiveness, demonstrated by evidence that the program has achieved tangible results;
- Its significance, particularly the degree to which it successfully addresses an important problem of public concern; and
- Its transferability, or the degree to which aspects of the program show promise of inspiring successful replication by other governmental units.