

**CODE FOR AMERICA 2015 FELLOWSHIP APPLICATION  
ST. LOUIS CITY / ST. LOUIS COUNTY**

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**Expand on your desired goals and outcomes. Be specific. (300 words maximum)**

The core of the St. Louis metro area is split into two jurisdictions, the City of St. Louis, with a population of 318,416 (2013) and St. Louis County with a population of 1,001,444 (2013). The City provides both municipal and county services. The County provides county-level services to its entire population and municipal services to 321,000 residents, while 90 municipalities provide services to the remainder of the County population. Government fragmentation is widely seen as a major hurdle for citizens to obtain needed services, or even to know who is responsible, and can make it particularly difficult for small businesses to obtain needed permits and licenses. Our primary goal is to determine ways to overcome the barriers caused by fragmentation and make it easier for citizens to obtain services, information and data, and regulatory approvals.

We can demonstrate how to transcend governmental fragmentation by working toward a 311 capability for all of St. Louis City and County, arriving at one location that could route and track response to citizen inquiries for City, County, and County municipal issues.

Local government fragmentation leads to inefficient procurement. We would like to develop a website/service to aggregate local government (municipality/school district/fire district) Requests for Proposals and other procurement needs so that potential vendors can readily access them and local governments can take advantage of collaborative efforts and participate in existing contracts.

Lack of governmental transparency is also a consequence of fragmentation. We are interested in initiatives that will make it easier to export data from governmental ERP systems such as Tyler Munis (commonly used in local governments nationwide) to open data platforms to arrive at higher levels of financial transparency. (Read more in the addendum.)

The IBM "Smarter Cities" grant program introduced big data analytics to our region's public safety in the form of hot spot policing. Civic innovation and the expertise in our local tech community can push us into the leading edge in public safety innovation with home-grown technology. In particular, the neighborhood ownership model

<http://www.circuitattorney.org/NeighborhoodOwnershipModel.aspx>) is emerging as a force in the City of St Louis, and could use innovative technology, with the support of CfA fellows, to spread its scope and impact.

We would particularly like to focus on greatly expanding the availability and ease of access to mobile users for spatial data. The City and County have strong GIS operations and Aaron Addison's GIS group at Washington University has strong capabilities as well.

We are currently developing our own Civic data leadership. Brett Lord-Castillo and Bill Schwulst from St Louis County are both in the Peer Network. Brett and Eleanor Tutt from nonprofit Rise Community Development are Brigade Organizers. Jon Leek from startup Lumate leads our National Day of Civic Hacking team. Aaron Addison from Washington University in St Louis coordinates that institution's civic innovation efforts. These are among the one hundred members of civic innovation advocacy group OpenDataSTL.

Both St Louis City and St Louis County are ready to implement a formal open data policy. We hope that the fellows can provide technical and cultural assistance as we implement these policies. We need more resident engagement through events, brigade, meetups, and hack nights where our residents take advantage of open data in their everyday lives. During this year's National Day of Civic Hacking, OpenDataSTL will formally launch as a Code for America Brigade. While this will raise the profile of this civic innovation organization, we expect the fellows to help raise the profile and productivity of this new Brigade, resulting in increased participation by both citizens and local government. This, in turn, should increase the long term success of our civic innovation initiatives.

**In addition to building a custom app/apps for your local government, what existing CfA Apps would you most like to redeploy? (200 words maximum)**

*To the Trails* - Currently the nearly 300 parks, 150 miles of trails, and 38,000 acres of public lands do not have a centralized information point for the public. Building out additional functionality, to make reservations and check availability of amenities for example, would be beneficial.

*SMC Connect/ Aunt Bertha* - Regional support service providers use a central database to track available resources. The database is not accessible by the public, therefore making it difficult for those in need-- or those wanting to help someone in need-- to easily connect to location-based resources in real time.

*OpenCounter* – We have already scheduled an OpenCounter webinar with a representative of the joint city/county economic development group. *Development FastPass* would also be of interest to the group.

*LocalData* – We’ve attended webinar meetings on LocalData and see potential have cross departmental use. *Ohana API*, *Civic Insight*, *Textizen* and *CityVoice* have all piqued interest in departments of planning and social services.

*Jail Population Management Dashboard* – St. Louis County’s Justice Services Director has shown interest and is engaging his Louisville counterpart about the app and its use to date.

*Public Art Finder* - With multiple world class art institutions and dedicated sculpture parks in both the City and County, the region makes an excellent candidate for the deployment of an outdoor art finder app.

*Discover BPS* - The Mayor’s office has discussed making the City Public schools easier to find and navigate for parents.

*SmartProcure* - Providing procurement information has been of recent interest and a FOI request from local news organizations has prompted discussions of opening up more.

**Strong sponsorship is key to the program's success. What local gov’t leaders will take an active role to support this program? (300 words maximum)**

Under the leadership of the Mayor and County Executive, the region has witnessed a boom in technology, biosciences, and other innovative economic sectors. Many areas have been revitalized with both creative reuses of historic buildings and with new (and, in many cases, green) construction. The Mayor and County Executive are committed to furthering this regional momentum to ensure our region remains one of the fastest growing tech hubs in the United States and a hotbed for entrepreneurial activity. The leadership is committed to expanding citizen access to government services and data, and will fully support this project.

St. Louis City and County IT leadership and respective teams are strongly committed to open data and improving citizen access to government services. County IT open data initiatives include the adoption of the “Look at Cook” budget visualization website (as <http://fiscalfocus.stlouisco.com>) in November 2013 and a current project to establish a St. Louis County open data portal as a “micro site” on the State of Missouri open data portal hosted by Socrata <https://data.mo.gov/> . The first data sets are expected to be available on the portal in July 2014.

Additional support comes from the Police Department and the Department of Planning. Through partnerships with the nonprofit Rise, we are also developing an interactive mapping tool (<http://www.datagateway.org/>) for citizens and funders to view and download data at the citizen-preferred zip code and municipal/neighborhood scales. Brett Lord-Castillo from County Police IT has been one of the leaders of the St. Louis Open Data Community and the nascent St. Louis OpenDataSTL brigade. The City and County IT professionals in all departments look forward to working with the Code for America fellows to improve citizen access to services and data.

**What else should we consider about your local government that makes you an excellent candidate?** (300 words maximum)

St. Louis' regional leadership has a record of success in technology. National media is recognizing St. Louis as a growing and vibrant tech community. Dice.com cites St. Louis as the fastest growing tech hub in the country. Forbes recently called St. Louis, "a model for aspiring tech hubs," citing our region's mentoring networks and success in attracting entrepreneurial talent. This recognition is the outcome of strong public-private alliances employing a powerful formula of startup events, early phase venture capital, and affordable incubator space, all combined with free or subsidized mentoring, legal advice, and other essential business services.

Cooperation is crucial in our particular region. Dozens of local government entities came together over the last three years to complete our OneSTL Plan for Sustainable Development, an unprecedented regional plan that was federally-funded and locally-matched. City of St. Louis Mayor Francis Slay has created an Action Agenda to accomplish specific immediate goals in the next five years.

And there are more ongoing initiatives in intergovernmental collaboration in the St. Louis region.

- The newly-formed St. Louis City-County Economic Development Partnership
- St. Louis County and the Metropolitan Sewer District common building permit management system, which is working to expand to other local governments that do permitting and form a single web portal for builders
- Great Rivers Greenway, the regional trails districts, spanning St. Louis City, St. Louis County, and St. Charles County
- St Louis County imagery consortium, a joint effort of local governments and Washington University to acquire region wide high-resolution aerial photography and related spatial data
- The Loop Media Hub, a gigabit fiber-linked commercial district alongside the new Delmar Loop trolley line
- City-County public safety collaborations: Metro Air Patrol, Bomb and Arson Squad, Major Case Squad, and Regional Justice Information Services
- A regional intergovernmental homeless services network including seventy shelters, transitional housing, and permanent housing; with all partners sharing a central cloud application for tracking clients and bed availability

**What steps have you taken to ensure innovation in government?** (300 words maximum)

*Eg. Recent policies, dept. of innovation, open data portal, UX workshops for staff*

In August 2013, the City of St. Louis and St. Louis County--two completely separate governmental jurisdictions--merged their respective economic development arms into one unit known as the St. Louis Economic Development Partnership (EDP). The EDP represents a monumental step forward in the arena of inter-governmental cooperation in this historically-

fragmented metropolitan region. The EDP will allow the two governments to collaborate on business attraction and retention -- including the continued growth of the region's tech and bioscience startups.

The City has adopted a cloud-based solution for email, citizen service requests, and work order management. Cityworks Server is used by over 70 departments, agencies, and operational areas to track internal and external service requests, work orders, capital management, and assets. In the next eight months, the City will transition to a cloud-based financial and payroll management system developed by New World Systems.

The St. Louis County budget data visualization web site <http://fiscalfocus.stlouisco.com> relies on an open source product produced by the Chicago civic hacking community, first used at the [lookatcook.com](http://lookatcook.com) website for Cook County.

St. Louis County Government has recently launched an open data initiative through a micro-site application of the State of Missouri's Socrata open data platform. The St. Louis County Assessor data is slated to be the first user. In addition, the City is publishing raw datasets for public use. These datasets include GIS, Assessor tax records, building permits, and service requests (<http://dynamic.stlouis-mo.gov/citydata/downloads/>).

St. Louis County and the Metropolitan Sewer District will share a common building permit management system, with a goal of extending use to other local governments that do permitting, with a single web portal for builders to use. A building industry group, the St. Louis Regional Permitting Collaborative is promoting this project.

### **How did you hear about the Code for America Fellowship program?**

The City of St Louis first became aware of the Fellowship program when interested members of the tech community championed the program via social media during the 2013-2014 application cycle. The City applied that year with assistance from those technology champions, but the application was unsuccessful. The County's first real connection with CfA came out of the 2012 ESRI International User Conference where GIS Programmer Brett Lord-Castillo met Steve Spiker of the Urban Strategies Council. Steve was deeply involved in civic hacking and was nearing the founding of Open Oakland. He is a natural advocate for civic innovation. With the information Brett brought back about civic innovation, St Louis County became participants in the 2013 National Day of Civic Hacking with RHoK-STL. That event was county government's first significant exposure to Code for America's work, and discovery of the Fellowship program has grown out of that. Now, the two local governments have recognized that the fellowship should be approached as a region and have come together for this joint application effort.