



“We’ve got to have the brightest minds to help solve our biggest challenges.”

- President Barack Obama, July 8th, 2013

The Presidential Innovation Fellows Program

The Presidential Innovation Fellows (PIF) program pairs talented, diverse individuals from the innovation community with top civil servants to collaborate during focused “tours of duty” to implement projects aimed at saving lives, saving taxpayer money, fueling job creation, and making the Federal Government work better for the American people—achieving results in months, not years.

Since the initiative launched two years ago, Presidential Innovation Fellows, along with their government teammates, have been delivering impressive results—at start-up velocity. Fellows have unleashed the power of open government data to spur the creation of new products and jobs; improved the ability of the Federal government to respond effectively to natural disasters; designed pilot projects that make it easier for new economy companies to do business with the Federal Government; and much more. Their impact is enormous.

Examples of the extraordinary work and innovative solutions Fellows are implementing across government in concert with their Federal teammates include:

Providing Americans with Access to their own Downloadable Personal Health Data: The [Blue Button initiative](#), a public-private partnership between the healthcare industry and the Federal Government, is helping consumers across the country gain secure, electronic access to their own personal health records. With the support of Fellows, the Blue Button Initiative has expanded its reach to more than 150 million Americans that are today able to access their own health information from a variety of sources—including healthcare providers, health insurance companies, medical labs, and state health information networks—in order to make more informed decisions about their own health care and enabling the development of useful third-party applications and services.

Unleashing Government Data as Fuel for Entrepreneurs and Innovators to Create New Apps, Products, and Services that Benefit the American People: Fellows are supporting efforts across the Government to make more and more government information like car safety ratings and hospital pricing available in machine-readable form for use by the American people. These data are being used by entrepreneurs and tech innovators who are turning those data into useful products, apps, and services—from apps to help citizens and businesses to save energy to services that help students evaluate the cost of college— built using open data.

Leveraging Open Data to Help Save Lives: With the support of Fellows, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA), launched openFDA, a new initiative that will provide easy access to FDA datasets that support the agency’s regulatory mission, help educate the public, and save lives. The project will make several valuable FDA public datasets—including millions of adverse event and medication error reports on FDA-regulated drugs—available to the public for the first time, via application programming interfaces (APIs) and raw structured files.

Enabling American Families and Business to Save Money on Electricity Bills: The [Green Button Initiative](#) is a public-private partnership that provides electric utility customers with easy and secure access to their own energy usage, from their utility website. Today, over 42 million household and business customers—reaching over 100 million Americans—already have access to their Green Button energy data. Armed with their own data in a standard format, households and businesses can more easily shop for solar panels, use virtual energy audit software, and save on their energy bills.

Making it Easier to Do Business with the Government, Maximizing Value for Taxpayers: The Presidential Innovation Fellows have led and collaborated on a number of projects aimed at making it easier for companies to do business with the Federal Government and enabling the Government to maximize value for taxpayers. By developing new tools, software, and online platforms, Fellows are giving America's small technology companies easier access to the Federal Government's nearly \$77 billion information-technology supply chain and better-connecting government agencies to innovative solutions that work better and cost less. Here's how:

- **RFP-EZ** is an online platform developed by the U.S. Small Business Administration and Fellows in only six months, that makes it easier for innovative small tech businesses to bid on government contracts, while also making it easier for Federal agencies to identify the bids that offer the best value for taxpayers.
- **FBOpen** is a new platform designed by Fellows to open the catalog of Federal opportunities to a larger audience—by providing more relevant search results of Federal opportunities. FBOpen was created as an open-API server with data import tools and sample applications that can help small businesses more easily search for and connect to opportunities to work with the U.S. Government.
- **Prices Paid Portal** is a database developed by Fellows and General Services Administration procurement officials of actual prices paid by the Federal Government for various services, enabling agencies to be more informed shoppers when seeking to procure services. The database will continue to expand with the addition of more datasets of purchase information.

Empowering Veterans to Make Better, More Informed Choices About Their Education. The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) worked with the Presidential Innovation Fellows to launch an online [GI Bill® Comparison Tool](#) that makes it easier for Veterans, Servicemembers, and dependents to calculate their Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits and learn about VA's approved colleges, universities, and available education and training programs across the country.

Mobilizing Citizens to Help Preserve Our Nation's History and Records. Fellows at work at the Smithsonian Institute helped to develop and launch a [crowdsourcing platform](#) that allows the public to transcribe handwritten historic documents and records. This kind of innovative approach will not only support important research, but provide an important avenue for Americans to help preserve our nation's history. In just six months, Fellows developed and launched an end-to-end solution for creating digital records for historic files, which in turn engaged thousands of volunteers who have helped to transcribe and review more than 3,000 historic and scientific records—that are now easily accessible to the public for the first time.

Improving the Ability of the Federal Government to Respond Effectively to Natural Disasters: During an emergency or a natural disaster it is essential that Federal, state, and local agencies have access to real-time information about the critical needs of survivors. In order to address this, Fellows have been working with agency partners to build tools that leverage technology to improve disaster preparedness and response. For example:

- **Lantern:** A Fellow working with the U.S. Department of Energy is building a new mobile app that provides helpful information and assistance during a disaster. The mobile app is designed to provide consumers timely disaster preparedness tips and recommendations, allow consumers to report and access information on power outages and fallen power lines, and help users find fuel and report the status of gas stations.
- **GeoQ:** A Fellow working with The Federal Emergency Management Agency and The National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency is developing "GeoQ", a tool that crowdsources geo-tagged photos of disaster-affected areas to assess damage over large regions. This information will allow the Federal Government to better allocate critical response and recovery resources to regions in need.

Looking ahead, the next round of Presidential Innovation Fellows will continue to build on these successes as well as tackle a new set of challenges. Applications are being accepted for the third round of projects through April 7, 2014. [Learn more](#), or [apply here](#).