1. Name of Governmental Department or Agency
Local Government Management Agency
2. Title of the Project
Innovation in the Local Government Sector
3. Description of the Project

Following a Strategic & Operational Review of the LGMA in 2018, the Chief Executives of the local authorities across Ireland indicated that they wanted to develop and support more innovation in the local government sector.

The LGMA, together with the County and City Management Association (CCMA), is aware of a substantial level of innovation and business process improvement in the local government sector that has been completed, individually by the 31 local authorities in the sector, or sometimes on a collaborative or regional basis. These projects have led to quality improvements, service enhancements, cost reductions and productivity increases of a business activity or process within the sector.   A list of some key examples of these innovations through technology are listed below:

- Projects funded under the Digital Innovation programme 2019- Dept of Rural and Community Development

- Digital Transformation of Services – Cork County Council Service Republic

- Smart bins Project, Dun Laoghaire Rathdown County Council/Dublin City council

- Housing reletting system – Monaghan County Council

- Wayfinding with Route4U – Fingal County Council/Dublin City Council

- Smarter Travel – DTTAS Initiative – 3 Pilot sites- Dungarvan, Westport and Limerick

The local government sector recognises that the key to effective and efficient delivery of services, monitoring and evaluation and programme and policy development is having access to relevant, accurate and high-quality data.

The LGMA would like to formally survey each local authority to gather data relating to existing and proposed innovative improvements to the provision both of front-end services within the local government sector to the citizens and businesses, and also to examine existing and proposed improvements to back-end services of the local authorities.

4. Project Scope

The project will involve gathering and analysis regarding existing innovative improvements relating to the full range of front-end services provided by local authorities, to the citizens and businesses and to examine improvements to back-end services of the local authorities.

The research data gathered may identify areas of duplication of effort relating to the improvement of processes and it is hoped that the outputs from the data gathering will lead to recommendations to reduce duplication in the future.

Policy informed by evidence is deemed to be more effective, but the evidence cannot be generated without reliable and accurate data. The evidence-based research will assist in developing a sectoral policy regarding innovation and identify specific supports from the LGMA that are required to support the sharing of best practice and improved business process and productivity across the local government sector.

In addition, it is hoped that the research will identify obstacles to adopting existing best practice service enhancements, i.e. resources, costs, procurement and identify the best means for the LGMA and the CCMA to support ongoing development of services and improvement to processes across the sector.

It is also anticipated that the conclusions of this research project will support the work of Our Public Service2020 by providing strong evidence-based data relating to the delivery of improved services for our customers, improved engagement with our citizens, driving efficiency and effectiveness, and embedding a culture of evidence and evaluation.

This is a unique opportunity to gain experience working across local government, engaging with all 31 local authorities, various government departments and key stakeholders.

5.	**Skills/Expertise Required**

- Expertise in a Science, Technology, Engineering or Maths discipline (ICT expertise desirable).
- Strong skills in data gathering, analysis and manipulation; competence with Microsoft Office Suite and data analysis technologies, i.e. Asana, SPSS;
- strong communication, report writing and presentation skills.

The ideal candidate will have some knowledge of public service organisations in Ireland and the public service reform programme. The researcher will have the ability to work effectively on his/her own initiative, the ability to manage projects and work activities successfully.

6.	**Expected Outputs of Project**

It is anticipated that the outputs from this project will be the creation of a dataset of existing and proposed innovative service improvements, the completion of a briefing paper that will ultimately be absorbed into a sectoral policy document and development of recommendations relating to the supports that can be provided having regard to an analysis of the obstacles preventing the utilisation of existing best practice examples from other local authorities.

7.	**Working Arrangements**

The researcher would ideally be based in the LGMA's Programme Management Office, which is based in Phoenix House, Conyngham Road. Flexible and remote working arrangements will be accommodated.

8.	**Expected Timeline**

It is anticipated that the project will last 6 months. It is preferred that the researcher work full-time on the project.