

[Press release: £7.5 million fund for councils' digital innovation opens](#)

Councils seeking to transform their public services through digital innovation can apply to a new [£7.5 million fund](#) from 24 September, Local Government Minister Rishi Sunak MP has announced.

Speaking at the LocalGovCamp event in Birmingham, Minister Sunak invited applications from local authorities to change the way they invest in technology, share expertise and ensure members of the public receive the best quality digital services from their local council.

Grants of up to £100,000 will be available for projects which demonstrate they benefit local public services and have the potential to be rolled out more widely across the country.

Local Government Minister, Rishi Sunak MP, said:

Digital innovation is re-shaping our lives, and many local authorities are at the forefront of embracing technology in ingenious ways to improve services for the public.

Whether it's an app to report fly-tipping, or a slick web solution to pay your council tax, we want to know the best ideas so we can help to make them happen.

I would also like to encourage councils to sign up to our Local Digital Declaration, so we can all support each other and build on each other's work to revolutionise public services.

The fund will also be used to provide digital skills training for at least 1,000 staff working on digital solutions at councils.

The fund's opening comes after the government made a "digital pledge" backed by the £7.5 million of government funding with the launch of a Local Digital Declaration in July. The declaration aims to connect the work of local government digital teams to deliver better local public services.

Alongside this, the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government established a new team to work with councils to help them deliver on their declaration commitments.

Local authorities can apply and find out more information at localdigital.gov.uk/fund

Local authorities and central government departments in England are eligible to submit an expression of interest, whether individually or in partnership with other local authorities. All bids will need to demonstrate input from at

least two local authorities.

The bidding is not open to non-public sector organisations. However, there are no restrictions on winning bids to commission a private company to help deliver the project.

The deadline to submit an expression of interest is 5 October 2018. A decision on which projects have been chosen is expected to be announced by 3 December.

A blog about the fund's opening is at: mhclgdigital.blog.gov.uk