



The Center for Government Excellence, or GovEx, was created in 2015 with the mission to help governments use data to make informed, effective decisions and improve people's quality of life.

GovEx does this by:

- Providing technical assistance
- Connecting academic knowledge to practical government experience
- Building governments' capacity to use data for decision making and policy development
- Facilitating partnerships between governments for idea sharing and coordination
- Helping government leaders think strategically about using data
- Developing tools and resources to educate government leaders on the value and use of data
- Offering formal, in-depth training through structured curricula, certificate programs, and university courses

GovEx is part of Johns Hopkins University's 21st Century Cities Initiative and a key partner in What Works Cities. Launched by Bloomberg Philanthropies in April 2015, What Works Cities is a national initiative to help 100 mid-sized American cities enhance their use of data and evidence to improve services, inform local decision-making, and engage residents.

Michael Bloomberg, former Mayor of New York City and a Johns Hopkins alumnus, saw the need for a center to complement What Works Cities because no organization existed dedicated to training and supporting cities when it came to using tools like data management, performance, and analytics. As mayor, Bloomberg had created an Office of Data Analytics to apply data science to the city's challenges.

GovEx engages with governments to help them leverage their data to improve outcomes for the lives of residents. Its team works directly with government leaders, assisting them with problem-solving to strengthen these four practice areas:

- Data management
- Performance analytics
- Open data
- Advanced analytics

Working directly with GovEx starts with an in-person, half-day, guided discussion of a city's current challenges and what issues it wants to attack using data. Following this discovery workshop, GovEx staff recommends how it can best support a city's use of data and meet the goals and priorities of city leadership. The engagement also includes training (including on-line programs) and technical assistance.

Given GovEx's mission to increase the capacity of government in general, it promotes sharing examples of what cities have found to be successful approaches. As such, its technical assistance is based on a demonstration project that will help a city meet a specific goal, such as reducing nonemergency 911 requests or street safety. Equipped with tools, coaching and training, a city can then develop a project, and its experience in implanting it can be shared with others. For more about the GovEx approach, see <https://govex.jhu.edu/>.