

Application

Preliminary Question

In which language are you submitting the application (check one)?

Please note that each country has the option of either submitting an application in English, or in their native language **if they are unable to pay for translation into English**. For applications submitted in the native language, OGP will pay for the translation into English before passing on to the judges.

English
 Native language (please mention)

If you are submitting in your native language and it is non-Latin based language, you will have the option of uploading a PDF file at the end of this application. Please follow the questions and word limits mentioned in the application template.

A. THE TEAM

The following information is required to capture a basic understanding of those responsible for your initiative and any partnerships that have helped you to meet your goals.

INITIATIVE NAME (required)

Provide the name of the initiative that your team is submitting for consideration of the 2015 Open Government Awards. If the initiative is operating under one or more alternate name(s), provide the name that is most commonly recognized.

Better Neighborhood Program (Programa Bairro Melhor)

THE NOMINATION (required)

Begin by describing how this initiative was selected. For example, mention any nomination or consultation process held with civil society partners or others when selecting the initiative.

[100 words]

The Office of the Comptroller General - Brazil (CGU) organized a process to choose which initiative would represent Brazil on the OGP Awards. CGU received 25 candidatures and chose, based on OGP Awards criteria, 6 initiatives to participate in a public voting that occurred between May 11th and 26th on OGP Brazil website. The Better Neighborhood Program won with 36% of the 10,394 computed votes in this public voting. The Program articulates actions of direct participation, oriented by a transparent process that guarantees accountability, access of information, and, through public interest actions, qualifies structures and services bound to public policies.

Is this initiative included in your country's OGP National Action Plan?

(Applicants can choose initiatives from within OR outside their OGP National Action Plans)

Yes No

GOVERNMENT POINT OF CONTACT (required)

Provide the name, title, phone number(s), email address(es) and mailing address of a single point of contact for the purposes of communicating with your team. The person should be the senior most individual responsible for overseeing the application requirements.

Please also provide the name and professional title of the government official responsible for implementing the initiative, if different from above.

Government official responsible for implementing the initiative:

Canoas City Hall, Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil.
 Rua 15 de Janeiro, 11
 CEP 92010-300
 Mayor of Canoas – Mr. Jairo Jorge da Silva
 Phones: +55 51 3462 1566/ +5551 9230 6324
 E-mail for contact:
 tais.ruiz@canoas.rs.gov.br
 prefeito@canoas.rs.gov.br

Government official responsible for overseeing the application requirements:

Otávio Moreira de Castro Neves
 Coordinator for Open Government and Transparency
 Transparency and Public Oversight Directorate
 Corruption Prevention and Transparency Secretariat
 Office of the Comptroller General - Brazil
 +55 (61) 2020-6545
 otavio.neves@cgu.gov.br; ogp@cgu.gov.br

TYPE OF APPLICATION (required)

We strongly encourage applicants to submit a joint application from a government agency and a civil society organization. Only submit a joint application if a civil society organization was involved in either designing, implementing or monitoring the initiative jointly with the government.

Is this a joint application?

Yes No

If yes, please fill out the "civil society point of contact" field below.

CIVIL SOCIETY POINT OF CONTACT

Please provide the name and title of a single point of contact at the organization. By providing these details you acknowledge that you are jointly applying with a civil society organization for the 2015 Open Government Awards.

OTHER PARTNERSHIPS (optional)

If you are partnering with one or more other government agencies, private sector entities, media etc., please list each partner. In 250 words or less, provide a brief narrative of the partnership and the role each partner plays in your initiative.

The initiative is organized by Canoas City Hall with the purpose to provide to the contributor of Urban Property Tax the opportunity to designate, annually, up to 50% of his tax value to a Project registered in the Program. The Projects are registered by civil organizations in a Digital Platform, with open data, and the resources are divided by equal criteria to the four geographical regions of the city.

The contributors designate 50% of their Urban Property Tax to one of the projects presented by social nonprofit entities which attend public interest and are of collective use. The program gives the opportunity to directly exercise citizenship, integrating the contributor to the co-management process of the City, and also, to the residents of the region, to manage the project execution in partnership with the entities. The presented Projects considered the limit of investment in the Region and the applicants must compromise with the mobilization of the community to have 20% counterpart of the value designated to their location.

In Better Neighborhood Program 2014/2015 edition, eight civil society entities were enabled: Nossa Senhora das Graças Hospital; Canoas Association of Disabled People; Jardim Atlântico Neighborhood Association; Jovens do Vento Sport Association of Rio Branco Neighborhood; Traditional Movement Piquete Maroto; Cidade Nova Communitarian Association; Visually Impaired Association of Canoas; Vila União dos Operários Neighborhood Association. The entities are responsible for the direct hiring of the companies to the project execution. Canoas City Hall is responsible for monitoring and guaranteeing the end of the Project.

B. THE INITIATIVE

The Open Government Partnership (OGP) is prepared to celebrate a range of successful applicants for the Open Government Awards. This year's theme is Improving Public Services through Open Government. Please visit here for more clarification on the theme. To qualify for recognition, we need to understand the various elements of success of your initiative and its sustainability over time. Please answer the following questions:

PROBLEM DEFINITION (required)

In 200 words or less, please identify the specific problem your initiative intended to solve. Why was this problem important to solve at a particular time and what were the challenges posed by your national (or local) economic or political context?

Until 2008 Canoas was seen as a territory with many paradoxes. The city had the 3rd GDP of the state of Rio Grande do Sul and outstanding municipal revenue, but also had many social inequalities and areas with high density of poverty population. This contradiction was part of a precarious urban infrastructure, lack of health units, damaged schools, high tax of unemployment and urban violence. The population lived under the submission to an anti-popular and conservative political hegemony with large historical scandals of corruption.

Since 2009, was initiated in Canoas a new growing cycle with focus on popular participation, social compromise, ethics and transparency. Based on citizen protagonism for solving problems, change of priorities and in a common project of development was created the System of Popular and Citizen Participation, with 13 tools of participation. The citizen decides the course of the City. The objectives of the Better Neighborhood Program are the participation of an important part of the population in the Public Management, also involving communitarian associations in a local entities network. The Program enables by direct tax benefit, the co-management between Public Management, civil organizations and contributors citizens in the execution of works and services in the neighbourhoods.

INITIATIVE DESIGN (required)

In 250 words or less, describe your initiative's goals and objectives. How did it aim to improve public service delivery, who was it intended to benefit (specify the target population), and why was it important to use open government approaches to achieve this goal? If your initiative was designed to improve access or services for disadvantaged or marginalized groups, provide details on this here. Describe any innovations in the design of the initiative.

The initiative allows the contributor citizen, when paying the Urban and Property Tax, to designate up to 50% of its value to one of the presented projects by civil society entities. Among the structuring objectives of the Better Neighborhood Program there are, respectively: the rise of transparency in the application of public resources; the direct involvement of solidarity networks to solve the neighborhood demands; celerity in services and works execution; reducing the overall cost of the works through direct hiring by the proposing entities. The main goals of Better Neighborhood Program are: the expansion of popular participation in solving popular demands of the population that lives in communities in the neighborhoods within the city; qualifying communitarian and social organizations; improve social infrastructure in the communities. The Better Neighborhood Program is an unprecedented action in Brazil in order to involve the citizen, social and communitarian organizations, microentrepreneurs and public administration for viability of works and services as: construction and qualification of sports courts and leisure area with precarious services in the communities; reforms and revitalization of buildings that are used by partner entities of public policies; equipment acquisition for recovery and maintenance of the life quality of people with special needs; implementation of areas to provide services and public policies in peripheral regions of the city; acquisition of hospital equipments for those that attend Public National System of Health and revitalization of squares by implementing gymnastics equipments.

INITIATIVE OUTCOMES (required)

In 450 words or less, explain how your initiative was able to demonstrate one or more of the following results:

- Citizens have better access to information on the public services to which they are entitled, and/or information on the performance of public service providers
- Governments are better at asking for and responding to feedback or complaints by citizens on the quality of public services
- Citizens have ways to actively participate in the design and delivery of public services
- Citizens have mechanisms to monitor and oversee public works and services

Initiatives should also provide evidence if the initiative was able to expand access to public services to a larger population than before or if the quality and efficiency of public services has improved.

If there are any baseline indicators to measure the outcomes of the initiative, please describe them in detail. If the initiative was included in the OGP Action Plan, please describe how this did (or did not) contribute to the initiative's success.

In Brazil, there are more than 400 cities that have Participatory Budgeting; Canoas has been emerging as capital of popular participation. Occupying in 2014 the Presidency of International Observatory of Participatory Democracy – IOPD, when hosted the 14th IOPD Conference, nowadays, Canoas is also the National Coordinator of Brazilian Network of Participatory Budgeting and Coordinator of Autonomy, Management and Participation Thematic Unit of Mercocidades Network. Canoas innovated creating 13 organized direct democracy tools and a System of Popular and Citizen Participation that guarantee participation, transparency and permanent dialogue between public managers and citizen. The tools are organized in five different roles: **Tools for Collective Demands**, with Participatory Budget, Plenary of Public Services, Company Polygons and Better Neighborhood Program, making possible respectively the participation of 11% of electors to vote in 365 works, evaluate 1.186 services, attend more than 100 companies priorities, and now with Better Neighborhood Program, to improve social infrastructure in the neighborhood. To attend **Individual Demands**, were realized 525 editions, with weekly cycles, whitin 249 editions of City Hall on the Street, 71 Mayor in the Station, 205 Public Audiences, with 30.900 people attendances. **Tools of Strategic Elaboration**: the City Congress was created to plan the city, been responsible for long term strategies; the Biannual Participatory Plan was created to plan the city, been responsible for long term strategies for the actions of the period. **Tools of Consultation**, for the social control of strategies, were created the Economic and Social Development Council, with 50 leaders from different sectors of the city, and the House of Councils, place of every Council of public policies. **Collaborative Tool**: The Agora in Network is a virtual tool that allows online dialog between people and managers. The works, services and demands presented in these tools are monitored by a specific government team, Participatory Budget Council and forums of delegates. The demands and the services have three weeks term to give return to citizen. The Better Neighborhood Program is the 13th participatory tool, created to increase and qualify the participation of citizen. The program have been changing the perspective of 140.000 contributors citizens, giving the possibility to destinate directly 50%, of one of the main taxes of the city, to projects of public interest. The program radicalizes the democracy when attend historical demands of more than 120 social organizations, that articulate in more than 200 communities improvements in areas where public policies are implemented. The Program involves the citizen, the socials organizations and public administration. The execution of the Projects of Better Neighborhood Program occurs through co-management. The works and services have planning, execution and control shared between contributors' citizen, entities and public administration.

INITIATIVE SUSTAINABILITY (required)

In 200 words or less, please describe any plans for scaling up or sustaining the initiative. Base your description of the strategy on the information provided in the previous sections, such as how you intend to leverage your current success and increase your reach or capacity. Address any threats or operational challenges to your initiative and describe how you manage those risks on a regular basis.

Canoas has more than 140,000 registered properties that contribute to Urban Property Tax, more than 120 social entities distributes in 18 neighborhoods and more than 200 communities. In its first edition of Better Neighborhood, 2,000 contributors designated part of their tax for eight enabled projects. The success obtained in the execution of this Program edition raised communities' interest. A Significant part of the entities are already making administrative adjustments to participate at 2016 Edition. Part of the contributors realize the viability of the initiative in their neighborhood and the community accompanies, in loco, the realization of works. To advance in the obtained results with Better Neighborhood Program, the local government, in partnership with entities and communities, works to train the largest number of participants. The Better Neighborhood has an annual agenda of execution, publicizing the steps, achievements and foreseen interactions letting the network of entities articulated. One of the main challenges is the constant construction of the "partnership culture and participation". It's necessary the constant update of the strategies with civil society involvement, the contributors citizen, the accounting, architecture and engineering offices and executors companies of the works and services, creating thus, a new social mark of direct participation.

VALIDATION OF CLAIMS (required)

While it is strongly encouraged that each initiative includes an implementing partner, such as a Civil Society Organization, private sector agency, media entity, etc., it is not a requirement. However, you are required to secure and upload documents from at least two credible nongovernmental actors, who can attest to the veracity of the claims made in your application.

You are only allowed to upload one file. If you have multiple documents, please zip them into a single file first. The file types that are allowed to be uploaded have an extension of .ZIP, .PDF, .DOC, .DOCX, .XLS or .XLSX.

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C. THE PITCH

The following information allows each applicant to make their strongest (and final) case for consideration.

BEST CASE (required)

In 250 words or less, please present the most compelling facts for why your initiative should be recognized. This is an opportunity to distinguish your initiative, based on any factors that you have not had the opportunity to describe in the previous sections. What is your best argument for why your initiative has achieved a meaningful outcome? What elements of the initiative make it different and better than others that have been tried and tested? Be creative and concise.

The Better Neighborhood Program is already recognized by its differentials:

- 1) Creating the culture of direct participation in the application of Urban Property Tax resource;
- 2) Partnership of community and civil society organizations;
- 3) Life quality improvement within the neighborhoods of the city;
- 4) Celerity and lower cost in implementing projects that improve and qualify the spaces in communities;

It starts from the principle that the Public Administration must be the expression of all and not just a part. It was with this spirit of democracy and transparency that was created the System of Popular and Citizen Participation of Canoas, with 13 tools that articulate different strategies. The Better Neighborhood is the great novelty created to citizen in their contributor interface with public policies, in other words, especially those who are not used to demand through others participatory tools of the Municipality. It is a tool specially designed to the citizen that pays Urban Property Tax and wants to see his city recognized, that desires life quality, which goes to squares and parks, appreciates public spaces and that cultivates local culture and living together. More than that, it is a Program which the vision is a solidary and inclusive management.

The Program innovates with the possibility of the citizen to direct part of his tax for a work or service in a direct way, making that the value goes directly to the account of the project.

VIDEO SUBMISSION or ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTS (optional)

OGP does not offer a venue for applicants to meet our judges during the application process. In order to provide the opportunity for making a personal connection, you are encouraged to upload a short video to complement your application. You may also depict an individual participant in your initiative and describe his or her experience. We do not need to know actual names or personal details. Take this opportunity to tell a story, to connect with our panel of experts, so that they might better understand your attention to specific needs.

Video submissions should follow these guidelines:

Maximum length of 3-4 minutes.

Please focus on personal presentations; it's not necessary to develop a sophisticated or polished video.

Here are some logistical and technical suggestions:

Video cameras, digital cameras, and phones are easy ways to record a video.
 Laptop and desktop computers can typically record video through Skype or other software.
 If possible, set to a low resolution to reduce file size. This will enable an easier video uploading process.
 If you are having difficulty uploading the video file, try logging out of the application and logging back in using another internet browser.

Here are general suggestions for delivering a high-quality video pitch:

Introduce yourself and your initiative. Focus on describing your intended benefits and/or services and how they have been effective. What is unique about your initiative, partners, or technical approach? Keep your description and language simple.

* NOTE

If the burden of developing a video presentation is either prohibitive or might not reflect the best characterization of your initiative, then you are not required to submit one, and the judges are instructed not to discount your application because it may not include a video. You may upload additional documents instead, such as proof of implementation and results if you wish. This could take the form of evaluation or audit reports, citizen surveys, media reports etc. that would provide additional validation for judges. We hope that this option offers a new and inventive way in which you can best express the results of your work.

You are only allowed to upload one file with a maximum of 3 pages. This file must be in English or in your native language. If you have multiple documents, please zip them into a single file first. The file types that are allowed to be uploaded have an extension of .ZIP, .PDF, .DOC, .DOCX, .XLS or .XLSX.

Additional documents.zip

Full Submission Of non-Latin Based Native Language

If your language is Latin based, DO NOT use this upload field. Please use the application above.

You are only allowed to upload one file with an extension of .PDF