



FUND FOR THE CITY OF NEW YORK

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NEW BOOK FROM THE FUND FOR THE CITY OF NEW YORK SETS OUT NEW WAYS FOR GOVERNMENT TO MEASURE ITS RESULTS

January 9, 2006—The Fund for the City of New York announced today the availability of its newest publication, *Listening to the Public: Adding the Voices of the People to Government Performance Measurement and Reporting*.

This new book is the result of ten year's work of the Fund's Center on Municipal Government Performance, systematically listening to people from many neighborhoods, income levels, ethnicities and generations tell what criteria they use to evaluate local government's effectiveness.

The book, written by Fund Vice President Barbara Cohn Berman, quotes extensively from a series of focus groups in which New Yorkers spoke candidly and insightfully about how well government delivers its services, from their perspective. The research led to the formulation of new measures of local government performance and suggestions for information people say they need from government in general and for 21 different service areas. People in other U.S. cities and abroad are finding the research relevant to their governments and their locales.

Throughout these pages, the people who are government's "customers" emerge as knowledgeable, eloquent, and discerning in their views on service delivery. They demonstrate that listening to the public is not only a responsibility of government, but a valuable, illuminating, and productive exercise.

Mary McCormick, President of the Fund for the City of New York, said: "This work provides a challenge to local governments everywhere to engage the public in new ways by finding out, systematically and objectively, how people feel and think about government in their locales and reporting information back to the public on a regular basis. This book is a helpful guide for all of us in government, for watchdog groups, community organizations, think tanks, academic institutions and foundations who want to bring the voices of the people into government's performance standards, measures and reporting. It can lead us to explore and advance the way local governments are structured, and how their agencies and employees perform in the future."

Copies of the book may be purchased online or an order form may be obtained by visiting www.fcny.org. The cost of one book is \$17.00 plus \$1.50 for shipping and handling.

The Fund for the City of New York was established by the Ford Foundation in 1968 with the mandate to improve the quality of life for all New Yorkers. For over three decades, in partnership with government agencies, nonprofit institutions and foundations, the Fund has developed and helped to implement innovations in policy, programs, practices and technology in order to advance the functioning of government and nonprofit organizations in New York City and beyond. The Fund seeks out, adapts, applies and assesses ways to enable government and nonprofit agencies to achieve excellence through its core programs—bridge loans, grants, incubation, management and technology assistance—and through three strategic initiatives: the Center on Municipal Government Performance, the Youth Development Institute, and the Center for Internet Innovation, E-Community Connect.

The Fund's Center on Municipal Government was established in 1995 to improve trust, communication and accountability between government and the public. The Center applies market research and the latest technology to create innovative ways to assess government performance that involve the public and reflect its perspective. In doing this work, the Center hopes that the substance and manner of communications between the public and government will be constructive and instructive to both parties and lead to improvements in government performance. The Center's work started in New York City. Many other cities have adapted its approaches. The Center has been continuously funded by the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation.