# Better Government Ambassadors Design Challenges Justification Letter

**Justification to Participate**

**Better Government Ambassadors Design Challenge**

**March 22--June 14, 2018**

Around Washington, DC

To: [Manager Name]

From: [Your Name]

Re: Approval to Participate the 2018 Better Government Ambassadors Design Challenge

Dear [Manager],

I am requesting approval to attend the Better Government Ambassadors Design Challenge (Design Challenge) that will occur from March 23--June 15, 2018. There is no cost to participate in this professional development opportunity, and the work will all be done above and beyond my full time job.

The 2018 Design Challenge is in partnership with the General Services Administration’s Better Government Movement and Performance Improvement Council, and provides a unique, cost-effective opportunity to gain the knowledge and further develop the leadership skills that are critical to [your agency’s] success in modern day America. The Design Challenge offers participants a free, facilitated, team-based experience for impact, fueled by the principles of Human-Centered Design, Lean Startup, and Agile ways of working. The BGM Challenges are a series of events where Better Government Movement members both learn and use innovative practices to address real cross-agency problems faced by the government.

This professional development opportunity is completely free and the work is completed in addition to participants full time jobs and requires about 8 hours of work per week. Work will be completed in a series of workshops, virtual learning, and team-based work during the sessions. Workshop sessions and team work will occur on Friday afternoons. After the workshops, each team works independently and structures its own approach to researching, prototyping and designing their solution, guided by mentors and coaches. The core activity is the design challenge, which will take place from March through June. At the end of the three months teams will pitch their ideas in front of a panel of judges, and those who successfully complete the Challenges will get a Statement of Accomplishment and become Better Government Ambassadors.

The benefits to participating in the Challenge are many. Participants will gain a knowledge base around 21st century proven practices and real world experience to experiment, collaborate, and share in creative problem solving with others across the government. They will be paired up with other team members and develop connections with mentors and teachers that can be applied back at our agency. In addition, our entire team will benefit not only from the strategies and tactics I will bring back, but from the connections to our peers across the government struggling with the same challenges we face. Also, did I mention this is also free?

I believe that this experience will be the highest value for dollar professional development experience I’ll have this year. What I learn, and the peer network I will cultivate, will enable me to be more effective in my role in the coming years.

## Details

* **When:** March 23--June 15, 2018
* **Where:** Throughout DC and Virtual (Learning). Note: for pilot, all attendees must be in DC
* **What:** Cross-Agency Priority Goals (from Office of Management and Budget and Performance Improvement Council)
* **Who**:
  + White House Leadership Development Program Fellows
  + CXO Fellows
  + Up to 40 additional members from the Better Government community
  + Better Government Movement mentors, coaches, facilitators, participants
* **Website:** [Innovation.gov](https://www.innovation.gov/competition/)
* **Questions and feedback:** better-gov@gsa.gov

I will submit a post-Challenge report for your review within two weeks after the close of the Challenge. I will include possible action items with recommendations/improvements for our team or program. I can share this relevant information with [key personnel] upon my return.

Want to learn more? Visit our Design Challenges section on [Innovation.gov](https://www.innovation.gov/competition/) or watch the [Design Challenge Ask Me Anything](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZZ0K88ZjHl4&t=1202s) session.

Best,

[Name]

[Title, Department]