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Open Media Project (OMP) Named Semifinalist in Harvard's 2017 Innovations in American Government Awards Competition

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Denver, CO – The Ash Center for Democratic Governance and Innovation at the John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University, recognized [Open Media Project \(OMP\)](#) as part of the 100 programs named as Semifinalists in this year's Innovations in American Government Awards competition. Open Media Project will compete to be named a Finalist in the competition and have the chance to be awarded the \$100,000 grand prize in Cambridge this spring.

Open Media Project advanced from a pool of more than 500 applications from all 50 states, and was selected by the Innovations Award evaluators as an example of novel and effective action whose work has had significant impact, and who they believe can be replicated across the country and the world.

Open Media Project, a program of the Denver-based nonprofit, [Open Media Foundation](#), is a groundbreaking Software-as-a-Service that enables government transparency and civic engagement by providing affordable *or free* live-streaming and searchable video archiving for all government meetings. With proven results in Colorado via the Colorado Channel Authority (CCA), this open-source software is poised to scale nationwide, bringing a new level of government accessibility to the people. OMP was designed to leverage emerging, low-cost, and innovative tools (like YouTube's free live-streaming and transcription services and Archive.org's advanced archival features) to expand public engagement and reduce costs. Implemented for the 2013 legislative session, the Colorado Channel saw an over 50-percent decrease in cost and a 140-percent increase in total site visitors. After three successful years, OMP service has spread to several municipal government agencies across the state, as well as to the state Supreme Court and Court of Appeals. Program staff is confident that the software is ready for nationwide adoption to help state and local governments expand transparency and accessibility, even on the most limited budgets. Toward the end of 2016, OMP was picked up by its first client outside of Colorado - Lane County, Oregon. The project now provides over a dozen government clients cost savings

of up to 90 percent when compared with previous commercial service providers.

“These programs demonstrate that there are no prerequisites for doing the good work of governing” said Stephen Goldsmith, director of the Innovations in American Government Program at the Ash Center, “small towns and massive cities, huge federal agencies and local school districts, large budgets or no budgets at all — what makes government work best is the drive to do better, and this group proves that drive can be found anywhere.”

The Semifinalist programs represent a cross-section of jurisdictions and policy areas, and embody one of the most diverse and sophisticated groups that have advanced to this stage in the competition’s 30-year history. They were invited to complete a supplementary application last fall, answering in-depth questions about their work, the process of creating and sustaining their programs, and how they believe they can teach others to do what they do. The Ash Center expects to announce 10 programs that will be named Finalists and be invited to Cambridge to present to the Innovation Awards Program’s National Selection Committee in March, with the grand prize winners to be named in June.

Please visit the Government Innovators Network at <http://innovations.harvard.edu> for the full list of Semifinalists, and for more information regarding the Innovations in American Government Awards.

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About the Ash Center for Democratic Governance and Innovation

The Ash Center for Democratic Governance and Innovation advances excellence in governance and strengthens democratic institutions worldwide. Through its research, education, international programs, and government innovations awards, the Center fosters creative and effective government problem solving and serves as a catalyst for addressing many of the most pressing needs of the world’s citizens. For more information, visit www.ash.harvard.edu.