

VIRTUAL IGFOA

GFOA 2021 Session Descriptions

Pre-Meeting

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Graduate School  **USA**



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 900 Fort Street Mall, Suite 1540,
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

GFOA & IGFOA Summer 2021 Virtual Meetings

<https://www.pitiviti.org/igfoa-virtual>



Timing of GFOA and IGFOA Meetings

The Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) will host their summer 2021 meeting virtually, for the two-week period of July 12-23, 2021. The GFOA is an opportunity to hear from leading practitioners, recognized industry experts, researchers, and peers how to effectively prioritize the current needs of communities and prepare for future challenges. GFOA will be offering over 50 sessions on a broad range of topics including Accounting, Budgeting, Capital Finance and Infrastructure, COVID Impact, Leadership and Treasury.

Our Island Government Finance Officers Association (IGFOA) will meet for one day prior to the GFOA, and for two days following the GFOA, to ensure insular government participants get the most out of GFOA content and sessions. Please add this event to your calendars and plan to join us!

Pre-Meeting

Add to Calendar

Post-Meeting

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Participation


With funding support from the U.S. Department of the Interior's Office of Insular Affairs (DOI-OIA), the Graduate School USA's PITI-VITI program will sponsor five participants from each insular government to attend the GFOA conference. Insular government participants should plan to join at least five sessions, and plan to report out to the IGFOA group on three sessions. Session assignments and report-outs will be finalized in our IGFOA pre-meeting.

Timing

With the exception of participants from the U.S. Virgin Islands, most insular government participants will not be able to join GFOA sessions in real-time. Sessions are scheduled from Monday to Friday, July 12-23, 2021, from 11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Eastern Standard Time. However, GFOA has indicated that recorded sessions will be made available to registered participants within 48 hours, so participants can watch sessions at their convenience.

 **Monday, July 12, 2021**

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 **Noon-1:45 PM ET**

Relief and Recovery/Infrastructure Panel

Join GFOA's COVID-19 Rescue, Relief and Recovery Panel featuring a national perspective on the fiscal challenges resulting from the ongoing public health crisis, and a discussion to shed light on the policy tools already in place and those being debated at the federal level to ensure a successful recovery.

 **3:00 PM-5:00 PM ET**

ACCOUNTING AND FINANCIAL REPORTING

Accounting and Auditing Year in Review

During this annual session, speakers will provide a comprehensive overview of the key developments in accounting, auditing, and financial reporting that affect state and local governments. Topics include recently promulgated standards and upcoming implementations with related practice issues, as well as developments related to current GASB projects likely to affect preparers and auditors in the near future.

 **Tuesday, July 13, 2021**

 **11:00 AM-1:00 PM ET**

ACCOUNTING AND FINANCIAL REPORTING

Looking at Leases: Implementing GASB Statement No. 87

New accounting and financial reporting for leases is requiring a tremendous implementation effort, wherein governments must find and interpret a large number and wide array of agreements. Hear from those who have been on the forefront of endeavor on methods used and lessons learned.

 **11:00 AM-Noon ET**

BUDGETING AND FORECASTING, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Zoom Towns: The Impact of Remote Work on Our Communities

With the onset of COVID-19 some employees, now working remotely, opted to move out of large urban metros areas into smaller towns. This migration led to a financial impact in both areas. How did these small towns address a large and unplanned demand for service? What was the impact on tax revenues, property values, and the economy? Speakers will also explore what this means for those areas if the trend continues. Going forward, all finance officers can learn from these experiences and help you be better prepared for the next large change in your community.

 **11:00 AM-12:15 PM ET**

LEADERSHIP, ETHICS, AND TRUST

Promoting Trust and Respect with Design Thinking

GFOA's Financial Foundations Framework encourages organizations to "treat everyone fairly" in order to promote mutual trust and respect. Unfortunately, this is often easier said than done. Design thinking is a method for putting people first in how process and products are put together. Organizations have used

this collaborative approach to address many different types of problems. We also know that building trust starts with people. In this session, learn how you can apply the principles of design thinking to develop policy solutions, improve processes, create a culture of collaboration, and promote mutual trust and respect in your organization.

 2:00 PM-3:00 PM ET

CAPITAL PLANNING AND ASSET MANAGEMENT

Finance Officers are from Mars, Engineers are from Venus

Effective collaboration between finance officers and engineers is essential to implement your capital program and build and maintain the infrastructure that is necessary to a thriving community. Collaboration encourages thoughtful planning, well-designed projects, and cost effective solutions. Yet, finance officers and engineers often have different ways of approaching challenges and this can impede collaboration. This session examines how finance officers, engineers and other local government leaders, can improve results, build better relationships, and help build more sustainable organizations.

 2:00 PM-3:15 PM ET

DEBT MANAGEMENT

Go Get Help: How to Leverage Outside Professionals in Managing Your Debt Program

Issuing and managing debt is one of many complex responsibilities for finance officers. The complexities inherent in the process and limited staff resources often makes it a necessity to rely on external resources like municipal advisors, underwriters, and legal counsel to access the municipal debt market and meet the disclosure responsibilities of the Continuing Disclosure Agreement (CDA). In this session, speakers will discuss what issuers should expect from those engagements and how you can be better prepared to take advantage of your relationships with these external advisors to improve your debt management programs.

 Wednesday, July 14, 2021

 11:00 AM-1:00 PM ET

BUDGETING AND FORECASTING

Rethinking Police Budgeting: Practical Approaches for a Better Community

As with nearly all public services, police have been asked to do more with less and forced to assume roles and responsibilities outside of their core area of expertise. While these issues are not new, awareness and visibility of police misconduct is at an all-time high and has fueled public demand for change. How can finance officers work with their peers in public safety to implement reforms? All governments need to look at how police departments are funded and understand the role that line item budgeting, repeated budget cuts, and misalignment of funding and results has contributed to the current situation and the calls for change. In this session, speakers will address how to make improvements to how governments budget for police, build strong relationships in your organization, better engage the community, and work towards improving public trust.

 11:00 AM-12:15 PM ET

PROCUREMENT

Overview of Public Procurement

Procurement is essential to government's ability to carry out its mission. All government programs require a network of partners that provide supplies, equipment, and services and meeting the community's needs requires that this network operate efficiently, effectively, and ethically. This session will provide an overview of a best practice procurement function and highlight the essential procurement practices for all governments. Specific topics will include: procurement policies, procurement processes, contracting best practices, cooperative purchasing, supplier relationships, privatization, technology, and ethics.

 11:00 AM-Noon ET

TREASURY AND INVESTMENT MANAGEMENT

Cutting Your Last Check: Creative Alternatives to Traditional Payment Methods



Governments are continuing to shift away from traditional payment methods like cash and check, and are searching for alternatives for customers for both receivables and payables. As organizations continue to search for ways to minimize internal paperwork and utilize modern payment and receipt methods, governments need to be aware of the infrastructure and policy considerations. This session will dive deeper into digital alternatives to traditional receivables and payables options available to the public sector, the policies and procedures necessary to implement them, and explore creative payment alternatives on the horizon for the public sector.

 2:00 PM-3:00 PM ET

ACCOUNTING AND FINANCIAL REPORTING

Appointing the Ump: GFOA Best Practices For Selecting an Independent Auditor

GFOA recommends that governments receive an independent audit for financial statements and single audits. But how should you select and contract for this essential role. Many governments do choose their own independent auditors and in this session, speakers will explore GFOA's best practices for seeking, choosing, contracting and working with auditors to give taxpayers and other resource providers third-party assurance. In addition, speakers will provide recommendations on how you can best manage this relationship and control the required effort and costs of doing so.

 2:00 PM-3:00 PM ET  Networking Session

The Evolving World of Utility Finance



Utilities have faced increased pressure as moratoriums put in place last year have constrained budgets. As essential services, utilities have had to continue and continue to do so while adhering to public health measures that added to operating costs. Join the Utility Finance Forum for this session featuring an expert panel to review the continuing operating challenges that public utilities face and an outlook for the year ahead.

 2:00 PM-3:15 PM ET

DEBT MANAGEMENT

Will it Ever Be Enough? Considerations for Voluntary Issuer Disclosure

Issuers active in the municipal bond market are no strangers to the pressure for providing up to date financial information, especially in light of COVID-19. This session will highlight opportunities for voluntary disclosure to the market and how issuers should evaluate the amount and type of information being disclosed. Panelists will also discuss how to leverage your financing team in making those decisions.

 4:00 PM-5:00 PM ET  Networking Session

Small Government Forum (SGF) Resource Round Table

Small governments provide unique experiences for finance officers, often requiring them to wear multiple hats and balance scarce resources with limited financial capacity. The proximity between finance officers and the residents they serve is also typically less within small communities than larger communities, making things like public trust, transparency and open communication critical. For this event, the Small Government Forum will be providing an update on their activities in 2020, and a preview on what's to come in 2021. This will be followed directly by three concurrent roundtable discussions on Debt Issuance, Managing Economic Development Projects, and Staff Development within small governments. These resource roundtables will allow public finance officers working in small governments to ask questions, hear from their colleagues, and share their experiences and resources they've used in the past.

 Thursday, July 15, 2021

 11:00 AM-Noon ET

ACCOUNTING AND FINANCIAL REPORTING, COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS

Reap What You Sow: Financial Reporting for Defined Contribution Pension, OPEB, and Other Employee Benefit Plans

With the implementation of GASB Statements Nos. 84 and 97, governments will need to quickly make assessments about whether defined contribution pension and postemployment benefits other than pensions (OPEB) plans, including some IRS Section 457 plans, need to be included in their financial statements. This session will examine the process of determining whether 457 plans are defined benefit or defined contribution pension plans or other employee benefit plans, and how those determinations affecting their inclusion in or exclusion from a sponsoring government's fiduciary fund financial statements.

 11:00 AM-12:15 PM ET

ACCOUNTING AND FINANCIAL REPORTING, BUDGETING AND FORECASTING, DEBT MANAGEMENT, PROCUREMENT

Year in Washington: 2021 GFOA Federal Update

The effects of the COVID-19 pandemic have been felt by communities throughout the country. The CARES Act and the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 both provided \$500 billion in funding to state and local governments for rescue and recovery. In this session, we will discuss lessons learned from

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the already-appropriated funds and discuss the potential for an infrastructure plan on the horizon for state and local governments. Additionally, staff from GFOA's Federal Liaison Center will review where we have been in the 116th congress and where the 117th will likely take us.

 11:00 AM-1:00 PM ET

BUSINESS PROCESS IMPROVEMENT

SOS: Focusing on Core Elements of Process Improvement

It's difficult not to come down with "Shiny Object Syndrome" (SOS), during an ERP implementation. Software vendors invest billions in their reporting tools, workflow, self-service capabilities, mobile features, advanced analytics, machine learning, and user interfaces and provide an easy fix to solve all of a government's problems. However, implementing process improvements is much less about the technology and more about governance, communications, readiness, and a project culture that values diverse perspectives, working together, and a focused vision for the organization. Attend this session to hear from practitioners and GFOA staff from the Research and Consulting Center to learn effective strategies for process improvement to go along with your next technology implementation.

 2:00 PM-3:15 PM ET

BUDGETING AND FORECASTING

Value Based Budgeting: Creating Alignment In Difficult Times



Balancing a budget most often means cutting services. Almost all governments have faced pressure to raise additional revenue or cut services when the community is most at need. Focusing on values during the budget process can align service provision to community needs. In this session, find out how other governments have been able to better align funding with community values, improve outcomes for the most in need, remain fiscally sustainable, and improve public trust.

 2:00 PM-3:00 PM ET

COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS

Overview of Defined Contribution and Deferred Compensation Plans

As local governments are considering and even adding elements of defined contribution and deferred compensation plans to their retirement offerings, it is important that the finance officer understand the fiduciary considerations of doing so. This session will highlight what finance officers should be aware of in terms of fiduciary responsibility as well as provide an update on trends in these retirement vehicles.

 4:00 PM-5:00 PM ET  Networking Session

GFOA Black Caucus Annual Business Meeting

Join us for GFOA's Black Caucus 2021 Annual Business Meeting. Established in 1991, the mission of the Caucus is to support the aspirations and achievements of African-American public finance officers; to pursue professional development opportunities for Caucus members; and to sponsor projects to assist African Americans seeking careers in government finance. In addition to an update and recap of the Caucus's activities, attendees will also hear from a guest speaker who will provide career insight.

 11:00 AM-12:15 PM ET

ACCOUNTING AND FINANCIAL REPORTING

Achievers (not) Anonymous: Common Reporting Deficiencies for GFOA's Certificate of Achievement Program

This session will address common deficiencies noted in reviews of comprehensive annual financial reports submitted to GFOA's Certificate of Achievement (COA) program. Speakers will also emphasize asterisk items on GFOA's checklist that most frequently result in award denials.

 11:00 AM-12:15 PM ET

COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS

No Such Thing as a Quick Fix: Cautionary Ideas to Address Pension Liabilities

With the economic downturn, governments are facing increased budgetary pressure. Additionally, pension plans may see lower than anticipated investment returns compelling governments to utilize short-term solutions to alleviate pension pressures. During this session, speakers will provide an update on the state of public pensions and explain several ideas proposed to reduce pension liabilities. For each option, speakers will discuss the business case in favor along with potential limitations, risks, and long-term challenges.

 11:00 AM-Noon ET

RISK ASSESSMENT

Thinking Probabilistically: The Essential Risk Management Tool

Without probabilities, the only way to deal with risk is the gut. Unfortunately, research has shown that using your gut feel to manage risk leads to inconsistent, overconfident, and just plain wrong decisions. The insurance industry, for examples, is based on probabilistic thinking and some of the same concepts that make insurance companies successful can be used to help local governments make better decisions. In this session you will learn about essential concepts in applying probabilities that will help you see uncertainty in the world differently and help you make better decisions for your organization.

 2:00 PM-3:15 PM ET

ACCOUNTING AND FINANCIAL REPORTING

Trustworthy: Implementing GASB Statement No. 84, Fiduciary Activities

New accounting and financial reporting for Fiduciary Activities has required governments to revisit virtually every preexisting fiduciary fund to determine if it meets the new, higher threshold for fiduciary activities established by GASB Statement No. 84 and related implementation guidance. In this session you will hear from those who have completed these determinations and those who audit them on lessons learned.

 **11:00 AM-Noon ET**

RISK ASSESSMENT

Political Risk and its Consequences

Government is inherently political and with politics comes disagreement, uncertainty, and emotion. However, the nature of our politics has changed in recent years and, with it, the level of risk for government. Political conflict today is characterized by decreasing trust in institutions and deteriorating norms of governance. In this session we will explore how this risk threatens good public finance and what can be done about it.

 **11:00 AM-1:00 PM ET**

TREASURY AND INVESTMENT MANAGEMENT

Leveraging Technology to Help with Essential Treasury Functions

The COVID-19 pandemic has caused many governments to address their technology needs and look for alternatives to existing in person or paper based approaches for managing the treasury function. Citizens, vendors, and the government itself can benefit from online technology resources for making and receiving payments. This session will discuss GFOA best practice recommendations, technology options available to governments from both a payables and receivables perspective, and lessons learned from practitioners who have worked to implement new technologies in the treasury department.

 **1:45 AM-1:00 PM ET**

ACCOUNTING AND FINANCIAL REPORTING, DEBT MANAGEMENT, TREASURY AND INVESTMENT MANAGEMENT

Where to Find Your LIBOR and What to do About It

When LIBOR ceases to exist, state and local governments need to be sure that their exposure to the reference rate is also gone. Where can you find your exposure? And when you find it, what should you do about it? This panel will discuss the tax and accounting methods to address eliminating LIBOR in your financial contracts and other places that LIBOR may currently be used.

 **2:00 PM-3:00 PM ET**

LEADERSHIP, ETHICS, AND TRUST

It's Not All About the Numbers: Important Leadership Skills for the Finance Officer

Finance officers can often take comfort focusing on the detailed aspects of numbers, spreadsheets, financial statements, and accounting standards. Formal training to become a finance officer focuses on technical skills and organizations rely on application of those technical capabilities. However, to be truly effective and best serve our organizations and communities, finance officers need to develop their leadership skills in the same way - training and practice. In this session, speakers will highlight essential leadership skills for finance officers and how you can build these skills through a combination of formal training, ongoing practice, and experience.



 2:00 PM-3:15 PM ET

DEBT MANAGEMENT

New Congress, New Administration, New Goals

2021 marks the beginning of the 117th Congress. Together with a new administration, there are many changes on the horizon for state and local governments related to tax and funding priorities at a federal level. In this session, speakers will provide an overview of current plans, which options are most likely to impact your government, and where finance officers can look for more information. Specific emphasis will be placed on exploring strategies for enhancing infrastructure in communities across the United States and how GFOA's advocacy efforts can keep you connected to the latest developments from Washington DC.

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 4:00 PM-5:15 PM ET  Networking Session

WPFN Business Meeting & Networking Event

The focus of GFOA's Women's Public Finance Network (WPFN) is to foster the careers of women in public finance through education, networking, and mentoring opportunities. Join WPFN for its annual business meeting as we celebrate on the past year, welcome the 2021-2022 officers, and meet fellow women and allies in public finance.

 Tuesday, July 20, 2021

 11:00 AM-12:15 PM ET

CAPITAL PLANNING AND ASSET MANAGEMENT

Life Cycle Costing: Promoting Long-Term Thinking and Equitable Distribution of Resources in Asset Maintenance

The acquisition cost of an asset is just a portion of the total cost of owning it. Ongoing maintenance significantly adds to that cost. Moreover, failure to keep up with asset maintenance can result in premature deterioration, an increased risk of failure, and higher total costs. Life cycle cost analysis helps guard against these risks by considering the entire cost of owning the asset over its entire life. In this session, you will see how lifecycle costing can help governments make smarter, more cost-effective, and geographically equitable spending decisions, and how you can get started in implementing this approach in your organization.

 11:00 AM-Noon ET

LEADERSHIP, ETHICS, AND TRUST

Chefs vs. Cooks: Applying a Problem Solving Approach to Public Finance

Within their organizations, GFOA believes finance officers should approach their jobs like chefs (innovating, experimenting, and strategizing), rather than like cooks, (following a strict protocol to produce a pre-determined outcome). A finance officer who operates like a chef is well-positioned to lead the organization through different types of challenges, serving as a problem solver to best apply a range of skills across a variety of current demands. In this session, learn how you can change your approach to "cooking," better leverage your skills, and increase your value to the organization.

 11:00 AM-12:15 PM ET

TREASURY AND INVESTMENT MANAGEMENT

Should We Just Put the Money Under the Mattress? Investment Strategies for Today and Tomorrow

While the low interest rate environment is a tremendous help to many participants in the macro economy, government investment programs have suffered with very low returns on their public funds. While the return on investment is not the leading principle for government investment, it is important for governments to utilize relevant investment strategies for this continuing low rate environment. In this session, market experts will provide an outlook for government investing and discuss strategies that may suit a government's varying investment goals now and into the future.

 2:00 PM-3:15 PM ET

BUDGETING AND FORECASTING, CAPITAL PLANNING AND ASSET MANAGEMENT

More than a Buzzword: Understanding Equity in Budgeting



The term "equity" continues to be mentioned often involving discussions on a host of topics in our society, communities, and governments. But what does equity actually mean in terms of provision of governmental services and how does this impact the budget? Equity-driven initiatives are and will be very different from one community and organization to the next. However, common themes have emerged in both the definition of equity and how to overcome common challenges. This session will focus on the finance officer's role in making more equitable financial decisions related to both revenues and expenses.

 2:00 PM-3:00 PM ET

ACCOUNTING AND FINANCIAL REPORTING

Who CARES? Single Audit and Reporting Implications of the CARES Act and Other Federal Grants for COVID

While providing state and local governments with critical funding for COVID related expenditures and to offset revenue loss from the economic shutdown, the federal government has also created an evolving set of rules and regulations for recipients to follow. In this session, speakers will hopefully demystify available guidance on COVID-related grants to help you prepare financial statements, schedules of expenditures of federal assistance.

 4:00 PM-5:00 PM ET  Networking Session

Large and Complex: The Challenges of Today's Urban Governments

Large urban governments are facing a new set of challenges, such as citizens raising questions on equity and businesses and residents exploring options outside the urban core in today's evolving remote environment. These challenges have implications in how large governments operate. What's a finance officer to do? During this networking event, attendees will have options to meet with fellow public finance officers and engage in a dialogue of the pressing issues they are facing and some potential solutions to take back to their communities.

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 11:00 AM-12:15 PM ET**DEBT MANAGEMENT**

What's Trending in the Muni Bond Market

Municipal bond issuance remained strong throughout all of 2020 despite the pandemic. For example, the issuance of taxable bonds increased drastically in the last year due in large part to recent tax law changes and favorable market conditions. If you are considering accessing capital in the future, attend this session to hear from speakers what factors you would be considering to determine pricing, structure, and type of security. Speakers will also discuss their recent experience and share lessons learned for all state and local government issuers.

 11:00 AM-12:15 PM ET**CAPITAL PLANNING AND ASSET MANAGEMENT**

Bye Bye Backlogs: Strategic Capital Asset Management

Every government manages capital assets, but many governments inadequately fund their ongoing maintenance and lack the data needed to manage assets optimally. Failure to manage assets effectively can result in ballooning deferred maintenance backlogs at best and catastrophic asset failure at worst. This session describes how each community can take a more strategic approach to capital asset management, based on case study examples from local governments that are considered leaders in the field. The session will address how the finance department should work with other stakeholders, the key competencies you need to build in your organization, and how to remedy common capability gaps.

 11:00 AM-12:15 PM ET**LEADERSHIP, ETHICS, AND TRUST**


Know Your Why: Connecting with the Community

With a focus on tasks and transactions, it can be easy to get lost in financial reports, budget documents, cash receipts, and continuing disclosures and not see the larger impact that the finance office can have on the community. In this session speakers will explain the importance of seeing the big picture and understanding how to connect and define the role of finance with the purpose of government and the outcomes it works to achieve. From there, finance officers can emerge as a leader, better coordinate resources, and understand the implications of certain financial policies and actions on overall community values like trust, equity, and engagement.

 2:00 PM-3:15 PM ET**BUDGETING AND FORECASTING**

Budgeting Basics: A Different Perspective on the Function Everyone Loves to Hate

Mention the word “budgeting” to anyone outside the finance office and listen to the groans and complaints. Whether dissatisfaction ensues from the length of the process, the level of effort, how decisions are actually made, or the fear of budget cuts, budgeting is one of the more maligned financial functions. But why? Obviously budgeting is more than a math exercise to get revenues to equal expenses. Budgeting drives funding, positions, projects, and more. Managing the budget process involves coordinating a diverse and often conflicting set of priorities, personalities, and politics. In this session, GFOA will invite speakers from different backgrounds to discuss budgeting from multiple perspectives and concentrate on the basics. Attend to learn how you can simplify the process, improve your technical budget skills, better involve your peers, and produce better outcomes.

 2:00 PM-3:00 PM ET

ACCOUNTING AND FINANCIAL REPORTING

In or Out? Understanding the Latest Guidance on the Finance Reporting Entity

Since the issuance of GASB Statement No. 14, The Financial Reporting Entity, approximately forty years ago, nineteen subsequent statements - up to and including GASB Statement No. 97 - have affected what legal entities compose a governmental financial reporting entity, and how each should be included. In this session speakers will explain the current authoritative guidance and share their practical experience about properly identifying and incorporating all kinds of component units (CUs), including fiduciary CUs and CUs with their own CUs into a primary government's financial reporting entity.

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 Thursday, July 22, 2021

 11:00 AM-12:15 PM ET

BUDGETING AND FORECASTING

Budgeting for the Unexpected: Leveraging Stress Tests to Promote Resiliency

The COVID-19 pandemic and resulting economic crisis is the latest in a revolving door of events that have had significant impacts for governments and their ability to budget and provide for the continuity of services. Too often governments have relied upon staid long-term financial plans with minor incremental adjustments for annual growth/retraction for revenues and expenditures. With these regular challenges, how can governments better prepare to help identify their budget vulnerabilities and plan for addressing these gaps in order to build financial resiliency? This session will focus on the importance of stress tests, where to get started, how to choose scenarios, strategies for refining your approach and better using information to make decisions. Making stress tests a regular part of long-term financial planning will have impacts throughout your organization's financial and operational plans.

 11:00 AM-12:15 PM ET

BUSINESS PROCESS IMPROVEMENT

We've Always Done It This Way: How COVID Forced Governments to Overcome Resistance to Change

Over the past year, many governments were forced to make an abrupt transition to remote work and successfully implemented technology enabling electronic signatures, online payments, paperless workflows, remote meetings, and more. As governments work to plan for a return to "normal," what will that look like and how can we learn from the technology and process improvements to take the next step towards a more modern government. Speakers will look back and highlight major accomplishments, discuss what they would do differently given the chance, and what it could all mean for the future and our ability to react (or plan) for the next crisis.

 11:45 AM-1:00 PM ET

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Rethinking Local Government Economic Development

The underlying premise of traditional economic development strategies is that subsidies incentivize firms to take actions that they wouldn't have otherwise taken. For example, the incentive can initiate hiring new employees, locating a business in a particular area, or expanding production. However, research suggests that these incentives are often not as effective as they may seem and we may hope.

Alternatively, incentives that are not effective are wasted resources that could have been used to support other public programs. In this session speakers will examine what makes incentives more or less likely to be effective, how to increase the odds that incentives will work, and which alternatives to traditional incentive-led approaches can better accomplish economic development goals.

 2:00 PM-4:00 PM ET

ERP SYSTEMS AND TECHNOLOGY

Emerging Technology in Local Government

While governments are not always viewed as leaders when it comes to technology adoption, that is not always true. Over the past year, many have been able to quickly adapt to the changing landscape. Going forward, governments are presented with new opportunities for changing service delivery, modernizing operations, becoming more efficient, or delivering new ways to connect with citizens. In this session, speakers will share their insights on emerging technologies for the finance officer, strategies for moving forward, and how best to prepare the organization for adoption.

 2:00 PM-3:00 PM ET

COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS

Public Plans Data: Quick Access to Information on Public Plans at Your Fingertips

The Public Plans Data (PPD) began in 2007 as a tool to provide easy access to quick facts about public pensions at the national, state, system, and plan level. Now, in 2021, the PPD contains data from over ninety percent of pension assets and members in the United States. This session will provide an overview of the PPD, how finance officers can utilize the online tool, and highlight important research developed using the data.

 Friday, July 23, 2021

 11:00 AM-1:00 PM ET

ERP SYSTEMS AND TECHNOLOGY

Public Sector Cybersecurity Update

Just as the pandemic has exposed other weaknesses in government, it also left governments more vulnerable to cybersecurity threats. In this session, speakers will explore what governments should be aware of now for 2021 and into the future. In addition, speakers will discuss how to manage cyberthreats with remote workers, necessary policies that governments should have in place, and the role of cyber insurance and other external consultants and services in mitigating risks.

 11:00 AM-12:15 PM ET

LEADERSHIP, ETHICS, AND TRUST

Time to Talk Equity: When, How, and Why to Have the Discussion

Finance officers are stewards of their community, helping to allocate resources and manage implementation of programs and services. Increasingly, conversations on results have included an equity lens. What is equity and what does it mean for public finance? In this session, hear from finance officers on how they have embraced equity into their operating vernacular, built and continue to build an awareness around implicit bias, and recognize the challenges in focusing on the topic. In addition,

speakers will provide guidance to help you include an equity focus in your organization - when to introduce equity, how to best communicate equity issues, and why it matters.

 11:45 AM-1:00 PM ET

COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS

Show Me the Money: Trends in Compensation and Benefits Administration

Compensation and benefits are seen as important considerations for recruitment and retention and for many local government personnel costs can exceed seventy to eight percent of the operating budget. This session will explore both current trends in public sector compensation and current challenges in administering payroll. Specifically, speakers will highlight how the COVID-19 pandemic has changed payroll administration and how to deal with remote employees, taxable benefits, grant reporting, and out-of-state employees.

 2:00 PM-4:00 PM ET

DEBT MANAGEMENT

Rating Agency Update

In this rapidly changing environment, finance officers need to remain mindful about credit rating agency criteria for state and local governments. This session will present a panel of speakers who will discuss how credit rating agencies view issues facing governments, recent changes in rating methodology, and what your organization can do to adjust. Speakers will also review GFOA's best practice on engaging with rating agencies and highlight other recommendations and lessons learned for improving your relationship with the rating agencies.

 2:00 PM-3:15 PM ET

TREASURY AND INVESTMENT MANAGEMENT

Who's Who in Public Investing: Understanding The Role of External Advisors

Governments use a variety of external advisors and providers to help manage aspects of their investment program. In this session, speakers will discuss how to determine whether a government may need an investment adviser to assist with planning and portfolio management, how to use broker/dealers to buy and sell investments, and work with banks and other parties to purchase investment products. In this session governments will gain insights on the roles of these professionals and how, alongside finance officers, an entity's investment program can be well managed.

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+1.808.523.1650 www.pitiviti.org/igfoa-virtual

900 Fort Street Mall, Suite 1540,
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813


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