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Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk

News Release

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Voting Systems Assessment Project Named Finalist for Harvard's 2017 Roy and Lila Ash Award for Public Engagement in Government

LOS ANGELES – Today, the Los Angeles County Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk's Voting Systems Assessment Project was announced as a finalist in this year's Roy and Lila Ash Award for Public Engagement in Government by the Ash Center for Democratic Governance and Innovation at the John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University.

As one of four finalists for the Roy and Lila Ash Award, the Voting Systems Assessment Project (VSAP) will compete for a \$100,000 grand prize during presentations to the Innovations in American Government Awards National Selection Committee, chaired by Kathleen Kennedy Townsend, former Lieutenant Governor of Maryland. Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk Dean Logan and VSAP Project Coordinator Monica Flores will make the presentation on May 17 in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Presentations by the finalists will be livestreamed on the Ash Center website at <http://ash.harvard.edu>.

The VSAP is an innovative project launched by Los Angeles County to develop a completely new voting experience for Los Angeles County voters; an experience that focuses on the needs and preferences of the voters themselves – and, that is publicly owned and operated. The proposed new voting experience was designed using a human-centered approach that actually engaged voters in the design process. To date, the County has engaged close to 3,500 voters in the project.

Tony Saich, director of the Ash Center and Daewoo Professor of International Affairs, remarked that these programs “demonstrate the expanding horizons of how technology can be used to engage citizens and disseminate information more broadly than it ever has before. These programs are not just changing the old town hall method of public discourse, but also showing how the principles and tools of engagement, crowdsourcing, and open information can be used in initiatives working to address diverse societal challenges, such as enfranchisement and informed voting, mental health, criminal justice, and community development.”

The Roy and Lila Ash Award for Public Engagement in Government aims to highlight government programs, policies, and initiatives that encourage public participation in a range of budgetary, regulatory, and policy decisions. This award was also designed to recognize those efforts that successfully employ digital technology and crowdsourcing techniques to broaden public involvement in government decision-making and drive problem-solving.

The Innovations in American Government Awards was created by the Ford Foundation in 1985 in response to widespread pessimism and distrust in government's effectiveness. Since its inception, over 500 government innovations across all jurisdiction levels have been recognized and have collectively received more than \$22 million in grants to support dissemination efforts. Such models of good governance also inform research and academic study around key policy areas both at Harvard Kennedy School and academic institutions worldwide. Past winners have served as the basis of case studies taught in more than 450 Harvard courses and over 2,250 courses worldwide.

The mission of the Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk is to serve Los Angeles County by providing essential records management and election services in a fair, accessible and transparent manner. For more information, visit lavote.net.

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.

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