



Costs and Savings of Instant Runoff Voting

In addition to strengthening democracy, **instant runoff voting (IRV) can save money**. Any jurisdiction that does away with runoffs will see the savings add up year after year.

Case Study: San Francisco

In 2004, San Francisco conducted its municipal election using IRV for seven Board of Supervisor races. In November 2005, they used IRV for their Citywide Assessor's election. In 2006, they will add the mayor and other city offices.

To implement IRV, the city paid \$1.6 million to voting equipment manufacturer Electronic Systems & Software (ES&S) for a one-time equipment upgrade. Now, the city's new faster, better, and cheaper IRV elections they will pay this back and more in just two election cycles.

SAN FRANCISCO COSTS & SAVINGS SUMMARY

Approx. cost of implementing IRV:	\$2.4 million
Approx. savings, 2004 supervisors race:	\$1.4 million

PAYBACK PERIOD: 2 years

EXPECTED SAVINGS OVER 10 YEARS: \$15 million

BREAKDOWN OF COSTS & SAVINGS

ESTIMATED COST OF CITYWIDE RUNOFFS*

Between: **\$3.8 and \$5.7 million**
(Or: **\$15 - \$22 for every runoff voter**)

COST OF IMPLEMENTING IRV

Upgrading voting equipment:

\$1.6 million

Community education & outreach

\$800,000

SAVINGS FROM 2004 SUPERVISORS RACE

Administrative costs saved by eliminating runoff elections for Supervisor '04:

\$1.2 million

Public financing saved by eliminating runoffs of four Supervisor '04:

\$136,000

EXPECTED SAVINGS OVER 10 YEARS*

\$15 million

Voter turnout for Dec. '03 totals from the Dept. of Elections,
http://www.sfgov.org/site/election_index.asp?id=5877.

Projections by FairVote: the Center for Voting & Democracy in "What does a citywide election in San Francisco cost?" <http://www.fairvote.org/sf/electioncost.pdf>. 2003.