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GRANTS.GOV IMPLEMENTS ENHANCEMENTS

Grants.gov is always seeking ways to improve the applicant experience and simplify the grant process for both the applicant and the grant-making agency. Plans to enhance Grants.gov are made based on applicant and grantor assessments and requests. Recently Grants.gov implemented many system enhancements as part of System Build 2008-01, which improved form functionality, submission notification and tracking a package.

The application process is a key component of the Grants.gov experience – for this reason we have invested time and resources during this System Build to enhance the application forms. Prior to System Build 2008-01 the size of some fields on commonly used forms was insufficient for entering the necessary data. Once the maximum number of characters or data was entered in the field, a plus sign would appear. Fields in those forms have now been expanded so that the applicant may enter all the necessary data and the plus sign issue has been resolved.

The data fields are not the only things that have been improved on the application forms – the Save & Submit function has also been improved. An application package that has been completed and checked for errors will display an active Save & Submit button. Prior to the new system enhancement, once the saved package with the active Save & Submit button was re-opened, the Save & Submit button would automatically become deactivated. The applicant would then have to save and check package for errors again, before the Save & Submit button would activate. The Save & Submit button now remains active, which saves time and eliminates confusion about whether the package has been completed.

Submission notifications were also re-evaluated and improved to make information easier to find and understand. The submission confirmation page (that displays directly after an application is submitted) now has more information about the applicant; their name as well as DUNS number has been added so all the information pertaining to the submission is in one location to make tracking the status of the package easier.

The submission receipt email has also been updated. The subject line now features the Grants.gov tracking number in the beginning instead of the end, so organizing submission emails by their confirmation number is an effortless task. The text of the submission receipt email has also been updated with a more concise and clear message about when the applicant should expect a package to be validated. The emails now state that a package will be validated within 2 business days instead of 24-48 hour time frame. Other text within the receipt emails has been updated as well, to inform the applicant on what to expect as the next steps in the submission process. A deleted package notification email and error message has also been created to advise applicants when a package they have submitted has been deleted by the grantor agency.

Improvements made during this System Build have also made tracking an Adobe Reader application package simple. The Grants.gov user ID used while submitting an Adobe Reader application package was case sensitive and required the user to remember the exact letter case combination used. The user ID is now case neutral and therefore easier to remember while tracking the status of an application package.

MANAGING PARTNER



*Fulfilling the President's
Management Agenda*

To view a detailed summary of all enhancements made during this System Build, visit:

<http://grants.gov/assets/SystemEnhancements08-01-A.pdf>

GRANTS.GOV RECEIVES 100,000 SUBMISSIONS FOR FY 2008

In the first six months of fiscal year 2008, Grants.gov has already received an astounding 104,778 electronic grant application submissions. This is a 23 percent growth from the 85,354 submissions during the same period in fiscal year 2007. Grants.gov owes much of its success this year to the grant community, which continues to support us in all of our efforts.

“The 104,778 grant applications have exceeded our expectations and we attribute that to our agencies and applicant community,” said Eben Trevino, Grants.gov Program Manager. “Grants.gov will continue to set high goals in submissions, to strengthen the communication between grantors and grantees so it serves as the central storehouse for information on over 1,000 grant programs and simplifies grants management.”

The grant community has been very cooperative in all Grants.gov efforts, including our latest undertaking, the transition to the Adobe Reader application system. The applicants and grantors have been taking the necessary steps to ensure the transition is a success. To date, 11 of the 26 grant-making agencies have completed the transition to the Adobe Reader application system. Ten agencies have transitioned most of their opportunities to the new system and are scheduled to complete the conversion to the Adobe system by September 30, 2008. The remaining five agencies are working with the Grants.gov Program Management Office (PMO) to set a schedule which accommodates these agencies’ specific needs.

CONTACT CENTER REPORTS TOP CALLER INQUIRIES

Grants.gov’s Contact Center is dedicated to serving you by providing the information you need to succeed at finding and applying for federal funding. The Contact Center reports that the majority of calls they receive are related to finding and applying for federal grant money. Many callers have the false impression that federal grants are for personal enrichment, but a federal grant is not federal assistance, loans to individuals, [benefits](#) or [entitlements](#). Grants offered by Grants.gov are an award of financial assistance from a federal agency to a recipient

to carry out a public purpose of support or stimulation authorized by a law of the United States.

There are however many federal programs that offer such services and links to their websites and can be found on Grants.gov. If you are in need of personal financial assistance such as Social Security/Supplemental Security Income, Medicaid or State Social Services, you can find help at www.GovBenefits.gov. This type of individual assistance is not available on this website. If you are interested in student loans, please go to www.Studentaid.ed.gov. If you are a small business looking for a loan, please visit the [Small Business Administration](#).

Another top caller inquiry is how to download and submit a grant application package. Downloading a grant application is simple. Once you have [registered](#) with Grants.gov and downloaded the [compatible software](#) for free, you are ready to search, download, complete and submit a grant application. For step-by-step instructions on finding, applying and completing a grant application visit the [Help](#) section on Grants.gov. The Help section provides user guides, animated tutorials on completing and submitting a grant application package and much more.

Although uncommon, certain caller inquiries do not receive an immediate response.

For this reason, we log each new caller inquiry by subject, and contact the caller when the response to their inquiry has been thoroughly researched and tested. So even if your question did not receive an immediate response, rest assured that you will be contacted when a response is available.

TIPS FOR PREVENTING GRANT FRAUD

Unfortunately, grant fraud is a prevalent issue. It is very common for an applicant to be contacted by a deceptive person posing as grant specialist or federal government official requesting payment for free federal grant funds. Knowing a few simple tips can keep you and those you know protected from grant fraud.

NEW! HAVE GRANTS.GOV UPDATES SENT RIGHT TO YOUR INBOX

Receive updated information about critical issues, new tips for users and other time sensitive updates as information is available. [Click here to sign-up!](#)

Here are 5 tips offered by the Better Business Bureau:

1. You will not be contacted by the government to offer you a grant

The government does not contact people to offer them money. If you do qualify for a government grant, the government does not request payment for it.

2. There are no fees associated with applying for a government grant

Providing financial information to prove that you qualify for a government grant is typical, but you should never pay money to apply for a grant. People who run scams often claim to provide help and sometimes claim to be “federal government” officials; don’t be fooled by these scams that request money from you.

3. All Government Grants Involve an Application Process

If you have not submitted an application for a government grant and someone claims you have been awarded one, it’s a scam. Grant money is not given over the phone for a fee. In order to qualify for a grant you must apply for the specific opportunity that you are qualified to apply for.

4. Government grants are awarded for explicit opportunities

Government Grants are typically awarded to states, cities, educational institutions, nonprofits and other organizations to fund research and other projects.

5. Government grant application information is free

Be cautious of offers that ask for your personal information (especially financial) when requesting a fee to access grant information. You can always access free information about government grants and other benefits at Grants.gov and Govbenefits.gov.

As an additional resource — The National Procurement Fraud Task Force developed [Grant Fraud](#). Grant Fraud provides tips to protect your organization and the source of your federal funds by helping to detect and prevent fraud.

FRAUD ALERT

If you have received a phone call from someone seeking your bank account or other personal information in order to process a government grant that you did not apply for, you can [submit a complaint](#) with the Federal Trade Commission. If you have information regarding a grant fraud specific to HHS, please contact the HHS Fraud Hotline at 1-800-447-8477.

USING GRANTS.GOV COMPATIBLE SOFTWARE

Grants.gov strives to make all resources needed to find and apply for grants accessible and easy to use. All the information and software you need to successfully complete a grant application is available free on the website.

Although all the software you need (Adobe Reader version 8.1.2 and PureEdge Viewer) for use with Grants.gov is available for free, some applicants may already have software installed on their computer that can be used with Grants.gov. Adobe Acrobat Professional software can be used to complete a Grants.gov application package. Adobe Acrobat Professional software has the capacity to perform all tasks performed by the corresponding version of Adobe Reader. For example, Adobe Acrobat Professional 8.1.2 can do what the Grants.gov compatible version (8.1.2) of Adobe Reader can. [Click here for more information on using Adobe Acrobat Professional.](#)

Grants.gov is also compatible with most operating systems including Macintosh (MAC OSX). Grants.gov supports the use of MAC OS 10.4.3 or higher (i.e., Leopard) to complete Adobe Reader application packages. If you have a MAC operating system that is 10.4.3 or higher, you must download or ensure you have the Grants.gov compatible version of Adobe Reader to submit a Grants.gov application package. MAC users with earlier operating systems (less than 10.4.3) may still be able to submit an Adobe Reader application package, however Grants.gov does not guarantee a successful submission while using the earlier MAC operating system versions. View the table below for more information on MAC OS compatibility with Grants.gov.

Computer	Operating System	Forms Program	Compatible	May Use System with Citrix Server Connection
Mac	Tiger	IBM Workplace Forms Viewer	Yes	
Mac	Tiger	PureEdge Viewer	No	Yes
Mac	Tiger	Adobe Reader 8.1.2	Yes	
Mac	Leopard	IBM Workplace Forms Viewer	No	Yes
Mac	Leopard	Adobe Reader 8.1.2	Yes	
PC	WINXP	PureEdge Viewer	Yes	
PC	WINXP	Adobe Reader 8.1.2	Yes	
PC	Vista	IBM Workplace Forms Viewer	No	Yes
PC	Vista	PureEdge Viewer	No	Yes
PC	Vista	Adobe Reader 8.1.2	Yes	

Visit the Applicant FAQs for more information on using Macintosh with Grants.gov:

http://grants.gov/applicants/applicant_faqs.jsp#78

UPCOMING EVENT

Connect with Grants.gov at the following upcoming events:

April 23 – 24, 2008

National Grant Management Association 2008
Annual Training Conference & Workshops.

Ronald Reagan Building/International
Trade Center, Washington, DC

HAVE GRANTS.GOV PRESENT AT YOUR EVENT

Grants.gov is available to present on the Find and Apply process. Resources permitting, we may be able to present in person, if not we can always present using our online e-seminar tool. The sessions are scheduled for one hour with an open dialogue on the process while answering any questions you may have. If you are interested please fill out the [Outreach Request Form](#) and email the completed form to support@grants.gov and a representative will contact you.

STAKEHOLDER WEBCAST

The next Grants.gov Stakeholder Webcast will be held April 16, 2008 from 1 – 2 p.m. ET, to discuss the transition to the Adobe Reader System and other issues affecting the grant community. Details for logging on to the Webcast are available on the Stakeholder Communications page: http://www.grants.gov/help/stakeholder_communications.jsp.

APPLICANT TIPS

Here are a few things that you can do get a head start and have a successful grant submission.

1. Remember to Register Early

In order to apply for opportunities on Grants.gov, you must be registered and have a Grants.gov User ID and password to submit your completed application package. The registration process takes 3-5 business days to complete if completed in a timely manner. [Click here for a registration checklist if you wish to register your organization](#) or [click here to view a checklist to register as an individual](#).

2. Make sure you have Grants.gov compatible software

Grants.gov offers free software downloads of the compatible software. You may already have all the software you need to use Grants.gov. In order to view the downloaded application

package, you will need to install the [PureEdge Viewer](#) (Windows EXE File) and [Adobe Reader](#). There are basic [system requirements](#) for using the PureEdge Viewer and there are basic [system requirements](#) for Adobe Reader. If you are a non-Windows user, please refer to this [support](#) page.

3. Submit application package only once

Submitting multiple copies of the same application package could cause delays in processing your application submission. We suggest that you submit your complete package only once. You will be notified via email when Grants.gov receives and validates your package before sending it on to the grant-making agency for review. You will also be notified via email when your package has been retrieved by the grantor agency. If there were errors within your package you will also be notified. Grants.gov will communicate with you every step of the way through the application submission process. To know the status of your package you may login to the Grants.gov system using your user ID and password. Visit the [Tracking an Application Submission FAQs](#) for more information: http://grants.gov/applicants/applicant_faqs.jsp#tracking

OTHER RESOURCES AVAILABLE TO HELP WITH THE GRANT PROCESS

Grants.gov offers excellent information on finding and applying for federal funding. Visit the [Related Links](#) page <http://grants.gov/help/relatedlinks.jsp> to find all the information you will ever need about the grant process.

The Contact Center is also available to respond to your questions. You can email your inquiries to support@grants.gov or call 1-800-518-4726 Monday thru Friday 7:00 a.m. – 9:00 p.m. ET. When emailing or calling the Contact Center for support, please have the following information to help to expedite your request:

- Funding Opportunity Number (FON)
- Name of the agency you are applying to
- Specific area of concern

GET CONNECTED

Sign up to receive the Succeed e-Newsletter. If you are receiving the Grants.gov Succeed Newsletter from a colleague or at a meeting, sign up to receive it by email – directly to your inbox. **Subscribe Today!**

<http://www.grants.gov/help/subscribe.jsp>