Federal Grants 101
Grant Writing
August 25, 2022
Agenda

• Get Organized
• Common Federal Forms
• Grant Writing
• Political Push
• Tips and Takeaways
Get Organized

Read, re-read, and read the NOFO again!
Get Organized

Check grant guidelines criteria

- Names of grant guidelines differ by program
  - NOFO – Notice of Funding Opportunity
  - NOFA – Notice of Funding Availability
  - RFA – Request for Applications
  - FOA – Funding Opportunity Announcement

Organize your application

- Create a skeleton outline
- Continue to cross-reference the NOFO for section specific directions
- Set up grants.gov workstation
- Outline roles, responsibilities and assignments

Look for specific page lengths, word counts, and font requirements.
Common Federal Forms

Administrative Work
Common Federal Forms

- SF424 (Application for Federal Assistance)
- SF424A (Non-Construction Budget)
- SF242B (Non-Construction Assurances)
- SF424C (Construction Budget)
- SF424 D (Construction Assurances)
- SFLLL (Disclosure of Lobbying activities)
SF424 – Application for Federal Assistance

- Standard form required for use as a cover sheet for submission of pre-applications and applications and related information under discretionary programs.

- Requests basic information about the applicant and project specific information
### Budget – SF424A Non-Construction

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>6. Object Class Categories</th>
<th>GRANT PROGRAM FUNCTION OR ACTIVITY</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Personnel</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Fringe Benefits</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Travel</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Equipment</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. Supplies</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. Contractual</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g. Construction</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h. Other</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i. Total Direct Charges (sum of a-g)</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>j. Indirect Charges</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>k. TOTALS (sum of i and j)</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Program Income</td>
<td>$</td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Budget – SF424C Construction

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BUDGET INFORMATION - Construction Programs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>COST CLASSIFICATION</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. Total Cost</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Costs Not Allowable for Participation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Total Allowable Costs (Columns a-b)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Administrative and legal expenses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Land, structures, rights-of-way, appraisals, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Relocation expenses and payments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Architectural and engineering fees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Other architectural and engineering fees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Project inspection fees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Site work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Demolition and removal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Construction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Equipment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Miscellaneous</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. SUBTOTAL (sum of lines 1-11)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Contingencies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. SUBTOTAL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Project (program) income</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. TOTAL PROJECT COSTS (subtract #15 from #14)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

FEDERAL FUNDING

Enter eligible costs from line 16c. Multiply X \( \% \) \( $ \)
Assurances

• SF424 D – Construction Assurances
• SF424 B – Non-Construction Assurances
• Affirms compliance with:
  • Federal statues pertaining to nondiscrimination
  • Hatch Act
  • Davis Bacon
  • National Environmental Policy Act
  • Audits and Ethics

1. Has the legal authority to apply for Federal assistance, and the institutional, managerial, and financial capability (including funds sufficient to pay the non-Federal share of project costs) to ensure proper planning, management, and completion of project described in this application.

2. Will give the awarding agency, the Comptroller General of the United States and, if appropriate, the State, the right to examine all records, books, papers, or documents related to the assistance, and will establish a proper accounting system in accordance with generally accepted accounting standards or agency directives.

3. Will not dispose of, modify the use of, or change the terms of the real property title or other interest in the site and facilities without permission and instructions from the awarding agency. Will record the Federal awarding agency directives and will include a covenant in the title of real property acquired in whole or in part with Federal assistance funds to assure non-discrimination during the useful life of the project.

4. Will comply with the requirements of the assistance awarding agency with regard to the drafting, review, and approval of construction plans and specifications.

5. Will provide and maintain competent and adequate engineering supervision at the construction site to ensure that the complete work conforms with the approved plans and specifications and will furnish progressive reports and such other information as may be required by the assistance awarding agency or State.

6. Will initiate and complete the work within the applicable time frame after receipt of approval of the awarding agency.

7. Will establish safeguards to prohibit employees from using their positions for a purpose that constitutes or presents the appearance of personal or organizational conflict of interest, or personal gain.


9. Will comply with the Lead-Based Paint Poisoning Prevention Act (42 U.S.C. §4901 et seq.) which prohibits the use of lead-based paint in construction or renovation of residence structures.

10. Will comply with all Federal statutes relating to non-discrimination. These include but are not limited to: (a) Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42 U.S.C. §§2000d-2000d-3), which prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin; (b) Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, as amended (20 U.S.C. §§1681 et seq.), which prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex; (c) Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended (29 U.S.C. §794), which prohibits discrimination on the basis of handicap; (d) the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, as amended (42 U.S.C. §§6101-6107), which prohibits discrimination on the basis of age; (e) the Drug Abuse Office and Treatment Act of 1972 (P.L. 96-255), as amended amended relating to nondiscrimination on the basis of drug abuse; (f) the Comprehensive Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism Prevention, Treatment and Rehabilitation Act of 1970 (P.L. 91-610), as amended, relating to nondiscrimination on the basis of alcohol abuse or alcoholism; (g) §§522 and 527 of the Public Health Service Act of 1912 (42 U.S.C. §§300a-80 and 230 et seq.), as amended, relating to confidentiality of alcohol and drug abuse patient records; (h) Title VIII of the Civil Rights Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. §§3601 et seq.), as amended, relating to nondiscrimination in the sale, rental or financing of housing; (i) any other nondiscrimination provisions in the specific statute(s) under which application for Federal assistance is being made; and (j) the requirements of any other nondiscrimination statute(s) which may apply to the application.
SFLLL – Disclosure of Lobbying Activities

- Used by applicants to disclose lobbying activities that have been secured to influence the outcome of a Federal action.

- Intended to prevent the use of federal funds for lobbying, and to monitor the lobbying expenditures of federal funds recipients.
Grant Writing

The fun part!
Common Narrative Elements

1. Executive Summary
2. Need or Problem Statement
3. Project Description
4. Project Timeline
5. Goals, Objects, Outputs, and Outcomes
6. Organizational Capacity and Background
7. Project Sustainability
8. Budget
Executive Summary

Summarize your project:

• What project addresses
• Target audience
• Goals and objectives
• Funding amount requested
• Match commitment (if any)
• Total project cost

Complete this section last.
Need or Problem Statement

What is the problem?

Who does it effect and why?

What has been done in the past and why is this not sufficient?

How does the solution and project relate to your mission statement?
Need or Problem Statement

Provide evidence:

- Use comparative data and statistics where possible to help build your case.
- Provide easy to read graphs and tables to summarize data.
- Quantitative metrics are key.

Site your sources and provide links to data or background if you can.
The project location is unsafe for pedestrians and needs improvement.

According to the Federal Railroad Association (FRA), there were 10 reported accidents involving pedestrians recorded at the project site between 2009 and 2018.
Project Description

Framing your project through easy-to-follow steps will help to keep your project description consistent and concise throughout the narrative.

What?  
Where?  
How?  
When?
Project Timeline

Year 1
- Development of a Strategic Plan
- Mountain CAP ELI training and licensure

Year 2
- Project marketing
- Beneficiary training
- Beneficiary consulting
- Project Assessment

Year 3
- Project marketing
- Beneficiary training
- Beneficiary consulting
- Project close-out
Goals, Objectives, Outputs, & Outcomes

Keep things narrow, quantifiable, precise, and timebound.

- **Goals:** A general broad statement of what you wish to accomplish.
- **Objectives:** Represents a tangible step towards accomplishing your goal.
- **Outputs and Outcomes:** Examples of completed deliverables. Make sure to demonstrate short-term, mid-term, and/or long-term impacts through concrete Evaluation Methods.
Example: Goals, Objectives, Outputs, & Outcomes

• **Goal** – Increase pedestrian safety at the railroad crossing.

• **Objective** – Educate residents about the dangers of the project site over a 3-month period.

• **Output** – Hold 3 community safety meetings for residents.

• **Outcome** – Decrease pedestrian accidents at the project site by 2% in year 1.
Organizational Capacity and Background

Explain why your organization can implement this project:

- Organizational mission
- Past experience
- Financial capacity

Reference specific staff:

Include professional bios for specific staff involved in the project.

Where a position is vacant or being filled with grant funding, include a short description of required qualifications and process the organization will take to the fill the position.
Project Sustainability

• State whether the project will terminate at the end of the project period or continue into the future.
• Demonstrate a commitment to the project in the long-term.
• Identify how the project will be funded and managed in the future.

Show them they won’t be wasting their money on you.
Budget

Budget narrative MUST match all forms.

• Describe how each line-item cost was calculated and the purpose/use.
• Costs should be reasonable.
• Provide quotes, if available.
• Secure a match commitment letter.
Political Support

Adding that extra push.
Can Grant Advocacy Really Help My Application?

YES!
Meet with the Funding Agency

Set meetings or calls with the funding agency to discuss your project.

Request feedback – the more the funding agency knows, the better.

Put your project on their radar!
Develop Strategic Partnerships

Utilize websites, public meetings, and social media platforms.

• Broad community support from invested stakeholders and partners will boost your applications appeal.

• Solicit support from partners early in the grant application process or even before the grant solicitation is released.

• Have partners commit the project through their own letter of support or MOU.

• Involve project partners in other advocacy efforts.
Secure Congressional Support

• Contact the congressional members offices representing the district *where the project will take place*.

• Inform congressional staffers of your project and request letters of support.

Create an easy letter template describing your project.
Tips and Takeaways
START EARLY

• Identify your priorities.
• Start collecting information and attachments before the solicitation opens.
• Create your workspace and download your federal forms as soon as the program opens.
• Submit before the deadline date to avoid grants.gov technical issues.
CREATE A SUBMISSION TIMELINE

- Set internal and partner deadlines.
- Designate roles and responsibilities.
- Build in contingency.
- Disseminate to all involved parties.
FOLLOW THE SOLICITATION

• Create a checklist of required items.
• Check grants.gov forms against the NOFO.
• Reach out to the listed program contact.
WRITE FOR THE LAYMAN

- Name your project.
- **Do not** assume the reviewer has a background on community or project.
- **Do not** assume the reviewer is a subject matter expert.
- Avoid using jargon.
- Spell out acronyms first.
- Mimic language from the solicitation.
CONSISTENCY IS KEY

• Match your federal forms and budget to your narrative.
• Repetition but not verbatim.
• Second set of eyes.
DON’T GIVE UP

• Get a debrief.
• Learn how to improve your application for the next round.
• Double up on political and stakeholder support.
Thank you!

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