



Guidance for First-Time Users of Grants.gov

NOAA Coastal Services Center
www.csc.noaa.gov

Introduction

First-time users of Grants.gov must complete several steps to register. These steps may take some time to complete, so applicants should begin the Grants.gov process at least four weeks before a proposal submission deadline. Applicants from universities should first contact their Office of Sponsored Programs to determine if their organization has already registered to use Grants.gov and if other mandatory information has been established, such as the organization's DUNS number (see step one below). Applicants from other organizations should check with their business or financial offices to determine if their organization is registered to use Grants.gov.

While anyone can explore Grants.gov and download grant applications, only an authorized organizational representative (AOR) has the authority to sign and submit these applications on behalf of a company, organization, institution, or government. To become an AOR, an applicant must register with Grants.gov and gain authorization from his or her organization's e-business point of contact. The e-business point of contact determines who is allowed to submit grant application packages on behalf of an organization and is a primary role established through the Grants.gov registration process. There is no limit to the number of people who can register from an institution to use Grants.gov.

Steps and Estimated Times to Register on Grants.gov

Note: the registration process takes approximately three to five days to complete, but allow four weeks to complete all steps.

1. **Obtain a DUNS number (takes one day).** All applicants for federal funding must have a Dun and Bradstreet, or DUNS, number to complete their application package. A DUNS number is a unique nine-digit identification number issued free of charge. Check first with your organization's business or financial office to find out if your organization already has a DUNS number by contacting Dun and Bradstreet at (866) 705-5711, or refer to www.dnb.com/US/duns_update/index.html. If your organization does not have a DUNS number, the estimated time to complete this step is one day.
2. **Register with the System for Award Management (SAM) (takes one to two weeks for processing).** If you already have a taxpayer identification number (TIN), your SAM registration will take three to five business days to process. If you are applying for an employer identification

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number (EIN), allow up to two weeks to complete this process. An authorizing official of your organization must register with SAM. Register at www.sam.gov/portal/public/SAM.

3. **Become an authorized organizational representative (takes one day).** The e-business point of contact (E-Biz POC) at your organization must log on to *Grants.gov* to confirm you as an authorized organizational representative (AOR). Note that there can be more than one AOR for your organization. In some cases the E-Biz POC is also the AOR for an organization. The total estimated time for completing this step will depend on the responsiveness of your E-Biz POC.
4. **Track authorized organizational representative (AOR) status.** At any time, you can track your AOR status by logging on as an applicant (enter user name and password from Step 3) at <https://apply07.grants.gov/apply/login.faces?userType=applicant&cleanSession=1>.

Steps for Applying for Funds through Grants.gov

1. **Find the grant opportunity you are interested in** by using the Grants.gov search interface at www.grants.gov/search/basic.do . You can conduct either a basic or advanced search. In a basic search, search for information on available grant opportunities using a keyword, funding opportunity number, or a catalog of federal domestic assistance (CFDA) number. Advanced searches allow you to search by funding opportunity dates, funding activity category, funding instrument type, eligibility, agency name, and any of the basic search parameters. Grants.gov also allows anyone to register to receive e-mail updates (www.grants.gov/web/grants/manage-subscriptions.html) as new grant opportunities are added. Anyone can also sign up to receive e-mail notices of any changes to any specific grant application packages or federal funding opportunity announcements.
2. **Apply for the grant you are interested in** by using the Apply for Grants link (www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/apply-for-grants.html). The Apply for Grants feature enables users to apply for competitive federal grant opportunities through a single, unified process.
 - a. **Download the grant application package and application instructions** for the grant you wish to apply for. You will need to enter the funding opportunity or the CFDA (Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance) number to access the application package and instructions. The NOAA Coastal Services Center's CDFA number is 11.473.
 - b. **Complete the selected grant application package.** Once it has been downloaded, you can complete the application off-line.
 - c. **Submit the completed grant application package online.** Once Grants.gov has received your submission, within the next 24 to 48 hours you should receive two email messages from Grants.gov updating you on the progress of your application. The first email will confirm receipt of your application by the Grants.gov system, and the second will indicate that the application has either been successfully validated by the system before transmission to the grantor agency or has been rejected because of errors. After the application has been validated, you will receive a third email when the application has been downloaded by the federal agency. If the federal agency assigns an agency-specific tracking number, then you will also receive an email about this application.