Succeed

A NEWSLETTER

MANAGING PARTNER

Fulfilling the President's Management Agenda

OVER 180,000 SUCCESSFUL SUBMISSIONS IN FY07

Fiscal Year 2007 (FY07) has been a very challenging and rewarding year for Grants.gov. There have been many program developments and changes made to improve the overall applicant experience and according to our submission totals, all of the effort to improve has paid off.

There were 180,659 submissions in FY07, which represents a 109 percent increase in submissions from FY06, which totaled 86,321 submissions. As of December 31, 2007 there have been 49,605 submissions.

TRANSITION TO NEW ADOBE READER SYSTEM IN FULL SWING

In an effort to better serve the grant community and increase site accessibility, Grants.gov has committed to transitioning from the previous PureEdge based application system to an Adobe Reader based application system.

The Adobe Reader applications offer more functionality and expansive system compatibility. The Adobe Reader applications are compatible with most operating systems including all Windows (Vista, Windows 2007), Mac OSX (Tiger, Leopard), Linux and UNIX.

The system transition will not affect the application process itself. Grants.gov is working with agencies to identify specific dates when the agencies will transition to Adobe Reader. Some agencies are currently posting opportunities in Adobe. The transition is tentatively scheduled to be completed by the end of fiscal year 2008. During the transition period applicants will need to have both PureEdge and Adobe Reader 8.1.1 software installed on their computers, since not all applications from all agencies are transitioned to Adobe Reader. Both PureEdge and Adobe Reader 8.1.1 software are available for free download on Grants.gov: http://www.grants.gov/resources/download_software.jsp.

SUCCESSFUL SUBMISSIONS RECEIVED ON NEW ADOBE READER FORMS

Agencies are already posting applications using Adobe Reader. To date Grants.gov has received 1,144 applications in Adobe. Click here to view a sample Adobe Reader application. To view an animated tutorial on completing a form with Adobe Reader, click here.

THE COMMUNITY SPOKE WE LISTENED: GRANTS.GOV USABILITY TESTING COMPLETE

All five phases of extensive usability testing have been successfully completed. The testing was done to ensure the many site functionality improvements to be made to the site, will operate as anticipated, and provide the maximum benefit to the applicant.

The participants of the study were end-users from different backgrounds, representing both sectors of the grant community (applicants and grantor agencies).

Phase 1 testing focused on general website functionality, and helped Grants.gov identify areas for improvement based on respondent feedback. The two main areas for improvement are to focus on applicant needs and streamlining the content on the homepage.

The second phase of testing assessed the level of ease associated with registering with Grants.gov, searching funding opportunities, and the application process.

Phase 3 testing was performed to gauge the efficiency of completing and submitting a grant application package. Applicant users were able to experience completing a new Adobe Reader application and many noted that they preferred the new Adobe Reader application to the old PureEdge application.

The fourth phase of the usability study was used to address grantor agencies' concerns on the grant opportunity posting process.

Phase 5 testing validated changes suggested during phases 1-4. The changes were presented to respondents using paper prototypes of the Grants.gov website.

Look for updates and communication from the Program Management Office on changes being made to the website, as a result of the usability test findings.

GRANTS.GOV PMO STRIVES TO CONNECT WITH GRANT COMMUNITY

Grants.gov is dedicated to informing and involving the grant community of developments and decisions reached about the transition and all other aspects of Grants.gov. The Program Management Office strives to not only involve and inform the grant community through meetings and forums but also educate through outreach.

To increase community involvement, Grants.gov has created multiple meetings and forums to discuss the program and address the grant community's needs and concerns. Grants.gov holds quarterly webcasts to keep applicants and grantors up to speed with the rapid developments of Grants.gov. To receive email alerts regarding the latest issues and updates to Grants.gov, visit: http://www.grants.gov/applicants/email_subscription.jsp.

To inform the community, Grants.gov also provides information on the homepage in the "What's New This Week at Grants.gov" section. Grants.gov provides training to educate the grant community on the Find and Apply process. To request training or Grants.gov participation at a conference please complete

the Outreach Request Form and return it to the PMO via email at: support@grants.gov.

The Grants.gov Program Management Office gladly invites ideas to better serve the grant community. We value your opinions and feedback which may be sent to support@grants.gov.

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!

CONTACT CENTER UPDATE

The Grants.gov Contact Center experienced a 32 percent growth in customer inquiries from fiscal year 2006 to 2007. In FY08, thru December 31, 2007, the Contact Center has received 47,956 contacts which is a 2.5 % increase over the same period in FY07.

The Contact Center staff is available to assist you with your questions via telephone: 1-800-518-4726 or by email support@grants.gov Monday – Friday 7:00 a.m. – 9:00 p.m. ET.

STAKEHOLDER WEBCAST

The next Grants.gov Stakeholder Webcast will be held January 16, 2008 to discuss the transition to the Adobe Reader System. Details for logging on to the Webcast will be available at http://www.grants.gov/resources/stakeholder_communications.jsp.

FEDERAL GRANTS STREAMLINING UPDATE

The Grants Policy Committee (GPC) continues to lead the federal government in improving the management of federal financial assistance government wide. The committee recommends financial assistance policies and practices to OMB and coordinates related interagency activities. The GPC serves the public interest in collaboration with other federal-wide grants initiatives.

GPC activities over the past year placed special emphasis on outreach to the grant community, including universities, nonprofit organizations, states and local governments. During the year, the GPC fulfilled its vision to do more outreach and be more inclusive of stakeholders' points of view by planning and executing three successful webcasts in March, June, and

October, 2007. All three webcasts exceeded expectations and garnered significant stakeholder participation and feedback. Webcast topics were guided by community interest and concern, and in the case of the March webcast, stakeholder representatives actually formally presented their concerns to the GPC. The next GPC webcast will be held on March 18, 2008.

The GPC will continue to lead the federal government in this regard, and the November 2007 sunset of the Federal Financial Assistance Management Improvement Act, P.L. 106-107 has had no impact on GPC activities. Presently, the GPC is leading federal grant-making agencies in a strategic planning exercise around its work including federal grants policy streamlining and overall improvements in the realm of federal financial assistance. The GPC is also working on branding, organizing additional webcasts, and coordinating its work with the Grants Committee of the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act (FFATA) Task Force.

NEED HELP FINDING AND APPLYING FOR GRANTS?

There are many resources available online to assist you in finding and applying for opportunities on Grants.gov. Click on HELP in the left navigation and check out the applicant and agency user guides, FAQs and comprehensive glossary of terms. You may also want to view the new Grants.gov Adobe Reader application tutorial. Click here to view a narrated tutorial on how to complete a grant application package using Adobe Reader.

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, the following will help to expedite your request:

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

FRAUD ISSUES?

Unfortunately, grant dollars are susceptible to fraud, waste and abuse. Using federal grant dollars for unjust enrichment, personal gain or other than their intended use is a form of theft, subject to criminal and civil prosecution under the laws of the United States.

Federal grant dollars are susceptible to several forms of financial theft, most commonly in the form of specific federal violations, including: embezzlement, theft or bribery, false statements, false claims and mail and wire fraud. Each of these violations of the law is subject to criminal prosecution, fines, restitution, and civil penalties.

Click here to learn more about Grant Fraud. Grant Fraud is a message from the National Procurement Fraud Task Force. The National Procurement Fraud Task Force 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.

GET CONNECTED

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