

§ 3015.153

§ 3015.153 Notice of preapplication review action.

Awarding agencies shall inform governmental applicants of the results of their review of preapplications by using the Notice of Preapplication Review Action form prescribed by Circular A-102. If the review cannot be completed within 45 days, the awarding agency shall inform the applicant, in writing, when it will complete the review.

§ 3015.154 Application for Federal assistance (nonconstruction programs).

Governments shall use the Application for Federal Assistance (Nonconstruction Programs) form prescribed by OMB Circular A-102 in applying for discretionary grants unless a form specified in § 3015.155 or § 3015.156 is to be used.

§ 3015.155 Application for Federal assistance (construction programs).

Governments shall use the Application for Federal Assistance (for Construction Programs) form prescribed by Circular A-102 in applying for any grant whose purpose is solely or primarily construction, land acquisition, or land development.

§ 3015.156 Application for Federal assistance (short form).

Governments shall use the Application for Federal Assistance (Short Form) form prescribed by Circular A-102 in applying for any single-purpose, one-time grant of less than \$10,000 not requiring Circular A-95 clearinghouse review, an environmental impact statement, or the relocation of persons, businesses, or farms. Awarding agencies may, at their discretion, authorize or require this form for applications for larger amounts.

§ 3015.157 Authorized form for nongovernmental organizations.

Nongovernmental organizations shall use application forms prescribed by the awarding agency. The facesheet of these applications shall be Standard Form 424.

7 CFR Ch. XXX (1-1-05 Edition)

§ 3015.158 Competition in the awarding of discretionary grants and cooperative agreements.

(a) *Standards for competition.* Except as provided in paragraph (d) of this section, awarding agencies shall enter into discretionary grants and cooperative agreements only after competition. An awarding agency's competitive award process shall adhere to the following standards:

(1) Potential applicants must be invited to submit proposals through publications such as the FEDERAL REGISTER, professional trade journals, agency or program handbooks, the Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance, or any other appropriate means of solicitation. In so doing, awarding agencies should consider the broadest dissemination of project solicitations in order to reach the highest number of potential applicants.

(2) Proposals are to be evaluated objectively by independent reviewers in accordance with written criteria set forth by the awarding agency. Reviewers should make written comments, as appropriate, on each application. Independent reviewers may be from the private sector, another agency, or within the awarding agency, as long as they do not include anyone who has approval authority for the applications being reviewed or anyone who might appear to have a conflict of interest in the role of reviewer of applications. A conflict of interest might arise when the reviewer or the reviewer's immediate family members have been associated with the applicant or applicant organization within the past two years as an owner, partner, officer, director, employee, or consultant; has any financial interest in the applicant or applicant organization; or is negotiating for, or has any arrangement, concerning prospective employment.

(3) An unsolicited application, which is not unique and innovative, shall be competed under the project solicitation it comes closest to fitting. Awarding agency officials will determine the solicitation under which the application is to be evaluated. When the awarding agency official decides that the unsolicited application does not fall under a recent, current, or planned solicitation, a noncompetitive award