



Stakeholder Webcast January 16, 2008

Questions & Answers

Software/Versioning

- 1. Please clarify the problem of multiple users with different versions of Adobe Reader causing corruption of the file. In particular, if one person fills out the form with one version and another person will just submit with another version, will this lead to corruption? What if the submitter makes changes, not just submit, will this cause the submitted file to be corrupted?**

Adobe Reader 8.1.1 is the required software for viewing, editing and submitting a complete grant application to Grants.gov. Grants.gov does not guarantee to support other versions of Adobe Reader released prior to version 8.1.1. Any and all edits made to an Adobe Reader application package must be made with Adobe Reader version 8.1.1.

- 2. I understand that errors will arise as a result of users completing the Adobe forms using Acrobat Professional rather than Reader. Are there efforts underway at Grants.gov to address this issue? As it is currently, this is going to pose a serious problem for many applicants.**

Currently to complete Adobe Reader application packages you can only use Adobe Reader 8.1.1 to complete the application package without submission errors.

Our identification, validation and verification (IV&V) team is currently working with the new system software manufacturer (Adobe) to resolve all technical issues involving Adobe Reader application packages. As the system matures and once all technical issues have been resolved by Adobe, versioning will no longer be an issue.

At this time, there are no plans to support other Adobe products such as Acrobat and Professional for submitting grant application packages to Grants.gov.

- 3. I am aware that to submit grants, we must use Adobe Reader 8.1.1. I am also aware that if two or more people are working on a grant together, that we both must use the same version. My question is this. The University of Tulsa staff will be using Adobe Professional 8.0, and our Principle Investigators may be using Adobe Reader 8.1.1. Is this going to cause a compatibility issue whenever it comes time to submitting grants?**

Grants.gov application packages must be downloaded, opened, completed and submitted using ONLY Adobe Reader version 8.1.1. Anyone accessing a grants.gov package must use Adobe Reader 8.1.1, failure to do so may result in errors in during submission.

For instructions on how to ensure you are using Adobe Reader 8.1.1 please refer to this FAQ on the Grants.gov website: **How can I ensure I am using Adobe Reader to work on my application package?** http://www.grants.gov/help/general_faqs.jsp#19.

- 4. Are you guys working towards improved compatibility of Adobe forms with other versions of Adobe Acrobat other than Reader? If so, is there a timeline for this?**

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At this time, there are no plans to support other Adobe products such as Acrobat and Professional for submitting grant application packages to Grants.gov.

5. Does the 8.1.1 version of Adobe Reader also allow us to write?

Adobe Reader version 8.1.1 allows the applicant to perform all of the necessary actions to submit a complete application package to Grants.gov.

Technical/Viewing & Accessing the Webcast and Information

6. We at the NC Division of Public Health have been requested not to use Realplayer. We will not be able to view the upcoming webcast due to a security vulnerability in the Realplayer digital media player, is there another option?

Windows Media Player is the other option available to view the webcast.

7. Can you please provide the URL to obtain the charts and the presentations for the webcast?

The presentation and other materials for all Stakeholder Quarterly Webcasts can be found on the "Stakeholder Communications" page:

http://www.grants.gov/help/stakeholder_communications.jsp

8. Where can I download the PPT presentation?

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9. This question may be too late for this webcast; however, I would like to know if the webcasts are captioned for the deaf and hard of hearing. I realize transcripts are provided for archived webcasts. Is there any way I can call in to the webcast using a video relay interpreter?

The live webcast (and archive) was closed captioned, and captioning was tested with another source prior to broadcast, it will be tested again and working prior to our next event.

10. Someone may have already brought this to your attention, but the link provided in your webcast directions page was not complete. The part of the link that extends to the next line is not included in the associated link and so several viewers may not have been able to see the webcast.

We are aware of this issue and apologize for any inconvenience it may have caused. This issue has been resolved so it will not occur during our next webcast scheduled for April 16, 2008 from 1-2pm, EST.

11. Please note that the volume is very low on the broadcast for today...We have 2 machines in our office...the volume is turned all the way up and it is still difficult to hear.

We apologize for the inconvenience. We will test and verify audio levels again prior to the next broadcast.

- 12. I had the volume turned up as high as it would go and I still could barely hear what was being said. Will there be a transcript?**

We apologize for the inconvenience. We will test and verify audio levels again prior to next broadcast. The archived webcast is available on the Stakeholder Communications page located here: http://www.grants.gov/help/stakeholder_communications.jsp. At this time we do not provide transcripts.

Transition/Timeline

- 13. Michael referred to the April 1 and June 30 as “target” dates. What is meant by “target”? Does it mean that these dates may be extended?**

By target, we mean that we are aiming to have the new system processes in place by the dates mentioned, but only if all major technical issues have been addressed by that time.

- 14. What if our Agency doesn’t have Adobe Reader 8.1.1 by June 30, can we still post with Adobe 8.0 documents?**

The Adobe Reader 8.1.1 version is required to apply for Adobe Reader applications currently posted on Grants.gov. The Adobe Reader 8.1.1 is available for free download on Grants.gov at: http://www.grants.gov/help/download_software.jsp#adobe811

- 15. Why is the government forcing agencies like NSF to convert to Grants.gov submission process since Fastlane is far superior to Grants.gov? They’ve had years to work out all the bugs, and now that it is operating at peak efficiency, we need to convert to a system that still has MANY bugs.**

Grants.gov simplifies the grants management process while creating a centralized, online process to Find and Apply for over 1,000 grant programs from the 26 federal grant making agencies.

Grants.gov streamlines the process of awarding over \$400 billion annually to state and local governments, academia, not-for-profits and other organizations.

- 16. I am new to the federal government. Is there a way to get into the application system without having a DUNS number, etc, so we can see what the applicants see when they are trying to apply for our programs?**

On the Applicant Resources page: http://www.grants.gov/applicants/app_help_reso.jsp on Grants.gov, there are User Guides, animated tutorials and overviews you can view at any time to understand the Find and Apply process.

- 17. Will applications still be available after the closing date? So that applicants can get ready for the next year?**

Yes, Grants.gov maintains an application archive. Grant applications submitted to Grants.gov will be archived for 180 days on the website.

Forms/Key Personnel Form/Adobe Test Form

- 18. You mentioned 42 forms converted, are Agency Specific forms included in the count?**

Yes, agency specific forms are included in the 42 forms that will be converted.

- 19. I noticed the OMB information is located at the bottom of the form instead of the top right hand corner. Will all forms have the OMB approval information be relocated to lower right hand corner?**

Upon renewal, Grants.gov will place the OMB clearance number on the form. Grants.gov will not include the expiration date. The placement will be consistent, but Grants.gov has not yet decided whether the number will be at the top or the bottom of the form.

- 20. Are you saying that the form changes to support FFATA have been posted to the federal register? If so, where can we find them?**

The 60-day Site Location FedReg Notice was published on November 14, 2007 and the Mandatory 60-day FedReg Notice was published on January 7, 2008. Grants.gov is preparing to publish the 30-Day Site Location Notice.

- 21. For the electronic forms, can the OMB form approval date start after the Grants.gov forms are created instead of when OMB approves the new form? This will allow electronic forms to be in use for the 3 year period.**

The OMB approval date is assigned when OMB signs off on the final form. Grants.gov cannot release the revised form for use until the form is signed by OMB. However, the renewal period will not begin again until OMB releases the form. For example – if a form expires on 4/30/08 and OMB does not sign the revised form until 6/1/08, then the renewal period will extend until 6/1/11. Even if the current form expires, it will stay in effect during the time that OMB reviews the form.

Please keep in mind that some of the forms for this cycle will be assigned a one, two, or three year renewal period. This is to prevent all of the forms expiring at the same time for the next cycle. After we get through this 2008 renewal year, the forms for the next period will be renewed for a three-year period – thus evening out the cycle.

- 22. When do agencies submit the NEW OMB Approval information for the program specific forms?**

As soon as the agency has a final, OMB-approved form.

- 23. For agencies requesting hard copy of SF-424, can you tell me where to find the most recent version? I see several available when I Google SF 424.**

To view the most recent version of the SF 424 go to the Forms Repository on the Grants.gov site: <http://apply07.grants.gov/apply/FormLinks?family=15>

24. Could you clarify the R & R form changes that are planned? What specifically is changing? What will be the version number?

A complete review of the R&R form changes was published to the federal register for public comment. Changes included but are not limited to required data collection in accordance with FFATA.

25. Where can we find a copy of the SF-424 that is fillable for paper applications and when is the deadline for when we have to stop using the old PHS forms?

You can view forms at: <http://apply07.grants.gov/apply/FormLinks?family=15>
Agencies policy will determine when internal forms usage is phased out for government-wide forms.

26. Sr/Key personnel form: If the applicant chooses to go back and enter additional key personnel, will there be the ability to re-alphabetize the entries (as requested by NIH?)

No, that functionality is not in the current form design and functionality.

27. Will the Adobe budget form allow us to remove senior key personnel entered by mistake without having to reset all entries or start over?

You may delete an entry without resetting the entire form.

28. Will the adobe budget form allow us to change the budget year dates (after having already been entered or if we realize do not match the dates entered on the SF424 face page) without having to reset all entries or start over?

The budget years can be changed.

29. Is there a test site for individuals who wish to try the Adobe forms?

Adobe test packages are currently available on Grants.gov:
<http://www.grants.gov/aboutgrants/buildreleases.jsp>

Miscellaneous

30. Why does the funding opportunity web service still require a registered SSL Certificate for access? All of this information is generic and available off of Grants.Gov anonymously; can this be expanded to include information such as package location?

The current methods in which web services operate require a SSL certificate. If you would like to suggest a site enhancement to the Grants.gov Program Management Office, please fill out the enhancement form:

http://www.grants.gov/assets/EnhancementForm_V2_grantor.doc and email it to support@grants.gov.

31. If you are giving a link to the Instructions, the XSL, why not a link to the actual application where the package can be downloaded?

Opportunities are posted by the federal agencies to include the package. This suggestion will be brought forward to the agencies for discussion.

32. When will the number of "help desk" monitors be increased?

At this time there is no need to increase help desk (Grants.gov Contact Center) staff. The Grants.gov Contact Center staff is scheduled according to call volume and customer needs and is currently meeting performance metrics and goals.

33. Could you show the website again so that I can sign up for weekly updates?

You may sign up for Grants.gov Updates by visiting:
http://www.grants.gov/applicants/email_subscription_signup.jsp

34. Please clarify how "Track my application" works, is the grant application tracking number assigned and sent after the package is validated in the second email?

The Grants.gov tracking number is assigned once the application has been validated. The tracking number is sent in the second e-mail.

After submitting a complete application package, applicant will first receive a receipt, then an email verifying receipt of submission.

The application package is then validated or rejected and a second email verifying successful submission or rejection (due to errors), is sent to the applicant which includes a Grants.gov tracking number.

The applicant will receive a third email once the application is retrieved by the grant-making agency, which will include an agency tracking number (separate from Grants.gov tracking number).

The Grants.gov and agency tracking numbers can be used by the applicant to track the status of their application package through the application process.