



AT-A-GLANCE

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RECOVERY ACT AND GRANTS.GOV

Submission Volume Growth

Grants.gov has experienced an unprecedented rate of growth since the January 6, 2009 introduction of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (\$787 billion “Stimulus Bill”). There were 38,646 applications processed in March, which is a 78% increase over the 21,651 applications processed in February and a 143% increase over the 15,931 January submissions. The first week of April (1-7), there were 11,464 applications processed, making it the largest weekly submission total to date.

The sharp incline in the number of grant applications submitted (from an average of 3,000 submissions per week in December 2008 to 10,000 per week, March 2009) caused a strain on the system. A 60% increase in application submission volume is predicted for the Recovery Act opportunities.

The system, which consists mainly of hardware acquired in 2005, has been maintained and enhanced on a regular basis through system builds. The Speed & Reliability Upgrade and System Build 2008-03 (deployed to production on February 8, 2009) addressed many of the system issues associated with the increased traffic and submissions to the website. These system builds (Speed & Reliability and Build 2008-03) added enhancements to improve system capacity and the processing speed of application submissions. The “Speed & Reliability Upgrade” dealt with the amount of submissions that could be processed within a given amount of time and involved adding hardware (three new T-1000 servers) and updating software. Build 2008-03 enhanced the LDAP (Lightweight Directory Access Protocol), which controls the speed at which concurrent users are able to login to the system and thus submit their application packages.

To handle the influx of applications, Grants.gov is in the process of procuring additional hardware and software to meet the increased needs of the applicant community. In addition to this procurement, we are developing a 90-day plan of action which will include monthly system builds (May – July) to improve system performance. Our previous process was to execute quarterly system builds. These builds are being designed to improve submission processing, system capacity and the overall user experience. Once the plan of action and milestones for this effort are finalized, we will publish to the Grants.gov website and blog.

New Features and Functionality – System Build – April 2009

We are executing a System Build April 18 – 19 to improve overall system performance and the ability to meet the demands of Recovery Act submissions. The system will be unavailable during this time. In this Build the system configuration will be updated to improve processing of user identification data (ex. password changes), and will also provide a new feature, “Track My Application,” which will allow you to check the status of an application submission by simply entering its corresponding Grants.gov tracking number. With this new “Track My Application” feature, you will not need to login to see the status of a submitted package.

MANAGING PARTNER

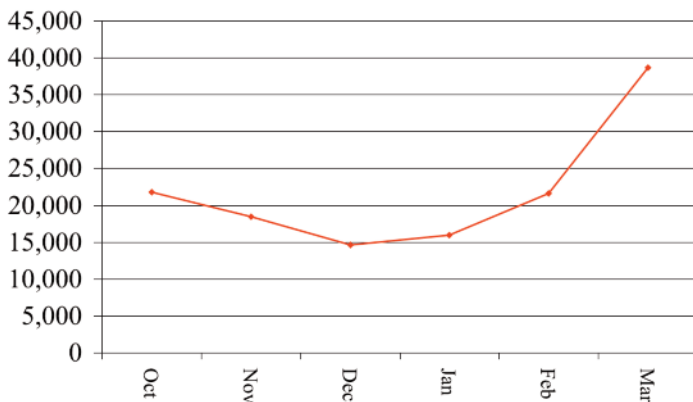


*Fulfilling the President's
Management Agenda*

The new system configuration and “Track My Application” feature will improve system functionality by reducing the strain put on the system by the unprecedented number of applicants logging into the system. For every System Build we distribute a detailed communication on what occurred in the Build via our Grants.gov update listserv: http://www.grants.gov/applicants/email_subscription_signup.jsp.

As with any funding opportunity, you do not have to register to view the opportunity, but you must register in order to apply for the opportunity. If you have not registered, it is recommended you allow yourself four weeks to register in the event you experience any issues. The added time will help ensure that you can complete the process in time to meet the closing deadline of the grant opportunity.

Application Submissions



Recovery Act Information on Grants.gov

The “Recovery Act and Grants.gov” page: <http://www.grants.gov/applicants/recovery.jsp> was created on Grants.gov because of its vital role in stimulus dollar allocation. This page is a high interest area on the website and has received over 104,051 visitors since its creation on March 6, 2009. On this page you will find the most complete information on Recovery Act grant opportunities, the type of funding available for the \$787 billion stimulus package, a timeline for Recovery Act activities, and links to funding information by agency.

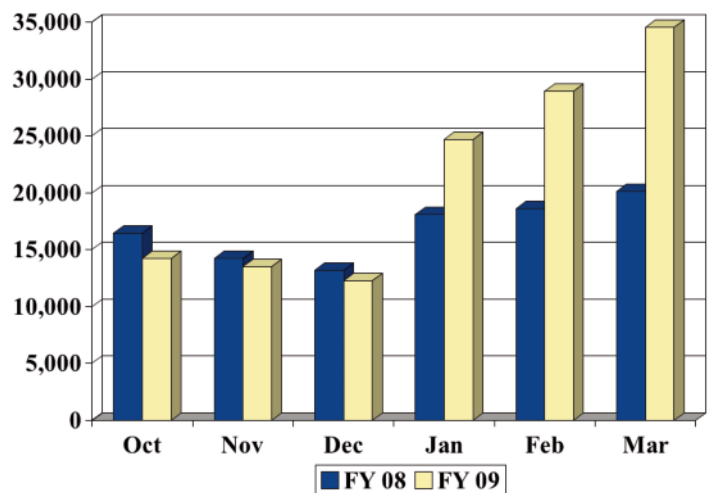
To search for Recovery Act opportunities provided on Grants.gov, go to : <http://www07.grants.gov/search/search.do;jsessionid=?mode=CATSEARCH&fundActivity=RA>. You can also search Recovery Act funding opportunities by using the “Find Grant Opportunities” link in the left navigation and “Search By Category”. Recovery Act opportunities are identified by their opportunity titles, which are required to contain the words “Recovery Act” or the letters “RA.”

CONTACT CENTER VOLUME GROWTH

The Grants.gov Contact Center has experienced a significant increase in call volume. The Contact Center volume in FY 09 through March is 128,105, a 27% growth over FY 08 for the same period of time. The Contact Center is a dedicated staff of knowledgeable Customer Support Representatives (CSRs) available to answer grant applicant inquiries on all aspects of Grants.gov. To sustain quality customer service, especially during the projected increase in submissions due to the Recovery Act, the Contact Center has hired a class of Customer Support Representatives, who will come on board by April 20 and bring the number of CSRs available to answer customer inquiries to 102.

In addition to the new hires, Grants.gov has increased the number of T1 phone lines from five to seven. By April 24 two additional lines will be in place, bringing the total number of T1 lines to nine. This increases the capacity for the number of simultaneous calls we can receive from 120 to 216.

Contact Center Contacts



TRANSITION TO ADOBE COMPLETE

Through the combined efforts of Grants.gov and the 26 federal grant-making agencies, the transition to Adobe has been successfully completed. This was a major effort which required the coordination of resources and extensive planning to migrate all grant opportunities from the PureEdge System to the Adobe System.

All grantor agencies are now posting and accepting Adobe applications. PureEdge applications are no longer in use. All applicants wishing to submit a grant application package are required to use the Grants.gov compatible version of Adobe software. Additional information and free compatible software downloads are available on the “Download Software” page: http://grants.gov/aboutgrants/help/download_software.jsp#adobe811.

Adobe Software Versioning Information

| Adobe Professional Versions | Adobe Reader Version | Compatible | Broken Pipe Resolved | Vista Compatible | Mac Compatible |
|-----------------------------|----------------------|------------|----------------------|------------------|----------------|
| 8.0* | 8.1.1 | Yes | No | Yes | Yes |
| | 8.1.2 | Yes | No | Yes | Yes |
| | 8.1.3 | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| | 8.1.4 | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| 9.0 | 9.0 | Yes | No | Yes | Yes |
| | 9.1 | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |

Please Note: The Applicant System-to-System 2006 Endpoint has been terminated. Applicant System-to-System users are to access the system using the **2007 Applicant System-to-System Endpoint**: <https://ws07.grants.gov:446/app-s2s-server/services/>

REGISTRATION – WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW

Grants.gov registration is an integral part of the federal grant application process for applicants and grantors alike. In order to apply for grants or post grant opportunities (grantor), you must be registered with Grants.gov. The objective of registering with Grants.gov is to validate and verify the registrant’s identity and that they are either eligible to apply for or post a federal grant opportunity. Grants.gov requires electronic credentials – a username and password – to access the system.

A portion of applicant registration now provides applicants the ability to better manage their information by having the

functionality to update their information immediately. The user profile that each applicant completes upon registering (or updating their registration) allows them to create a secret question and secret answer of their choice which they may use to reset or retrieve their username and password information on Grants.gov.

Grantor registration was updated on March 29; agency users registered with ORC Level 1 or 2 and or USDA Level 1 or 2 prior to the deployment of Build 2009 – 01 are considered legacy users and are required to update their information within the Grants.gov system by completing a profile and creating a secret question/answer. Agency users registered with Employee Express (EEX) will have to re-register with Grants.gov and are considered new registrants. Any user who was not registered with ORC or USDA before Build 2009-01 was deployed is considered a new user and must register with Grants.gov.

To learn more about the changes implemented to the registration (both applicant (organization and individual) and grantor) processes visit: Build 2008-03 (applicant): <http://grants.gov/assets/SystemEnhancements2008-03A.pdf> and Build 2009-01 (grantor): <http://grants.gov/assets/NewGrantorRegistrationProcess.pdf>.

When completing the applicant registration process for the first time, allow yourself four weeks. Registration (except individual registration) generally involves the cooperation and coordination of multiple entities and or parties within an organization. The added time will allow you to complete the process to ensure you meet the closing deadline of the grant opportunity.

There will be no change to System-to-System (S2S) users with this update, as S2S users are validated through certificates, not registration credentials.

PREVENT GRANT FRAUD

Grant fraud is on the rise. Many scams are taking advantage of the Recovery Act funding the government made available to stimulate the economy, often asking for fees to access free information about getting government grants. Grants.gov is the government’s official grant portal for finding and applying for federal money. Everything you need to apply for federal grants is available free of charge on the website. Here are some tips to prevent grant fraud:

Five tips offered by the Better Business Bureau:

1. You will not be contacted by the government to offer you a grant

The government does not contact people to offer them money. If you do qualify for a government grant, the government does not request payment for it.

2. There are no fees associated with applying for a government grant

Providing financial information to prove that you qualify for a government grant is typical, but you should never pay money to apply for a grant. People who run scams often claim to provide help and sometimes claim to be “federal government” officials; don’t be fooled by these scams that request money from you.

3. All government grants involve an application process

If you have not submitted an application for a government grant and someone claims you have been awarded one, it’s a scam. Grant money is not given over the phone for a fee. In order to qualify for a grant you must apply for the specific opportunity that you are qualified to apply for.

4. Government grants are awarded for explicit opportunities

Government grants are typically awarded to states, cities, educational institutions, nonprofits and other organizations to fund research and other projects.

5. Government grant application information is free

Be cautious of offers requesting a fee to access grant information and that ask you for your personal information (especially financial). You can always access free information about government grants and other benefits at Grants.gov and Govbenefits.gov.

As an additional resource — The National Procurement Fraud Task Force developed Grant Fraud: <http://grants.gov/assets/GrantFraud.pdf>. Grant Fraud provides tips to protect your organization and the source of your federal funds by helping to detect and prevent fraud.

UPCOMING EVENT SCHEDULE

NGMA Roundtable

April 21, 2009
Rockville, MD

Capital Area Food Banks' Metropolitan Area Hunger Conference 2009

April 24, 2009
Landover, MD

2009 National Summit on Grants in the American Recovery & Reinvestment Act

April 30, 2009
Alexandria, VA

[Grants.gov Presentation Request Form](#) – Fill out this form if you have an upcoming event you would like Grants.gov to attend or if you would like to request a complimentary Grants.gov presentation on the Find and Apply process. Email the completed form to support@grants.gov and a representative will contact you.

[Read about past events attended by Grants.gov](#)

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 becomes available. To sign-up visit:

http://www.grants.gov/applicants/email_subscription_signup.jsp

TECHNICAL ISSUES? NO PROBLEM, FIND HELP 24 HOURS A DAY

Applicant Troubleshooting Page

If you run into technical difficulties, help is now available 24 hours a day with the new applicant “Troubleshooting” page: http://grants.gov/help/trouble_tips.jsp. On this page you will find information on common troubleshooting issues, such as verifying your Authorized Organization Representative (AOR) status and login for E-Business Point of Contact (E-Biz POC). These troubleshooting tips can help you quickly resolve your technical issues. As with any of the Grants.gov web pages, your comments and feedback on the content are encouraged. If you are experiencing a technical issue that continues to occur please contact the Grants.gov Contact Center: <http://www.grants.gov/contactus/contactus.jsp> or call 1-800-518-4726.

STAKEHOLDER WEBCAST

The next Grants.gov Stakeholder Webcast will be held **April 15, 2009 from 1 – 2 p.m. ET**, to discuss the Recovery Act, Grant Fraud and System Enhancements and activities around the Recovery Act and other issues affecting the grant community. Details for logging on to the Webcast are available on the Stakeholder Webcast page:

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

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