GRANTS.GOV[SM]

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Applicant Enhancements

System Build 2008- 03

February 8, 2009

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INTRODUCTION

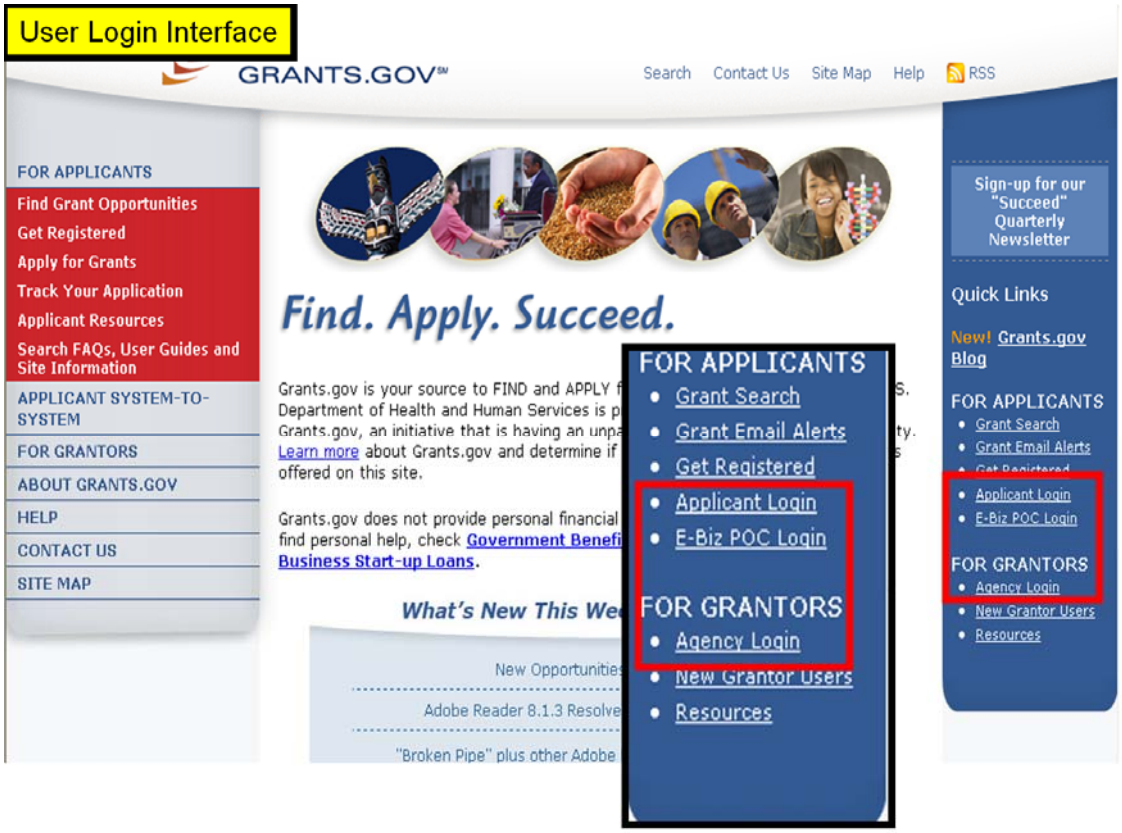
In order to continue the mission and goals of Grants.gov, system enhancements and new functionality are constantly evaluated and executed. This document summarizes the new functionality and system enhancements that were implemented on February 8, 2009. All enhancements performed during System Build 2008-03 were made to the Adobe System; no updates will be made to PureEdge system.

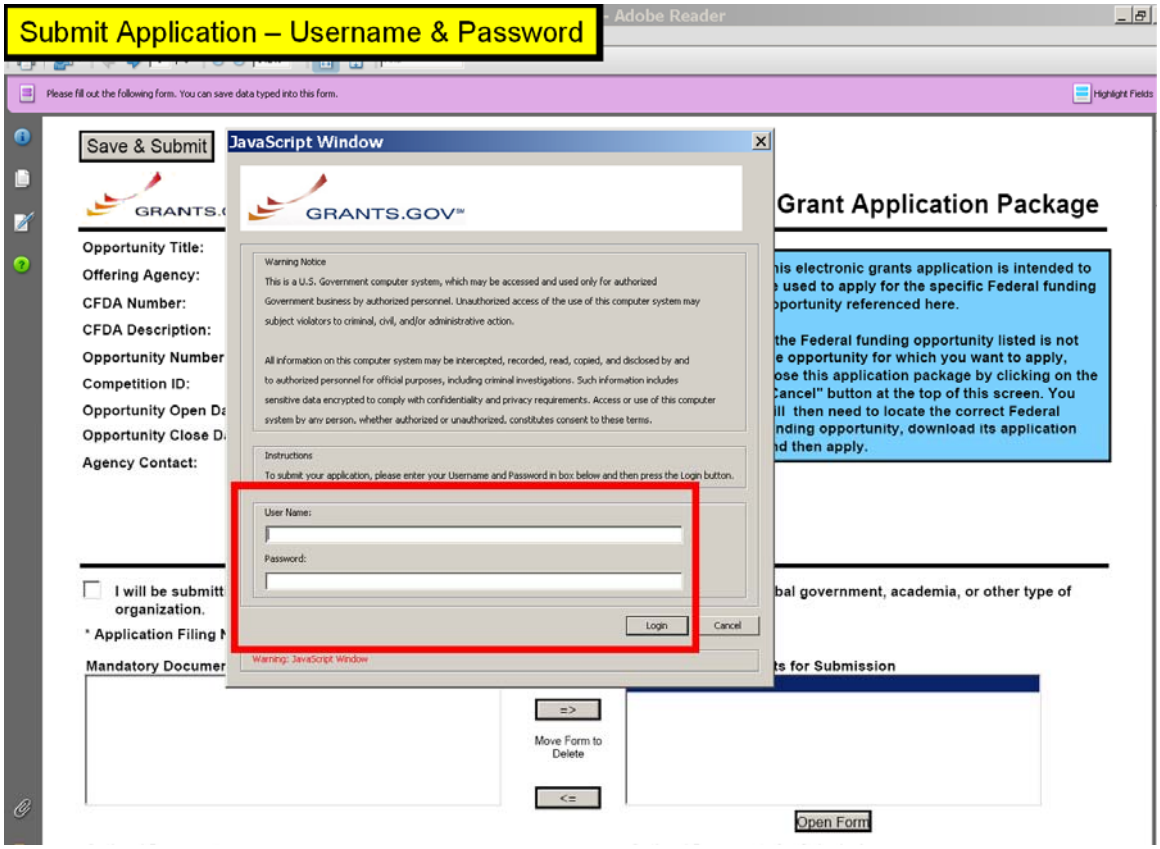
APPLICANT ENHANCEMENTS

Faster Credential Validation

A major portion of the system build was devoted to updating the Grants.gov LDAP (Lightweight Directory Access Protocol). The LDAP is a database which stores all system user identification information. The LDAP configuration determines the speed at which users are recognized and their credentials (username, password, DUNS number, System-to-System certificates, etc.) are verified as valid for use with the system. A user's information must be validated each time they access the system, by either logging into the website (see **Figure – "User Login Interface"**) or submitting a grant application (see **Figure – "Submit Application – Username & Password"**). Currently the system is able to validate and permit 360 concurrent users; after the Build the system will allow 2000 concurrent users.

Prior to the System Build, the LDAP configuration was becoming overloaded (designed at the beginning of the Grants.gov initiative in 2002), since it was created with far less users in mind. Before the Build, the LDAP was configured to verify user information separately as individual units, which took more time than to verify user information in clusters as a single unit. Users will now be clustered and associated with their respective groups (Applicant and Grantor). All user information within the LDAP will be treated as one unit, then validated, instead of a user's information being checked in parts as several separate units. After the Build, users will be able to be validated by the system much quicker which will mean faster login times and submission processing.


User Login Interface
GRANTS.GOV
Search
Contact Us
Site Map
Help
RSS
FOR APPLICANTS
Find Grant Opportunities
Get Registered
Apply for Grants
Track Your Application
Applicant Resources
Search FAQs, User Guides and Site Information
APPLICANT SYSTEM-TO-SYSTEM
FOR GRANTORS
ABOUT GRANTS.GOV
HELP
CONTACT US
SITE MAP
Find. Apply. Succeed.
Grants.gov is your source to FIND and APPLY
Department of Health and Human Services is
Grants.gov, an initiative that is having an unpa
Learn more about Grants.gov and determine if
offered on this site.
Grants.gov does not provide personal financial
find personal help, check Government Benefi
Business Start-up Loans.
What's New This We
New Opportunities
Adobe Reader 8.1.3 Resolve
"Broken Pipe" plus other Adobe
FOR APPLICANTS
Grant Search
Grant Email Alerts
Get Registered
Applicant Login
E-Biz POC Login
FOR GRANTORS
Agency Login
New Grantor Users
Resources
Sign-up for our "Succeed" Quarterly Newsletter
Quick Links
New! Grants.gov Blog
FOR APPLICANTS
Grant Search
Grant Email Alerts
Applicant Login
E-Biz POC Login
FOR GRANTORS
Agency Login
New Grantor Users
Resources

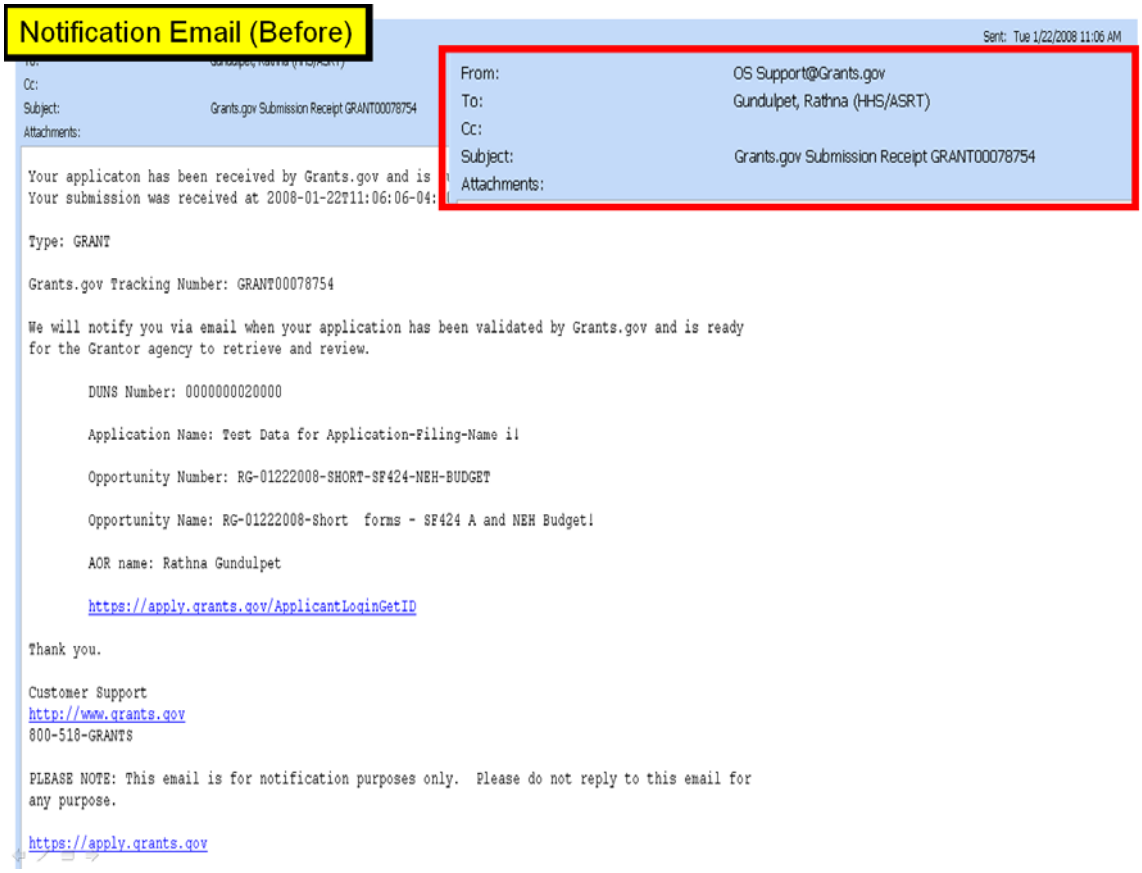


Managing Notification Email Simplified

Prior to the Build, application submission notification emails would appear in an applicant's inbox according to the type of email it was (i.e., Submission Validation Receipt for Application); however some applicants submit multiple grant application packages so it was hard to tell which email corresponded to each application package without opening the email. (See **Figure – "Notification Email (Before)"** below)

After the Build, the Grants.gov tracking number will be placed in front of every email subject line (see **Figure – "Notification Email (After)"** below). This will provide an easier way to organize emails according to their corresponding submission. Each submission's emails will be grouped together in an inbox by tracking number; which will make tracking the progress of a particular submission much easier. The new placement of the tracking number in the front of the subject line will also create a more consistent appearance of emails. Users will notice a change in the Submission Received Email, Submission Validated Email, Submission Rejected Email, Submission Agency Retrieval Email, and Submission Assign Agency Tracking Number Email.

Notification Email (Before)



Sent: Tue 1/22/2008 11:06 AM

From: OS Support@Grants.gov
To: Gundulpet, Rathna (HHS/ASRT)
Cc:
Subject: Grants.gov Submission Receipt GRANT00078754
Attachments:

Cc:
Subject: Grants.gov Submission Receipt GRANT00078754
Attachments:

Your applicaton has been received by Grants.gov and is
Your submission was received at 2008-01-22T11:06:06-04:

Type: GRANT

Grants.gov Tracking Number: GRANT00078754

We will notify you via email when your application has been validated by Grants.gov and is ready
for the Grantor agency to retrieve and review.

DUNS Number: 0000000020000

Application Name: Test Data for Application-Filing-Name i1

Opportunity Number: RG-01222008-SHORT-SF424-NEH-BUDGET

Opportunity Name: RG-01222008-Short forms - SF424 A and NEH Budget1

AOR name: Rathna Gundulpet

https://apply.grants.gov/ApplicantLoginGetID

Thank you.

Customer Support
http://www.grants.gov
800-518-GRANTS

PLEASE NOTE: This email is for notification purposes only. Please do not reply to this email for
any purpose.

https://apply.grants.gov

Notification Email (After)

<Sample Email Copy>

From: support@grants.gov [mailto:support@grants.gov]
Sent: Monday, March 17, 2008 6:09 PM
To: Vemula, Kavitha
Subject: GRANT00001086 Grants.gov Submission Validation Receipt for Application

Your application has been received and validated by Grants.gov and is being prepared for Grantor agency retrieval and review.

Type: GRANT
Grants.gov Tracking Number: GRANT00001086

You will be notified via email when your application has been retrieved by Grantor agency.

Thank you.
Grants.gov
mailto:support@grants.gov

If you have questions please contact the Grants.gov Contact Center:
support@grants.gov
1-800-518-4726(M-F 7:00 AM - 9:00 PM ET)

PLEASE NOTE: This email is for notification purposes only. Please do not reply to this email for any purpose.

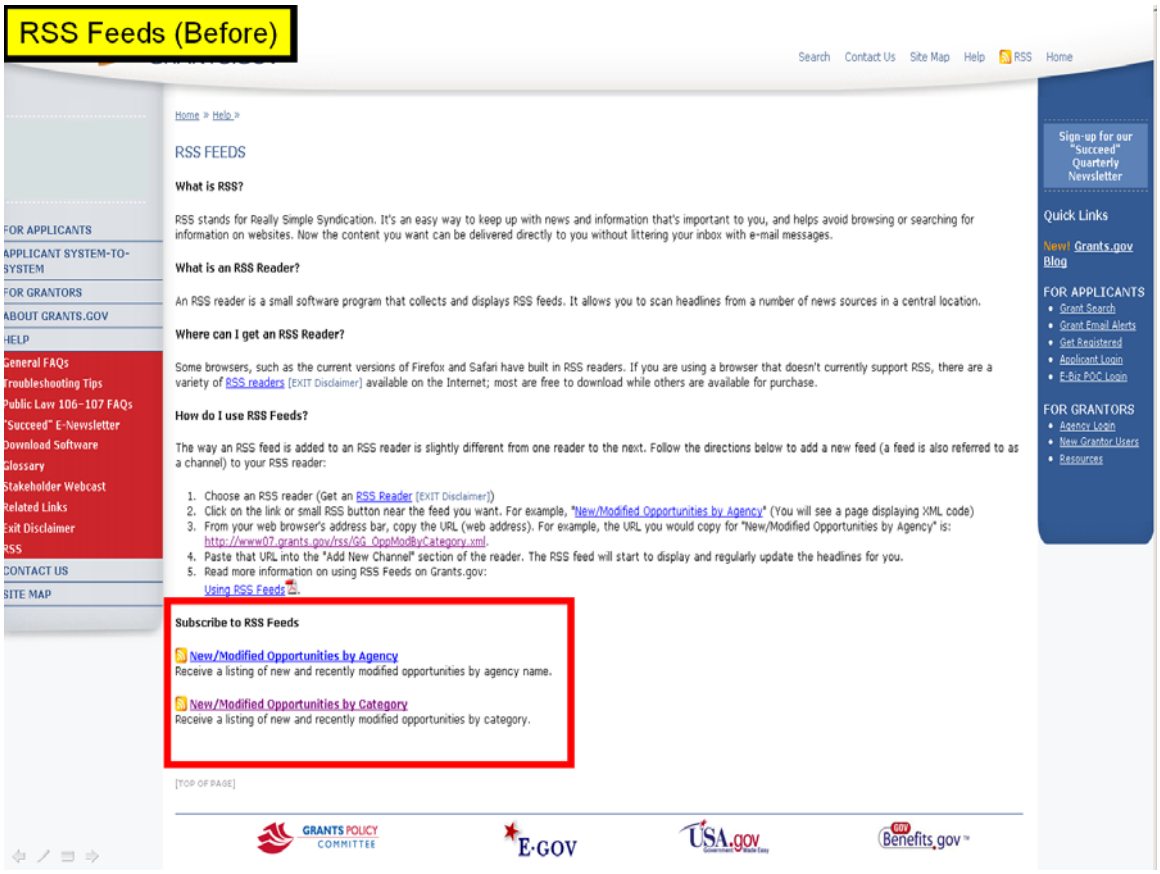
More Options for RSS Feeds

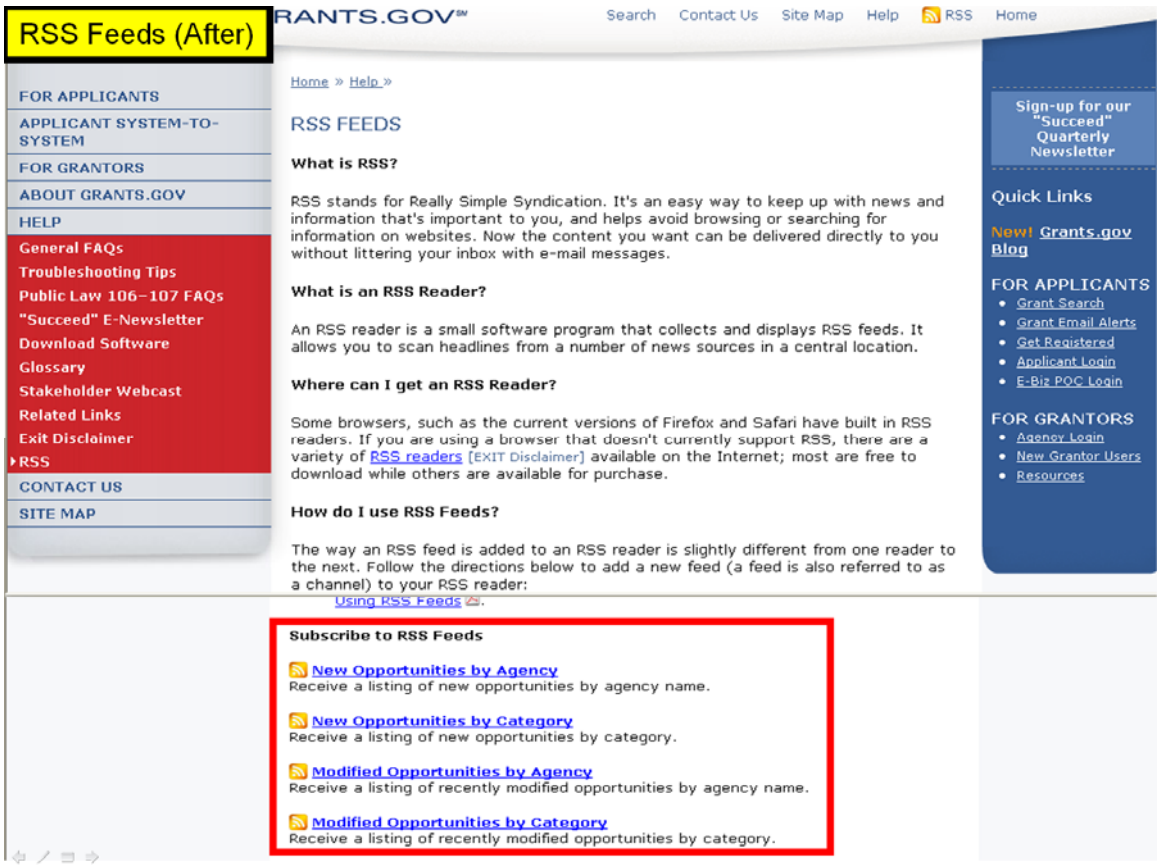
Prior to the Build, users were offered two RSS feeds. The RSS feeds included both new and modified opportunities and were grouped either by the Grantor Agency providing the funding opportunity or by the category for which it fit (see **Figure – "RSS Feeds (Before)"**).

To offer users more options of viewing opportunities, Grants.gov created four separate RSS feeds. Users who wish to receive information about new opportunities only may do so by agency and/or by category; users wishing to receive only information about modified opportunities may do so by agency and/or by category. The new RSS feeds created during the System Build will allow users to receive and view only the information they wish, nothing more or less.

Four New RSS Feeds (see **Figure – "RSS Feeds (After)"**):

1. New Opportunities Modified by Agency
2. Modified Opportunities by Agency
3. New Opportunities by Category
4. Modified Opportunities by Category





APPLICANT SYSTEM-TO-SYSTEM

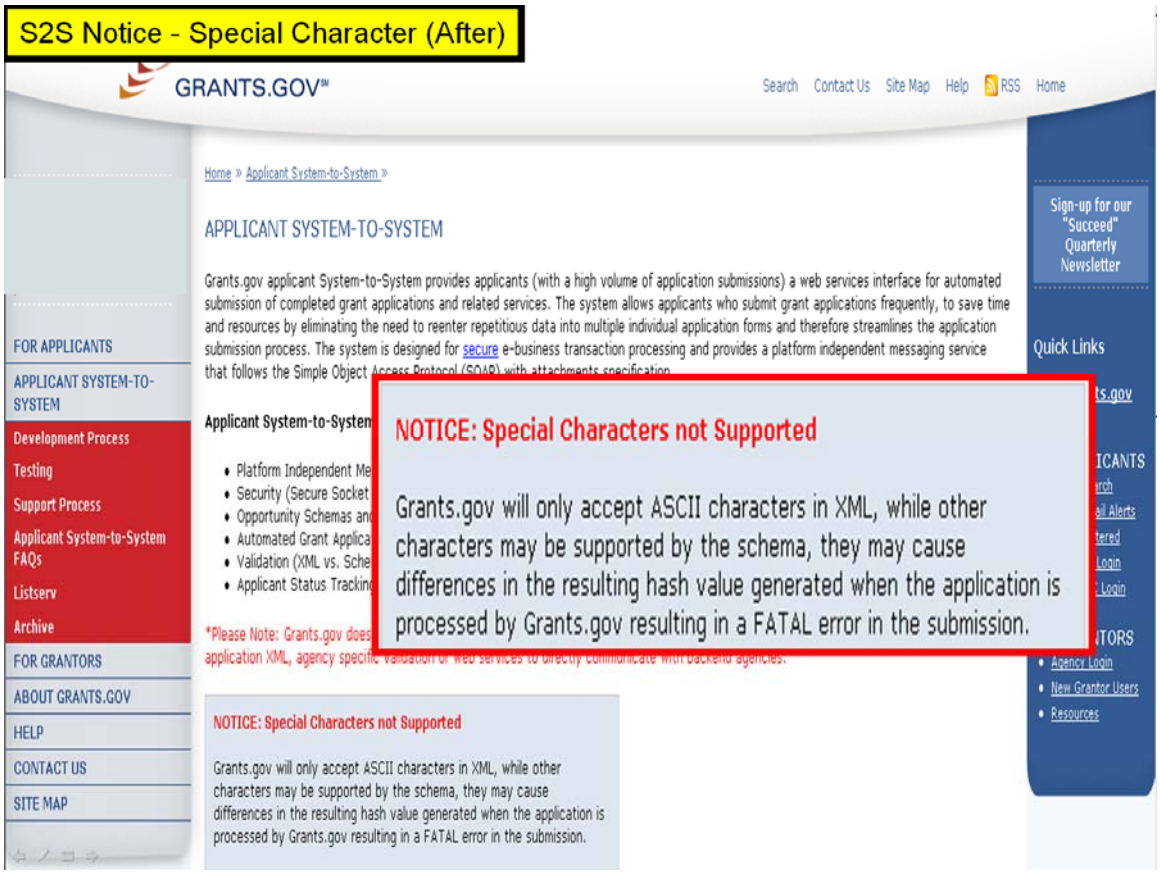
Using Special Characters in XML Schema

Prior to the System Build, there was no warning or notice given to System-to-System (S2S) users about the use of non ASCII characters within the Grants.gov XML schema.

During the Build, the following message was added to the Applicant System-to-System page: http://www.grants.gov/applicant_s2s/applicant_system_to_system.jsp (see **Figure - "S2S Notice – Special Character (After)"** below), to provide guidance on the use of special characters:

> **NOTICE: Special Characters Not Supported**
> Grants.gov will only accept ASCII characters in XML; while other characters may be supported by the schema, they may cause differences in the resulting hash

value generated when the application is processed by Grants.gov, resulting in a FATAL error in the submission.



GRANTS.GOV REGISTRATION UPDATE

Grants.gov registration is an integral part of the federal grant application process. In order to apply for grants, you must be registered with Grants.gov. The objective of registering with Grants.gov is to validate the applicant's identity and verify that they are eligible to apply for a federal grant. For this reason Grants.gov requires electronic credentials – a username and password – to access the system.

Grants.gov's current credential provider (eAuthentication) provided by the Operational Research Consultants (ORC) is scheduled to sunset. Due to the unavailability of this service, Grants.gov will become the service provider. The changes implemented to the

registration (both organization and individual) processes during Build 2008-03 are explained in further detail below. *There will be no change to System-to-System (S2S) users with this update, as S2S users are validated through certificates not registration credentials.*

ORGANIZATION REGISTRATION

Organization Registration will be simplified by reducing the number of steps from six to five. Step 3, which is obtaining a username and password (for use when submitting an application package and logging into the applicant user interface), is now being provided by Grants.gov.

Old Registration Process	New Registration Process
Step 1: Obtain DUNS Number	**Step 1:** Obtain DUNS Number
Step 2: Register with CCR	**Step 2:** Register with CCR
Step 3: Obtain Username & Password	**Step 3:** Username & Password
Step 4: Grants.gov Registration	**Step 4:** AOR Authorization
Step 5: AOR Authorization	**Step 5:** Track AOR Status
Step 6: Track AOR Status	

Registration Step 3 Change

Legacy Users vs. New Users

1. **Legacy Users** – a legacy user is defined as an applicant who has completed registration before the Build 2008-03 is implemented.

    a. **Submitting an application:** As long as the applicant knows their username and password, they will be able to submit their application (**Figure 2**) without any issues (see item "c" below if user forgets their username/password). The applicant will NOT be prompted to complete a profile, create a secret question/answer and username/password until they use the applicant user interface, i.e., the Applicant Login (**Figure 1**). It is highly recommended that legacy users login to the applicant user interface and complete a profile, secret question/answer and username/password.

    b. **Logging into the user interface:** If a legacy user goes to the Applicant Login (**Figure 1**) and enters their username and password, they will be prompted to complete a profile, create a secret question/answer and confirm their username/password. *Applicants using their username and*

*password to submit a grant application package (**Figure 2**) will NOT be prompted to complete a profile.*

2. **New Users** – an applicant who registers once Build 2008-03 is implemented will complete a profile and create a username/password using the new registration process.

Figure 1
Applicant Login User Interface
(Right Navigation Bar)

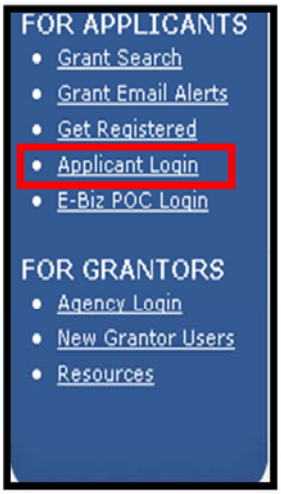
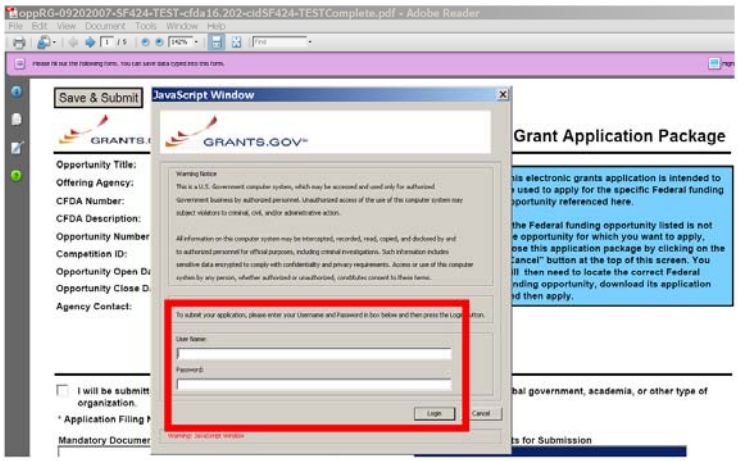


Figure 2
Sign & Submit
Grants.gov Application Package



Forgot My Username/Forgot My Password

Setting up a user profile allows a user to reset their password at anytime. If a user forgets either their username or password – on the applicant login page they will choose either the link “Forgot My Username” or the link ”Forgot My Password” and enter their information as instructed on the screen (**Figure 3**).

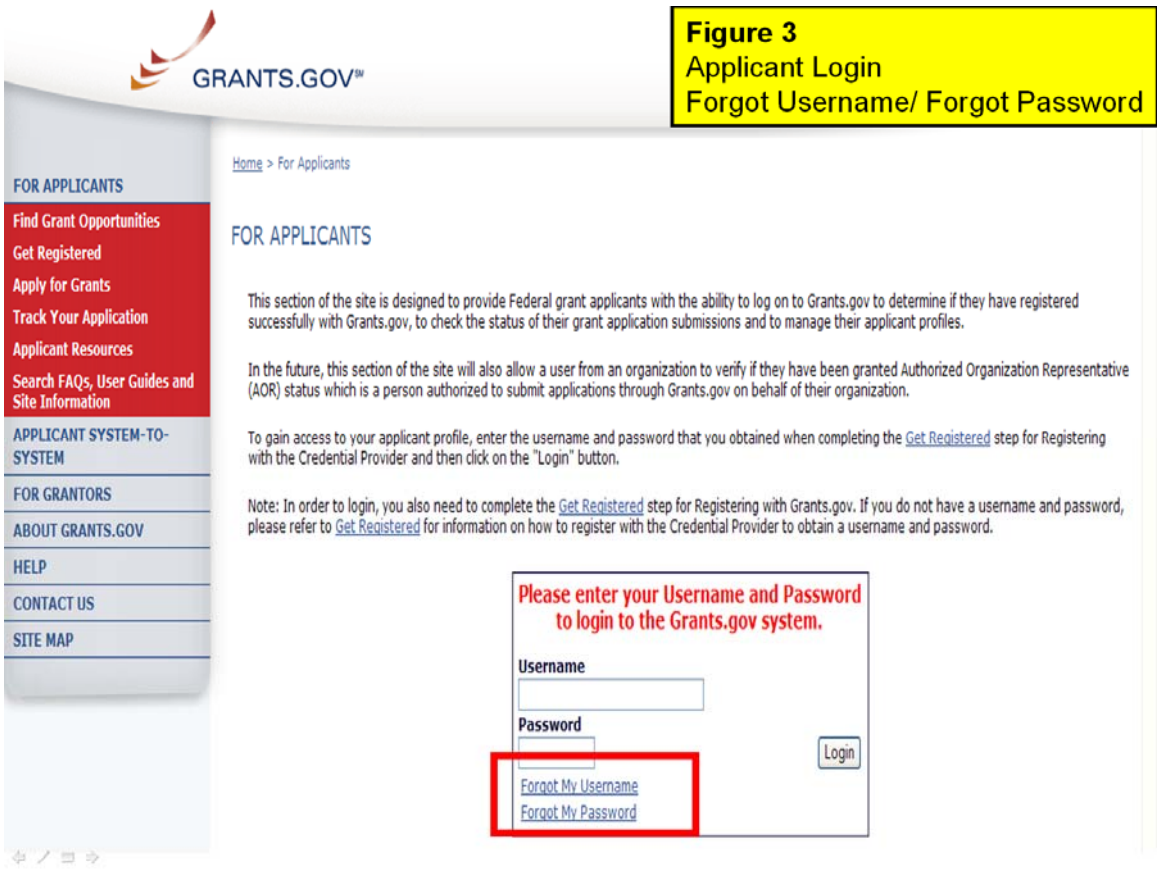
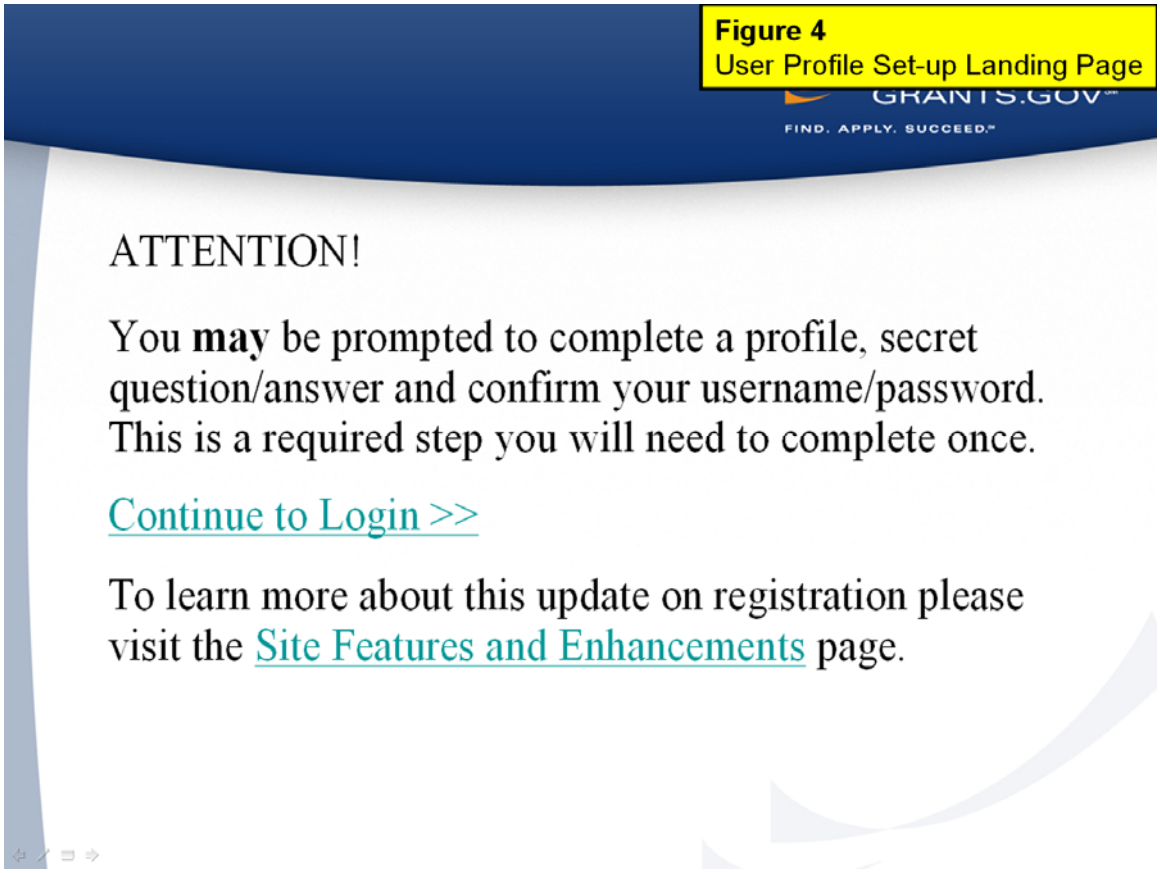


Figure 3
Applicant Login
Forgot Username/ Forgot Password

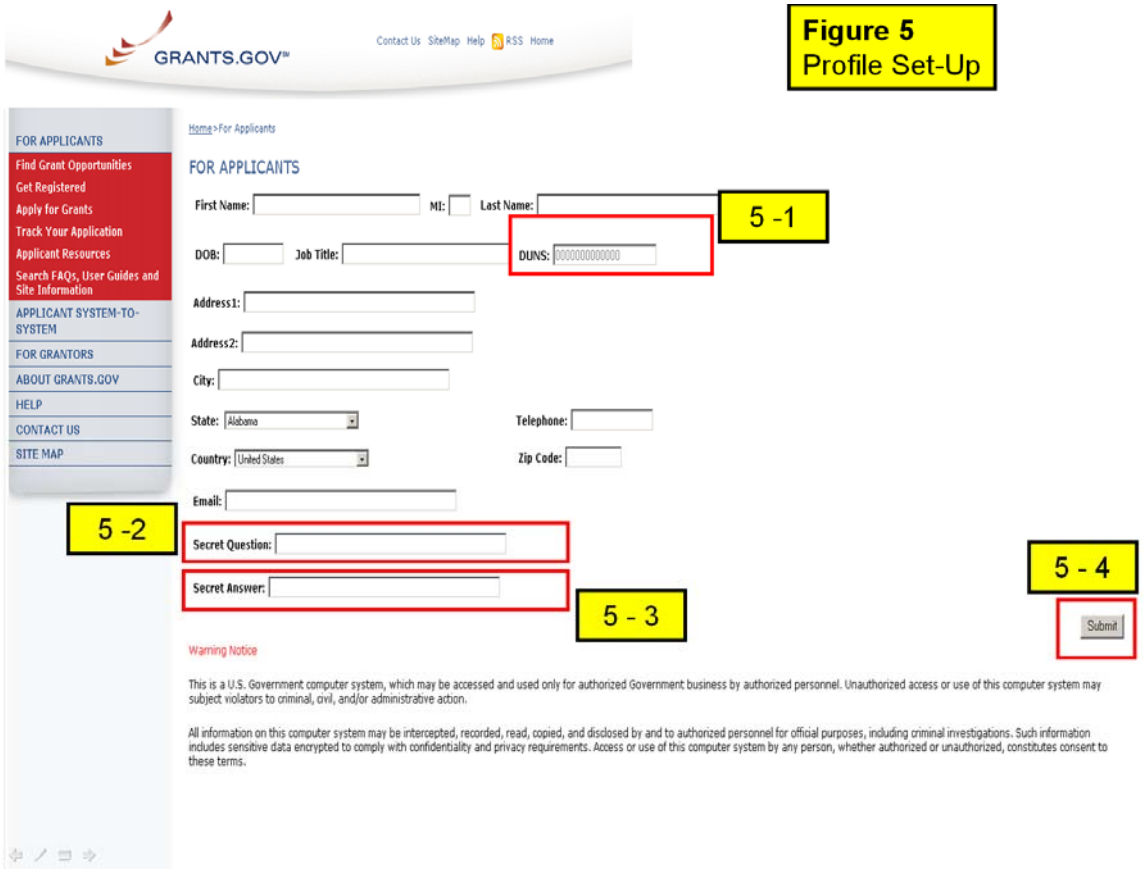
a. **User has tried to Reset and still fails to obtain their Username and Password:** If a legacy user has already attempted to reset their own username and password, then it is suggested to contact the E-Biz POC (the E-Biz POC will need to login) to inform the applicant of their username – the applicant can now restart the process and the system will send an automated password. If the applicant is unable to contact the E-Biz POC, then they should call the Contact Center and create a ticket.

1. Creating a User Profile – Legacy Organization Users

Upon clicking the Applicant login the applicant will be directed to a landing page with a message that they may need to complete a user profile (**Figure 4**).



After logging into Grants.gov the applicant will be prompted to complete a user profile (**Figure 5**) if they have not already done so. The profile screen will appear with a pre-populated DUNS field (**Figure 5 - 1**). The user will also need to create a "secret question" (**Figure 5 - 2**) and "answer" (**Figure 5- 3**). *The "secret question" and "answer" fields have a 100 character limit each. Spaces and punctuation are counted as characters. This information is not case sensitive.* The user must enter a response in all fields of the profile questionnaire (except: Address line 2).*The following field requirements apply for DOB: (mm/dd/yyyy) and Telephone (xxx-xxx-xxxx).* Once the user has completed all information they will submit their information using the submit button (**Figure 5 - 4**).



After the user has submitted their information the following screen (**Figure 6**) will appear, where they can edit (**Figure 6 - 1**) or confirm (**Figure 6 - 2**) and continue submitting information.

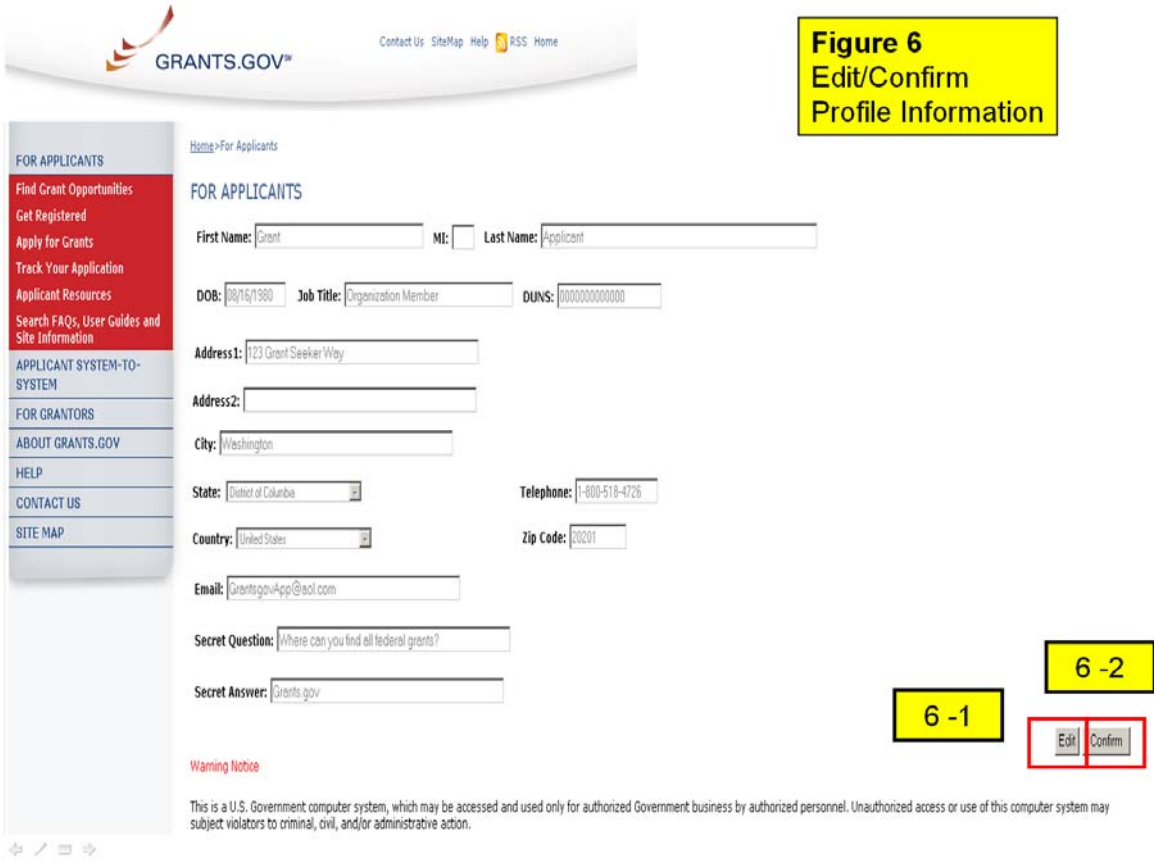
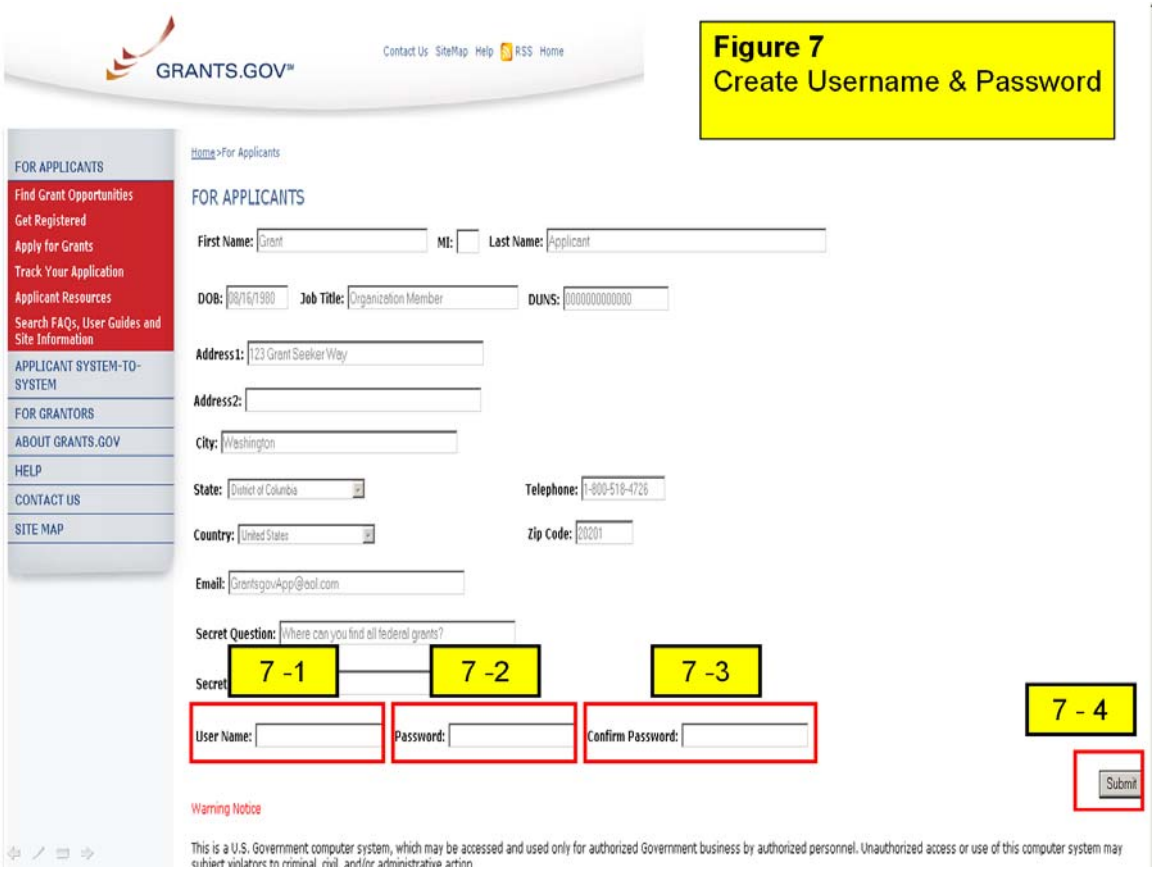
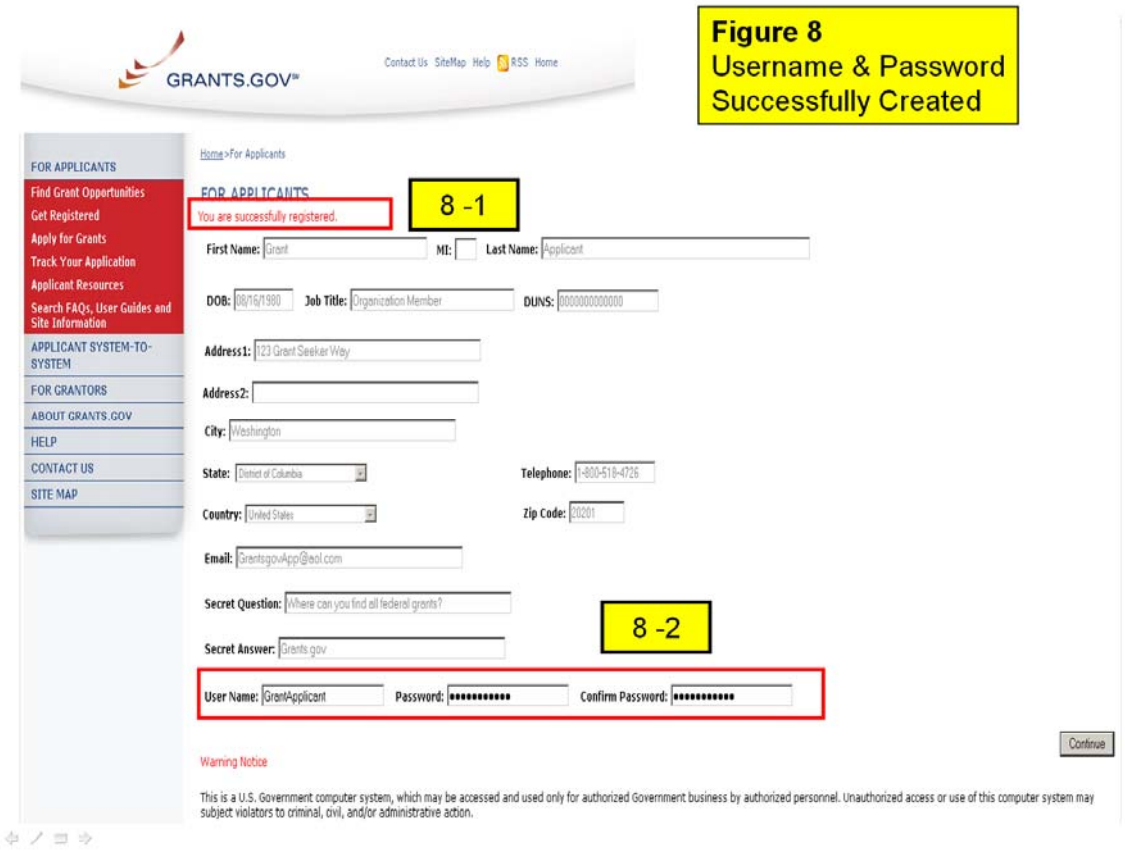


Figure 6
Edit/Confirm
Profile Information

Once the user confirms their profile information is correct and complete, the user will create a username and password (**Figure 7 – 1**, **Figure 7 - 2**), then confirm their password by re-typing it (**Figure 7 – 3**) and choose submit (**Figure 7 - 4**).

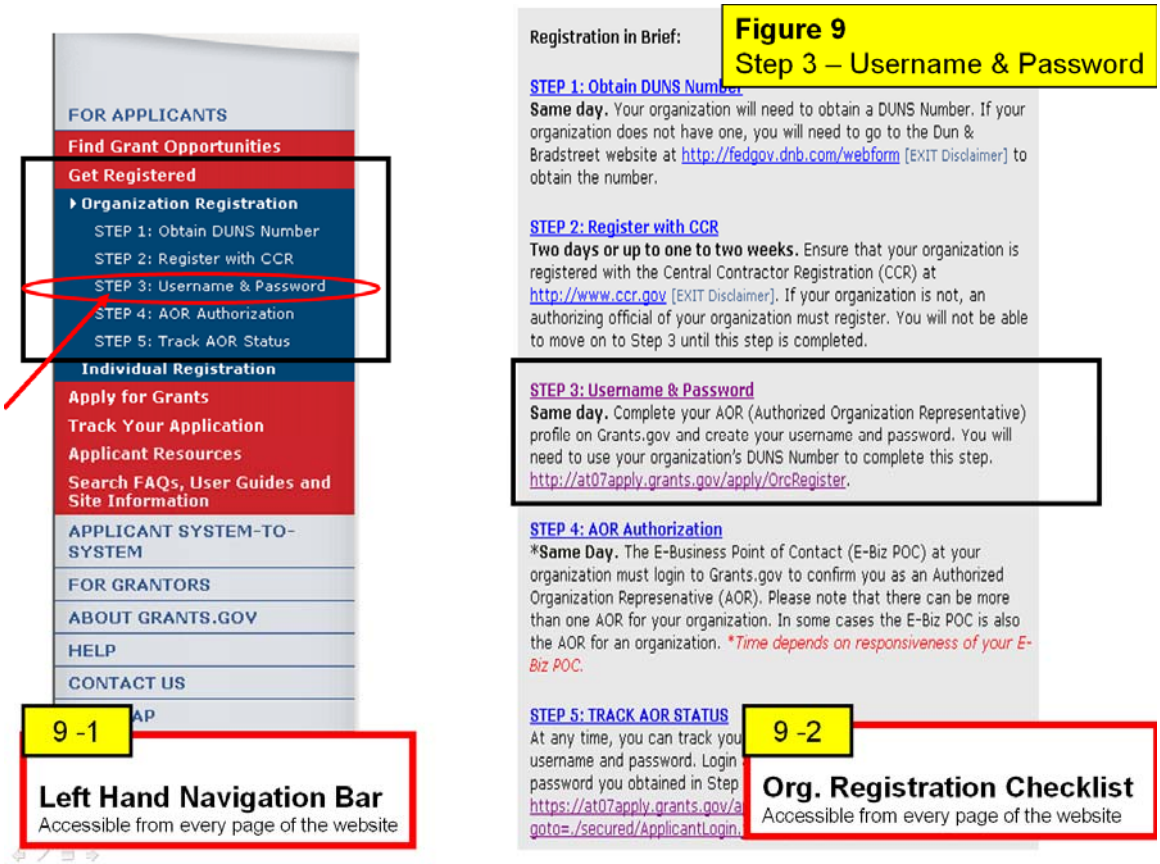


After the user creates and confirms a username and password, they will get a message stating that "you are successfully registered" (**Figure 8-1**), which means they have completed step 3 of the registration process and now have a username and password (**Figure 8 - 2**).



2. Creating a User Profile – New Organization Users

To create a username and password as a new applicant registrant, simply follow the steps outlined on the website under the "Get Registered" section: http://www.grants.gov/applicants/get_registered.jsp. A new user will complete the registration process including Step 3 shown below to complete a profile, create a username and password (**Figure 9 - 1**). New users may follow the steps shown in the Organization Registration Checklist (**Figure 9 - 2**) below.



The new user will be asked to provide a DUNS number to complete this part of the registration process (**Figure 9**). Once the new user enters their DUNS number they will follow the steps as outlined for **"Creating a User Profile – Legacy Organization Users"** pages 18 – 22.

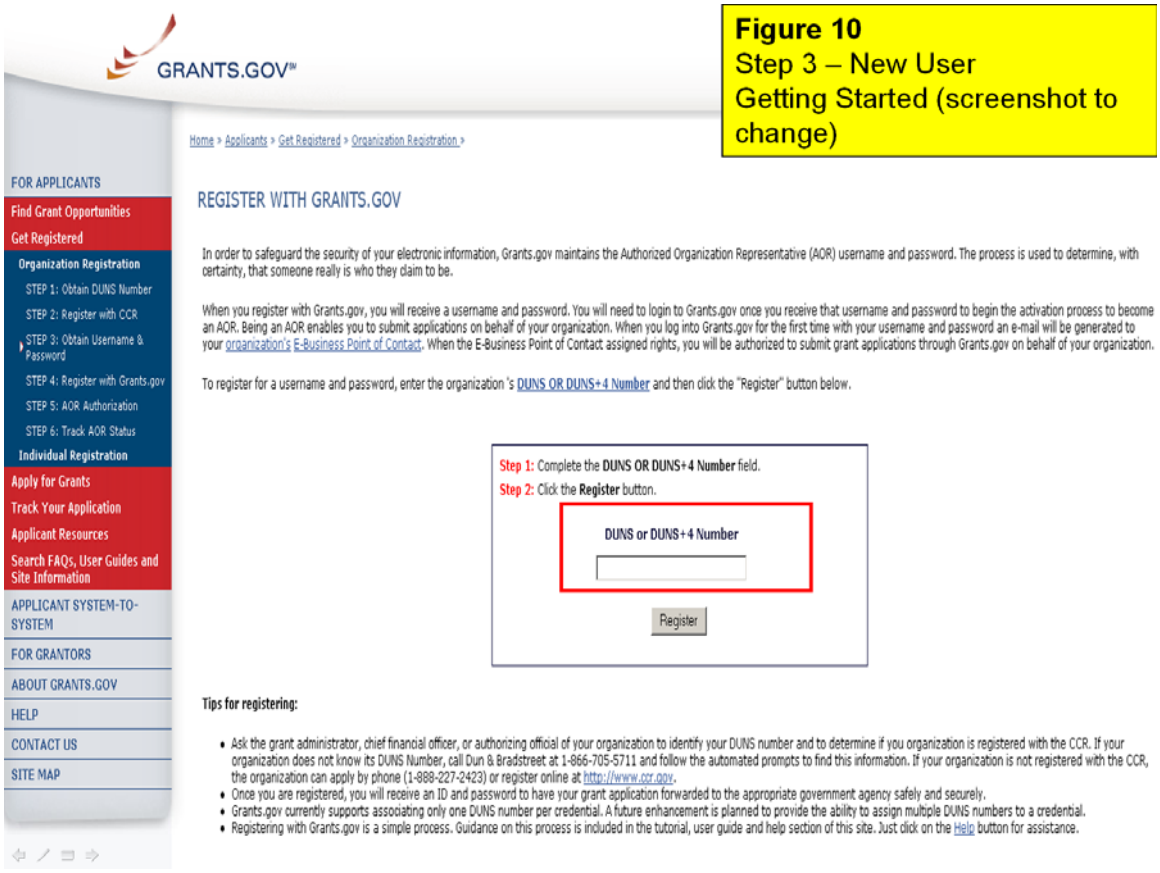


Figure 10
Step 3 – New User
Getting Started (screenshot to change)

INDIVIDUAL REGISTRATION

Individual registration has been simplified to a single step (formerly a two step process). Step 1, which was obtaining a username and password (for use when submitting an application package and logging into the applicant user interface), is now being provided by Grants.gov instead of the secondary credential provider (ORC).

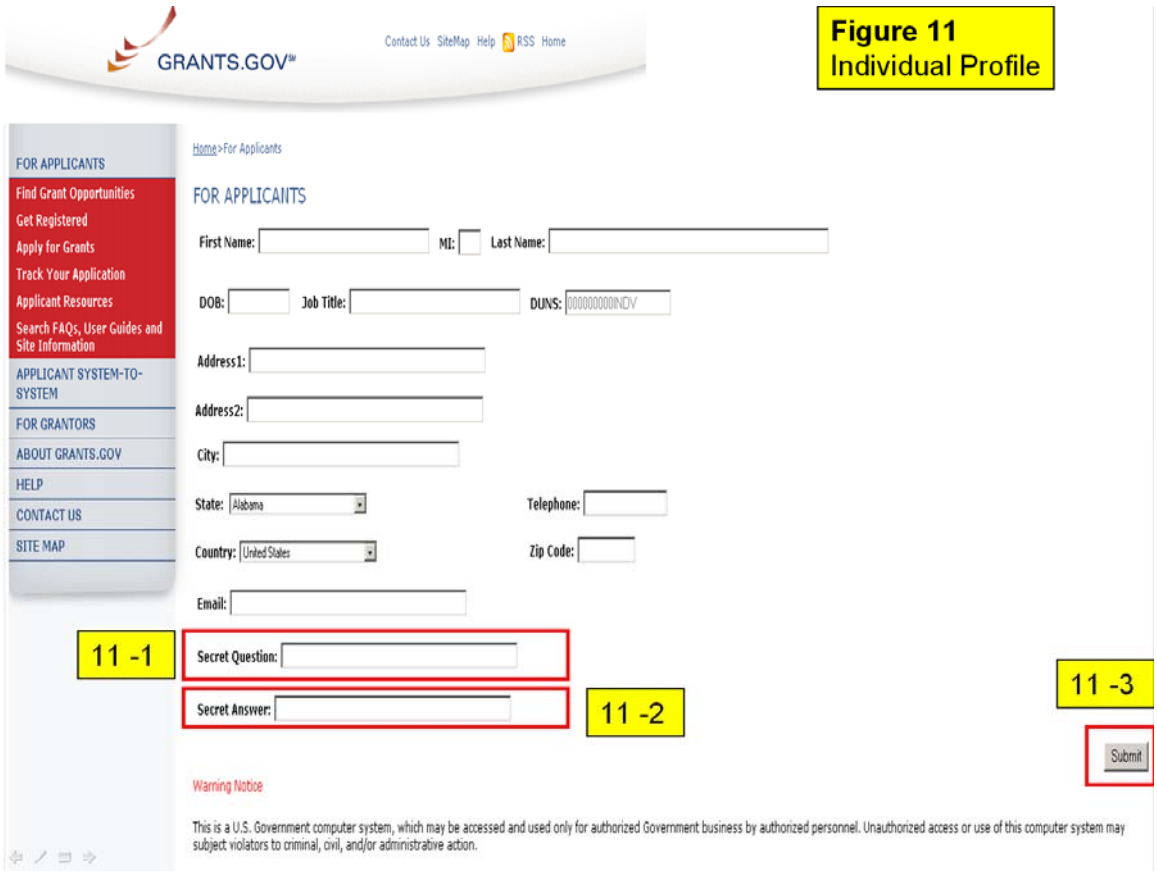
Old Registration Process	New Registration Process
Step 1: Username & Password	**Step 1:** Register with Grants.gov
Step 2: Register with Grants.gov	

1. Creating a User Profile – Legacy Individual Users

Individuals currently registered with Grants.gov will need to login to the Grants.gov user interface (**Figure 1**) to create a user profile. The user may continue to submit grant

applications with their current username and password (**Figure 2**); however they will not be able to reset or change their information within the system without creating a user profile. Creating a profile will allow the user to reset a forgotten username or password and allow them to change their login information (username and password) whenever the user prefers.

Upon clicking the Applicant login the applicant will be directed to a landing page with a message that they may need to complete a user profile (**Figure 4**). After logging into Grants.gov the applicant will be prompted to complete a user profile (**Figure 11**) if they have not already done so. The user will also need to create a "secret question" (**Figure 11- 1**) and "answer" (**Figure 11 - 2**). *The "secret question" and "answer" fields have a 100 character limit each. Remember the format of the "secret answer", as spaces and punctuation are counted as characters within the "secret answer". This information is not case sensitive.* The user must enter a response in all fields of the profile questionnaire. *The following field requirements apply for DOB: (mm/dd/yyyy) and Telephone (xxx-xxx-xxxx).* Once the user completes all information they will submit their information using the submit button (**Figure 11 - 3**).



After the user submits their information the following screen (**Figure 12**) will appear, where they can edit (**Figure 12- 1**) or confirm (**Figure 12- 2**) and continue submitting their information.

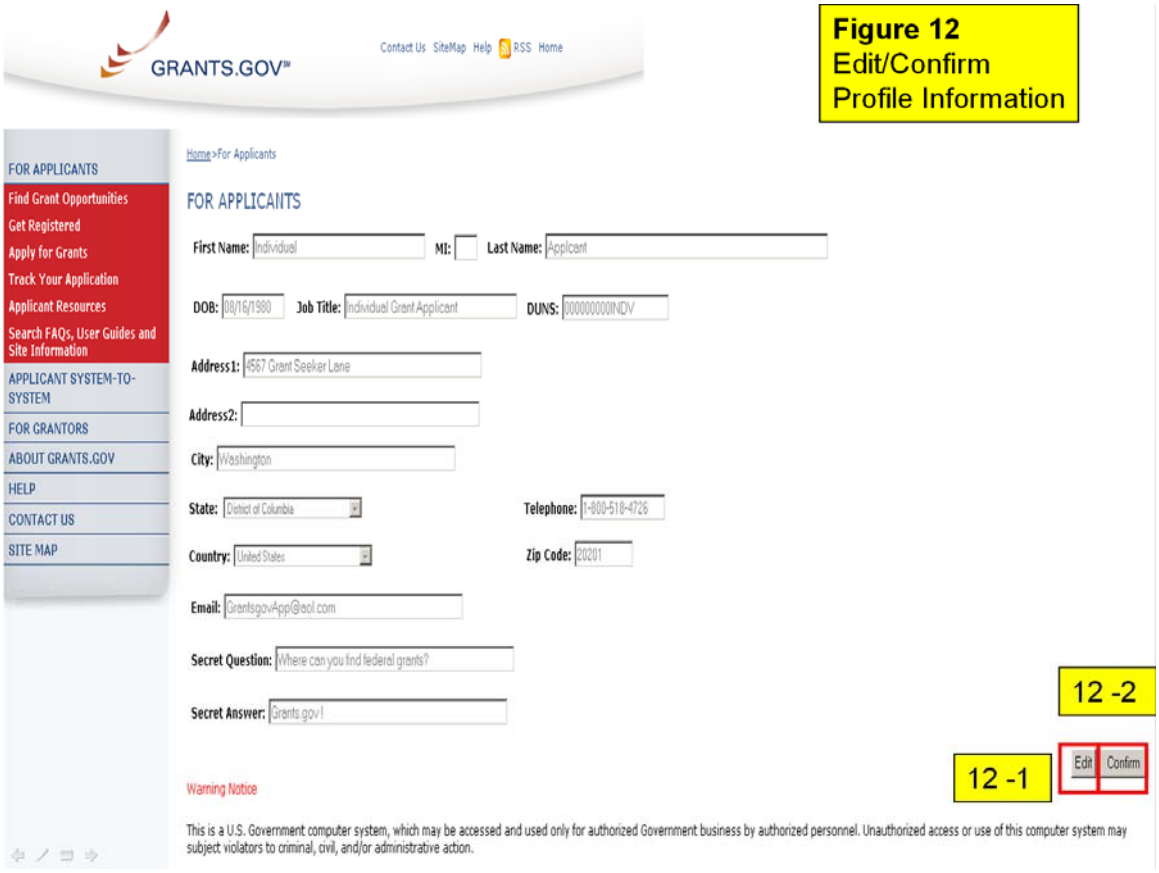


Figure 12
Edit/Confirm
Profile Information

Once the user confirms their profile information is correct and complete, the user will create a username and password (**Figure 13 – 1**, **Figure 13 - 2**), then confirm their password by re-typing it (**Figure 13 – 3**) and choose submit (**Figure 13 - 4**).

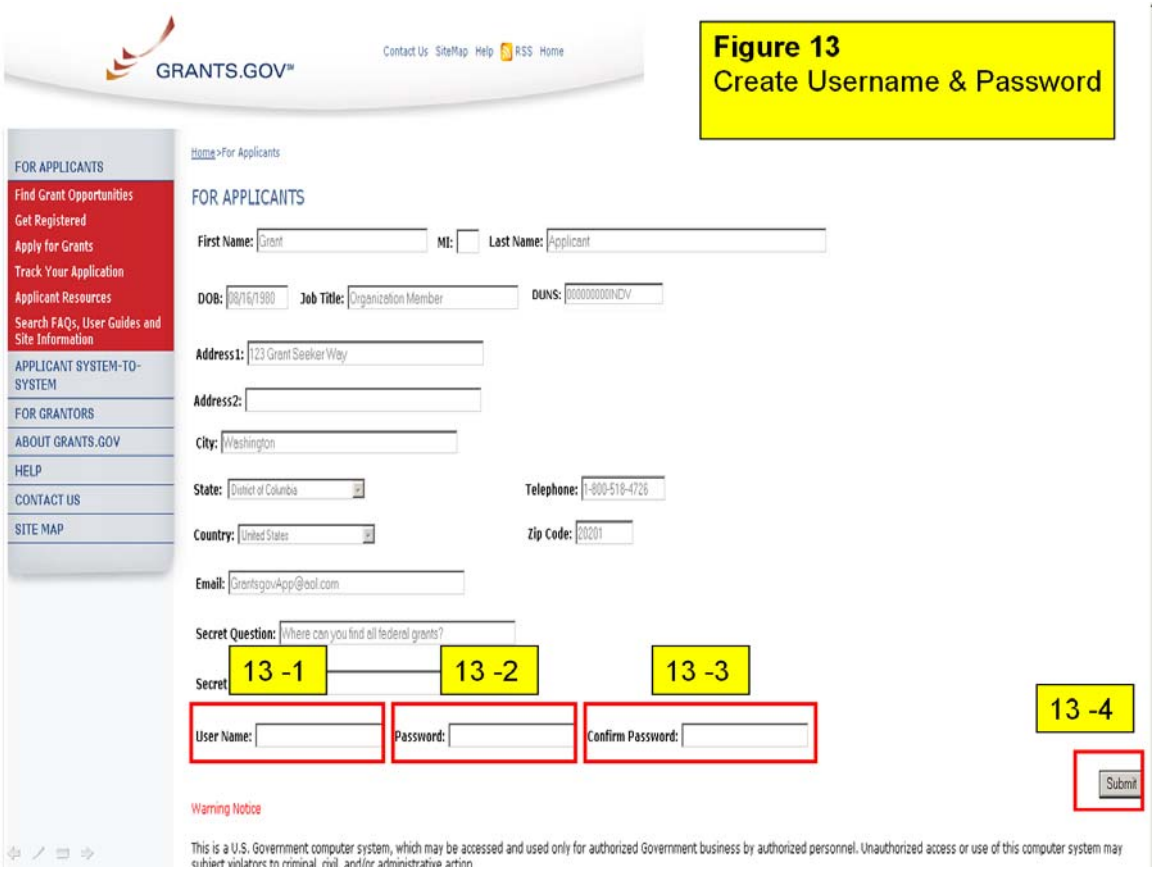


Figure 13
Create Username & Password

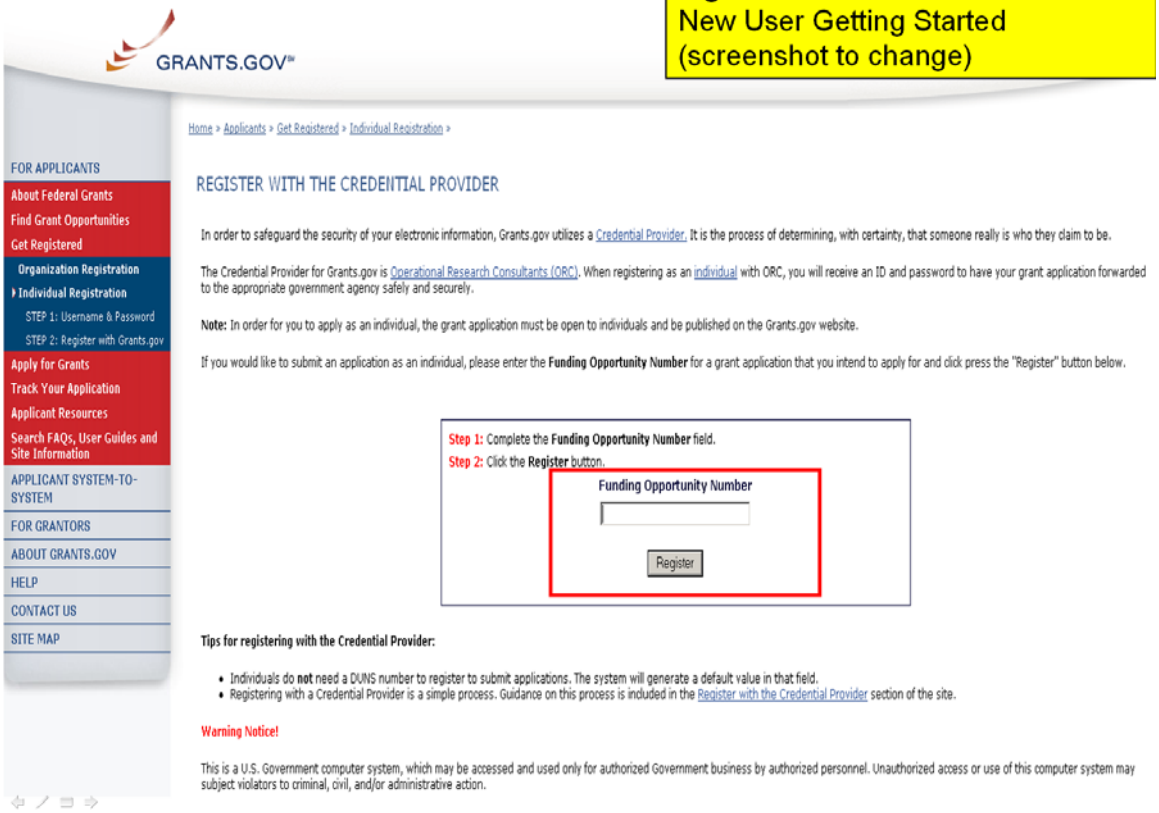
2. Creating a User Profile – New Individual Users

To create a username and password as a new applicant registrant, simply follow the steps outlined on the website under the "Get Registered" section: http://www.grants.gov/applicants/get_registered.jsp. A new user will complete the registration process including completing a profile, creating a username and password. New users may start the registration process by visiting the Individual Registration page: http://www.grants.gov/applicants/individual_registration.jsp (see **Figure 14** below).

Figure 14
Individual Registration

A Funding Opportunity Number (FON) for a grant available to individuals must be used to begin the process of setting up a user profile. Once a valid FON is entered in the field (shown in **Figure 15** below) on the Individual Registration page, they will follow the steps as outlined for "**Creating a User Profile – Legacy Individual Users"** pages 25-28.

Figure 15
New User Getting Started
(screenshot to change)



Forgot My Username/Forgot My Password

Setting up a user profile allows a user to reset their password at anytime. If a user forgets their username or password, on the applicant login page they will choose either the link for “Forgot My Username” or the link ”Forgot My Password” and enter their information as instructed on the screen (**Figure 3**).

CHECKING REGISTRATION STATUS

To check registration status, an applicant may login into Grants.gov using the username and password obtained (Legacy User) or created (New User) during registration. Click “Manage Applicant Profile” (see **Figure 16-1**). If the registration was successful there will be a message under the profile management box stating “AOR Status: Approved” (see **Figure 16-2**).

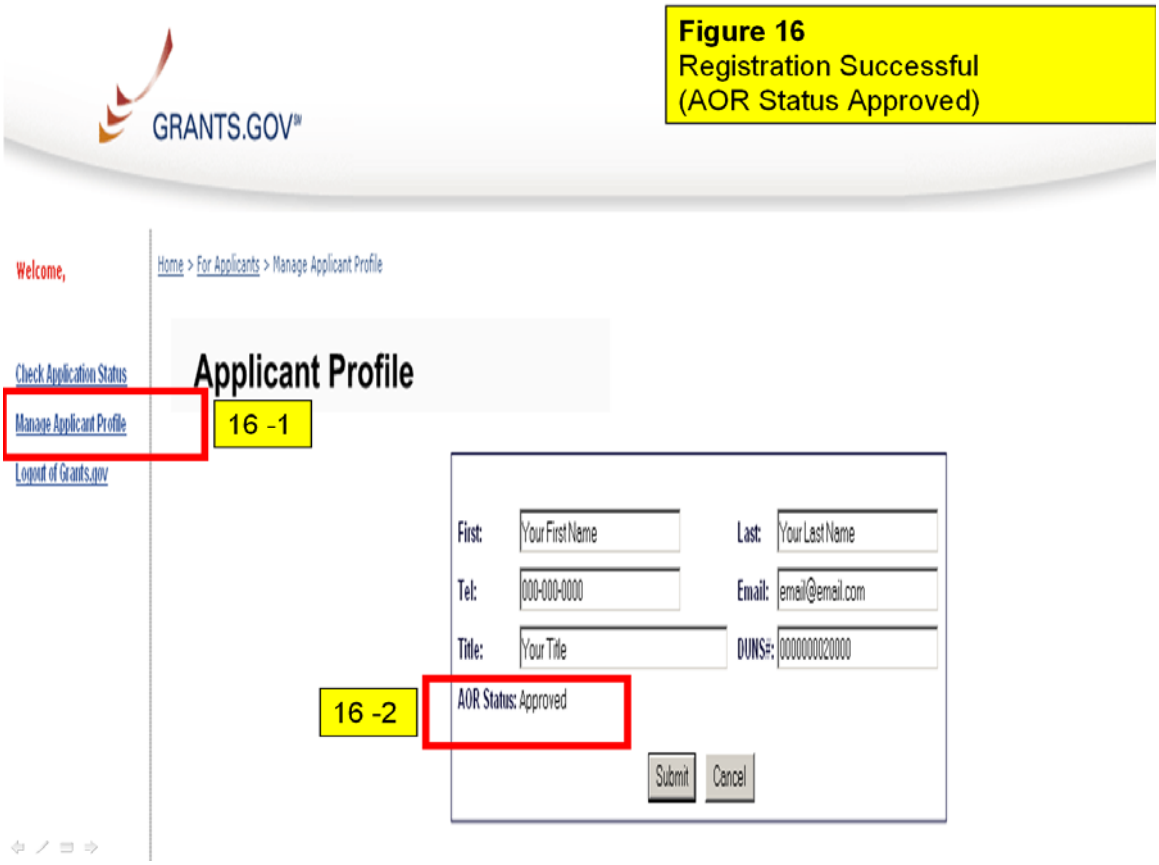


Figure 16
Registration Successful
(AOR Status Approved)

For More Information/Help
Creating a Grants.gov Profile see the **"Get Registered – Applicant Profile"** FAQ section on the website: http://grants.gov/applicants/applicant_faqs.jsp#registering