MANAGING PARTNER

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES · USA

Fulfilling the President's Management Agenda

FISCAL YEAR 2009 IN REVIEW

Fiscal year 2009 was a year of unprecedented growth for Grants.gov. There were a total of 309,771 submissions in FY09, a 54 percent increase over FY08 (202,366 submissions). Much of the growth experienced this year can be attributed to the Recovery Act, which resulted in increased overall Web site traffic and application submissions. Grants.gov processed 64,409 applications for Recovery Act opportunities.

This year alone several records were broken for Grants.gov. On April 27, 2009 there was an astounding 8,392 submissions and on September 18, 2009 Grants.gov received its 300,000th submission. Traffic to the Web site was also at a record high this fiscal year, there were a total of 16,236,849 visits. Traffic to the Web site peaked during the month of March in which Grants.gov received 1,994,862 visits. On average 70 percent of the visitors to the site are "unique" first time visitors.

Throughout the year, multiple Grants.gov outreach efforts, such as the Stakeholder webcast, the "Find & Apply" presentation, the Succeed Newsletter and the Web site were used to connect with the community. The Grants.gov live interactive sessions were attended by 6,930 community members. These sessions enabled participants to ask questions directly to the Grants.gov staff.

The Grants.gov Contact Center, which offers help desk support to the applicant community, experienced a significant increase in call volume. In March, call volume peaked at 36,287 calls, as a result of Recovery Act-related inquiries. The Contact Center is currently staffed with a team of 81 customer service representatives (CSRs). The CSRs are trained to handle applicant inquiries regarding the Web site, Grants.gov processes (such as registration) and technical issues.

In response to the increased system demands, system builds, also known as system enhancements, were implemented to increase system capacity, speed and reliability. Currently the Technical Augmentation Design also known as "the Boost" is underway to increase system reliability, handle the sustained high volume of submissions expected into the future, and improvements in system testing capabilities. Grants.gov continues to rise to the challenge of increased system demand and is soon expected to resume its role as the single electronic entry-point for accessing grants from all 26 federal grant-making agencies. Grants.gov provides a unified and streamlined process for finding and applying for all federal grant opportunities.

RECOVERY INFORMATION ON GRANTS.GOV

On August 3, 2009, Grants.gov introduced a new Recovery Act feature on the home page. The Recovery Act feature is a central location to view all Recovery Act opportunities on Grants.gov and information related to finding Recovery Act funding. Here you will find links to a listing of all Recovery Act grant opportunities and the new "Recovery Act Money and You" page. The "Recovery Act Money and You" page features a listing of resources with information on finding money for personal expenses, how to apply for business, organizational and community funding and other useful information. Other resources included are, White House Recovery Act information and the Grants.gov Recovery Act webinar series.

Grants.gov created a three-part Recovery Act webinar series on finding and applying for Recovery Act funds on Grants.gov to offer the community step-by-step demonstrations on locating Recovery Act grants. Series one, Introduction to Grants.gov and the Recovery Act, offers viewers an overview of Grants.gov, the Recovery Act and eligibility to apply for Recovery Act opportunities. Series two demonstrates the use of Grants.gov's "Advanced Search" as well as alternative information sources to locate Recovery Act grants. Information on formula and block grants are also presented in series two. During series three viewers learn the registration process and how to complete and submit a grant application. Grants.gov also partnered with FedBizOpps.gov to present the differences between opportunities listed on Grants.gov versus those on FedBizOpps.gov. Each of the webinars is archived on the webinars page.

GET CONNECTED

Sign up to receive the Succeed e-Newsletter. If you are receiving the Grants.gov Succeed e-Newsletter from a colleague or at a meeting, sign up to receive it by email – directly to your inbox. **Subscribe Today!**

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

IMPROVED SUBMISSION SPEED

Many efforts, including multiple system builds, have improved the processing time of an application submission. These enhancements have led to increased submission speed and less processing time for applications. Applications are now validating within three minutes of submission.

BOOST EFFORT (TECHNICAL AUGMENTATION DESIGN)

The team at Grants.gov has been very busy planning and implementing one of the largest system build undertakings in the history of the initiative. The Technical Augmentation Design (TAD), more commonly referred to as "the Boost," is an effort to improve system reliability and increase system capacity in anticipation of future system growth. From FY08 to FY09, there was a 54 percent increase in application submissions, a 56 percent increase in Authorized Organization Representatives (AORs) and a 32 percent increase in call volume to the Contact Center.

The Boost is an investment in additional hardware and related software enhancements which will further stabilize and increase reliability of the system at higher volume levels. The Boost will be implemented in five phases and will upgrade the Lightweight Directory Access Protocol (LDAP), Adobe, Web/application, and database server tiers, as well as the test and training environments.

Upgrades to the LDAP server will increase the capacity for supporting concurrent logins; password management; registration activity and application workflow support with fewer delays. The Adobe server upgrade will increase the ability to receive and process an increased number of applications. To improve the user's ability to access Grants.gov more quickly, conduct more efficient searches and increase site browsing speed, the Web/application server will also be enhanced. Increased storage space to handle the projected increase in application processing will be achieved by upgrading the database server tier. The Boost will also establish distinct testing and training environments to enable the community to test in a more robust controlled environment. System unavailability for scheduled maintenance will also be reduced due to more thorough testing of changes in a test environment that will better emulate the production environment. The Boost upgrades to the system will create a more robust, reliable and resilient system for current and future usage.

GRANTS.GOV WEB BROWSER COMPATIBILITY

Firefox and Internet Explorer browsers on Windows XP and Vista are compatible with Grants.gov, as well as Firefox and Safari on Mac systems. Also, no issues were found with using Google Chrome on Windows XP and Vista. Please note that Chrome is considered Beta software by Google: http://www.google.com/chrome/intl/en/why.html [EXIT Disclaimer].

CCR HAS A NEW LOOK

The Central Contractor Registration (CCR) has recently updated their home page. However, all of the processes required for CCR registration for Grants.gov remain the same. CCR registration is required for all Grants.gov applicants and must be renewed yearly to ensure applicants are eligible to submit a grant application and receive federal funds. It is also important to keep the E-Business Point of Contact information up-to-date with CCR in the event personnel changes occur within your organization.
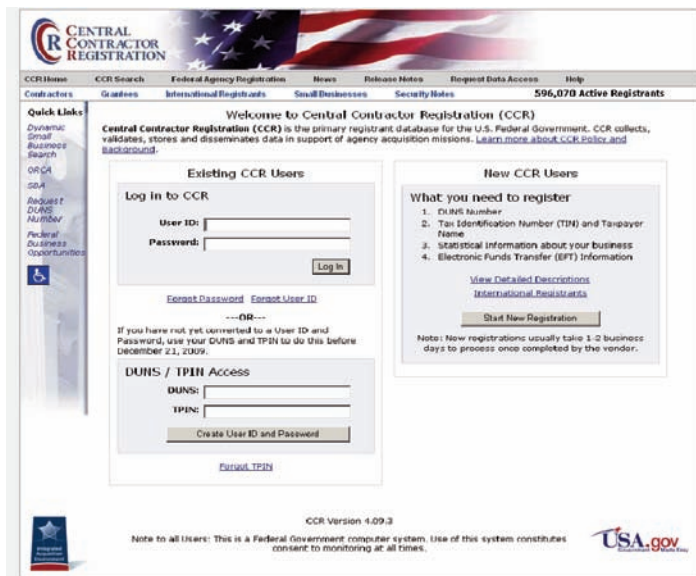
The Central Contractor Registration (CCR) is a Web-enabled government-wide application managed by GSA that collects, validates, stores and disseminates business information about the federal government's trading partners in support of the contract award, grants and the electronic payment processes.

Grants.gov does not maintain records of an applicant's CCR registration status so applicants should remember to check their CCR status (step two of the Grants.gov registration). Grants.gov registration is a one-time process, however CCR registration must be renewed yearly. To check your CCR status, visit: http://www.ccr.gov.

Use the Search CCR link, https://www.bpn.gov/CCRSearch/Search.aspx, to find information pertaining to your CCR registration.

To update or renew your CCR registration information, visit: http://www.ccr.gov/Renew.aspx.

If you are not registered with Grants.gov and wish to apply for a grant, visit the Grants.gov "Get Registered" page: http://www.grants.gov/applicants/get_registered.jsp.

STAKEHOLDER WEBCAST

The next Grants.gov Stakeholder Webcast will be held October 21, 2009 from 1:00 - 2:00 P.M. ET, to discuss the Recovery Act, system enhancements and activities around the Recovery Act and other issues affecting the grant community. Details for viewing the webcast are available on the "Stakeholder Webcast" page:

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

UPCOMING EVENT SCHEDULE

Grants.gov Stakeholder Webcast
October 21, 2009
1:00 - 2:00 P.M. ET
http://www.grants.gov/help/stakeholder_communications.jsp

American Association of Grant Professionals Annual Conference
November 4-7, 2009
Austin, Texas

http://grantprofessionals.org/annual-conference/about-the-2009-annual-conference.aspx

Grants Policy Committee (GPC) Webcast
November 12, 2009
2:00 - 3:30 P.M. ET
GPC Webcast and Outreach

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

FIND MORE RESOURCES – GRANTS.GOV TUTORIALS

Grants.gov features a variety of resources to make finding and applying for grants easier, such as animated tutorials. Animated tutorials have been created highlighting every aspect of the initiative. From understanding the purpose of Grants.gov to finding grants, registration and submitting an application there is a comprehensive animated tutorial for step-by-step instructions. Visit the "Applicant Resources" page: http://www.grants.gov/applicants/resources.jsp#animated to view animated tutorials and find other helpful resources.

NEW ADOBE READER VERSION RELEASED

To view, complete and submit a Grants.gov application package, the compatible Adobe Reader or comparable Adobe Acrobat Professional software is required. Adobe released an update to the Adobe Reader software on October 14, 2009. Confirmation of compatibility will be provided once the new Adobe Reader software version is tested and approved for use with Grants.gov.

If you are currently using a compatible version Adobe Reader software there is no need to upgrade. Compatible software may be obtained free of charge by visiting the "Download Software" page: http://www.grants.gov/help/download_software.jsp#adobe811.

COMPATIBLE VERSIONS OF ADOBE READER 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
	8.1.5	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
	8.1.6	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
9.0	9.0	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
	9.1	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
	9.1.1	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
	9.1.2	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes