Compusearch

FedConnect™

Ready, Set, Go!

A quick start guide designed to get you up and running fast with FedConnect, the portal for doing business with the federal government.

Welcome to FedConnect

FedConnect is a web portal that bridges the gap between agencies and vendors to streamline the process of doing business with the federal government. Through this portal, you will be able to review opportunities and receive awards. You'll also have an open channel of communication with the government that is both secure and auditable where you can ask questions, submit responses, acknowledge receipt of documents, and receive awards. You can even create teams within FedConnect to manage your response or award.

This guide is designed to help you get up and running as quickly as possible.

First we'll take you through the registration process. *It's fast, easy and most important, free!* In fact, using FedConnect will cost you absolutely no money and will actually save you a great deal of time and effort, which translates to even more financial savings for you.

Next, we'll walk you through the basics of everything from creating your profile to receiving an award. This guide is just a quick look, high-level tour of each of these processes. However, within FedConnect, there are lots of on-screen prompts and detailed online help that will answer any questions you might have. Of course, if you ever need additional help, the FedConnect support team is standing by, ready to assist you.

Ready? Let's go!

www.fedconnect.net

Registering

*Registering and using
FedConnect is fast,
easy, and free.*

♦

*You can have an unlimited
number of users under
your FedConnect
company account.*

♦

*You can check the status of
your registration at any
point by clicking
the **Check Status** link
on the homepage.*

♦

*When you log in, FedConnect
checks to see whether you
are an administrator or a
representative. What you
see on the pages within
FedConnect and the tasks you
can perform are determined
by this role designation.
For more information about
the differences between
administrator and
representaive access,
see page 15.*

Before you can register with FedConnect, you will need the following:

- Your company's DUNS (including plus 4 extension if applicable).

  If you don't know your company's DUNS or if your company does not have a DUNS you can search for it or request one at http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform/displayHomePage.do.

- A federal Contractor Central Registration (CCR) account.

  If your company is not currently registered with CCR, please register at www.ccr.gov before continuing with your FedConnect registration.

- Possibly, your company's CCR MPIN.

  If you are the first person from your company to register, FedConnect will need to create a company account. Only a person who knows your company's CCR MPIN can do this. To find out who this is in your company, go to http://www.ccr.gov/ and click **Search CCR**. Once you've found your company, locate the Electronic Business Point of Contact.

  After the initial FedConnect account is created, employees can register themselves without the MPIN. If you are not sure whether your company has an account with FedConnect, don't worry. Complete the registration form and we'll let you know.

1. **Click Register as a Vendor.**

   This link is available on the FedConnect home page at www.fedconnect.net.

2. **Fill in the requested information.**

   The email address that you enter on this page will become your FedConnect user ID and will be used for all communication between FedConnect and you. Make sure that any SPAM filters you or your company may use are set up to allow communication from the fedconnect.net URL. If not, important notices and alerts might never reach you.

3. **Click the Register button.**

   What happens next depends upon whether or not your company currently has a master FedConnect account.

If your company has a FedConnect account...

- FedConnect will create an account for you with a status of pending.

- An email will be sent to your company's FedConnect administrators.

  An administrator will decide whether or not to activate your account. The administrator will also decide whether you are to be given administrator privileges or if you will be a standard user.

- You will get an email from FedConnect.

  When your account status has been changed, either activated or denied, you will receive an email from FedConnect.

If your company does not have a FedConnect account...

- You will be prompted to enter your company's CCR MPIN.

  If you know your company's CCR MPIN, enter it in the field that now displays and click the **Register** button again. If you don't know this number, see the "*Before you can register...*" section on page 2 for guidance on who in your company would know this.

- FedConnect will confirm your CCR registration.

  This process normally takes just a few seconds. If your registration is valid and active, FedConnect will create a FedConnect company profile for you, download your address from CCR, and populate preferences such as your CCR-specified NAICS and PSC/FSC codes.

- FedConnect will create a personal account for the person creating this company account and make that person a FedConnect administrator.

  Since the person who sets up the initial company account on FedConnect must know your agency's MPIN, that person is designated as an administrator for the FedConnect company account. As an administrator, that person will be able to perform a variety of management duties within FedConnect, including updating company information and activating or denying registration requests by others in your company.

- An email will be sent to this new administrator.

  Once the registration is complete, this new administrator will receive an email notification that the account has been activated.

If you forget your password, your company's FedConnect administrator can reset it. Although the administrator can't see what your password was or specify what it will be, the administrator can push a reset button that causes FedConnect to electronically generate a new password and email it to you. You can change this new password at any time within your user profile. See Managing Your Profile on page 4.
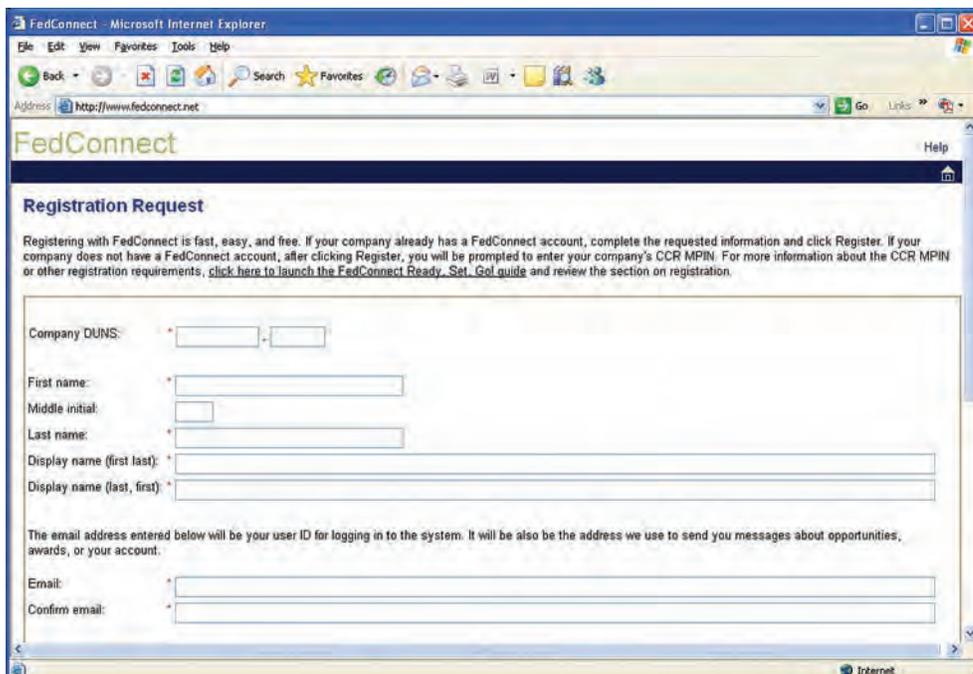
Have questions?
Email us at
support@fedconnect.net

The links to access the company profile and your personal profile are at the top of most FedConnect pages.

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*Some of the information in your company profile is pulled directly from CCR and appears in a read-only mode within FedConnect. If you've recently made changes to your CCR account, be sure to click the **Update from CCR** button on the company info page.*

There are two different profiles associated with you in FedConnect, your company profile and your personal profile. Each user can edit to his or her own personal profile. However, users designated as administrators for your company can also edit the company profile. This section will explain the differences between the two and show you how to access them.

### Company Profile
Editable by administrators only

The company profile includes information such as the company address, a list of company users, and the NAICS codes as well as the PSC/FSC codes in which your company is interested. The address and the codes are all downloaded automatically from CCR when the initial company account is created and cannot be edited within FedConnect. If your company makes changes to its CCR information at www.ccr.gov, an administrator for your company's FedConnect account can click the **Update from CCR** button within FedConnect on the Company Info page to download the changes to FedConnect.

To access the company profile:

1. **Sign in to FedConnect.**

2. **Click the Company Profile link at the top of the page.**

   A link to the company profile is available on most pages within FedConnect.

*To move between sections within the company profile, click the menu options on the horizontal menu bar, or the **Continue** or **Previous** buttons at the bottom of each page.*
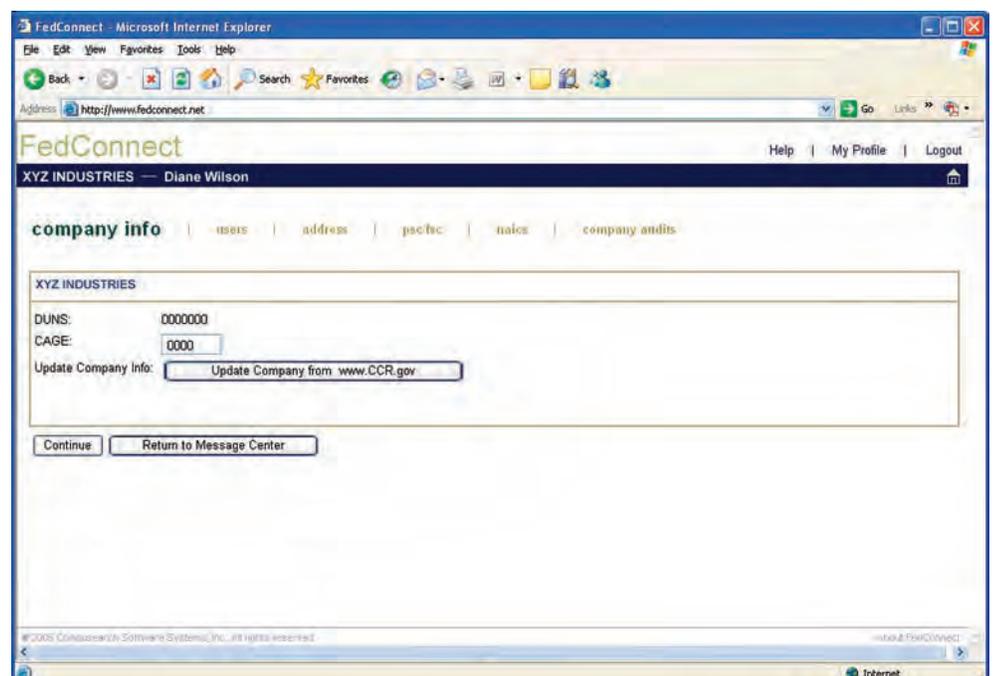
Your Personal Profile
Editable by you and administrators only

Your personal profile is where you will maintain information such as your name, how it displays or prints, and the agencies from whom you would like to receive information about opportunities or awards. It is also where you will go if you need to change your password.

To access your personal profile:

1. **Sign in to FedConnect.**

2. **Click the My Profile link at the top of the page.**

   A link to your profile is available on most pages within FedConnect.

To move between sections within your profile, click the menu options on the horizontal menu bar, or the **Continue** *or* **Previous** *buttons at the bottom of each page.*

The email address listed in your personal profile is also your FedConnect user ID. Be sure the email address you use here is one you monitor frequently, as FedConnect will send email alerts for opportunities, awards, etc. to this address.

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You can change your password at any time by clicking the **Change Password** *button.*

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You will only receive opportunities from agencies you specify on the Agencies tab of your user profile. To access, click **Agencies** *in the horizontal menu bar.*

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Although an administrator can access your personal profile, the administrator cannot see your password.

Have questions?
Email us at
support@fedconnect.net

*Opportunities are filtered behind the scenes to only show opportunities from agencies you specified on the Agencies tab in your user profile. To update that list, click **My Profile** at the top of the page.*

Opportunities posted on FedConnect include both publicly posted, available for access by anyone, and directed, available only to a limited agency-specified list of vendors. FedConnect offers a number of options to simplify the searching process, including the ability to specify search criteria and sort by column.

To search for opportunities as a registered vendor...

1. **Sign in to FedConnect.**

2. **Go to Opportunities.**

   Click **Opportunities** on the horizontal menu bar and FedConnect will display all the opportunities that are available for you.

   FedConnect displays 10 opportunities per page. If more than 10 opportunities are available, you can page through the opportunities by clicking the numbered hyperlinks at the bottom of the opportunities list.

   Tips for finding opportunities:

   Column sorts will allow you to sort the opportunities by clicking the column headings. For example, if you knew the opportunity was from a specific agency, you could click the **Agency** column heading and FedConnect would reorder the list by agency name. You could then page through until you found the opportunity you sought.

   Search criteria can be specified in the fields at the top of the list of opportunities. These criteria can be used to filter, or limit, the opportunities that display. Search criteria options include both basic and advanced search capabilities. To view the advanced search capability options, click **Advanced Options**. To return to the basic options, click **Search Criteria**. For easier viewing of the search results, click the [**-**] minus sign next to Search Criteria to hide the criteria. To reopen the search section, click the [**+**] plus sign.

4. Review the opportunity details.

To view the details of a specific opportunity, click the hyperlink under the opportunity title to go to the opportunity summary page.

On the opportunity summary page, an overview of the opportunity can be found in the left column. The actual opportunity and all attachments are available in the Documentation section in the right column. To view the form or attachments, click the title of the document.

If this is an opportunity you'd like to pursue, click the **Register as Interested Party** button in the center of the page. The page will refresh and display the message center for this opportunity in the center column and the Responses and Response Team sections in the right column. Your name will appear in the Response Team list.

If someone from your company has already registered interest for this opportunity, the **Register as Interested Party** button will not display. Instead, you will have the option to join the response team by clicking the **Join the Team** button within the Response Team section. Once on the team, you will receive all amendments, messages, and email alerts issued for the opportunity.

Anyone in your company who wants to stay informed about the opportunity should be join the response team to ensure that he or she has access to all email alerts, amendments, and communications related to the opportunity.

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To remove yourself from the response team, click the "X" next to your name.
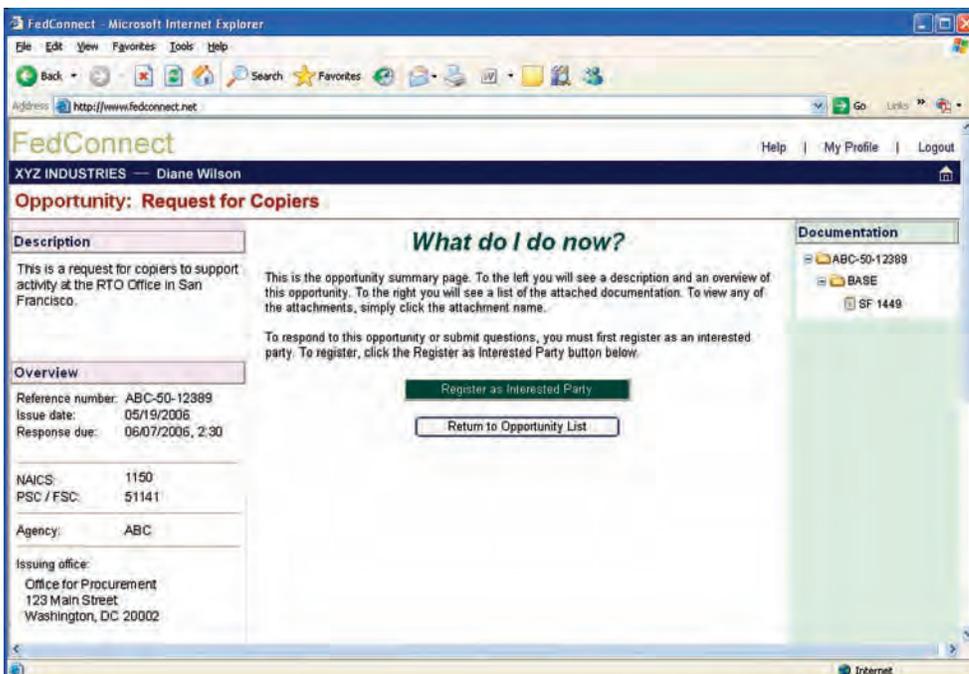
Have questions?
Email us at
support@fedconnect.net

Throughout the entire response development process, FedConnect tracks all activity and edits and stores who did what and when in an audit log.

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To learn more about using the Message Center to communicate with an agency, see "Sending and Receiving Messages" on page 12.

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Anyone in your company who will work on the response should join the response team to ensure that he or she has access to all email alerts, amendments, and communications related to the opportunity.

Registered vendors can electronically respond to any opportunity available to them in FedConnect.

1. **Sign in to FedConnect.**

2. **Go to Opportunities.**

   Click **Opportunities** on the horizontal menu bar.

3. **Open the opportunity.**

   Find the opportunity in the list. For help on using the search and sorting options available on this page, see "Tips for Finding Opportunities" on page 6. Once you've located the opportunity, click the hyperlink under the title to open it and display the opportunity summary page.

4. **Create the response.**

   What displays on the opportunity summary page depends upon whether or not your company has registered interest with the agency through FedConnect and whether or not you are currently on the response team. When your company registers interest, all members of the response team will be kept up to date with future amendments and email alerts. Team members can use the message center for this opportunity to communicate with the agency and to view publicly posted messages. In addition, team members will have the ability to participate in the response development.

   To register interest, click the **Register as Interested Party** button in the center column. If the button is not displayed, your company has already registered interest for this opportunity.
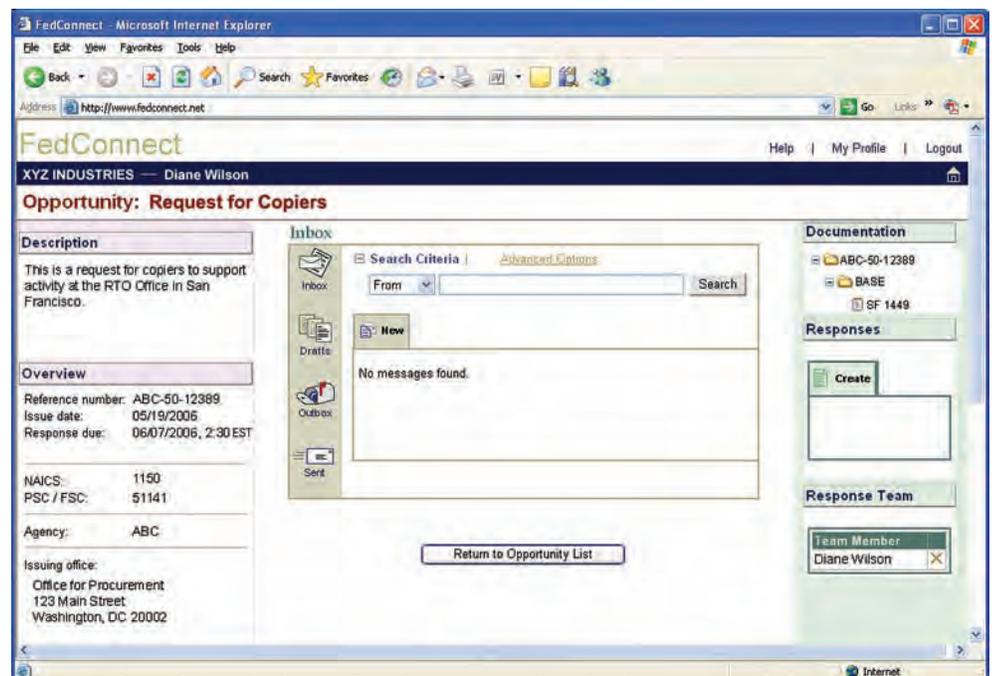
Once interest is registered and you are a member of the response team, the message center for this opportunity will display in the center column and the Responses and Response Team sections will display in the column to the right.

If you are not currently on the Response Team listed in the column to the right and would like to join, click the **Join the Team** button within the Response Team section. To delete yourself from the response team, click the "X" next to your name.

To create and submit a response...

- Click the **Create** button within the Responses section. Your response has now been created and you will be taken to the first data entry page.

  Some opportunities will allow more than one response or alternate responses to be created and submitted. If a response has already been created for this opportunity, it will appear in the Response section. Click the response description to open.

- Complete the data entry pages.

  The data entry pages available to you within the response will vary depending upon the opportunity and how the agency has configured it. For more details about a particular page, see the online help available on that page.

  You can move between the pages by clicking the options on the horizontal menu bar or by using the **Continue** and **Previous** buttons at the bottom of the page. Each time you move from one page to the next, your data will save.

- Submit the response to the agency.

  On the response Complete page, specify the number of days the response is good and click the **Submit to Agency** button. If you are not ready to submit to the agency but would like to exit the response for now, click the **Return to Opportunity Summary** button at the bottom of the page or the home button in the toolbar at the top of the page.

- Print the confirmation page.

  You'll notice that on your confirmation there are two dates and times. One is when you submited the reponse and the other is when the agency's system actually picked up the response. For security reasons, FedConnect cannot directly insert any data into the agency's internal systems. Because of this, there may be a time delay between when you submit and when the agency electronically picks up the response. But don't worry, the official time of submission is the one that was recorded when you clicked the **Submit to Agency** button.

For a No Bid response...

  If you would like to submit a No Bid type of response, click the **Submit No Bid** button within the Responses section. Once a No Bid has been submitted to the agency, you will not be able to create a standard response and the **Create** button will be hidden. Likewise, once a standard response is created, you will not be able to submit a No Bid response and the **Submit No Bid** button will be hidden.

Editing a Response
Option available for responses with a status of In Progress.

1. Follow the steps 1-3 on page 8 to open the opportunity.

2. In the Responses section, click the response description to open the response for editing.

Deleting a Response
Option available for responses with a status of In Progress.

1. Follow the steps 1-3 on page 8 to open the opportunity.

2. In the Responses section, click the delete button, on the row of the response to be deleted.

Withdrawing a Response
Option available for responses with a status of Submitted or Received.

1. Follow the steps 1-3 on page 8 to open the opportunity.

2. In the Responses section, click the **Withdraw** button on the row of the response to be withdrawn.

NOTE: If the response is for an opportunity that is not a sealed bid and the due date/time has passed, a withdrawal request will be sent to the agency. It is up to the agency to decide, based upon FAR rules, whether or not to accept or deny the request.

Have questions?
Email us at
support@fedconnect.net

Receiving an Award

Anyone in your company who wants to stay informed about the award should join the team for this award to ensure that he or she has access to all email alerts, modifications, and communications related to the award.

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To remove yourself from the team for this award, click the "X" next to your name.

When an agency posts an award to you through FedConnect, an email alert will be sent to the email address you specified when you registered in FedConnect. You can then log in to FedConnect to view and acknowledge the award.

1. **Sign in to FedConnect.**

   The email alert sent to you from FedConnect will include a URL link.

2. **Go to Awards.**

   Click **Awards** on the horizontal menu bar and FedConnect will display all the awards that have been made to your company.

   FedConnect displays 10 awards per page. If more than 10 awards are displayed, you can page through the awards by clicking the numbered hyperlinks at the bottom of the awards list.

   Tips for finding awards:

   Column sorts will allow you to sort the awards by clicking the column headings. For example, if you knew the award was from a specific agency, you could click the **Agency** column heading and FedConnect would reorder the list by agency name. You could then page through until you found the award you sought.

   Search criteria can be specified in the fields at the top of the list of awards. These criteria can be used to filter, or limit, the awards that display. Search criteria options include both basic and advanced search capabilities. To view the advanced search capability options, click **Advanced Options.** To return to the basic options, click **Search Criteria**. For easier viewing of the search results, click the [**-**] minus sign next to Search Criteria to hide the criteria. To reopen the search section, click the [**+**] plus sign.
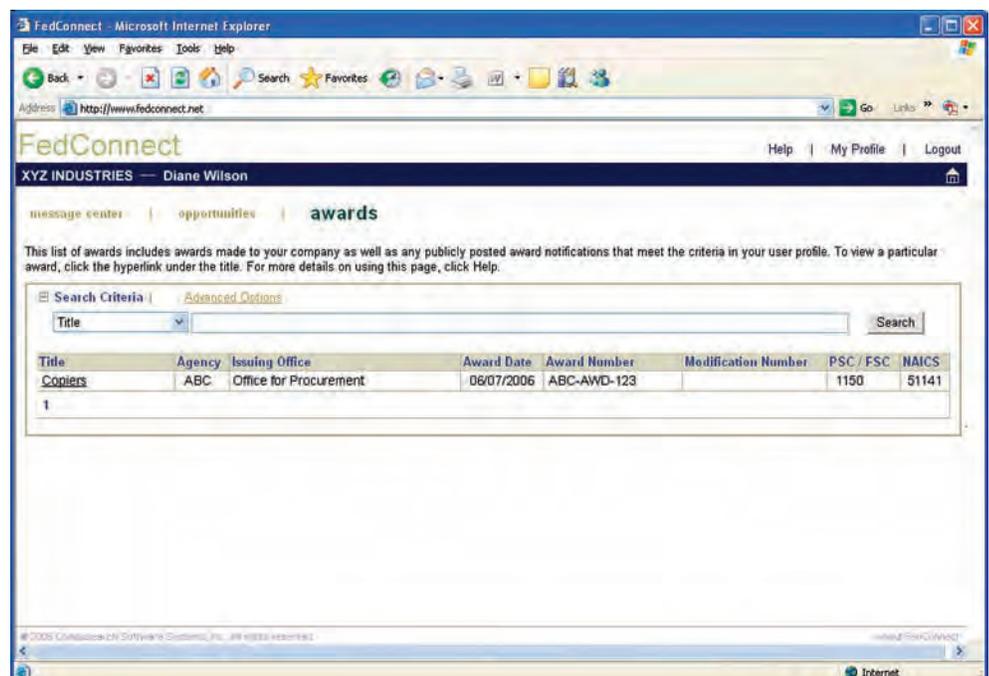
3. **Review the award details.**

    To view the details of a specific award, click the hyperlink under the award title to go to the award summary page.

    On the award summary page, an overview of the award can be found in the left column. The actual award and all attachments are available in the Documentation section in the right column. To view the form or attachments, click the title of the document.

4. **Join the Team.**

    To see all information concerning the award, click **Join the Team.**

5. **Acknowledge the award.**

    Click the **Acknowledge Award** button. If someone from your company has already acknowledged the award, the button will not display.

    Later, if modifications are issued for the award, they will appear automatically within the Documentation section. To acknowledge these new documents, check the box beside the title and then click the **Acknowledge** button within the section.
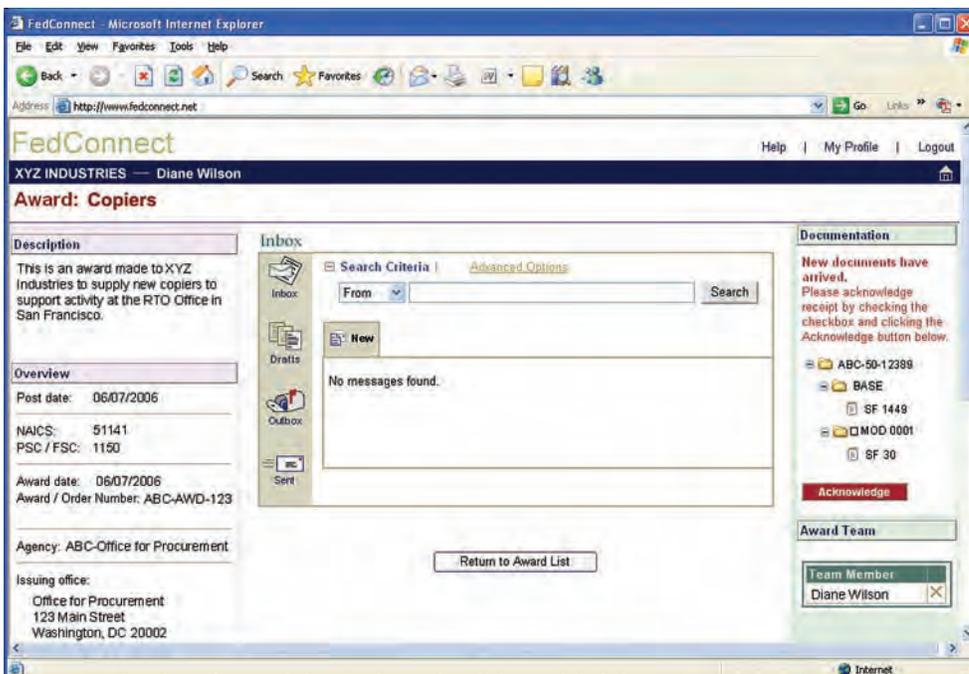
An agency may respond publicly to any message you send, so be sure not to include any proprietary information.

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The main message center offers a delete option to make it more manageable and easier to find things. Messages deleted from the main message center are not actually deleted from the document record. They just don't display in your main message center any longer. However, they are still available for viewing within the summary of the related opportunity or award. The only exceptions to this are draft messages that have not yet been sent. When you click the delete option for a draft message, it permanently removes it from FedConnect.

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To restore a deleted message, go to the main message center's Deleted folder and click the restore button. The message will be returned to the folder from where it was originally deleted.

When you are reviewing an opportunity, working on a response, or managing an award, questions may arise or you may have a need to discuss something with the agency. FedConnect provides a dedicated, secure channel for that communication and automatically captures it in a permanent record. When you use FedConnect, there is no risk that the agency or you will lose any of this important information.

FedConnect's message center works much like a standard email program. Many of the concepts such as creating a new message, replying, or adding attachments will feel familiar. What is different is that everything that is sent through FedConnect is secure, recorded, and automatically associated with the related opportunity or award.

When you first log in to FedConnect, you will be taken to the main message center page. Here you will see a compilation of all messages, both directed to you and sent publicly. Any time you open an opportunity or award to view the details, you will also find a smaller version of the message center where the content is limited to only the communication sent or received for that specific document.

Overview

The message center has different folders to organize your messages. Depending upon where you are in FedConnect, or the context of the page you are viewing, the available folders may differ. The actions available to you will depend upon the folder you are currently viewing and your access level. To move between folders, click the folder icons on the left side of the message center.

Here are the possible folders that may display and what they include:

Inbox – public or directed messages sent to you
Drafts – messages you've previously saved but have not sent
Outbox – messages awaiting pickup by the agency
Sent – messages you've sent that the agency has picked up
Deleted – messages you've deleted from your main message center view
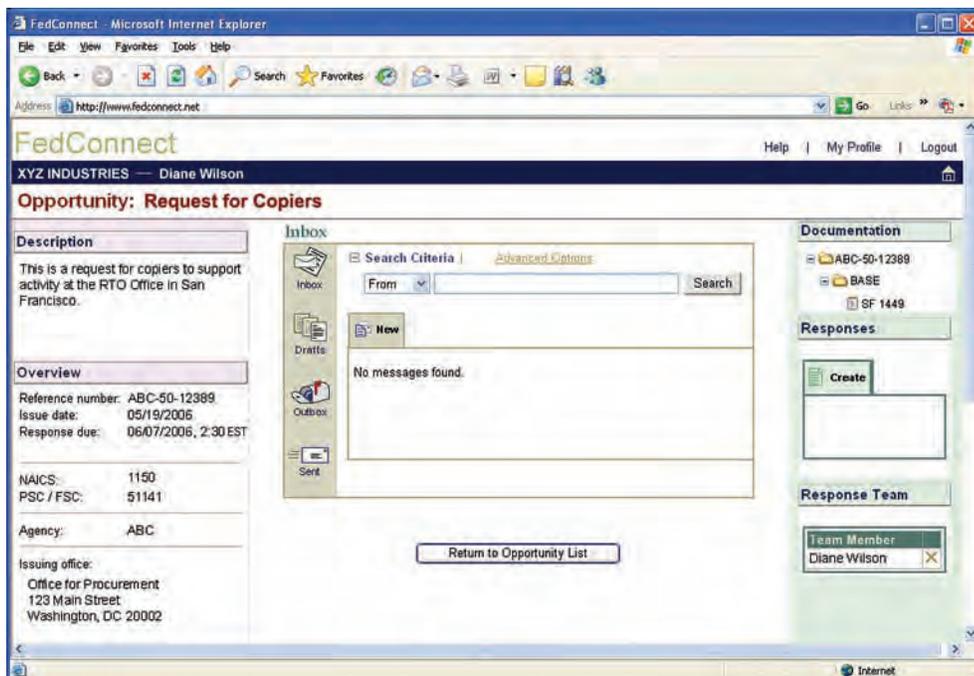
To send a new message...

1. **Log in to FedConnect.**

2. **Go to the Opportunity or Award summary page.**

   Since all new messages must be associated with a particular opportunity or award, the ability to create a new message is only available on the opportunity and award summary pages. If the message is about an opportunity, click **Opportunities** on the horizontal menu bar. If the message concerns an award, click **Awards** on the horizontal menu bar. Find the opportunity or award in the list and click the hyperlink under the title to open the summary.

3. **Click the New button on the message center.**
   Write your message. To add attachments, click **Attach** and follow the on-screen prompts.

4. **Click Send**.

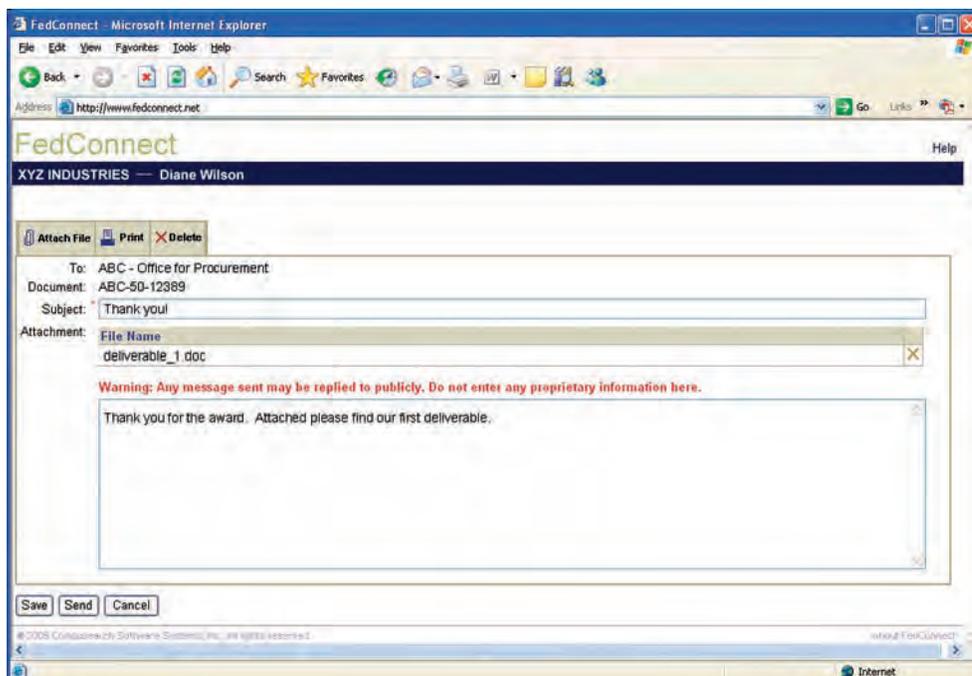
To reply to a message...

1. **Sign in to FedConnect.**

2. **Find the message you wish to reply to in the message center.**

   You can also go directly to the opportunity or award summary pages for a particular document and locate the message in the document-specific message center. See instructions for sending a new message above for how to open the summary page.

3. **Click the Reply icon at the right end of the message's row.**

   Write your message. To add attachments, click Attach and follow the on-screen prompts.

4. **Click Send**.

Have questions?
Email us at
support@fedconnect.net

Managing Users

Your company has complete control over its FedConnect account and which employees have access. Employees who have been designated as administrators can add users directly or activate users who have submitted registration requests. Administrators can also perform such tasks as changing a user's role designation, access levels, and resetting passwords.

Adding More Users to Your FedConnect Account

You can have an unlimited number of company representatives using your FedConnect account. Each additional representative must create a personal account associated with your company's master account. There are two ways this can be done: each person can register on their own; or if you are an administrator for your company's FedConnect account, you can add them.

For employees that are going to register on their own, refer them to the instructions in the "Registering" section of this guide starting on page 2.

If you are an administrator and would like to add a user, here's how you do it…

1. **Sign in to FedConnect.**

2. **Click the Company Profile link at the top of the page.**

3. **Click Users on the horizontal menu bar.**

4. **Click Add at the top of the user list.**

   Fill in the required fields and click **Return to User List**.

   A new account has been created for the user. By default, the user is a representative. An email with a FedConnect-generated password will be sent to the email address you entered for the user when making this new account. The new user can change the password at any time by updating his or her personal profile. See "Managing Your Profile" on page 4.
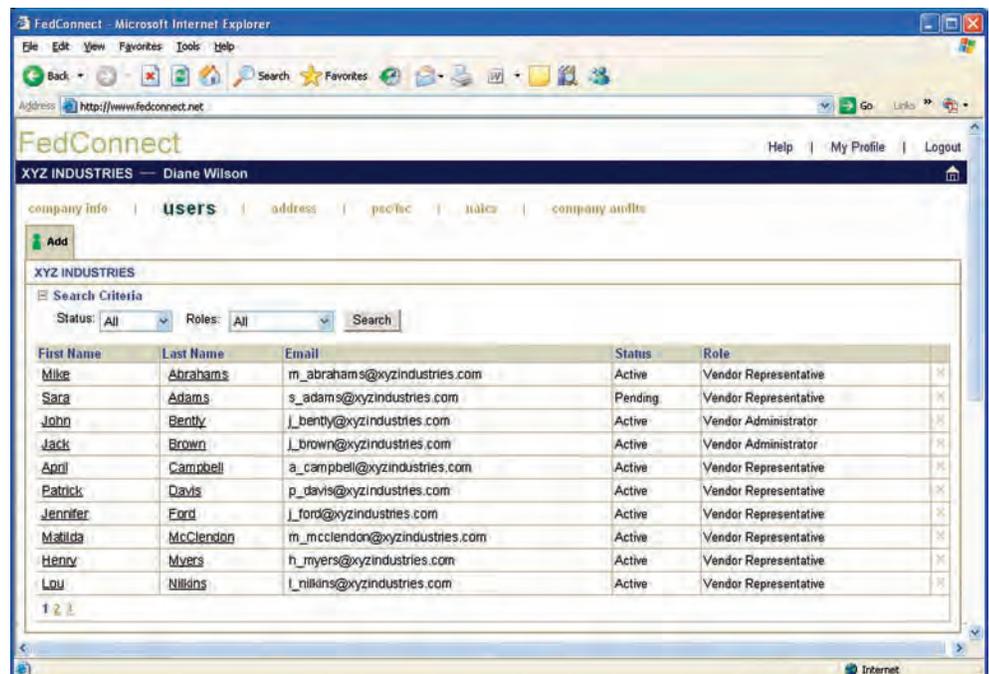
Managing Your User Accounts

If you are an administrator for your company's FedConnect account, you have the ability to control a variety of things concerning a particular user. For example, you could change someone's role (administrator/representative), activate or inactivate his or her account, specify access rights, and reset his or her password.

You can also manage the personal details of your own account. You cannot, however, inactivate yourself or change your role designation. Another administrator would have to assist you.

To access the administrative tools for a particular user...

1. **Sign in to FedConnect.**

2. **Click the Company Profile link at the top of the page.**

3. **Click Users on the horizontal menu bar.**

4. **Select the user by clicking the hyperlink under the name.**

5. **Click Admin Tools on the horizontal menu.**
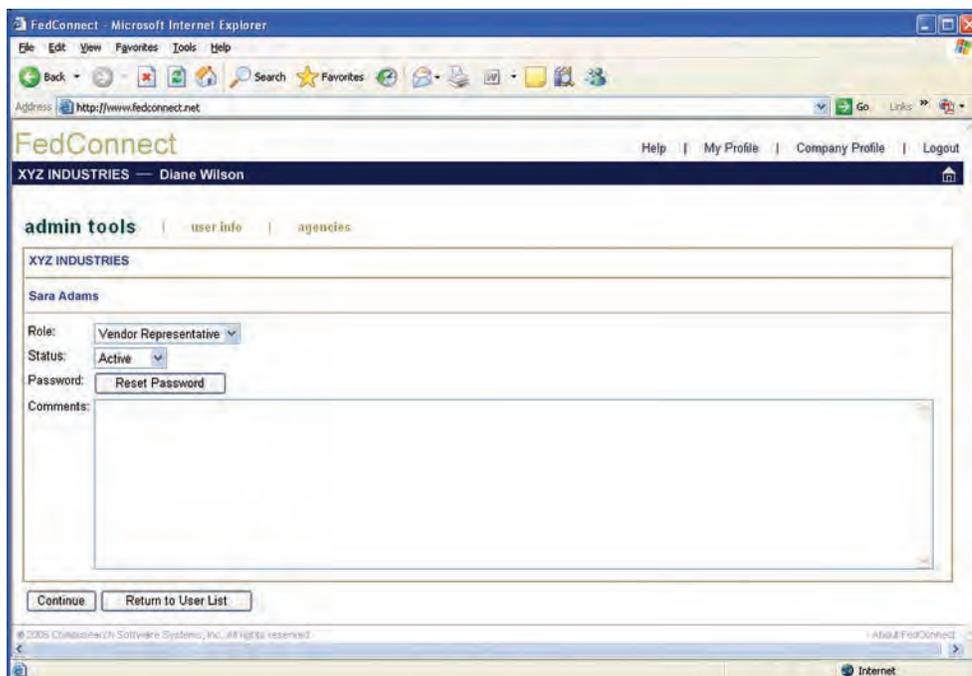
Representative

- Access to opportunities

- Access to responses

- Access to awards

- Access to communication tools

- Access to his or her personal profile.

Administrator
All access rights available to the representative, plus...

- Full access to the company profile

- Full access to all user profiles for your company.

NOTE: Although an administrator has access to another user's profile, the administrator cannot see that user's password.

Have questions?
Email us at
support@fedconnect.net

Quick Answers

I've forgotten my password and locked my account, what do I do?

Contact your FedConnect administrator at support@fedconnect.net.

My account has been inactivated, what do I do?

Each company manages its own users and who has access. If your account has been inactivated, you will need to see your company's FedConnect administrator.

Are there any limits to the types of files that can be included as an attachment to a response or message?

Yes, there are certain file types that cannot be uploaded. We've followed Microsoft's lead and use the list they've developed for excluding files with extensions that are considered high risk. For a complete list of these files, please visit, http://support.microsoft.com/?kbid=883260.

What if I accidentally submit a response before I meant to?

If the due date and time have not passed, you can simply withdraw the response. After the due date and time, depending upon the type of opportunity and the FAR rules governing it, you may be able to submit a withdrawal request. It would then be up to the agency to decide whether or not to allow the withdrawal. For more details, see page 9.

Initially my company submitted a No Bid type of response, but now we we changed our minds and would like to submit a proposal. How do we start over?

If the due date and time have not passed, you can simply withdraw the No Bid response and then create a new response for submission.

I've submitted my response, but the confirmation page says that it is queued awaiting agency pickup. What does this mean and will it still be counted as having been submitted on time?

Due to agency security requirements, FedConnect can never upload data into an agency's database. Instead, it is up to each agency to pull the information from FedConnect. This pull is an automatic process that happens on a schedule determined by each individual participating agency.

When you submit your response, the time of submission is captured and recorded. This is the official time of submission to be used in determining whether or not it was on time. It does not matter if the agency picks it up a minute later or the next day. Their pickup time is not used to calculate whether or not you met the deadline. For some types of opportunities, the agency cannot pick up until after the official due date and time.

How do I know when the agency picks up my response?

You can see the exact date/time of pickup by opening the response and going to the Confirmation page.

I'm working on a response and I've noticed that some of my work has been changed. How can that happen?

Anyone on the Response Team has access to the In Progress response and can make changes. To see who has changed what, click the History link within the Responses section of the opportunity's summary page. The history will show a complete audit of who did what and when.

Have questions?
Email us at
support@fedconnect.net