

# Federal Grant Seeking Manual for Illinois' Free and Charitable Clinics

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Illinois Association of Free and Charitable  
Clinics

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## Forward

*Thank you for taking time to learn about applying for Federal funding and for considering adding this funding stream to your revenue sources. As fellow healthcare workers, the people who contributed to this manual have walked in your shoes – delivering healthcare services while also needing to find new program income to deliver services for people who otherwise would lack access to care.*

*Our hope is that this manual demystifies Federal funding enough so that you are able to make an educated decision on whether or not your organization is ready to apply for and manage Federal Funds.*

*We wish you abundant success!*

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# What are Federal Grants?

**A federal grant is a legal contract between you and a government agency to deliver a specific program.**

The Federal government appropriated 1.4 trillion dollars in government funding for federal fiscal year 2020, the budget includes almost \$185 billion in domestic discretionary spending which means that these dollars will be available in competitive grant solicitations (HHS Budget Bill #1865, 2020).

The majority of healthcare grants that can benefit Free and Charitable Clinics are from the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) and its agencies including the National Institutes of Health (NIH), Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Office of Population Health (OPH), Office on Women's Health, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), and Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA).

## Grant Types

There are several different types of grants which affect how the grants are awarded and implemented. Here's more about the main grant types:

- [What is a block grant?](#)
- [What is a discretionary grant?](#)
- [What is a mandatory grant?](#)
- [What is a formula grant?](#)
- [What is a cooperative agreement?](#)
- Later in this manual, you will learn how to read a *Federal Notice of Funding Opportunity* to determine if your organization is eligible to apply for a specific grant opportunity.

## The Federal Grants Lifecycle

The grant process follows a linear lifecycle that includes creating the funding opportunity, applying, making award decisions, and successfully implementing the award. The specific actions along the lifecycle are grouped into three main phases. Each of the three phases has its own page that provides a more detailed look at the process:

1. [Pre-Award Phase - Funding Opportunities and Application Review](#)
2. [Award Phase - Award Decisions and Notifications](#)
3. [Post Award - Implementation, Reporting, and Closeout](#)

**Free and Charitable Clinics will typically apply for *Discretionary Competitive Grants* that are open to 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations.**

*Block, Mandatory, and Formula grants* typically support government entities (i.e., states, counties, etc.). Your clinic is not eligible to apply for those, although you may be able to apply for "pass-through funds" by a local government entity that has secured these funds and is passing them on to local organizations (e.g. Community Development Block Grants AKA CDBG).

**For more in-depth information about the "Grants Lifecycle", read *Grants 101* here:**

<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/learn-grants/grants-101/grant-lifecycle.html>

# Pre-award Phase - The 5 steps to Federal grant readiness

*Position your clinic to submit a competitive proposal. Take these steps, in order, to prepare to apply for Federal grants. You can do this!*

## 1. Apply for a DUNS Number

According to Dun & Bradstreet, the company that created the DUNS Number, ...”it is used to establish your company’s D&B® file, which can help potential partners and lenders learn more about your business, and may also help them make more informed decisions about whether or not to work with you as a client, supplier, or partner”. Currently, the Federal government requires that your organization has a DUNS number to be able to apply for and receive federal grants. Before you can bid on government proposals, you need to get a Dun & Bradstreet (DUNS) number.

**A DUNS number is a unique nine-digit identification number for each physical location of your business. You cannot apply for a DUNS using a P.O. Box.**

**When registering for your DUNS number, you’ll need to have the following information on hand**

- Legal name
- Headquarters name and address for your business
- Doing Business As (DBA) or other name by which your business is commonly recognized
- Physical address, city, state, and ZIP Code
- Mailing address (if different from headquarters and/or physical address)
- Telephone number
- Contact name and title
- Number of employees at your physical location
- Whether you’re a home-based business

**Request a DUNS # here:** <https://www.dnb.com/duns-number/get-a-duns.html>

**This is what the “Get a DUNS” landing page looks like**

# Get a Dun & Bradstreet D-U-N-S® Number

The D-U-N-S Number is used to establish your company's D&B® file, which can help potential partners and lenders learn more about your business, and may also help them make more informed decisions about whether or not to work with you as a client, supplier, or partner.

The first step in creating a new D-U-N-S Number is searching to see whether Dun & Bradstreet has already created one for you.

Primary Reason for  
D-U-N-S Number  
Registration

Select
Select
I have a U.S. based business
I have a Canada based business
I'm an Apple Developer
I'm a U.S. Government Contractor or Grantee

Hi there, thanks for stopping by Dun & Bradstreet! Can I point you in the right direction?

CALL US (866) 990-5845

CONTACT US

START A LIVE CHAT

## Then, follow these steps

- Enter your business name, address, and telephone number.
- DUNS will search to see if you already have a DUNS #.
- If you don't already have a number, then click on the "Get a DUNS # box" on the right-hand corner of the screen.
- There are three ways to sign up and two of them have an annual fee associated. Select the Free one on the left, called "D-U-N-S Number and CreditSignal"
- Follow the prompts and enter all of the information listed in the bullets above.

## How long does it take to obtain a DUNS number?

Allow up to two business days to obtain a DUNS number, but it can occur in one business day.

***Congratulations, you took your first step to applying for Federal funds!***

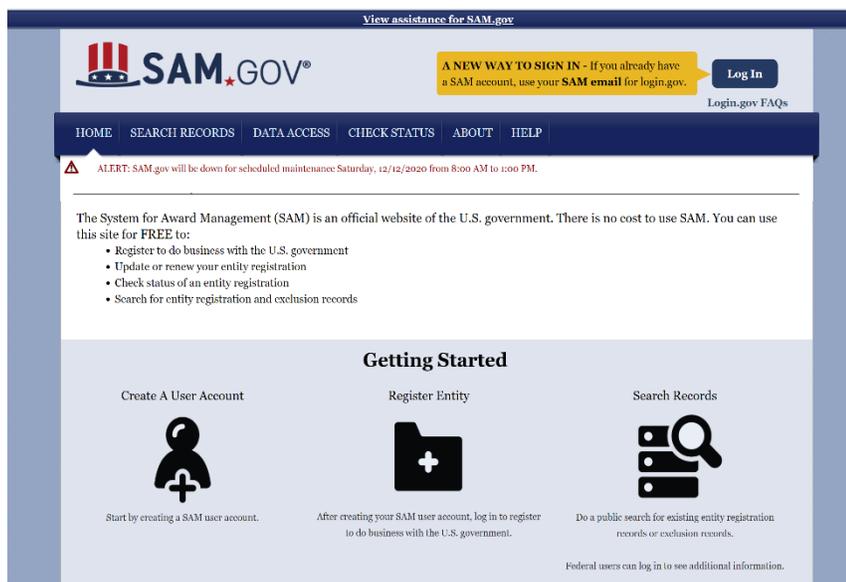
## 2. Apply for a System Award Management (SAM) number

Your organization needs a SAM number to be able to apply for both Federal and state funding. It's **easy** to apply for one. In doing so, you will be creating what SAM calls an **entity registration**.

SAM is an official website of the U.S. government's General Service Administration. There is no cost to use SAM. You can use this site for FREE to:

- Register to do business with the U.S. government
- Update or renew your entity registration
- Check status of an entity registration
- Search for entity registration and exclusion records

The SAM website can be found here <https://www.sam.gov/SAM/pages/public/index.jsf> and the landing page looks like this



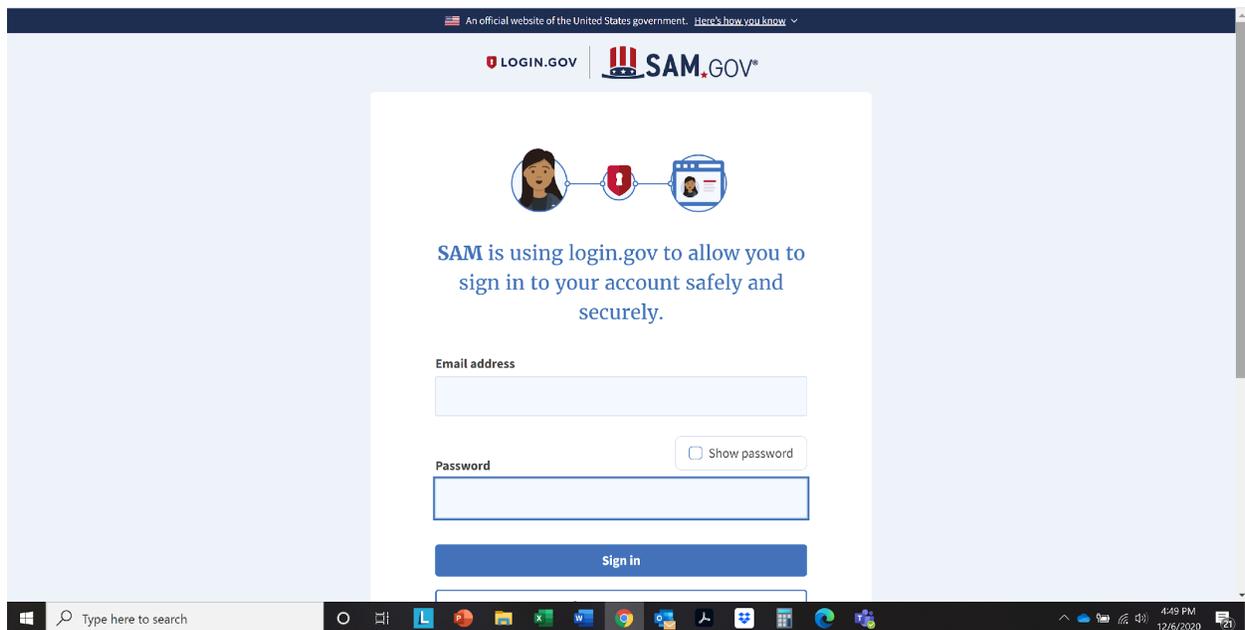
## How to apply for a SAM Number

**Before you can apply for a SAM number, you first need to get a DUNS # and a Login.gov account. You only need to do this once.** If you already have a Login.gov account please use it. If not, follow the steps here to obtain a login.gov account

<https://www.login.gov/help/creating-an-account/how-to-create-an-account/>

Be sure to save your login.gov email address and password somewhere in your files.

Then, to apply for a SAM number, login to SAM here using your login.gov email and password [https://secure.login.gov/?request\\_id=8b1c7c4f-b724-46b1-85ab-5665757d3ab2](https://secure.login.gov/?request_id=8b1c7c4f-b724-46b1-85ab-5665757d3ab2)



**Have this information on-hand, and enter it into the SAM portal**

- DUNS Number
- Legal Business Name
- Physical Address from your Dun & Bradstreet (D&B) record
- Your organization's EIN number (note: it's listed on your IRS 501c3 letter)
- Your bank's routing number, your bank account number, and your bank account type, i.e. checking or savings, to set up Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT).

### **Need help with the login.gov account or SAM login?**

Contact the Federal Service Help Desk at [www.fsd.gov](http://www.fsd.gov), or by telephone at 866-606-8220 (toll free) or 334-206-7828 (internationally), for FREE help.

Federal Service Help Desk can help with:

- Creating an account
- Assigning roles to an account
- Entity Registrations
- Exclusions
- Searching for data in SAM

## How long will it take to receive my SAM # and how long is it valid?

Allow up to 12-15 business days after you submit before your registration is active in SAM.

You will need to renew your SAM # annually. Login with your Login.gov ID and your SAM # and follow the prompts. It's easy. You will receive a notice from SAM saying it's time to renew.

### IMPORTANT TIP

Go to the **OFFICIAL System Award Management (SAM) site.**  
<https://www.sam.gov/SAM/>

**Be wary of for-profit organizations who offer to help you apply for or renew your SAM #. You do not need their help. They will charge you thousands of dollars for something you can easily do yourself. A SAM application is NOT difficult.**

## What a SAM Registration looks like to organizations viewing your entity registration online

A SAM listing is public knowledge. This screenshot shows a search result when someone searches for a nonprofit in SAM. This is Fenix Family Health Center's listing.

The screenshot shows the SAM.gov search results for 'FENIX FAMILY HEALTH CENTER\*'. The page includes a search bar, a 'Clear Search' button, and a 'Current Search Terms' header. Below the header, there are buttons for 'Save PDF', 'Export Results', and 'Print'. The search results show one record for 'FENIX FAMILY HEALTH CENTER' with a status of 'Active'. The record details include: DUNS: 965295657, CAGE Code: 67Z22, Has Active Exclusion?: No, DoDAAC, Expiration Date: 10/08/2021, Debt Subject to Offset?: No, and Purpose of Registration: Federal Assistance Awards Only. There is a 'View Details' button next to the record. The page also features a 'FILTER RESULTS' section on the left with options for 'By Record Status' (Active, Inactive) and 'By Record Type' (Entity Registration, Exclusion). The GSA logo and footer information are visible at the bottom.

## By 2022, SAM will be assigning each registered agency a Unique Entity Identifier

By April of 2022, the federal government will stop using the DUNS number to uniquely identify entities registered in SAM. A Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) will be a unique number assigned to all entities (public and private companies, individuals, institutions, or organizations) who register to do business with the federal government. By April 2020, entities doing business with the federal government will use a unique entity identifier (UEI) created in SAM.gov. Active registrants will have their UEI assigned and viewable within SAM.gov. No action is needed at this time. To receive updated information about this change, please visit here: [www.gsa.gov/entityid](http://www.gsa.gov/entityid)

***Step 2 is done. You have a SAM #. Keep going!***

### 3. Apply for a Grants.gov account

Grants.gov calls itself the “gateway to the Federal grant world”. Most (but not all) Federal agencies post Notice of Funding Opportunities (also known as NOFO’s) on Grants.gov. Most Federal agencies require grant proposals to be submitted using this portal. You can access the portal through the [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov) website or the Grants.gov mobile app. The free app can be downloaded from [Google Play](#) or [Apple’s App Store](#).

#### Follow these steps to register/set up a Grants.gov account

1. Go to <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/register.html> (it’s easier to create an account from the website than the app)
2. Click the **Register** link in the top-right corner of the Grants.gov banner.
3. Click the **Get Registered Now** button on the Register page.
4. Complete the **Contact Information** and **Account Details** sections. All fields with a red asterisk (\*) are required.
  - o Email Address - When entering an email address, please keep in mind that all correspondence with Grants.gov will be sent to that email address.
  - o Username - Enter a username to log in to Grants.gov. It may only contain alphanumeric characters, question marks, periods, dashes, underscores, and the @ symbol. Your username cannot contain a space, nor can it only include numbers. Select a username you will remember.
  - o Password - The password you choose must meet the following password requirements:
    - Must contain at least eight (8) characters
    - Must contain at least one (1) uppercase letter (A-Z)
    - Must contain at least one (1) lower case letter (a-z)
    - Must contain at least one (1) number (0-9)
    - Must contain at least one (1) special character (e.g. ! @ # \$ % ^ & \*)
    - Cannot be the same as the previous six (6) passwords
    - Cannot contain dictionary words, names, or your Username

5. Select whether to subscribe or unsubscribe from Grants.gov Communications. The **Alerts** are important messages about time-sensitive or major system changes. The **Newsletter** features training, system enhancement updates, and other resources to help the federal grants community.
6. Click the **Continue** button.
7. Click the **Send Temporary Code** button, then access your email account to access the temporary code.
8. Enter the temporary code you received in the email from Grants.gov into the **Temporary Code** field and click the **Continue** button.
9. Decide if you would like to add a profile to your Grants.gov account or click the **Continue** button to log in. You need to [add a profile](#) to submit an application. After registering, review the [Workspace Overview page](#) to learn how to apply for a grant.

This video will also teach you how to register (and more) - The [Introduction to Grants.gov Video](#)

### Important

One person at your organization must be designated as the **eBiz Point of Contact (eBiz POC)** and a separate account must be the **Authorized Organization Representative (AOR)**.

You need these roles to be able to submit an application. There are other roles that can be assigned too, but they are optional. Learn more about roles here:

[https://www.test.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/workspace-overview/w  
orkspace-overview.html](https://www.test.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/workspace-overview/workspace-overview.html)

[Series](#) covers the complete Grants.gov application process, from registering and creating a Grants.gov account to finding funding opportunities and completing an application package.

***Note: Not all federal grants are submitted in Grants.gov. Some agencies, such as the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS/AKA AmeriCorps) use their own site. Always watch the tutorial, read the instructions and ask questions when using a new portal to apply.***

***Way to go! You are registered in Grants.gov and completed Step 3!***

#### **4. Search for Federal grants**

**Federal grant opportunities can be found here. This is where you can find grant listings, their corresponding Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) and download an application package.**

**Go to [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) or the Grants.gov app – This resource has information about finding and applying for all types of federal grant programs.**

Users can [subscribe](#) to receive real-time updates on funding opportunities of interest.

For example, using the search term “healthcare”, you can generate a list of grant opportunities that are forecasted (will be open for application in the future) and those that you can submit an application to now (see the open and close dates to the right of the opportunity name to verify opening and closing dates).

**A screenshot of the Grants.gov search engine when you enter the search term “healthcare”**

GRANTS.GOV > Search Grants

## SEARCH GRANTS

### BASIC SEARCH CRITERIA:

Keyword(s):  ✕  
 Opportunity Number:  ✕  
 CFDA:  ✕

[Search Tips](#) | [Export Detailed Data](#) |

**SORT BY:** Relevance (Descending) ▾ 
**DATE RANGE:** All Available ▾

1 - 25 OF 120 MATCHING RESULTS: « Previous 1 2 3 4 5 Next »

Opportunity Number	Opportunity Title	Agency	Opportunity Status	Posted Date	Close Date
PA-20-073	Using Innovative Digital Healthcare Solutions to Improve Quality at the Point of Care (R21/R33 - Clinical Trial Optional)	HHS-AHRQ	Forecasted	06/10/2020	
FOA-ETA-20-12	H-1B Rural Healthcare Grant Program	DOL-ETA	Posted	09/14/2020	11/13/2020
PA-20-069	Encourage Innovative Digital Healthcare Research at the Point of Care	HHS-AHRQ	Forecasted	02/14/2020	
RFA-DC-19-001	NIDCD Hearing Healthcare for Adults: Improving Access and Affordability (R21/R33 Clinical Trials Optional)	HHS-NIH11	Posted	07/03/2018	06/04/2021
HHS-2020-IHS-DVPH-0001	Domestic Violence Prevention Program: Forensic Healthcare Services	HHS-IHS	Forecasted	02/14/2020	
PAR-20-243	Digital Healthcare Interventions to Address the Secondary Health Effects Related to Social, Behavioral, and Economic Impact of COVID-19 (R01 - Clinical Trial Optional)	HHS-NIH11	Posted	08/25/2020	03/02/2021
PA-17-481	Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ)-sponsored National Research Service Award (NRSA) Individual Postdoctoral Fellowship (F32)	HHS-AHRQ	Posted	09/12/2017	08/08/2022
RFA-ES-20-007	Pediatric and Reproductive Environmental Health Scholars (PREHS): Strengthening the Pipeline (K12 Clinical Trial Not Allowed)	HHS-NIH11	Posted	09/22/2020	01/15/2021
PA-18-723	Improving Patient Adherence to Treatment and Prevention Regimens to Promote Health (R21 Clinical Trial Optional)	HHS-NIH11	Posted	03/28/2018	05/07/2021
PA-18-722	Improving Patient Adherence to Treatment and Prevention	HHS-NIH11	Posted	03/28/2018	05/07/2021

Click on an individual Grant Opportunity, and it looks like this

The screenshot shows the Grants.gov website interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with 'HOME', 'LEARN GRANTS', 'SEARCH GRANTS', 'APPLICANTS', 'GRANTORS', 'SYSTEM-TO-SYSTEM', 'FORMS', 'CONNECT', and 'SUPPORT'. A search bar is located on the right with the text 'SEARCH: Grant Opportunities Enter Keyword...'. Below the navigation bar, the page title is 'VIEW GRANT OPPORTUNITY'. The main content area displays the grant details for 'CDC-RFA-PS21-2102 Comprehensive High-Impact HIV Prevention Programs for Community-Based Organizations' from the 'Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control - NCHHSTP'. There are 'Apply' and 'Subscribe' buttons. Below this, there are tabs for 'SYNOPSIS', 'VERSION HISTORY', 'RELATED DOCUMENTS', and 'PACKAGE'. The 'SYNOPSIS' tab is active, showing a table of general information.

General Information	
Document Type:	Grants Notice
Funding Opportunity Number:	CDC-RFA-PS21-2102
Funding Opportunity Title:	Comprehensive High-Impact HIV Prevention Programs for Community-Based Organizations
Opportunity Category:	Discretionary
Opportunity Category Explanation:	
Funding Instrument Type:	Cooperative Agreement
Category of Funding Activity:	Health
Category Explanation:	
Expected Number of Awards:	90
CFDA Number(s):	93.939 -- HIV Prevention Activities Non-Governmental Organization Based
Cost Sharing or Matching Requirement:	No
Version:	Synopsis 1
Posted Date:	Sep 17, 2020
Last Updated Date:	Sep 17, 2020
Original Closing Date for Applications:	Nov 20, 2020 Electronically submitted applications must be submitted no later than 11:59 p.m., ET, on the listed application due date.
Current Closing Date for Applications:	Nov 20, 2020 Electronically submitted applications must be submitted no later than 11:59 p.m., ET, on the listed application due date.
Archive Date:	Dec 20, 2020
Estimated Total Program Funding:	\$210,000,000
Award Ceiling:	\$0
Award Floor:	\$0

To see the actual page in the example above click here:

<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/search-grants.html?keywords=comprehensive%20HIV%20prevention>

## You can also search for Federal Opportunities here

[Federal Register](#) – Provides access to information about federal benefits and opportunities for funding. There will be information overlap with funding sources provided on Grants.gov.

[The Federal Office of Rural Health Policy \(FORHP\)](#) – Maintains a site specifically for rural health organizations, including a page for [agency-specific funding opportunities](#). Rural service providers are encouraged to sign up for FORHP's weekly e-newsletter, which contains information about other rural-specific funding opportunities. Request to be added to the e-newsletter list in an email to [mdaniels@hrsa.gov](mailto:mdaniels@hrsa.gov).

[Candid, formerly called The Foundation Center](#) is a nonprofit organization that provides information, resources, and training related to working with philanthropic organizations.

- [Foundation Directory Online by Candid](#) – A subscription-based service that collects and organizes information about philanthropic organizations in the United States. It has a searchable database of known funders.
- [PND by Candid, formerly called Philanthropy News Digest](#) – A daily news service that publishes philanthropy-related articles and open requests for proposals.

- [Funding Information Network locations](#) – Free funding information centers that provide a core collection of Candid/Foundation Center publications and a variety of supplementary materials and services. Staff are available to assist you with funding searches at each location.

## How to read a Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA)/Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO)

Read the FOA's eligibility requirements carefully. In fact, read the entire FOA all the way through at least twice before you consider applying. Don't spend hours on an application only to realize later that you are not eligible to apply or that the funding opportunity takes you away from your primary mission. For example, is the opportunity restricted to government entities? Are there religious restrictions? Organizations that require religious activities of participants are typically excluded. If you were awarded the funds, would you consider it "mission drift"? If you answered no to these questions then proceed.

**Preview the mandatory and optional forms** that you will need to fill out, including any that might require extra work or file attachments. Identify information or agreements (Memoranda of Understanding, Letters of Support, Letters of Cooperation, etc.) that you will need to create and execute with collaborating organizations. Start working on these right away.

The announcement is usually followed by a **technical assistance webinar** (live or recorded) that explains

the funding opportunity. If provided, always attend these! They will help you understand the vitally important aspects of the solicitation and what a responsive proposal should look like. You'll hear directly from the grant contacts at the agency providing the funding and can ask questions in the live sessions.

**TIP-** Read the FOA's eligibility requirements carefully, participate in the corresponding technical assistance webinar (if there is one), preview the documents/forms, and reach out to the funder with any questions.

Which leads me to recommend that you **reach out to a grant contact at the agency** (the name and contact information will be listed in the FOA). Ask specific questions,

briefly discuss your idea, and get to know the people at the agency.

***You're getting closer! You can evaluate a FOA. Step 4 is done!***

## 5. Other Information to Gather BEFORE You Apply

### Find an accountant who has experience with Federal grants

Federal grant budgets are complex. They are highly detailed and have many stated exclusions. Get someone who can help you build a budget that follows the allowable and unallowable expenses stated in the Funding Opportunity Announcement. It's also important because post-award, the Federal government also requires that organizations have the ability to calculate, allocate, and account for actual expenses precisely. This requires an accounting system that is set up to track specific employees' time as well as other expenses. Detailed financial reporting and invoicing is also a part of the accountant's role.

### Take time to gather (or create) these common documents that you will need

- **SAM, DUNS, and EIN #'s**
- **I.R.S. 501c3 letter (PDF)**
- **Board of Directors List (PDF)**
- **Board, staff and patient demographics** (gender, race, income level, etc.)
- **Most recent Independent Audit (PDF) & IRS 990 (PDF)**
- **Job descriptions and resumes** – Combine in one PDF the job descriptions and resumes for all staff who will be listed in the proposal
- **Letters of Support** - These must be specific to the program and to the application you are submitting. They describe the roles of each party in carrying out the program if funded and the respective parties' commitment to carrying out the work. They need to be signed by the heads of all of the agencies involved. Do not use general letters of support. Scan all letters and include them in one PDF.
- **Logic model** – Create or update the logic model specific to the program that you are requesting funding for. A logic model is a visual way to represent a program's resources (inputs), activities, outputs (often, by counting the number of people served/services provided), short-term outcomes, long term outcomes, impacts, and moderating factors (issues that impact the program). Follow these instructions to create a logic model: <https://www.cdc.gov/eval/steps/step2/index.htm> or the instructions of the particular agency you are applying to.
- **Background checks** - Be prepared to have to pay for and conduct background checks. Collect proof of any recent background checks completed on your staff.

***Step 5 is complete. You're ready to apply!!!***

# Apply! How to Draft and Submit a Federal Grant Proposal

## The Pre-application Information Session

Read the FOA and look for the date, time and attendee registration information for The Pre-application Information Session. Most agencies offer a Pre-application Information Session (a webinar) soon after the release of the FOA. Attend it! Take notes. It will guide you in the development of your proposal and emphasize the key aspects of the FOA, such as the total amount of funding the agency is offering, amounts that individual agencies can request, and key information that needs to be included in the application. You can also ask questions during the live sessions or send questions to the agency contacts if the session was recorded.

## Login to Grants.gov

Most (but not all) Federal funds are requested through Grants.gov. If the application uses a different portal, then be sure to follow the instructions in the Funding Opportunity. For example, the Corporation for National and Community Services AmeriCorps/AmeriCorps VISTA uses the eGrants portal. Watch an eGrants tutorial here: <https://www.nationalservice.gov/grants-funding/funding-resources/egrants>

- 1. Once logged into Grants.gov, search for the grant opportunity, click on it, and then create a *Workspace* for it and download an application package.**

Watch a video on how to create a workspace here:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gOjwumQzOG8>

*Important - Save the Workspace with a unique name, and note the number Grants.gov assigned to your application. You will need this in the future.*

Within the Workspace/application download the document package to your computer. You're going to complete most (but not all) of them on your computer and then upload them to Grants.gov.

## 2. Common application package documents from Grants.gov include:

<p><b>Application for Federal Assistance SF-424 form</b></p>	<p>Download this fillable PDF to your computer, complete it, click “save” within the form, click “check errors”, login to Grants.gov and upload it to your Grants.gov application Workspace. Consider it the face sheet for your proposal that includes general information and the amount of funding you are requesting. Complete only the sections identified by the funder. It’s rare that you will fill in every field.</p> <p>Note: To find your congressional district, go to <a href="https://www.house.gov">House.gov</a> and search for your Congressional District by entering your zip code + 4. If you do not know your zip code + 4, you may look it up by visiting <a href="#">USPS Look Up Zip Code</a>  page.</p> <p>The congressional district code should use the 2 character state abbreviation, a hyphen, and then a 3 character district number. For example, IL-001 for Illinois’ 1<sup>st</sup> district.</p>
<p><b>SF 424B – Assurance - Non-Construction Programs</b></p>	<p>Just download it, read it, and save it to your computer. There is nothing to fill out on this form.</p>
<p><b>SFLLL Disclosure of Lobbying Form</b></p>	<p>Complete this form. When you come to the Lobbying Registrant section, type N/A into the name box, unless you are a registered lobbyist.</p>
<p><b>Project Narrative Form</b></p>	<p>This form allows you to attach a PDF of the project narrative that you wrote in Word and then converted to PDF. You cannot directly upload your Project Narrative PDF to Grants.gov. You must attach it to this Project Narrative Form and then upload it.</p>
<p><b>Project Abstract Form</b></p>	<p>This form allows you to attach a PDF of the Project Abstract that you wrote in Word and then converted to PDF. You cannot directly upload your Project Abstract to Grants.gov. You must attach it to Project Abstract Form and then upload it. Caveat: Not all applications use this – some will have you attach your Abstract using the Project Attachment Form.</p>
<p><b>Project Attachment Form</b></p>	<p>This form allows you to attach many required attachments. These are documents that the funder’s guidelines require or recommend that you attach, such as a Logic Model, Job Descriptions for project staff, key project staff resumes, a project timeline, and more. Attach the documents in PDF format. You cannot directly upload these documents to Grants.gov. You must attach them here and then upload the Project Attachment Form.</p>

<b>Budget Narrative Attachments Form</b>	Just as the name indicates, use this form to attach your Project Budget. You can attach Excel or PDF formats. Tip, if you are using an Excel spreadsheet with multiple tabs, do not convert it to PDF because your PDF will only show one of the tabs.
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**Need help?**  
Grants.gov support is available 24/7 except for Federal holidays.

Call: 1-800-518-4726  
Email: [support@grants.gov](mailto:support@grants.gov)  
Website: <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/support.html>

### 3. Grant writing – Proposal Development & Submission Tips

Are you sitting and staring at FOA you printed out and a blank Word document? You aren't alone. You can do this. Take it from people who have developed and submitted Federal Grant proposals for many years, there is a process and key steps you can take to get all of the work done. Usually, Federal grant deadlines are tight. Often, you will only have one to two months between the FOA being issued and the submission deadline. You will not be able to crank out a solid last-minute proposal. Start working on it right away.

#### Follow the instructions

Read the Funding Opportunity Announcement multiple times. Underline or highlight key information. If it helps you to see it in hard copy, print it out and add sticky tab labels at the edge of the document to help you find information quickly. Send the FOA to everyone on your team who will be working on the proposal.

#### Where do I start?

Create the Program Budget and Logic Model FIRST, followed by the narrative. While writing the narrative, gather or create all of the attachments that need to be submitted. Using this process, you are mimicking the review process used by the people who will be reviewing your grant. Your budget and logic model

should tell the basic story of your program/project. The narrative and attachments flesh out the details. Write with your reviewers in-mind.

### **Program/Project Budget**

Create a program/project budget that covers the entire grant period and follows Federal guidelines. Work with your accountant who has Federal grant experience to develop the budget. Adhere to the FOA instructions that specify what expenses are *allowable* and *unallowable*. You are held to Federal guidelines even if you are unaware of them.

**Many Federal grant periods are multiyear. Create annual income and expense budgets for each year of the proposed grant period.** Sometimes, the Federal agency will give you a template to follow. Other times, you will need to create your own budget template that includes the level of detail that the Federal government expects. Remember in math class when the teacher instructed you to “*show your work*”? Well, you absolutely need to demonstrate in your budget how you arrived at your numbers. Discuss with the accountant the specific staff, supplies, travel, etc. needed to carry out the program each year and get started.

**Example – Personnel Line Item:** *You’re requesting funds for a nurse to staff a vaccine clinic. Here’s an example of a personnel line item with corresponding narrative:*

Personnel

Full-Time Registered Nurse

Yr 1 - \$65,000 x 100% x 1 Year = \$65,000

Yr 2 - \$65,000 x 100% x 1 Year = \$65,000

Yr 3 - \$65,000 x 100% x 1 Year = \$65,000

Total \$195,000

The Registered Nurse will spend 100% of his/her/their time on this project providing nursing care to pediatric and adult patients. Responsibilities include: pre-vaccination assessment, educating patients about potential side effects/adverse reactions, administering vaccines, monitoring patients post-vaccination for adverse reactions, and providing post-vaccination care and documentation/reporting.

**Example – Transportation Line Item:** *You are applying for a Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) grant. In the FOA, it states that the agency requires you to budget for and attend grant training. Here’s what the travel line item might look like.*

DHHS-Sponsored Technical Assistance Training/Travel (Location, Airfare, Hotel, Transportation TBD) \$20,000

\$20,000 in DHHS sponsored technical assistance and training funds has been allocated to cover the cost of travel for staff in accordance with program guidelines. The sites of the training

sessions are unknown at this time. Travel estimates are based upon the agency's formal written travel policy.

Discuss **overhead** with the accountant and how much overhead you will request. Since most smaller organizations do not have a negotiated federal administrative cost rate, use the **10 percent De Minimus rate**. If using the De Minimus rate, the funder will ask you to attach a letter stating that you do not have a negotiated rate and are electing to use this.

## **The Logic Model**

Logic models are not as scary as they look. They are a distilled representation of your program's resources, activities, outputs (typically, numbers served), outcomes, and impact. See Page 14 for a discussion of how to create a logic model. You can also watch a video on logic model creation. There are many formats. Use whatever Logic Model format the funder recommends.

## **The Proposal Narrative**

Go back to the FOA. Locate the information about the proposal narrative sections and follow the format precisely. Look for the section entitled "*Application and Submission Information*" or something similar.

**Formatting and Writing Style** – Follow the guidelines, but typically, the proposal narrative is formatted in 12-point Times New Roman font, double-spaced, and with strict 1-inch margins. Typically, tables can be single-spaced. Adhere to the formatting instructions. Reviewers do not read beyond the page limit and you will lose points for not following these basic instructions. The writing style is formal and specific. All content must be presented in the third person. The word "you" should not appear in the narrative. Get to the point. Avoid excessive, flowery language and generalities. Be prepared to write 20-50 pages. You'll be surprised how easy it is to fill the pages when you start answering the questions for each proposal narrative section.

**Proposal narrative sections** – The narrative usually includes the:

- *Statement of need* - The problem, citing recent local, regional and national statistics, local surveys/needs assessments conducted, any previous attempts to address the problem in the community, and existing gaps in services
- *Description of the community to be served/target population* – Use current census data, demographic descriptions of the target population, and the number of people you have served
- *How the application addresses any priority areas identified in the FOA* – If you are serving one or more of the high-needs populations identified in the FOA, say so! This will earn you extra points.
- *Proposed program/project activities* – Tell them exactly what you'll do. Refer back to your logic model and explain the activities in detail here.
- *Performance Measurement/Evaluation* – Again, go back to the logic model, list your goals, objectives, outcomes, and impacts. Explain how you will achieve these. Provide annual targets. If you don't know the difference between an objective and an outcome, read Dr. Bev Browning's Grant Writing for Dummies book. It provides the best explanation.

- *Qualifications of the applicant organization to manage federal funds and the project itself.* – In this section, talk about the other government grants that you manage and how long you have managed them, any other large grants that you manage, the qualifications of the leadership team involved in implementing and supervising the program/project, and if you have managed this project, or a project of similar scale how well it was managed.
- *Project sustainability* – Agencies always ask how you plan to fund the program once their funding ends. Discuss searching for new income sources/streams, etc.

**Each section will come with a set of questions.** Answer every aspect of the question. Go so far as creating a section header for each response.

**For example, the Performance Measurement section asks you to, “Describe how the applicant will measure progress in achieving the project’s goal(s)/vision, identify targeted outcomes and describe the tools used to track and report the outcomes to DHHS, and identify project goals, objectives, activities, and products (if applicable), and provide a corresponding 36-month timeline”.**

Here’s what your response might look like:

- Describe how the applicant will measure progress in achieving the project’s goal(s)/vision

XXZ Clinic will follow the DHHS Measuring Effectiveness Initiative and report on the following outcomes using patient visit documentation, standardized patient surveys, and additional results in accordance with the DHHS grant contract.

- Identify targeted outcomes and describe the tools used to track and report the outcomes to DHHS.

Identified outcomes:

- 1) 33% more patients vaccinated overall over the fiscal year 2020 baseline each year
- 2) The New Registered Nurse assigned to the program is hired and trained within 30 days of award notification as evidence by human resources records and time certifications
- 3) >60% of 300 vaccinated patients complete a patient satisfaction survey indicating that they understood the potential side effects of the vaccine(s) they received

- Identify project goals, objectives, activities, and products (if applicable), and provide a corresponding 36-month timeline.

Goal – Tip- Use the goal stated by the agency in the FOA and tweak it as needed

Objective: 1) Increase the number of patients vaccinated by 33% as compared to fiscal year 2020 baseline numbers (from X Number to X Number patients); 2) Hire and train a Registered Nurse to staff the program; and 3) Increase Provide stalking education for professionals at the 7 trainings and symposium for 525 professionals that increases the percentage of people who are referred to A Safe Place’s for stalking-related services from 4 to 15% of total individuals-served by years 2 and 3.

Year 1 (DD/MM/YY- DD/MM/YY, the grant start date to end of Year 1 date)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Hire and orient Registered Nurse</li> <li>● Vaccinate patients</li> <li>● Conduct program evaluation and submit reports to stakeholders (board of directors, funding agency, etc.)</li> <li>● Etc.</li> </ul>
Year 2 (DD/MM/YY- DD/MM/YY)	Explain what activities will continue from Year 1 and anything that changes in Year 2
Year 3 (DD/MM/YY- DD/MM/YY)	Explain what activities will continue from Year 1 and anything that changes in Year 2

**Create and attach ALL of the other requested attachments** - the Abstract, job descriptions, etc.

**Proofread and edit!** – The goal is ZERO mistakes. Typos reflect poorly on your organization/project. Use Grammarly and Spell check, then print it out (colored paper makes the words stand out) and read it aloud line-by-line. You will be amazed at how much you catch. Find an outside reviewer/editor to look at your work. Preferably, someone unfamiliar with your work. Your CEO/ED should conduct a final review and approve the complete proposal package prior to submission on Grants.gov.

See also the More Resources section at the end of this manual for help.

## How to Submit

- 1) Have all of your forms ready to submit at least 72 hours before actual deadline. Have a good internet connection.
- 2) Attach PDF's of your documents to the proper Form in the Application Package. Click SAVE.
- 3) Login to Grants.gov. Upload the Forms to your application's Workspace one by one.
- 4) Once they are accepted without errors, click SUBMIT.
- 5) After submission, a confirmation number, date and time submitted will appear on the screen. Screenshot and save this. You will need the number to track your application through the full submission and review process.

## Post Award Grant Management

Entire books are written about this subject, and each agency has a process to follow to effectively manage the award. You will learn that process in the post-award technical assistance (education) provided by the funding agency. Here are a few things just to be aware of.

- 1) Make sure your bank can accept Federal ACH funds
- 2) Work with an Accountant who understands how to "draw down" funds.
- 3) Be prepared to deliver! Educate every member of the team about the grant
- 4) Connect with the program officer/grant point of contact early on (program and financial – are they the same person?)
- 5) Accept your award following the agency's established process
- 6) Reporting (financial and narrative) following the agency's established process. Be prepare for semiannual or quarterly narrative reports, monthly or quarterly fiscal reports/invoices, annual reports, and a Closeout Report at the end of the grant period.

## More Resources

**Browning, Beverly A. (2016), Grant Writing for Dummies®**, 6th Edition, John Wiley & Sons, Hoboken, NJ, ISBN: 978-1-119-28012-5

<https://www.dummies.com/store/product/Grant-Writing-For-Dummies-6th-Edition.productCd-1119280125.html> – Dr. Browning is a nationally respected grant consultant and trainer. This book is the ultimate guide to effective grant writing. It's not specific to federal grants alone, but will help you develop your grant seeking skills.

**Cassidy, Karen L. & Kester, Cheryl L. (2015) In the Trenches - Writing to Win Federal Grants: A Must-have for Your Fundraising Toolbox & the corresponding (but separate) Writing to Win Federal Grants: A Must-have for Your Fundraising Toolbox Workbook** – The sections on how to craft a Federal proposal are excellent. The section on Grants.gov is antiquated. Follow Grants.gov's training and instructions for anything related to the site.

**Grants Learning Center** - <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/learn-grants.html> - This is Grants.gov's official web-based training site.

**Grants.gov training videos** - <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/applicant-training.html> – A complete list with links to Grants.gov training videos.

**Grants.gov Community Blog** - <https://grantsgovprod.wordpress.com/> - Helpful, curated posts by Grants.gov users.

**Grant Professionals Association** - [https://grantprofessionals.org/general/register\\_member\\_type.asp?](https://grantprofessionals.org/general/register_member_type.asp?) - Join this national professional association and the Chicago Area Chapter. GPA provides online resources, a national conference, and the local chapter has continuing education (very affordable), mentoring and networking opportunities.

**U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Grant Writing Tips** – <https://www.hrsa.gov/sites/default/files/grants/apply/writestrong/grantwritingtips.pdf> - This deck walks you through the development of the elements of a proposal.