How to Apply for a USCIS Citizenship and Integration Grant

USCIS

April 10, 2024
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Agenda

• Welcome
• Overview of the USCIS Citizenship and Integration Grant Program
• How to apply for federal grants
• Eligibility requirements
• Questions and Answers
Welcome – USCIS Office of Citizenship

Provides federal leadership, tools, and resources to foster immigrant integration

Promotes instruction and training on citizenship rights and responsibilities

Engages and supports organizations in their integration efforts
Overview of the USCIS Citizenship and Integration Grant Program

The goal of the Citizenship and Integration Grant Program is to:

• Expand the availability of high-quality citizenship preparation services for immigrants across the nation and
• Provide opportunities for immigrants to gain the knowledge and skills necessary to integrate into the fabric of American society
Program Impact

- $155 million allocated
- 644 competitive grants awarded
- 41 states + District of Columbia
- 300,000 + immigrants served
Who Can Apply?

Historically, a diverse range of organizations have been eligible to apply, including:

- City, township and county governments
- Independent school districts
- Indian/Native American tribally designated organizations and governments
- Public/Indian housing authority
- Nonprofits with 501(c)(3) or 501(c)(6) IRS status, other than institutions of higher education
- Private, public and state-controlled institutions of higher education
- Special district governments
- State governments
When Can Organizations Apply?

• Organizations may apply for the FY24 Citizenship and Integration Grant Program as soon as the FY 24 Notices of Funding Opportunity are published on [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov)

• Historically, the application period has been open for 45-60 days

• There are steps organizations may take now to begin preparing for the application period
Review and Selection Process

• Applications are due by the deadline on the Notices of Funding Opportunity

• USCIS conducts a technical review of all eligible applications:
  o USCIS convenes panels of grant reviewers
  o Applications are scored and ranked based on the criteria in the Notices of Funding Opportunity
Grants Application Process

Sagal Musa

Grants.gov

www.grants.gov
Grants.gov
Guide for Applicants

USCIS Citizenship and Integration Grants Program Webinar
April 10, 2024
Agenda

• Introduction to Grants.gov

• Grants.gov Resources for Applicants
  – Online resources
  – Customer assistance

• Basics of Grants.gov
  – Registration
  – Navigation of Grants.gov website
  – Search Grants
  – Applying through Grants.gov

• Summary

• Ways to Connect with Grants.gov
Introduction to Grants.gov

• The Grants.gov program management office was established in 2002 and managed by the Department of Health and Human Services

• **Mission statement:** Provide a common website for federal agencies to post discretionary funding opportunities and for grantees to find and apply to them

• **Partners:** Grants.gov partners with 34 federal awarding agencies to post their financial assistance opportunities

• **Reach:** In FY23, Grants.gov published more than 4,000 notices of funding opportunity (NOFOs) worth over $161 billion of federal financial assistance
Grants.gov Resources for Applicants

• Online Resources
  – User Guide/Online help: Provides descriptive information/steps for Grants.gov functions
  – Learn Grants: Provides the 101 for federal grants
  – Chatbot: Provides quick answers for frequently asked questions
  – Newsletter: Informs users of the latest with Grants.gov and partners
  – YouTube video playlist: Provides videos with screenshots for various Grants.gov workflows
  – Blog: Provides detailed information on multiple topics
  – Subscription: Subscribes you to opportunities of your interest

• Customer Assistance
  – Grants.gov Contact Center & Self-service knowledge base
  – Grantor point of contact (POC) information
The Grants.gov User Guide/Online Help provides explanations and instructions for both applicants and grantors.

The help articles can be easily accessed by clicking on the Help link at the top or the 🎨 icon.

Resources:
- User guide / Online Help
Learn Grants

• Provides the applicant a gateway to the federal grants world

• Important links:
  – Grants 101: Describes grants lifecycle
  – Grant Eligibility: Describes/defines eligibility
  – Grant Terminology: Provides glossary of grant terms
  – Grant Making Agencies: Lists grant making agencies
    ▪ Has link to Recent Grants on Grants.gov
  – Grant Reporting: Describes reporting process, oversight, and lists reporting forms
  – Grant Fraud: Provides means to fight fraud

Resource:
  ▪ Grants.gov Learn Grants Page
Chatbot (Grant)

• Chatbot:
  – Grant, the Grants.gov chatbot answers frequently asked questions
  – Grant is available on most of the Grants.gov web pages
  – Provide feedback to improve Grants.gov ability to assist you
  – Click on the chatbot icon in the footer to open

Resources:
  ▪ Chatbot: Click on the chatbot icon
YouTube Videos

- YouTube video playlist:
  - Provides 50+ videos to assist users
  - Videos provide walk throughs of various Grants.gov functions
  - Click on YouTube link in the footer to view

Resources:
- Grants.gov YouTube
Newsletter and Blogs

• Newsletters:
  – Highlight latest blogs and provide upcoming changes
  – Subscription required for receiving the monthly newsletters
  – Published newsletters are available to all on the archive page

• Blogs:
  – Provide in-depth explanation for various topics
  – A total of 299 blogs available under various categories
  – Click on Blog link in the footer to view

Resources:
  ▪ Grants.gov Newsletter Archive
  ▪ Grants.gov Community Blog
Customer Assistance – Contact Center

• Grants.gov Contact Center
  – Provides assistance to all Grants.gov applicants for Grants.gov related questions. Examples
    • How do I register?
    • Why is the Apply button greyed out?
    • How can I share a workspace with my colleague?
  – Self-Service Knowledge Base
  – Lists top 10 user questions and other answers related to Grants.gov functionality
  – Submit service request using this portal

Resources:
  ▪ Self-Service Knowledge Base
Customer Assistance – Grantor Contact

• Grantor Contact Information in NOFO:
  – Notice of funding opportunity (NOFO) provides a point of contact from the grantor agency
  – Grantor POC answers the questions specific to the grant. Examples
    • Am I eligible for this grant?
    • Can you extend my deadline?
  – Grantor POC information can be found under the Additional Information section of the View Grant Opportunity page
Subscribe to Opportunities

- Subscribe to posted or forecasted opportunities
- User must be logged in to subscribe
- Varied subscriptions available –
  - Grants.gov News
  - All new opportunities
  - Opportunities of choice
  - Saved Searches

Resources:
- Manage Subscriptions
Reminder: Fraud

• Federal financial assistance award recipients are a crucial part of safeguarding Federal funds and maintaining a secure cyber environment

• Fraud prevention
  – You Can Help Fight Fraudulent Activity
  – Report Fraud
Grants.gov Applicants

• Individual applicant: An individual that applies for themselves
  – Does not need to register with The System for Award Management (SAM.gov)
  – Does not need unique entity identifier (UEI)
  – Does not need roles assigned in Grants.gov

• Organization applicant: An individual that works on applications on behalf of an organization
  – Organization needs to fully register with SAM.gov
  – Organization needs UEI
  – Individuals of the organization need appropriate roles assigned in Grants.gov

• Grants.gov does not charge the applicants any fee
Pre-requisites for Applying through Grants.gov

- Registration of applicant organization with SAM.gov
  - Fully register with SAM.gov
  - Designate an E-Business Point of Contact (EBiz POC)
  - Acquire Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) for your organization
  - Start early as this process may take 7-10 business days

- Register with and log into Grants.gov
  - Register with Grants.gov
  - Add a profile (Individual Applicant / Organization Applicant)
  - Link Grants.gov account with that of Login.gov
  - Follow the on-screen prompts for all pages

Resources:
- How to create an Applicant account for my organization self help
- How to Register with Grants.gov video
Pre-requisites for Applying through Grants.gov, Cont.

• Add profile
  – Select individual/organization profile if not added during registration
  – An individual may have multiple profiles

• Assign roles
  – E-Business Point of Contact (EBiz POC)/Expanded Applicant Organization (Expanded AOR) is required to assign roles for individuals working on behalf of an organization

Resources:
- Add profile user guide
- Manage roles user guide
- Understanding user roles
- User roles and Workspace actions video
Navigating Grants.gov Website

• Explore the various tabs on the site

• Logged in users will see additional options under the tabs

• Search Grants: Search for grant opportunities

• Applicants: Quick access to various links and resources

• Connect: Stay in the loop for the latest from Grants.gov
Search Grants

• Assists applicants in identifying the appropriate opportunities

• Search results can be filtered by:
  – Basic Search Criteria
  – Opportunity Status
  – Funding Instrument Type
  – Eligibility
  – Category
  – Agency

• Use search tips to find the right opportunity

Resources:
- Search Tips page
- Search Grants page
- How to Search for a Federal Grant video
View Grant Opportunity

- Synopsis tab: Provides the essential information about the opportunity, including the Funding Opportunity Number, posted and closing date

- Version History tab: Provides access to all versions of the grant opportunity's forecast and synopsis

- Related Documents tab: Lists documents and links the grant-making agency may have attached to this grant opportunity

- Package tab: Provides links to the grant opportunity package(s)

- Click Apply button to start application process
- Click Subscribe button to subscribe to the opportunity

Resource:
- Mystery of Gray Apply Button blog
Grants.gov Application Process

Pre-requisites
-- Fully register with SAM.gov/acquire UEI
-- Register with Grants.gov
-- Assign roles

Search Grants
-- Identify grant opportunities
-- Check eligibility

Apply
-- Complete Workspace
-- Submit Workspace application

Track Application
-- Track application using Check Application Status link or Track My Application link

Resources:
- Registration user guide
- How to Search for a Federal Grant video
Workspace

- Workspace is a shared, online environment where members of a grant team may simultaneously access and edit different forms within an application.

1. Create a Workspace
2. Fill out mandatory and optional forms per agency instructions
3. Notify Applicant Organization (AOR) of the completion of forms
4. Submit the application
5. Agency acknowledges receipt of the application

Resources:
- Manage Workspace user guide
- Workspace video series for Organization Applicants
Create Workspace for a Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) → Add Workspace participants (optional) → Complete application → Check for errors → Submit application → Note Grants.gov tracking number → Track application
Summary

• Visit Grants.gov to find and apply for federal financial assistance
• Utilize User Guide/Help, videos, chatbot, help tips in forms, and contact center to answer your questions related to Grants.gov system
• Reach out to grantor point of contact for grant related questions

Resources:
- Grants.gov website
- Grants.gov User Guide
- Grants.gov YouTube
- Grants.gov chatbot
- Grants.gov Blogs
- Grants.gov Newsletters

Samples:
- How to apply to a federal funding opportunity blog
- Grant writing basics blog
- “How To...” blog series
Connect with Grants.gov

Stay connected with Grants.gov through our mobile app and social media to find out more about what’s coming, new training opportunities, and updated resources.

Grants.gov Mobile App
Follow us on Twitter: @grantsdotgov
Video tutorials on YouTube

Community Blog
Subscribe to our blog: Blog.Grants.gov
Bookmark our Online User Guide
Email Us: Community@grants.gov
Eligibility Requirements

Jacqueline Greely
Grants and Financial Assistance Division
Department of Homeland Security

www.dhs.gov/dhs-grants
QUESTIONS?
Resources

• USCIS Grant Program Office: citizenshipgrantprogram@uscis.dhs.gov

• Grants.gov: support@grants.gov or 1-800-518-4726

• Subscribe or view a list of upcoming local and national engagements: www.uscis.gov/outreach

• Share feedback on today’s engagement or contact us: Public.Engagement@uscis.dhs.gov
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