

Grants Life Cycle

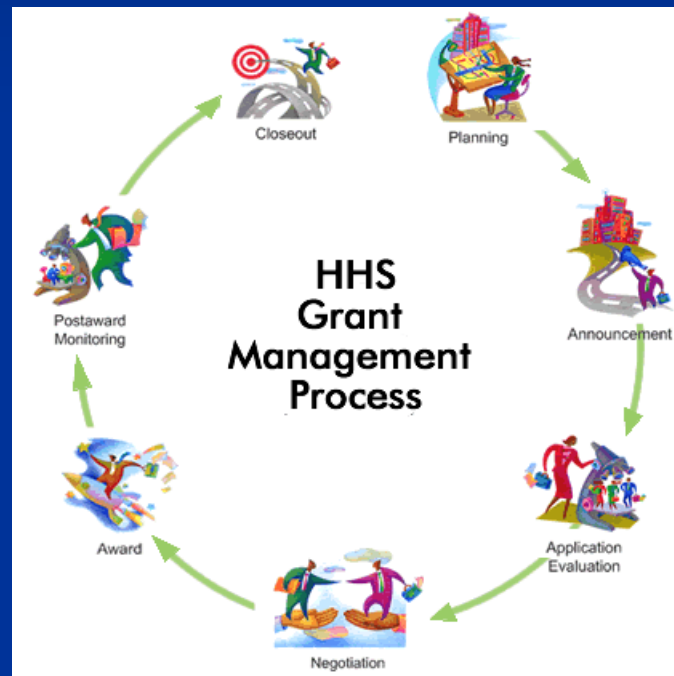
Applicants' Perspective

The Cycle in a Nutshell

- Grants cycle or process is a series of sequential steps involved in the pre-award and post-award phases of grants administration or management
- The steps are planning, announcement, application, negotiation, award, post-award monitoring, closeout
- Familiarity with the various steps is definitely helpful for applicants in knowing what to expect, writing competitive applications/proposals and after an award, implementing a grant program as stated in their proposal and in accordance with all terms and conditions



Diagram of Grant Cycle



Planning

- Keep your organization's mission and goals in mind
- Identify the federal agencies that have programs that align with your goals and mission
- Search [Grants.gov](https://www.Grants.gov)/CFDA for current funding opportunity announcements
- Take stock of your organizations strengths and challenges towards a successful application



Planning Continued

- Conduct an internal needs assessment
- Would you need a proposal committee?, a project director?, writers?, designate an authorized organization representative, etc
- Map out assignments for completing your application. Set completion dates
- Obtain and review past successful grant application packages
- Get registered on Grants.gov



Announcement

- Grant opportunity announcements are sometimes called funding opportunity announcements(FOA), request for proposals(RFP), request for application(RFA)
- HHS FOAs can be found on Grants.gov, Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance(CFDA)and on the HHS Forecast website
- You can also contact any HHS agency for current funding opportunities



Application

- Assuming you find a funding opportunity of interest, read it thoroughly, discuss it as a team, map out a strategy for tackling the application and writing the proposal
- A typical grant application has multiple sections including abstract or summary, organization background, problem description, goals and objectives, project design or methodology, evaluation, methods, etc



Application Continued

- Follow the instructions for each section in the funding opportunity announcement. Special attention to all technical requirements
- Have more than two persons screen your application for errors and adherence to the instructions
- Make your sure that your proposal is vividly descriptive. Remember you will not be there to explain any ideas that do not come across to reviewers



Application Continued

- When your application is received by the awarding agency, it will be reviewed for completeness and eligibility
- It will be evaluated by experts based on an objective review process, scored according to the stated criteria in the announcement, and rank ordered according to merit
- Application review is a fair and objective process. No secrets; No favors.



Application Continued

- The application review process further includes the business management capabilities of the applicant
- A strict examination of whether the applicant has a system in place to comply with applicable regulatory or statutory requirements
- It also involves a detailed cost analysis of the proposed budget to determine what is allowable, and reasonable



Negotiation

- The awarding agency may call the applicant to negotiate a modification of some or all aspects of the contents of the application to bring them in line with regulations or enabling legislation
- Usually it has to do with scope of work and budgets but may extend to other pertinent areas including terms and conditions of an award
- Either way, negotiation is a good sign that an applicant may indeed receive a grant award



Award

- The awarding agency will notify successful applicants via a document called Notice of Award (NOA)
- The NOA describes all terms and conditions, including reporting requirements
- The NOA also implies that the awarding agency considers the applicant fit to enter into a business agreement with the government, and will comply with legal and policy requirements



Monitoring

- Awards have to be monitored for progress or deficiencies
- This includes site-visits, telephone contacts, progress and financial report reviews, etc
- Grantee and awarding agency should maintain all communication records including telephone contacts, and formal correspondences
- Maintain all documents related to amendments



Monitoring Continued

- If monitoring identifies non-compliance or deficiencies, the awarding agency may take actions to correct the issues
- Such actions may include technical assistance, termination, suspension and debarment, audit resolution, and conflict resolution
- Even when issues have been corrected, there still might be follow-up site visits to ensure the program is being implemented as required



Closeout

- Closeout involves reviewing expiring grants to ensure requirements are met
- Grantees will submit final progress and financial or budget reports to the awarding agency
- All funds must have been spent or obligated by the formal date when the grant ends
- If an extension is needed to tidy up the closeout process, grantee must request and obtain the permission in writing



Summary

- The grant cycle or process is intended to ensure
 - Transparency
 - Grants are properly planned
 - Fair competition
 - Grantees are provided the support they need to succeed
 - Taxpayer dollars are used only for the intended purpose

