



# Governor's Grants Office News

Martin O'Malley    Anthony Brown  
Governor            Lt. Governor

AUTUMN 2013

## The Shutdown's Ripple Effect

*by Eric Brenner, director, Governor's Grant Office*

Each federal grant program comes with its own statute, with the goal always being to direct funds towards a particular service or need. The less money spent on administration of the grant, the more money that goes to direct services. However, the public legitimately wants to know that their tax dollars are being well spent, so it is appropriate to comply with a series of rules and norms meant to reduce waste, fraud, and lesser forms of mismanagement.



Finding the sweet-spot between simply trusting the grantee to do the right thing and imposing an overly oppressive amount of "hassle-factor" reporting requirements is the essence of the grants management field. I am always impressed with how dedicated most grants professionals are to the goal of getting the money where it is needed, which they assist by making sure their organization complies with reasonable grants management rules that improve transparency and accountability.

With this background in mind, I am writing this during the current shutdown of the federal government. I am stunned at the waste and inefficiency imposed by the various actions related to planning for the shutdown, actually doing the shutdown, finding and sharing information related to the shutdown, and ultimately getting everything back in place...all of which comes at the expense of time and money that is being taken away from the core purpose of delivering direct services and goods related to the goal of each federal grant program.

The impact occurs at the federal government and ripples through state governments, universities, nonprofits, and everyone who touches federal grant dollars in any way. Balancing the use of federal grant dollars to meet legislated policy goals while complying with all adequate accountability systems is tough enough on the best of days. During a federal shutdown, the balance swings dramatically out of kilter, resulting in a new level of waste and inefficiency imposed on the time of everyone involved in the grants management field.

In the search for "waste" of government resources, we need look no further than the added time taken away from meeting our core mission that has been imposed on all of us with this shutdown.

*Eric Brenner's memo with shutdown information relevant to federal grantees can be located at the top of the What's New section of [GGO's website](#).*

## **Governor's Grants Office Hosts Series of Grants Management Trainings**

**Register today!**

Following is the list of upcoming workshops, all held at the Maryland Fire and Rescue Institute in College Park, Maryland. These (no-fee) workshops are for anyone who is managing a federal (or pass-through) grant. Seating is limited, and pre-registration is required. Click on a link for more information and to register for a workshop. Please note that the October 10 DATA ACT training, originally designed as a live workshop, has been changed to a WEBINAR. (Also note that both the Data Act webinar and the Cost Principles workshop may have to be cancelled and rescheduled due to the federal government shut-down, in which case we'll email people who registered.)



*A-133 workshop in September*

Thursday, October 10, 2013, [UPDATE ON THE DATA ACT](#) (WEBINAR). What the Data Act will do when (and if) it's passed by Congress and signed into law. Presenter: Christina Ho, U.S. Department of Treasury.

Thursday, November 7, 2013, [Administrative Circulars workshop](#) at MFRI. This session will include in-depth coverage of each of the cost principles circulars covering state/local governments, higher education, and non-profits. Presenters: Stacia LeBlanc, Esq., National Grants Management Association, and Deb Posey, Charles County government.

Thursday, November 13, 2013, [Cost Principles workshop](#) at MFRI. Presenters t.b.a.

The presentations from our September workshops (A-133 Circulars and CAROI) are posted at the What's New section of [our homepage](#). Many thanks to our expert presenters who have participated in the first two workshops of the series:

Preston Alderman, Toni Lawson, Helena Moynahan, Rich Rasa, Chuck Laster, Patrick Smith and Larkin Jennings.



## In Case You Missed It...

**We recorded our most recent webinar on How To Apply for a State Bond Bill for a Capital Project**

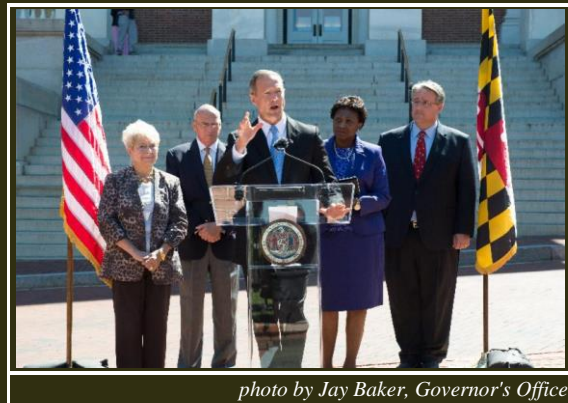
The Governor's Grants Office frequently receives requests for information about public support that may be available for capital projects, as opposed to the more traditional grant options that are available for operating expenses via specific federal statutes and funding streams.

The Maryland General Assembly offers opportunities for funding on capital projects (known as Bond Bill requests) with the best information available on how to navigate the existing process provided by the Department of Legislative Services.

[WATCH THE RECORDED WEBINAR.](#)

## Governor O'Malley Announces \$5.5 Million in Early College, Digital Learning Grants

**Investments to support cutting-edge education programs**



*photo by Jay Baker, Governor's Office*

Governor Martin O'Malley announced the first recipients of \$5.5 million in total grants from two funds: the Digital Learning Innovation Fund and the Early College Innovation Fund. These grants will promote programs that prepare students for jobs in the 21st Century economy.

"In Maryland, we must ensure that our educators and institutions are equipped to provide students with the knowledge and skills that will fuel innovation in the future," said Governor O'Malley. "By investing in programs that promote interactive digital

learning and make it easier for students to train for high-demand fields, we are making the better choices that will expand opportunity and support our economy. Working together with our educators, parents and students, we can give our children the tools they need for the jobs of tomorrow."

[READ MORE](#)



## State receives \$31 million grant from the U.S. Department of Education

Maryland Awarded Grant Promoting the Readiness of Minors in Supplemental Security Income (PROMISE)

Governor Martin O'Malley announced on Monday that Maryland was selected to receive \$31 million as part of U.S. Department of Education grant Promoting Readiness of Minors in Supplemental Security Income (PROMISE), an opportunity for states to improve the education and career outcomes of youth with disabilities receiving Supplemental Security Income (SSI).

"In Maryland, we have been guided by the principle that there is no such thing as a spare Marylander," said Governor Martin O'Malley. "As part of this commitment to being more effective in supporting child SSI recipients who continue to face challenges as adults, we are committed to ensuring that all of our economic development and workforce creation initiatives include opportunities for individuals with disabilities."

"We are thrilled to receive the PROMISE grant from the U.S. Department of Education. With PROMISE, we hope to achieve better outcomes for child SSI recipients and their families," said Maryland Department of Disabilities Secretary Catherine A. Raggio. "This grant spans five years and will provide enhanced supports and services to 1,000 Maryland youth with disabilities. It will allow us to continue our leadership role in ensuring that all of our youth, including those receiving SSI benefits, are prepared to enter the 21st century workforce."

GGO Director Eric Brenner said: "I'm particularly gratified to see that one of our smaller agencies, the Department of Disabilities, was able to lead this effort which proves that when a particular grant opportunity perfectly matches the needs and goals of an organization, anything is possible."

[READ MORE](#)

## Local Workshops Around Maryland

*No fee workshops*



### Anne Arundel County Library, Annapolis:

- Wednesday, November 13, 2013, 2:00 p.m., "Introduction to Fundraising Planning."
- Wednesday, November 13, 2013 - 4:00 p.m., "Innovative Fundraising."

[MORE INFORMATION AND REGISTER](#)

### Charles County library, Waldorf (P.D. Brown):

- Friday, November 2, 2013, 9:30 - 11:00 a.m., "Understanding Collaboration."

[MORE INFORMATION AND REGISTER](#)

### Enoch Pratt Central Library, Baltimore:

- Thursday, November 14, 2013, 1:00 - 3:00 p.m., "Telling the Story of Volunteer Impact."
- Thursday, November 21, 2013, 1:00 - 3:00 p.m., "Building the Winning Proposal."
- Tuesday, November 26, 2013, 1:00 - 3:00 p.m., "How to Start a Nonprofit."

[MORE INFORMATION AND REGISTER](#)

### Howard County Library, Ellicott City:

- Thursday, October 24, 2013, 7:00 - 8:30 p.m., "Grants Seeking Basics." Call 410.313.1950 to register.



## Match making: Local Governments and Contractual Grant Writers

The Governor's Grants Office recently was approached by a large county government that was preparing to issue a task order to allow them to create a pool of vetted grant writers who could be called upon on short notice to avoid a longer, formal bid/proposal process. We asked some of our local government contacts to weigh in on this issue.

One of the larger counties described having a list of pre-qualified service providers maintained by their Bureau of Purchases. To qualify for this list, the person/company must first identify their areas of specialization (grant writing, in this case) which allows the buyer (county agency) to narrow the selection process. Every effort is made to obtain at least three price quotes from this list of providers to avoid the need for a more lengthy proposal process.

When the agency in need of a grant writer goes to this list to solicit a price quote there will be a certain threshold that limits the size of the contract that can be awarded. Minority Business Enterprise (MBE) certification can be advantageous for the vendor. Once a vendor is chosen, the method of payment is usually a purchase order.

Many of the smaller local governments hire individual grant writers on short notice based on past experience and without a competitive bid process. Fees usually are based on a dollar per hour rate, or a set fee for the total project based on estimated time needed to complete the work. In some cases elected local officials vote on the total allowance for the work.

In most of these cases the local entity will have purchasing regulations that do not require a bid or formal procurement process for professional services. One comment was that this really is the best way for these services to be purchased as the low bidder may not be the professional with the best background, experience, and knowledge for the job. One suggestion was that if other counties have procurement rules that don't provide this level of flexibility they may want to make changes.

For more information, please contact our office.

## **New Foundation Center Tool Helps Connect Non Profits with Funders**



### ***Online tool now available without a subscription***

The Foundation Center, the leading source of information about philanthropy worldwide, has launched Foundation Directory Online (FDO) Free, an online tool that dramatically expands public access to the Center's authoritative collection of foundation information. At no cost, users can search the basic profiles and IRS Forms 990-PF of nearly 90,000 grantmakers, less than 7 percent of which have websites of their own. This new tool puts critical data at anyone's fingertips.

You can search for worldwide grantmaking foundations and find their contact information, fields of interest, financial data, and program priorities much as you have been able to do for Maryland private grantmakers at [grants.maryland.gov](http://grants.maryland.gov).

Unique to this new tool is how it enables users to search by keyword across the entire text of the IRS Forms 990-PF for all independent grantmaking foundations. "While the IRS may someday make foundations' 990 returns available in machine-readable open format," said Bradford K. Smith, the Foundation Center's president, "'someday' isn't soon enough for the millions of nonprofit organizations who are tackling the world's most pressing problems. The new tool makes it possible to search the raw data on the IRS forms today, alongside additional information that has been cleaned and organized by the Foundation Center."

Together, these produce a powerful fundraising tool that helps nonprofits find the

grants

they need and is completely accessible to social entrepreneurs, researchers, or anyone else who wants to know about how America's foundations contribute to the public good.

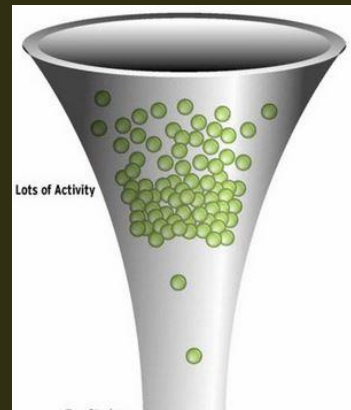
And contribute they do. According to Key Facts on U.S. Foundations, the Foundation Center's new annual research study, in 2011 the country's 81,777 foundations held \$622 billion in assets and distributed \$49 billion, an amount estimated to have reached \$50.9 billion in 2012. The outlook for 2013 is for continued modest growth overall.

Try FDO Free by visiting <http://fdo.foundationcenter.org>.

## Non Profits, did you know?

**Keep your pipeline of grant applications full!**

GrantsStation conducts a survey every six months on the state of grant seeking in America. The most current survey revealed that 81 percent of organizations that applied for grants won awards. Which supports the old adage that if you don't ask, you won't receive.



# GOVERNOR'S GRANTS OFFICE

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**Welcome to the Maryland Governor's Grants Office**



Please remember there is a wealth of information on numerous subjects related to finding, winning and managing grants at the Governor's Grants Office [website](#). And, you can sign up to receive email alerts when new grants are posted!