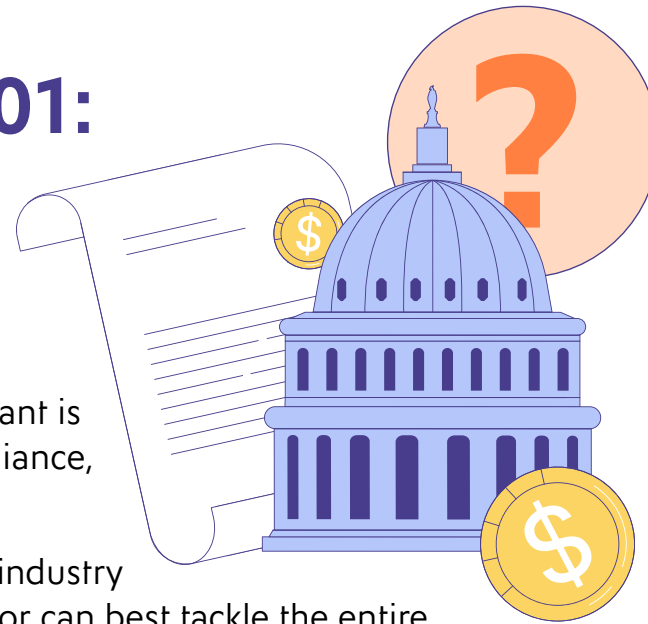


Grants Management 101:

What Happens After an Award?



The grant management process doesn't end once a grant is awarded. In fact, much of the work — including compliance, allocation and reporting — is done afterward.

At a recent GovLoop [online training](#), government and industry experts discussed how agencies across the public sector can best tackle the entire grant management lifecycle. Below are some key takeaways from the discussion.

GATHER POTENTIAL RECIPIENTS

The money doesn't help if you can't give it away. "One of the things that's painful as a grantmaker is: We have a dollar amount and there's a timeframe tied to it [but] we don't have enough solid applicants to push all the money out," said Matt McCarter, Grants Branch Chief in the Idaho Office of Emergency Management.

Thankfully, there are ways to avoid such a situation. "One thing that helps is to identify potential applicants and host a bidder's workshop prior to releasing the opportunity," McCarter said.

At a bidder's workshop, he explained, the grantor will bring together potential applicants and describe the program's mission — what the funding aims to achieve. They'll also talk through eligibility, ensuring that those who apply for the grant actually meet the criteria, while those who aren't ready can still learn about future opportunities, McCarter said.

A workshop "levels any expectations on the front end, so we get the right people at the table," McCarter said. "That saves everybody a lot of time and trouble."

ESTABLISH STRONG COMMUNICATIONS

Once you've landed a grant, people from multiple departments likely will be involved in distributing the funding. It takes a strong communication plan to ensure that money flows smoothly, said Eric Gonzalez, Senior Customer Success Manager at Euna Solutions.

"Who needs to be involved with the management of the grant that you've received? Who's going to be involved with passing it on to your subrecipient?" he said. "It's really critical to outline that and communicate that out to all parties involved."

It's also crucial to share timelines. Without such transparency, "maybe you have a report that's due tomorrow or the end of the week, and now you're scrambling internally, externally, to try to get all the information that you need," Gonzalez said.

Given all the different stakeholders who must come together to manage grant funds effectively, "communication is key ... to prevent any hiccups from happening," he said. "That starts with documenting the process and outlining the people involved."

DEMONSTRATE THE IMPACT

Grant funding ultimately is a means to an end, and the grant management process needs to recognize this. It's important to establish methods for documenting how the grant will affect the agency's mission — and to tell that story in a way that's supported by data and metrics.

As the agency managing the grant funds, "you need to understand, where is that money ultimately coming from? Why is it being made available?" said Julia Malott, Euna Solutions' Principal Product Manager.

Understanding the grant's intent is "going to give you insights into the kind of reporting, the kind of metrics that [the grantor will] be looking to collect ... in order to ultimately show that their program was successful," she said.

More than just a necessary task, documenting outcomes with robust metrics offers "an opportunity for you to show that those funds are valuable — that they really did make an impact," said Malott. This, in turn, helps open the door to further funding.

BRING EVERYONE TO THE TABLE

At the Ohio Office of Budget and Management, Deputy Director of Grants and Financial Reporting Stacie Massey looks at roles and responsibilities. When it comes to grant management, she believes bringing the right people to the table "is critical to the success of your project," she said.

Program leaders need to be involved — the ones who are "the boots on the ground, getting the program done," she said. And the financial team needs to be there, too. They need to stay on top of compliance requirements "because they're doing a lot of the payment work and the drawdown of funds."

The procurement team also plays a role, especially in federal government. When doling out grants, "they're procuring something with federal funds" and thus need to ensure compliance with relevant contracting requirements, Massey explained.

Finally, be sure to give lawyers a seat at the table, especially when it's time to distribute the money.

"When you sign a grant agreement, it's a contract," she said. "You should include your attorney. When you're doing a notice of award to all the subrecipients that you're sub-granting, make sure your attorneys have looked at it."

Taken together, these post-award tips can ensure that awarded grants truly advance an agency's mission.

→ [For more insights, watch the full event on demand.](#)

