

TIPS FOR SUBMITTING APPLICATIONS THROUGH GRANTS.GOV

San Francisco Bay Water Quality Improvement Fund (SFBWQIF), Fiscal Year 2022

WHAT TO DO NOW/BEFORE YOU ARE READY TO APPLY:

- Register NOW! There is a multi-step registration process that can take approximately **one month** for applicants who have never done business with the federal government before. You can create login information prior to when the RFA is released. Further details and assistance can be found at www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/organization-registration.html.
- Please note that you will need to register with SAM.gov and Grants.gov. Both utilize Login.gov, which is a free, secure sign in service.
 1. As part of registration, SAM.gov will assign you a Unique Entity ID (UEI). **If you are already registered with SAM.gov make sure your account is active. You must renew your SAM registration each year.**
 2. Note: On April 4, 2022, the federal government stopped using the DUNS Number to uniquely identify entities. If your organization is already registered in SAM, (either as active or inactive registration), the transition to UEI is automatic.
 3. A key part of the SAM.gov registration is identifying an [EBiz point of contact](#) (name and email address). This is important as you move forward to register in Grants.gov and apply. Prior to application submission, the EBiz point of contact (POC) must authorize roles, such as an Authorized Organization Representative (AOR), within your organization to fill out application materials. This safeguards your organization from individuals who may attempt to submit a grant application without permission. The POC will automatically have access to fill out application materials.
 4. Once assigned, verify the AOR role by logging into Grants.gov.
- The approved AOR must be the person who submits the application package in Grants.gov. The AOR is the person within the applicant's organization that will submit the grant application through Grants.gov, even if other individuals, within or outside of the applicant's organization, prepared/wrote the grant.
- Registering in Sam.gov is free of charge. Please be advised, some companies may offer to register your organization for a fee. If you choose to use one of these companies, any fee you incur is not reimbursable with EPA grant funds.

WHEN YOU ARE READY TO UPLOAD APPLICATION MATERIALS:

"Workspace" in Grants.gov: the standard way to submit applications online

- Make sure the EBiz POC has authorized roles in your organization that are able to create a workspace, such as an AOR. Then log into Grants.gov.
- Click "Search Grants" and find the grant you want to apply for.
- Enter an "Application Filing Name" to create a Workspace.
- Once the Workspace is created for the selected opportunity, you will see all the forms you need to apply, including additional optional forms.
- For a visual/auditory guide explaining how to create a Workspace account, watch [this video](#).

Mandatory forms to be submitted through Grants.gov:

1. Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424)
2. Budget Information for Non-Construction Programs (SF-424 A)
3. Pre-award Compliance Review Report (EPA Form 4700-4)
4. EPA Key Contacts (Form 5700-54)

5. Proposal Narrative (Project Narrative Attachment Form)-prepared as described in Section IV.B of the announcement
 6. Project Area Map (submit under the “Other Attachments” accessed under the Optional documents” in Grants.gov)
- Do not submit password-protected files.
 - Make PDF files searchable by creating the PDF from its source document (e.g., a Microsoft Word file). Searchable PDF files make it easier for reviewers to review your narrative. The easiest way to do this is to use the “Create PDF/XPS Document” feature, found under → File → Export → Create PDF/XPS Document.
 - When uploading forms, grants.gov will ask, “Do you want to unlock this form?” Click “Yes.”
 - Submitting an application through Grants.gov does NOT automatically mean Grants.gov accepted the application or that EPA received the application. Submit your application at least two to three days early. By submitting your information early, you will have time to find out if your application has been received, is free of errors, and is accepted by the Grants.gov system before the deadline.
 - After signing and successfully submitting the application package, within 24 to 48 hours the AOR should receive a series of notification emails from Grants.gov with the following subject lines:
 1. **GRANT##### Grants.gov Submission Receipt**
Indicates Grants.gov (not EPA) received the application and is currently being validated.
 2. **GRANT##### Grants.gov Submission Validation Receipt for Application**
Indicates if Grants.gov received and validated the application and is being prepared for Grantor agency retrieval.
 3. **GRANT##### Grants.gov Grantor Agency Retrieval Receipt for Application**
Indicates Grantor agency (EPA) retrieved the application from Grants.gov.
 4. **GRANT##### Grants.gov Agency Tracking Number Assignment for Application**
Indicates Grantor agency (EPA) assigned an Agency tracking number to the application.

If the AOR did not receive any of the notification emails listed above, contact the Grants.gov Help Desk at 1-800-518-4726, available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week excluding federal holidays.

- You can check the status of your application any time after submission by using the tracking link provided in the Submission Receipt email, or by logging into Grants.gov using the “Applicants” link at the top of any page and clicking on the “Check Application Status” link.
- Review instructions in Section IV.B. of the SFBWQIF Request for Application (RFA) and the BIL SFBWQIF RFA on how to submit the application package through Grants.gov.
- If you experience transmission difficulties, please refer to Section IV.B. and Appendix 1 in the RFA for more information and contact the Grants.gov Help Desk (1-800-518-4726).
- If you are experiencing technical difficulties in SAM.gov, please visit the [Federal Service Desk](#) site.

COMMON ISSUES TO AVOID WHEN TRYING TO SUBMIT THE APPLICATION PACKAGE THROUGH GRANTS.GOV:

- Ensure that your files are not corrupt or forcing any errors before uploading them to Grants.gov.
- Ensure the file name(s) does not exceed 50 characters.
- Review other common error messages at www.grants.gov/applicants/encountering-error-messages.html.

COMMON REASONS FOR GRANTS.GOV APPLICATION PACKAGE REJECTION:

- Applicant's Sam.gov account is inactive: You must log into your account at least once per year for your account to remain active. It's easy to check your account status by going to Sam.gov and "Renew Entity" if needed to renew your account.
- Application was not submitted by the Authorized Organization Representative (AOR): Individuals submitting application packages on behalf of their organization must be the AOR or use the AOR's username and password. The organization's E-Biz POC must authorize the individual as an AOR.
- The application was submitted with another organization's account information: Applicant did not have an active Sam.gov account and had another party submit an application package on their behalf. EPA considers the party submitting the application package as the applicant and will not accept applications on behalf of other organizations.
- The applicant is unsure if the application submitted successfully: When attempting to submit the application package, some applicants have reported their screen continuing to say "in progress." Make sure you submit the application early to allow for any issues that may occur along the way. Call the [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov/helpdesk) Help Desk for FREE assistance at 1-800-518-4726.