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| GRANT MANAGEMENT | | |
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| Quick Reference | | |

# Understanding Grants

The National Grant Management Association defines a grant as “*funding received by organizations that is not expected to be repaid, often distributed by a government organization, that provides support or stimulation to accomplish a public purpose.”*

There are several different types of grants but they all begin the same: submission of a grant proposal, evaluation of the proposal, notification of grant award. If you are lucky enough to receive a grant, the grant award notification (GAN) will include the award number, the award period, and any special terms or conditions.

It’s important to remember that all grant activities and expenses must be necessary, reasonable, and allocable.

Necessary – required to complete the grant components

Reasonable – prudent use of the funds

Allocable – traceable to the specific grant activities

***You’ve been awarded a grant, now what?!*** This Quick Reference guide will provide the basics of the grant lifecycle and the process of managing a grant.

# Program Requirements

The project manager is responsible for the overall compliance of the grant. Responsibilities include providing training and oversight of program staff and ensuring they understand their roles/responsibilities; making sure program activities are being implemented according to the proposal; and, communicating with stakeholders regarding program activities.

**Staffing**

* Develop job descriptions for any staff paid by the grant; specify the timeframe for all grant-funded positions.
  + It is recommended that someone on the grant team (i.e., project manager, bookkeeper, accounting specialist) possess the fiscal capacity to create and manage a grant budget and serve as a liaison with Business Affairs.
* Keep time logs for anyone working on the grant.

**Professional Development**

* Schedule/provide any staff training and continue as needed.
* Maintain copies of agendas, sign-in sheets, presentations, and handouts as documentation of meetings, training, professional development.
* Ensure plans are made for the project manager to participate in any funder required meetings or training.

**Program Activities**

* Any changes that would reflect a major adjustment from the original proposal must be approved by the funder/grantor and district leadership prior to those changes being implemented
* Become familiar with policies/regulations as they relate to the funding source (i.e., OMB Circulars, Non-regulatory guidance, EDGAR, UGG, etc.). Consult with district accountability staff as needed.
* Provide parents/participants with program information such as brochure, info sheet, “handbook”.

**Communication**

* Develop a process regular and on-going communication with participants, staff, administration, and partners; this could be meetings, newsletters, email blasts, etc.
* Confirm the preferred method of communication with the funder/grantor and always provide a prompt reply to communication by the program officer.

# Fiscal Requirements

An integral part of grant management, financial management relates to initiating and managing the specific expenses needed to implement the project to achieve program goals and objectives. Project managers are responsible for knowing, understanding, and following the project budget as approved by the granting agency.

**Project Spending**

* + All program expenses must be reasonable and necessary for the program to operate and be successful. Always ask yourself, “Is this an appropriate use of funds for implementing the project?” and ”Is this purchase necessary for the project to be successful?”
  + Work with the district Grants and Business Affairs departments to obtain accurate accounting/budget codes and to ensure access to the district financial system.
  + If the grant budget includes funds to compensate employees through stipend pay, the project manager must know and follow all applicable district policies and procedures for preparing and submitting accurate payroll forms in a timely manner.

**Contracting & Purchasing**

* + Contractors must have a scope of work outlining the specific services being provided, be an approved vendor, and cannot begin work until a contract is fully executed. Reach out to the Grants and Business Affairs departments for assistance.
  + Follow all district purchasing policies/procedures which includes creating requisitions and purchase orders for all purchases. Some purchases may require prior approval from the granting agency.
    - Software/technology purchases must be routed to appropriate approvers prior to the final requisition.
  + Ensure all inventory is properly accounted for and used for the purpose intended by the grant. The project manager should maintain an inventory log and ensure that all items have been tagged/labeled appropriately following district policy/procedure.

**Budget Amendments**

* Significant budget changes will require a budget amendment; amendments must be submitted to and approved by the granting agency before the program encumbers funds. Notify Business Affairs when the amendment is approved so that they can update the accounts in the district’s financial system.
  + - Business Affairs will review the year-to-date expenditure report with project managers to determine needed amendments.

**Reimbursement requests**

* Generally, expenses of grant-funded projects are paid via general purpose funds first then the district seeks reimbursement by petitioning grant funds from the grantor. This will be completed by Business Affairs but it is the project manager’s responsibility to notify Business Affairs of the schedule provided by the granting agency and any specific submission requirements.

# Monitoring Requirements

Project evaluation and assessment should be an ongoing process. The funder will request reports be submitted that include program updates and explains how data is being used to make program improvements. The program manager must be willing to “monitor and adjust” when something isn’t working.

**Reporting**

* Find out the due dates of all program reports (quarterly, bi-annually or annually) and the submission format.
* Regularly collect information on project activities and participants for reporting purposes but also to make sure the project is on schedule.
  + - Contact the Assessment department in advance if formal academic, behavior or attendance data is needed for reporting purposes.

**Performance Measures**

* All federal grants have performance measures, commonly referred to as Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) Measures, to assess the effectiveness of the grant project. Data collected on project activities should provide documentation that the activities are leading to improvements.

**Program Evaluation**

* The purpose of evaluation is to collect information about your project to know if:
* The activities provided lead to positive changes;
* The program needs to be adjusted to achieve desired results; and,
* The project has resulted in replicable best practices.
* Think about these things:
* What information needs to be collected?
* From whom will information be collected?
* How will information be collected?
* When will information need to be collected?
* How will results/recommendations/reports be shared?
* Some grants may require an external evaluator – this should have been stated in the application package and costs should be funded through grant funds.

**Site Visits**

* + Project manager should conduct employee evaluations and observations of program activities; use a rubric and discuss strengths/weaknesses.
  + The funder may conduct “desktop” monitoring calls that could include activity, professional development, and service questions as well as fiscal questions. May request documentation supporting a reimbursement request.
  + The funder may conduct an on-site monitoring visit that would include staff/participant interviews, records review, and visits to locations where project activities are taking place. May be required to submit some documentation prior to the visit.
* All funder monitoring visits should include a final report containing any recommendations or corrective action needed.

# Closing the Project

Just because your project is almost finished doesn’t mean that your work is done. The funder/grantor will want to know what was accomplished with the funds and how activities will continue.

**Compiling/Submitting a Final Report**

* + Using funder template, submit the project-end report specifically addressing how well performance measures were met.
  + Obligate and expend all grant funds within the specified grant period including obtaining vendor invoices and close all outstanding purchase orders. Complete these tasks 3-4 weeks prior to the grant end date so that Business Affairs can submit a final reimbursement request by the specified deadline.

**Disseminating Results**

* After completing the project, share the results and successes of program activities with staff, participants, administration and partners.

**Retaining Grant Files**

* Best practice is to maintain project files/records for 3-5 years after the close of the grant period for auditing purposes. Documents may be kept electronically provided they cannot be altered (PDF format).

**Sustaining the Project**

* The project manager (and team) should identify some best practices that can be duplicated at other sites and share those with stakeholders.
* Present to administration data that supports a request for funding to continue project activities and/or identify other grants that could be obtained to sustain successful components.

# Resources

For information on grant writing, locating data, and district grant policies/procedures, visit the Accountability department’s webpage at: <https://accountability.cmcss.net/grant-writing/> Some important documents have been linked below:

**District grant policies**

[Grant Administrative Policy: GRT-A001](https://employees.cmcss.net/misc/ViewISO?filename=GRT-A001.pdf)

[Grant Opportunities Procedure: GRT-P002](https://employees.cmcss.net/misc/ViewISO?filename=GRT-P002.pdf)

[Grant Proposal and Application Procedure: GRT-P003](https://employees.cmcss.net/misc/ViewISO?filename=GRT-P003.pdf)

[Grant Post-Award Procedures: GRT-P004](https://employees.cmcss.net/misc/ViewISO?filename=GRT-P004.pdf)

[Third Party Facility Constructional/Alteration Procedure (FAC-P004)](https://employees.cmcss.net/misc/ViewISO?filename=FAC-P004.pdf)