

Exchange Network Application Submission Guidance

Detailed Instructions for Submitting Applications Through Grants.gov

Requirements to Submit Through Grants.gov and Limited Exception Procedures:

Applicants, except as noted below, must apply electronically through [grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) under this funding opportunity based on the grants.gov instructions in this announcement. If an applicant does not have the technical capability to apply electronically through grants.gov because of limited or no internet access which prevents them from being able to upload the required application materials to grants.gov, the applicant must contact OMS-ARM-OGDwaivers@epa.gov or the address listed below in writing (e.g., by hard copy, email) at least 15 calendar days prior to the submission deadline under this announcement to request approval to submit their application materials through an alternate method.

Mailing Address:

OGD Waivers
c/o Jessica Durand USEPA Headquarters
William Jefferson Clinton Building 1200 Pennsylvania Ave., N. W. Mail Code: 3903R
Washington, DC 20460

Courier Address:

OGD Waivers
c/o Jessica Durand Ronald Reagan Building
1300 Pennsylvania Ave., N.W. Rm # 51278
Washington, DC 20004

In the request, the applicant must include the following information:

- Funding Opportunity Number (FON)
- Organization Name and Unique Entity Identifier (e.g., DUNS)
- Organization's Contact Information (email address and phone number)
- Explanation of how they lack the technical capability to apply electronically through [grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) because of 1) limited internet access or 2) no internet access which prevents them from being able to upload the required application materials through grants.gov.

EPA will only consider alternate submission exception requests based on the two reasons stated above and will timely respond to the request -- all other requests will be denied. If an alternate submission method is approved, the applicant will receive documentation of this approval and further instructions on how to apply under this announcement. Applicants are required to submit the documentation of approval with any initial application submitted under the alternative method. In addition, any submittal through an alternative method must comply with all applicable requirements and deadlines in the announcement including the submission deadline and requirements regarding application content and page limits (although the documentation of approval of an alternate submission method will not count against any page limits.)

If an exception is granted, it is valid for submissions to EPA for the remainder of the entire calendar year in which the exception was approved and can be used to justify alternative submission methods for application submissions made through December 31 of the calendar year in which the exception was approved (e.g., if the exception was approved on March 1, 2018, it is valid for any competitive or non- competitive application submission to EPA through December 31, 2018). Applicants need only request an exception once in a calendar year and all exceptions will expire on December 31 of that calendar year. Applicants must request a new exception from required electronic submission through [grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) for submissions for any succeeding calendar year. For example, if there is a competitive opportunity issued on December 1, 2019 with a submission deadline of January 15, 2020, the applicant would need a new exception to submit through alternative methods beginning January 1, 2020. Please note the process described in this section is only for requesting alternate submission methods. All other inquiries about this announcement must be directed to the Agency Contact listed in Section VII of the announcement. Queries or requests submitted to the email address identified above for any reason other than to request an alternate submission method will not be acknowledged or answered.

Submission Instructions:

The electronic submission of your application must be made by an official representative of your institution who is registered with [grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) and is authorized to sign applications for Federal assistance. For more information on the registration requirements that must be completed in order to submit an application through grants.gov, go to grants.gov and click on "Applicants" on the top of the page and then go to the "Get Registered" link on the page. If your organization is not currently registered with grants.gov, please encourage your office to designate an Authorized Organization Representative (AOR) and ask the individual to begin the registration process as soon as possible.

Please note the registration process also requires your organization have a Unique Entity Identifier (e.g. DUNS number) and a current registration with the System for Award Management (SAM) and the process of obtaining both could take a month or more. Applicants must ensure all registration requirements are met in order to apply for this opportunity through grants.gov and should ensure all such requirements have been met well in advance of the submission deadline. Registration on [grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov), [SAM.gov](https://www.sam.gov) and DUNS number assignment is FREE.

Applicants need to ensure the AOR who submits the application through [grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) and whose Unique Entity Identifier (e.g., DUNS number) is listed on the application is an AOR for the applicant listed on the application. Additionally, the DUNS number listed on the application must be registered to the applicant organization's SAM account. If not, the application may be deemed ineligible.

To begin the application process under this grant announcement, go to [grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) and click on "Applicants" on the top of the page and then "Apply for Grants" from the dropdown menu and then follow the instructions accordingly. Please note: To apply through grants.gov, you must use Adobe Reader software and download the compatible Adobe Reader version. For more information about Adobe Reader, to verify compatibility or to download the free software, please visit Adobe Reader Compatibility Information on grants.gov.

You may also be able to access the application package for this announcement by searching for the opportunity on [grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov). Go to grants.gov and then click on "Search Grants" at the top of the page and enter the Funding Opportunity Number, EPA-OMS-20-01 or the CFDA number applying to the announcement (CFDA 66.608), in the appropriate field and click the Search button.

Please Note: All applications must now be submitted through grants.gov using the "Workspace" feature. Information on the Workspace feature can be found at the grants.gov Workspace Overview Page.

Application Submission Deadline:

Your organization's AOR must submit your complete application package electronically to EPA through grants.gov no later than **Wednesday, March 25, 2020, 11:59 PM ET**. Please allow for enough time to successfully submit your application and allow for unexpected errors requiring you to resubmit.

Please submit all the mandatory application materials and any applicable additional application documents, detailed in Appendix E of the FY2020 Exchange Network Grant Solicitation Notice, using the grants.gov application package:

Mandatory Documents

- (1) Cover Letter (use 'Other Attachment Form' to submit)
- (2) Project Narrative Attachment Form
- (3) Budget Narrative Attachment Form
- (4) Application for Federal Assistance (Standard Form (SF-424)
- (5) Budget Information for Non-Construction Programs (SF-424A)
- (7) Key Contacts Form (EPA Form 5700-54)
- (8) Pre-award Compliance Review Report (EPA Form 4700-4)

Additional Attachments (submitted using the Other Attachment Form), if applicable:

- (A) Personnel attachments, including staff resumes
- (B) Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement
- (C) Additional Information for Inter-Tribal Consortium
- (D) Formal Project Partners:
 - Roles & Responsibilities
 - Distribution of Funds
- (E) List of Exchange Network Assistance Agreements

Applications submitted through grants.gov will be time and date stamped electronically.

If you have not received a confirmation of receipt from EPA (not from grants.gov) within 30 days of the application deadline, please contact Erika Beasley, at 202-566-2530 or beasley.erika@epa.gov. Failure to do so may result in your application not being reviewed.

Technical Issues with Submission:

Once the application package has been completed, the "Submit" button should be enabled. If the "Submit" button is not active, please call grants.gov for assistance at 1-800-518-4726. Applicants who are outside the U.S. at the time of submittal and are not able to access the toll-free number may reach a grants.gov representative by calling 606-545-5035.

Applicants should save the completed application package with two different file names before providing it to the AOR to avoid having to re-create the package should submission problems occur or a revised application needs to be submitted.

Submitting the application:

The application package must be transferred to grants.gov by an AOR. The AOR should close all other software before attempting to submit the application package. Click the "submit" button of the application package. Your Internet browser will launch, and a sign-in page will appear.

Note: Minor problems are not uncommon with transfers to grants.gov. It is essential to allow enough time to ensure your application is submitted to grants.gov **BEFORE** the due date identified in [Section IV](#) of the FY2020 Exchange Network Grant Solicitation Notice. The grants.gov support desk operates 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, except Federal Holidays.

A successful transfer will end with an on-screen acknowledgement. For documentation purposes, print or screen capture this acknowledgement. If a submission problem occurs, reboot the computer turning the power off may be necessary and re-attempt the submission.

Note: [Grants.gov](https://grants.gov) issues a "case number" upon a request for assistance.

Transmission Difficulties:

If transmission difficulties resulting in a late transmission, no transmission or rejection of the transmitted application are experienced and following the above instructions do not resolve the problem so that the application is submitted to grants.gov by the deadline date and time, follow the guidance below. The Agency will make a decision concerning acceptance of each late submission on a case-by-case basis. All emails, as described below, are to be sent to beasley.erika@epa.gov with the FON in the subject line. If you are unable to email, contact Erika Beasley at 202-566-2530. Be aware EPA will only consider accepting applications that were unable to transmit due to grants.gov or relevant [SAM.gov](https://sam.gov) system issues or for unforeseen exigent circumstances, such as extreme weather interfering with internet access. Failure of an applicant to submit timely because they did not properly or timely register in [SAM.gov](https://sam.gov) or grants.gov is not an acceptable reason to justify acceptance of a late submittal.

If you are experiencing problems resulting in an inability to upload the application to grants.gov, it is essential to call grants.gov for assistance at 1-800-518-4726 before the application deadline. Applicants who are outside the U.S. at the time of submittal and are not able to access the toll-free number may reach a grants.gov representative by calling 606-545-5035. Be sure to obtain a case number from grants.gov. If the problems stem from unforeseen exigent circumstances unrelated to grants.gov, such as extreme weather interfering with internet access, contact Erika Beasley, at 202-566-2530 and beasley.erika@epa.gov.

Unsuccessful transfer of the application package:

If a successful transfer of the application cannot be accomplished even with assistance from grants.gov due to electronic submission system issues or unforeseen exigent circumstances and you have already attempted to resolve the issue by contacting grants.gov, send an email message to beasley.erika@epa.gov prior to the application deadline. The email message must document the problem and include the grants.gov case number as well as the entire application in PDF format as an attachment.

Grants.gov rejection of the application package:

If a notification is received from [grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) stating the application has been rejected for reasons other than late submittal and it is too late to reapply, promptly send an email to beasley.erika@epa.gov with the FON in the subject line within one business day of the closing date of this solicitation. The email should include any materials provided by grants.gov and attach the entire application in PDF format.

Please note successful submission through [grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) or via email does not necessarily mean your application is eligible for award.