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GRANTS OFFICE

GRANTS OFFICE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

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GEARING UP FOR GRANTS IN 2012

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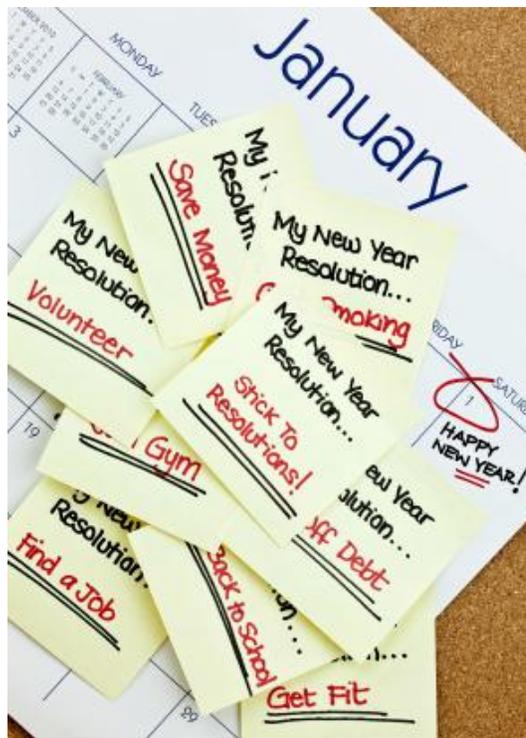


World-class grants intelligence, at your fingertips

GRANT RESOLUTIONS FOR THE NEW YEAR

NOW IS THE TIME TO CHART YOUR PLAN FOR SUCCESS IN 2012

BY SUSANNAH MAYHALL, GRANTS DEVELOPMENT COORDINATOR



The start of the new year means big business for gyms and fitness clubs as overstuffed holiday revelers seek to atone for their overindulgence by resolving to get in shape and lose those extra pounds. Whether or not this year's flock will stick with their goals remains to be seen, but the beginning of the year is also a great time to think about getting your grant-seeking program in shape. Whether you have yet to embark on a quest for grant funding or are a weather-beaten veteran of the process, take this opportunity to rethink your strategies, or develop an entirely new one, and make 2012 your most successful grants year yet.

As budgets continue to tighten, strategizing for grants development and increasing the competitiveness of your proposals is key to bringing home grant dollars. The following tips and hints will help you to focus on a few aspects of your grants plan that could use a little tweaking, getting you in gear for the year ahead.

RESOLUTION #1: PLAN AHEAD.

With grant deadlines frequently released just a few short weeks in advance, writing compliant proposals can often seem like a last-minute scramble to get everything together in time for submission. Although it can seem as though you're at the mercy of the funder regarding when the guidance will be released, you can take control by mapping out a tentative submission calendar based on deadlines from previous years. Funders often release guidelines around the same time each year.

Additionally, many programs, especially those that are well-established, change very little from year to year. As a result, mapping out a plan for grant submissions and even preparing some materials ahead of time is not only feasible, it's highly advisable so that you can give yourself the longest preparation runway possible. Obviously, any materials prepared in advance will need to be tweaked so that they are compliant with the current year's guidance, but gearing up ahead of time can go a long way towards preventing last-minute scrambling for details.

RESOLUTION #2: GET ORGANIZED.

With today's technological advancements, many tools exist that can help you keep it all together. Make 2012 the year that you tackle the mounds of paper documents and disparate technological systems by exploring the tools that are available to you and utilizing them to keep everything in order. Frequently-used information such as your organization's DUNS number, Grants.gov username and password, and organization administration details should be readily available. In addition, past grant applications and any accompanying documentation should be stored for easy access should you need to review or re-tool the documents in the future.



RESOLUTION #3: STAY IN TOUCH.

Maintaining good relationships with funders is critical to your success as a grantseeker. For federal projects, stay on top of administration and reporting deadlines and be as thorough as possible. Failing to properly report on your grant may result in a loss of funding and hurt your chances of receiving future awards.

In the private funding arena, strong relationships with funders are the earmark of successful grant applicants. Whether leading up to an initial request from a new funder or a renewal from a previous source of funding, regular communication and updates on your progress help demonstrate your organization's success and ability to carry through on goals. Contact with current and previous funders also serves to keep the funder in the loop concerning the results of their investment in your project. Treat them well and you could reap the rewards for many years to come.

RESOLUTION #4: PRIORITIZE INTERNAL PROJECTS.

While it often happens that an organization comes across a grant and develops a project around the grant's guidelines and priorities, this strategy is a bit like putting the cart before the horse. A better way of managing grant projects is to prioritize your organization's projects in advance and seek out grants that truly line up with those projects. By starting with your project, you ensure that the program details and internal drive behind the project are in place before you engage in proposal development, which will help to keep the process up and running when you have an application to write. You will also increase your success rate by demonstrating to funders that you have a real stake in the project by thoroughly describing its implementation and sustainability details.





2012 Department of Homeland Security Funding

BY VINCE SIRAGUSA, GRANTS DEVELOPMENT CONSULTANT

In the aftermath of the 2001 attacks, the nation’s collective quest for safety spawned a quick rise to prominence for U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS). Established in the [Homeland Security Act](#) of 2002, DHS supports the various security efforts and programs that contribute toward the broad yet vital mission to “secure the nation from the many threats we face.” However, with the Fiscal Year 2012 Budget now solidified, many of those tasked with ensuring the nation’s security may be doing so with much less federal grant money in their pockets.

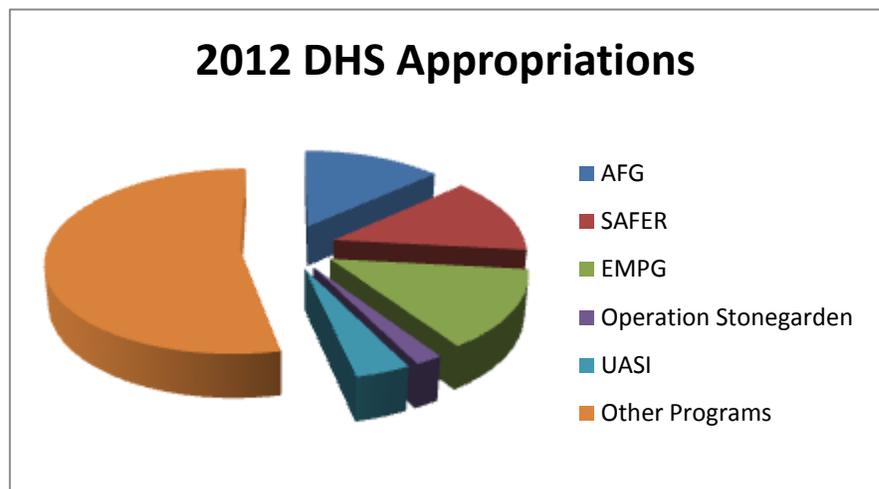
Overall, the 2012 appropriations set aside only \$2.37 billion for state and local grant programs. An impressive number on the surface but down roughly \$1 billion from 2011, which also saw major reductions when compared to FY 2010. Still, given the ambiguity of the 2012 legislations and the funding methodology used by Congress, there are many unknowns at this time. Outside the amount of \$50 million for the Operation Stonegarden

Program and no less than \$100 million for “areas at the highest risk of a terrorist attack,” it’s impossible to know exactly where this block-based funding will end up. While it’s reasonable to expect that “areas at the highest risk of a terrorist attack” implies UASI funding, this may or may not be the program-specific intent of the legislation’s language.

Many of these decisions will rest upon “the discretion of the Secretary” as the act directs Homeland Security Secretary Janet Napolitano to award the \$1.35 billion based on threat, vulnerability and consequence among previous grant programs. Again, while we know that at

least \$100 million will go to the highest-risk areas and no less than \$50 million for Operation Stonegarden, the remaining money must be stretched to fund many formerly stalwart programs such as the State Homeland Security Program (SHSP), Transit Security Grant Program (TSGP), Port Security Grant Program (PSGP), and Metropolitan Medical Response System (MMRS).

What does that mean for those targeting the funding and support afforded by these programs? While fundamental changes in these DHS programs and overall funding may



already be a foregone conclusion, the steps in identifying and leveraging these programs remains refreshingly consistent with years past. In the end, the money that is available will present itself to those with the innovative project ideas that best align with state priorities and the focus of the grant program itself. Additionally, a willingness to engage multiple project partners in pursuit of a common goal will not only diversify the grant options on the table but also help the grant program impact as many local stakeholders as possible.

DEFINED FY2012 DHS PROGRAMS

Assistance to Firefighters (AFG)	\$337.5 million
Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER)	\$337.5 million
Emergency Management Enforcement Grants (EMPG)	\$350 million
Operation Stonegarden	at least \$50 million
Urban Areas Security Initiative (UASI) (likely program fit for "areas at the highest threat of terrorist attack")	at least \$100 million

UNDEFINED FY2012 DHS PROGRAMS

State Homeland Security Program	 <p>\$1.35 billion shall be distributed, according to threat, vulnerability, and consequence, at the discretion of the Secretary of Homeland Security</p>
Urban Areas Security Initiative	
Metropolitan Medical Response System	
Citizen Corps Program	
Over-the-Road Bus Security Assistance	
Port Security Grants	
Transit Security Grants	
<i>Interoperable Emergency Communication Grant Program*</i>	
<i>Buffer Zone Protection Program*</i>	
<p><i>* Note: Given the fact that neither the Interoperable Emergency Communications Grant Program nor the Buffer Zone Protection Program Grants were funded in FY2011, significant FY2012 funding is unlikely.</i></p>	





Health Care Innovation Challenge Focus

THE \$1 BILLION PROGRAM AT-A-GLANCE

BY SUSANNAH MAYHALL, GRANTS DEVELOPMENT COORDINATOR

As would-be applicants to the Health Care Innovation Challenge across the country are learning, the Center for Medicare & Medicaid Services' monstrous \$1 billion program aimed at innovating health care and payment models in an effort to save money is no walk in the park.

By December 19, 2011, CMS had received well over 10,000 letters of

intent for the program. While a significant percentage of these LOIs will probably not result in full proposal submissions, interest in the program has been unsurprisingly overwhelming. With the January 27 deadline looming, project developers, writers, and other grants professionals are knee-deep in the murky program requirements, which call for a tightly-knit forty-page narrative and a complex total cost of care savings plan, among other elements. As with almost any grantwriting endeavor, it is crucial that all participants follow a few

necessary steps to stay above water and ensure that a responsive, competitive narrative is submitted by the deadline. Although by no means exhaustive, the following tips will help keep the process going smoothly for everyone during crunch time.

1. Register early.

HCIC grants must be submitted via Grants.gov. Because the registration process can take up to two weeks, it's important to get your registration information lined up as soon as possible to avoid any last-minute snags with submission.

2. Set internal deadlines and delegate responsibilities.

With so many moving parts, the HCIC grant is a huge undertaking for any grantwriting team. Be sure to set deadlines and communicate regularly with the team so that all necessary components are completed in a timely fashion.

3. Keep reviewing the guidance. Just

TIMELINE FOR HEALTH CARE INNOVATION CHALLENGE

Mandatory non-binding LOI submission deadline: ~~December 19, 2011~~

Full proposal deadline: **January 27, 2012***

Applicant award ceiling: **\$30 million**

Applicant award floor: **\$1 million**, but will accept projects with smaller budgets

*While the LOI is non-binding (details may differ from actual proposal submission), full proposals will be disqualified if CMS has no record of the lead applicant submitting an LOI by the appropriate deadline.



because you've read the guidance once or twice doesn't mean you will remember every detail. Throughout the process, revisit the guidance to make sure your proposal is on track and meets the priorities laid out in the FOA. Additionally, keep abreast of new developments as some requirements have changed. For example, a January 5 email from CMS explains that section e. Key Personnel is not a required form and is not included in the application package. Additionally, the email directs applicants to state "Health Care

Innovation Challenge" in their Descriptive Title of Applicant's project in Item 15 and check "c" on Item 19, as Review by State Executive Order 12372 does not apply to this grant.

4. Utilize outside reviewers.

Whether internal or external proposal development is used, it's critical to involve a reviewer who is not a part of the immediate proposal development team to evaluate and edit your proposal. CMS has provided a large quantity of guidance for application preparation, but it is only too easy to

miss details, weak points, and proofreading errors in a document with which you've been working closely. A fresh pair of eyes on your application will provide you with additional insight and may catch errors or logic lapses you have missed.

5. Submit early.

Although Grants.gov has greatly improved in recent years, technical difficulties are always a potential problem, and submitting your proposal at least a day or two in advance of the deadline ensures that you will get it in on time.

HEALTH CARE INNOVATION CHALLENGE RESOURCES

Program Page: <http://innovations.cms.gov/initiatives/innovation-challenge/index.html>

Webinar Links: [http://innovations.cms.gov/documents/pdf/HC Innovation Slides- Webinar Overview Compliant.pdf](http://innovations.cms.gov/documents/pdf/HC%20Innovation%20Slides-Webinar%20Overview%20Compliant.pdf)
[http://innovations.cms.gov/documents/pdf/HCIC Effective Project Design Webinar 2 Dec6 2011.pdf](http://innovations.cms.gov/documents/pdf/HCIC%20Effective%20Project%20Design%20Webinar%202%20Dec6%202011.pdf)
[http://innovations.cms.gov/documents/pdf/HCIC Webinar Dec 13 2011.pdf](http://innovations.cms.gov/documents/pdf/HCIC%20Webinar%20Dec%2013%202011.pdf)
[http://innovations.cms.gov/documents/pdf/HCIC Webinar4 12 19 11.pdf](http://innovations.cms.gov/documents/pdf/HCIC%20Webinar4%2012%2019%2011.pdf)

Link to FOA: <http://innovations.cms.gov/documents/pdf/innovation-challenge-foa.pdf>

Financial Plan Excel Template: http://innovations.cms.gov/documents/HCIC-FinancialPlanTemplate_v2.xlsx

Frequently Asked Questions: <http://innovations.cms.gov/initiatives/innovation-challenge/faq.html>

Fact Sheet: <http://innovations.cms.gov/documents/pdf/innovation-challenge-fact-sheet.pdf>



IMPROVE YOUR GRANT SUCCESS RATE WITH THE INDUSTRY'S TOP GRANT WRITING SERVICES.

The best way to ensure that your grant application will be approved is to have it written by the company with one of the best track records in the industry: Grants Office. Our grant writing services have helped hundreds of municipalities, schools, hospitals, and non-profit entities get the funding they need.

For more information on how we can help you succeed, contact Susannah Mayhall at smayhall@grantsoffice.com today!

Proofreading Towards a Better Proposal

BY ALI PALMIERI, HELPDESK ADMINISTRATOR AND RESEARCH ASSOCIATE

Anyone who's been involved with the grants process knows it's one thing to find the right grant and another thing to actually submit an application. Once you go through the trials and tribulations of putting the application together, you may have looked over the application hundreds of times, or you may not have had much time to look it over at all. In this economic state, organizations are downsizing and people are being asked to take on more and more tasks. This can hurt the quality of an application when the submitter doesn't have enough time to properly proofread the application before it is time to submit.

Crucial errors could be made in the haste to submit a grant application. It is important to proofread or, more importantly, have someone outside of the process proofread the proposal. When you have read a proposal many times, your mind knows what you want to have written down, so you are much more likely to skip over your own errors. If you don't have time for someone else to edit for you, something that will make it easier to pick out your own mistakes is to read it out loud to yourself or have someone

read it out loud to you. If wording or ideas don't make sense, you will know it. You will stumble over sections where the wording is awkward or you can think to yourself, "Does this make sense to someone outside of the project?"

Be aware of the audience for which you are writing. It is important to keep this in mind when doing any writing but in a grant proposal, you are trying to persuade someone that your project deserves funding. Use details that will let the reviewer know this project is something that can easily be put into action and has a lot of support from the organization and the community. If you are editing your proposal and find it isn't written in an actionable way then find a way to work towards that by clearly defining the goals or using partnerships and other ideas that may make the project more concrete in a reviewer's mind.

Whether or not you have time to edit your own proposal, the best option is to have someone from outside of the organization proofread and edit for you. They are able to give you the feedback you need so the proposal will make sense in terms of the guidance.

It will also give you another set of eyes to find errors that you don't want to be put in front of reviewers. Those on the outside will be able to pick out typos and errors that will not be picked up by a computer's spell check. This will not work for budgets or anything to do with detailed numbers but you will be on your way to a well proofread and error free proposal. You don't want a small typo or confusing wording to take your project out of the running for grant funding.

COMING SOON....

The following grants have expected release dates in the coming weeks:

Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER).

Funds local fire departments' staffing and deployment needs.

Distance Learning and Telemedicine Grants (DLT).

Supports education and healthcare opportunities in rural America.

Coordinated Tribal Assistance Solicitation (CTAS).

Variety of programs supporting public safety and justice projects in Tribal organizations.

Stay tuned for more details!



Grantseeking Tips

MAKE GRANTS A COMPONENT OF YOUR ORGANIZATION'S STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

BY CHRIS LAPAGE, SENIOR GRANTS DEVELOPMENT CONSULTANT



At least once a day someone will ask me to provide them some tips and strategies to improve their grantseeking efforts. As simple as the request sounds, it actually is a very difficult one to address. Volume is not the issue, as there are reams of information available to organizations seeking to maximize the potential of grant funding. Unfortunately, this may be an instance where the right answers are being provided but the wrong question has been asked. In other words, the problem is that when folks are seeking information at such a high and unspecified level, they usually don't know where to start. When organizations are just getting their feet wet with grants, information overload may have the reverse effect of intimidating involved staff members to the point where they become discouraged with grant funding mechanisms and throw in the towel. This article is intended for those

organizations that may be asking the wrong question and really want some feedback on where to begin.

The best place to start your grantseeking efforts is to roll it into your organization's strategic planning and budget processes. An organization's budget should be reflective of its vision, or the strategic direction outlined by top level personnel. Grant funding is intended to fill in the gaps where an activity is in the strategic interest of the organization but there may be a budgetary shortfall. As such, any grantseeking plan should be reflective of the organization's strategic vision and thereby, its budget. For example, higher education institutions in a particular area usually compete for the best students. If a particular grant requires the winner to be the technical assistance hub for a given region, the awardee may be put in a position to provide valuable services to a potential

competitor. Obviously, it is not in the strategic interest of an organization to pursue that particular grant no matter how much "free money" is on the table. Thus, the effect of the strategic plan on grantseeking activities is straightforward and intuitive.

However, most folks do not recognize how well-informed grants intelligence can inform the strategic planning and budget development process. Understanding the grants landscape for the sector in which your organization operates is crucial to the strategic planning process. For instance, in the health care sector, we know that funding is concentrated on eliminating health disparities, improving access, health professional education, implementation of health information technology and emergency preparedness. Knowing the general categories where the bulk of funding is concentrated is critical to the creation of the organization's



budget. If improving health access to rural patients and updating the organization's billing systems are competing strategic objectives, it may prove useful to know that there may be grant funding available for the former initiative while the latter project will only be achieved through a budget allocation. Since grant funds cannot be used to supplant existing funding, an organization that went ahead and budgeted for the rural health project would not be eligible to replace that funding with grants later in the fiscal year.

In summary, a good starting point for anyone new to grantseeking is to gain

some understanding of where grant funding is concentrated in their sector. Rather than identifying a single need and researching individual grants that may support that item, peruse all the grants available in a particular sector and try to identify common areas that the funding seems to address. This should also prove useful for developing a budget for planning purposes. Once you have identified strategic objectives that have budget shortfalls, make these items priorities in your grantseeking efforts. For many grant programs, four to six months may pass between the opening of an application window and the announcement of

awards. For this reason alone, it is essential that grant conversations be integrated into your organization's long-term planning. Once you have completed these steps, then you can begin researching grant funding for individual projects with the peace of mind that there will be buy-in at the very top of the organization, since the efforts have been integrated into the strategic vision.

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SEEKING NEW WRITERS!

Grants Office is inviting other writers and grants professionals to serve as guest contributors to *FUNDED*. If you have an article you would like to submit for publication in *FUNDED*, please email your article, a short biography, and contact information to newsletter@grantsoffice.com.

Please note: Articles should be between 500 and 750 words and address a specific grant opportunity or topic



UPCOMING EVENTS

January 2012 Webcasts

- **January 26, 2012:** 2012 Mastering the 2012 Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program, *Sponsored by Cisco*

February 2012 Webcasts

- **February 16, 2011:** Building a 21st Century Workforce with Grants, *Sponsored by Cisco*
- **February 23, 2011:** Reimagining Education by Investing in Innovation, *Sponsored by Cisco*

March 2012 Webcasts

- **March 15, 2011:** Distance Learning & Telemedicine Webcast Series: Part III, *Sponsored by Cisco*

March 2012 Webcasts

- **March 15, 2011:** Distance Learning & Telemedicine Webcast Series: Part III, *Sponsored by Cisco*

April 2012 Webcasts

- **April 19, 2011:** And Justice for All: DOJ Grants for Your Public Safety Projects, *Sponsored by Cisco*

Register for upcoming events or view previous webcasts at

<http://grantsofficeevents.webex.com>.



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<http://grantsoffice.com/funded.aspx>.

YOU ASKED AND WE LISTENED!

To provide you with even more timely and relevant webcasts, Grants Office's 2012 webcast line-up will focus primarily on individual grant programs and each event will be scheduled promptly once the official grant guidance materials have been released.

In order to ensure that you receive invitations to the webcasts that interest you, please visit <http://grantsoffice.info/Webcasts.aspx> and browse through our upcoming webcast menu. You can register for scheduled events or enter your email address in the "Invite Me" box of any upcoming webcast, and you will receive the invitation for that event once it is scheduled!

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