

EPA Grants Competition Process Webinar, September 12, 2024

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

- Q1: Do the training requirements flow down to subrecipients?
- A1: The EPA Grants Management Training for Applicants and Recipients and the How to Develop a Budget training requirements do not flow-down to subrecipients. We would encourage them to take the training, but they are not required to.
- Q2: Can you please share the URLs and how to sign up for the listserv that are referenced in this presentation?
- A2: All links from today's webinar are available on the [EPA Competition Process Webinar webpage](#). You can sign up for the EPA listserv by filling out the [form on the EPA grants website](#).
- Q3: To confirm, is it required that one staff member complete both the EPA Grants Management Training for Applicants and Recipients and the How to Develop a Budget training? Would it not be adequate if one staff member did one, and a second staff member did the other?
- A3: We recommend that a single individual completes the training, but we are not requiring that a single individual completes all the training. When we check for completion, we are searching by your Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) – not an individual's name. However, we do recommend that someone is from the EPA Key Contacts Form.
- Q4: Is registration on both SAM.gov and Grants.gov required for all grants or are there specific grants offered on each individual website?
- A4: SAM.gov and Grants.gov registration is required to apply for all federal grants. All federal grant opportunities are published on Grants.gov.
- Q5: Is there a signup option that does not charge?
- A5: There is no cost to register on Grants.gov, SAM.gov, or for the EPA listserv.
- Q6: The Grants.gov “Saved Search” option is still not available to me. I have communicated with Grants.gov and they keep saying it will be resolved “in the next few months.”
- A6: Please make sure you have organizational user roles properly assigned. Please see the [Grants.gov support webpage](#) for more information.
- Q7: How do I fix the “Apply” button being grayed out on Grants.gov?
- A7: If you have technical issues with Grants.gov, please reach out to their support desk via the [Grants.gov support webpage](#).
- Q8: Grants.gov often rejects workspace forms when trying to upload forms that do not match the workspace you are working in, so reusing forms has not worked for us. When the use of workspace forms first started it would let you do some but not others. Most of them are rejected now. Could it be that we are doing something incorrectly when trying to submit?
- A8: Please contact the Grants.gov hotline for support: 1-800-518-4726 (U.S.) or support@grants.gov.

- Q9: If you are applying on Grants.gov, do you still need to do stuff on SAM.gov too? Do they go hand in hand, or are they completely separate entities?
- A9: They are separate registrations but do coordinate to a certain extent. You first need to register on SAM.gov to receive a UEI, complete your registration (note that receiving a UEI does not mean your registration is complete), and designate an E-business point of contact. Then, use the UEI along with other information to register with Grants.gov. Additionally, there are other tasks you'll need to complete in Grants.gov before being able to apply such as identifying Authorized Organizational Representatives (AORs), creating a workspace, etc. Please refer to the [How to Register to Apply for Grants webpage](#) and first several slides [in this presentation](#) for detailed information and links.
- Q10: Will an applicant be notified if their submission is late (e.g. 5 minutes past deadline)?
- A10: Applicant submissions are time and date stamped by Grants.gov. You will be unable to submit if it's after the deadline.
- Q11: For registration, on SAM.gov and Grants.gov, do you need to register every year / re-register or is it one and done? Then you just update assigned roles as personnel changes?
- A11: You need to renew your SAM.gov registration annually.
- Q12: There are times where the federal award allows for expenditures to happen prior to the award date. Do we have to reach back out to EPA prior to allowing this for our subrecipients?
- A12: Yes, you should be in touch with the Program Office before making any grant expenditures. It varies from program to program.
- Q13: In the grant application there is a part about a mentor, could you explain what that is about?
- A13: Contact the EPA Point of Contact listed in the NOFO for any questions relating to the grant program.
- Q14: Are there any new specific rules for the EPA?
- A14: The Office of Management and Budget's (OMB's) recent changes to 2 CFR Part 200 commonly referred to as Uniform Grant Guidance and Appendix I that prescribe the format and content for a competitive Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) will go into effect on October 1, 2024. These requirements apply to the grant management processes of all federal government agencies. For more information on the specific rules EPA applies, please see the following web pages for additional information: Introduction to Regulations, Policies and Guidance for EPA Grants, Public Policy Requirements and EPA Grants Policy Resources.
- Q15: As a state entity, are we allowed to follow our procurement rules, which do not necessarily follow the EPA procurement thresholds?
- A15: Yes, states follow their own procurement procedures as provided under [2 CFR 317](#), with the exception of the requirements in 2 CFR 200.321 (small and disadvantaged businesses), 2 CFR 200.322 (domestic preferences), 2 CFR 200.323 (recycled materials), and 2 CFR 200.327 (contract clauses contained in Appendix II to 2 CFR

Part 200). EPA's 40 CFR Part 33 Disadvantaged Business Participation rule also applies to states.

Q16: Minority Business Enterprise (MBE)/Women Business Enterprise (WBE) negotiated percentages: who generally negotiates these and at what frequency?

A16: EPA's Disadvantage Business Enterprise (DBE) program has four main objectives: 1) ensure nondiscrimination of contracts under EPA's financial assistance agreements, 2) be in alignment with U.S. laws and regulation, 3) help remove barriers to participation of the DBE community and 4) provide flexibility to recipients of EPA assistance agreements in relation to providing contracting opportunities for DBEs. Under these objectives, EPA aims to work with states and locally funded programs to give minority business enterprises and women business enterprises opportunities to participate in the procurement and contracts process.

EPA's MBE/WBE program provides that entities must meet specific criteria under at least one of the following two statutes in order to be qualified for EPA's DBE program:

1) As authorized under 40 CFR 33.202, EPA sets a minimum participate goal of 8% - which means an entity must establish that it is "owned or controlled by socially and economically disadvantaged individuals who are of good character and citizens of the United States, including Historically Black Colleges and University (HBCU) and women."

2) As authorized under 40 CFR 33.203, EPA sets a minimum participate goal of 10% - which means an entity must establish that it is "owned and controlled by socially and economically disadvantaged individuals who are of good character and citizens of the United States, including HBCUs, Black Americans, Hispanic American, Native Americans, Asian Americans, Women and Disabled Americans."

EPA negotiates these goals with states and recipients of EPA financial assistance awards. Note that "entities not covered by one of the two statutory presumptions for socially and economically disadvantaged individuals must meet the criteria listed in 40 CFR 33.202 and/or 40 CFR 33.203 to qualify for EPA's DBE Program."

For more information, see EPA's frequently asked questions and answers on [EPA's Disadvantaged Business Enterprise program](#) web page. More specific answers may also all be found through a self-guided training course on accurately completing [EPA's Form 5700-52A on MBE-WBE Utilization Under Federal Grants and Cooperative Agreements](#).

Q17: How often do we have to report to meet requirements in the Federal Funding Accountability Act (FFATA) and how should we report?

A17: The FFATA is a federal policy requirement that applies to all EPA grants. The reporting frequency for federally funded contracts and grants is orchestrated by federal regulations. Please find more on the General Services Administration's

website on [FFATA and the FFATA reporting tool aka – FFATA Subaward Reporting System \(FSRS\)](#).

Q18: Are you sending this recording out?

A18: A recording of today's webinar will be available on the [Competition Process Webinar webpage](#).

If you have future grant related questions, you may also consult [EPA's Grant Community Library of Frequently Asked Questions](#).