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Notice of Opportunity To Register Early for Electronic Submission of Grant Applications for HUD Funding Opportunities; Early Registration With Grants.gov; Notice

DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT

[Docket No. FR–5027–N–01]

Notice of Opportunity To Register Early for Electronic Submission of Grant Applications for HUD Funding Opportunities; Early Registration With Grants.gov

AGENCY: Office of Assistant Secretary for Administration, HUD.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: As part of the ongoing implementation of Electronic Government (E-Government), a key component of the President's Management Agenda, HUD is continuing with its transition to a total electronic grant application system. This system requires applicants to submit applications for Federal grants electronically through Grants.gov, the governmentwide portal for electronic grant applications. To protect the applicant and the applicant's information, and to assure Federal agencies that they are interacting with officials authorized to submit applications on behalf of applicant entities, an applicant must register with Grants.gov to submit an application for funding.

To facilitate the Fiscal Year (FY) 2006 Federal grant application process, this notice encourages prospective applicants for HUD funding to register early for the FY2006 funding cycle. Registering now, in advance of agencies posting their FY2006 grant opportunities, may eliminate many of the registration issues that HUD applicants faced in FY2005 of not meeting registration requirements in time to meet grant application deadlines. Early registration provides HUD, Grants.gov, and the applicant sufficient time to address any questions regarding the registration process, as well as allow applicants to focus on completing application requirements, since registration will be completed.

HUD anticipates that it will post its funding opportunities in early 2006. Prospective applicants for FY2006 HUD grants are encouraged to register at *http://www.grants.gov* with the publication of this Notice. Although applicants can register at any time before an application is submitted to HUD, the registration process can take approximately 10 days or more. The process relies upon an exchange of data across three different databases and an organization's E-Business Point of Contact (E-Business POC) to complete the authorization process. With busy schedules, an organization seeking to submit a grant application would not want a scenario where a key individual serving as the E-Business POC is not available to complete the process in time to meet an application deadline. Early registration helps applicants avoid possible delays with the timely submission of applications or finding out right before the submission deadline that all the steps in the registration process are not complete.

This notice describes the steps that HUD applicants must take to register successfully at *http://www.grants.gov*.

DATES: Early registration commences with the issuance of this notice and ends January 31, 2006.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: The NOFA Information Center, at telephone number 800 HUD–8929. Persons with hearing or speech impairments may access this number via TTY by calling the Federal Information Relay Service at 800 HUD–2209. The NOFA Information Center is open between the hours of 10 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. Eastern Standard Time, Monday through Friday, except on Federal holidays.

I. Grants.gov

Early in his administration, President Bush set expanding electronic government as a goal for the Federal government. Among other things, expanding electronic government would result in the public receiving high-quality services from the Federal government. Expanding electronic government would also improve the Federal government's efficiency in the delivery of its services by reducing the cost of delivering those services.

As part of this initiative, the Federal government launched Grants.gov. Grants.gov is a simple, unified access point for interactions between grant applicants and the Federal agencies that manage grant funds. There are 26 Federal grant-making agencies and over 900 individual grant programs that award over $350 billion in grants each year. Through Grants.gov, the grant community, including state; local and tribal governments; academia and research institutions; public housing agencies; not-for-profit and for-profit organizations; and other organizations need only visit one Web site to access, find, and apply for grant funds available from the Federal government.

In FY2005, a record number of grant applicants registered with Grants.gov resulting in over 15,000 electronic grant applications submitted to Federal agencies. This accomplishment signals the adoption of a major change in the way the Federal government does business, moving from a paper-based grants management process to an electronic process. In FY2006, Federal agency grant programs will continue to move toward implementing a completely electronic application process. As a result, Federal agencies, including HUD, strongly encourage the grant community to prepare as early as possible for the electronic application process using Grants.gov.

II. The Need To Register With Grants.gov

Before an applicant can apply for a grant opportunity, the applicant must first register with Grants.gov to obtain certain identifying information. However, it should be noted that registration is a multi-step process and all of the steps do not occur directly at Grants.gov. Registration protects both the applicant and the applicable Federal agencies. Registration confirms that the applicant has designated a certain individual or entity to submit an application on behalf of the applicant and assures the Federal agency that it is interacting with the designated representative of the applicant.

III. What Is Involved in Registration?

- Use of DUNS Numbers. In 2004, the Federal government adopted a policy that applicants must obtain a Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number in order to receive funding. DUNS numbers are issued by Dun and Bradstreet, a company that provides business information credit, marketing and purchasing decisions for more than 70 million businesses worldwide. Its data universal numbering system issues unique 9-digit numbers that are used by businesses and the Federal government to track funding and business related information and relationships. Large organizations can set up what is known as DUNS + 4 to track the flow of funding and disbursements within the parent organizations and any number of sub-agencies or departments within the organization. States and universities frequently identify their sub-organizations through the use of DUNS + 4 numbering.
- Registration in the Central Contractor Registration (CCR). The CCR is the primary vendor database for the Federal government. The CCR was established to primarily assist Federal government agency acquisitions and procurements. The CCR collects, validates, stores and disseminates data in support of agency acquisitions. Registration in CCR was extended from the procurement and acquisition area to grants. For grants, CCR stores an applicant's information, allowing Grants.gov to verify an applicant's

identity and identify key business contacts for the organization. When an applicant registers with CCR it will be required to designate an E-Business Point of Contact (EPOC). The E-Business POC is the sole authority within an organization who can approve or revoke approval of an individual to submit grant applications on behalf of their organization via Grants.gov.

- Registration with a Credential Provider. The Credential Provider is the organization that validates the electronic identity of an individual through electronic credentials, personal identification numbers (PINs), passwords or other identifying information for Grants.gov. In order to safeguard information, Grants.gov uses E-Authentication, the Federal program that ensures secure transactions. E-Authentication defines the level of trust or trustworthiness of the parties involved in a transaction through the use of credential providers. This is the process of determining, with a high degree of certainty, that someone is really who they claim to be. When an applicant registers with a Credential Provider they receive a USER ID and Password.
- Authorized Organization Representative (AOR) Registration. An AOR is the person(s) named by an agency to submit an application for funding consideration on behalf of the agency. By authorizing the person to submit on behalf of the organization, the organization is stating that the AOR is authorized to make a legally binding commitment on behalf of the organization. Designated AORs must register with the Credential Provider to obtain a USER ID and Password and register in Grants.gov to be identified as their organizations AOR. The organization's E-Business POC will be sent an email from Grants.gov, which tells the EPOC that someone from the E-Business POC's organization has registered with Grants.gov as an AOR. The E-Business POC must go into Grants.gov and approve the AOR status to allow the nominated person to submit an application via Grants.gov. When an AOR has been designated and approved to submit the application the registration is completed for that person to submit an application on behalf of the applicant organization.

IV. Time Allotted for Registration

Generally, registration with Grants.gov, which must be completed *prior* to any grant application submission, takes approximately 10 business days. The length of time depends on when the steps in the registration process are completed; the volume of traffic on the various sites involved in the registration process; and the ability of the applicant to determine who will be the person responsible for submitting the grant application, and having that person authorized through the registration process as the AOR. Registering early should allow the applicant sufficient time to focus on these items, and will help an applicant become familiar with the requirements for electronic application submission through Grants.gov.

V. The Registration Process

Many Federal grant-making agencies provide funding to organizational entities and some agencies are permitted to fund individuals; however, HUD only provides funding to organizations. This notice, therefore, is directed to HUD applicants, that are organizational entities.

Appendix A, which follows, provides a step-by-step guide to the registration process before an applicant may submit a grant application electronically. Appendix B lists resources that Grants.gov makes available to prospective applicants to help them through the process. All organizational entities must complete steps 1 to 5 to be fully registered with Grants.gov.

Dated: November 22, 2005.

Keith A. Nelson,

Assistant Secretary for Administration.

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Appendix A

Overview of the Step-by-Step Registration Process
All Five Steps Must be Completed to Register

Step One: Obtain a Data Universal Number System (DUNS) Number

- **Need for a DUNS Number.** In order to submit an electronic application via Grants.gov, your organization will need a DUNS number. The DUNS number stands for Data Universal Numbering System.
- **Use of DUNS + 4.** Large organizations can use the DUNS number plus 4 additional digits to identify specific units within a large entity.
- **DUNS Number Good for the Entire Process.** You will use the same DUNS number throughout the registration and application process.
- **Do you Already Have a DUNS Number?** Prior to requesting a DUNS number investigate if your organization already has a DUNS number by contacting your chief financial officer or grant administrator.
- **If No DUNS Number, Just Call to Get One.** If your organization does not have a DUNS number you can immediately receive one by calling 866-705-5711. For persons with hearing impairments, the phone number is 866-814-7818. **It takes approximately ten minutes to get a DUNS number and there is no charge.**

Proceed to Step Two

Step Two: Register with the Central Contractor Registration (CCR)

Applicants Registering for the First Time.

Your organization must register with CCR to establish roles and IDs for representatives that will use Grants.gov to submit electronic applications. Your organization's DUNS number is required to register with the CCR.

- **CCR Assistance Center Available To Assist You.** If you need assistance with the registration process, you can contact the **CCR Assistance Center** 24 hours, 7 days a week at 888-227-2423 or 269-961-5757 or online at www.ccr.gov. Persons with hearing impairments may contact the CCR by using the Federal Relay Service at 800-877-8339.
- **CCR Helpful Tool.** In addition, a CCR Handbook is available by clicking on the "CCR Handbook" tab at the top of the page at www.ccr.gov.
- **Complete a Trading Partner Profile (TPP) and receive a Temporary Confirmation Number.** To start the registration process, go to www.ccr.gov. The CCR registration process consists of completing a Trading Partner Profile (TPP). On the left side of the screen, click on "Start New Registration". Enter your DUNS number at the next screen, "New Registration". At the next screen, the CCR will assign a temporary confirmation number that allows you to save your registration as a work in progress.
- **Start, Save, and, Complete your TPP at a Later Time.** Your temporary confirmation number, along with your DUNS number, will let you access CCR to complete your TPP at a later date. To access your TPP at a later date, at www.ccr.gov, select "Finish Saved Registration Using Confirmation Number". At the next screen, enter your DUNS number and temporary confirmation number. Follow the instructions on the next screens until you complete the TPP.
- **Replacement of Temporary Confirmation Number by Trading Partner Identification Number (TPIN).** A Trading Partner Identification Number (TPIN),

which is assigned by CCR, will replace the temporary confirmation number when your registration is approved and becomes active. The TPIN is also your confidential password that confirms that you successfully registered in CCR and allows you to change your CCR information.

- **Prepare to Select an E-Business Point of Contact and an Authorized Organization Representative.** While completing the TPP, you will need to identify an E-Business Point of Contact (E-Business POC) and an alternate, who will be responsible for identifying and naming individuals as Authorized Organization Representatives (AOR). The AOR must be someone authorized to enter into a legally binding commitment for the organization. The AOR will submit applications through Grants.gov for your organization. The person that completes the TTP can be the E-Business POC and the AOR or they can be different people.
- **Create a Marketing Partner ID Number (MPIN).** The final step of the TPP requires you to create a Marketing Partner ID Number (MPIN). The MPIN is a self-defined nine-character password that the E-Business POC will need to access Grants.gov to authorize the AOR to submit a grant application.
- **Two Notifications of Successful CCR Registration.** After you complete the TPP, you will receive two notices if your registration was submitted successfully. The first notice, which you will receive **within 24 hours** after submitting your registration, welcomes you to CCR and will include a copy of your registration. The second notice, which you will receive **within approximately 48 hours** after submitting your registration, provides you with a Web link/address where you can enter your DUNS number and temporary confirmation number to obtain your confidential TPIN.

Current Registrants without a MPIN. If you currently have an active registration in CCR and you do not have a MPIN you will need to:

- Access your CCR registration by clicking on "Update or Renew Registration using TPIN".
- Enter your DUNS number and TPIN.
- Click on the tab named "Points of Contact", complete all fields for the E-Business POC and the alternate E-Business POC. Scroll down to the bottom of the "Points of Contact" page and create your own MPIN. Click on the "Validate/Save" button.

  Your registration will take approximately 48 hours to update.

Annual Renewal of your CCR Registration. Applicants are required to renew/update their information in CCR on an annual basis. If you do not renew your registration it will expire and result in your Grants.gov application being rejected.

- To renew your registration, go to www.ccr.gov, and click on "Update or Renew Registrations Using TPIN".
- Enter your DUNS number and TPIN, and click "Submit".
- If there are no changes to the registration, click the "Validate/Save" button for the information to register in the system, then click "Submit".
- If there are changes, enter the changes, and then click "Submit".
- **Your registration will take approximately 48 hours to update.**

NOTE: You must click on the "Validate/Save" or the "Renew Profile" button in "Registration Tools".

Don't Know Your TPIN? If you are registered in CCR, but do not know your TPIN, go to www.ccr.gov.

- Click on "Update or Renew Registrations Using TPIN".
- At the next screen click on "Don't Know Your TPIN? Click Here for a TPIN Letter request".
- On the next screen enter your DUNS number and click on "Send TPIN Letter".
- A confidential TPIN letter will be mailed to the CCR Point of Contact (POC) identified in the TPP. If you do not know your organization's POC, call 888-227-2423 for assistance.

Verify Status of Your Registration. You can verify the status of your registration online at www.ccr.gov.

- Click on "Search CCR".
- When prompted, enter your DUNS number and click "Search". The registration status is located at the top of the page or you can also call the CCR Assistance Center for the status of your registration.
- You should check the ccr.gov website for any additional information that may be implemented.

Proceed to Step Three

Step Three: Register with the Credential Provider

- **Need for Credential Provider to Safeguard Information.** In order to safeguard the security of your electronic information, Grants.gov utilizes a Credential Provider to determine with certainty that someone is really who they claim to be.

- **AOR Must Register with the Credential Provider**. An assigned AOR must register with the Grants.gov Credential Provider to create a username and password, which are needed to submit an application package through Grants.gov. To register: Go to: http://apply.grants.gov/OrcRegister. Scroll down the page and enter your DUNS number and click on "Register". At the next screen scroll down and select "Get Your Credentials". Complete and submit all information on the E-Authentication User Information screen.
- **Create User Name and Password.** On the next screen you will confirm your information, create your own "User Name" and "Password", and click on "Submit". If all information has been entered correctly, you will receive a notice of Registration Success.
- **Same Day Registration**. User names and passwords are validated on the same day that you register.

Proceed to Step Four

Step Four: Register with Grants.gov

- **AOR Required to Register with Grants.gov.** The AOR must register with Grants.gov in order to submit an application for an organization. You can register with Grants.gov ***on the same day.***
- To register with Grants.gov: Click the "Applicants" link at the top of any screen at www.grants.gov. At the next screen scroll down and select "Register with Grants.gov". Enter your Username and Password supplied by the Credential Provider and click on "Register". Complete all information on the "Authorized Organization Representative User Profile" screen and click "Submit".

- Upon following all steps correctly, you will receive a notice that you successfully registered with Grants.gov. The E-Business POC will receive a notice stating that someone has registered to submit grant applications on behalf of your organization.

Proceed to Step Five

Step Five: Authorize an AOR to submit a Grant Application

- **Notification to E-Business POC that AOR has Registered.** This is a **final and very critical step** in the registration process. Once a potential AOR registers with a Credential Provider and Grants.gov, the E-Business POC will receive an email stating that someone has signed up to become an AOR for their organization.
- **E-*Business POC must Authorize AOR to Submit Applications.*** The E-Business POC will need to authorize the AOR as the Authorized Applicant that is approved to submit applications on behalf of the organization, before that person can submit an application. ***Note: If an AOR has not been authorized by their E-Business POC, the submitted application will be rejected.***
- **Authorizing an AOR**. To authorize an AOR to submit applications on behalf of the organization: Click the Ebiz link at the top of any screen at www.grants.gov. At the next screen, click on "Login Here". Enter your DUNS and MPIN and click on "Login". The next screen welcomes you to the "E-Business Points of Contact" section where you will be able to add and revoke AOR privileges. On the left side of the screen, select "Manage Applicants". Click on the box(es) next to the name of the AOR(s) that you are assigning rights. Click on "Reassign Roles". At the next screen, use the arrows to move the roles from one box to the other. To provide authorization, the "Current Roles" should indicate "Authorized

Applicant". Click on "Continue". You will receive a notice that the role has been successfully reassigned. Click on "Continue". Repeat the steps if you are assigning rights to multiple AORs.

- **Notification of Approval of AOR.** The AOR will receive an email advising that the E-Business POC has provided them authorization to submit applications on behalf of their organization.
- **Check your AOR Status.** An AOR can check their status by clicking the "Applicants" link at the top of any screen. At the next screen, click on "Login Here". Enter your Username and Password supplied by the Credential Provider, click on "Login". On the left side of the screen, select "Manage Applicant Profile". Your status will be either – "Approved" or "AOR Request Sent". If the status is "Approved" you are authorized to submit grant applications on behalf of your organization. If the status is "AOR Request Sent" you have not been approved and you should contact your E-Business POC and have them authorize you as an AOR with Grants.gov.

For additional assistance

Registration checklists that guide you through the entire process for submitting electronic grant applications are available at the "Get Started" link on Grants.gov. If you have questions or need additional information, call the Grants.gov Contact Center at 800-518-GRANTS (4726) or email support@grants.gov. The Contact Center hours of operation are Monday-Friday 7 a.m. to 9 p.m. Eastern Standard Time.

Appendix B

The following is a list of resources on the Grants.gov website that are designed to help you through the Find and Apply Process electronic process.

Frequently Asked Questions

Training Demonstration

Tutorial

User Guide

Quick Reference

Glossary

Technical Library

Tips and Tools

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