SSLN-NAPA-SEA Shared Services Forum

Grants Quality Service Management Office (Grants QSMO)

December 14, 2023
Federal Grants Obligations by Fiscal Year

Growth in grants obligations* has been fueled by the COVID-19 pandemic and recent legislation.

*Obligation: "When awarding funding, the U.S. government enters a binding agreement called an obligation. The government promises to spend the money, either immediately or in the future. An agency incurs an obligation, for example, when it places an order, signs a contract, awards a grant, purchases a service, or takes other actions that require it to make a payment" (USASpending.gov)

Source: USASpending.gov (FY08-23)

Grants obligations are rising with an average annual increase of 8%.
Government-wide Grants IT Investment Spending

Grants-related IT investment spending continues to increase year-over-year, with more than $1.5B in planned modernizations for FY24.

Grants IT Spending

Source: ITDashboard.gov

System consolidation and modernizations are vital to long-term cost reduction and efficiency in the federal grants ecosystem.
On August 9th, 2023, OMB Memo M-23-19 established the Council on Federal Financial Assistance (COFFA) to ensure agencies have the tools needed to deliver financial assistance programs.

The inaugural meeting was held on October 26, 2023.

Goals

• Reduce the administrative burden for both federal agencies and program applicants.

• Create a partnership among federal grant-making agencies as a single forum to inform federal financial assistance policy, oversight, and technology activities.

• Provide strategic direction for other government-wide grant-related activities, including the Grants QSMO.

Stakeholders

• The COFFA is an interagency collaboration between the 24 Federal CFO Act agencies’ senior financial assistance officers (SFAOs) and a Small Agency Council rep.

• The SFAO of HHS will serve as the council’s first co-chair for a two-year term and successor co-chairs will be selected by the council members.

• Stakeholders will work with OMB to plan coordination between the Grants QSMO Data Standards lead, FACE, and other government-wide working groups and initiatives.
OMB’s proposed updates to the Uniform Grants Guidance are currently available for public inspection at the Federal Register here.

A redline version of the UG updates, which reflects the proposed policy and textual changes, can be found here on CFO.gov.

OMB invited interested persons and organizations to submit comments in December to http://www.regulations.gov/.
Impacts of Grants QSMO Efforts:

- Increased adoption of Federal shared services from 18% of agencies to 47% of agencies *
- Saved agencies “thousands” of hours in market research and acquisition process
- Well-coordinated, supported, and strategically-aligned Grants IT investments avoid duplicative investments and inform Agency Systems Inventory.
- Regular Agency IT Demand Analysis informs Marketplace priorities and Agency Systems Inventory.

Before the Grants QSMO:

- No repository of shared service providers or agency systems inventory
- Little to no access to grants system market analysis
- No government-wide investment review process
- Minimal grants eco-system stakeholder feedback to inform need and solutions

*Based on count of agencies with shared service adoption of Award Management solutions including eRA, GrantSolutions, eGMS or vendors on the QSMO Catalog of Market Research.
Grants QSMO Marketplace

**Overall Marketplace Objective:** Help federal awarding agencies find the best solutions to address their evolving needs

- Create & manage a marketplace of modern grants management solutions
- Bring transparency on solution performance, price methodology, and customer satisfaction
- Designate high-quality shared solutions with modern functionality
- Advise customer agencies on marketplace offerings

Grants QSMO Marketplace is live here: [https://ussm.gsa.gov/marketplace/grm/](https://ussm.gsa.gov/marketplace/grm/)

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### Awards Management Solutions
- eRA
- GrantSolutions

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### Payment Systems
- Automated Standard Application for Products (ASAP)
- Payment Management System (PMS)

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### Indirect Cost Negotiation Services
- Interior Business Center (IBC)
- Program Support Center Cost Allocation Services (PSC/CAS)
Buying Insights supports the Grants QSMO strategic goal of promoting Marketplace transparency.
How Agencies Approach Grants IT Acquisitions

1. Consider Marketplace Offerings
2. Consider Commercial Market Research
3. Conduct Investment Planning

Grants QSMO’s Objectives for Each Acquisition Approach:
- Meets Grants Standards
- Does Not Force “One Size Fits All” Approach
- Balance QSMO Due Diligence with Vendor Burden
- Quick Path to Acquire
- Leverage “Best in Class” Contracts

Conduct Investment Planning
Acquisition Gateway is the workbench for the federal acquisition professional.

**Save Hundreds of Hours**
Leverage Grants QSMO resources to streamline your modernization efforts.

**Do Not Start From Scratch**
✓ Vendor POCs  
✓ Evaluation criteria  
✓ Past performance templates  
✓ Sample Statement of Work/RFPs

**Lasting Partnership**
Your partnership is vital to continuously improving the broader grants management ecosystem.

Visit Acquisition Gateway at [https://acquisitiongateway.gsa.gov/shared-services/resources/4216](https://acquisitiongateway.gsa.gov/shared-services/resources/4216)
FY24 Tribal CX Pilot for Post-Award Reporting

Tribal Customer Experience Pilot for Post-Award Reporting

RECIPIENT BURDEN AND IMPACT

Barriers to Compliance
The lack of reliable broadband and electricity highlights a systemic vulnerability for Indian tribes and rural governments complying with the online reporting required for many federal funds.

Penalties imposed
Grant recipients that do not submit timely compliance reports typically receive a high-risk rating score and typically audit findings.

Reporting Burden
Reporting can be time intensive and costly for remote Tribal communities who have small staffs and high turnover. Reports are often lengthy, highly technical, and lacking in clear guidance.

PILOT OVERVIEW:
The Tribal Customer Experience (CX) Pilot for Post-Award Reporting aims to explore ways to improve the technology and knowledge gap related to post-award reporting with the goal of reducing burden and supporting Tribal compliance efforts in low-broadband areas.

Research Areas
- Technological barriers to reporting
- Challenges to remote Tribal recipients
- Federal reporting best practices

Potential Solutions
- Onsite support and guidance
- Offline reporting options
- Plain language
- Case Study: Public Law 102-477

PILOT PARTNERS
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)
- Grants Quality Service Management Office (Grants QSMO)
  - Project Lead
  - Indian Health Service (IHS)
Executive Office of the President (EOP)
- Office of Management and Budget (OMB)
  - Customer Experience Team (CX Team)
- Office of Federal Financial Management (OFFM)
- White House Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP)
U.S. Department of the Treasury
- Office of the Recovery Programs (ORP)
- Office of Tribal and Native Affairs (OTNA)
U.S. Department of the Interior (DOI)
- Office of Grants Management (OGM)
- Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA)

Want to share with us? If you have information that may be helpful for this project, please email GrantsQSMO@hhs.gov

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How to get involved

Connect with the Grants QSMO

❖ Keep up with Grants QSMO news by subscribing to the grants community listserv. Send an email with the subject “subscribe” to grantscommunity-subscribe-request@listserv.gsa.gov to join.
❖ Email us at GrantsQSMO@hhs.gov with any questions or feedback!

Innovate with the Grants QSMO

❖ Visit our Grants QSMO Github site for information and innovations across the government: https://github.com/grants-qsmo.