Grants Glossary
Basic Grant Terminology

Abstract	A brief summary of the proposed project, frequently limited to one page. Abstracts should give a brief description of the applicant, should clearly state the goal or purpose to be supported by the grant and provide a statement of need. Also known as a Project Summary or Executive Summary
Audit	A formal review of a grantee's use of grant funds. Audits can be financial or programmatic. Financial audits detail expenditures, while programmatic audits focus on projects' successes, failures, benchmarks, milestones, etc. Audits are generally conducted by an outside reviewer or consultant. In many cases, auditing fees can be built into grant budgets. Many grant programs do not require grantees to perform audits, but almost all grant programs require some form of reporting.
Authorizing Agency	The agency administering the grant program.
Block Grants	Funds distributed on a formula basis to states, localities and municipalities, generally to address a specific issue or need. State and local governments are then able to determine the unique needs of their constituencies and distribute the funds accordingly.
Bricks and Mortar	Funding needed for construction or renovation of a building or other structure: i.e. wiring, concrete, plumbing, lumber, etc, exceeding $25,000. Bricks and mortar (or construction) funding is often used to change the footprint of an existing structure.
Bridge Awards	Grants awarded once the initial grant has expired to help grantees achieve a project-related goal or to continue the project until other funding can be secured.
Call for Proposals (CFP)	The announcement made by the authorizing agency requesting applications from potential grant recipients. CFPs generally contain program objectives, guidelines, eligibility, budget, award limitations and specific instructions for proposal submission. CFPs should always be carefully read and precisely followed. Also known as a request for proposal (RFP), notice of funds availability (NOFA), or broad agency announcement (BAA).
Central Contractor Registration (CCR)	The Department of Defense created the CCR in an effort to consolidate the paperwork generated through its work with contractors. Through CCR, businesses and grant applicants are able to enter information about their organization directly into the database. CCR registration is required to register with www.grants.gov.
Challenge Grant	A grant that requires the grantee to raise a pre-determined amount of dollars from other sources in order to receive the grant. Challenge grants generally come with specific terms setting deadlines for raising additional dollars and limitations on purposes for which the money can be used.
Competitive Grants	Grants that are open to any applicant who meets the eligibility requirements. Competitive grants are generally announced through RFPs or CFPs. They are frequently reviewed by committees comprising volunteers who specialize in the subject area. The competitiveness of a grant program can frequently be determined by comparing the dollars available for expenditure through the program in that fiscal year to the award limit or ceiling, as stated in the RFP.

Consortium	A cooperative arrangement entered into by like-minded organizations intent on pursuing a common goal. Many grant programs favor consortiums due to the likelihood that resource-sharing will lead to a broader impact and better "bang for the buck." Even if the grant is to be awarded to the consortium, one organization within the group must serve as the lead agency and assume responsibility for administrative oversight of the grant.
Cost-sharing	While "cost-sharing" and "matching" are often used interchangeably, many agencies and institutions make the following distinction: "Cost-sharing" means that some of the project costs must be assumed by the institution requesting funding, while "matching requirements" means that a certain ratio of funds will be acquired, spent or reserved in proportion to the award.
Direct Costs:	All costs that is directly and solely applicable to the proposed project. These can include salaries, travel expenses, equipment purchases or bricks and mortar.
DUNS Number	The Dun and Bradstreet Data Universal Numbering System number, or "DUNS," is a nine-digit figure given by Dun and Bradstreet to applicant organizations and serves as a means of identifying those organizations and businesses. DUNS numbers are frequently required on federal grant forms.
Eligibility	The criteria an applicant must meet in order to apply for the program. Eligibility is generally determined by organization type (e.g. healthcare organization, K-12 schools, law enforcement agency). Regional location, population or previous awards may also affect one's eligibility.
Form 990	The IRS form private foundations are required to submit to document their annual finances, including charitable giving. 990s can be an invaluable tool in identifying a foundation's giving preferences and history.
Formula Grants	Grants distributed based on a calculation to address a specific issue or need. The calculations, or formulas, are frequently based at least in part on population. Other factors, depending upon the purpose of the grant, may include crime statistics or poverty indexes.
Grant	An award made by a foundation, organization, corporation, governmental or non-governmental agency. Grants normally fund specific projects, initiatives or needs. They generally have a pre-specified time cycle (i.e. funding will be provided on an annual basis for one, two, three or four years).
Grantee	The recipient of a grant. The grantee will be listed on the award letter or notice and may be an institution or an individual, depending upon the criteria and purpose of the grant.
Indirect Costs	The costs incurred through a project that are not directly related to it, such as costs related to administrative support or the use and subsequent deterioration of an institution's physical plant. Indirect costs can sometimes be recovered through a grant budget, often using a percentage of the direct costs. Some federal agencies refer to indirect costs as facilities and administration or F&A. Indirect costs are also known as overhead.

Indirect Cost Rate	A negotiated percentage of project costs that grant recipients are allowed to allocate from grant funds to cover indirect costs.
In-kind Match	Sometimes referred to as a "soft" match, in-kind matches are goods, services or other things of value that will directly support the requested project and are being provided through sources outside of the funder. If the RFP specifies that applicants must match a percentage of the grant and that they can do so through in-kind matches, the value of the in-kind services should be determined based on fair market prices and represented in the proposal budget.
Lead Agency	The agency or organization responsible for grant administrative oversight and proposal submission in a consortium.
Letter of Intent	A letter submitted prior to a proposal stating an organization's intent to apply to a grant program. Requirements for letters of intent vary, but many federal agencies require only a statement of intent. Letters of intent help authorizing agencies to fine-tune their review process prior to the proposal deadline.
Matching Costs	See *Cost-sharing*.
Minor Renovations	Modifications to an existing facility that is required to effectively implement a funded project. Funds for minor renovations are usually capped at $25,000 (See *Bricks and Mortar*).
Notice of Funds Availability (NOFA)	See *Call for proposals* (CFP)
OMB Circulars	Office of Management and Budget documents that detail instructions to federal agencies on the fiscal administration of grant programs, among other items. OMBs help grant applicants by outlining fiscal expectations and requirements inherent in any federal grant program. Of particular interest are OMB Circular A-102 (Grants and Cooperative Agreements With State and Local Governments), OMB Circular A-133 (Audits of States, Local Governments and Non-Profit Organizations), OMB Circular A-87 (Cost Principles for State, Local and Indian Tribal Governments), OMB Circular A-21 (Cost Principles for Educational Institutions), OMB Circular A-110 (Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Other Agreements with Institutions of Higher Education, Hospitals and Other Nonprofit Organizations) and OMP Circular A-122 (Cost Principles for Nonprofit Organizations).
Operating Support	Support for the basic needs of a project or organization to maintain its activities. Also known as general support.
Pass-through Grants	Grants awarded to a grantee, such as a state administrative agency, with the requirement that the majority, if not all, the funds then be distributed to other, generally smaller organizations or agencies.
Program/Project Director	The individual responsible for oversight of the grant-funded initiative. In some cases, grants are awarded directly to the individual directing the project, but they are frequently awarded to the individual's agency or organization. Program directors are generally charged with reporting responsibilities. Research grant programs generally refer to the program director as the principal investigator or PI.

Program Officer	The individual at the authorizing agency responsible for administrative oversight of the grant program. Program officers are often extremely helpful throughout the grant application process, if applicants have thoroughly read the RFP and all other available materials yet still have additional questions.
Proposal	The document(s) submitted by a grant applicant, generally in response to an RFP. While proposals vary in length and content depending upon the requirements of the grant program, they generally include a proposal narrative, explaining the needs, goals, implementation plan and evaluation plan for the proposed initiative, a budget and a budget narrative, which provides a clear and concise description of every line item on the budget.
Request for Proposals	See *Call for proposals* (CFP).
Reports	Most grant programs require recipients to submit annual and final reports throughout the life of the grant. Annual reports generally include a narrative explaining successes, benchmarks achieved, the progress of the grant funded initiative and a financial report outlining expenditures to date. Final reports generally include evaluative information from all years of the grant's life, as well as plans for continuation and dissemination and a final budget outlining all expenses year-by-year.
Seed Money	The money required to launch a new project or initiative. Also known as "start-up funds."
State Administrative Agency (SAA)	In pass-through grants, the agency responsible for accepting federal dollars and distributing them to localities and municipalities.

This glossary is designed to assist you in understanding some of the basic terms that are regularly used in grants.