![Common Grant Application - Simplifying the Art & Science of Giving®](logo)

Welcome to a quarterly newsletter that is dedicated to talking about the Common Grant Application and topical issues for the grantmaking community. This issue includes:

- Going Paperless - A How to Guide
- News and Notes - Project Streamline
- CGA Tips – Using Grantmaker Programs
- Upcoming Events
- Feedback

Going Paperless - A How to Guide

Introduction: You've decided to streamline your grant management process by going online and paperless to save time and money, improve your decision making, communicate more transparently with your grantseekers, and do good for the environment. One question we frequently get asked is "How do you do it? What are the steps needed to get set up and start using the Common Grant Application?" Here are the steps that will get you up and running quickly.

Setting up your account: Our "Getting Started" document will help you pull together the information you need to set up your account. You will need to provide information about your organization, (e.g. background, history, mission) grantmaking programs (e.g. areas of interest, unique supplemental questions), and the grantmaking process (e.g. LOIs, solicited/unsolicited applications accepted, grant cycles) that you'll be using. This information will be available to grantseekers so they can review and understand your grantmaking interests. Other information (e.g. evaluator groups and application evaluation criteria) will be used to set up and customize the grantmaking process to match your specific needs. After setting up your account, grantseekers will be able to research your grantmaking interests, and if they meet the criteria that you have configured, submit an application for your consideration.

Importing previous grant information: You can import application or grant data from your existing system into the Common Grant Application. We review your data, map it, and then transfer it into the Common Grant Application. After the transfer is complete, you can review it for completeness and accuracy. Paper applications can also be added to the Common Grant Application at any time. Each application that is imported or added also creates a new grantseeker account that they can update and use for future applications.

Informing and educating your grantseekers: You can tell your grantseekers that you'll be using the Common Grant Application by sending an email and posting a link from your website to our website. Your grantseekers will come to our site, register, log in, and set up their account. After they set up their account, they can start submitting grant applications. The process is simple – we have over 4,000 active grantseekers and almost all of them have set up their accounts by simply reading the directions on the website. For those who would like more information, we hold frequent grantseeker and grantmaker webinars during which we demonstrate how to use the system. We also provide email and phone support.

News and Notes - Project Streamline

A new guide titled "Online Applications and Reporting" will be released soon from Project Streamline. Look for it at the Project Streamline website. The guide offers a set of recommended practices and principles to improve and streamline the process of online grantmaking. It does a good job of discussing the issues of online grantmaking and describing the qualities of effective online systems.

CGA Tips – Using Grantmaker Programs

Are you expecting lots of applications, and trying to find an easy way to collate, sort, and deliver the applications to different groups of evaluators? The Common Grant Application can do this for you. You can create multiple and independent programs. Each program can have its own LOI requirements, grant cycle dates, rules about which types of applications may be submitted, different supplemental questions, and different evaluation rules and evaluators. Each of the programs you configure becomes available to grantseekers for review, and based on their own fundraising interests, they can choose which of your programs to apply to. The applications are automatically associated with a program, and a group of evaluators. This means evaluators only have to focus on reviewing and evaluating those applications that are relevant to them. The applications are available for review the instant they are submitted. This feature significantly reduces the time to review, sort, assign, collate, and evaluate LOIs and applications.

Upcoming Events

The Common Grant Application will be hosting a Webinar for grantmakers on February 16, a Webinar for grantseekers on March 2, and will also be exhibiting and speaking at the Grant Managers Network national conference from March 15 - 17. Check our website for further information.

Feedback

During a recent grant cycle, a number of grantseekers asked for the capability to preview their complete application, in the form the grantmaker would see it, before they submitted their application. The idea made sense, so we implemented the feature before the completion of the grant cycle, and the grantseekers that asked for the capability were able to use it before they submitted their applications.

We received a request from a grantmaker to support electronic grant agreements. They didn't want to manage the process of sending out, getting back, and keeping track of paper grant agreements. Their attorney is fine with electronic approvals from grantseekers. We are currently developing software that will allow grantmakers to create and manage electronic grant agreements, and allow grantseekers to "sign" the agreements by clicking on an accept box. The LOI (if any), application, grant agreement, and grant reports (if any) will all be linked to each other and viewable with a Web browser.

We welcome your feedback, questions, comments, and suggestions for future topics. We can be reached by email at: info@commongrantapplication.com or by phone at: +1 (310) 499-1277.

This Newsletter is presented by:

COMMON GRANT APPLICATION
Simplifying the Art & Science of Giving®

The Common Grant Application is a Web-based service that can be used by non-profit grantmakers to receive, review, track, and manage online grant applications and proposals from non-profit grantseekers.