

Grant Tracking and Compliance Management

By Henry Flood

Two of the fundamental tasks associated with every grant award are tracking project activities and demonstrating compliance with the grantmaker's conditions. At first, deciding what to track and how to untangle the strings attached to a grant award can seem quite daunting. Like most things managerial, however, the job is made considerably easier if you begin with the right questions:

- Who needs the information and how will it be used?
- What kinds of actions must be tracked and by whom?
- How will you expected to demonstrate compliance?
- Does the type or size of your organization affect the nature of your tracking and compliance responsibilities?
- Are these responsibilities influenced by the number and size of awards received?

Many different personnel within your organization, and within the grantmaker's as well, are likely to use tracking and compliance information. For example, at the Medical Center Campus where I work as Director of Grants, I am responsible for grant submissions and managerial oversight of grants awarded to the campus from all sources. Each grant awarded to our institution has a designated project director (usually a dean or other senior official from our school of nursing or allied health technologies). But day-to-day responsibility for accomplishing authorized grant activities rests with designated program managers. All of these individuals have varying needs for information associated with grant actions and/or compliance.

To assist with the practical tasks of everyday grant administration, simple forms can be used to track applications award actions and post-award management outcomes:

Application Tracking Record

The prime purpose of the application tracking record is to record critical information and initial actions taken by your staff when a grant is developed and filed with a funding source for consideration. It tells you who developed an application, the funding source with which it was filed, who will manage the project if approved, and what official action was taken on the application (approval or denial).

—— Page 1 of 2 ——

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Award Tracking Record

Once a funding source decides to award a grant to your organization, a number of internal and external actions are set in motion-all of which need to be recorded. These include (1) receipt of the award decision; (2) information about the funding source team and your project implementation team. If many different persons will be involved getting your grant set up according to established internal procedures, their actions need to be documented to complete the bilateral relationship between your organization and the funding source.

Grant Administration Tracking Record

Once the formal relationship between your agency and the funding source has been established and the grant administration apparatus has been set up internally, you are ready to track essential information associated with managing the grant: key award information, budget amendments, program amendments, reporting, audit outcomes and notations regarding grant project closeout.

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