

U.S. Department of Education
FY 2006 P.L. 106-107 Annual Report Update
Reporting Period: June 1, 2005, through August 31, 2006

General

The U.S. Department of Education (Department) is the third-largest federal grant-making agency. From June 1, 2005, through August 31, 2006, the Department made awards in 47 mandatory programs totaling \$57.96 billion and 114 discretionary programs totaling \$7.46 billion.¹

During FY 2006, the Department continued its active participation on the Grants Executive Board and the Grants Policy Committee. The Department was selected as one of the first three Grants Management Line of Business (GM LoB) consortium lead agencies.

The Department also is a leading participant in the P.L. 106-107 Interagency Work Groups, including the Pre-Award, Post-Award, Mandatory, Government-wide Forms, Invention Reporting, and Research and Related Work Groups. These Work Groups are charged with streamlining the federal grants process. In addition, the Department actively participates in the National Grants Partnership (NGP), an organization that provides a forum for federal, state and local governments, nonprofit organizations, and private sector vendors interested in federal grants streamlining initiatives. The NGP provides another vehicle for nonfederal groups to express their views to the federal government regarding these initiatives. A representative from the Department serves as the federal cochair of the NGP, with a representative from the National Association of Auditors, Comptrollers, and Treasurers (NASACT) serving as the non-federal cochair.

Grants.gov

The Department posted all 122 of its discretionary grant announcements or synopses on Grants.gov FIND. Between October 1, 2005, and September 30, 2006, the Department exceeded the government-wide goal calling for agencies to make 75% of their grant programs available for electronic application through Grants.gov. The Department posted 104 out of 131 application packages on Grants.gov APPLY.

For its FY 2006 discretionary grant competitions, the Department received approximately 14,000 applications, of which approximately 8,500, or 60 percent, came in electronically. Of the applications received electronically, approximately 5,500 were received via Grants.gov, and

¹ Complete Impact Aid program numbers are not current for the period and are not included. The Federal Student Aid grant programs are also not included, except for the Leveraging Educational Assistance Partnership and Special Leveraging Educational Assistance Partnership Programs.

3,000 were received electronically via the Department's e-Application system. The remaining 5,500 were received in hard copy.²

Grants.gov Outreach

The Department continues to educate and inform, through a variety of outreach formats, its staff, applicants and grantees, and the public about ongoing efforts to fully transition to Grants.gov for the submission of Department grant applications. The following are examples of the Department's outreach:

- **The Department's Chief Financial Officer's Special Announcement to Grantees.** In August 2005, using the Department's extensive database, the Chief Financial Officer sent to all grantees a memorandum on the subject of "*Transitioning to Grants.gov to Submit Electronic Applications.*" The memo outlined the Department's plan to fully implement the use of Grants.gov and provided tips for recipients on how to submit a grant application successfully using the Grants.gov system. This memo is also posted on the Grants.gov page on the Department's Web site.
- **Training Sessions for Department Staff.** During the reporting period, the Department developed a one-day introductory course on Grants.gov and conducted 17 sessions attended by 174 Departmental program staff. These sessions provide staff with hands-on examples of how to build and publish an electronic application in Grants.gov. The Department is currently developing an "Application Package Tool Kit" designed to give all Department applications a uniform look. This tool kit will further assist program staff in developing an electronic application package for Grants.gov.
- **Link to Grants.gov on the Department's Web site.** The Department has added to its Web site a link to Grants.gov FIND and APPLY for funding opportunities on Grants.gov.
- **Grants.gov Webcast for Faith-Based and Community Initiatives.** The Department has made numerous presentations at the White House Conferences on Faith-Based and Community Initiatives and developed a webcast presentation, which is available on the Grants.gov page on the Department's Web site. The webcast introduces viewers to Grants.gov and its features, and provides information on how to use the system.
- **Speaking Engagements at Major Conferences.** The Department's e-Grants Team has made presentations at nine major conferences for grantees and/or prospective applicants on how to find and apply for a grant using Grants.gov. The Team distributed the Grants.gov brochure at these conferences.

² These are preliminary figures for applications received. The final figures will be available in late 2006.

Grants Management Line of Business (GM LoB)

As noted, in FY 2006 the Department was designated as a GM LoB consortium lead. As a result, the Department began positioning itself as a grants management service provider to other federal grant-making agencies. The Department carried out a number of marketing activities, including the development and release of the Request for Quote for the Grants Management System Implementation. The Department's GM LoB consortium approach is unique in that consortium members will have the opportunity to participate in the design of a new, full life-cycle, end-to-end grants management system. The implementation contract to design, develop, and implement the new grants management system, referred to as the "G5 solution," was awarded in September 2006.

ED Consortium Open House

In support of the Department's selection as a GM LoB consortium lead, the Department hosted an Open House on April 4, 2006. The purpose of the Open House was to market the Department's proposed grants management solution to other federal grant-making agencies. The Open House gave attendees an opportunity to learn more about the Department's vision, ask questions, and gather information they will need to select a GM LoB service provider. Participating agencies included the Departments of Commerce, Energy, Defense, Veterans Affairs, and Agriculture, and the Corporation for National and Community Service, the National Endowment for the Arts, and the Institute of Museum and Library Services.

Grant System Demonstration

In May 2006 the Department hosted a demonstration of its legacy grants management system, the Grant Administration and Payment System (GAPS), to six federal grant-making agencies. While the Department anticipates that features of the existing system will be incorporated into the G5 solution, it was emphasized that the G5 solution will be a brand new system with many new and enhanced features. Twenty-two federal staff from the Institute of Museum and Library Services, the Departments of Veterans Affairs, Treasury, and Commerce, the Small Business Administration, and the National Endowment for the Arts attended the demonstration.

In addition to these activities, the Department has focused on enhancing the electrical infrastructure and the Education network to support the Department's needs and its designation as a GM LoB consortium lead. A new Project Management Office provides administrative and program support for the G5 project. The Department also developed a Migration Plan to provide guidance to the Department's GM LoB consortium partners on transitioning from their current grants management systems to the Department's Grant Management System and a Governance Plan to address the governance structure, roles, and responsibilities of the consortium-governing participants, and consortium-governance functions. The Department completed a grants management system requirements analysis in the summer of 2005. This analysis identified and documented over 1200 functional requirements. The Department provided the system requirements analysis to several agencies to ascertain how closely their agency requirements matched the Department's requirements.