

Grants Glossary–Updated Terms

501(c)(3) Organization	An organization that has been approved by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) as being a tax-exempt, charitable organization. To be considered a 501(c)(3) organization, organizations must serve at least one acceptable purpose: charitable, educational, scientific, literary, religious, and/or preventing cruelty to children or animals.
990-PF	A public IRS form that provides financial data and information about a foundation. It often names the trustees and current and past officers, application information, and a list of grants awarded.
Abstract	The portion of a grant response that presents a clear and concise summary of the grant. It should briefly explain the need for the project and the impact the grant will have on the target population.
Administrative/ Indirect Costs	These are costs that will be incurred with a specific project but that do not directly serve the target population outlined by the project. Administrative costs typically serve the entire organization and include tasks and projects that are administrative in nature. Indirect costs are usually operational expenses of the organization receiving funds.
Appropriated Funds	Moneys allocated by legislation passed by Congress and signed by the President that are usually specified in Congress's yearly budget or continuing resolution
Boilerplate	A standardized but customizable text (also referred to as “copy”) that explains key information about a product, company, foundation, organization, etc. Boilerplate documents can be reused in a variety of contexts and ensure key features of the topic it covers.
Budget Narrative	A budget prepared for inclusion in a grant response that explains and justifies how estimated costs and the need for them were determined
Carry-Forward Funds	Unexpended balances at the end of the year that are balances that are calculated as current-year budget appropriation and prior-year balances, less current-year expenditures
Competitive Grant	A competitive grant is awarded not by formula (see “ Entitlement/Formula Grant ”) but rather based on a competitive process by which a committee selects which applicants best fit program priorities and will be awarded funding.
Continuation Grant	An extension or renewal of existing program funding for one or more additional budget period(s) that would otherwise expire
Corporate Foundation	A private foundation (see “ Family Foundation ”) that sources grant-making funds mainly from profit-making businesses. Visit our Grants and Funding Center to learn more.
Cost Share or Match	The portion of project costs not paid by grant funds (unless otherwise authorized by federal statute)

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Direct Costs	Costs a company can easily and clearly identify as being tied to a specific activity, product, or project. Unlike indirect costs (see “Indirect Costs”), these funds go directly into serving a specific, often project-based, activity.
Discretionary Grant	A grant (or cooperative agreement) for which the federal awarding agency generally may select the recipient from among all eligible recipients; may decide to make or not make an award and can decide the amount of funding to be awarded
Entitlement/ Formula Grant	The opposite of a competitive grant (see “ Competitive Grant ”). In an entitlement or formula grant, awarded fund amounts are determined by state or federal formulas, and schools/districts do not have to compete for this type of funding. It is automatically funneled from the state/federal government. An example of this kind of grant is Title I.
ESEA/ESSA	The federal government’s Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) enacted in 1965 was the nation’s first educational law and provided funding to emphasize equal opportunity for all students. The law was reauthorized as the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) in 2015.
Evidence Based	An intervention, strategy, or activity that demonstrates a statistically significant effect on improving student outcomes
Family Foundation	A grant-making organization that is established, funded, and run by a single family’s assets. Family members determine the funds’ priorities and steward the foundation’s assets and philanthropic goals.
Fiscal Agent	An organization or person that acts on behalf of another party in performing various financial duties and responsibilities
Grant Solicitation	A publicly available document in which a funder announces its intentions to award grant funding to eligible organizations via a competitive grant process. These announcements can be known as solicitations.
Grantee	An organization that is/was awarded funds from an organization
Indirect Costs	Expenses that are not readily identified with the grant project but are often necessary for the general operation of the business, organization, or program. Indirect costs may also be called “overhead” or “administrative expenses” and are the opposite of direct costs (see “Direct Costs”).
Letter of Support	A testimonial that often accompanies a response to proposals in an organization’s application for grant funds. These external testimonials show that other organizations, people, or businesses believe in the applicant and that they should receive the grant funds from the funder.

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Logic Model	A graphic depiction that presents a systematic way of shared relationships among the resources, activities, outputs, outcomes, and impact of a program or project
LOI	A letter of intent (LOI) is a funder’s request for a letter from all potential applicants in which they share their “intent” or desire to apply for a specific funding category put forth by the foundation.
MOU	A memorandum of understanding (MOU) describes the broad terms of an agreement to which two or more parties agree.
No-Cost Extension	An extension of time to a project period and/or budget period to complete the work of the proposed project without additional federal funds and without a change in the project scope of work
Obligated Funds	Orders placed for goods and services during a given period that require payment by the non-federal entity (i.e., vendor) during the same or a future period
Proposal	A written narrative and/or an application with a series of questions and responses as well as outlining a request for financial assistance in the form of grant funds provided by an institution such as a government department, corporation, or foundation
Project Period	The period established in the award document during which awarding agency funding begins and ends
Research Based	A concept or strategy that is derived from or informed by objective academic research
RFP/RFA	An organization or business issues a request for proposal (RFP)/request for application (RFA) to invite applicants to propose a product or service to meet a specific need. The RFP/RFA outlines the need, eligibility, and project requirements.
SMART Goals	Goals that are Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time Based

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