

**Minnesota Department of Administration
Office of Grants Management
Operating Policy and Procedure
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Policy on Writing and Publicizing Grants Notices and Requests for Proposal

Statutory References

Minn. Stat. 16B.97-Grants Management

Minn. Stat. 15.994-Internet Grant Information

Minn. Statute 13.599-Grants

Policy

Minnesota Statutes 16B.97 subd. 4(a)(1) provides that the Commissioner of Administration shall “create general grants management policies and procedures that are applicable to all executive agencies.”

It is the policy of the State of Minnesota to include sufficient information in notices of grant opportunities and requests for proposal (RFPs) so that potential applicants may make informed decisions about applying for and managing state grants. It is also the policy of the State of Minnesota to publicize competitive grant opportunities broadly.

Notices of grant opportunities and RFPs shall include information about the grant program, application criteria, application and proposal requirements, state agency contacts and grant reporting requirements.

Competitive grant opportunities shall be publicized as broadly as possible. At a minimum, competitive grant opportunities must be posted on the granting agencies’ websites. Agencies should also consider additional methods to reach potential applicants, including but not limited to: US mail, electronic mail, targeted newspapers and the Minnesota State Register. Competitive grant opportunities that are posted on state agency websites will be linked to www.grants.state.mn.us, the one-stop website for state grant opportunities.

State agencies may, with or without reason, withdraw a grant notice or RFP at any time after it has been made public.

Scope of Coverage

This policy applies to all executive branch grant-making agencies, boards, committees, councils, authorities and task forces.

This policy applies only to competitive grant review processes. Legislatively-named, formula and sole/single source grants processes are not subject to this policy.

This policy supersedes other state agency policies that concern publicizing competitive grant opportunities except when the existing state agency policy is stricter.

Grant programs that seek an exception to this policy must complete a Grants Policy Exception Request and submit it to the Office of Grants Management for the approval of the Commissioner of Administration.

Definitions

Competitive Grant:

A competitive grant is a grant that is awarded through an application process in which multiple grant applications are solicited through a notice of grant opportunity or RFP and reviewed by the state agency. In a competitive grants process, grants are awarded to those applicants that most closely meet the selection criteria identified by the granting agency, based on the availability of grant funds.

Notice of Grant Opportunity/RFP:

A notice of grant opportunity or request for proposal is a document that notifies grant seekers of a competitive grant opportunity and includes information on grant requirements, selection criteria, timelines and process.

Procedures

1. The notice of a grant opportunity or RFP is drafted by appropriate staff. Notices of grant opportunities and RFPs must clearly communicate grants program information that will help potential applicants determine whether and how to submit an application. These documents must also identify important program requirements for grantees. Essential elements of a notice of a grant opportunity or RFP include:
 - a description of the grant program
 - the state's goals and priorities in making the grants
 - eligibility requirements for applicants
 - a statement on whether a multi-organization collaboration is required, welcome or not allowed for this grant program
 - grant outcome expectations and reporting requirements
 - deadlines and timelines for each step in the application and award process
 - amount of money for distribution and how it will be allocated
 - selection criteria and weight
 - detailed application formatting instructions or an application template
 - general information about the review process and a general overview of the composition of the review committee
 - requirements for in-kind or matching funds
 - the name and contact information of a contact person at the state agency
 - a statement about when information in their grant application becomes public data

2. At a minimum, the notice of a grant opportunity or RFP must be posted on the granting agency's website. The state agency should also consider additional methods to reach potential applicants, including but not limited to: US mail, electronic mail, targeted newspapers and the Minnesota State Register.