

CA-29 Grants Workshop

Resource Packet

A guide to help organizations in California's 29th Congressional District find, apply for, and manage federal grant funding.





Federal Grants 101

A federal grant is funding provided by the federal government to support a specific program, project, or public purpose. Grants can support many types of work, including community services, education, health care, infrastructure, public safety, arts and culture, and economic development.



Most federal grants are available to organizations such as nonprofits, local governments, schools and colleges, and public agencies. **Eligibility is different for every grant**, so always check who can apply before spending time on an application.

How does federal funding reach my community?

There are two common paths:

DIRECT FUNDING



Federal Agency



Your Organization

Your organization applies directly to a federal agency.

Example: A nonprofit applies directly to the U.S. Department of Justice for a competitive grant to support a community violence prevention program.

PASS-THROUGH FUNDING



Federal Agency



State or Local Agency



Your Organization

The federal government provides funding to a state or local agency, which then offers its own grant opportunity.

Example: The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development provides funding to the State of California, which then awards a portion of those funds to eligible local organizations.



Good to know: If you only search for grants offered directly by federal agencies, you may miss federal funding available through state, county, and other local agencies.



Where can I find grants?

There is no single website that lists every grant opportunity. A good funding search uses several resources.



GRANTS.GOV

A central place to search for current competitive federal grant opportunities. Search by keyword, agency, eligibility, funding category, and more. You can also create an account to receive notifications about new opportunities.



SAM.GOV ASSISTANCE LISTINGS

Use SAM.gov to explore what federal assistance programs exist. Listings provide information about a program's purpose, eligibility, administering agency, and contacts. Keep in mind that a program appearing on SAM.gov does not necessarily mean funding is currently available.



FEDERAL PROGRAM INVENTORY

A beginner-friendly way to explore federal programs by topics such as housing, transportation, economic development, agriculture, and disaster relief.



FEDERAL AGENCY WEBSITES

Once you identify agencies that fund work like yours, visit their websites. Agencies may provide upcoming funding announcements, webinars, FAQs, application guidance, and program contacts.



STATE & LOCAL AGENCIES

Don't forget state, county, and other local agencies. Some federal funding is distributed through state and local governments and may never appear as an opportunity on Grants.gov.



Tip: Start looking early. Some federal opportunities may only be open for 30 to 60 days, so preparing your project before an opportunity opens can give you a head start.



Developing & Writing Your Grant Proposal (Steps 1–3)

These steps will help you turn your project idea into a clear and competitive proposal.

1

EXPLAIN THE NEED

Clearly describe the problem your project is trying to solve. Use data and evidence to show who is affected and why it needs attention.



Example: Our after-school program currently has a waitlist of 75 students, demonstrating a need for additional academic support.

2

SET YOUR GOALS & OBJECTIVES

A goal is the broader change you hope to make. An objective is a specific, measurable result.



Goal: Increase access to after-school academic support for middle school students.

Objective: Provide after-school tutoring to 100 additional middle school students during 2026-27 school year.

3

EXPLAIN YOUR PLAN

Describe the major activities, who will be responsible, and when they will happen.



Example Objective: Serve 100 additional students.

Activities: Hire part-time tutors → partner with two local schools → offering tutoring three afternoons per week → enroll and serve students throughout the school year.

Before You Submit

- ☐ Confirm your organization and project are eligible
- ☐ Follow all application instructions and formatting requirements
- ☐ Answer every required question
- ☐ Include all required documents and attachments
- ☐ Make sure your budget and proposal match
- ☐ Review your application for clarity and accuracy
- ☐ Submit before the deadline



Tip: If possible, have someone who was not involved in writing the proposal review it. A fresh reader can often identify missing information or unclear language.



Developing & Writing Your Grant Proposal (Steps 4–7)

These steps will help you turn your project idea into a clear and competitive proposal.

4

SHOW HOW YOU WILL MEASURE SUCCESS

Explain what you will measure and how you will collect it. Start with your goals and objectives.



Example: Track enrollment and attendance to measure serving 100 students. Use grades, assignments, or surveys to measure improvements in academic outcomes.

5

BUILD YOUR BUDGET

Show how much your project will cost and how grant funds will be used. Make sure your budget matches your plan.



Example: If your project includes two part-time tutors, your budget should account for their wages and other related program costs.

6

PLAN FOR WHAT COMES NEXT

Explain how your project may continue after the grant ends.



Example: After the grant ends, the organization may seek additional funding or partner with local schools to help continue the tutoring program.

7

BRING IT ALL TOGETHER

Make sure every part of your proposal connects and tells one clear story.





Preparing & Submitting Your Application



Read the Full Funding Announcement

Pay attention to who can apply, what activities can be funded, how applications will be scored, what documents are required, and when the application is due. Don't rely only on the grant summary.



Give Yourself Enough Time

Federal application may require registrations, organizational documents, letters, budgets, partnerships, or other materials that take time to prepare. Start early and identify who within your organization will be responsible for each part.



Follow Instructions Carefully

Applications are reviewed against the requirements in the funding announcement. Follow all instructions, formatting requirements, and page limits.



Tip: If possible, have someone who was not involved in writing the proposal review it. A fresh reader can often identify missing information or unclear language.

Before You Submit

- ☐ Confirm your organization and project are eligible
- ☐ Follow all application instructions and formatting requirements
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How Our Office Can Help



FIND RESOURCES

We can help identify federal funding programs, agencies, and resources that may be relevant to your project.



CONNECT WITH FEDERAL AGENCIES

We can help connection organizations with the appropriate federal agency contacts for questions about programs and funding opportunities.



GRANT UPDATES & WORKSHOPS

Our office can share funding opportunities, resources, and workshops to help organizations navigate the federal grants process.



Requesting a Letter of Support

Organizations applying for grants that would benefit constituents can request a letter of support from Congresswoman Luz Rivas.

What to Send Us



GRANT DETAILS

Program name • Funding agency
Amount requested • Application
deadline



PROJECT DETAILS

Brief project description •
Community served •
Expected impact



SUPPORTING MATERIALS

Draft application or project
summary • Letter submission
instructions • Organization contact

Submit your request as early as possible to allow our office time to review your materials.



Please Note: A request does not guarantee a letter will be provided. A letter of support does not guarantee funding or determine grant outcomes.



Grants Resources

FEDERAL RESOURCES			
	Grants.gov	Search current competitive federal grant opportunities.	grants.gov
	SAM.gov	Explore federal assistance programs and listings.	sam.gov
	Federal Program Inventory	Browse federal programs by topic area.	fpi.omb.gov
	USA.gov	Find government programs and services.	usa.gov

OTHER RESOURCES



California Grants Portal
grants.ca.gov



U.S. Small Business Administration
sba.gov

Need Assistance?

Henry Huynh
Grants Coordinator
Henry.Huynh@mail.house.gov | (818) 253-3535