



Grant Funding 101

Finding, Pursuing, Writing, and Administering Grants

Bill Goldy, Iowa League of Cities Consultant
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Topics Covered Today

- Types of Grants
- Finding Grants
- Pre-Award Phase
- Award Phase
- Post Award Phase
- Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL/IIJA) and Inflation Reduction Act (IRA)
- Resources

What is a Grant

A grant is a conditional award of funding in most cases, but it can also be a non-monetary award for technical assistance or training. Generally speaking, the grant lifecycle has three phases which include:

- **Pre-Award Phase:** Notice of Funding Opportunity and Application submitted and reviewed
- **Award Phase:** Award Decision is Made and Applicants are Notified
- **Post Award Phase:** Implementation, Reporting, and Closeout

Types of Grants: Competitive Grants

- Based on merit, applied for directly through an agency, and awarded through a process which requires a project budget and a proposal to apply for the grant. These grants are also known as “discretionary” funding.
- Awardees are chosen by a team of reviewers who read your grant proposal and evaluate your project to determine if it is a good fit for their funding.
- The outcome of a competitive awarding process is not predetermined and include a lot of rules and regulations to keep the awarding process fair and equitable.
- It is crucial to understand what is being asked of you in the application, and to have a very good understanding of your proposed project to make your application as competitive as possible.

Types of Grants: Pass-Through Grants

- Federal agencies issue pass-through funds to a state agency, think of IEDA, Iowa SRF, and IDOT programs.
- States distribute these funds as competitive or non-competitive based on terms and authorizing legislation. For example, if it is a formula funding stream at the federal level, it will be at the state level as well (think CDBG grants).
- Applicants apply for funding through a state agency.

Types of Grants: Formula Grants

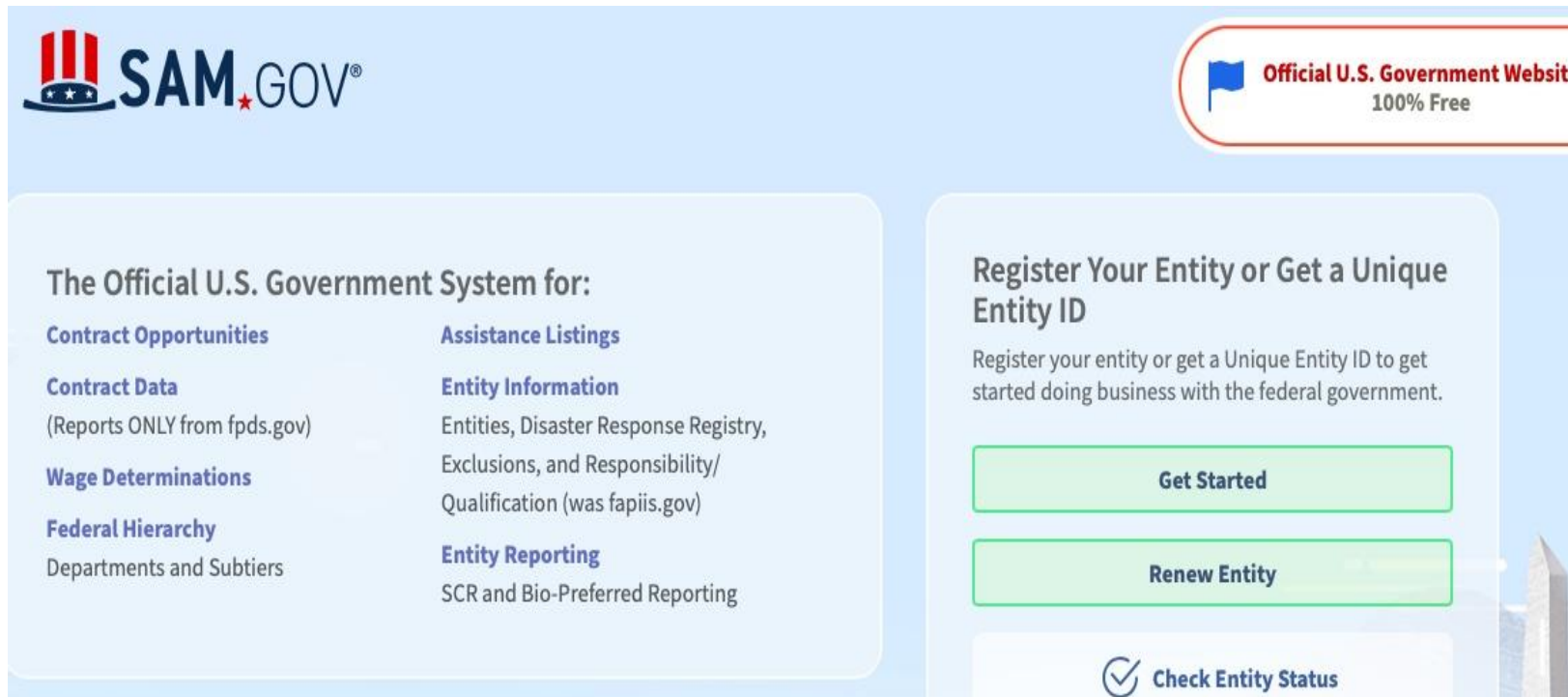
- Awardees are predetermined and funding is mathematically allocated to recipients. The ARPA funds cities received is an example of a formula grant.
- Typically, a recipient must meet certain criteria thresholds to be considered for an award. Criteria can be based on several factors such as population and a community's low to moderate or median income.

Types of Grants: Continuation Grants

- Awards extend beyond one year.
- Applications for continuation awards are assessed based on the availability of funds for consecutive years.
- Grant performance is vital first year of the award; maintaining compliance and meeting the objectives identified in the grant application.
- Continuation awards are normally not for infrastructure projects and provide funding to non-infrastructure programs.

Federal Grants

To apply for federal grants, you must have an active SAM.gov account



The screenshot shows the SAM.gov homepage. At the top left is the SAM.gov logo, which includes a stylized American flag icon. At the top right, there is a badge that says "Official U.S. Government Website" and "100% Free". The main content area is divided into two columns. The left column is titled "The Official U.S. Government System for:" and lists several services: "Contract Opportunities", "Contract Data (Reports ONLY from fpds.gov)", "Wage Determinations", "Federal Hierarchy (Departments and Subtiers)", "Assistance Listings", "Entity Information (Entities, Disaster Response Registry, Exclusions, and Responsibility/Qualification (was fapiis.gov))", and "Entity Reporting (SCR and Bio-Preferred Reporting)". The right column is titled "Register Your Entity or Get a Unique Entity ID" and includes the text "Register your entity or get a Unique Entity ID to get started doing business with the federal government." Below this text are three buttons: "Get Started", "Renew Entity", and "Check Entity Status" (which has a checkmark icon).

SAM.GOV®

Official U.S. Government Website
100% Free

The Official U.S. Government System for:

- Contract Opportunities**
- Contract Data**
(Reports ONLY from fpds.gov)
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SCR and Bio-Preferred Reporting

Register Your Entity or Get a Unique Entity ID

Register your entity or get a Unique Entity ID to get started doing business with the federal government.

Get Started

Renew Entity

Check Entity Status

Federal Grants

Most Federal grants require you to submit applications on the grants.gov site

Register an account for your city at grants.gov

Searching for grant opportunities on the site is easy and the search can be narrowed to eligibility for city governments

The screenshot shows the Grants.gov search results page. The header includes the Grants.gov logo and navigation links: HOME, LEARN GRANTS, SEARCH GRANTS, APPLICANTS, and GRANTOR. The search results are for 'City or town' eligibility, with 1,177 matches. The results are sorted by 'Posted Date (Descending)'. The first five results are listed below:

Opportunity Number
HRSA-24-040
HRSA-24-039
P24AS00132
RFA-CA-24-006
20240111-PJ
RFA-FD-24-001
FTA-2023-012-TRI-ADCMS
L24AS00087
HHS-2024-ACF-OHS-CH-R8-01

BASIC SEARCH CRITERIA:
Keyword(s):
Opportunity Number:
CFDA:

OPPORTUNITY STATUS:
 Forecasted (143)
 Posted (1,034)
 Closed (1,643)
 Archived (14,760)

FUNDING INSTRUMENT TYPE:
 All Funding Instruments
 Cooperative Agreement (286)
 Grant (914)
 Other (2)
 Procurement Contract (2)

ELIGIBILITY:
 All Eligibilities
 City or township governments (1,177)
 County governments (1,218)
 For profit organizations other than small businesses (1,059)

State Grants

Best Places to look for State Grants:

- iowagrants.gov
- iowadot.gov/grants-programs
- iowaeda.com
- iowafinance.com



Other Grants

- Private Foundation: typically set up by an individual or family for charitable purposes, think Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, Walton Foundation
- Public Foundation: Funds are raised from multiple sources and gifted to eligible applicants, think County Foundations
- Corporate Foundations: Company provides funds to eligible applicants, think Xcel and Alliant Energy, Miracle Equipment

Pre-Award Phase: Notice of Funding Opportunity

The Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) announces the grant and defines application guidelines that includes:

- Eligible applicants, submission requirements, and deadlines
- Maximum award and required match amounts
- Funding focus: transportation, community / economic development, public safety, etc.
- Allowable and non-allowable expenses
- Other

Pre-Award Phase: Notice of Funding Opportunity

When reviewing the Notice of Funding Opportunity, consider the following:

- Does your project meet eligibility requirements, are a good fit with the grant program priorities, and do you need to enlist professional assistance to develop the proposal
- How competitive is the grant, what is the cost-sharing requirement, do you need to procure professionals, what is the maximum award amount
- Are the funds subjected to Buy America, Build America Act (BABA) and/or Davis-Bacon Labor Standards, if so, it may increase project cost
- If allowed, don't hesitate to contact the funder about the NOFO
- Understand the conditions and reporting requirements should you be awarded funding

Pre-Award Phase: Typical Grant Team

- Stakeholders: helps with brainstorming ideas for application/project
- Grant Writer: Internal or hired professional
- Implementers: responsible for implementing if funded, normally a staff member such as city clerk, parks and rec director, etc.
- Financial and Authorizing Agent: responsible for stewardship of funds if awarded, authorized to submit applications, sign agreements, and reporting progress

Pre-Award Phase: Writing the Grant

Each application will include a general information section to provide applicant and project team information. In addition, the application may require, but not limited:

- Abstract: concise one page or less about your project
- Executive Summary: mission state and background about your project
- Need Statement: describes the need addressed by your project (be creative and innovative to set yourself apart from the competition)
- Objectives: Your anticipated outcomes if you were to receive funding
- Methodology and Evaluation: Details of the steps you plan to take to reach objectives, examples include data collection, community surveys
- Budget: Anticipated applicant match, amount paid by the funder, personnel cost, indirect costs
- Other: Team resumes, letters of support, etc.

Pre-Award Phase: Writing the Grant

Application Narrative: be specific and differentiate yourself from the competition:

- Who will it benefit; citizens and/or businesses?
- How will it improve quality of life and what are the long-term benefits to your city?
- What makes the project you are requesting funding for and your community unique?
- Use photos, statistics, records, and available documentation if allowed by the NOFO

Pre-Award Phase: Writing the Grant

Before Submitting:

- Attend program webinars (sometimes they are required)
- If it is allowed, reach out to the contact for the grant with questions. A lot of times they provide information that can strengthen the application
- Follow all requirements such as word and character count, font size, margins, page count, and include everything they are asking for or risk elimination
- Check spelling, review grammar, check your budget and recheck all your math
- Utilize your grant team in the review process

Pre-Award Phase: Grant Submission

Make sure all the appropriate signatures are obtained and submit the grant on time, preferably early.

The grantor typically specifies how the application should be submitted which may be:

- Online: the most common method and if you submit have the deadline it more than likely will be rejected / refused
- Mail: Typically requires multiple copies of the application to be submitted and make sure you mail well before the deadline
- Email or Fax: most funders refuse to accept proposals in this manner, but a few may require it

Award Phase: Award Decision

- The NOFO, RFP, or the funding website should indicate when to expect a decision
- Do not contact the funder about your application until the notification date has expired
- When you receive notification about the award decision, acknowledge the notification even if you were not awarded funds

Award Phase: Awarded Funding

You have been awarded funding, now what:

- Express gratitude: immediately upon receiving grant award notice, pick up the phone and call them to thank them for the award
- Thoroughly review the funding / award guidelines: they will lay out award amount, reporting requirements, acknowledgment of terms, contact information, etc.
- Accept the funds formally: return acceptance form (if the funder is formal) and pass a resolution accepting the funds at the city level
- If you have questions, ask, but do not ask questions until you review the guidelines, etc. because it may provide answers to your questions

Post Award Phase: Grant Administration

Go in with the understanding the post award phase will require a significant amount of effort. This phase may include:

- Implementation: completing the specific activities defined in the grant application
- Financial Management: stay on top of expending the funds
- Reporting: most funding sources will require periodic progress reports and usually require a final report; an example of what to expect is ARPA reporting
- Audits / Single Audits: Federal awards require the project to be audited if awarded funds exceed \$750,000 in a fiscal year
- Closeout: the grant process ends, a final report is submitted, final paperwork is executed and submitted to the grantor, and the awarding agency reviews for grant compliance

Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA)

- Also known as the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) passed into law by Congress in November 2021
- It authorized \$1.2 trillion for roads, bridges, and water infrastructure along with investments in broadband, energy, and other improvements
- \$550 billion of the \$1.2 trillion are slated for “new” investments / programs
- Some funding is directly distributed to states and remaining funding will be eligible for competitive direct grants (discretionary funding)

Iowa IIJA / BIL Funding

In addition to the discretionary/competitive grant funding available through a federal agency, Iowa will receive at least \$5 billion in pass-through funding over 5 years. The funding will be allocated to both existing and new state programs, and will be available for:

- Transportation: highways, transit, bridges, airports, and charging stations
- Broadband
- Water, electrical infrastructure, and broadband infrastructure
- Housing, arts, health, and safety
- Other

Inflation Reduction Act (IRA)

- Signed into law in August 2022
- Approximately \$370 billion of investment (tax credits, grants, loans) in renewable / clean energy and combating climate change
- For programs eligible to cities, a direct payment can be made in lieu of tax credits

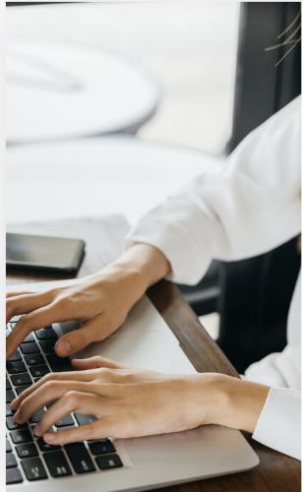
Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) Continued

Examples of programs/funding cities will be eligible for include:

- Renewable Energy: solar and wind
- Clean Vehicles: Electric and Hybrid
- Carbon Pollution Reduction Planning Grants
- Pollution Reduction Implementation Grants
- Other programs on the horizon related to renewable energy and reducing greenhouse gas emissions

Resources on the Iowa League Website

<https://iowaleague.org/resource/grant-funding-opportunities/>



Federal Funding Opportunities

Federal funding opportunities on community and economic development, housing, public safety, transportation, water and storm sewer, and other infrastructure. Before applying for...

[See Details](#) →

Click on the section below to find current grant opportunities:

[Broadband](#) | [Community, Economic Development and Housing](#) | [Public Safety](#) | [Transportation](#) | [Water, Sewer, Storm Sewer, Electrical Infrastructure and Water Resources](#) | [Other Opportunities](#) | [Grant Resources](#)

Broadband

[Broadband Technical Assistance](#)

The Broadband Technical Assistance (BTA) program provides financial assistance through cooperative agreements to eligible entities to receive or deliver broadband technical assistance and training.

How Can Funds be Used

Funds can be used to promote broadband expansion in eligible rural areas and include activities such as project planning, community engagement, operations, financial sustainability, environmental compliance, construction and engineering planning, accessing federal resources, and data collection and reporting.

Deadline: August 20, 2024

Resources on the Iowa League Website

<https://iowaleague.org/resource/state-funding-opportunities/>



State Funding Opportunities

State funding opportunities on broadband, community and economic development, housing, transportation, public facilities, water and storm sewer, and other infrastructure. Before applying...

[See Details](#) →

Transportation

[DOT/DNR Fund](#)

The intent of the DOT/DNR program is to enhance roadside beautification of primary system corridors with plant materials. To be eligible for funding, the site must be on a primary highway right-of-way, including primary highway extensions. The maximum award amount for the program is \$100,000. Letters of request for funding are accepted year-round, and if the project is select, the project is funded in the order in which it was received.

Deadline: Applications Accepted Year-Round

[Pedestrian Curb Ramp Program](#)

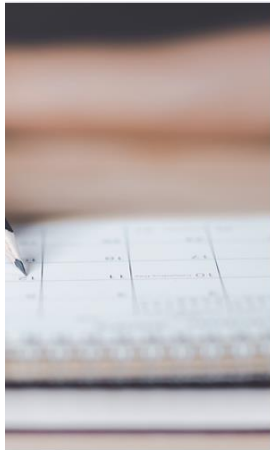
The program assists cities in complying with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) on primary roads. To qualify for funding:

- The city must engineer and administer the project
- Improvements must involve a municipal extension of a primary road
- Curb ramps must meet ADA standards

Deadline: Applications Accepted Year Round

Resources on the Iowa League Website

<https://iowaleague.org/resource/federal-and-state-grant-calendar/>



Federal and State Grant Calendar

Overview of Federal and State grants available and upcoming by month to help you plan out applications and timelines. Note that the...

[See Details](#) →

Opens in August	Federal or State	Agency
Infrastructure and Transportation		
Diesel Emissions Reduction Act Grants	Federal	EPA
Strengthening Mobility and Revolutionizing Transportation (SMART) Grant Program	Federal	USDOT
State Programs		
REAP Grants: City Parks and Open Spaces	State	DNR
Traffic Safety Improvement Program	State	DOT

Opens in September	Federal or State	Agency
Federal Economic / Community Development / Housing Programs		
Choice Neighborhoods Implementation Grants	Federal	HUD
Older Adult Home Modification Grant Program	Federal	HUD

Resources on the Iowa League Website

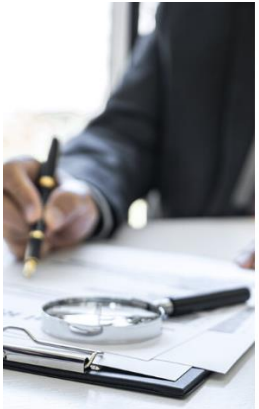
<https://iowaleague.org/resources/federal-funding/>



Contact Us with Funding Questions

If you have any questions on the American Rescue Plan, the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act or any other state or federal...

[See Details](#) →



SAM Registrations

The System for Award Management (SAM) is the official government-wide database to register with to apply for and receive government grant funding....

[See Details](#) →



Federal Funding Webinars/Training

Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) Grants Webinars
SS4A: Action Plans Webinar This webinar offered a general overview of the SS4A program...

[See Details](#) →



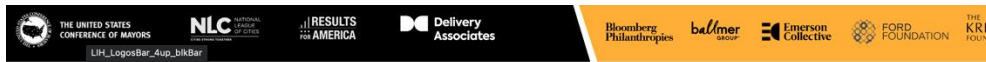
Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA)

About the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, also known as the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL), is a law that...

[See Details](#) →

Resources: Local Infrastructure Hub

<https://localinfrastructure.org/application-bootcamp/>



Local Infrastructure Hub

CALENDAR GRANT SEARCH RESOURCES ▾ NEW



New Bootcamp Offerings

Now with five bootcamp phases complete and one underway, the Local Infrastructure Hub will be hosting a new set of bootcamps beginning Fall 2024 focused on different funding opportunities made available through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and Inflation Reduction Act. These bootcamps are open for registration and will run through Fall 2024. **Select one of the following to learn more and register!**

Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC)

Assists communities as they undertake hazard mitigation projects, reducing the risks they face from disasters and natural hazards. The program aims to shift the federal focus away from reactive disaster spending and instead focusing efforts on proactive investment in community resilience.

[Learn More](#)

[Register Now](#)

Flood Mitigation Assistance (FMA) program

Supports local communities through investments in strategies to harden resilience, in plans for flood mitigation, and in the reduction of the risk of damage before a disaster. Projects might include reducing flood losses by elevation and relocation of flood insured structures, along with floodproofing non-residential structures, small local flood reduction projects, and plans to reduce flood damage.

[Learn More](#)

[Register Now](#)

Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE)

Provides investments in road, rail, transit, and port projects to enhance freight and passenger transportation networks. These projects will ultimately strengthen supply chains, reduce bottlenecks, and make local communities safer and more efficient for drivers, cyclists, and pedestrians. Projects might include the development of master plans, zero emissions plans, reducing conflicts in residential areas between freight and traffic, development of port planning, and risk assessments.



WHAT QUESTIONS DO YOU HAVE?

Bill Goldy, Iowa League of Cities Consultant

Email: billgoldy@iowaleague.org

Mobile: (970) 222-0611