



# Finding a Federal Grant

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What is Available to Help Your County?

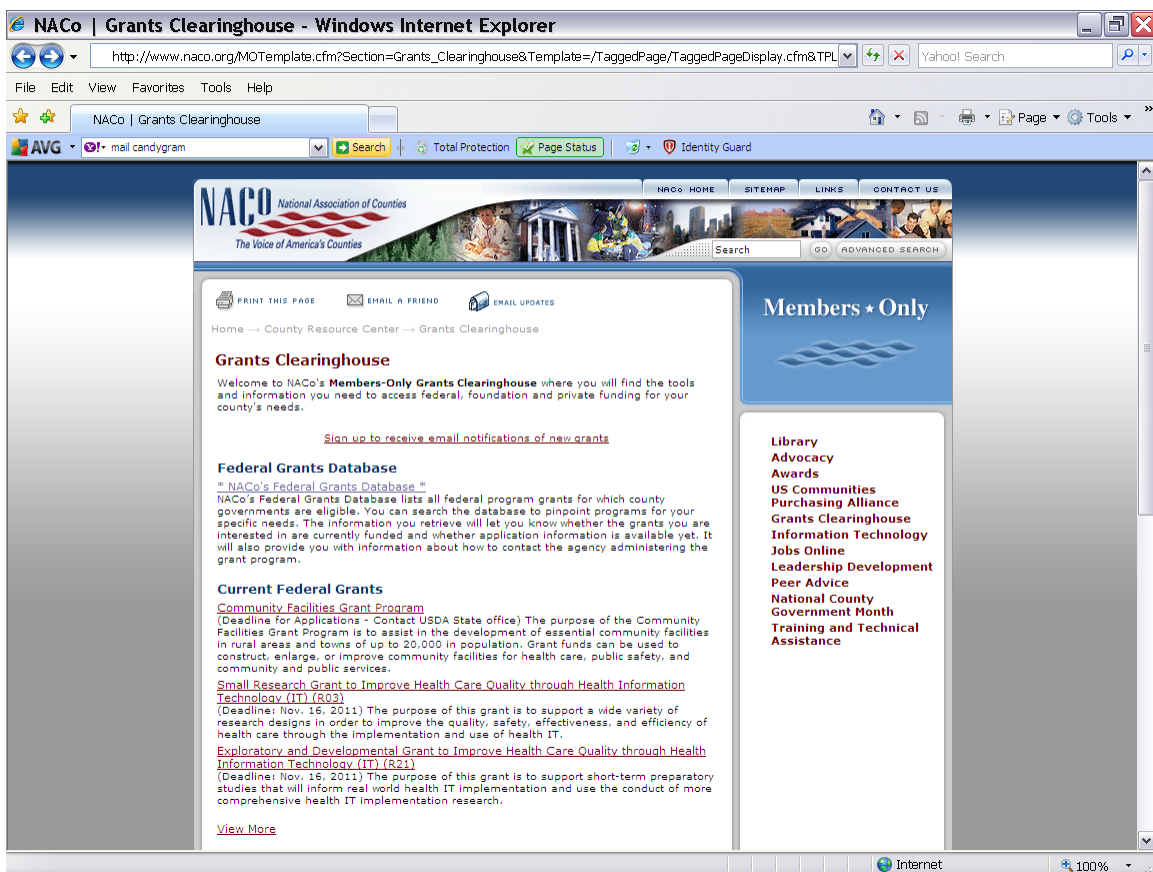
Association of County Administrators of Alabama Conference  
Insuring County Government

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National Association of Counties  
May 27, 2010

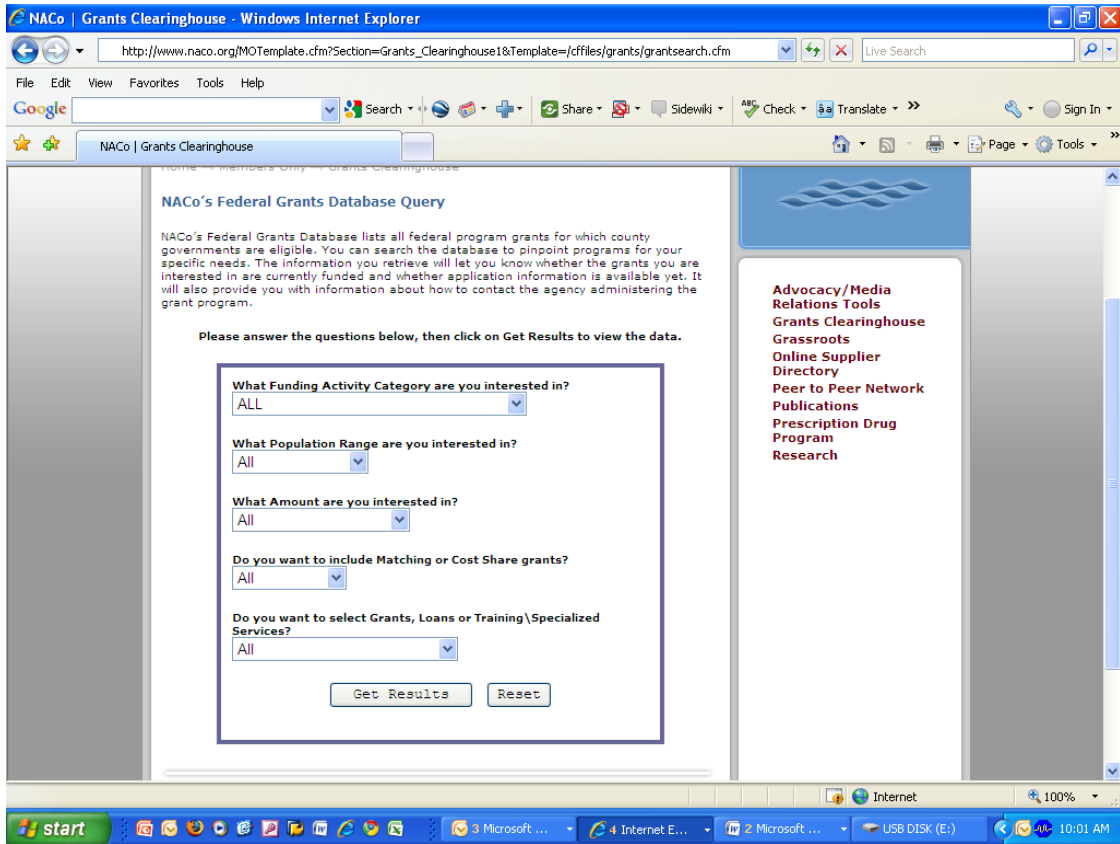
# Finding Federal Grants

## Finding Your Grant

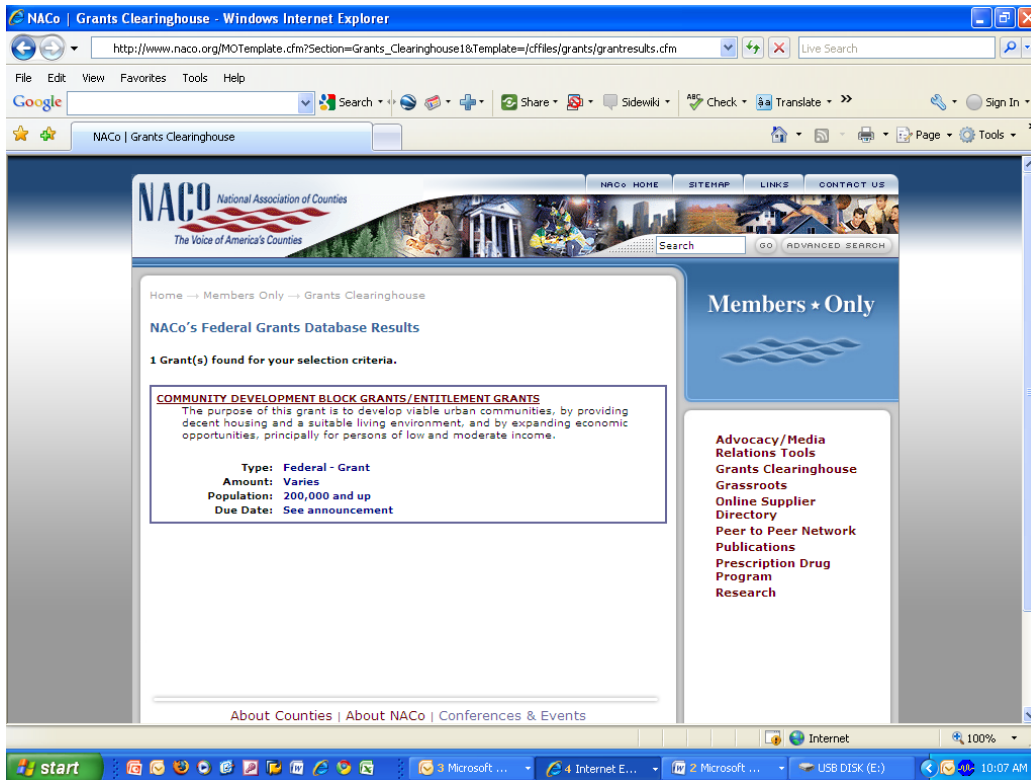
The National Association of Counties maintains a Members-Only website section called the Grants Clearinghouse which is dedicated to grants, federal and non profit that are county eligible. As a means of providing this service to your counties, NACo staff has investigated and analyzed every federal and private grant to see if counties are eligible recipients. Only those grants are posted on this website in the Section called Federal Grants Database. Each week NACo staff reviews all new grants that are currently accepting applications and posts those grants in a prominent place on the Grants Clearinghouse web page called Current Federal Grants. This information includes a description of the grant, the due date for applications and a link to the grant in the Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA).



The Federal Grants Database can be queried by the type of grant, amount of the grant, the size of your government and whether you want a loan, grant, or matching fund. Once you have selected all of your variables you click on Get Results to find out which grants are out there that match your county's needs.



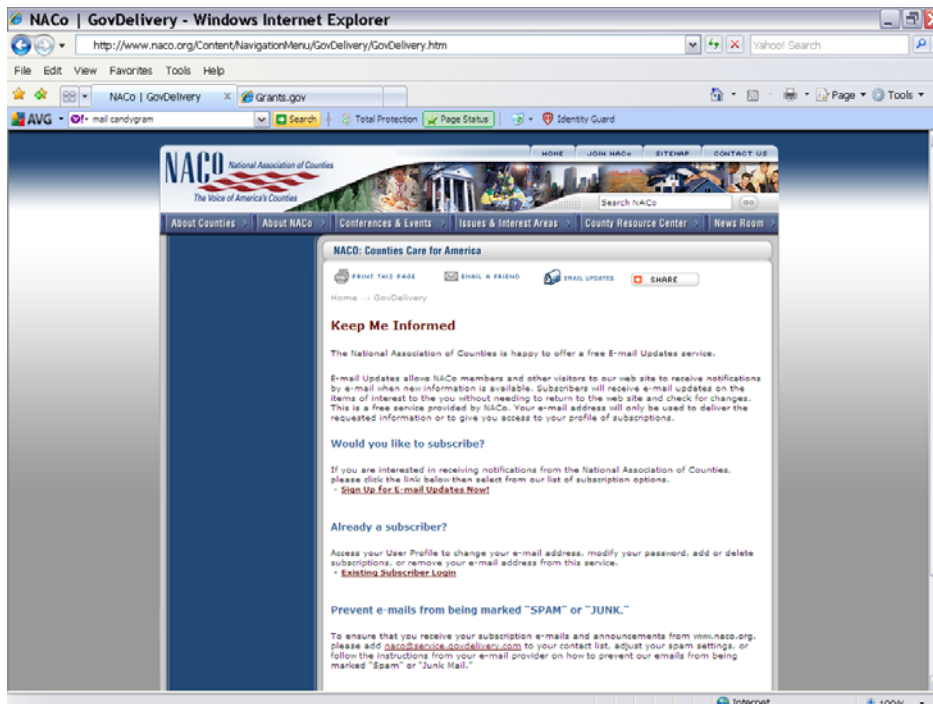
Once you have selected your variables and clicked on Get Results the list of county eligible grants will appear.



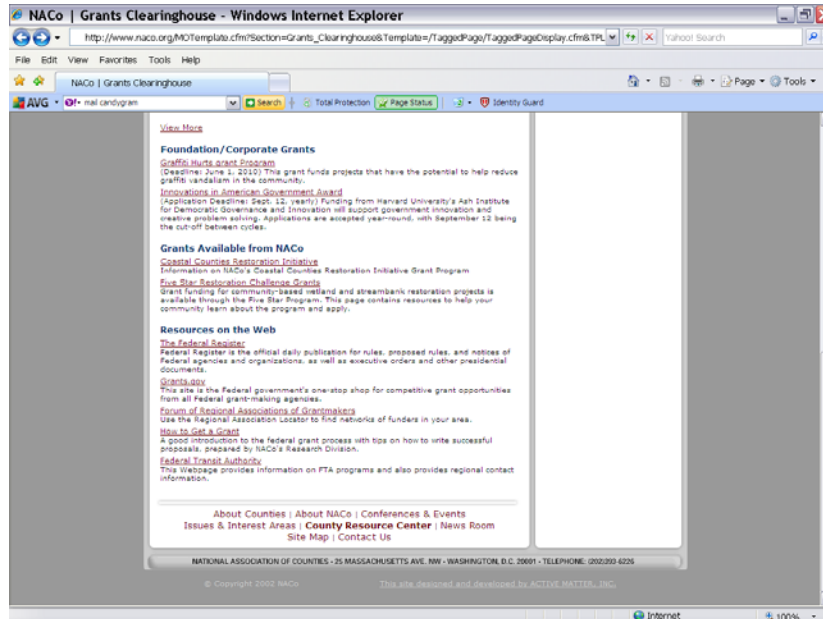
When the results of the query pop up, click on the title of the grant to be taken directly you the actual grant description in the Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance. This description provides information about the agency or department that administers the grant, the size of grants allocated, eligible recipients and the grant cycle.



The Grants Clearinghouse is updated weekly. Interested county officials can register for NACo Gov Delivery that will send out an email whenever this page is updated.



In addition to the federal grants, the Clearinghouse also provides information about Foundation/Corporate Grants, NACo grants and other resources available so that counties can find grants that meet their needs.



The most useful of these free resources is Grants.gov. Not only does this website have information about all federal grants but it provides additional guidelines about writing grant applications and can be used to apply for grants online. Once an application has been completed, the site can be used to track the progress of your county's grant application.



The Grants.gov web page has a separate section for Recovery Act grants and lists each of these grants by date of grant release for application, by code number, grant name and agency name.

The screenshot shows the search results page for Recovery Act opportunities. The table lists various grant opportunities with their respective dates, titles, agencies, and funding numbers. The results are sorted by Close Date in ascending order.

Close Date	Opportunity Title	Agency	Funding Number
04/08/2009	<a href="#">OJDP FY 09 Recovery Act Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force Program Grants</a>	Office of Juvenile Justice Delinquency Prevention	OJDP-2009-2099
04/20/2009	<a href="#">OJDP FY 09 Recovery Act Local Youth Mentoring Initiative</a>	Office of Juvenile Justice Delinquency Prevention	OJDP-2009-2118
04/20/2009	<a href="#">OJDP FY 09 Recovery Act National Youth Mentoring Programs</a>	Office of Juvenile Justice Delinquency Prevention	OJDP-2009-2166
05/14/2009	<a href="#">OJDP FY 09 Recovery Act ICAC Task Force Training and Technical Assistance Grants</a>	Office of Juvenile Justice Delinquency Prevention	OJDP-2009-2119
05/14/2009	<a href="#">OJDP FY 09 Recovery Act National Internet Crimes Against Children Data System (NIDS)</a>	Office of Juvenile Justice Delinquency Prevention	OJDP-2009-2121
05/14/2009	<a href="#">OJDP FY 09 Recovery Act Internet Crimes Against Children Research Grants</a>	Office of Juvenile Justice Delinquency Prevention	OJDP-2009-2120
05/18/2009	<a href="#">RECOVERY - Air Force Fiscal Year 2009 American Recovery and Reinvestment Act Research Program</a>	Air Force Office of Scientific Research	AFOSR-BAA-2009-3
05/19/2009	<a href="#">Recovery Act - Electric Drive Vehicle Battery and Component Manufacturing Initiative</a>	National Energy Technology Laboratory	DE-FOA-0000026
05/25/2009	<a href="#">Transportation Security Administration (TSA) ABRA Airport Checked Baggage Inspection System</a>	Department of Homeland Security	DHS09TSA117-001-ABRA
06/30/2009	<a href="#">TSA Advanced Surveillance Program</a>	Department of Homeland Security	DHS09TSA118-001
08/06/2009	<a href="#">Recovery Act - Smart Grid Investment Grant Program</a>	Headquarters	DE-FOA-0000058
01/30/2010	<a href="#">Recovery Act BLM NV Black Rock Transportation Plan Project</a>	Department of the Interior	RECOVERY-ACT-BLM-NV-RFA10-1866
02/28/2010	<a href="#">Recovery Act - BLM WY 2010 PFD Warren Bridge River Trail Delineation</a>	Department of the Interior	RECOVERY-BLM-WY-RFA10-8804

The front page of the Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance provides information about the number and types of grants and the agencies that administer them. It also includes links to information about how to write a grant proposal and frequently asked questions about applying for a grant.



Federal Grants Wire is a new free grant seeking resource that is available on the web. It breaks out grants by granting agency, subject area, applicant type, and assistance type. It can be found at <http://www.federalgrantswire.com/>



Federal Grants Wire also includes information on applying for federal grants and how to write a successful grant proposal. Keep in mind that application requirements are established by the granting department or agency. The website also includes daily updates and information on the most popular grants. It also allows the applicant to search by the types of grants for which the applicant is eligible.

## **Writing a Grant Proposal**

### Step 1

Become familiar with the eligibility requirements and other criteria related to the organization and grant program that you are interested in. Each grantor will establish its own protocol for applications, procedures, deadlines, etc. *If you need the money right away, it is too late!*

### Step 2

#### Getting Started

- Believe that you will get a grant
- Show the future of your county
- Start with where your county wants to go, who is the county and what are its strengths and priorities.
- Create a plan for the county, not just a proposal for a grant
- Do your research: find potential funders by searching locally first then target a source that is interested or funds projects like yours

The US Environmental Protection Agency has posted tips on writing a successful grant proposal on its website at <http://www.epa.gov/ogd/recipient/tips.htm>. The tips include the following components of a successful grant application:

#### 1. Proposal Summary

The proposal summary appears at the beginning of the proposal and outlines the project. It can be a cover letter or a separate page. It should be brief: no longer than two or three paragraphs. It is often helpful to prepare the summary after the proposal has been developed. This makes it easier to include all the key points necessary to communicate the

objectives of the project. The summary document becomes the foundation of the proposal. The first impression it gives will be critical to the success of the venture. It very possibly could be the only part of the package that is carefully reviewed before the decision is made to consider the project further.

## 2. Introduction of the Organization

Most proposals require a description of an applicant's organization and its past, present, and projected operations. Be concise, specific and compelling. Use the description to build credibility for your organization. (Start a "credibility" file.) Reinforce the connection between you and the grantor. Establish a context for your problem statement.

IN BRIEF: Who, what, when, why, and how much!

Some features to consider are:

A brief biography of board members and key staff members,

The organization's goals, philosophy, and record with other grantors, any success stories. The data should be relevant to the goals of the granting organization and its grant program, and should establish the applicant's credibility.

## 3. Problem Statement

The problem statement (or needs assessment) is a key element of a proposal. It should be a clear, concise, well-supported statement of the problem to be overcome using the grant funding. An applicant could include data collected during a needs assessment that would illustrate the problems to be addressed. The information provided should be both factual and directly related to the problem addressed by the proposal.

Zero in on a specific problem you want to solve or an issue you want to address;

Do not make assumptions of the reviewers,

Use statistics to support the existence of your problem or issue,

Make a connection between the issue and your organization,

Make a case for your project locally, not just nationally,

Demonstrate your knowledge of the issue or problem and,

Set-up the milestones of your goals and objectives, address the outcomes you wish to achieve.

#### 4. Project Objectives

The project objectives should clearly describe the goals of the project. Applicants should explain the expected results and benefits of each objective. They should also list the specific criteria of the grant program. Then, describe how the proposal meets each criterion. Goals are general and offer the evaluator an understanding of the thrust of your program. Objectives are specific, measurable outcomes. They should be realistic and attainable. Objectives help solve the problem or address the issue. If your objectives make reference to a number -- make sure it is do-able. Do not confuse objectives with methods. Always be realistic.

#### 5. Project Methods or Design

The project method outlines the tasks that will be accomplished with the available resources. It is helpful to structure the project method as a timeline. Early in the planning process, applicants should list the tasks that will have to be completed to meet the goals of the project. They can then break these into smaller tasks and lay them out in a schedule over the grant time period. This will provide a chance to consider what personnel, materials, and other resources will be needed to carry out the tasks.

Describe in detail the activities that will take place in order to achieve desired results. Make sure your methods are realistic. Describe WHY you have chosen these activities. Justify them over all other approaches your organization could have taken. Show your knowledge of the bigger picture. Include a timetable of major milestones.

#### 6. Project Evaluation

Applicants should develop evaluation criteria to evaluate progress towards project goals. It is important to define carefully and exactly how success will be determined. Applicants should ask themselves what they expect to be different once the project is complete. If you are having a problem developing your

evaluation process, you better take another look at your objectives. Be ready to begin evaluation as you begin your project.

#### Summative and Formative Evaluation:

Summative Evaluation is a plan to evaluate the project that measures how you will have met your objectives.

Formative Evaluation is a plan to evaluate the project during and after its execution. It can be used as a tool to make appropriate changes along the way.

### 7. Future Funding

Applicants may be asked to list expected sources of continuing funding after the conclusion of the grant. The applicant may also be required to list other sources and amounts of funding obtained for the project.

### 8. The Proposal Budget

Funding sources require different amounts of detail in the budget. Most Federal funding sources require a large amount of detail. Also, they usually provide budget forms with instructions. The budget format presented here is designed to match what most Federal agencies request. If the funding source requires a specific format, you must provide a budget in that format.

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The Rural Assistance Center has a website that can be found at [http://www.raonline.org/info\\_guides/funding/grantwriting.php](http://www.raonline.org/info_guides/funding/grantwriting.php) that provides valuable information for rural county grant seekers.

In addition to numerous sites on the web that provide information on writing a winning federal grant proposal, some counties have started looking at designating a grants coordinator for their county. This position can be part of an existing employee's current job description, can be a private consultant or can be a new hire. Several counties that have taken the hire route have discovered that a diligent grants coordinator who can challenge every department to search out and find appropriate grants to the services it provides will pay for itself with new found money. Note: competition for federal money is tight so be the best that you can be when writing a federal grant application.

## **Resources for Federal Grants**

[www.naco.org](http://www.naco.org) (members' only) Grants Clearinghouse

Federal Government Grants website

[www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov)

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance

[www.cfda.gov](http://www.cfda.gov)

Federal Grants Wire

<http://www.federalgrantswire.com/>

Federal Grants Wire Tips for Writing Federal Grants

<http://www.federalgrantswire.com/writing-a-federal-grant-proposal.html>

### **Writing a Federal Grant Proposal**

Education Money

[http://www.educationmoney.com/federal\\_write\\_proposal.html](http://www.educationmoney.com/federal_write_proposal.html)

Environmental Protection Agency Grant Writing Guidelines

<http://www.epa.gov/ogd/recipient/tips.htm>

EPA Grant Writing Tutorial

[http://www.epa.gov/region07/citizens/care/pdf/epa\\_grant\\_writing\\_tutorial.pdf](http://www.epa.gov/region07/citizens/care/pdf/epa_grant_writing_tutorial.pdf)