

APPLICATION WORKGROUP

MEMBERS: Mary Abraham- GOCCP (Chair); Irene Tai- Abell; Emily Soontornsaratool- MEA; Bonnie Brady- MDA; Chichi Nyagah-Nash- DGS; Joan Peacock & Dana Phillips- DBM

Priority 1: Standardized Definition/Data Elements:

- Common Application Portal Development:
 - Design for both small and large entities
 - Accommodate applicant/grantee and requestor/grantor needs
 - Enable multi-part application process
- Implementation Strategy:
 - Structure the portal into multiple parts for data collection and streamline it to avoid redundancy.
 - Integrate with existing state certification processes if possible
- Compliance & Standards:
 - Align with revised 2 CFR (October 2024)
 - Ensure consistency with SB 459 (MEGA Council, 2024)
 - Incorporate SB630/HB1539 (2021) reference materials

Priority 2: Terms and Conditions

- Review Process:
 - Examine current agency terms and conditions
 - Evaluate state and federal regulatory requirements
- Implementation:
 - Monthly review of grantor requirements to date content based on findings

Priority 3 Examples of Successful Application

- Website Development:
 - Create repository for successful applications (PII redacted)
 - Find a way to develop a standard Maryland website
- Platform Selection:
 - Consider DBM or DoIT hosting
 - Integrate with existing platforms:
 - MEGA Council information (DBM)
 - Maryland Grants Portal

Action Items: Regular Meetings: Schedule: 2nd Friday monthly, 1-2 PM upcoming dates:
2/14, 3/14, 4/11, 5/9, 6/13

BUDGET WORKGROUP

MEMBERS: (Chair) Lauren Buckmaster DNR, Donna Gunning MSDE, Bonnie Brady MDA, Joan Peacock, Mike Morello & Dana Phillips DBM

Priority 1 - Indirect Cost Guidance & State Approval Timeline

- Expand on indirect cost guidance per SF&P § 2-208 to establish statewide/standardized definitions and guidance for indirect cost and administrative overhead cost
- Obtain information and feedback from stakeholders (agency grant contacts and nonprofit grantees) and challenges related to indirect and administrative costs
- Work in conjunction with Application Workgroup to review when indirect cost rates are approved to determine what is optimal and feasible (Note: Prior recommendation from Council was to approve at the application phase.)
- Review Uniform Guidance indirect cost guidance for consideration for adoption

Priority 2 - Allowable/Unallowable Cost Definitions

- Review existing guidance from other States and for existing State Grant programs to develop standardized allowable/unallowable costs
- Determine what current practice is and evaluate if such guidance should be part of the notice for funding opportunities
- Review Uniform Guidance's indirect cost guidance for consideration for adoption
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Priority 3- Standardized Budget Template

- Create standardized budget templates
 - Obtain and analyze existing templates for key elements that should go into a statewide grantee budget template.
 - Identify solutions to address specific agency (State Grant Program) requirements.

Priority 4- Uniform Guidance

- Review Federal guidance for best practices and to determine what is applicable and feasible to be incorporated into processes for Maryland
- Identify state-specific modifications needed
- Ensure feedback is obtained from various types of stakeholders (grantors/grantees)

ACTION STEPS:

- Next meeting March 4th

MONITORING AND REPORTING WORKGROUP

MEMBERS: (Chair) Joan Peacock DBM, Bonnie Brady MDA, Mike Morello & Dana Phillips DBM

Priority 1 Pre-award Risk Assessment Tool (PARAT)

- Review and update the assessment tool previously developed by the Governor's Grants Office workgroup, including input from agency grant contacts.
- Consider implementing a two-phase risk assessment process:
 - Initial phase: General risk assessment for all nonprofits and potential grantees/sub-recipients
 - Second phase: Specific risk assessment tailored to the particular grant program the applicant is pursuing
- Identify how to determine high/medium/low ratings for grantees/sub-recipients
- Assess the need to build in periodic risk assessment for sub-recipients

Priority 2 - State Grant Reporting

- Reporting expectations (both financial and program/progress related)
 - Determine minimum key elements that should be included in a standardized reporting template to streamline reporting.
 - Work on guidance for submission procedures.
 - Assess grantee reporting capabilities and identify the reporting metrics.
 - Considering required timelines and needs for periodic reporting

Priority 3 - State Grant Monitoring

- Individuals representing various agencies awarding State grants and different types of applicants/grantees/ subrecipients should be asked for feedback and comments.
- Determine minimum monitoring efforts to be required based on risk assessment rating
- Evaluate available state monitoring capacity

ACTION STEPS:

- Review the prototype to determine if it is helpful for the Council's efforts.
- Review previously developed Risk Assessment tools, using them as a starting point to suggest changes/updates needed.
- Review the various forms and processes related to this workgroup's topics (monitoring and reporting) to discuss relevance and whether there are forms or processes that we can leverage for Maryland grantees.

Meet on Friday of every other week. Next meeting January 31st, 8-9 am

CUSTOMER SERVICE WORKGROUP

MEMBERS: (Chair) John Brothers, (Vice Chair) Mike Morello DBM, Bonnie Brady MDA, Irene Tai Abell Foundation, Gloria Brown DHS, Erik Lyon DOIT

Priority 1: Centralized Grant Advertisement

- Conduct a gap analysis between the Info Portal and the requirement to create a centralized grants advertisement
- **Immediate Action:**
 - Info Portal demo (January 30th, 3 PM)
 - Review the demonstration by Jason Dubow

Priority 2: Directory of Grant Contacts

- Contact Management:
 - Review and update the Governor's Grants Office contact list
 - Assess the potential use of the Info Portal contact list as an alternative
- Agency Point of Contact:
 - Identify the Chief Accountability Officer for each agency and create a directory.
 - Determine appropriate points of contact for grants at each agency
- Create Customer Service Structure:
 - Evaluate the need for dedicated customer service leads
 - Define reporting relationships to accountability officers

Priority 3: Transparency of Grant Payments and Details Pre-Awards

- Pre-Award Process:
 - Work in conjunction with Application Workgroup to help identify common/key elements of the previous council's work on the terms and standards
 - Work in conjunction with Monitoring & Reporting Workgroup to review a prototype of pre-award risk assessment tools

Priority 4: Survey Data/Measure of Customer Experience

- Survey Development:
 - Assess the need for the grantee feedback mechanism
 - Create sample survey questions
 - Design distribution strategy
- Process Improvement:
 - Identify key elements of customer experience
 - Evaluate process time improvements

- Work with the grant Ombudsperson workgroup to share information and possibly assist with recommendations for Ombudsperson role/function

Action Items:

- Demo of the State InfoPortal for the MEGA Council -
 - Thursday, January 30, 2025
- The next meeting to be scheduled for February

OMBUDSPERSON WORKGROUP

MEMBERS: (Chair) Jasmine Clemons

Priority 1: Feasibility Assessment

- Study the optimal position placement within the State government for the Ombudsperson role and determine staffing and resource requirements.
- Analyze technical needs, including systems needed to support the position, system integration capabilities, and current grant processing volumes across agencies.

Priority 2: Role Definition

- Define specific tasks and functions of the Role.
- Develop recommendations on how the Ombudsperson will provide technical assistance and oversee process improvements while managing information dissemination across agencies.
- Establish how they coordinate with agencies to understand and recommend improvements for efficient grant processing timelines and procedures while supporting nonprofit organizations in navigating State processes.

Priority 3: Implementation Planning

- Develop a comprehensive timeline for position creation, hiring processes, and system integration requirements.
- Establish an agency coordination framework and training procedures to ensure successful implementation of the Ombudsperson role.

ACTION STEPS:

- Meetings to be scheduled in February
- Create a presentation for the Council to assess the group's findings to be presented at the April 29th meeting for the development of recommendations due by July 1, 2025.