

## DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT

[Docket No. FR-5396-N-02]

### **Notice of Fiscal Year (FY) 2010 Opportunity to Register and Other Important Information for Electronic Application Submission for the Sustainable Communities Planning Grant Program**

**AGENCY:** Office of Sustainable Housing and Communities, HUD.

**ACTION:** Notice.

**SUMMARY:** This Notice provides instructions to potential Sustainable Communities Planning Grant Program applicants that intend to apply for the approximately \$98 million in funding to be made available for the program in FY2010. HUD is publishing this Notice to inform potential applicants of the multi-week time frame for the registration requirements that must be met before an application can be submitted, as well as the application procedures to follow once the NOFA itself has been published. HUD is also requesting that potential applicants notify HUD of their intent to submit an application no later than May 14, 2010. HUD urges you to notify the clearinghouse of your intent to apply as soon as possible so that we can plan accordingly. The Sustainable Communities Planning Grant Program is appropriated under the Department of Housing and Urban Development Appropriations Act, 2010 (Public Law 111-117, approved on Dec. 16, 2009). The Sustainable Communities Planning Grant Program Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) will be made available electronically through [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov). HUD requires that applicants apply electronically via Grants.gov.

On February 10, 2010, (75 FR 6689) HUD published the **Sustainable Communities Planning Grant Program Advance Notice and Request for Comment** (Advance Notice). The Advance Notice announced HUD's intent to offer funding through a competitive Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) under its Sustainable Communities Planning Grant Program. Through the Advance Notice, HUD sought input from state and local governments, regional bodies, community development entities, and a broad range of other stakeholders regarding how the Sustainable Communities Planning Grant Program should be structured in order to have the most meaningful impact on regional planning for sustainable development. Today's Notice announces that HUD has received approximately 900 comments in response to the Advance Notice, some of which were quite extensive. HUD and its partnership agencies, the U.S. Department of Transportation and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, are currently reviewing and analyzing the comments received. As a result, the publication of the Sustainable Communities Planning Grant NOFA, originally scheduled for April 10, 2010, is not expected to occur before May 2010. In the interim, HUD is publishing this Notice to inform potential applicants of the time frames and registration and application submission requirements using Grants.gov so that they are fully prepared to submit an application by the deadline date stated in the NOFA when it is published.

**To submit an application via Grants.gov, new Grants.gov users will be required to complete a five-step registration process, which can take 2 to 4 weeks to complete and requires having a Dun and Bradstreet Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number,**

**active registration in the Central Contractor Registration (CCR), registration with Grants.gov, and the person submitting the application for the organization to be authorized to submit the application and so noted on the Grants.gov system.**

HUD is also using this Notice to request that entities interested in applying for the Sustainable Communities Planning Grant Program notify HUD of their intent to submit an application. Providing HUD with this information will allow HUD to properly assess the workload anticipated during the review process and plan accordingly to ensure timely decision-making. If your organization is interested in applying for the Sustainable Communities Planning Grant Program, please call the HUD NOFA Information Center as soon as possible, and before May 14, 2010, at telephone number 800-HUD-8929 from 10:00 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. Eastern Time, Monday to Friday, except Federal holidays, and indicate your intention to submit an application. The NOFA Information Center operator will ask for your organization name and address, contact name, email, and telephone number, including area code. Persons with hearing or speech impairments may access NOFA Information Center via TTY by calling the Federal Information Relay Service at telephone number 800-877-8339. This is a toll-free number. Notification of intent to apply is not a requirement for application. If you are an eligible applicant, you may still apply – notification merely helps HUD determine staffing requirements for the review and evaluation of applications.

HUD also is advising potential applicants to enroll in the Grants.gov subscription service. The subscription service will notify you of funding opportunities, including the Sustainable Communities Planning Grant NOFA, when they are placed on the Grants.gov site. Information on the subscription service can be found at [http://www.grants.gov/applicants/email\\_subscription.jsp](http://www.grants.gov/applicants/email_subscription.jsp) The NOFA Information Center does not keep a mailing list to notify applicants when the NOFAs are released. HUD uses the Grants.gov subscription service for that purpose.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION:** To obtain a DUNS number, contact the Dun and Bradstreet Federal Information Desk at 866-705-5711 and select Option 4. **DUNS numbers are free to federal grant applicants.**

For Assistance with registering with the Central Contractor Registration (CCR), contact the CCR Federal Service desk from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Eastern Time at telephone numbers 866-606-8220 (toll-free) or 334-206-7828. You can also refer to the CCR User's Registration Guide found at <https://www.bpn.gov/ccr/help.aspx>

For assistance with Grants.gov registration, you can contact the Grants.gov help desk which operates 24 hours a day, 7 days per week except federal Holidays, at telephone number 800-518-GRANTS or by email at [Support@Grants.gov](mailto:Support@Grants.gov), or on their website at [http://www.grants.gov/applicants/get\\_registered.jsp](http://www.grants.gov/applicants/get_registered.jsp) .

To notify HUD that your organization intends to apply for the Sustainable Communities Planning Grant Program, please call the HUD NOFA Information Center at telephone number 800-HUD-8929 between the hours of 10:00 a.m. and 6:30 p.m. Eastern Time, Monday to Friday, except Federal holidays. Please be prepared to provide your organization name, address, contact name, email, and telephone number, including area code.

Potential Applicants should be aware that the Sustainable Communities Planning Grant Program will only provide funding to organizations and not individuals. If you are seeking government benefits, individuals should go to the federal website at [www.govbenefits.gov](http://www.govbenefits.gov).

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** On February 10, 2010, (75 FR 6689) HUD published the Advance Notice. The Advanced Notice announced HUD's intent to offer funding through a competitive NOFA under its Sustainable Communities Planning Grant Program. Through the Advance Notice, HUD sought input from state and local governments, regional bodies, community development entities, and a broad range of other stakeholders on how the Sustainable Communities Planning Grant Program should be structured in order to have the most meaningful impact on regional planning for sustainable development. The goal of the Sustainable Communities Planning Grant Program is to support multi-jurisdictional regional planning efforts that integrate housing, economic development, and transportation decision-making in a manner that empowers jurisdictions to consider the interdependent challenges of economic growth, social equity and environmental impact simultaneously.

## **BACKGROUND INFORMATION NEEDED TO APPLY FOR GRANTS VIA GRANTS.GOV**

**A. Instructions on How to Register for Electronic Application Submission.** Applicants must submit their applications electronically through Grants.gov. Before you can do so, you must complete several important steps to register as a submitter. The registration process can take approximately 2 to 4 weeks to complete. Therefore, registration should be done in sufficient time before you submit your application, and may be begun or even completed before the NOFA is published. To register, applicants must complete **five** sequential steps:

- 1. Step One:** The applicant organization checks with the Dun and Bradstreet to see if they have an existing Dun and Bradstreet Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number. If no number is on file at Dun and Bradstreet for the Organization at the Street location, then the applicant organization must obtain a DUNS number and follow all of the registration steps.
- 2. Step Two:** Register the applicant organization at the CCR;
- 3. Step Three:** Register a user name and password (AOR ID) at Grants.gov;
- 4. Step Four:** The applicant organization's E-Business Point of Contact (E-Biz POC) logs in to Grants.gov to grant authority to the Authorized Organization Representative (AOR); and
- 5. Step Five:** AOR confirms status as "authorized applicant" to submit an application on behalf of the organization.

All five steps must be completed to have a valid registration and to be able to successfully submit an application via Grants.gov. Definitions and a detailed explanation of each step in the process is contained below. Information is also available at the Grants.gov website at [http://www.grants.gov/applicants/get\\_registered.jsp](http://www.grants.gov/applicants/get_registered.jsp)

## **B. Key Terms Used as Part of the Registration Process.**

- 1. Applicant Organization.** The applicant organization is an entity that is identified as the legal applicant for funding in box 8a on the SF-424, Application for Federal Assistance, and is the organization that HUD award funds to and will hold accountable to fulfill the requirements of the award, should the applicant be selected for funding.
- 2. Authorized Organization Representative (AOR).** The applicant organization (applicant legal name on box 8a of the SF-424) E-Biz POC, must grant permission for a person (the AOR)

to submit an application on behalf of the applicant organization through the Grants.gov system. Authorizing an AOR safeguards the applicant organization from unauthorized individuals who may attempt to submit a grant application without permission.

**3. eBusiness Point of Contact (E-Biz POC).** The E-Biz POC is identified in the Central Contractor Registration (Step 2 of the Registration Process). The E-Biz POC must grant authority for a person, the AOR, to submit applications on behalf of the organization. An E-Biz POC may serve as an AOR as well as an E-Biz POC. The E-Biz POC is the sole authority recognized by Grants.gov with the authority to grant or revoke an AOR's permission to submit a grant application on behalf of the organization using the Grants.gov system.

**4. Marketing Partner ID Number (MPIN).** As part of the CCR Registration Process, the E-Biz POC will be asked to create an MPIN. The MPIN is a nine character (alpha-numeric) password that is used to access other systems and should be well guarded. The E-Biz POC uses the DUNS number plus MPIN to log into the Grants.gov system and grant authority to submit an application on behalf of the applicant organization, to a person requesting such permission.

### **C. Instructions on Completing the Registration Process for New Applicants or Applicants Updating or Renewing Registration.**

**1. The Need to Register.** HUD provides funding to organizations only. This information, therefore, is directed to HUD applicants that are organizational entities. Registration protects both HUD and the applicant. Specifically, registration confirms that the applicant organization has designated and authorized an individual or entity to submit an application on its behalf and assures HUD that it is interacting with a designated representative of the applicant who has been authorized to submit the application.

**2. Registration Requirements.** HUD's NOFA process requires applicants to submit applications electronically through Grants.gov. Before being able to do so, applicants must register with Grants.gov to provide and obtain certain identifying information. **Please note that registration is a multi-step process.** The registration process also requires the applicant organization to provide information at websites other than Grants.gov. The registration process can take approximately **2 to 4 weeks** to complete.

**a. Step One: Obtain a Dun and Bradstreet Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS).** Step One of the registration process requires an applicant organization to have a DUNS number for the organizational entity for which funds are requested and an application for federal assistance is being submitted. All organizations seeking funding directly from HUD must have a DUNS number and include the number on the form SF-424, Application for Federal Assistance, which is part of the application package. The DUNS number is also required as part of the registration process. If the applicant organizational entity identified in box 8a on the SF-424 already has a DUNS number, it must use that number. The number must be registered for the legal name of the organizational entity. To check if the organization has an existing DUNS number, contact the Dun and Bradstreet Federal help desk at telephone number 866-705-5711 and select Option 4. **Failure to provide a DUNS number or the correct DUNS number associated to the applicant organization legal name as entered on the form SF424, box 8a and CCR may prevent you from submitting a grant application or obtaining an award,**

**regardless of whether it is a new award or renewal of an existing one.** This policy is pursuant to OMB policy issued in the Federal Register on June 27, 2003 (68 FR 38402). HUD codified the DUNS number requirement on November 9, 2004 (69 FR 65024). A copy of the OMB Federal Register notice and HUD's regulation codifying the DUNS number requirement can be found at [www.hud.gov/offices/adm/grants/duns.cfm](http://www.hud.gov/offices/adm/grants/duns.cfm). Applicants cannot submit an electronic application without a DUNS number. An incorrect DUNS number in an application package will result in Grants.gov rejecting the application, because the DUNS number entered in the application will not be consistent with the DUNS number associated to the applicant legal name as entered in box 8a of the form SF-424, CCR, and Internal Revenue Service (IRS) records. The applicant legal name and DUNS number used on the application must match the DUNS number and organization name used in the CCR. Applicants must note that information entered and used to obtain the DUNS number will be used to pre-populate the CCR, which is **Step Two** of the registration process. Applicants should, therefore, carefully review information entered when obtaining a DUNS number. When registering with Dun and Bradstreet (D&B), please be sure to use the organizational entity's legal name used when filing a return or making a payment to the Internal Revenue Service (IRS). Organizations should also provide the zip code using the zip code plus four code (Zip+4).

Applicants can obtain a DUNS number by calling telephone number 866-705-5711 option 4 for federal grant applicants. (This is a toll-free number). Applicants in Alaska and Puerto Rico can call telephone number 800-234-3867. The approximate time to get a DUNS number is 10 to 15 minutes, and there is **no charge**. Applicants may also obtain a DUNS number by accessing the D&B website at <http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform>. The approximate time to create the number online is one business day. When obtaining a DUNS number, be sure you provide Dun and Bradstreet with information on the applicant organization that is consistent with the applicant organization's IRS records. After obtaining a DUNS number, applicants should wait 24 to 48 hours to register with the CCR so that its DUNS number has time to become activated in the D&B records database.

If you are not sure if you have a DUNS number for your organization, call the Dun and Bradstreet federal help desk at telephone number 866-705-5711, option 4. They will assist you in determining if a number already exists for your organization at the address on the SF-424.

**b. Step Two: Register with the CCR.** The second step of the registration process is registering with the CCR. The CCR is the primary registrant database for the federal government. An organization planning to submit a grant application for the first time must register, using its legal business name used by the IRS. If you need assistance with the CCR registration process, you can contact the CCR Assistance Center, Monday through Friday, from 8:00 am to 8:00 pm Eastern Time at telephone numbers 866-606-8220 or 334-206-7828. Applicants can also obtain assistance online at [www.ccr.gov](http://www.ccr.gov). A CCR User's Guide that guides applicants through the registration process is available on the CCR website by clicking on "Help."

**Registration, including update/renewal, can take several weeks as CCR compares its records to those maintained by D&B and the IRS.** The records of D&B, CCR, and the IRS must match. If discrepancies arise, Step Two cannot be completed until the discrepancies are resolved. For this reason, HUD urges applicants to complete the CCR registration, or update/renew its existing registration, immediately. Otherwise, the CCR check with D&B and IRS records may delay completing the registration process and adversely affect the ability to submit a grant application.

The CCR registration process consists of completing a **CCR Trading Partner Profile (TPP)**, which contains general, corporate, and financial information about your organization. When completing the TPP, you will be required to identify several points of contact (POC). Mandatory POC include the primary CCR POC, who will be responsible for maintaining the information in the TPP, and the E-Biz POC who will authorize individuals wishing to submit applications through Grants.gov on behalf of the applicant organization.

**(1) CCR Use of D&B Information.** In July 2006, CCR implemented a policy change. Under this policy change, instead of obtaining name and address information directly from the registrant, CCR obtains the following data fields from D&B: Legal Business Name, Doing Business As Name (DBA), Physical Address, and Postal Code (Zip+4). Registrants will not be able to enter or modify these fields in CCR because they will be pre-populated using data from Dun and Bradstreet. During a new registration, or when updating a record, the registrant has a choice to accept or reject the information provided from the D&B records. If the registrant agrees with the D&B supplied information, the D&B data will be accepted into the CCR registrant record. If the registrant disagrees with the D&B supplied data, the registrant must go to the D&B website at <http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform> to modify the information contained in D&B's records before proceeding with its CCR registration. Once D&B confirms the updated information, the registrant must revisit the CCR website and "accept" D&B's changes. Only at this point will the D&B data be accepted into the CCR record. This process can take up to 2 business days for D&B to send modified data to CCR, and that time frame may be longer if data is sent from abroad.

**(2) CCR EIN/TIN Validation.** To complete the CCR registration, the Employer/Taxpayer Identification Number (EIN/TIN) and Employer/Taxpayer Name combination you provide in the IRS Consent Form must match exactly the EIN/TIN and Employer/Taxpayer Name used in federal tax matters. It will take **one to two business days to validate** new and updated records prior to becoming active in CCR. Please be sure that the data items provided to D&B match information provided to the IRS. If the registration in D&B and the CCR do not match the IRS information, an error message will result. Until the discrepancies have been resolved, the registration will not be completed. HUD recommends that applicant organizations carefully review their D&B and CCR registration information for accuracy immediately upon publication of this notice. If you have questions about your EIN/TIN, call 1-866-255-0654 (Option 4).

**(3) Detailed Steps for NEW applicant organizations to register with CCR.** CCR provides a detailed step-by-step User's Guide on its help page at <https://bpn.gov/ccr/help.aspx> to assist an applicant organization in completing their CCR registration. New Registrants should print out this guide and follow its clear and precise, step-by-step instructions. Additional assistance is available online at [www.ccr.gov](http://www.ccr.gov). Before beginning the CCR registration process, organizations should designate an individual who will be responsible for completing the CCR registration and managing the information entered into CCR. The listing below identifies the steps in the CCR registration process.

Additional assistance is available online at [www.ccr.gov](http://www.ccr.gov). Before beginning the CCR registration process, organizations should designate an individual who will be responsible for completing the CCR registration and managing the information entered into CCR. The listing below identifies the steps in the CCR registration process.

(a) Create a User Account. Start at the CCR homepage, <https://www.bpn.gov/ccr/>. Under the "New CCR Users" heading, select "Start New Registration". Enter your DUNS

Number and company information (Legal Business Name and Address), and click “Continue Registration”. If one of the fields fails verification, an error message will prompt you to correct or change invalid information. If the D&B data is correct, click “Accept/Continue Registration”. Select the “Create User Account” link. The Create User Account page is displayed. You will be prompted to enter your user information, create a user ID and password, and choose security questions. When satisfied with your entries, click “Continue”. Note: The person identified in the user account fields becomes the default primary CCR POC.

If the user ID and password you create meet the criteria, a confirmation page is displayed confirming the creation of your user account. Click on “Continue”. Next, the CCR registration instructions page is displayed. Read the information, and then click “Continue”. The first page of your registration, General Information, is displayed.

Complete and submit the online registration. If you already have the necessary information on hand, the online registration takes approximately one hour to complete, depending upon the size and complexity of your business or organization.

(b) The “General Information” page is the next screen. On this page the registrant must complete all the required information.

(c) Continue to fill in the required fields in each section, Corporate Information, Goods and Services, Financial Information, and Points of Contact. Note: Under Goods and Services a North American Industry Classification (NAICS) number and a Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) number are required. Links to the NAIC and SIC code directories are contained in the CCR User’s Guide.

(d) **Creating a Marketing Partner ID Number (MPIN).** The final step in creating the organization’s TPP requires the registrant to create an MPIN. The MPIN is a self-defined, nine character password that the E-Biz POC will use to access Grants.gov to authorize an AOR to submit a grant application. **Note:** The CCR POC will validate and save data contained within CCR for Corporate Information, Goods/Services, Financial, Points of Contact, and IRS content. Once the information has been validated and saved in each required section, the last screen will indicate “Registration Complete.”

(e) **Registration Notification.** When the registration is successful, the registrant will receive two letters messages via email. The first welcomes the registrant to CCR and confirms the registration was accepted. The second confirms the CCR POC successfully created a User ID and password for Central Contractor Registration. The second email message is only a confirmation of the User ID, so make sure that you have received both.

(4) **Annual Update or Renewal.** Applicant organizations must annually login to CCR and update or renew their registration at [www.ccr.gov](http://www.ccr.gov). If an applicant organization fails to update/renew its CCR registration, the Grants.gov registration will lapse prohibiting the application from being accepted by Grants.gov due to failure to have a complete registration.

#### (5) Detailed Steps for Updating/Renewing Current Registrations

(a) Start at the CCR homepage, <https://www.bpn.gov/ccr/>. You can login under “Current Users,” by entering your user id and password.

**Note:** CCR registration is NOT required for individuals. HUD does not directly fund individuals through its NOFA process.

(b) The next screen shows the DUNS numbers(s) and status of all profiles (TPP) associated with your user account. Find the DUNS number for the organization you wish to update or renew and click on “update/renew”.

(c) The next screen shows the registration status. The status of each category of information is shown to its right. A check mark in a green background indicates information has been accepted by CCR. An exclamation point in a yellow field indicates information that needs to be corrected. **Note:** If your organization has changed you may need to correct information that has been previously accepted at CCR. Enter the updated information in all affected fields and carefully review your registration. Once all information has been reviewed and, if necessary, updated, then click on “Validate/Save Data.” If there are no changes at your organization, simply click on “Validate/Save Data.”

**c. Step Three: AOR ID (Username and Password) at Grants.gov.** In order to safeguard the security of your electronic information, Grants.gov requires all users to create an account in the Grants.gov system. In order to access the account the user must verify that they are able to obtain a username and password. This process determines that someone really is who he/she claims to be. **Note:** Your organization’s CCR registration must be complete and active before you can obtain a username and password.

(1) Select **Get Registered** in the Quick Links on the left navigation of any Grants.gov page. This will take you to the Get Registered screen.

(2) Under the Get Registered heading, select **Organization Registration** in the left navigation.

(3) Under Organization Registration, select **STEP 3: Username & Password**.

(4) Once you are on **STEP 3: Username & Password** screen, select the link **Create Username and Password** in the gray bar on the screen.

(5) The organization’s CCR registration must be complete and active before you can create a Grants.gov account. Enter the applicant organization’s DUNS Number and select the Register button. You will be taken to an online form. Complete the form. When entering an email address, please keep in mind that all correspondence with Grants.gov will be sent to that email address. For the Secret Question/Answer fields, enter a question only you would be able to answer and will be able to remember in the future. When you have completed the form select the **Continue** button.

(6) A confirmation screen will appear, if you have changes you would like to make choose the **Edit** button and the form will return to a screen where you can make changes. If you have no changes select the **Submit** button.

(7) You will see a message at the top of the screen that will read “You are successfully registered.” To continue to the Applicant login page select the Continue button on the bottom right. If you don’t receive the successful message, another message will appear stating what issue needs to be addressed with the form. Simply correct the error and select Submit until you receive the successful message.

**d. Step Four: Granting Approval of an AOR to Submit an Application on Behalf of the Organization.** To complete this step, the E-Biz POC for the organization identified in Box 8a of the SF424 form, must log into the Grants.gov website and give the registered AOR approval to submit an application to Grants.gov. By authorizing the AOR to submit on behalf of the applicant organization, the E-Biz POC is stating that the person has the legal authority to submit the electronic application on behalf of the applicant organization and can make a legally binding commitment for the applicant organization.

(1) The E-Biz POC must approve the designated AOR(s). *If the E-Biz POC does not grant authorization, Grants.gov will not accept the application.* The E-Biz POC can designate the AOR to submit applications on behalf of the organization at

<https://apply07.grants.gov/apply/AorMgrGetID>. The registration is complete when an AOR has been approved to submit an application on behalf of the applicant organization by the E-Biz POC.

HUD urges applicant AORs to check with the E-Biz POC to make sure they have been authorized to make a legally binding commitment for the applicant organization when submitting the application to Grants.gov. This is particularly important if the E-Biz POC for the applicant organization has been changed. The new E-Biz POC will have to grant authorization to all AORs not previously authorized. You can search the CCR registration for the E-Biz POC by going to <https://www.bpn.gov/CCRSearch/Search.aspx>.

**e. Step Five: Check your AOR Status at Grants.gov** AORs can track their AOR status at any time on Grants.gov by going to the Applicant home page at Grants.gov. In “Quick Links,” on the right navigation select **applicant login** and enter your user name and password. If you have not been granted AOR status by the E-Biz POC, you should contact the E-Biz POC directly.

#### **D. Instructions on How to Download an Application Package and Application Instructions.**

To download the application and instructions, follow the directions below, but first you must be sure you have Adobe Reader 9.2 installed on your computer.

**1. The Application Package and Application Instructions.** The general process for downloading, completing, submitting, and tracking grant application packages is described at [http://www07.grants.gov/applicants/apply\\_for\\_grants.jsp](http://www07.grants.gov/applicants/apply_for_grants.jsp). To download the application and instructions, go to [https://apply.grants.gov/forms\\_apps\\_idx.html](https://apply.grants.gov/forms_apps_idx.html) and enter the CFDA Number, Funding Opportunity Number, **or** Funding Opportunity Competition ID for the application that you are interested in. If you enter more than one criterion, you will not find the instructions. You will then come to a page where you will find the funding opportunity *Download Application & Instructions* link. Before you can view and complete an application package, you **MUST** have a compatible Adobe Reader installed. Applicants are advised they must download the most current reader available from the Grants.gov website. HUD has been advised by Grants.gov that newer versions of Adobe Reader operate better than older versions of the reader, and using the newer versions of the software results in faster uploads. To obtain the latest version of Adobe Reader and ensure compatibility with your system, go to [http://www.adobe.com/products/acrobat/readstep2\\_allversions.html](http://www.adobe.com/products/acrobat/readstep2_allversions.html). At that site you can identify the software you have installed on your computer and follow the instructions for downloading the software compatible with your computer and associated to the instructions in this General Section for using the latest version of Adobe Reader.

**2. Check Which Version of Adobe You Are Using.** To check which version of Adobe Acrobat you are using, go to the Help menu in Adobe Acrobat and then select “About Acrobat.” A text box will appear containing an Adobe logo with a number. Under that information, you will see another number; this is the version number of your software (e.g., 8.1.1, 8.1.2, or 8.1.3, 9.0, etc). If you do not have the correct version of Adobe Reader, go to [http://www.adobe.com/products/acrobat/readstep2\\_allversions.html](http://www.adobe.com/products/acrobat/readstep2_allversions.html). System requirements for Adobe Reader can be found on the Grants.gov site at

<http://www.adobe.com/products/reader/systemreqs/index.html#90win> You can use Adobe Reader 9.2 ( or newer version of Adobe Reader) with Adobe Professional 6.0 or newer, provided you have updated the default setting on the copy of Adobe Professional on your computer so the Adobe Reader default setting matches Adobe Reader 9.2 or the version you have downloaded from Grants.gov and installed on your computer.

**3. Frequently Asked Questions Available at Grants.gov.** Grants.gov has posted instructions in Frequently Asked Questions at [http://grants.gov/applicants/applicant\\_faqs.jsp](http://grants.gov/applicants/applicant_faqs.jsp). Applicants should review these FAQs as it will assist them in making sure that they are properly set up to successfully submit an application. Applicants need to make sure that the default setting on their Adobe Reader is set to the Adobe Reader 9.2 or the newer version of Adobe Reader software downloaded from Grants.gov. Applicants that need assistance can contact the Grants.gov Contact Center by phone at 1-800-518-GRANTS or via email at [support@grants.gov](mailto:support@grants.gov).

**CRITICAL NOTICE:** Applicants must be aware that all persons working on Adobe Forms in the application package must work using the same Adobe Reader version available from Grants.gov. Please alert your staff and those working on your application that failure of all users to download and use the correct and same version of Adobe Reader or to update the Reader on Adobe Professional to the newer version and meet the Grants.gov compatibility requirements contained in this Notice will result in your not being able to create or submit the application package to Grants.gov or your application being rejected by Grants.gov. Using incompatible versions of Adobe Reader will result in files being corrupted.

Next, download the application instructions by clicking on the *Download Instructions* link. The Instructions contain the General and Program Sections for the funding opportunity, as well as forms that are not part of the application download but are included as elements of a complete package, as specified in the published NOFA. After you have installed the latest version of Adobe Reader, you can now download the application by clicking on the *Download Application* link. Both the instructions and application should be saved on your computer. You do not need to be registered to download the instructions or complete the application; however, once you have downloaded the application and intend to submit an application, you must save it on your computer or local network drive.

Each program NOFA also includes a checklist. Please review the checklist in the Program Section to ensure that your application contains all the required materials.

#### **4. Electronic Grant Application Forms**

a. Forms contained in the Instructions download are available in Microsoft Office Word 2003 (.doc), Microsoft Office Excel 2003 (.xls), or Adobe (.pdf) formats. The .pdf files are only fillable forms and cannot be saved locally, unless you have Adobe Professional software version 6.0 or higher. To submit these forms, applicants must print the completed form then fax them to the fax number identified in this NOFA using the facsimile transmittal coversheet HUD\_96011.

b. To open the Application download, you must **first install the latest Adobe Reader**. During the download process, the application automatically opens. If you have a version of Adobe Acrobat or Adobe Acrobat Reader version 8.0 or older, the application will not open, and you will get an error message telling you to first install the correct version of the software. The Application download will contain a cover page entitled "Grant Application Package." The cover page provides information regarding the application package you have chosen to download, i.e., Opportunity Title, Agency Name, CFDA Number, etc. Review this information

to ensure that you have selected the correct application. The Grant Application cover page separates the required forms into two categories: “Mandatory Documents” and “Optional Documents.” **To complete a form from either the “Mandatory Documents” or Optional Documents,” you must first highlight and move the form over to the “Submission” box and then open the form.**

c. Please note that regardless of the box in which the forms are listed, the applicant should follow the directions in the published NOFA application and instructions downloaded from the Grants.gov site. The Sustainable Communities Planning Grant NOFA will also identify the forms that may be applicable and that need to be submitted with the application and which will be found in the instructions download at Grants.gov.

d. Because you will be adding additional attachment files to the downloaded application, applicants should save the application to their local computer or network drive. DO NOT download the application or attempt to upload the application using a USB flash drive (also called a “key drive,” “thumb,” or “jump drive”) because Grants.gov has found that applicants have problems uploading applications and attachments from a USB flash drive. All HUD “program-specific” forms not available at the Application download will be available in the Instructions download in Microsoft Word Office 2003 (.doc), Microsoft Excel Office 2003 (.xls), or Adobe (.pdf) format, compatible with Adobe Reader 9.2 or above. The .pdf forms are fillable but not savable, unless you have Adobe Professional 6.0 or higher. Applicants may use the HUD\_96011, “Third Party Documentation Facsimile Transmittal” (“HUD Facsimile Transmittal” on Grants.gov) form and fax to HUD any forms they have completed but cannot save.

## **5. Instructions on How to Complete the Selected Grant Application Package**

**a. Ensure You Have the Correct Application Downloaded.** Applicants must check the application to ensure that the application they have downloaded matches the CFDA Number, Funding Opportunity Number, and Competition ID for the funding opportunity under which the applicant is requesting funds. **In FY2010, if HUD receives an application submitted under the wrong application package, HUD will rate the application under the funding competition ID on the SF424 for the submitted application.** Please pay careful attention to which application you submit. The CFDA number, Funding Opportunity Number, and Competition ID are located on the front page of the downloaded application. If you download the wrong application, and it is prior to the deadline date, simply go back to Grants.gov and obtain the correct application and resubmit.

**b. Mandatory Fields on Application Download Forms.** Forms in the Application download contain fields with a yellow background. These data fields are mandatory and must be completed. Failure to complete the fields will result in an error message when checking the package for errors.

**c. Completion of SF424 Fields First.** The forms in the application package are designed to automatically populate common data such as the applicant name and address, DUNS number, etc. In order to trigger this function, the SF424 **must be completed first**. Once applicants complete the SF424, the entered information will transfer to the other forms.

**d. Submission of Narrative Statements, Third-Party Letters, Certifications, and Program-Specific Forms.** In addition to program-specific forms, many of the NOFAs require the submission of other documentation, such as third-party letters, certifications, or program

narrative statements. This section discusses how you should submit this additional information electronically as part of your application:

1. Narrative Statements Responding to the Factors for Award. If you are required to submit narrative statements, you must submit them as an electronic file in Microsoft Word Office 2007 (or earlier) (.doc), Microsoft Excel 2007 (or earlier) (.xls), or in Adobe (.pdf) format that is compatible with Adobe Reader 9.2 or above. **If HUD receives a file in a format or software other than those specified or that is not compatible with HUD software, HUD will not be able to read the file, and it will not be reviewed.** Each response to a Factor for Award should be clearly identified and can be incorporated into a single attachment or all attachments can be zipped together into a single attached ZIP file. However, HUD advises applicants that files zipped within zipped files cause problems and can result in the application attachments not able to be opened or read. Applicants should develop files, then zip the files together, and then place them as an attachment to the application. Documents that applicants possess in electronic format, e.g., narratives they have written, must be submitted as Microsoft documents; graphic images (such as computer aided design (CAD) files from an architect) must be saved in .pdf format. The documents must be compatible with Adobe Reader 9.2 or above and attached using the “Attachments” form included in the application package downloaded from Grants.gov. In addition, some NOFAs may request photographs. If this is the case, then the photographs should be saved in .jpg or .jpeg format and attached using the “Attachments” form. When creating attachments to your application, please follow these rules:

2. **DO NOT** attach a copy of the electronic application with your attachments as an attachment file. HUD cannot open such files when the application is attached as an attachment file.

3. Check the attachment file and make sure it has a file extension of .doc, .pdf, .xls, .jpg, or .jpeg or, if you save files in Microsoft Office 2007, the file extensions should be as follows:

Word 2007 File Type Extension

a. docx - Word 2007 XML Document

Excel 2007 File Type Extension

b. xlsx - Excel 2007 XML Workbook

PowerPoint 2007 File Extension Type

c. pptx – PowerPoint 2007

4. Make sure that file extensions are not in upper case. File extensions must be lower case for the file to be opened. The software will automatically insert the correct file extension when saved.

5. **DO NOT** adjust file extensions to try to make them conform to HUD standards. If you have problems, please contact the HUD contact listed in the NOFA.

6. **DO NOT use special characters (i.e., #, %, /, etc.) in a file name.**

7. **DO NOT include spaces in the file name.**

8. **Limit file names to not more than 50 characters. HUD recommends that file names be no more than 32 characters.**

9. **DO NOT convert Word files or Excel files into PDF format. Converting to PDF format increases file size and will make it more difficult to upload the application and does not allow HUD to enter data from the Excel files into a database.**

10. **DO NOT submit applications larger than 150 megabytes. These file sizes are difficult to upload and HUD cannot guarantee that they can be processed, as its system has not been tested with files larger than 150 megabytes.**

*Failure to follow the directions for items (e), (f), and (g) will result in your application being rejected with a “VirusDetect” error message.*

**e. ZIP Files.** In order to reduce the size of attachments, applicants can compress several files using a ZIP utility. Applicants can then attach the zipped file as described above. HUD’s standard zip utility is WinZip 14. Files compressed with the WinZip utility must use WinZip 14 or earlier versions and must be zipped using either the “Normal” option or “Maximum (portable)” option available to ensure that HUD is able to open the file. Files received using compression methods other than “Normal” or “Maximum (portable)” or which have been zipped with a version of WinZip later than WinZip 14, cannot be opened by HUD and will not be reviewed. Applicants should be aware that if **HUD receives files compressed using another utility, or not in accord with these directions, it cannot open the files and, therefore, such files will not be reviewed.**

**f. Third-Party Letters, Certifications Requiring Signatures, and Other Documentation.**

Applicants required to submit third-party documentation (e.g., establishing matching or leveraged funds, documentation of 501(c)(3) status or incorporation papers, documents that support the need for the program, Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs), or program-required documentation that supports your organization’s claims regarding work that has been done to remove regulatory barriers to affordable housing) can choose from the following two options as a way to provide HUD with the documentation:

(1) Scanning Documents to Create Electronic Files. Scanning documents increases the size of files. If your computer has the memory and capacity to upload scanned documents, submit your documents with the application by using the Attachments form in the Mandatory or Optional Forms section of the application. If your computer does not have the memory to upload scanned documents, you should submit them via fax, as described below. Electronic files must be labeled so that the recipient at HUD will know what the file contains. Program NOFAs will indicate any naming conventions that applicants must use when submitting files using the Attachments form. **Please note that if you do not follow the file name limit of NOT more than 50 characters, and the prohibition of using spaces and special characters in the file name, the Grants.gov system will treat these files as though they had a virus and the application will be rejected with a “VirusDetect” error message.** If an applicant received a “VirusDetect” error message and the package has been checked for viruses, applicants should check their attachment file names for length, delete any spaces, and delete any special characters. HUD also recommends that file names be no more than 32 characters. Once the deficiencies have been addressed, applicants should save the application file, and the newly renamed attachments, and close the application down. Remove any cookies, reboot your computer, and then submit the application. Grants.gov advises submitting the application from Internet Explorer.

(2) Faxing Required Documentation. Applicants may fax the required documentation as program-specific forms to HUD. Applicants should use this method only when documents cannot be attached to the electronic application package as a .pdf, .doc, .xls, .jpeg, or .jpg, or

when the size of the submission is too large to upload from the applicant's computer. If an applicant is trying to submit the application including scanned documents, and the application does not upload quickly to Grants.gov, HUD advises the applicant to either reconvert the scanned documents back to Microsoft Word or Excel files or send the attachments in using the fax methodology, because size of the scanned attachment files may be exceeding the capacity of your computer or your internet server to process the files and obtain a successful upload to Grants.gov.

HUD will not accept entire applications by fax and will disqualify applications submitted entirely in that manner.

(a) Fax form HUD\_96011, "Third\_Party\_Documentation\_Facsimile\_Transmittal" (HUD Facsimile Transmittal on Grants.gov). Facsimiles submitted in response to a NOFA must use the form HUD\_96011. The facsimile transmittal form, found in the downloaded application, contains a unique identifier that allows HUD to match an applicant's submitted application via Grants.gov with faxes coming from a variety of sources. Each time the application package is downloaded, the facsimile transmittal form in the package is given a unique ID number. To ensure that all the documents faxed in support of your application contain the same unique ID number, when you have downloaded your application package from Grants.gov, be sure to first complete the SF424 and save the application package on your hard drive or shared network drive, and then provide copies of the form HUD\_96011 from the saved application package to third parties that will submit information in support of your application. **Do not download the same application package from Grants.gov more than once for each application that you are going to submit, because if the unique identifier on the facsimile transmittal form covering documents faxed in support of your application does not match the unique identifier in your application, HUD will not be able to match the faxes received to your application submission.** Only one application per applicant is allowed for the Sustainable Communities Planning Grants, but applicants should be aware that they must download a separate application package from Grants.gov so that each application submitted will have its own *unique* embedded ID number. Applicants must use a unique application for each funding request. Each application downloaded from Grants.gov contains a unique ID number that is used to associate any materials transmitted by facsimile to a single funding request submitted for an organization. To associate faxed materials, the unique ID on an application has to match the unique ID on the facsimile transmittal cover page. *Reusing a previously submitted application for another project or another organization's submission will result in HUD not being able to match the faxes received to the appropriate application.* HUD will not match documents submitted via fax using the same ID number in two or more funding requests or without using the HUD\_Form\_96011 Facsimile Cover Sheet as the first sheet on the transmitted materials, or faxed to the wrong fax number.

Faxes that cannot be matched to an application will not be considered in the review process.

If you have to provide a copy of the form HUD\_96011 to another party that will be responsible for faxing an item as part of your application, print a copy of the facsimile transmittal cover page from your downloaded application and provide that copy to the third party for use with the fax transmission. Please instruct third parties to use the form HUD\_96011 that you have provided as a **cover page** when they submit information supporting your application using the facsimile method, because it **contains the embedded ID number that is unique to your application submission.**

(b) Use form HUD\_96011 as the fax cover page. For HUD to correctly match a fax to a particular application, the applicant must use, and require third parties that fax documentation on its behalf to use, the form HUD\_96011 as the cover page of the facsimile. Using the form HUD\_96011 will ensure that HUD can electronically read faxes submitted by and on behalf of an applicant and can match them to the applicant's application package received via Grants.gov.

Failure to use form HUD\_96011 as the cover page for each application submitted will create a problem in electronically matching your faxes to the application. If HUD is unable to match the faxes electronically due to an applicant's failure to follow these directions, HUD does not hand-match faxes to applications and will not consider the faxed information in rating the application. If your facsimile machine automatically creates a cover page, turn this feature off before faxing information to HUD. After feature has been disabled send a test fax to ensure the feature has been completely disabled.

(c) HUD Fax Number. Applicants and third parties submitting information on their behalf must use the form HUD\_96011 facsimile transmittal cover page and must send the information to the following toll-free fax number: **800-HUD-1010**. If you cannot access the toll-free 800 number or experience problems, you may use **215-825-8798** (this is not a toll-free number). **Your application will be reviewed without faxed information if you fail to use the FY2010 fax numbers.**

(d) Fax Individual Documents as Separate Transmissions. It is highly recommended that applicants fax individual documents as separate submissions to avoid fax transmission problems. When faxing two or more documents to HUD, applicants must use the form HUD\_96011 as the cover page for each document (e.g., Letter of Matching or Leveraging Funds, Memorandum of Understanding, Certification of Consistency with the Consolidated Plan, etc.). Please be aware that faxing large documents at one time may result in transmission failures.

(e) Check Accuracy of Fax Transmission. Be sure to check the record of your transmission issued by the fax machine to ensure that your fax submission was completed "OK." For large or long documents, HUD suggests that you divide them into smaller sections for faxing purposes. Each time you fax a document that you have divided into smaller sections, you should indicate on the cover sheet what part of the overall section you are submitting (e.g., "part 1 of 4 parts" or "pages 1 to 10 of 20 pages").

Your facsimile machine should provide you with a record of whether HUD received your transmission. If you get a negative response or a transmission error, you should resubmit the document until you confirm that HUD has received your transmission. HUD does not acknowledge that it received a fax successfully. When receiving a fax electronically, HUD will electronically read it with an optical character reader and attach it to the application submitted through [Grants.gov](http://Grants.gov). Applicants and third parties submitting information on their behalf may submit information by facsimile at any time before the application deadline date. Applicants must ensure that the form HUD-96011 used to fax information is part of the application package downloaded from Grants.gov. As stated previously, if your facsimile machine automatically generates a cover page, you must ensure that you turn that feature off and use the form HUD\_96011 as the cover page. Also ensure that the fax is transmitted to fit 8½" x 11" letter-size paper.

(f) Preview your Fax Transmission. HUD recommends that you "preview" how your fax will be transmitted by using the copy feature on your facsimile machine to make a copy of the first two or three pages. This way, you will see what HUD will receive as a fax. If the fax is not clear or cuts off at the bottom of the page, applicants should use a different facsimile machine or

have the machine adjusted. All faxed materials must be received no later than the application deadline date. HUD will store the information and match it to the electronic application when HUD receives it from Grants.gov. **If you are not faxing any documents, you must still complete the facsimile transmittal form. In the section of the form titled “Name of Document Transmitting,” enter the words “Nothing Faxed with this Application.” Complete the remaining highlighted fields and enter the number “0” in the section of the form titled “How many pages (including cover) are being faxed?”**

**(g) If You Resubmit an Application. Please be aware that a resubmitted application must meet the timely receipt requirements of the NOFA. All documents faxed in support of the application should be faxed again using the Facsimile Cover that you saved for that application. Fax the materials after your resubmitted application has been received by HUD. Please be sure to allow time for your application to be received and faxed materials to be sent after receipt.**

**g. Steps to Take Before You Submit Your Application.** Approximately one week before submitting an application, each applicant should configure its proxy and cache servers to ensure transmission of its application to Grants.gov. Grants.gov uses HTTP post protocols on port 80 (your technical support will be able to assist). Prior to submitting, applicants should review the application package and all the attachments to make sure the application contains all the documents the applicant wants to submit. If it does, save it to your computer and remove previously saved versions. Check your AOR status on Grants.gov to make sure your eBusiness POC has authorized you to submit an application on behalf of the applicant organization. Run the Check Package for Errors feature on the application package and correct any problems identified. Contact any persons or entities that were to submit third-party faxes to make sure that the faxes have been submitted using the facsimile cover page that you provided in accordance with instructions in this Notice. Check your email system to ensure that it allows receipt of messages from [Support@grants.gov](mailto:Support@grants.gov). Microsoft Outlook users can set their email to receive messages from [Support@grants.gov](mailto:Support@grants.gov) going to their email Inbox, clicking on “Actions” and selecting “Junk Email”, and then selecting “Junk Email Options.” A dialog box will come up. Click “OK.” Another dialog box will appear and select the “Safe Senders” folder. Then add [@grants.gov](mailto:Support@grants.gov) to the list of acceptable email domains. Click “OK.” Applicants not using Microsoft Outlook should check with their software provider or IT staff to get directions on how to allow email from Grants.gov to come into your Inbox. This is critical as notices of receipt, validation, or rejection are sent by email. Grants.gov sends the email notification to the email address registered during the registration process. The email from Grants.gov does not go to the contact name listed on the SF424 Application for Federal Assistance, but to the person designated in the registration at Grants.gov. Also check your Trust Manager to ensure that it will allow files to go to all sites. To enable Trust Manager, follow the steps below:

1. Click on **Edit**;
2. Then click on **Preferences**;
3. Then click **Trust Manager** in the left-hand pane;
4. Click on **Change Settings** on the ensuing window;
5. Select **allow all sites listed** toward the top of the page;
6. Click on **OK**;
7. Click on **JavaScript** on the left-hand side of the screen;
9. Make sure everything is checked here except for things under the **Debugger** heading (do not change);

10. Click on OK until you get out of the **preferences** windows;
11. When this has been done, you can try submitting your application. Click "Allow" on the pop-up window.

#### **h. Grants.gov Application Processing Steps and Notifications**

After successful upload of an application to Grants.gov, the following processes will occur:

**1. Confirmation of Submission to Grants.gov.** When an application is successfully uploaded to Grants.gov, the AOR submitting the application will receive a confirmation screen on his or her computer that informs the submitter that the application has been successfully uploaded to Grants.gov and is being processed. This confirmation will include a tracking number. Print this confirmation out and save it for your records. The tracking number, CFDA Number, and Funding Opportunity Number, as well as the date and time of submission will appear on the confirmation. If you do not receive this confirmation, it usually means that your application has not been successfully uploaded. If your screen goes blank or you have problems uploading or your computer is not saving files, it usually means that your computer does not have sufficient memory or processing capability to store and upload the application. If you experience these difficulties, you should go to [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov) and log in using your user name and password, and then click on "Check Application Status." If your application does not appear, you should immediately call Grants.gov support at 800-518-GRANTS for assistance (this is a toll-free number). If the Help Desk is closed, you should try reducing the size of your application or temporarily taking files off your computer to reduce the demand on your system. The files that were removed can be placed back on your system after uploading the application. HUD also recommends checking to ensure that the applicant's firewalls and anti-virus software allow access to the Grants.gov system. HUD also recommends that the applicant check the file size that they intend to upload to Grants.gov and make sure that their computer has sufficient memory to process the application, the internet service they have with their Internet Service Provider allows them to transmit a file of that size and, if not either, reduce the file size by using the Facsimile resource or increasing the service capacity contracted with the service provider, and that their internal network will allow a file of that size to be uploaded. If your internal network has file size limits, the applicant can reduce the file size by using the facsimile resource or work with their IT staff to allow a larger size application to be accepted by their network.

**2. Application Submission Validation Check.** The application will then go through a validation process. The validation check ensures that:

- (a) The application is virus free (this includes that the file names comply with the required size limits and spacing and special characters limitations);
  - (b) The application meets the deadline requirements established for the funding opportunity;
  - (c) The DUNS number submitted on the application matches the DUNS number in the registration, and that the AOR has been authorized to submit the application for funding by the organization identified by its DUNS number;
  - (d) The AOR has been authorized by the applicant's E-Biz POC to submit the application;
  - (e) All the mandatory (highlighted) fields and forms were completed on the application;
- and
- (f) The correct version of Adobe Reader was used in completing the application package forms.

**3. Application Validation and Rejection Notification.** If the application fails any of the above items during the validation check, the grant application will be rejected and Grants.gov will send an email to the person denoted by the applicant in the registration process to receive email notifications from Grants.gov. The email will indicate that the grant application has been rejected. The email will also include the reasons why the application was rejected. The email will come from [Support@Grants.gov](mailto:Support@Grants.gov). The validation check can occur 24 to 48 hours after the application submission.

#### **4. Receipt Dates and Times**

**(1) Timely Receipt Requirements and Proof of Timely Submission.**

**(a) Proof of Application Receipt.** Receipt times and rejection notifications are automatically recorded by Grants.gov. An electronic time stamp is generated within the system when the application has been successfully received, the application has been validated, or when an application has been rejected. HUD will use these date stamps to determine whether an application meets the timely receipt requirements.

**(b) Confirmation Receipt.** Upon submitting an application at Grants.gov, the person submitting the application will see a confirmation screen appear on their computer. The confirmation advises the submitter that the application has been successfully uploaded to Grants.gov. This confirmation will also include the Grants.gov tracking number. Print the confirmation and save it with your records. If you do not receive the Confirmation screen, go to [www.Grants.gov](http://www.Grants.gov), and using the AOR user name and password, click on “Check Application Status.” If there is no data to display for the submitted application, the application was not successfully uploaded and not received by Grants.gov.

**(c) Grants.gov Receipt Email.** Shortly after displaying the successful submission Confirmation screen, Grants.gov will send a Receipt Notice to the email address listed in the registration. The Receipt Notice will identify the application submitted and the date and time it was received by Grants.gov. HUD will use this date and time stamp to determine if the application was received by Grants.gov in accord with the timely submission requirements in this notice. The Receipt Notice merely acknowledges that an application was received. The next step in the process is the validation of the registration information against the DUNS number information and the applicant electronic signature in the application submitted to Grants.gov; and a check to see that there are no viruses in the application or that the attachment files met the file-naming conventions contained in this notice so as to be compatible with the Grants.gov system.

**(d) Validation Receipt via Email.** Within 24 to 48 hours after receiving the Receipt Notice email, the applicant will receive a validation receipt or rejection notice via email. The validation receipt indicates that the application has passed the validation review at Grants.gov and that the application is ready to be retrieved by the grantor agency for agency processing. Please be aware that the Grants.gov validation does not indicate that the grantor agency has reviewed the content of your application; rather, the validation merely indicates that the application has been successfully received and is ready for pickup by the grantor agency.

**(e) Rejection Notice.** If an application fails the validation process, the applicant is sent a rejection notice within 24 to 48 hours after the notification of receipt by Grants.gov. The email notification will be sent to the email address registered in the Grants.gov system to receive email notifications. The applicant should review the rejection notice because it will include the reason(s) for rejection. If the rejection notice is received prior to the deadline date, the AOR

should try to cure the deficiencies identified and resubmit the application as soon as possible prior to the deadline. The most common rejection notices are:

*(i) Invalid DUNS.*

“The DUNS number entered in your package is invalid or does not match the DUNS number that is registered with the Central Contractor Registry (CCR). Please verify that the DUNS number is entered correctly, and is the same as in your Central Contractor Registry (CCR) registration.”

*(ii) Password ID.*

If the submitter submits using a password not associated with the User ID or if the submitter forgets or confuses the password, the submitter will not be able to log onto Grants.gov. Attempts to log on using the wrong password/ID combination will result in a pop-up JAVA Script Window with a Warning Notice. The notice states “Grants.gov cannot log you in with the provided credentials. You have made 1 of 3 allowed failed logins. Please verify your user name and password and attempt to login again.”

Applicants can get their password reset by going to their credential provider, obtaining a new password, registering that password at Grants.gov and having the E-Biz Point of Contact authorize the submitter as an AOR to submit the application under the applicant DUNS number using the registered credentials.

*(iii) Not Authorized.*

(A) A User that uses a User ID/Password combination that is registered but has not been authorized by the applicant’s E-Biz POC will receive a rejection message that states, “You are not designated by your organization to be an Authorized Organizational Representative and your application cannot be validated. You either have not successfully completed the registration process or your E-Biz POC has not authorized you to submit on behalf of your organization.” To verify whether you have been successfully registered with Grants.gov, click

<https://apply07.grants.gov/apply/ApplicantLoginGetID>. To check to see if you have been designated by the E-Biz POC as an AOR, go to

[http://www.grants.gov/applicants/org\\_step6.jsp](http://www.grants.gov/applicants/org_step6.jsp).

(B) Applicants that may have an authorized user name/password but who enter the DUNS number incorrectly, or who use a DUNS number that they have not been authorized to use, will receive the “NOT AUTHORIZED” rejection in combination with the invalid DUNS message.

(C) Individuals who attempt to apply for a grant for which individuals are not an eligible applicant, will receive the Not Authorized and Invalid DUNS rejection notices, plus a third rejection notice that states: “The grant opportunity for which you have applied is designated for Authorized Organization Representatives (AOR) only. However, your application or grant/grants was not submitted on behalf of a company, organization, institution, or government. An AOR submits a grant on behalf of a company, organization, institution, or government. AORs have the authority to sign grant applications and the required certifications and/or assurances that are necessary to fulfill the requirements of the application process.”

*(iv) Virus Detect.*

A “VirusDetect” rejection message can be received if the application contains a virus or if the application submission contains files which do not meet the file-naming conventions stated in this notice.

**(f) Most Common Reasons for Rejection.** HUD has found that the most common reason for rejection of an application by Grants.gov was the failure of the applicant to be authorized by their E-Biz POC to submit the application on behalf of the applicant organization. The second-most common error was an applicant including spaces, special characters, and/or using more than fifty characters in an attachment file name, which resulted in a “VirusDetect” error. The third-most common error was an applicant **not** submitting the application using the correct DUNS number associated to the applicant organization for which the applicant was the authorized AOR. Submitting an application with a DUNS number that does not match the registration information will result in three error messages.

**(g) Save and File Receipts.** Applicants should save all receipts from Grants.gov, as well as facsimile receipts, for proof of timely submission. Applicants will be considered meeting the timely submission requirements based upon the requirements in Section IV.C., Receipt Dates and Times, and when all fax transmissions have been received by 11:59:59 p.m. on the deadline date stated in the program NOFA.

**(h) Checking the Status of Your Application Online.** Grants.gov allows applicants to check the status of their application online two ways. To quickly check your application status, simply select **Track My Application** on the Grants.gov home page. For a more thorough check, click on Applicant Login, and then enter your user name and password. All applications submitted by the applicant with the user name and password entered in the login screen will be identified and the status will be displayed. By Logging into Grants.gov, applicants can also view the list of forms and files received with their application package. This link is available for each application under **Submission Files/Names in Check Application Status**. Be sure to review the list to see that all your files are included in your submission. This will ensure that you submitted and Grants.gov received what you intended to submit. Applicants are obligated to check the on-line status of their application if they do not receive an immediate confirmation notice or an email notice of receipt as well as validation. HUD advises applicants to use this service to make sure the application was received by Grants.gov in accordance with Section IV.C., entitled “Receipt Dates and Times,” and to track the application to see if it is validated or rejected by Grants.gov. Applications that do not meet the timely receipt requirements in the NOFA will be considered late and will not receive funding consideration.

**(i) Understanding the Status Messages.** If the application has not been uploaded or received by Grants.gov, the status message will state, “No data to display.” Applicants seeing this message should attempt to submit their application if the deadline date has not passed. If an application has been received, Grants.gov will note on the “Application Status” display that the application has been received. If the application has been received and validated, the status will display as validated.

If an application has been rejected, the status will display that the application has been rejected with errors and the applicant should click on the rejection to see what the error message was or should consult his or her email for the reasons for the rejection.

If an application has been received by HUD, the status will note that the application has been received by the granting agency and HUD will assign a tracking number. When HUD assigns a tracking number, the status will indicate that the agency has assigned a tracking number.

Dated: \_\_\_\_\_

4/7/10



Shelley Poticha  
Director, Office of Sustainable Housing and  
Communities

[FR-5396-N-02]