



Forest Service  
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

---

# USDA Forest Service Inflation Reduction Act Forest Landowner Support Notice of Funding Opportunity 2 (NOFO): Tribal Access to Emerging Private Markets for Climate Mitigation or Forest Resilience

## SUMMARY INFORMATION

### Federal Awarding Agency Name

U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Forest Service: Inflation Reduction Act Forest Landowner Support

### Notice of Funding Opportunity Title

Tribal Access to Emerging Private Markets for Climate Mitigation or Forest Resilience

### Notice of Funding Opportunity Number

USDA-FS-2024-IRA-FLS-02 at [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov)

### Assistance Listing

This opportunity for Inflation Reduction Act Forest Landowner Support is provided under the Assistance Listing 10.731: Inflation Reduction Act Landscape Scale Restoration.

### SAM.gov Registration

All applicants must have an active registration with the System for Award Management ([SAM.gov](https://www.sam.gov)) and maintain active registration throughout the life of the award. This is the government-wide web-based system that supports contracts, grants, and the electronic payment system. This requirement for registration may be found at 2 CFR § 25.200.

### Notice of Funding Opportunity Summary

This NOFO is the second Inflation Reduction Act Forest Landowner Support funding opportunity offered through the Landscape Scale Restoration Program as authorized under Section 13A of the Cooperative Forestry Assistance Act of 1978 (16 U.S.C. 2109a). Awards will support tribal access to emerging private markets for climate mitigation or forest resilience. Funding is provided through the Inflation Reduction Act of 2022 (Public Law No: 117-169. Subtitle D, Sec. 23002 (a)(2) and (3), Competitive Grants for Non-Federal Forest Landowners).

### Key Dates

Application materials can be found by searching for this funding opportunity through Grants.gov (Opportunity Number USDA-FS-2024-IRA-FLS-02). The deadline for application submission is August 21, 2024.

For inquiries specific to the content of this NOFO, contact the following shared inbox: SM.FS.LandownerIRA@usda.gov. Please include “NOFO 2” in your subject line. Details on pre-award webinars and other supporting information for this funding opportunity will be posted to the Grants.gov listing and the USDA Forest Service Inflation Reduction Act Forest Landowner Support website: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/about-agency/state-private-forestry/coop-forestry/ira-forest-landowner-support>.

# Notice of Funding Opportunity 2

## Tribal Access to Emerging Private Markets for Climate Mitigation or Forest Resilience

### Table of Contents

- PROGRAM DESCRIPTION ..... 5
  - Background ..... 5
- ELIGIBILITY..... 6
  - Who Can Apply..... 6
  - Eligible Lands..... 6
  - Eligible Markets..... 6
  - Ineligible Uses of Grant Funds ..... 7
- FEDERAL AWARD INFORMATION ..... 8
  - Funding Availability..... 8
  - Project Performance Period..... 8
  - Reporting Requirements..... 8
  - Navigators ..... 8
- PROGRAM DESCRIPTION AND CONTENT..... 9
  - Activities..... 9
  - Guiding Principles ..... 9
- APPLICATION COMPONENTS ..... 10
  - Required Documents ..... 10
  - Cover Page ..... 10
  - Project Narrative..... 11
  - Detailed Budget ..... 11
  - Budget Narrative..... 12
  - Standard Forms 424 and 424A ..... 13
  - Optional Documents ..... 13
- EVALUATION CRITERIA..... 13
- SUBMISSION INFORMATION..... 13
- CONTACT FOR FURTHER INFORMATION ..... 13
- APPENDIX ..... 15

Indirect Cost Rates ..... 15  
Grants.gov Application Submission and Receipt Procedures..... 15

## PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The purpose of this funding opportunity is to support Tribal access to emerging private markets for forest resilience or climate mitigation. Applicant eligibility is limited to federally recognized Tribes, Alaska Native Corporations/Villages, and Tribal Organizations.<sup>1</sup> The USDA Forest Service anticipates awarding at least \$20 million through this opportunity. Eligible applicants may each submit one proposal requesting up to \$2 million.

This funding opportunity is the second in a series of Forest Landowner Support funding opportunities supported by the Inflation Reduction Act (Public Law No: 117-169. Subtitle D, Sec. 23002(a)), with funding for this opportunity provided by Sec. 23002(a)(2) and 23002(a)(3). Non-tribal entities interested in submitting proposals related to emerging private markets for forest resilience or climate mitigation should refer to the first NOFO of this series, “Supporting Underserved and Small-Acreage Forest Landowner Participation in Emerging Private Markets.”<sup>2</sup>

This Federal funding opportunity is a government-to-government opportunity, and the USDA Forest Service remains committed to fulfilling the Federal trust responsibility, honoring treaty obligations, and supporting Tribal self-determination.

### Background

Tribal forests provide vital benefits such as clean air and water, cultural resources, public health improvements, fish and wildlife habitats, forest products, and climate mitigation through carbon sequestration and storage. Such benefits, also referred to as “ecosystem services,” have not to date been widely compensated or incentivized through market transactions or by private capital. However, emerging private markets are placing value on the contributions to ecological, social, and economic vitality associated with forest stewardship and traditional ecological knowledge. This stewardship is characterized by reciprocity: people benefit from the vast array of ecosystem services provided by forests while forests benefit from humans’ intentional stewardship. For millennia, Tribes have cultivated reciprocal relationships with forest lands. Today, there is an emerging opportunity for Tribes and Tribal members to receive compensation from private markets for these stewardship efforts.

The Inflation Reduction Act provides the USDA Forest Service with funding to support the participation of underserved landowners in emerging private markets for climate mitigation or forest resilience. Tribes and Tribal members are considered underserved landowners, and both trust lands and fee lands are eligible to benefit from funded projects. Emerging private markets for climate mitigation or forest resilience include but are not limited to formal markets for

---

<sup>1</sup> [Tribal Organization](#), as defined in the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (25 U.S. Code § 5304), refers to “the recognized governing body of any [Indian Tribe](#); any legally established organization of [Indians](#) which is controlled, sanctioned, or chartered by such governing body or which is democratically elected by the adult members of the [Indian](#) community to be served by such organization and which includes the maximum participation of [Indians](#) in all phases of its activities: Provided, that in any case where a contract is let or grant made to an organization to perform services benefiting more than one [Indian tribe](#), the approval of each such [Indian tribe](#) shall be a prerequisite to the letting or making of such contract or grant.”

<sup>2</sup> USDA-FS-2023-IRA-FLS-01 on [Grants.gov](#)

carbon sequestration, water quality and quantity, habitat protection, biodiversity conservation, and wetland restoration. Whether regulatory or voluntary, these markets have the potential to attract private capital to land conservation and create additional revenue streams for Tribes and individual Tribal members. However, these groups often face significant barriers to market participation, including a lack of technical service providers, staffing and resource limitations, data and reporting burdens, eligibility restrictions, and perceived risks. With this funding opportunity, the USDA Forest Service intends to support Tribes that self-determine interest in gaining access to these emerging markets.

## ELIGIBILITY

**To apply for this grant program, an entity MUST have an active SAM.gov registration at the time of application and must provide their Unique Entity Identifier (UEI).**

- [Sam.gov Training for Tribal Governments and Tribal Organizations](#)

### Who Can Apply

The following entities are eligible to submit a project proposal:

- Federally Recognized Tribes
- Alaska Native Corporations/Villages
- Tribal Organizations<sup>3</sup>

### Eligible Lands

Project activities must target nonindustrial private forest land, which is defined as meeting all the following criteria:

1. Is rural, defined as all areas outside United States Census areas with 50,000 or more people. All applicants, especially Tribes located near major urban centers, should use the [Landscape Scale Restoration Project Planning Tool](#) to confirm that the proposed project area(s) is within an eligible rural area.
2. Has existing tree cover or is suitable for growing trees.
3. Is owned by any private individual, group, association, corporation, Tribe, or other private legal entity.

Both Indian trust lands held by Tribes and trust lands held by individual Indians are eligible provided they meet the above criteria for nonindustrial private forest land. Applicants can propose projects that would benefit both lands held in trust and fee lands. Applicants can also propose work that would benefit other nonindustrial private forest land owned either by Tribal members or non-Tribal private forest landowners.

### Eligible Markets

The landscape of environmental markets is rapidly growing and changing. In recognition of this, there is no formal list of eligible markets for this funding opportunity. Applicants are encouraged to think creatively about strategies for increasing Tribal access to markets and market innovations that support climate mitigation or forest resilience. Importantly, any

---

<sup>3</sup> See footnote 1 above for a definition of Tribal Organizations.

proposed markets must be private markets, rather than public programs incentivizing specific forest management practices. Both regulatory and voluntary markets are within the scope of this funding opportunity. Also within scope are market innovations such as certifications for products and/or supply chains that address climate mitigation or forest resilience. Eligible markets include, but are not limited to carbon markets, biodiversity markets, and water markets. Applicants should refer to the program website for more resources on eligible markets and are encouraged to contact program staff ([SM.FS.LandownerIRA@usda.gov](mailto:SM.FS.LandownerIRA@usda.gov)) for further information and discussion on eligible markets.

### Ineligible Uses of Grant Funds

- Basic research, which is defined in 2 CFR § 422.1 as, “systematic study directed toward fuller knowledge or understanding of the fundamental aspects of phenomena and of observable facts without specific applications towards processes or products in mind.” Basic research includes applied research, which 2 CFR § 1108.45 defines as, “efforts that attempt to determine and exploit the potential of scientific discoveries or improvements in technology, such as new materials, devices, methods and processes.”
  - Technical transfer, education, and outreach activities associated with applying research can be included in the proposal.
  - Indigenous Knowledge is one of the many important bodies of knowledge that contribute to scientific, technical, social, and economic advancements. Indigenous Knowledge is not considered “basic research” and can be supported by project activities.
- Construction and capital improvements including facilities, infrastructure, roads, new buildings, culverts, and boardwalks.
- Land acquisition projects (including conservation easements).
- Equipment. Equipment purchases are rarely eligible, requiring approval prior to award and additional recordkeeping by the awardee. Equipment is defined as an article of nonexpendable, tangible personal property having a useful life of more than one year and an acquisition cost of \$5,000 or more per unit. Where necessary to accomplish the activities of the grant, equipment rental may be more cost-effective than acquisition.
- Lobbying, litigation, or political advocacy.
- Incorporation fees; brokers' fees; or fees to promoters, organizers, management consultants, attorneys, accountants, or investment counselors in connection with the establishment or reorganization of an organization.
- Initial resources to capitalize a revolving fund, defined as a pool of capital that can be loaned and replenished as a borrower pays back a lender.
- Cost-share, reimbursement, and other types of payment provided directly to individual landowners. However, funding may be used for direct cost reimbursement or for contracts—including with individual Tribal members, companies, or organizations—for work performed on eligible land.
- Profit. Profit is not an allowable expense.

**NOTE: This NOFO is not intended for wood innovations (e.g., mass timber, renewable wood energy, biochar/soil amendments, and related technologies). Please consult the [USDA Forest Service Wood Innovations program website](#) for upcoming funding opportunities.**

## FEDERAL AWARD INFORMATION

### Funding Availability

The USDA Forest Service anticipates that at least \$20 million will be awarded through this NOFO. Each eligible applicant may submit one proposal requesting up to \$2 million. **There is no match requirement for proposals to be funded through this NOFO.**

### Project Performance Period

Recipients will be expected to implement and demonstrate measurable progress within two years of award. Recipients are encouraged to complete all project activities and expenses within three years, though agreements may be extended up to five years total with adequate justification. All projects must be completed within five years, and all funds must be expended by September 30, 2031, regardless of when an award agreement is executed.

### Reporting Requirements

Financial and narrative progress reports must be submitted at a frequency specified in final signed award documents, at least annually and not more than quarterly. Timely submission of financial and progress reports for each award is required. Payments will be withheld until missing reports are received and approved. Progress reports should highlight direct quantitative and qualitative investment activities and outcomes and should include illustrative impact stories. Geospatial data files that outline the project area and any other relevant data will be required as part of regular reporting. Successful proposals will be outcomes-oriented, focused on project impact, and will have clear monitoring and evaluation plans. Applicants will not be required to share any proprietary or sensitive data with the Federal government.

### CNavigators

Non-federal “Navigators” have been identified to enhance and facilitate equitable access to financial and technical assistance opportunities offered through the Inflation Reduction Act. These Navigators are a free service to applicants and are poised to help communities that may benefit from extra assistance in (1) identifying funding opportunities, (2) engaging with a wide variety of new and existing Forest Service programs, (3) completing grant applications, and (4) post-application financial compliance.

Tribal Navigators are available for NOFO application support. To inquire regarding support from Navigators organizations, please contact program staff by email ([SM.FS.LandownerIRA@usda.gov](mailto:SM.FS.LandownerIRA@usda.gov)).



## PROGRAM DESCRIPTION AND CONTENT

With this funding opportunity, the USDA Forest Service intends to support Tribes that self-determine interest in gaining access to emerging private markets for climate mitigation or forest resilience.

### Activities

**All proposed project activities should support Tribal access to emerging private markets for climate mitigation or forest resilience.** Activities may include, but are not limited to:

- Facilitation of access to markets and/or certification systems.
- Practice development and the installation of climate mitigation or forest resilience practices on Tribal forest land.
- Science synthesis and technical support to assist project implementers and inform program development.
- Development of innovative tools or strategies for lowering transaction costs for market entry and/or managing risk.
- Technical assistance for development of forest management plans and/or implementation of applicable forest management activities.
- Training for foresters and technical assistance providers.
- Innovation for quantification, data collection, and monitoring.
- Hiring of staff or contractors to provide support services.
- Administrative staff time and benefits dedicated to project reporting, compliance, recordkeeping, and oversight.

**NOTE: It is the responsibility of each applicant to navigate any Bureau of Indian Affairs requirements associated with proposed activities on trust lands.**

### Guiding Principles

Proposed activities should align to the following principles established in consultation with the USDA Forest Service Office of Sustainability and Climate:

- Forest management practices must emphasize ecosystem resilience rather than maximization of any single benefit to the detriment of ecosystem function.
- Forest management practices should measurably demonstrate “net positive” outcomes (additionality) over time for multiple public and ecosystem benefits including, but not limited to, carbon sequestration, biodiversity/habitat restoration, sustainably managed forest products, erosion control, medicinal plants, sustainable management of non-timber forest products, recreation, and/or improved water quantity or quality.
- Activities and practices should incorporate consideration of risk, including disturbance and future climate conditions, and contribute to forest resilience.
- Activities and practices must be designed for site-specific conditions (e.g., forest type; climate change impacts and vulnerability; and relevant laws, regulations, and policies).

- Emerging private markets that support these practices should optimize direct benefits to landowners while limiting their financial risk.

## APPLICATION COMPONENTS

This section outlines required application components. The USDA Forest Service may choose not to consider applications that fail to comply with required content, format, and page limits, or those that are incomplete. All required forms are standard and may be accessed through Grants.gov. Each page must be numbered and have one-inch margins. The text of the project narrative must be single spaced and typed in a standard typeface (e.g., Times New Roman, Arial, Calibri) with no smaller than 12-point font.

### Required Documents

Only the documents listed below are required for application submission. Applications are to be submitted through Grants.gov by searching grant opportunity number USDA-FS-2024-IRA-FLS-02. For those proposals selected for awards, completion of additional forms will be required.

Required documents:

1. Cover Page
2. Project Narrative
3. Detailed Budget
4. Budget Narrative
5. Standard Forms SF-424 and SF-424A. *These forms need not be submitted as separate attachments in Grants.gov, but are rather filled out and completed via Grants.gov.*
6. If applicable, Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA, see appendix for additional information)

### Cover Page

The proposal cover page should include the following:

- **Project Title:** Provide a descriptive title for this project. Use this full title consistently on all submission communications and supplemental documents until an official application number is assigned by the Forest Service.
- **Project Applicant:** Provide the name of the Federally Recognized Tribe, Tribal Organization, or Alaska Native Corporation/Village applying for Federal funding. This must match the entity name on the associated SAM.gov registration.
- **Contact Information:** Provide the name, title, address, phone number, and email address for the individual acting as the applicant's main point of contact.
- **Entity Type:** Identify whether the applying entity is (1) federally recognized Tribe, (2) an Alaska Native Corporation or Village, or (3) a Tribal Organization. If self-identifying as a Tribal Organization, please describe how your entity meets the definition of a Tribal Organization as "the recognized governing body of any Indian Tribe; any legally established organization of Indians which is controlled, sanctioned, or chartered by such governing body or which is democratically elected by the adult members of the Indian community to be served by such organization and which includes the maximum

participation of Indians in all phases of its activities: Provided, that in any case where a contract is let or grant made to an organization to perform services benefiting more than one Indian tribe, the approval of each such Indian tribe shall be a prerequisite to the letting or making of such contract or grant.”<sup>4</sup>

- **Abstract:** Include a concise summary of the proposal (200 words or less) that includes scope, location, key partners, and expected accomplishments.

### Project Narrative

The project narrative should not exceed ten pages (excluding budget and budget narrative) and should include the below-listed components.

- **Project Problem Statement:** In fewer than 100 words, provide a summary of the issue(s) to be addressed by the project, including any barrier(s) to participation in emerging private markets for climate mitigation or forest resilience that will be addressed.
- **Strategies for Addressing Barriers/Challenges to Tribes:** Explain how your project will address barriers to market participation for a Tribe(s) and/or Tribal members. These may be financial, social, cultural, or other barriers.
- **Proposed Activities and Implementation Timeline:** Provide a detailed explanation of proposed project activities along with a description of project schedule/timeline, goals, and milestones.
- **Program Alignment:** Describe how the project will align with the goals and guiding principles defined in this NOFO.
- **Project Partners:** If and as appropriate, provide the name(s) of any partner entities and briefly describe their involvement and contributions to the project. Include the rationale for engaging the identified partner(s) in program delivery.
- **Measurable Outcomes and Impact:** Describe how project impact will be measured; explain the metrics and processes to determine economic, environmental, and/or social outcomes for proposed activities.
- **Monitoring and Evaluation:** Explain how your project will track success and adaptively address new challenges and opportunities as they arise.
- **Capability and Capacity:** Describe how capacity exists or will be developed for program delivery and financial oversight.

### Detailed Budget

Each proposal should include a detailed budget in addition to the required SF-424A budget form. Project start and end dates should define the period during which all proposed work takes place and all requested funds are spent. Applicants may request up to \$2 million. There is no minimum request or award amount.

---

<sup>4</sup> Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (25 U.S. Code § 5304)

Budget categories for the detailed budget should align with the SF-424A. The detailed budget should include additional details and line items that align with proposed activities. Budget categories should include the following:

- **Personnel**  
This category includes direct compensation to individuals for time worked. Identify each supported staff position on a different line and clarify the number of hours/days and rate for each. The salaries of administrative and clerical staff should normally be treated as indirect costs.<sup>5</sup>
- **Fringe Benefits**  
Fringe benefits can be included as a separate line item or can be included as part of the Personnel line item, as long as the applicant is consistent in this. Fringe benefits should be applied equally across all employees.
- **Travel**  
Include details such as number of trips, number of days, transportation estimates, and per diem rates.
- **Supplies**  
Supplies refer to tangible personal property. This category *does not* include equipment,<sup>6</sup> the purchase of which is discouraged. It *does* include tree purchase not completed under a contract for service.
- **Contracted Services** (e.g., contract for service, equipment rental)
- **Other** (e.g., subawards)
- **Indirect Costs**  
Indirect costs may be determined using a Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement, if established. In the absence of a Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement, an applicant may elect to use the de minimis rate of 10% applied to modified total direct costs. See Appendix for more information on indirect cost rates.

### Budget Narrative

Explain and justify all requested budget items/costs. List in detail how the totals in the budget were determined and demonstrate a clear connection between costs and proposed project activities. For personnel salary costs, include base-line salary figures and estimates of time to be directly charged to the project. If project income is anticipated within the performance period, this should be noted in the budget narrative and will be discussed at the agreement phase (once recipients have been selected). The recommended path is to utilize project income to augment project activities and thereby achieve expanded impact.

---

<sup>5</sup> Direct charging of these costs may be appropriate only if all of the following conditions are met: (1) Administrative or clerical services are integral to a project or activity; (2) Individuals involved can be specifically identified with the project or activity; (3) Such costs are explicitly included in the budget or have the prior written approval of the Federal awarding agency; and (4) The costs are not also recovered as indirect costs.

<sup>6</sup> An article of nonexpendable, tangible personal property having a useful life of more than one year and an acquisition cost of \$5,000 or more per unit.

## Standard Forms 424 and 424A

Required forms SF-424 and SF-424A may be accessed through [Grants.gov](https://www.Grants.gov).

## Optional Documents

Entities applying as a Tribal Organization may submit a letter of support from the Indian governing body that controls, sanctions, or charters the organization, if and as applicable. Such a letter is encouraged, but not required.

## EVALUATION CRITERIA

All proposals will be screened for relevance, accuracy, completeness, and compliance with USDA Forest Service policies. Proposals will then be evaluated based on the extent to which they meet the following criteria, listed in priority order:

- Alignment with the program and its priorities as outlined in the Program Description and Content sections above (e.g., targeted markets address climate mitigation and/or forest resilience, targeted markets enhance ecosystem health, barriers to market participation are addressed, potential to have significant and lasting impact, benefits are optimized while risks limited)
- Technical merit (approach is sound and well-designed, targeted markets are adequately understood and addressed, measurable outcomes clearly defined, monitoring well-designed).
- Organizational capability and capacity (key personnel, both current and proposed, have appropriate skills and experiences; proposed partnerships are strong)

The agency will also account for program portfolio balance (e.g., geographic location, scope of activities, market of focus) in determining awards to be funded.

## SUBMISSION INFORMATION

Applications are to be submitted through [Grants.gov](https://www.Grants.gov) by searching grant opportunity number USDA-FS-2024-IRA-FLS-02.

**Grants.gov recommends submitting your application package at least 24-48 hours prior to the close date to provide sufficient time to correct any potential technical issues that may disrupt the application submission. Please see the Appendix for detailed instructions on Grants.gov application submission and receipt procedures.**

## CONTACT FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

For inquiries specific to the content of this NOFO, please contact the following shared inbox: [SM.FS.LandownerIRA@usda.gov](mailto:SM.FS.LandownerIRA@usda.gov). Please limit questions to those regarding specific information contained in this NOFO, such as dates, page numbers, clarification of discrepancies, etc. Questions related to the merits of a specific proposal will not be addressed. For overarching application support, applicants are encouraged to request assistance from a Navigator.

The USDA Forest Service will publish an application assistance webinar within one month of publication of this NOFO. Virtual “office hours” will also be scheduled throughout the application period. Information regarding these sessions will be shared to the Grants.gov listing and the [USDA Forest Service Inflation Reduction Act Forest Landowner Support website](#).

## APPENDIX

### Indirect Cost Rates

#### **Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA)**

If the applicant has a NICRA, the NICRA rate can be used to determine indirect costs. A copy of the NICRA must be submitted with the proposal.

#### **De Minimis Rate**

Any non-Federal entity that does not have a current NICRA (including provisional) may elect to charge a de minimis rate of 10 percent of modified total direct costs (MTDC), which may be used indefinitely. No documentation is required to justify the use of the 10 percent de minimis indirect cost rate. As described in 2 CFR § 200.403, costs must be consistently charged as either indirect or direct costs but may not be double charged or inconsistently charged as both. If chosen, this methodology must be used consistently for all Federal awards until such time as a non-Federal entity chooses to negotiate for a rate, which the non-Federal entity may apply to do at any time.

#### **Modified Total Direct Cost (MTDC)**

For calculation of indirect costs, applicants should utilize MTDC, unless otherwise specified in a NICRA. MTDC includes all direct salaries and wages, applicable fringe benefits, materials and supplies, services, travel, and up to the first \$25,000 of each subaward (regardless of the period of performance of the subawards under the award). MTDC excludes equipment, capital expenditures, charges for patient care, rental costs, tuition remission, scholarships and fellowships, participant support costs, and the portion of each subaward in excess of \$25,000. Other items may only be excluded when necessary to avoid a serious inequity in the distribution of indirect costs, and with the approval of the cognizant agency for indirect costs.

### Grants.gov Application Submission and Receipt Procedures

Please read the registration instructions carefully and prepare the information requested **well in advance of the application deadline**.

Organizations must have an active System for Award Management (SAM) registration, which provides a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI), **and** a Grants.gov account to apply for grants. Creating a Grants.gov account can be completed online in minutes, but **SAM registration may take several weeks**. Therefore, an organization's registration should be done in sufficient time to ensure it does not impact the entity's ability to meet required application submission deadlines.

#### **How to Register to Apply through Grants.gov**

The below information summarizes Grants.gov registration instructions. For further details, refer to: [grants.gov/applicants/](https://grants.gov/applicants/).

1) *Register with SAM*: All organizations (entities) applying online through Grants.gov must register with the System for Award Management (SAM). As part of SAM.gov registration, entities determine points of contact, including an Electronic Business Point of Contact (EBiz

POC). Failure to register with SAM will prevent your organization from applying through Grants.gov. SAM registration must be renewed annually. Additionally, take careful note of the EBiz POC designation, as this individual plays a critical role in Grants.gov account setup.

2) *Create a Grants.gov Account*: Follow the on-screen instructions provided to create a grants.gov account.

3) *Add a Profile to a Grants.gov Account*: A profile in Grants.gov corresponds to a single applicant organization the user represents (i.e., an applicant) or an individual applicant submitting on their own behalf. If you work for or consult with multiple organizations, you can have a profile for each organization under one Grants.gov account. In such cases, you may log in to one Grants.gov account to access all your grant profiles. To add an organizational profile to your Grants.gov account, enter the UEI (Unique Entity Identifier) for the organization in the UEI field.

4) *Authorize Profile Roles*: After registering with Grants.gov and creating an Organization Applicant Profile, the applicant's request for Grants.gov roles/access is sent to the EBiz POC. The EBiz POC must then log in to Grants.gov and authorize the appropriate roles, including the Authorized Organization Representative (AOR) role. The AOR role includes permission to complete and submit applications on behalf of the organization. Once an individual has been assigned the AOR role, that individual will be able to submit an application online on behalf of the entity any time.

*A Note on Electronic Signatures*: When applications are submitted through Grants.gov, the name of the organization applicant with the AOR role that submitted the application is inserted into the signature line of the application, serving as the electronic signature.

*The EBiz POC of the organization must authorize people who are able to make legally binding commitments on behalf of the organization as users with the AOR role; **this step is often missed and it is crucial for valid and timely submissions.***

## **How to Submit an Application via Grants.gov**

Grants.gov applicants can apply online using Grants.gov Workspace. Workspace is a shared, online environment where members of a grant team may simultaneously access and edit different webforms within an application. For each funding opportunity announcement, you can create individual instances of a Workspace.

For an overview of applying on Grants.gov using Workspaces, refer to:

<https://grants.gov/applicants/workspace-overview/>

1) *Utilizing a Workspace*: See above link for a video tutorial on creating a Workspace. Add participants to a Workspace to complete all the required forms online or by downloading PDF versions and check for errors before submission. The Workspace progress bar will display the state of your application process as you apply. As you apply using Workspace, you may click the blue question mark icon near the upper-right corner of each page to access context-sensitive help.



a. *Adobe Reader*: If you decide not to apply by filling out webforms, you can download individual PDF forms in Workspace. The individual PDF forms can be downloaded and saved to your local device storage, network drive(s), or external drives, then accessed through Adobe Reader.

*NOTE*: Visit the Adobe Software Compatibility page on Grants.gov to download the appropriate version of the software (at no cost) at:

<https://grants.gov/applicants/adobe-software-compatibility>

b. *Mandatory Fields in Forms*: In the forms, you will note fields marked with an asterisk and a different background color. These fields are mandatory fields that must be completed to successfully submit your application.

c. *Complete SF-424 Fields First*: These forms are designed to fill in common required fields across other forms, such as the applicant's name, address, and SAM UEI. Once completed, the information will transfer to the other forms.

d. *Upload required documents*: See page 10 above for details.

2) *Submit Application through Workspace*: An application may be submitted through Workspace by clicking the Sign and Submit button on the Manage Workspace page, under the Forms tab. **Grants.gov recommends submitting your application package at least 24-48 hours prior to the close date to provide you with time to correct any potential technical issues that may disrupt the application submission.**

3) *Track a Workspace Submission*: After successfully submitting a Workspace application, a Grants.gov Tracking Number (GRANTXXXXXXXX) is automatically assigned to the application. The number will be listed on the Confirmation page that is generated after submission. Using the tracking number, access the Track My Application page under the Applicants tab or the Details tab in the submitted Workspace.

For additional training resources, including video tutorials, refer to:

<https://grants.gov/applicants/applicant-training>

*Applicant Support*: Grants.gov provides applicants 24/7 support via the toll-free number 1-800-518-4726 and email at support@grants.gov.

### **Timely Receipt Requirements and Proof of Timely Submission**

The applicant with the AOR role who submitted the application will receive an acknowledgement of receipt and a tracking number (GRANTXXXXXXXX) from Grants.gov with the successful transmission of their application. This applicant with the AOR role will also receive the official date/time stamp and Grants.gov tracking number in an email serving as proof of their timely submission.

When the USDA Forest Service successfully retrieves the application from Grants.gov, and acknowledges the download of submissions, Grants.gov will provide an electronic acknowledgment of receipt of the application to the email address of the AOR representative. Proof of timely submission shall be the official date and time that Grants.gov receives your application. Applications received by Grants.gov after the established due date for the program will be considered late and will not be considered for funding.