

City Colleges of Chicago (CCC)

Grant Writer's Glossary of Terms*

Allowable Cost: A charge that the funding agency will reimburse under the terms of the grant or contract being awarded.

Appropriation: Legislation which establishes a federal activity and determines the limits on the amount of money which can be set aside for the activity.

Authorized Representative: Signature authority for grant forms, letters commitment, submission of proposals, formal agreement between the City Colleges of Chicago and other entities acting as partners for a grant or other project. At CCC, the Executive Director of Grants and Contracts serves as the authorized representative (AR). This position is also known as the Authorized Organizational Representative (AOR) and the Signing Official (SO).

Award Letter: The written notification sent by the funding agency announcing that the project has been funded, the amount of the award, and the performance period including the start/end dates.

Block Grants: These are grants allocated by the federal government to state agencies and which are based on a formula, not a competition.

Boiler Plate: Parts of a proposal which are standard and acquired from the Office of Grants and Contracts, Research and Evaluation, the affirmative action statement, institutional profiles, equal opportunity statement, etc.

Budget: The grant budget provides the financial plan of project. The Budget shows how each cost charged against the grant is calculated and why the cost is reasonable and necessary to the project. The funder may require that a certain percentage of the total cost be provided by the grantee, as a matching gift.

CFDA: The 'Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance' is the federal coding structure used to identify available federal grants and loan programs. This is used by auditors and therefore must be accurate.

Consortium: A group of organizations sharing in the finances and/or administration of a grant.

Contract: A legally binding agreement which, in grant writing, can be used to commit two or more entities in a collaborative grant project and/or between a funding agency and the recipient.

Competitive Grant: A process of proposal selection that is based on an evaluation by a reviewer or team of reviewers. Proposals are given scores based on how well they meet stated guidelines, and are competitively ranked. Those with the highest scores are generally funded.

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Funding Opportunity Profile: A standardized form completed by a prospective grant writer prior to the development of the formal proposal, outlining the grant concept, operational needs, and approximate budget and a signature of approval from the College President or District Office Administrator.

Continuation Grant: Funding that is awarded for a previously funded project.

Contracted Services: Funds paid to a second party providing services to the fiscal agent.

Cost Reimbursement: Where the grantee provides proof of each expense allowed under the grant and the funding agency reimburses the documented full amount.

Cover Sheet: The top sheet of the grant proposal. This is usually a standardized form requiring the signature (electronic or original) of the organization's Authorized Representative (AR) prior to submission.

Deadline: Due date of a proposal, set by the funder and non-negotiable.

Demonstration Grant: Usually a demonstration grant is of limited duration and it aims to test the viability of a project or idea.

Executive Director of Grants and Contracts: The official college representative and contact in the grant procurement process. This individual helps coordinate the overall operations of the Office of Grants and Contracts.

Direct Costs: Expenses that are associated with the operation of a project and that are itemized by categories specified as allowable under the grant or contract. Examples of Direct Costs include: personnel, consulting, materials, equipment, technology, and participant expenses.

DUNS Number: The DUNS number is assigned and maintained by Dun and Bradstreet (D&B). It is referred to as the Global Location Identifier and it enables organizations to clearly identify trading partners as well as accurately gauge risks and opportunities. Many grants require this number listed on a grant application. The Office of Grants and Contracts has this number for each of the colleges and for District Office.

EDGAR (Education Department General Administrative Regulations) provides standards and instruction for grant applications and the administration of grants and agreements. EDGAR can be accessed online at:

<http://www.ed.gov/policy/fund/reg/edgarReg/edgar.html>

EIN Number: An Employer Identification Number (EIN) is assigned by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) is also known as a federal tax identification number, and is

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used to identify a business entity. Contact the Office of Grants and Contracts for this information.

Earned Income: Revenue that is generated through the collection of fees or other payments. If these funds are collected for activities supported by a grant this income must be used to expand and/or enhance the grant related functions described in the proposal.

Electronic Submission of Proposals – Electronic submission is required by most Federal and many state programs today. The Office of Grants and Contracts processes electronic submissions of proposals to the National Science Foundation (using Fastlane), other U.S. agencies (using grants.gov) and using other electronic methods required by other agencies. By contacting the Office, a faculty or staff member can be given access to begin loading the proposal on the appropriate site and can be trained on its use for both proposal and report submission. In general, final submission of any proposal is completed by the District's Authorized Representative.

Evaluation: The plan/process for determining if the project objectives and performance outcomes are accomplished as well as the methods for achieving those outcomes.

Facilities & Administrative Costs (F&A): Those costs which are not readily identifiable with a particular project or activity but which are necessary to the general operation of the organization and to complete the activities of the grant. (See **Indirect Costs**.)

Fiscal Period: Refers to the time period for financial operations of the awarded funds. Grants awarded by the state of Illinois usually have a July 1-June 30 Fiscal Year. Federal grants' periods of operation vary, but the Federal government's normal Fiscal Year runs from October 1 to September 30.

Formative Evaluation: Method of identifying areas for improvement as the project is in planning stage or being implemented.

Freedom of Information Act: When, in the context of grant submission and proposal writing, this would refer to federal and state laws providing public access to grant proposals and the scoring results for proposals submitted to government agencies.

Fringe Benefits: Benefits that are paid in addition to salary, i.e. life & health insurance, retirement, unemployment compensation. Fringe benefits are calculated annually by CCC and grant writers should contact the Office of Grants and Contracts for the latest fringe benefits rate.

FTE (full-time equivalent) Enrollment: The equivalent number of students enrolled on a full-time basis, determined by dividing credit hours taken by students enrolled by

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the average number of credit hours in a full-time load. For the City Colleges of Chicago FTEs are determined by dividing the number of credits taken by 12.

Funding Agency: The external source that proposals are submitted to in hopes of securing additional revenue. These can also be referred to as the grantor, or funder.

Funding Criteria: these entail the evaluation standards employed by the funder when deciding which projects to fund. These will be used to measure the quality of the proposal and need to be addressed in a proposal.

Goals: This definition is provided in the context of completing a grant application. For this purpose, goals are broad-based statements of your ultimate expected result of the project being undertaken.

Grant: Restricted funds from government agencies (federal, state and local) or from private agencies/foundations offered to organizations through competitive means or allocation.

Grantee: The recipient and administrator of a grant.

Grantor: The agency or funding source awarding the funds to carry out a project.

Grant Writer: The grant writer is the individual (or team) from the institution who is seeking funds in support of a proposed project. The grant writer is responsible for all phases of the proposal development and, if funded, manages the project.

Guidelines: The procedures established by the funding agency that grant seekers and grantees must follow. These guidelines would include both the application process and the implementation and management of funded projects.

Indirect Costs: The costs of doing business for the College that are not readily attributable to the grant project but are necessary for the operation of the institution. Indirect costs usually would include fees such as operating buildings, telephone expenses and general administrative salaries and these costs are auditable. The funding source usually limits the amount to be claimed as indirect costs. Contact the Office of Grants and Contracts for additional information.

Institutionalization: The College makes the grant-funded program/activity a part of its regular operations, and it is fully integrated in ongoing College budget/expenses.

In-Kind Contribution: A non-monetary contribution of equipment, supplies, space, etc. provided by the grantee to meet cost-sharing requirements. The amount of in-kind may be limited by the funding source and these costs are auditable.

Letter of Intent or Letter of Inquiry: A letter that may be requested by a funder stating that the college plans to submit a full proposal or that seeks an invitation from the funder to submit a full proposal.

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Letter of Commitment: Written **assurance of participation** from an organization or individual concerning a project to be undertaken by an organization or individual if the proposal is funded. Letters of commitment are obtained by organizations or individuals who are considered credible in the eyes of the funder.

Letter of Support: Written **endorsement** concerning a project to be undertaken by an organization or individual if the proposal is funded. Letters of support are obtained by organizations or individuals who are considered credible in the eyes of the funder.

Matching Funds: Cash or in-kind support contributed by the grantee to carry out a project. Some grant proposals require a match before funding a proposal, and the amount of match will vary and these contributions are auditable.

Need Statement: Describes the problem area or need that the proposed project will address. To make a compelling case as to why this program or project is needed, use statistical, testimonial, or other evidence that shows that the proposed plan is essential. Also called the Problem Statement.

Non-Competitive Grant: Federal or state dollars allocated on the basis of a formula which is generally attached to a socioeconomic standard. Receipt of funds may or may not require submission of a proposal. These grants are also known as formula grants.

Nonresponsive: A term used to indicate that the proposal failed to comply with all the rules, regulations, and requests of grant guidelines. A major reason for a proposal being rejection/not reviewed, it found by the funder to be “nonresponsive.”

Objectives: Statements about expected outcomes that tell *who* is going to be doing *what*, *when*, and *how much* will be done. Measurable objectives become the criteria used to judge the impact of the project on the target audience and/or to determine organization effectiveness.

OMB (Office of Management and Budget): The Federal office that issues instructions and regulations governing a grant. The agency puts out circulars that govern a project and will prevent a grant project director from committing acts of Federal fraud, making unauthorized purchases and payments, and provide guidance on daily activities conduct.

- *Cost Principles for Educational Institutions* ([OMB Circular A-21](#));
- *Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Other Agreements with Institutions of Higher Education, Hospitals, and Other Nonprofit Organizations* ([OMB Circular A-110](#))
- *Audits of States, Local Governments, and Non-Profit Organizations* ([OMB Circular A-133](#)).

Performance-Based Contract: An agreement that includes a statement of the required services in terms of output; a measurable performance standard for the output;

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and an allowable error rate. Defined units of service have an associated cost, and the grantee is reimbursed based on the number of documented units performed during a specific period.

Planning Grant: Funding provided to support activities necessary to design and plan a particular program of project. A planning grant often subsidizes the production of a subsequent grant request.

Postmark Date: The date stamped by the U.S. Post Office or other mail service showing when a proposal was sent to the funding source if sent by traditional carrier. Electronic submission can also be time stamped by the receiving agency – grants.gov or Fastlane have this feature.

Pre-Application: A preliminary screening process used by a funding source to identify potentially fundable projects. Pre-applications, while shorter in length than a full proposal, generally follow a prescribed format identified by the funding source. This is similar to a letter of intent.

Principal Investigator (PI) also called the **Project Director:** The individual responsible for leading and carrying out the terms of the award. **There may also be Co-PI's serving on a grant.**

Problem Statement: The section of the formal proposal used to identify the specific purpose of the proposed project and convince the funding source of the critical need for the project. The problem must relate to the purposes and goals of the funding source and be supported by appropriate statistical evidence, research and expert statements. Similar to the Need Statement.

Process evaluation: Assessment that is used to give direction or to explain behavior. This evaluation answers questions about how the project operates and documents the procedures and activities undertaken in service delivery. Such evaluations help to identify problems faced in delivering services and strategies for overcoming these problems.

Project Director (PD) also called the **Primary Investigator (PI):** The designated individual who is responsible for the overall day-to-day administration, coordination, implementation and monitoring of the project. The project director ensures that the project is carried out in accordance with the final contract or agreement.

Project Period or Performance Period: The period authorized by the funding agency in which the proposed activities take place. This can range from less than one year to multi-year projects.

Proposal, Proposal Narrative or Technical Proposal: The document submitted to a funding source requesting financial support for a specified period to carry out a specific project.

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RFP/RFA 'Requests for Proposals or Announcements': Are generated by an agency who is interested in seeking proposals or applications that will accomplish the specific purposes outlined in the request guidelines.

Seed Money: Funds awarded to support a start-up project with the purpose of finding permanent financial support from other sources.

SGA – Solicitation for Grant Application. Used by Department of Labor to announce availability of funds and acceptance of applications.

Solicited Proposal: A proposal submitted in response to a request (RFP/RFA/SGA) from the funding source.

Subcontract: Funds received from a primary grant recipient to support the costs associated with carrying out a portion of the grant project. It is not necessary to submit a proposal to receive a subcontract, although submission of a budget is usually required. The primary grant recipient and/or the funding source generally requires a "Memorandum of Agreement/Understanding (MOA/U) which describes the specific agreement (including outcome measures, etc) in detail.

Subrecipient: A third-party organization performing a portion of a grant project. The terms of the relationship are documented in a Memorandum of Agreement/Understanding (MOA/U). The funder holds the grant awardee responsible for all actions taken by both the awardee and the Subrecipient.

Substantial Approval: An award level from the funder, which guarantees the dollar amount and fiscal year of the grant award. This serves as an emergency measure to assure the that funding will not be interrupted between the grant's fiscal years.

Summative Evaluation: Method of looking at the results of a project at the end of the project to determine if it met its objectives and was successful. The focus on this evaluation method is on the outcomes.

Unsolicited Proposals: Foundations and Corporations may indicate in their guidelines that they do not accept unsolicited proposals. Those seeking funding should contact the funder to determine if they would be willing to accept a letter of inquiry or a full proposal for consideration. The actual unsolicited proposal would be the written document for funding of a project once they invite a submission.

Vendor: A contractor for goods or services that are a part of the grant and that have the expenditures accounted for in the budget.

*Initial Source and inspiration for this glossary is found at Oakton Community College's site:http://www.oakton.edu/about/officesanddepartments/grants/services/links/grant_term_s_glossary.pdf