

## Section 5.7: Application Finalization and Approval

### PURPOSE AND POLICY

Given the significant responsibility for managing a grant, agencies should have internal policies and procedures for final approval prior to submitting a grant application. Agency leadership should have ample time to review the application materials before final approval of and signature on the grant application.

### PROCEDURE

Once the review and edit of the final draft application documents is complete, the grant program manager will finalize the application and obtain approval to submit the application. Depending on the complexity of the grant application and the agency's internal requirements, this may be a quick process (three days or less) or it may require getting on a public hearing schedule. The grant program manager would have included this in the application development schedule.

**Finalizing the application.** When the grant program manager receives the edited documents from the communications manager, he/she should review the edits and resolve any outstanding issues. At this stage, outstanding issues should be nominal. However, if there is missing information, the grant program manager may need to return to the source to obtain additional information (i.e., supporting data cited in the program narrative and referenced in the appendix was not included). Once the grant program manager is certain that the application materials are complete and final, he/she is ready to get final approval to submit the application.

**Agency leadership approval.** Most grant applications require the signature of the agency's legally responsible party (usually the executive director). The grant program manager should provide advance notice to the agency's director regarding approval. For small agencies, this will be a relatively easy process. For larger agencies, this likely will require going through a division manager for review and approval prior to sending the application to agency's executive director. The process will be more complex for institutions of higher learning, where many departments and researchers are seeking grants and will need to coordinate with the university's grants/development business unit.

**Public officials.** Boards and commissions are governed by elected and/or appointed bodies. Depending upon the agencies' internal requirements, the board or commission may be required to review a grant application prior to submittal (in other cases, the board or commission may simply be required to approve pursuing the grant but may not need to review the grant application materials). Any decisions or reviews by boards and commissions will be subject to a public hearing as required by open meeting laws. The agency's grant program manager should be aware of these requirements and schedule the review to accommodate the public hearing schedule of the board or commission.

**Authorized representative signature.** Once the requisite approvals have been obtained, the agency's authorized representative must sign the grant application submission form (SF-424 for federal grants). The signatory certifies the information is accurate and complete and provides assurances that the agency will abide by the terms and conditions of the award agreement (if the grant is awarded and he/she accepts the award on behalf of the agency).