

Partnership Plan
Grants Policy Committee (GPC)
Federal Demonstration Partnership (FDP)
National Grants Partnership (NGP)

According to findings from the Government Accountability Office, based on public law 106-107, more input from non federal stakeholders is a necessity. This need could be met by incorporating feedback goals and mechanisms into the grant streamlining process.

The GAO has documented a disconnect in communication. This could stifle the progress made thus far. A solid structure for the dissemination of processes, actions and priorities would be a great boost to forward progress. Although initially when PL 106-107 was implemented all stakeholder groups were consulted for their input. However, since then the GAO contents that most stakeholders have not been involved in the development of procedures for PL 106-107 with the exception of the Grants.gov stakeholder meetings. Creating multidirectional communication architecture while forming a community of individual end users that have the same interests, demands and outcomes would benefit the streamlining progress made thus far.

Continued multi directional input will help the leveraging of grant funds across all sectors. Ultimately a streamlined process will help to represent a broad audience of participants in the policy making process to help ensure successful productive outcomes. Streamlining will increase overall awareness regarding priorities goals and common objectives as well as assist in the necessary consolidation of technological advancements regarding grants management.

While great strides have been made, with developments such as Grants.gov, it is agreed that the following areas could use additional focus.

Sectors and groups mentioned herein include Tribal governments, States, nonprofits and research organizations

Objectives

1. To establish a predictable and effective organizational structure for communication, input, and policy development across Federal agencies, in conjunction with the Executive Office of the President (EOP-OMB/OSTP) and the public.

- The **FDP and NGP** request the development of a routine process for informing stakeholders of the status of initiatives (description, agency contacts, participants, milestones, progress, etc.). The dissemination of this status information should be on a routine basis. One successful example of this type of communications has been the Grants.gov Stakeholder meetings that are held six times per year, with minutes/presentations posted on a public website.
 - **ACTION ITEM**-Create a stakeholders forum, similar to grants.gov stakeholder meeting, to help facilitate a system of checks and balances, continue to open the lines of productive communication and to further a broad and diverse representation of all sectors and groups involved.
 - **ACTION ITEM**- Maintain that the stakeholders' forum would continue to build on previous and established progress thus far, as well as facilitate expedited flow of ideas and work flow among sectors and groups involved. Help to formulate standard operating procedures as parameters are established to prevent disruption of progress and maintain focus.
 - **ACTION ITEM**- Build upon the model of the Grants.gov stakeholder and RBM model. This stakeholder meeting would include NGP & FDP and represent a more interactive environment. Post presentations of meetings
 - **ACTION ITEM**- Establish regular meetings (quarterly or more frequent) between groups to keep informed of status issues
- **Administrative Support.** Ensure the group gets the administrative support it needs to operate effectively. Discussion in a vacuum, without appropriate documentation and structure, is a waste of everyone's time. (**NGP**)
 - **ACTION ITEM**- Post presentations or updates to designated parties for dissemination. Post minutes, ensure accuracy, follow up on action items, maintain website and assist in securing funding
 - **ACTION ITEM**- Use webcasting to engage a community as broad as the grants enterprise. The government should not expect Californians to fly into DC every 3 months for a 2-hour meeting. Make it easy for these folks to participate.(**NGP**)

- **ACTION ITEM-Follow up on an offer by HUD to provide Webcasting on a quarterly or regularly scheduled basis. Identify an alternative webcasting capability for selected NGP/FDP meetings.**
 - **ACTION ITEM- To provide a variety of flexible means of communication (for example, location sites, webcasts, teleconferencing and the like)**
- Establish a formal advisory panel for either the Grants Policy Committee or for the Grants Executive Board. This would establish formal rules for board review and establish a procedure that would ensure formal input. If a Stakeholder Advisory Board was established, it would be formal and its suggestions would have some weight. **(NGP)**
- **ACTION ITEM:** Identify legal consideration in FACA requirements for establishing a formal advisory panel.
- Ensure that the lines of responsibility and reporting between the GPC, the Grants Policy Stakeholder Forum, and policy-makers are well defined and understood. By demonstrating how the ideas generated in the Stakeholder forum will be used, the government can ensure that the discussions aren't designed to placate noisy objectors or provide a forum only for complaints. **(NGP)**
- FDP and NGP will designate representatives to participate in above mentioned meetings, panels, boards and forums.
- **ACTION ITEM-** Participating organizations or agencies will designate the representatives for their entity.
 - **ACTION ITEM- Stakeholders' Representation.** Ensure that the Stakeholders' group has representation from across the grants enterprise: state, local, non-profits, Tribal, and vendors. **(NGP)** Use existing NGP and FDP representatives.

2. To implement a regular or routine communication and assistance policy development process for agencies and the public.

- The **FDP** and NGP would like to see more information about the content of the regular and routine communication
 - **ACTION ITEM-** For the research community, develop periodic public meetings to get public input, like those held by the Research Business Models subcommittee.
 - **ACTION ITEM-** For the non research community, develop periodic public meetings to get input similar to the Grants.gov stakeholder's model.
- Establish a PL 106-107 communications team that handles all the interactions and communications between stakeholders and the policy development process (**NGP**)
 - **ACTION ITEM** GPC leadership or representative would attend regularly scheduled NGP & FDP meetings to inform members on status and to get input regarding policy developments. GPC would play an active role in NGP & FDP activities. This collaboration and flow of information would be reciprocal, both NGP & FDP would, where appropriate, attend GPC meetings to provide updates and input as necessary.
 - **ACTION ITEM-** NGP & FDP would like to attend and participate in NGP meetings to the extent legally possible. It is understood that should there be a legal issue or conflict of interest members would exit the meeting as necessary.
- Regularly used listing of organizations, councils, and people. The Federal agencies should establish for government-wide grants policies initiatives, a regularly used listing of organizations, councils, and people who can provide insights to the policy being developed and use those organizations to expand the outreach on policy development input. Federal agencies should establish a procedure that at the beginning automatically puts these stakeholders on notice that new or modified policy is being considered and begin the discussions. P.L. 106-107 should establish a team that handles these discussions and coordinates the input for informal and information gathering. They would focus on the various topics under consideration by the grants policy committee. The team would be the contact point throughout the process and help run focus groups, routinely touch base with constituents and other interested parties. This way they can always be feeding information back and forth between the 106-107 work groups, GMLoB, etc., and the stakeholders. (**NGP**)

3. To integrate assistance policy development with lines of business or technical information systems development across agencies, the EOP, and the public.

- Stakeholder Representatives to participate and be a part of the dissemination of information and decisions regarding integrating policy development.
 - ACTION ITEM- GPC will call on Stakeholder representatives to participate in integrating policy development with lines of business or technical information systems development across agencies, the EOP and the public

Policy Development Process

Early Input: (public and agency meetings, focus groups, formal Request for Information)

- An advisory group would always give GPC a group to call upon to review activities and policy development confident that all necessary parties have been included. This could lengthen the process, but it would be formal and criteria could be established for membership on the advisory committee. (NGP)
 - ACTION ITEM-Identify from current FDP and NGP membership what organizations and/or individuals would be standing representatives on the advisory group. Each organization would designate who will represent them and who would be their back up.
- Stakeholders should be Included throughout Development Process. At any time, Federal managers can get input from stakeholders, whether it be information gathering or discussions of possible initiatives, the input of the stakeholders can be and should be included through out the policy development process (NGP)
 - ACTION ITEM-Attendance from NGP & FDP members at GPC meetings would ensure appropriate communication between members and help to facilitate productive input from stakeholders. NGP/FDP representatives would access their memberships and/or significant interest groups to provide input and feedback to the GPC on the issues under consideration. For example, the NGP State Representative would access the list of NGP state members to collect and consolidate viewpoints on issues of importance to the GPC/GEB/GMLOB.
- The lack of ownership of Federal initiatives among non Federal levels of the grants enterprise inhibits progress in streamlining grants management.

- ACTION ITEM-The political leadership must be brought into grants streamlining efforts through the NGP and other groups (Reference “Grantee Input” from the NGP White Paper)
- Regularly used listing of organizations, councils, and people. The Federal agencies should establish for government-wide grants policies initiatives, a regularly used listing of organizations, councils, and people who can provide insights to the policy being developed and use those organizations to expand the outreach on policy development input. Federal agencies should establish a procedure that at the beginning automatically puts these stakeholders on notice that new or modified policy is being considered and begin the discussions. P.L. 106-107 should establish a team that handles these discussions and coordinates the input for informal and information gathering. They would focus on the various topics under consideration by the grants policy committee. The team would be the contact point throughout the process and help run focus groups, routinely touch base with constituents and other interested parties. This way they can always be feeding information back and forth between the 106-107 work groups, GMLoB, etc., and the stakeholders.

4. Concept or Issue Development: (initial approach, preliminary method(s), questions leading toward implementation, impact assessment, formal Advanced Notice of Proposed Rule Making)

5. Pilot: (test of basic concepts, methods, policy and procedure, FDP or NGP)

- We are pleased to see the inclusion of pilot testing prior to proposed rulemaking and final policy issuance (**FDP**)

6. Notice of Proposed Rulemaking/Final Policy Issuance: (as appropriate to regulation, Circular, agency policy, etc.)

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Performance Measures

The common theme among all of the points listed above is *communication*. Expanding and improving upon existing communication methods will further steps towards streamlining the grant making process. Inclusion of all groups involved, nonprofit, vendor etc and the facilitation of information among these groups will expedite the process, provide for more accurate input and solidify solid and meaningful outcomes. The action items listed here are merely the first suggested steps towards collaborative efforts in the streamlining process. These items should be revisited periodically to reassess the need and reevaluate direction if necessary.

Objectives Summary and Recommendations

Objective One- Establish a routine process for keeping stakeholders informed, predictable and effective organizational structure for communication, predictable and effective input

Actions- Create a stakeholders forum (based on established models) Establish a meeting structure. Establish administrative support, advisory board consideration

Next Steps

NGP	FDP	GPC
Conduct analysis of Grants.gov stakeholders meetings		
Establish quarterly interactive stakeholder meetings (based on the GPC Grants.gov model)	Establish quarterly interactive stakeholder meetings (based on the GPC Grants.gov model)	
Establish roles & responsibilities	Establish roles & responsibilities	Establish roles & responsibilities
Determine standard operating procedures & parameters of focus for meetings	Determine standard operating procedures & parameters of focus for meetings	
Define who will represent NGP	Define who will represent FDP	
Establish procedures and designee to post & disseminate meeting information & presentations	Establish procedures and designee to post & disseminate meeting information & presentations	
		Follow up on an offer by HUD to provide webcasting
Identify legal consideration in FACA requirements for establishing a formal advisory board		
Ensure that the stakeholders group has representation from across the grants enterprise	Ensure that the stakeholders group has representation from across the grants enterprise	

Objective Two- Regular routine communication and policy development process assistance

Actions-Increased information about content of meetings; establish PL 106-107 communication team to deal with interactions between stakeholders & policy development team; establish parameters for participation to include NGP & FDP in GPC meetings to include an exclusion policy regarding conflict of interest or legal topics participation (members will exit meetings at that time).

Next Steps

NGP	FDP	GPC
	Develop periodic public meetings to get public input like those held by the Research Business Models subcommittee	
Play an active role in GPC meetings, with the exception of conflict of interest or legal restrictions	Play an active role in GPC meetings, with the exception of conflict of interest or legal restrictions	Leadership attend and play an active role (including status updates) at NGP & FDP meetings
Have designated leaders determine when its appropriate to seek input from stakeholders regarding development policies (to prevent the dissemination of information that must first be published in the Federal Registry)	Have designated leaders determine when its appropriate to seek input from stakeholders regarding development policies (to prevent the dissemination of information that must first be published in the Federal Registry)	
Define purpose of meetings consistent with statutory and other considerations that apply when there's policy development involved	Define purpose of meetings consistent with statutory and other considerations that apply when there's policy development involved	Define purpose of meetings consistent with statutory and other considerations that apply when there's policy development involved

Objective Three- Integrate policy development with lines of business or technical information systems development across agencies, the EOP and public.

Actions- Ensure representation across all grant enterprises.

Next Steps

NGP	FDP	GPC
		Call on stakeholder representatives to participate in integrating policy development with lines of business or technical information systems development across agencies, the EOP and the public

Policy Development Process Summary and Recommendations

Issue- pilot testing, early input, open and fluid communication through out policy development, political leader continue involvement with streamlining efforts

Next Steps

NGP	FDP	GPC
Identify organizations and individuals to be standing representatives on the advisory groups (and designate a back up)	Identify organizations and individuals to be standing representatives on the advisory groups (and designate a back up)	Call upon designee from NGP & FDP to review activities and policy development updates
Representative attends GPC meeting to provide feedback	Representative attends GPC meeting to provide feedback	