THE NATIONAL ACADEMIES
FEDERAL DEMONSTRATION PARTNERSHIP

ELECTRONIC GRANTS BUSINESS FORUM

Friday, July 29, 2005

The National Academies
Keck Center, Room 110
500 Fifth Street, NW
Washington, DC

Proceedings By:
CASET Associates, Ltd.
10201 Lee Highway, Suite 180
Fairfax, VA 22030
(703) 352-0091

Please see following documents appended:

1.) DUNS&CCR
2.) NGP White Paper

Agenda for July 29, 2005 Meeting Electronic Grants Business Forum (EGBF)
Keck Center, Washington DC

I. Welcome and Introductions (Dick K.)

II. Logistics (Dick K. and Ron S.)
   a. Coordination/Distribution of Meeting Minutes – this meeting will be taped, then transcribed
   b. Update on Forum status
      i. Our name: EGBF – Electronic Grants Business Forum
      ii. Need for Federal Co-Chair
      iii. NGP Rep – Tony Cavataio
      iv. FDP Faculty Rep – David Robinson OHSU
      v. Standing Committee subcommittee focus; recommendations for subcommittee from OMB
      vi. Liaison with NGP - National Grants Partnership Steering Committee

III. Creation of a National User Profile Database (Dick K.)
   a. Review of EDI 194 transaction set relative to both 'Professional' and 'Organizational' profiles developed by IAGC
   b. Review of NIH efforts in 'Commons' on profiles (David, Jennifer)
   c. Outline and discussion for 'white paper' on profiles

IV. DUNS/CCR Registration Issues (David Wright, Ron)
   a. Progress/Discussion since last meeting.
   b. Report on meeting with Grants.gov and Dun and Bradstreet (Becky)

V. Grants.gov User Interface & Cross-platform compatibility (Dick and Ron)
   a. Use of Citrix client for Mac and other platform compatibility with PureEdge – NIH proof of concept white paper vs. Pioneer Award solicitations
   b. Change management, known bug lists
   c. S2S Schema discussion (Department name max = 30 char), look at data templates etc. (Peter)
   d. How to handles spikes in volume during deadlines

VI. NASA NSPIRES Cover Sheet (Steve D.)

VII. NGP Summary of parallel efforts
   a. Accelerating Grants Streamlining white paper
   b. PL 106-107 – activities following the Sunset date

VI. Suggestions for Future Agenda Items/Task Groups? (All)

VI. Next meeting September 20 1:30-4:30pm, National Academies (Following FDP meeting)

Summary of EGBF July 2005 Meeting

- Electronic Grants Business Forum (EGBF) coined as committee name
- Co-Chair Ron Splittgerber (Institution) and TBA (Federal) – Update – Robert (Bob) MacDonald, USDA accepted Co-Chair position
- Introduction of National Grants Partnership (NGP) representative Tony Cavataio
- Governance questions about the revived Grants Management Line of Business was noted by several attendees.
- Grants Executive Board (GEB - Governing group of Grants.gov) expanded to include all 26 granting agencies, together with Grants Policy Committee (GPC) will direct how Grants Management Line of Business (GMLOB) will be implemented. Tom Cooley and Mary Santonastasso, both from NSF are members of both the GEB and the GPC providing information sharing. New member is Charlie Havekost (HHS).
- Tony Cavataio (NGP and Dept of Ed) attends GPC meetings, and will also provide information to EGBC
- The Performance Progress Report for research is complete with input from Jean Feldman and Trudy Woods, and has been submitted to Committee on Science for review and approval, then to Federal Register for review and comment
- Steve Dowdy (MIT), Tony Cavataio and others noted that the process needs to be reversed – comments and review from the research community must be solicited before the process is approved. The current method allows only reactive feedback. Proactive input from constituents is missing.
- The recent GAO report was critical of this process recommending that review by constituents be solicited early in the process. Discussion ensued about how this might be accomplished. FDP and NGP have parallel interest in seeing this happen, and is perhaps the best example of how the two groups might collaborate
- The topic of Profiles for various agencies consumed a majority of the first half of the EGBF meeting. There are many documents produced by many previous efforts to find a solution to issues surrounding this topic: Single log-in to various sites requiring credentials, need to have information about users, research investigators and institutions for these sites, and how Grants.gov might provide a resource for a solution, as well as serve as a 'Portal' or entry point to the various sites.
- Documents from Ellen Beck (UCLA) and Erin Lindsay (Caltech) provided a basis for what a profile might contain, and indeed the current 194 Transaction Set will capture.
- David Wright (HHS) summarized efforts by NIH in compiling profiles on researchers who have done business with that agency. There are about 50,000 registered users with 42,000 of those listed as faculty. There is an attempt to collapse various pieces of the profile at NIH into one for each faculty member. David indicated there might be room for a demonstration on how this might work for Grants.gov as a Portal.
- Bob MacDonald (USDA) noted that tracking awards by investigator also is needed. NGP noted this as a desire of state and local constituents as well. Steve Dowdy added the desire to have a single user id and password as part of a portal to access the hundreds of sites – saving help desk time for helping with login difficulties and forgotten passwords would go some distance in paying for a portal.
- Becky Spitzgo recommended that consideration be given to creating a clean slate with a single point where agencies, institutions and commercial providers could identify a researcher, and given a data standard, have pointers to the data based on the single standard.
- David Wright noted that the task of assuring NSF data item one was the same as NIH data item two and consolidating to one profile – with the decision made by the researcher, and combining them into the single profile would fit Becky's description
- Steve Dowdy explained that there are two issues – first, have a single identifier or credential that says 'I'm Steve Dowdy', my title is 'Assistant Director', I'm at MIT, My Phone is, my e-mail is… The second issue is the existing data at various agency back-end systems that says 'Here are my awards from NSF, Here are my awards from NIH' etc. which is all agency back-office information that also must be linked to the profile.
- The recent announcement that HHS will provide secondary investigator listings on a grant, for say 25% of the effort will complicate the issue unless a clear roadmap is first drawn out
- Bob MacDonald noted that the two pieces described are, first a unique and portable identifier so

that if a person moves from one university to another, that unique identifier will follow. Next time the person logs in, all the piece of the profile that indicates the tie to the university is changed and everything else remains the same.

- Ron Splittgerber described how a profile might look from Grants.gov perspective exchanging data with a system such as COEUS or InfoEd where the profile is available at the institutional site.
- Jennifer Flach noted that HHS does exchange data for certain transactions in this very manner.
- Steve Dowdy noted that one part of the decision process will be to decide how much the data must be atomized – is it ok to store the information as a 'blob' such as a PDF file, or does each individual piece of information contained on the PDF file need to be individually stored? When can I just replace the whole PDF page rather than updating each individual data item on that page?
- Bob MacDonald and Dan Hofherr discussed differences in reviewer and investigator data needed for each agency.
- Steve Dowdy noted that the starting point will need to be a universal government ID for everyone that would serve as the pointer to all of the information for that individual.
- David Wright described how that single identifier, say at Grants.gov would then map to various data sets at each agency. The agency would need only add that unique ID to their table to link the information through a single portal.
- Becky Spitzgo noted a parallel between what would be needed for an individual with the service provided by CCR at an institutional level
- Ron Splittgerber asked who might be able to make a decision on where that unique personal ID might reside – if Grants.gov were the broker, who would make that decision?
- Becky Spitzgo noted that it would probably be GEB.
- Dan Hofherr then asked how this would relate to authentication and security as is needed for a credential.
- Becky noted that Grants.gov is already doing this to some extent – every user has a credential when they log in, and you could use that same credential to find a profile that would identify you over all government sites.
- Ron Splittgerber noted that the conversation surrounding profiles seemed to be a circular event, and that perhaps the next step would be to put many of the concepts to paper. He also noted that the Electronic Authentication Partnership (EAP) has a web site for the government efforts in this area, and has been very active. Rather than re-hash the issue, EGBF might look at what has already been done: http://www.eapartnership.org
- The issues surrounding DUNS and CCR registration was discussed at length. The process must be documented, a standard set, and that information passed along to those registering. Recently a requirement to have Reviewers register is an indication of how there is a need for personal identification.
- The issue of continued use of PureEdge forms was discussed. IBM recently purchased the company, and its future direction may be in question.
- PureEdge forms are being 'tweaked' by specific programs, so that in one application, a field may contain one specific data item, whereas another program may ask for another, different data item. The System to System interface knows nothing about this change in definition, so the information passed may not be what is expected at the agency back-end.
- Tony Cavataio cited a specific example for the performance report – even though the form looks the same over various agencies, the instruction set can vary from program to program. Dept of Ed alone has over 100 different definitions for a student for example.
- Ron Splittgerber noted that as part of the information gathering for a white paper on this topic, considerable effort was done in 1997 to conduct a survey on the topic of profiles. This might now be one aspect of the paper. Recently, FDP released a faculty effort survey, so the way has been paved. This effort would be much easier with a pattern. There was discussion on how to begin the effort with several volunteers from institutions. David Wright agreed to represent the federal side. Specifically, the effort would be to develop a high-level data dictionary.
- Becky Spitzgo recommended that we call this effort a 'Business Case' – a term that would be recognized in the government world.
- Bob MacDonald suggested FDP include NGP in the effort of developing the Business Case.
- The issue of DUNS and CCR was discussed, and noted that a representative from DUNS would be invited to the next FDP meeting in September. We should try to schedule that person to appear in the EGBF with a specific set of questions.
- The discussion moved to PureEdge forms, some of the issues with the applications, and plans for

the future since PureEdge is not yet platform independent

- A pilot with Pioneer Applications in PureEdge were done through a 'Citrix' suite – a method that resembles a terminal server for a Windows application allowing Linux and Mac clients to use PureEdge forms. The application was completed successfully, but is was not know if any of the submissions were done from a Linux or Mac PC, or what issues may have been seen by the help desk. NIH contact center would have that information.
- Becky Spitzgo noted that a platform independent solution for PureEdge has a target date of November 2006 through May 2007, but that OMB may accelerate that schedule.
- Peter Brunner then led a discussion of the Grants.gov System to System progress, and some of the schema issues encountered.
- Steve Dowdy raised the issue of the amount of time it takes for COEUS to examine each PureEdge form to be certain that the System to System application will be successful. Peter noted that Grants.gov is pressing version 2 of the 424 R&R that will address some of these issues. John Etcheverry noted that Grants.gov is trying to replace some of the older PureEdge forms that caused many of the problems.
- Tony Cavataio noted that OMB has sent each agency a matrix asking how they are reducing the number of forms required, so there is pressure on the federal side to use Grants.gov as a means to that end.
- Becky Spitzgo asked that any forms issues with agencies be sent to Grants.gov for resolution.
- Tony Cavataio led a discussion of the just released NGP White Paper titled 'Accelerating Grants Streamlining'. There are about 45 vendors associated with NGP with 150-160 members total. The GAO wanted to know how PL 106/107 was impacting grantees – the initiative began with Andrea Brandon from HHS. Tony noted one example where 10 statements from NGP constituents outlining how improvements might be made where brought to the table for discussion with a number of agencies. The agencies only responded with why none could be done, and all were swept under the table. This happened regularly, with agencies defending their position. This is one of the issues the white paper addresses. The paper is widely distributed, and may have an impact on the success of constituent feedback in shaping Grants.gov, and the GMLOB in the next year.
- The meeting adjourned a 12:10pm. The next meeting is schedule for Tuesday afternoon, September 20 following the FDP meeting at National Academies in Washington D.C.

Transcription of July 2005 EGBF

Welcome and Introductions - Dick Keogh

- Introduction of attendees: Dick Keogh, Ron Splittgerber, Bob MacDonald, Jerry Stuck, Steve Dowdy, Gunta Lidars, David Wright, David Robinson (By phone - Faculty Rep), Dan Hofherr, Jennifer Flach, John Etcheverry, Julius Cotton, Peter Brunjner, Becky Spitzgo, Tony Cavataio, Thomas Drinance, Christian Harker (Cayuse)
- Co-chair Ron Splittgerber (Colorado State) and Federal member TBA
- Committee name – Electronic Grants Business Forum (EGBF), subcommittee of FDP ERA Standing Committee chaired by Steve Dowdy (MIT) and David Wright (NIH)

Logistics - Dick Keogh and Ron Splittgerber

- Gunta Lidars – Overview of FDP committee organization parallel to 106/107 working groups: Pre-award, Post-award and Audit. FDP is looking for any initiatives that might become demonstrations to help with particular issues. With the new look at Grants Line of Business, this makeup make change to improve communications.
- Steve Dowdy – There is a need for someone to provide feedback between technical and policy issues that are increasingly inter-related.
- Dick Keogh – Introduction of National Grants Partnership representing state and local constituents much as FDP represents research institutions
- Ron Splittgerber – Need for Federal Co-Chair may be filled by end of this meeting. Recently GAO made some recommendations to OMB regarding Grants Line of Business. forming a grants governance organization in order to make sure that the groups had clear goals as far as any of the post-award information that might be provided centrally. We wanted to insure that the working groups develop a common grant reporting system by the November 2007 deadline that was previously set for these issues. We also wanted to integrate strategy for addressing the law among the grants Line of Business, Grants.gov, and the working groups that were led by HHS. Also, one of the strong points, and I think what we can really focus on is they wanted to solicit grantee input on an ongoing basis. And I think the NGP White Paper also

emphasized this from the state and local levels, that one of the issues that may have been missing in the past was input from the customer base.

- Becky Spitzgo - Ron, there are a couple of things that actually have been going on, just to provide everyone with an update. And particularly with the first item on the governance issue, the Grants Executive Board, which as been in place at Grants.gov since really August 2002, has been expanded to include all 26 grant-making agencies, so that everyone has a seat at the table who is now paying to support the initiative. Also, an additional expansion, that board is now going to oversee the grants management Line of Business. So, that will come under the board, as well as the governance structure. And also, we have added ex-officio members to the executive board for the Grants Policy Committee, which is the group that is under the CFO council that is now handling the 106/107 policy issues. Essentially, we have brought all the components now into the same room, and into that under one board. Obviously, the executive board is not overseeing the Grants Policy Committee, but obviously will share things and have a good amount of communications going on where they can bring stuff to the board to get approval that either Grants.gov or the Line of Business might take on. And Grants.gov or Line of Business can bring policies, issues up, and the co-chairs that are NSF, Tom Cooley, and Susan Grant for Energy can take those back to the Grants Policy Committee. So, we have brought that governance structure together. We are excited about it. I think it gives us a really good forum to really kind of bring all these efforts together, and make sure that policy issues and technologies issues are going down the same path, and one is building on the other. The Line of Business effort I would say is getting kind of re-energized. One of the things in our meeting next week, will be a status report. One of the changes that have taken place, HHS is now the co-managing partner on the Line of Business, along with NSF. Mary Santonastasso has been there since it started, and she remains that co-chair, and Charlie Havekost is on the HHS side.
- Steve Dowdy - There were actually three new structures, right? There is the Line of Business, and then the policy, and then the third is the –
- Gunta Lidars - Electronic Business Committee. That was my understanding, and it's chaired by the GSA information officer.
- Becky Spitzgo - GSA is serving a role for all the Line of Business initiatives, and collecting the funds, and serving somewhat as a PMO for the Line of Business piece. But it is more of an administrative role in providing like contract support. So there are two as far as a governance and oversight. I think the Line of Business initiatives all come together under that GSA forum. But you don't have necessarily your grant-making agencies there. So, GSA has always been kind of the government-wide -- egov and government-wide kind of place to hold funds, things that are done cross-government. So, they are still in that role, but they are not at the Executive Board. I'm not sure the extent that they are involved in that picture. I think it's more a GSA and OMB role, and then a role with the Line of Business partners. Do you know anything more, Dan? I don't know if you have had any exposure to them.
- Dan Hofherr - The name is the Grants Executive Board, so it's not just Grants.gov.
- Tony Cavataio - The Grants Policy Committee did meet on Wednesday. I was attending that meeting in part for our department, but in part for the National Grants Partnership. And they went over and agreed to improving the annual report that was going to be submitted to Congress, the governmentwide report. However, Tom Cooley, who is the co-chair with Susan Swab, as Becky has just said, asked that OMB clarify the relationship of the GMLOB to the Grants Committee.
- Becky Spitzgo - Yes, he provided us that comment. The grants governance charter has not been finalized yet. It's being revised, with the expansion of the group, as well as pulling Line of Business under it. We actually just yesterday sent out the revised version. As well as the other change to that will be the group, it had been chaired previously by the Grants.gov program manager. Now, as it has been expanded, one of the agencies will chair that group. That was sent out yesterday with the comment that we had received from the Grants Policy Committee for the group to discuss in clarifying that role. We will have that discussion next week, and hopefully we'll figure out how that all fits together. That is actually one of the questions that came up not at the last meeting, but the meeting before. The Executive Board members had said, well, can someone explain the role of the Grants Policy Committee, and how do they see themselves, and how is that going to be working, because that's a new committee. So, I'm sure that will be a good discussion, and then we'll be able to incorporate that in the charter, and hopefully finalize the charter after this meeting, so we get that in place.
- Tony Cavataio - I believe that committee has a real clear idea of who they are and where they are going. And they have gone through a number of different issues and different areas. One area that would be of interest to this group has to do with the research PPR, performance progress report. And they talked about going forward to COS for review and approval. And then once that is done it's going to The Federal Register for review and committee. The reason I put it that way is because there is a non-research piece, and there is a research piece. They are two different aspects, and it gives the agencies the opportunity to choose the type of reporting that they would like to use for their particular program. And so, the research piece is going forward to the Community of Science, and it's supposed to be over there I guess in two weeks, as I understand it. I wrote that down in my notes. And then it's going to The Federal Register for review and comment.
- Steve Dowdy - When you are saying progress report, are we really carving out really the technical progress report, the programmatic thing? I thought there was a group for the entire reporting group, whether it be financial report, progress, technical reporting.
- Tony Cavataio - There is. There is an overall -- in PL106/107 there is an overall reporting group, post-award reporting group. And one group which I belong to -- I actually belong to both of these groups. But in any event, the non-research piece, that is a whole family of forums for non-research oriented competitions. And there is another group working with Trudy Woods and Gene Feldman, working on what I'm calling the research PPR. That has been completed. All that work

has been done, and it is now under review and comment. The target is to put it in The Federal Register very shortly.

- Steve Dowdy - That's one of the big concerns I have again. Because once again, we are in this period of are going to react to it once it's published in The Federal Register. We have not been at the table, and had comment prior to publication in The Federal Register. That's one of the things we went through with OMB, and it's one of the issues that keeps coming up in the FDP Executive Committee about FACA laws and stuff. And I think -- Jerry, correct me if I'm wrong -- didn't we finally come to the conclusion that the FDP and the way we are structured were sort of FACA-exempt in that regard? It was the same way when -- and I'm glad it's Jean, and I'm glad it's Trudy, because they certainly understand the issues better than a lot of other players. But this constant reaction of The Federal Register notice is not the way to get this stuff done. Where was the faculty input about progress reporting? Did they talk to a single faculty about any burdens, and about what they want on this? It's just not the way that I see that we are supposed to be doing business. That last bullet on that slide up there says solicit grantee input on an ongoing basis, and that is not knee jerk reaction at a Federal Register notice.
- Tony Cavataio - The Grants Partnership agrees completely, and that's why you have the white paper. That was a response to the GAO report. That's why it came out. You all here ought to get a copy of that. I'll give it to Ron to distribute. But that was one of the big driving forces, that Andrea said we'd like you to respond to the GAO report for us, and so that's what you see there. But we have had this discussion, Steve, how many years now? Five years that we have talked about it. You all were heavily involved initially with the R&R Subcommittee at one time, and you had a major input. You were at the table, you and Ken Forstmeier. So, you all were involved in this thing, and there is not a whole lot of new stuff involved with this, but there are some twists and turns.
- Ron Splittgerber - Tony mentioned the white paper that the National Grants Partnership has recently issued. We'll give Tony a chance later on in the agenda to go over that, but that's a document that Tony sent to me last week, and I think it's very well done. It really covers a lot of parallel issues to what FDP, and in particular this committee is concerned with. So, I think it's an excellent way to look at the parallel efforts between FDP and NGP.
- Tony Cavataio - We want to be collaborative with you, and we want to work together with you. It's sort of almost crazy when you think about it, because many of us that with the NGP are on the FDP. We work with you. We've been you through the ages, so it's not as if we are learning these issues.
- Dick Keogh - Just to pick up on Steve's comment, it is nice to see, and from on respect there has obviously been some ongoing crystallization of resolution relative to the governance issues. Then there seems to be some things that are coming together that. That all remains, however, within the grant community, and maybe even at the state and local level, still a very, very murky area in terms of what's going on. It will be important that there be good communication to the folks that are out there in both of those communities, so that they understand what's going on, otherwise it continues the frustration that Steve mentioned of being away from the table, and not being involved, and simply being reactionary, which I don't think that the community really wants to be simply reactionary.
- Ron Splittgerber – Let's move on to item three, and Dick, if you maybe could give us a brief introduction on why profiles are involved in our focus, and how those relate to our meeting today.

Creation of a National User Profile Database - Dick Keogh

- Dick Keogh -The whole concept of establishing a common user profile database is something that actually goes all the way back to the beginning, very much early on with the conversations that we had with Becky on the phone back even prior to the March meeting. This might be one project and one area where we could work together to d something that would bring some benefit to the user community, especially the folks that are generating grant proposals. Instead of having to maintain multiple profiles within multiple agency databases, it might be nice to have a common database that we all use, and simplify and streamline that whole process. We have had conversations on this in both the March meeting and the September meeting. I certainly won't try to comment on all of that, or to summarize all of that. But essentially I think the major focal points or the issues that have been brought up thus far to try to get some resolution on if we are going to establish such a database, the main hurdles that are in front of us, all of us to do that would be one, to establish a unique identifier that would follow an individual, regardless of what institution that they were involved with, which does not exist at the present time. The question has come up as to if this common database were to be established, who really takes ownership of it? What federal agency or federal unit takes ownership of it? Where does it reside? How does it get supported? None of those issues are resolved. The question of defining what the data elements would be is something that is not entirely resolved at least, although there has been some movement in that direction that we have had with the FTP over the years, and Ron will talk a little bit more about that. But there still are some areas there that might need to be resolved. And we also brought to the table I think perhaps the need to really analyze how the different agencies use user profiles, which there are differences among agencies, which are not really well known. Certainly, they are known within the individual agencies, but that kind of comparative analysis really has never been done, and might play a role in how we actually put together a good common user profile database. So, those are kind of the issues that I think have been discussed so far in terms of the main stumbling blocks or things that we need to somehow overcome. And I think I'll turn it now back to Ron in terms of bringing us a little bit further along, because we may -- speaking about white papers -- we may be partly down the road here in terms of the actual creation of one which helps resolve some of these things, or at least make some recommendations.
- Ron Splittgerber - For our virtual member, David, we are moving onto slide 4. One of the issues that was discussed previously was from the concept of user profile was the need for authentication to start with. If there some way that the

federal government and the agencies need to authenticate so that a person coming into a system -- so that they know who the person is. Making sure that the person is who they say they are and security issues surrounding that, if you move past that authentication one step, if you assume for the moment that that information happens to be in some form, available for authentication, moving past that a little bit and storing information particular to the individual becomes part of that whole picture. We went back and looked at some of the work that had been done before by IAGC, the committee that is no longer in existence, but did a lot of work on data standards for the 194 transaction set. A lot of those were discussed by that committee, and were included in some format in that transaction. There is already a standard, a basis, a lot of work had been done, we went back and looked at that. So, with the vision of doing a white paper at some point, we can include standards that previously had been created. And in that discussion, they looked at both dynamic and static data. Some of the static data, demographic information that doesn't readily change who an organization, a person is with generally will be stable, at least for the purposes of authentication until they change employment. Their education and training, even though you make take additional courses, that piece is part of your historical background. Research and professional experience and any honors, those sorts of things tend to be the static data as it was defined. Also included in that transaction set are pieces of dynamic data, things that change over time, publications, especially that would be appended to or added, because things go along. Memberships in associations that folks belong to, committee, advisees, if you are an advisee for a committee, and if you have collaborators on research projects, those all tend to be examples of static data. Other types of information that we found in the 194 transaction set, and the way that you handle that from a standard is submitting institutional profile data with the 194 transaction set. So, information that is defined -- I think originally it was viewed as vender data in the 194 transaction set. I wanted to move along, because as part of the profile, there has been quite a bit of work done with NIH Commons. And David agreed to update us on some of the efforts that are underway.

- David Wright - Over the past 30 plus years NIH has been compiling profiles on all the researchers that have done business with NIH, whether as reviewers or grantees or whatever. And when we brought the Commons online, we had a major push to start cleaning those files up. So, right now we've got about 50,000 users registered with the Council of the Commons. Of that, almost 42,000 are researcher or PI accounts. So, as each one of those PIs have come on board, before their account becomes activated, we go through our profile database which has 420,000 profiles in it right now. And making sure that we get the right person, that if the person submitted grants under John S. Doe and J.S. Doe and J. Steve Doe, that we find that they are all the same person, and collapse them down into one profile. As the Commons has been ramping up, we have been really cleaning up a lot of that data. I would estimate we got about 75 percent of our active PIs with Commons accounts. So, that's a pretty decent base in terms of clean profiles. We are increasing that at about 2 percent per month, adding another 2 percent on top of that every month of new PIs as they register into the Commons either for IAR Internet Assistive Review Module, or with a regular Commons account to actually do grant-related issues other than review. That's been pretty much our push at this point. I think if we start looking at trying to centralize that, I don't know what kind of volume NSF or DOE or Education have in terms of profiles, but having gone through a lot of this data cleansing just within NIH, it's a pretty laborious process. We've got a whole group of people that just sit there and that's all they do, is they look through these profiles if someone requests an account, and match them up, because we don't want to show one person another person's grant information.
- Steve Dowdy - Going through the process of creating all the NIH accounts again for all of our faculty and re-registering them, and delegating their roles and all of that, I think you will find that any institution -- maybe I'm wrong, and maybe you've guys can jump in -- we would be happy to scrub whatever it is, wherever it is, because as it is right now, most of our faculty have more than one federal agency in their portfolio. We are maintaining this profile, two, three, five times. And so, cleaning it up one time, whether I have to go through all 1,000 faculty and do it one more time, the time savings of not doing five times, and resetting 100 passwords because they forgot their NSF password, now they forgot their NIH password, now they forgot their NASA password is well worth the effort -- well worth it.
- Bob MacDonald - A little bit of the problem we have with that would be that again taking John Doe, John Doe was at MIT, and now he's gone to Colorado State. And he has come in and tried to make himself a fresh account. In reality, we want to be able to see that connection, and which institution is the one that manages that?
- Steve Dowdy - And that's why I think the NIH model of providing some other identifier, like give me any piece of a grant number you ever had. And whether that's give me a piece of a USDA grant number, or an NSF grant number to try to help match up
- Bob MacDonald - They often don't even know their grant numbers.
- David Wright - What we do is when one of the business officials at an institution, they are the ones who initiate the account creation. So, they create the account for Researcher Smith. Researcher Smith gets an e-mail that says your business official is writing a Commons account for you. Please click on this link. Go in and verify your NIH support. So, what we do is on the back end we've got a process that links that name and whatever information we have and say, okay, here are all the potential awarded grants that you could possibly have from NIH. And then underneath that there is a list of all the review committees that they potentially have served on. And they go through and say, oh yes, these three grants are mine, but these two are not. I served on this committee and this committee, but not this one. And so, they tell us which pieces are theirs and which are not, which helps us say okay, here are the five profiles that we think could possibly be this person. And we know, okay, these two really are, and these three are not based on the information that they give us. And so, we try to do something cross-agency, we can do the same. It's just saying here is all your NIH stuff, here is all your NSF stuff, here is all you DOE stuff, et cetera, and let them choose. And then that would help us match, okay, it's this person at NIH. It's this person at

NSF. And then you can kind of collapse everything into one.

- Becky Spitzgo -Would you even need to collapse? If you pick up a little bit of what Steve is saying, if you just went into whatever the database was going to be or become, the central database, and you've already got records in there, and you have updated them, why do you need to go update them at every other database that is going away?
- Bob MacDonald - For two reasons, because we are running into the same issue with multiple records. In fact, we are in the process of closing 12,000 of them. There are two reasons we need to collapse. For our project directors, we need to -- eligibility in part depends on past funding for some of our programs. And so, if you have multiple records for this person, you are not seeing other past funders. The second issue is that we are reviewing our proposals, information in that is also tied to their ability to log in and review the proposals. And we get put into a number of conflicts in doing that. Then that poses a delay in review in proposals, because we are having to straight out these conflicts.
- Becky Spitzgo - Maybe I didn't state that clearly. What I was suggesting was that rather than getting all the databases that are out there all up-to-date, and then try to match up all those records -- and some of them are just duplicating everything that is already somewhere else, if we just get all the data right in one place, and then maybe there are some fields that aren't going to be populated. You don't really have to do that matching if a university says I've got all my records over here in this database. You don't need to move anything from anywhere, because I can tell you I've got everybody registered. Then you save yourself a lot of time trying to do all this matching stuff. That's potentially a way to bring these together without trying to do all the linking together. Use your customers out there that are updating all these things. And as Steve said, they would be glad to just do it in one place, one more time, and then you don't need to worry about the others.
- David Wright - I'm definitely not advocating updating five separate things. That first time when someone goes in to say, okay, this is my record at NSF, and here is my record at NIH, you make that match the one time, the very first time, and then you combine all that stuff into one, and that resides in your main database and becomes their profile of records.
- Becky Spitzgo - And I guess I'm suggesting I'm not even sure if you need to do that.
- David Wright - You do, because you need to know that you get the right person at each agency, so you can get all the past funding from each agency and be able to aggregate that in one place.
- Bob MacDonald - We will need to do the initial matching, but I think what he's saying is that each of us will -- yes, we're stand alone at the moment, but nonetheless these are operational things. These are ongoing things even if you have one database for the federal government that individuals maintain themselves. On each of ours individuals maintain themselves now. But we have these problems where they keep up, because not every knows or pays attention to the rules.
- Steve Dowdy - I think there are two issues here. There is the one issue of having a single, because I'm Steve Dowdy. My title is Assistant Director. My telephone number is, my degrees are, all of that. That's one thing. And that's an easy thing to fix. That is just give me some data entry screens, and let's plug it all in. And then the other thing is to take that unique identifier and link it to all these phantom records and pull that together. That's sort of an agency back office problem, to get all of that linkage done. And I think it is important, because one of the things that we are experiencing now as I have been talking to the people on campus, the other most laborious piece of the whole proposal process is creating cart and pending support pages. And I don't know for the life of me why when a PI is going to NIH, and they have 100 percent NIH funding, why do they have to tell NIH all of the NIH awards that they have? Why doesn't NIH just look at their database and look at what awards they have? But it's part of this process, because they have these J.S. and J. Steve and John S., and they can't really look, because they don't have all of those phantom records linked up with some unique identifier at this point. I assume that's a big part of the problem.
- David Wright -That's part of it. The other part is currently NIH only stores records for the PI. So, if they were just another person on a grant that has 25 percent effort, we have no way to track it.
- Steve Dowdy - Isn't your Federal Register notice coming out today about how you are going to solve that problem?
- David Wright - I actually got an e-mail copy of the announcement. It might come out today.
- Bob MacDonald - A key piece of what you were saying is to make that work, if we can have a unique and portable unique identifier. Because then that does resolve the issue, and again, if it one for the federal government, that is more likely -- not entirely certain -- but more likely that faculty moves to one place or another, or if they deal with one agency or another, will continue to use that unique identifier. And even if they go to create a new record, they will be asked to enter that unique identifier. Oh, you are this person. Here is your information. Just tell us what has changed, and that will make it easier I think. And then I think that will enable a lot of the current pending support things that you are talking about, because the confidence will be much higher that in fact we have everything for that individual. Right now, I can say with an 80 percent degree of certainty that we could pull everything that Steve Dowdy ever submitted to CSRAS, but I could not say with 100 percent, and you need 100 percent.
- Steve Dowdy - Well, trust me, you're not getting 100 percent anyway.
- Ron Splittgerber - Is there a question as to how that effort might work? Does there need to be a parallel effort like the find piece of the current effort in trying to make a standard for each application when you do a find and then an apply? Do we need to look at doing a parallel effort through the profiles where you poll the agencies and find out what the back office system require? Use some of the work that has already been done in the 194 transaction set, see what has to be added to it? And have that be part of a central system, whether it's part of Grants.gov, wherever it resides. Collapse the information to one place, and then have the agency back office take the data from that central repository and populate the database. If we take the example of Grants.gov, the investigator sees all the information that agencies have access to. If there is supplemental

information that for a particular agency needs to be transmitted, then you have add that much as the find and apply stuff. The additional appendices have to be added to an application. Through the profile you have a central core piece of data that consists of the static data that Steve mentioned, the stuff that doesn't change. Some of the dynamic stuff the investigator can keep up with, publications, things like that. Link that with the part of the authentication process, the identifier. And if there is additional information a particular agency needs, maybe to have, at that point in time at least there is a central repository for that. Is that one way of looking how it is done, the parallel effort?

- Steve Dowdy - One of the things I think we need to be real careful about in this whole profile thing is the atomization of the data. Do you really need a screen and a bucket for a publication that says give me the volume number, the page number, and have all of that atomized out? If there is some business process that goes on in the background, but if it's simply so that a reviewer can look and go, wow, look at all the books this guy wrote, there is no value-added in going through the burden of us trying to come up with transaction sets or standards or screens that atomize all of that stuff down, if what you really need is just make sure that there is a PDF file loaded in some database in the sky somewhere that is always up-to-date with all the publications that the person has. I think that's where we got bogged down a lot with the 194 and everything, because back then we didn't transmit binary files. Everything was ASCII. So, there was an attempt to atomize everything down to the nth degree. Like what I'm seeing with Grants.gov in the system-to-system, I'm loving the fact that we just upload a PDF file of the facilities page and a budget justification. And it makes life a whole lot easier when we are not dealing with the atomized data like that.
- Ron Splittgerber - There is also another component to profiles. The investigator in some cases uses a piece of software that resides at the institution, whether it's COEUS or InfoEd, some of the commercial vendors that I think also are looking for direction on what information in particular is a piece of that static or demographic data that the agencies need in a form other than a PDF file, with stuff that is actually part of back office. And then again, appending on the PDF files, that as Steve pointed out, need not be atomized to that finite of detail. So, is that an effort that we might consider as maybe part of the topic of a white paper addressing how that it might be done? For the sake of argument, again using Grants.gov as the vehicle to make that transmission. And thinking about that process, because Grants.gov has already looked at doing a system-to-system interface on the find and apply. It surely wouldn't be that be a step to go on and use that system as an interface for a profile.
- Jennifer Flach - NIH actually has some transactions like that in place for some of our profile data. We have a request where our service providers can get certain profile information in the initial transaction, which they can update that in system-to-system fashion. It's somewhat limited now, but there have been discussions about how to expand those. I know our service providers love it, and want us to do more with it.
- Steve Dowdy - I think it sort of goes back to what Dick said. I don't think we have a good read behind the scenes of all the different agencies and what data they use. We sort of anecdotally know what NIH asks for, but what you really do with it after the fact. Are you just stored a big blob of a PDF file, or are you actually atomizing some of that data for some particular purpose? On something like a degree, I can see, yes, let's atomize the degree. You would like to know how many PhDs that you have versus other things. But we need to see what each agency uses.
- Bob MacDonald - Just to be above board and to clarify, our database that we have of the project directors, is also the database that we use for searching for reviewers. And there is a separate questionnaire that goes out to reviewers on an annual basis asking about the information. My suggestion is that we try to separate those things, because what we would ask for expertise and willingness to review, might be different from what NIH needs to ask in willingness to review. And in trying to consolidate our information on project directors, we use the same database for those things that we ours from that central database, however the mechanism gets worked out to do that. But as long as people are not taken by surprise, or are concerned by the fact that we would send out another questionnaire to reviewers, instead of having someone say, well, why is that not in the central database?
- Ron Splittgerber - Is there something that NSF separates reviewer information from PI?
- Dan Hofherr - We actually want to combine them together. NSF actually doesn't. We have a PI database and then a reviewer database. We want to combine them together, and have columns that show what people's roles are, so they are the responsible research officer or a PI or an NSF employee, that type of thing. That's where we want to get to. Also, I know NIH has been talking doing it, and we're also talking about doing it is to mine some of the data for different purposes. One example is just to help us identify reviewers. That would be good to do certain proposals. So, look at the biographical sketch, then mine the data, and then you know what that PI's field of research is. If a new proposal comes in with that type of topic, you could do semantic indexing and offer suggestions to NSF staff. So, they are looking at that type of thing, but that doesn't that the biographical sketch data, because we will take a PDF file.
- Dick Keogh - I would just like to both introduce and recognize Julius Cotton from the Department of Education.
- Julius Cotton - I think as far as our system staff is concerned, if the program officers are looking at a data element, and doing reports, they would want to be able to have it in a format they could do something with. Otherwise, they would be perfectly content to have it as a PDF file and be housed in the organizational and the personnel profiles. As far as our reviewer databases, each program office maintains their own reviewer databases outside of our back office system. So, the problem has been getting them to integrate their databases into our back office system, and to share reviewers across the program offices.
- Bob MacDonald - What I was envisioning was actually if we have a central database for all the project directors, I think we would still maintain an internal version of the subset that is ours. And then that internal version where we already have

reviewers. And the point is to separate the reviewer, manager, which is actually larger than our project directors. These are people from around the world, and we don't necessarily apply those. And just to separate those processes, even though they might share the same data a large extent internally.

- Steve Dowdy - I think at some point for the transition, if we could snap our fingers and we had a unique, universal government ID for everyone. I have been around long enough that almost universally I'm S. Dowdy in every computer system. I'm S. Dowdy in NIH. I'm S. Dowdy at NSF. I'm S. Dowdy at MIT. But a lot of people are S. Dowdy 1375, because they weren't the first S. Dowdy that grabbed their Yahoo account that afternoon. So, there is probably going to have to be some form of a mapping that says well, incoming S. Dowdy Grants.gov, S. Dowdy maps to S. Dowdy OO5 at NIH, but maps to 35792 at NSF or something, to make those transitions. Who keeps that master thing is unknown. But when I look at like the system-to-system where on a lot of forms now we are saying tell us the agency's ID. Well, I can't keep that mapping in my database that says the USDA ID is blip. And when I transmit for an NIH it's blip. And when I transfer, it's something else. At NASA I have five different user IDs, because they don't even use their procurement system versus their payment system versus their other system at NASA aren't even integrated. And they have even different constructions of the user ID and of the password. So, when I try to S. Dowdy, they say I'm sorry, that's too simple. You've got to be something else in one system. So, I can't even in my database go store the NASA user ID, because I've got five NASA user IDs. It depends on the business transaction I'm trying to process that afternoon, what my user ID becomes. So, there are a lot of issues and problems that we have to get agencies to come up to speed. The agencies around here are pretty good.
- David Wright - I think you're right, it's going to be much easier for the agencies to store one ID than the central place to store 15 IDs. So, I think if we get the central repository that has all that basic data in it, and that government user ID that they know we came up with 10 years ago, and each agency maps, okay, here is D. Dowdy at NIH is okay, here is ID number JK3251 at the central thing. Then as a user goes in to update their profile, you have the back end systems talking to each other, okay, here is all the centralized information that we are housing, and it goes out and gets all the NSF grant data, and the NIH grant data and kind of aggregates it into one place.
- Becky Spitzgo - Each system should do it, because it is one more data element for them. They are creating a table and keeping it up.
- David Wright - Well, if we get all that centralized stuff, all that static stuff in one place, then those are things that we as the agencies, don't have to keep up. The only thing we are keeping up is the stuff that is specific to us, the review committees, and the grants submitted and that kind of stuff.
- Steve Dowdy - And then if you want to keep redundant data, then I'm sure Pete and his folks will provide you some service to populate your own internal database.
- Becky Spitzgo - It sounds like it's exactly what CCR does for the whole federal government. They do it for organizations. We are talking about doing it for PIs. Everyone goes there to register. And then everyday we pull an extract from them of everything that changed from the day before and we update our files. And that's exactly the same thing, so you can pull that extract different ways, create different search criteria and decide what kind of extract you want, and how much data you one, or you can do a full dump of the database. It's exactly the same.
- Ron Splittgerber - Is that someplace that the Grants Executive Board is going with their area of responsibility?
- Becky Spitzgo - The CCR? I'm not sure what you are asking.
- Ron Splittgerber - The authentication, the idea of identifying a unique piece of information for an individual. Is that a new concept for that group, do you think? If we looked at the federal government, where would you go to ask -- would that responsibility for example be part of the Grants.gov issue?
- Becky Spitzgo - I think you would send it to the Executive Board. The other place you could send it is to OMB. OMB would probably then give it to the Executive Board, because the process is the Executive Board would need to approve it, and recommend that OMB approve it, and get OMB's okay. So, OMB has the final approval authority, because this obviously has a price tag attached to it. So, approving it means okay, also how are you going to fund it? And so when we get to dollars, OMB is always very interested in the dollars being spent. So, you would have to have an approach attached as well as how are you going to pay for it. Now, the Executive Board haven't dealt with an issue like that. I think we are about to see the Executive Board start to deal with some of those issues as you look at the GAO report recommendations, and how to continue address some of those, the GMLOB. What exactly is the strategy and the approach of that, and what are they going to do? So, all of those obviously have impacts on the agencies. So, they are not off the table, and this is their opportunity to have a voice in that.
- Dan Hofherr - If it goes there, I think they will wonder how does this relate to the authentication issue? And that's a federated identify approach. The goal is that you can log into your own agency application for whatever credential you want to. And in order to do that, there is a mapping process that has to happen. And it's the user who will map to it. So, they would come to fastening(?) with whatever credential. And they couldn't really do anything until they say, oh, yes, I'm this person on your database. And then NSF would have a table which would link this person -- when they submit it to NASA, this is what the RNS database says. So, it's not all clear in my mind how what we are all talking about relates to the authentication.
- Becky Spitzgo - I think the connection is that you have your credential providers for e-authentication. And you are going to have a credential. You said you have a credential now, and you use Grants.gov. You could use that same credential to get into this SI profile. And within that profile you have that unique identifier that identifies you across all the federal

government. That identifier would not be your log in. Your credentials would be your log in. And then you have a role within that, however we decide what the roles are, what you can do once you get into that database. So, the authentication piece is kind of how you get in, and then some group decides exactly what the data is, how it's going to work, what's the business rules and where it exists and all that.

- Dan Hofherr - But for the authentication to work, there is that mapping process. I don't know if that can be leveraged or not.
- Becky Spitzgo - Well, the mapping process is only needed if you already had an ID and password at a place before.
- Dan Hofherr - Or if you have records there.
- Becky Spitzgo - The mapping for records, I guess I would visualize it as it's that unique identifier, plus how that maps to the database at NSF. How that unique identifier maps to NIH, and to the different ones, and that would get you to the records piece of it.
- Ron Splittgerber - The hope is that no matter where the entry point for that authentication, that it can be passed along. If you are looking at single user log in with that, that credential can be passed along. There is a common way of doing it.
- Becky Spitzgo - And that is part of the underlying architecture for that, that assertion goes with you for that entire session that you are on there. But again, that just gets you into the system. And then the system takes over on what you can do. It's not at all really tied to this unique identifier. That is a unique identifier for your database, and for across the government, which seems like as far as figuring out what that is, it's just a number.
- Steve Dowdy - At that point it doesn't matter. Nobody needs to know what their unique number is at that point.
- Becky Spitzgo - Well, it's just something if you put it on an application when you are submitting, because someone says what's your PI number? So, you just decide what the size of the field, and whether alpha-numeric or it's numeric, and you give them a number, and people remembers it, and you're done. It shouldn't be a smart number, it just should be a number, or a name and a number. It could be anything really. There is already one that works, and just adopt that.
- Steve Dowdy - SSNs are so taboo. We had that problem solved for how many decades?
- David Wright - Basically, what we are talking about is creating a new SSN. Everyone says oh, we are not allowed to aggregate data, but yet they come back and say we need reports on aggregated data. We are wrestling with this at NIH too. They keep saying we need to do this, we need to do this, but they won't let us use what we need to use to be able to do it.
- Becky Spitzgo - I think that's just because the SSN has got a lot more tied to it than grant data, so you if you get something else, nobody is going to care.
- Julius Cotton - Plus, it completely violates the Federal Security Management Improvement Act, which we as computer security officers for the federal government are tied to. We are given guidelines for passwords and how often they should be changed and updated and dimensions and things.
- Dick Keogh - From the standpoint that this particular organization or group if I might be so bold, it seems as if over the past three times that we have discussed this, we're beginning more and more to get our arms around this in terms of understanding, at least in broad context, what the hurdles, and what some of the approaches are that could lead us to actually establish something. We probably at this point, and my sense is it may start spinning if in fact we don't start putting something down on paper, and start to indicate how we might actually go about doing this. And that certainly is not the kind of thing that a committee can do. But we may be at a point, or are we at a point where we need a smaller group to actually tackle this and come up with something concrete that we can actually put forward to somebody? Because until we actually put something down on paper, and actually put it forward to somebody who can do that, we are probably not going to go anywhere. And this might be good timing, especially with the crystallization with the Line of Business group, that maybe this could be something that we could actually get accomplished through that mechanism.
- Ron Splittgerber - That's an excellent segue into the outline for the white paper. I'm wondering at this point if we want to take a short break, and then get into an outline for the white paper, and see if we can agree on what the components of that white paper might include. We have already had some contributions from folks on FDP, ERA committee concerning that effort with Ellen Beck and others. So, maybe we could take a 15 minute break, and then come back and look at that.
- Dick Keogh - Okay, so it seems as if we might have at least a couple of people who might be willing to come forward to start a small group to really crystallize this.

[Brief recess.]

- Ron Splittgerber - In moving ahead with how we avoid making this part of the conversation we have had the last half hour a repetitive event, so that we are rehashing things, the concept I think was introduced a couple of meetings ago that we come up with a white paper, put things down in writing, especially with the federal folks around the table, with their help on how we might propose doing a demonstration on the whole topic of profiles. And I think profiles originally started to be part of the group's discussion because of the single sign on and authentication issue. And then it sort of morphed into a more inclusive and broader in scope, and probably paralleling a lot what NIH has done with their system as an example of how it might work. So, we have made some effort between the last FDP meeting and this meeting in gathering information on what a white paper might look at. And we really need -- I hope this is an open discussion -- you input on topics that might be covered by the white paper, and who might contribute to it. To this point in time we have had a number of federal agencies send us information. We have had information from Ellen Beck and Aaron Lindsey, who have been part of both FDP for some time. There was a lot of work that was done on this topic with profiles in 1996, 1997. That effort even got to the point that FDP was going to do a survey and try to find out what the components might be from an institutional perspective. So, we might go back and look at that information. Both Aaron and Ellen have provided a lot of data on what was done in the past, so we can build on that, update it, and use it perhaps as a basis for a white paper. Obviously, a white paper has to have an executive summary, so that was sort of the easy first target. We need to include that. Once the paper is done, we need to go back and do a summary, so folks can kind of read a one page synopsis of what that paper entails. The other one was this conversation, as I said originally started because of a single sign on. And Steve has been part of this effort in trying to find some way, whether a person authenticates at NIH or at USDA or at Grants.gov, somehow that credential is passed along, and they don't have to worry about a sign on somewhere else. It doesn't matter what the entry point is, they can get access to the level of security they are authorized to have at a number of different portals. There is actually a committee that started an effort some time ago called the Electronic Authentication Partnership. I'm not terribly familiar with the progress recently made. But we do know that they considered the authentication initiative, and that they wanted a federated authentication based on mutual trust. So, again, once you log into one point, you are trusted at other areas. That particular effort has both a federal component and a commercial component. So, there are folks from a number of commercial companies are -- I remember seeing Microsoft's name on there -- and federal agencies have been involved in that process.

- Julius Cotton - There are state government folks involved in that too. NASACT has been involved in that. In fact, I think Cornelia Chebinou, who is the co-chair of the National Grants Partnership is listed on their steering group.
- Ron Splittgerber - They were talking about how a credential service provider might provide that authentication, whether it's PKI, the SAMUL the Security Assertion Mark-up Language. Even to the point I think EduCAUSE has some proposals there. Universities could act as a credentialed service provider for their own employees. And meeting certain guidelines, they might be the one that is actually able to credential for someone. They published some standards for translation between the different systems, so they are pretty far down the road. And again, their major effort to encourage interoperability between the different systems. So, that partnership exists. That's one thing we can build on, and one thing that might be included in the white paper. I would just like to through it out now and see if anyone has dealt with that group, or uses any of the initiatives that they have started in considering authentication.
- Dan Hofherr - What's the name of the group?
- Ron Splittgerber - It's the Electronic Authentication Partnership. It looks like it is very active. They have a Web site. They have done a lot of work beforehand on things that we have been talking about. So, we might try to engage them in the process, and get some information from them on how far down the road they are in making that happen.
- Steve Dowdy - I forget the name, but a lot of universities have signed on to one of the federations at this point in time. The name of it slips me, but it's one that MIT is considering as well. But one of the things that I think is not clear to me is what level the various business transactions are being assigned, what level of authorization that we need. I had heard at one point in time that like submitting a proposal was a level one, and then somebody told me no, it's a level two. So, some of this is going to be difficult for us to understand unless what level it takes for the various transactions. And the agencies do that, right?
- Dan Hofherr - This is all under the authentication initiative. This is a governmentwide authentication initiative. And there are two parts. The applications have to go through assessment to see what level of credentials they need to accept. And then if you are a credentialed service provider, your credentials get assessed. So, then a user can only use a credential at the applications level or higher.
- Steve Dowdy - Right. But do we know, what is a proposal, for example?
- Becky Spitzgo - At Grants.gov the credentials are themselves what we call level one. But given the process that is in place, that the credentials are level one, but then the organizational comes in and gives the authorization, as well as other things that go on before it's awarded, it bumps it up to a level two. But the credentials themselves are level one, and that's really what is important in figuring out what credentials work with what application. So, if the application accepts level one, then those work. If you need level two, then your credential provider will have to provide level two, and you can work with a level two system or a level one system, so you can always go down. NSF credentials are level one, right?
- Dan Hofherr - They are level one. So, our credentials went through a credential assessment, and then the application goes through a risk assessment. So, I guess it would be possible that a grant to one agency can be maybe on a different level. But there is a risk assessment, and there is a standardized process you go through to say what your applications -- what their risks are.
- Bob MacDonald - I think it's a standardized assessment. We probably do it in USDA semi-annually for all of our information collections. So, they have all been assigned a risk. So, I don't recall the proposal on that. It's either a one or a two. We do have transactions that require non-repudiation. That gets into level three. Then we have some that require a signature, and there is nothing that handles that yet. But I don't know how many other departments have had to do that. It is a standardized grading level, and I think it is declared by the authentication initiative, right?
- Becky Spitzgo - They are actually NIST standards.
- Dan Hofherr - They are NIST standards, that's right. And each agency is supposed to be putting up applications that are e-authentication enabled. You can't do that until you do a risk assessment for your application.
- Ron Splittgerber - Who is the standard for making sure that NSF meets that criteria?
- Becky Spitzgo - GSA. The e-authentication initiative is their responsibility.
- David Wright - I have a question. How tightly do we want to couple the idea of a centralized profile with single sign on

authentication? They are related, but I think this should be two kind of separate –

- Steve Dowdy - I don't think we want to bite at all on the authentication.
- Becky Spitzgo - It's more of a design issue. This is a concept, an approach, a new way of internally doing business.
- Steve Dowdy - Whatever system we think we need for this profile naturally has to fall into the whole e-authentication initiative. That should be transparent.
- Becky Spitzgo - Yes, you shouldn't muddy the water with that piece.
- Bob MacDonald - But it is an issue, and for instance Dan and I have had some discussions about this, because once the proposal has been received, and there is confidential information associated with it, reviews, what have you, levels go up. The current processes right now require for a three level I think, or maybe even a level two, you've got to show up and show an ID to somebody. Right now for USDA, that means you've got to go to the county office. They don't recognize the universe of this. So, the part here about where they are talking about recognizing universities, and universities can be certified as credential providers would help ease that, because no one going to review for us if they have to go in sign in with the county.
- David Wright - But what does that have to do with creating a central profile?
- Bob MacDonald - Not. But I was saying it is also an issue. Also is the key word.
- Becky Spitzgo - But I think the real issue is we talk about what level credential do you need to submit an application. And we have already established that through Grants.gov. What level of credentials would you need to update the profile? That's really the issue. As the agencies pull that down, what you do with it, and where it goes after that is really nothing more than part of the systems of records notice of how we are going to use this data once it's been put into this profile, and you have that out there for public information. But that is where it stops.
- Bob MacDonald - And partly about credentialing what's in that profile, everything that is in there is public information, just like a directory. See, if you start putting other stuff in, it goes up.
- Steve Dowdy - You've got to be a little bit careful, because we might put a student as a key on a project for some reason, and a student's phone number is not public record. It is protected by student law.
- Bob MacDonald - That's why I said it depends on what goes in there. I wasn't saying that it was a level one.
- Steve Dowdy - That's not all necessarily public record just because it's submitted in a proposal.
- Bob MacDonald - Your processes for Grants.gov right now, the log in is all based on the AOR, not the project director, so we do need to deal with this issue.
- Ron Splittgerber - I think there is a little bit of history here too. Dick can help me out with the history, but when this committee was first step up, we were directed not to go beyond working with Grants.gov in the concept of single sign on was brought into the real of possibility of profiles. So, we have sort of stepped beyond that original charge in dealing with profiles. It started with the single sign on issue. That is one thing that things were talking about, and it has taken on the profile issue.
- Steve Dowdy - I think though that we are all right in the sense that Beth Philips pretty much said when we first said that we should start dealing with the notice of grant award and things like that, and basically said OMB is not going to like to hear that at this point in time. OMB wants to hear that the world is fine, Grants.gov is up and running, we've got all the bugs worked out of find and apply before we bite off. But profiles, since they are such an integral part of the application process, that that seems to be a reasonable thing to try to tackle as one of the next steps here.
- Ron Splittgerber - So, the linking between authentication and profiles, the reason that you might assume that we have been doing that is simply because of the history, not because they aren't two separate issues. We brought profiles into it because of the single sign on issue, even though they are completely separate topics. So, I think that's one thing that is important for the white paper to consider that aspect. There is another piece. If you remember at the first meeting we talked about quick wins, things that we might be able to do. And one of those that Becky mentioned was the grant opportunity profile with the CFDA, the Catalogue of Federal Domestic Assistance number. A number of universities I know -- we are one of them -- have a hard time in maintaining a list of those, or even obtaining a CFDA number for a particular award once it's been made. So, one of the quick wins might be to provide that information through Grants.gov, trough the find piece, and also if Peter can provide that table through the system-to-system, that might be another piece that we could provide as part of the data.
- Becky Spitzgo - It is required on sign.
- Julius Cotton - On that side, I would like to have a text box in there, because the core CDFA number, the title of that will be completely different than the title of the grant competition that the program officer is running. For example, 84-184 is the national programs program of the Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools, where they run grant competitions and they use 84-184; 84-184-A will say this is substance and drug abuse among college students. There will be completely different titles. So, I would like it if we have a text box so that someone in my agency could actually put the title of the grant competition. It can be completely different than the name that is in the catalogue.
- PARTICIPANT - I'm sorry to interrupt. I think in sign you can do that. Because I know for Energy we are putting CFDA 81-086, which means a certain thing, however –
- Julius Cotton - But in the description field I put in the actual title.
- PARTICIPANT - But that's not the description of the CFDA number. That's the description of this particular grant.
- Julius Cotton - Right, I put the description of the grant competition.

- PARTICIPANT - I thought that's how that field was defined.
- Bob MacDonald - The other thing I would say is I have learned recently that I guess it's post-award group or whatever, but they are working on a standard award. If that's the committee with FDP, that should be the mirror of that, as opposed to this.
- Ron Splittgerber - Let's leave this one out if it's been covered. Like I said, the reason I brought it up was if you look at the minutes from the first meeting, it's one of those quick wins that we covered. If it's been handled –
- Bob MacDonald - You might want to make sure that your other committee knows about it.
- Tony Cavataio - But it certainly wouldn't hurt. What this brings up is that it wouldn't hurt for what we are doing in that work group, for you to see the proposed new grant award notice that is being developed. We've got about a third or fourth draft of it right now. But this goes back to what Steve was saying earlier. If you all had input into that, it would save a lot of heartburn.
- Ron Splittgerber - So, we'll assume the CFDA is covered by the notice of grant award. For the institutional profile, again we are going to need some help on exactly what is included in that piece, if it indeed is part of the profile. If we have both the PI profile and institutional profile, and we want to separate those two pieces, what are the components of the institutional profile? And the first question is do we want to go there? Is the institutional profile part of the whole, broad concept of profiles? Or is that something that the award notice is going to handle?
- David Wright - I think the institutional profile kind of tacks onto what we want to do with the CCR. Because I think if we want to expand the CCR, the CCR is the logical place to be that profile for institutions.
- Becky Spitzgo - Well, it is now.
- Steve Dowdy - It needs to be expanded. We are seeing some expansion in I forget the acronym, ACFA(?) or whatever the DOD reps inserts that they did. And we are having issues around, because they have put in programmatic reps and certs inside the institutional. So, we don't know how to answer the question, because the question can only be answered if you know about the proposal you are talking about. It's not an institutional thing. So, that needs some work, but I think for profiles here, if we concentrate on people profiles, the institutional profiles, only one person needs to update those once a year, or when something changes, versus people's profiles that change all the time, because they wrote a new publication, and they switched institutions, and they went from assistant professor to full professor, and all of those things.
- PARTICIPANT - Is there a link between the PI and the institution? The PI moves from one institution to another, and is that get involved with this at all? Or do we not want to go there?
- Bob MacDonald - I think we have to better define the individual profile.
- Steve Dowdy - I think the for us, the way NIH has handled that concept of the affiliation, where people can have multiple affiliations. Personally, that seems to work very well for our faculty, where we do have a lot of people that are joint MIT-Whitehead-Massachusetts General-Brigham and Women's that all get to play together. That concept seems to work really well.
- PARTICIPANT - But does that assume that when we are constructing an individual profile, that an element is there that links to this institutional profile, so that we know this person is affiliated with multiple, or his history is that he or she has been affiliated with?
- David Wright - Yes, it gets into some design, but to me it's part of the employment section. When they fill out an employment record, that they somehow make that affiliation or something.
- Julius Cotton - Is this where we would put the numbers for the institution and the DUNS numbers for the components of the institutions?
- Bob MacDonald - That is exactly where the DUNS number may get difficult, because the DUNS number may be more tied to the financial office and institution. Well, the way the universities do that, they want to be affiliated with say the Hopkins Medical Center. Julius Cotton - That's the thing, I want the medical school's DUNS number, the school of business, are the arts and humanities, the school of engineering.
- Becky Spitzgo - That is up to the organization on how they do business. That is their call on what DUNS number should be put in if you are affiliated for when you do business with the federal government. So, we don't need to figure that out. That's the organization's call.
- Bob MacDonald - I agree, but it may not be one that is in the CCR. They may have a separate DUNS number for a portion of the university, but the one of the CCR may be say the financial one. And so, we have to look at that. I think we have to explore further.
- David Wright - You're right, it's something we need to consider, but I think it's much more in the design detail than we need to get here.
- Bob MacDonald - I agree.
- Ron Splittgerber - Again, some of the information, just as an example that Ellen Beck had provided in previous work that was done, as I mentioned in the 1997 timeframe, went down to defining exactly what might be on the profile. So, we've got literally pages of information. And it's just a matter of looking at that again for the white paper, and trying to figure out which pieces are appropriate. The term "award profiles" gets us beyond what we are doing at this point, but it's something that at some point down the road, we are going to have to continue discussing if indeed award announcements are a part of Grants.gov.
- Steve Dowdy - I think it's still legitimate. It's required in a proposal to tell an agency all of my active awards that I have.

- Ron Splittgerber - There is a parallel piece that hopefully Tony will fill us in on, on local and state block grants. We are looking for some way that Grants.gov could provide that information, and this might be a parallel effort between NGP and FDP as far as that data.
- Becky Spitzgo - When you say award profiles, just to clarify, are we talking about the awards that are associated with the individual on the individual profile? Or are we talking more award governmentwide database?
- David Wright - I think maybe Ron was going towards the latter, but I think we can apply it much better towards the individual. So, this would go back to you've got the central repository of that demographic data. But then when the person pulls up that record, the back end systems go and pull out a specific record set from each agency that says, okay, here are all this person's grants from NSF, NIH, DOE, et cetera, all the way down.
- Bob MacDonald - It is doable without the central database, but that would greatly facilitate it.
- Steve Dowdy - Right, and there is an issue here that I think needs to be brought up with the Grants Line of Business folks or policy folks, whichever group -- it's still very murky to me who is responsible for what in those two organizations. But the differences in the way agencies ask for -- like budget start and end date. Oh, that's real simple, we all understand that. Well, except for NIH only wants the direct costs for the current budget period, versus NSF wants the total project for the life of the award. So, what looks to be something very simple, award amount and budget start and end dates becomes very murky, and we've got to get some standardization across the government on these simples terms like that.
- David Wright - The fights we have had within NIH about degrees, it's been amazing. You think, okay, you've got a limited list of potential degrees, where you've got maybe 20, 25 or 30. Wrong. We have like over 200 variations of degrees. We've got to be able to count this, this person that has got this one degree.
- Steve Dowdy - And that has made its way into the PureEdge forms and the drop pick list for degrees. And I can tell you when we tried to map that to our HR data, we used the two of them. You are getting PhD or MS, that's all you're getting.
- David Wright - We've had gobs of fights. Why do we need to allow them to pick from a list of 200?
- Tony Cavataio - Steve, didn't the 424 R and R, didn't that take care of the problem for you with budget?
- Steve Dowdy - No, it was never defined.
- Becky Spitzgo - Because people can write the instructions however they want. It's one field. It's a common field, but that doesn't mean it operates in a common manner.
- Steve Dowdy - Right. And that's the danger I'm starting to see in the PureEdge forms. The agencies are getting familiar with the PureEdge forms, and now in an individual program announcement they are tweaking it. In this field I want you to give me this thing. And that becomes a huge problem when you start burying different implementations inside of program instructions.
- Bob MacDonald - It is going to be very, very difficult, because it is buried very deeply into how the agencies manage their funds and operate. I think the two examples are at NIH, where everything is on a continuing basis. So, you have these large things. So, what we are more interested in is the continuing increment. We use very little continuation. We give up all the funds with the initial award. We're looking for two very different sets of data. And it really comes down to how we manage our money, which has to do with a lot of how our money comes.
- Steve Dowdy - But then you can argue on the other side, as an agency when decided to fund a project, should they be looking at how much money the PI has, or should they be looking at the merit of the proposal in front of them? Is this good science, and does it look like they can do the work for the amount of money they are requesting? And when we start hearing NCI is not going to issue awards if you have more than $750,000, well, somebody might be able to cure cancer, and just because the exceed the $750,000 threshold, you are not going to give them award? So, these are the kinds of things that we are butting up now with implementing Grants.gov and moving forward. A lot of these old policy things where there were stove pipes, when we now have single governmentwide forms, those things are being exposed now, and it's becoming very difficult for us to manage it at the institutions.
- Bob MacDonald - This may be where we may need to closely coordinate with some of these other FDP committees, because as you say, they are grants policy things.
- Becky Spitzgo - Well, it's not just FDP committees. They need to go to the Grants Policy Committee, 106/107, and they need to hear this. They need to have this kind of feedback, because one of the main things that is lacking is governmentwide policy on doing grants. And it is up to every agency. We are streamlining. We have come a long way, but there are still the processing differences, and doing some of that change management without hopefully treading on anyone's toes on how you need to manage your funds, and how the money comes in, and the things you have to do because of whatever. But it's time to start thinking more alike. We have gone down the path, and now we've got some more hard work to do, and that's really what is happening.
- Bob MacDonald - That's what I meant, the mechanism I think is for this group to go to those FDP committees, who would then go to those specific forums.
- Becky Spitzgo - I thought I heard we had someone here to go directly to that group.
- Gunta Lidars - But the problem is FDP can talk about some of these things, but until NIH figures out if they want industry-funded clinical trials on their other support, we are not going to get anywhere.
- Jennifer Flach - Well, I guess the thing is if somebody higher than NIH was saying okay, NIH should be coming up with all these things. NIH, within the institutes we go through that just trying to come up with common business processes across institutes at NIH. It's a challenge, and it needs to come from higher up, because we are not doing it from the bottom-up.

- Bob MacDonald - But on these other committees you have the grants policy folks from the research agencies that are members of FDP, and that's a good place to start.
- Gunta Lidars - Do we?
- Bob MacDonald - You have a lot of the senior grants policy folks from the various research agencies on those committees. So, they are not the complete group of all research agencies. We know that. That's a good starting point.
- Gunta Lidars - It is. I think the problem is trying to configure FDP in a way that matches what the government agencies are actually doing. And that's what we have always butted up against, is how do we synergize the groups so we actually get some work done?
- Bob MacDonald - We have the right people on the FDP to get this started. So, it's a matter of working with them.
- Becky Spitzgo - But I think Jennifer's point is a good one. I think we do have the right people, but also the point is it's bigger than an individual agency. One agency could change every way they are doing business, but that doesn't mean they have changed it to match any other agency. And there is not a lot of difference between these types of issues and having a single place to find and apply. It's the exact same battle. OMB has put out policy. They have made a decision that this is how the government is going to do business. So, we really have to have now a new set of issues of how is the government going to do business. And OMB needs to be the place where that policy is going to come from. And 106/107 is the mechanism to take that to OMB, and through that law, it clearly says if we need to make changes to existing regulations, if you have legislation that needs to be changed, whatever, to be more citizen-centric and have more of a streamlined and standardized process, do it.
- Bob MacDonald - The problem of going straight to OMB is exactly the problem that Steve raised earlier, of working first in FDP and creating something that we can bring forward as a proposal is worth doing with multiple federal agencies and the institutions are directly involved. Once it reaches OMB, there are curtains that get drawn.
- Becky Spitzgo - I wasn't suggesting to bypass the committees. But at the same time, you may want to have two paths. I think those committees may benefit from some pressure or some guidance that OMB might offer that this is something that really needs to be done. That is just how it has worked for Grants.gov. If OMB had not pushed that through, we wouldn't be where we are. It's really that simple. And that's not because anyone wants to do business the wrong way or make life difficult. It's just part of what they have gotten used to, and it's part of the culture, and change is hard.
- Tony Cavataio - Another aspect here is I'll give you an example from the post-award work group for performance reporting. When we finished developing a family of forms for reporting, and we developed the instructions that went with those forms, we had five different forms that were developed. And that was to let the agency pick and choose what form fit their situation. But in addition to that, we said the agency can also write its own program-specific instructions. And so, you will have different definitions by the agency for the same data field that we just talked about earlier here. So, we are at a position now with this particular work group, we finished that work. But that would be an important feedback from this committee and others about making sure that the instructions are the same across the government. Right now we've got it written so you can just write in there what you want to write in there. And you are going to end up with -- in our department we have over 100 different definitions for student in the Department of Education. We did a survey of how our different program officers use the definition for student, and depending on the program, you had a slightly different definition of who was a student and who isn't. But I'm sure that's one example. That you all could probably come up with several examples yourselves of different definitions for the same thing. So, if you send something to Andrea and the policy committee like Becky is saying, that would be an important contribution.
- Ron Splittgerber - We also considered doing a survey. Again, there was a lot of work done in 1997 in developing a survey that would go out to research administrative offices, both at the institutional side and on the federal side to determine some of the parallel things that Tony was talking about, definitions and how those are done. So, we need to consider whether that survey is going to be part of the recommendation of the white paper, whether we want to go forward with that or not. We have had a number of problems with surveys in FDP. It got to the point -- this one did -- it sort of just died. The faculty actually ended up doing a survey that I think is out on the streets now that most of the institutions have submitted lists of active investigators. That one is moving forward. So, if we do decide to do a survey to gather this information, we do have a pattern to follow, since finally someone from FDP has gone forward with a survey, and being able to get past the compliance issues and things like that. So, that might be one component that we might want to consider. So, those were some of the things that we might consider in an outline on the white paper. At this point, Dick, maybe we need to try to see if we can do some specific assignments on how that information that we currently have in hand might be fleshed out, and actually have a responsibility assigned to some folks to finish that up.
- David Wright - One other section that I can think of potentially is -- and I may be getting too far down the line -- but maybe write up some potential implementations of a pilot. You've got a couple of different options. You've got Grants.gov doing the implementation. You've got one of the agencies doing the implementation. You've got a private company potentially hosting the implementation. And throw out the different options, maybe some pros and cons of each, and get that discussion started. I don't know how quickly we want to move to that point, but it's something else that might be in the white paper.
- Jennifer Flach - There are a lot of discussions that are going to go on about that. And probably the sooner we get that conversation going, the sooner we'll have some answers. So, I would actually agree.
- Dick Keogh - We've got potential sections of the white paper. So, we've got a format established. But again, my own philosophy is unless a small group grabs this bull by the horns and actually moves it forward, we may not actually have much

of this accomplished in anything concrete. So, we do have a couple of folks that have had experience with this that indicated some interest. And I wonder if we want to try to formulate, actually go to those individuals to see if they are willing to now together, perhaps with other individuals that we can think of that would be good for a small group of three or four individuals, to actually put something together for us to consider and put forward. The two individuals that I am thinking about have already been mentioned. That is Ellen Beck from UCLA, who has done some work on this. And someone who has not been as actively involved with any of the organizations recently, but who has considerable background and history with this whole effort is John Lindsey from CalTech. And those are two individuals that I can think of that might be very good to help lead a small task group.

- Ron Splittgerber - I'm wondering if anyone can think of anyone on the federal side. It would be nice to have someone who might be able to give some guidance to Aaron and Ellen. Would you be willing to do that?
- David Wright - Sure.
- Steve Dowdy - I think it would be useful if we just even had a brief inventory of what the agencies have, and at what level, not down to the every data item, but at least at a high entity level. You said, our employment record. Well, I sort of know what that means, but maybe NSF and Bob and people don't really know what you mean by the employment record versus this other record.
- David Wright - A high level data dictionary.
- Steve Dowdy - Yes, at least the entity kind of level maybe would be useful.
- Dick Keogh - I think that's excellent. I think that one of the charges that could go out to this particular group to do that. And also, we are generating a lot of information. We have uncovered a lot of information about this, which has been done in the past, including minutes of our discussions here. All that can be provided, as well as basic resource information. And they might get more resource information and then come back to us. It would be nice if they could start to get something together anyway in terms of at least some outline by September.
- Julius Cotton - When you say a high level data dictionary, you are talking about the data dictionary for our systems, or the data dictionary that I'm going to compile for our applications?
- Steve Dowdy - Like when you were talking out in the hall about you keep information about a student. What are some of those core components that maybe you keep a high level. You keep their name, their address, or something like that. But not down to we have address line one, address line two. But we keep degrees. NIH is trying to combine their profiles so that the reviewers and the project directors are in one system. Dan says they actually a have two databases. They would like to get to one database. So, what kinds of profile information are you keeping at a high level like that?
- Becky Spitzgo - I was just going to suggest, I guess we call it a white paper, but it really is almost a business case if you live in the government world. And I think it would be good to really -- and FDP needs to decide if they want to do this -- but really there are benefits above and beyond just the research community. And when you look at selling this governmentwide to all the federal agencies, and look at is everyone going to contribute, or how complicated is it going to get to fund this, it would be probably useful to relate this, they aren't called PIs, but they are key personnel on every grant. And to have a database where you have a single database that you can use that from an agency's perspective, with the single identifier to start knowing how much someone has signed up for grants across the board, and how much of their time is already being paid for would be a lot of value. So, it's bigger than just the research community, and I think it's a better sell to make that case. I'm sure that we can fill in the gaps wherever someone may need that, who may not have that perspective. But that is basically it. So, I think it's good to do the big picture sell, and obviously including the benefits not only I think to the grant community, but there are a lot of benefits on the government side too, and just making the case for why we want to do this.
- Bob MacDonald - I agree with you, Becky, but I might ask our colleagues in the National Grants Partnership to explore that issue a little more. The reason being is that my agency has not just research programs, but things that are more behavioral social type programs. So, in the research programs we have the same scientists applying over and over and over again. Therefore, it's worth maintaining a profile. A lot of these other programs, we see them once, maybe twice. These folks may not want to keep profiles, and besides, it would be a massive database. And so, the question is for some of the non-research programs, are there types of programs where the same folks do come back time and again? And how large is that, versus those were they are not so much interested, or it doesn't have that much value, because they come and they go.
- Tony Cavataio - Our novice applicant would be an example of that. They come from very small, non-profit organizations. And they maybe play four or five different roles.
- Bob MacDonald - I think that would strengthen when we make the case to base it on how much that is really true. Because I'm sure in some cases for non-research that is true. But to base it on sort of some reflection of the genuine size, rather than try to make a blanket statement.
- Becky Spitzgo - The implementation of how do you use this or when you use it is like another issue once you decide to put it in place. But there are definitely programs, I know within Education, and the system has a key personnel component in it that doesn't work very well, because it is all based on name match, because that's the only thing we can collect. And there has always been a need to really determine the amount of time someone is on a grant, and look at it from across the department. And now you are talking about being able to look at it from across the government.
- Bob MacDonald - I agree with you. In terms of articulating the value –
- Becky Spitzgo - There are some that won't fit, and maybe programs not worth doing or asking people to do it. And there are one time grants. But there are other programs that go on continuously that I think we all know that there is some abuse out

there, and there are some things going on that there is just no easy way to address right now, because of the whole Social Security number issue.

- Julius Cotton - That's right, we do have programs, state government, local government, universities that are not research, where you have the same project director year after year. It's the same people, the usual suspects.
- Steve Dowdy - But you have those where the government is technically the one that signed the application. How relevant is that, that they signed their transportation highway grant to receive their billion dollars.

DUNS/CCR Registration Issues - David Wright, Ron Splittgerber

- Ron Splittgerber - In the interest of time, we'll go through a couple more slides very quickly. We want to give time for Tony and some others to give some input going down. We talked a lot about this issue before, understanding that there are some issues with the DUNS/CCR registration process. I will send this document out later, but Ellen Beck has provided a list of talking point is you will, if we end up meeting with Dun and Bradstreet folks at the next meeting. I think Charlie Martin is our contact. If we have him at the next meeting, that we can make sure those topics are covered. And Becky had a meeting with D&B early on, but that was primarily a –
- Becky Spitzgo - It was a meeting with OMB, D&B and CCR. It actually was a meeting that CCR was looking for money. So, there really wasn't much discussion about the D&B or the CCR process. So, there really isn't much to tell.
- Steve Dowdy - Is there going to be work done on the CCR though?
- Becky Spitzgo - There is ongoing work that is being done now. The money issue that was really addressed there was more about supporting the help desk function that evidently D&B has been supporting since the government made the decision to make the DUNS number a single identifier across the government. Evidently, D&B has picked up the majority of that tab when it was done for contracts, and has continued to do it even for grants. And so, D&B was really looking for, because there was some agreement that at some point the government would start picking up more of that tab than it has been paying. So, that was what that meeting was all about. But we didn't get into enhancements. But John actually sits on the CCR board. They have a CM board.
- John Etcheverry - A function requirements board. They only meet twice a year.
- Ron Splittgerber - When is the next meeting? Do you know?
- John Etcheverry - The end of the year.
- Ron Splittgerber - So, it will be after our next meeting. Anyway, Ellen Beck had some excellent issues that we need to address. And if you end up having a meeting with them, that we don't resolve with Charlie, then we'll pass those points onto you.
- Dick Keogh - It looks like he will be available for our meeting in September, of this particular group, and will actually come and sit with us, which I think is good, because a lot of the problems that we are running into is really communication problems.

Grants.gov User Interface and Cross-Platform Compatibility - Dick Keogh and Ron Spittgerber

- Ron Splittgerber - There are some issues that we wanted to bring on the table. There was use of a Citrix client and meeting the requirements of Linux and Mac folks who don't have access to the PureEdge forms. Do you guys know how that went?
- Becky Spitzgo - Yes, we have some numbers. Actually, for the Pioneer Program we had 13 people who took advantage of using the Citrix client of the 300-some that were submitted electronically. It seemed to go well. We didn't have any negative feedback. It seemed to work fine. So, I have had some discussions with NIH about they have actually agreed to house/host a Citrix server if we want to go that way. And OMB had actually asked Grants.gov for a plan of moving to a platform independence, so that is our short-term plan. I'm just waiting to get some feedback from them. And if that's the way we go, then we'll be trying to get that up probably the end of the year or so, if not sooner.
- Julius Cotton - Were the 13 that were new, were some of the Linux and some of them Mac? Or do you know?
- Becky Spitzgo - I don't know. We were just looking for usage numbers, trying to get a sense. We hear this issue, but the thought was okay, now it's been out there. How many people really took advantage of it, and what kind of volume do we potentially have when we roll this out? And how many people used it, so how many potential problems was someone likely to hit? If you didn't have a high usage, there could be some others. But all in all it seemed to work well, and we didn't have any problems. Actually, NIH contact center took the calls as well for the Pioneer, so that's something we would fold into the Grants.gov contact center so they could have the same place to call whether they are having questions on the forms or the process or with the Linux solution. So, we'll have to get those folks trained and up to speed.
- Ron Splittgerber - Is there a timeline on having a client past PureEdge?
- Becky Spitzgo - The timeline we have is November 2006 through May 2007. Actually, PureEdge was just acquired by IBM. I don't know if anybody saw that, just about two weeks ago. And I have shared OMB's concerns with them of the need for Grants.gov to be platform-independent, especially this latest concern. So, that is being discussed within PureEdge/IBM. I don't know what to call them yet, because it's IBM/PureEdge. And we are supposed to be getting some feedback. They are hoping to accelerate that date. We worked really hard with PureEdge to try to accelerate that date. And they didn't feel like they could. I don't know if IBM will provide them a different perspective. Because I think just IBM is more aware of the big picture, where PureEdge was a much smaller company, and probably had more different internal priorities, and didn't

necessarily maybe see the value of moving that way. I don't know. So, we'll see.

- Ron Splittgerber - We also talked a bit about change management as far as Grants.gov, and having a known bugs list. Those were issues that we brought up before. And the third item on there, the S2S schema discussion, I know, Peter, you talked about having a meeting that preceded this one and addressing some of those issues. Do you have a quick summary of what was?
- Peter Brunner - Yes, let me pass out a couple of things that we have been working on. I'm not going to go over the entire thing, but we want to get out of here. But essentially, the application system-to-system process is operational at this stage. Two organizations have submitted live transactions to organizations. MIT submitted to DOE with a little bit of mixed success, but it got through. And InfoEd Systems International submitted to the National Science Foundation. I'm not going to through the slide thing. If you want to take a look at the final page on that, what we have been talking about is essentially the problem or the issue that we are trying to face in terms of looking at an applicant system-to-system approach is how do you deal with a number of potential clients out in the field? And it's an unknown number. It's about maybe a half a dozen vendor organizations and some unknown number of universities that may want to delve into developing their own systems, while at the same time having extremely limited capability of providing technical assistance. And in essence, the solution that we have come up with is basically to drown you with information. So that we give you as much information as possible, so that as big boys and girls you can then do your thing, and essentially be on alert that we have only a very, very limited capability of providing technical assistance. So, in terms of trying to deal with that issue, what we have been looking at -- and some of these things have been occurring independent of applicant system-to-system. They would be going on whether we were doing this or not. And some things are occurring as a result of simply the growth of Grants.gov, and people finding out that these silos we've got, we're asking for the same type of information 42 different ways, and maybe we can reduce that that 24, which is progress, maybe not as much progress as you would like. But in essence, the Grants.gov approach is looking to try to standardize data, expanding governmentwide data sets, a revision of for example the SF424 version 2 will be coming out sooner than originally anticipated actually. Working to reduce agency-specific data sets. We have been trying to work with some of the agencies to see if they can cut back, knowing that there are now other different things that are out there. Do you still need this separate way of collecting this information? That may have some reducing effect. Redoing of the global library and republishing the global library and applying those standards across the board, even to agency specific forms, where specific data elements are used. And extending the life cycle of forms. So, for example, when the SF423 version 2 comes along, it is expected that that would be then be in operation for a three year period, for the life of the OMB approval. So, this allows applicant organizations then to make an investment, knowing that it's not going to be changed 72 hours after they have gone public with it. It will 96 hours or 168 or something, but not 72. The other thing, which was the second piece that I passed out is that the organization of the technical information on the Grants.gov site has been a source of numerous complaints by applicant organizations, and by some technical staff in the agency. And we have taken a stab. Please regard this as extremely draft. But we have had some discussions with several of the agencies to take a look at the proposed outline of how we could reorganize our data holdings, our information holdings on the Grants.gov Web site so that it's more accessible, and more easily identifiable for the technical staff. And this is the first step toward doing this. It would put it in one area of Grants.gov in a technical library, accessible to both grantors and applicant organizations. There may be a couple of items in here where we might have to take a look at whether or not -- there are some security documents. We have to make a decision as to do we really want that particularly accessible? The answer may be no, although I don't think so. I don't think there is anything that unique about that information that couldn't go on the Web site. But essentially, what we are proposing here is to provide the information necessary for COEUS or for InfoEd Systems International, or any of the other organizations interested in doing so to have access on a much earlier basis that they have been having in the past, according to time tables that would try to lay out and to provide as much information as we can. And most of this information is already existing. It's a matter of reorganizing. We have identified several gaps where we think some additional documentation would be useful. For example, we have identified potential use of a bridge document, where we are comparing the schema versus the dat attribute template. And the basic rule of thumb is that the data rules, where there is a difference, but what we would want to is identify the differences between the two. It's not that we don't trust people's ability to read and make their own comparisons, but that's something we can do potentially and provide that service. So, that's pretty much where we are on this.
- Steve Dowdy - Peter, as I have been going through now, and I spent half of my life now sitting in Grants.gov, but going through each CFDA as they are posted, opening up the PureEdge, looking at new agency-specific forms that I might have to deal with. And in this balancing act of going what's the likelihood of me applying for that program, versus the other one, so I've got this juggling act. It's like get on the DOE, because we are going to probably submit 12 proposals for $20 million in a month, versus this one Education one that I saw the other day that I'm going I'm sure we're not going to apply to that one. But when trying to work with the agencies to reduce the forms, there are examples all over where maybe the agency has an agency-specific form, and it's an agency-specific form that just has a PDF upload in it. It's got some instructions and upload a PDF, which causes me heartburn, because I have to make a new data stream for that one form, versus why don't you just use the generic attachment form, where you can upload tons of different kinds of PDFs? What is the right communication vehicle to try to get those sort of forms out? You say you are working with them. Do you have a good stick that you can say no, we're not going to do this form? You should do it this other way? Or do the agencies just say, look, that's the form, the way you have seen it for 30 years. It's your job to program it.
- Peter Brunner - There is a combination of carrots and sticks; how you view them. Some people might view the carrot as a

stick, and vice versa. We have been working on developing a revised format for agencies to the data attribute tenets. And in one sense it makes it easier for them to construct the dat. On the other hand, it's a pain to pull together a dat. And there is certainly level at which the level of pain acts as a disincentive for coming up with an agency-specific form. That doesn't necessarily deter an agency. If the need is there, they are going to want their form. I think it's more carrots that are applicable. So, for example, if some of these governmentwide forms are out there, and essentially the OMB clearance is in place and everything, dealing with OMB is enough of a pain in the neck, that it can frequently be a good selling point to say, if you adhere to these new forms -- the version 1 of the SF424 represented a compromise just in the interest of getting something up. But version 2 represents an extended discussion among parties to make that form far more usable. So, hopefully, there is a greater interest in adoption of version 2 of the 424. There have been very extensive discussions with the R & R groups. So, it's not going to eliminate the duplication of effort. But the communication really is starting to break down stove pipes. If you go agency by agency, a lot of those subagencies within a department literally had never had a reason to meet, because their missions were so different. There was no reason for them to meet, and yet they suddenly find that they are collecting very similar information on four different forms. And they are not necessarily trying to impose pain upon the user community, no matter what it sometimes looks like when you are on the receiving end. You get them together and point that out to them, and there is progress being made. HUD was an excellent example that the number of forms that were out there were dramatically reduced. Commerce has significantly reduced a number of their forms. And there are a number of agencies like that.

- Steve Dowdy - I guess in some of the places though I've seen cases where like a form is listed in the mandatory section, which really for a university would never be filled out, because like the DOE has one. It's not in mandatory. They put it in optional. It's the lobbying form. Well, we don't lobby. We never would fill that form out saying, yes, I've lobbied to get this grant out of DOE. But I understand if you are maybe a national lab and the congressman working, he might have to fill that form out or something like that. But then we sometimes see that form up in the mandatory, which then for a lot of us, first of all we don't collect the data, because we don't lobby. So, I can never do data stream for that form, or I'm going to have to create a bunch of data items in a computer system and force people to fill out information that we would never use. I don't know how we sort of get involved with the form factory people.
- Becky Spitzgo - John is the forms guy.
- John Etcheverry - How they use that form to make it optional or mandatory, we really can't control that, the couple that we do. And we have had the conversation with an agency who for example submits a dat. We want this form developed. And we look at it and we say, okay, I see you've got a request for 24 data elements here, and 18 of these come from the 424, and 21 of these are already on this other form that we already have. So, no, we're not going to develop this form. That's not popular, but we do make those decisions, because we have limited resources. We also want to get to a greater use of governmentwide forms just to make their own lives easier. So, that happens frequently. When you see some of these forms you are referring to, they are probably older forms that have been around a while. We are trying to clean those up. And some agencies have actually eliminated some forms. They have found governmentwide use forms or other forms that succeed.
- Steve Dowdy - I don't understand why there are four different lobbying forms out there now.
- Becky Spitzgo - Because we didn't have a governmentwide form when Grants.gov went up. And the decision was do you build the forms, so options can't opt out who say they need it, or do you not build it and wait for 106/107 to deliver a governmentwide one, which we had hoped to have by the time we launched, and we still didn't have.
- Bob MacDonald - We have USDA regulations, until those are changed, until there is a governmentwide form, we have to use the USDA form.
- Becky Spitzgo - We definitely erred on the side of building some forms to increase usage by the agencies, and not provide the rationale for not using Grants.gov with the hope that eventually the would go away. So, any that you are identifying, especially the attachment is an excellent example where it shouldn't exist. If they want to give you those instructions, they should be in the body of the instructions and use the other attachment form. That's why it's there. That is the standard line. That's the message people get when they bring something like that to be developed. So, as you are finding those, certainly shoot them to us, because as John said, they are probably older forms that were developed, and it was part of bringing people in, and slowly getting them to streamline, because it just doesn't all happen at once.
- John Etcheverry - Our process has evolved also. Earlier it was let's get this program up. Now, we are looking at the agencies as a whole. So, an agency will come and say, okay we've got 84 forms we need developed. And through conversations and a little bit of negotiation, we pare that down to three. Because before, they would simply take a paper form and make it electronic. Now, we are saying let's look at the information we are trying to get. So, that's one half of it. The other part of it is it helps us a lot if you let the agency know also. Because if they get that feedback from you as well as us, it help reinforce that.
- Tony Cavataio - The other part of this too, let's keep in mind that OMB has just sent all of our agencies the e-gov management implementation plan. As part of that plan, an agency is supposed to identify and show how they are reducing the number of different forms that they are using, for example. And what have they done to use existing Grants.gov forms. So, we had to fill that out. That's in a matrix, and that's part of what we are being held accountable for on our e-gov plan. The other thing, in our agency we just reduced 110 forms by 30 percent, program specific forms by 30 percent. But even doing that, when we went to Grants.gov, you all turned around and sent back one of them and said use this existing EPA form that

you can use. And that has been a great help to us. So, I don't think the agencies want to fight this thing if they can see that what is being proposed here is really helpful.

- Steve Dowdy - The problem specifically on the system-to-system interfaces that we're dealing with is that when we name these forms that are identical, but we give them a new schema name, or we give them something else, that creates a whole other set of Java classes and streaming and stuff. And so, we have seen cases where the forms are identical, but it's call the Department of Education Lobbying Form, it's called the Department of Energy Lobbying Form. It has the same data. But that's now two sets of programs we have to maintain to populate the data stream. And when you open up a PureEdge, it's really easy, you just click on a little form and it opens up, and it's not a burden whether it was called EPA or whether it was called DOE form, it does not matter. But for us doing the system-to-system, it a whole other set of Java programs and classes that we're maintaining to do that. So, it is really adding to the burden when we see basically the same things over and over.
- Julius Cotton - Steve, does that add to your burden if like say we have an in(?) cover page, we have an Interior budget form, we have a Labor certification form? If the program manager has pulled the forms from the form factory from the different agencies and say, okay I want to be my application page.
- Steve Dowdy - Right. You open up the PureEdge form and it says we are collecting this, because the government in 1996 or 1967 passed this law and it is codified under CFR blah, blah, blah. Please attach your response. So, that's now a whole other set of programs we had to write, versus if you use a generic PDF upload, and then the instructions say in this generic form upload the thing. That's one program, and it handles any of those attachments. So, it's just these kinds of little things. I'm just sort of wondering where do we point these things out. Do we take them to Line of Business? Do we take them directly to an agency to try to get some real meat behind pushing them out?
- Becky Spitzgo - If you send them to Grants.gov, we certainly can share your e-mail easily enough with the agency. And we share that actually when we talk about it. We try to describe the system-to-system functionality, and why this creates more burden when we do this, even though it's not a big deal, it's not always a hard form to develop. It's just a bigger picture than just developing one form. So, since Grants.gov is a central repository, we are building them. People come to us to build forms. And then we can push out whatever we get to the agency. I think that's the best source, because we are not going to know if you send it to an agency, unless you copy us anyway, that we've even got an issue there.
- Julius Cotton - This sounds like an issue you can raise the next time Grants.gov does a Webcast.
- Tony Cavataio - There is another aspect though, and this is assuming that all of us are doing most of our programs with Grants.gov. In our agency we still have our own grants management system. In fact, we have two individual grants management systems over and above using Grants.gov. And we require user IDs and passwords to access applications for those systems as well. And I think you all need to address that to somebody. I don't know who it would be. Maybe it's the Grants Policy Committee. But asking for what is the plan for aligning these individual grants management systems that continue to exist in these different agencies.
- Becky Spitzgo - Well, OMB has asked agencies for that. And agencies all do have migration plans on file with OMB. So, that's something that is being managed out of OMB at this point. And that actually, by I think it's September 1 of this year, every agency will have to have an approved alignment/migration plan for any systems that duplicate any of the functionality, not just for Grants.gov, but any of the e-gov initiatives, and OMB has to approve those plans. So, that's underway now. They sent those out. Agencies had a chance to comment. Comments went back a week or so ago, and then OMB is going to review those, and by September 1 actually tell the agency, okay, here is your plan. We accepted it or changed it or whatever. So, I think that piece is already ongoing. I think OMB is actually done a very good job at making that happen and paying attention to it.
- Ron Splittgerber - In the interest of time, we have two items that are yet on the agenda, and the last one on this page, how to handle spikes in volume during deadlines, I'll handle directly myself with Becky and sort of pass that along, so we can get past that. Steve had one on NSPIRES, but before we do that, I would like to go to Tony, because he has produced a white paper through the National Grants Partnership, and let him fill a bit in on the efforts that NGP has done, especially as they parallel the FDP efforts.

NGP Summary of Parallel Efforts – Tony Cavataio

- Tony Cavataio - Is there anybody here who hasn't heard of NGP? So, everybody's heard of it. It's a spin off from the IAGC, but it grew beyond that in that it has a whole unit over and above non-profits, locals and state governments that includes a vendor community group of vendors and consultants. There are approximately 45 vendors that are associated with the NGP, and work in and of themselves, but in conjunction with the rest of the group. Overall, we may be around 150-160 members strong at this point. We have about 16 states that are loosely affiliated with us. And those states, under the leadership of the state of Texas and the state of Maryland are working to develop a state forum to bring these state agencies who work with representatives of states that work with grants, to come to Washington and discuss the whole e-gov, Grants.gov system-to-system types of issues. That is in the works right now, going on at this point, developing that directory of people who are called single points of contact for the states where they exist, and those where there are no single points of contact, but they work in the governor's office, and they work directly with grants management types of issues. So, the state side is pretty active. But keep in mind that everybody associated with this group are doing this on a voluntary capacity. So, there is nobody on salary here, so they are doing these other duties as assigned is what it boils down to. And this white paper came about through our association with Andrea Brandon, who is kind of the lead go-to for PL-106/107, who served as part of the steering committee for the NGP. And she said, you know I just got a paper here from GAO. They came by, and they saw me, and they wanted to know what's the PL-106 group doing to bring in the grantee community and the stakeholders and so on more directly into the process? Can you tell us what you have done to bring them in over and above the initial meetings? Many of us at this table were involved with those public consultations that began four or five years ago. So, this white paper was a result of that request. And the transmittal goes from the NGP, myself, co-chair with Cornelia Gabanov(?) from the NASAC(?), as a transmittal back to here in response to the GAO report. And just one significant aspect of that response had to do with involving the NGP in the process. Like Steve has been saying for years now, we need to be involved right at the beginning. Hey, we agree. The NGP has wanted to do this all along, but the FACA thing got in the way. The GAO attorneys said to us, well, we don't see a real problem here why you all can't be more involved with what the federal government is doing in this process. Grants.gov has been like on the cutting edge with their user group, and bringing in people to respond to what you guys are doing, your customer satisfaction thing. So, you have done that all along, but it hasn't happened in some of the other areas. And I'll give you just one example. One of the group works that Julius and myself are associated with, we had a meeting, and on page one were about ten statements that came from the public consultation meetings, three from states, two from non-profits, and three from universities. And these were their recommendations on how to handle this issue. I'm going to just keep it anonymous right now, not to incriminate anybody. So, these were brought forward, handed out to everybody at the table, and then agencies processed to discuss why they couldn't do anything that was there, and wanted to proceed with doing what they were doing. They were completely swept under the table. That happens kind of regularly. And the agency goes in fighting for its position. That's why we are there, right? We're fighting on behalf of our agency. So, this paper addresses that issue, but it goes into a lot of other things as well. I think it would be worth your while to take some time out and get a small group together and review it and see where we can collaborate together, and say let's go together on this, and work together. Because we want to work collaboratively with FDP. And the NGP was taken right off of the fdp.org. If you go onto our site it says the ngp.org. It models you guys. There are five working committees that are in action right now, and they have a federal person with a non-federal person at each spot. But what is different though is that this group also involves, and you'll see right up front you have for example the National Association of State Auditors, Comptrollers, Treasurers as a key one. You have the OMB Watch, which is made up of a number of non-profit organizations. You have the Association of Government Auditors, the National Grants Management Association. So, you've got a lot of different groups affiliated with this. Grants.gov has come and supported us, and Becky has been very vocal about supporting us and helping us as well and working collaboratively with us as well. So, that's no surprise. So, this paper goes into pretty much a number of recommendations that can be seen on page two that summarize on one chart. And if you want to drill down, just go to the back and read the details there. It's available. It's been pretty widely distributed. There has been a press release on it. It was brought up at the Grants Committee meeting on Wednesday, and Tom Cooley said that we understand that you all want to be more active participants. And he said we want this to be on our agenda for the September 29 meeting. So, we are on the agenda. And Tyson Whitney from your agency, Bob, is going to be one of the co-presenters there, because he was part of the co-chair representation on the white paper. So, we'll bring that forward and get these ideas out on the table.

- Ron Splittgerber - I'll go ahead, and when I send out the summary minutes of this meeting, be sure and attach a copy of that paper, because it really is excellent. In my opinion it is a milestone for planning the future of grants management.
- Probably one of the things we know we can collaborate with NGP on is the last item on there, the 106/107 sunsets. So, what is life after 106/107 sunsets? That's a really big issue I think for both NGP and FDP. One other quick item, if we can just take a minute, Steve had -- I think this kind of paralleled fast lanes issue with requiring a signature page. Agenda Item: NASA NSPIRES Cover Sheet
- Steve Dowdy - I guess I was just curious, for those agencies that are coming on board with Grants.gov, whether it's system-to-system or PureEdge, whether there is a push back or they understand or whatever, that we shouldn't be having to log in and do signatures. And where is that effort, and what's going on? I know NIH still has plans to make people log into a Web site after the fact and sign. And who is working on that? Where is that? How is that going?
- Becky Spitzgo - Well, I guess the only one that is probably working on it is we have it on the Grants.gov list to do an electronic signature policy that would be governmentwide. And I think the first step is defining what is electronic signature, and making it governmentwide so that it is accepted governmentwide. And it's not any more, well, my agency doesn't do it that way, or I don't do it that way. So, I think that's our starting point. And then making sure Grants.gov fulfills those requirements. And then we can say yes, that's an electronic signature based on that submission. It kind of continues to fall down on the list as other things come to the surface, is really what has happened to it, but it is definitely something -- I got your e-mail last week -- to push it up there on the priority list. I have talked to a gentleman at OPM who is doing a lot of the e-gov initiatives for the HR side. And they have an electronic signature policy that they have been working on, and I think we can probably piggy-back. They have done a lot of the work already. So, I have gotten some draft documents. I need to find out where they are, and then see how much of that we can use. Because if you have electronic signature for HR type documents, how different can this really be?
- Steve Dowdy - Right. We have gone through the pain and suffering of getting the credentials and stuff from Grants.gov. So, technically, we have already signed it. And now we go into the agency. So, how many times do we have to sign the same document? I can almost be persuaded until we can get the IG's office that logging into NIH and pushing the button that says, yes, it really is mine. But then like the NASA, not only do you do it electronically, but then make 20 copies, sign it, and mail it off to them as well.

- Becky Spitzgo - There is a burden on both sides. That's just a tremendous burden for them to match up, as much as it is a bother for you to do.
- Steve Dowdy - I know that their NSPIRES, they are gearing that up for their back office. Right now it's the forward facing and they are working with Grants.gov. But that e-mail was just a clarification that you have to do this. I'm hoping that we don't see this mushrooming as more agencies come on board. Yes, submit it through PureEdge and Grants.gov, but before you submit it, hit the print button and sign this thing and send it electronically.
- Becky Spitzgo - What is Energy doing?
- PARTICIPANT - See, we got rid of this a long time ago. So, we already went to electronic. So, we're not asking for any signature.
- Becky Spitzgo - Yes, it's real mixed at this point, and that's the bad thing.
- Bob MacDonald - We went to the lawyers, and they said fine, and the process is outlined.
- Becky Spitzgo - That's why we need this governmentwide policy, because then it takes the lawyers out of the picture. It is governmentwide, and then we can get a standard process. And if we hear of someone doing something different, we have something to point to.
- Steve Dowdy - We already have a law that says that an electronic signature is as valid as an ink signature. OMB put out clarification language to the agencies about two years ago reminding them of GAPIA(?) and the requirements that the electronic signatures are as valid. But yet we have but our lawyer said. Well, we have a law, and then we have two different memos, the last one from Karen Evans I believe, after she took rank, reminding the agencies once again. But yet then they say, well, our lawyers.
- David Wright - You were talking about the policy. OPM is working on one. You guys are working on one. Shouldn't there be one for everything, whether it's HR or grants or whatever?
- Becky Spitzgo - That's kind of how I ended up finding this OPM guy, because at an e-gov program manager meeting there was some discussion of hey, we need to centralize some of this stuff. All the e-gov programs are doing some of the same thing, and electronic signature was one of the things we talked about. I talked to this guy who said, hey, I've already done a lot of stuff on that. So, the answer is yes, but I guess that would be an OMB doing the policy. I don't know where it would come from. So, the next best thing is to go steal what they have already done, and just reuse it or reference it and make use of it, which is what I hope we can do. Bob MacDonald - We've been a little bit pat. My lawyers say yes, his say no. But on the other hand, it partly depends on how you do the risk assessment, where you come out. If it's a level one, then it's not that hard. If it's a level four, then I would guess it's pretty hard. And in part it depends on how that aligns what is coming through Grants.gov. So, if it's a level four and they are a level two, then that's not sufficient.
- Becky Spitzgo - But you know part of this, lawyers can make life really tough, and it keeps them employed. The bottom line, you can compare doing something electronically versus signing that document that you don't know who's signature, it's much more secure electronically. It's much better. And all the lawyers really care is if they have to go court, they can defend it, and they have something to point to, then they are done. So, that's just where we have to get to. This issue, I'm convinced, is not going away until we have a governmentwide policy for grants. And then that will cover for everything. It won't just be applications. It can be performance reports. It can be every document that is submitted, and then that can be referenced as the standard.
- Julius Cotton - There was an article in Federal Computer Week yesterday saying that NIH was going to digital signature, and that Sec. Leavitt was going to mandate it HHS-wide. I know I sent it to Jerry, and I think I sent it to your customer support desk.
- Becky Spitzgo - Don't do that. Send it to us, because they just have to do an escalation and then send it down.
- Ron Splittgerber - We are a few minutes past noon. I would like to thank our virtual member, David, if he is still there. I'll let Dick wrap up announcing our next meeting.

Next Meeting

- Dick Keogh - The plan I think is to meet again as we did in September, immediately following the meeting in January. The next meeting is September, because we're not going to do one in January. The problem with the winter meeting is it does not take in Washington. It takes place at one of the FDP institutions. It may be that people will want to come to New Orleans, where it will be. It's being hosted by Tulane. But probably we are not going to be able to get everybody that we need to together at that particular meeting because it is in New Orleans. So, the next meeting would be September, immediately following the FDP meeting at 1:30 pm.
- Ron Splittgerber - Okay, thank you everyone. I Appreciate your attention.

[Whereupon, the meeting was adjourned at 12:10 pm.]

DUNS CCR Document

<u>Ellen Beck - THE USE OF DUNS AND CCR – TALKING POINTS</u>

Background (brief):

For federal grant and cooperative agreement, as of 10/2003, all applications were to begin the mandatory inclusion of DUNS. The DUNS number would supplement other identifiers as required by statute or regulation, such as tax identification numbers.

The Central Contractor Registration (CCR) is the primary vendor database for the U.S. Federal Government. The CCR collects, validates, stores and disseminates data. Current and potential government vendors are required to register in CCR in order to do be awarded contracts by the government.

Federal online systems request DUNS and/or CCR information for registration.

General:

Has use of the DUNS as a unique identifier been successful?
Has use of the CCR registration been successful for grantee institution validation?

<u>Point</u>: Not only is it possible, but grantee institutions should have multiple DUNS (as appropriate).

- <u>Issue</u>: Information regarding the necessity of multiple DUNS is vague.
  - <u>Example</u>: Dun and Bradstreet web site only indicates "The D&B D-U-N-S number is a unique nine-digit identification sequence, which provides unique identifiers of single business entities, while linking corporate family structures together. D&B links the D&B D-U-N-S Numbers of parents, subsidiaries, headquarters and branches on more than 64 million corporate family members around the world.
  - <u>Example</u>: Central Contractor Registration (CCR) indicates "You must have a different 9 digit DUNS for each physical location/different address in your company as well as each legal division that may be co-located.
    - <u>Problem</u>: Some institutions, due to being part of a larger system or internal set-up, can't or are reluctant to create DUNS.

<u>Point</u>: It is up to the grantee institution to determine/select DUNS for C&G efforts.
<u>Point</u>: Agencies need to recognize that grantee institutions may have more than one DUNS.
<u>Point</u>: In some cases, agencies are requiring not only DUNS but CCR registration.

- <u>Issue</u>: A grantee institution may have as many CCR registrations as it has DUNS. (Also the case with CAGE Codes. CAGE Codes are created by CCR with new CCR registrations.)
- <u>Issue</u>: CCR registration not always created/maintained/managed by centralized research administration office.

<u>Point</u>: Some Federal agencies mandate the CCR e-Business Point of Contact be the POC for agency online system.

- <u>Issue and Problem</u>: CCR registration not always created/maintained/managed by centralized research administration office.

<u>Point</u>: Some Federal online systems now require the use of CCR the Marketing Partner ID (MPIN) as part of the registration or user access.

- <u>Issue</u>: According to CCR, this is a self-defined access code that will be shared with authorized partner applications (e.g., Past Performance Information Retrieval System

(PPIRS), Federal Technical Data Solutions (FedTeDS) etc.). The MPIN acts as the password in these other systems, and (per CCR) "you should guard it as such."

Problem: Presumption that individual registering has access or should have access to MPIN.

Federal Agency Online Systems Using DUNS and/or CCR for Registration and/or System Access (not inclusive):

NIH Contractor Performance System (CPS) – need active DUNS number to complete registration.

Grants.gov – CCR registration needed to validate applicant information. Will house organizational information allowing Grants.gov to verify user identity and to pre-fill organizational information on grant applications. NOTE: Grants.gov currently supports associating only one DUNS number per credential. A future enhancement is planned to provide the ability to assign multiple DUNS numbers to a credential.

Interior Department Electronic Acquisition System – Electronic Commerce (IDEAS-EC) National Business Center – Must have DUNS and CCR MPIN to login to see awards. Award notifications go to main CCR contact.

Department of Defense Web Proposal Tracking System (WebPTS) – from Strategic Environmental Research & Development Program – online cover sheet for self-registration requires DUNS and CAGE Code (must have CCR to have CAGE Code)

Department of Defense Wide Area Work Flow – must have CCR registration. The CCR EB POC is designated automatically as the WAWF Group Administrator (GAM). All other registrations appear to need user validation by the primary GAM.

Department of Energy Industry Interactive Procurement System (IIPS) – October 2004 User Guide states "All vendors who wish to do business with any government agency must register via the Central Contractor Registration (CCR) web site." Self registration includes DUNS field.

NGP White Paper

The National Grants Partnership
White Paper Series

Accelerating Grants Streamlining

Furthering the Recommendations of the GAO Grants Streamlining Report

July 2005

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I Executive Summary

Grants streamlining aims to transform the Federal grants enterprise to make it more efficient and less burdensome, for the betterment of the nation. This is important because grants account for 21.45%[1] of the Federal government's spending, more than the proportion of the budget attributed to acquisitions. The grants streamlining effort began with Public Law (P.L.) 106-107, the *Federal Financial Assistance Management Improvement Act*, was moved forward to some degree by Grants.gov, and has most recently been furthered through the Grants Management Line of Business (GM LoB) initiative. However, in its April 2005 report[2] the Government Accountability Office (GAO) concluded that the Federal government has not streamlined grant making as much as expected.

The GAO made five recommendations to accelerate grants streamlining:

1. Agencies should prepare annual progress reports.
2. OMB should ensure that efforts toward common reporting continue on track.
3. Independent grants streamlining initiatives should be integrated.
4. Grantee input should be solicited on an ongoing basis.
5. The initiative should have clear goals for completion.

The National Grants Partnership was established to bring together government and non-government representatives to improve the grants process in the United States. As noted by GAO, the Federal government has had mixed results in engaging non-Federal grants stakeholders in grants streamlining efforts, resulting in less progress than anticipated. This white paper is an attempt to open the communication channels between Federal and non-Federal stakeholders, providing key recommendations that should be discussed and, where appropriate, implemented. The NGP and its members welcome input from all stakeholders on the recommendations made in this paper, and desires to establish and accelerate dialog with the Federal government on grants streamlining.

The paper is organized around GAO's five key recommendations and includes additional recommendations to those made by GAO, which will further accelerate grants streamlining efforts. The intended audiences are The White House, the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), government grantors, and recipients of government grant funds.

[1] Data drawn from the *Consolidated Federal Funds Report for Fiscal Year 2003*. Grants accounted for $441 Billion or 21.45 % Federal Expenditures other than interest on the debt while procurement accounted for only $327.4 Billion or 15.90% of Federal Expenditures. Funding of grants exceeded funding for procurements for the first time in FY 1992.

[2] *Grants Management: Additional Actions Needed to Streamline and Simplify Processes,* GAO, April 2005, GAO-05-335, http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d05335.pdf.

I.A Summary of recommendations

The following is a summary of the recommendations made in this paper. A more detailed summary is provided in the *Conclusion*.

Table 1: Summary of Recommendations

Recommendation	Audience		
	OMB	Agencies	Grantees
Analyze all key modernization drivers: policy, people, process, and technology	●	●	
Stakeholders should focus on the business process of grant making before discussing information technology systems implementation or modernization	●	●	●
Understand the state of the custom, GOTS, and COTS grant management product offerings	●	●	●
Harmonize Federal financial assistance legislation	●	●	
Elevate grants streamlining to the President's Management Agenda	●		
Establish a Grants Ombudsman in the Office of Federal Financial Management within OMB and provide additional resources focused on Federal grants management	●		
Establish an overall Program Management Office to oversee grant streamlining initiatives and report to the Office of Federal Financial Management	●	●	
Create a Chief Grants Officer Council to address the unique processes and requirements of the grants management function and serve as an advisory body to the PMO	●	●	
Work in partnership with constituencies to develop a grants business process that is standardized across the grants enterprise	●	●	
Communicate the value of grants streamlining to non-Federal grantors	●	●	
Adopt and collaboratively extend data standards such as the Uniform Financial Data Elements and Definitions (as proposed by the National Grants Partnership's Uniform Guidelines Project), and look for further data standard consolidation opportunities across all grant programs	●	●	●
Inventory existing back-office systems, identify overlaps, and consolidate similar functions. For example, Federal agencies can develop consolidated interfaces with Grants.gov, and use the "Apply" functionality as leverage to consolidate back-end business processes		●	●

Recommendation	Audience		
	OMB	Agencies	Grantees
Interact proactively, repeatedly, and regularly to better understand mutual concerns and experiences with grant programs		●	●
Consolidate State and local grantees' stovepiped grant offices			●

I.B About the National Grants Partnership

NGP members are working on several projects and will undertake further projects related to streamlining the grants process, funding the grants process more efficiently, and communicating new developments in applying for, accounting for, and reporting on grants. The NGP is a forum where stakeholders may research and discuss grants administration issues. We invite interested parties from Federal agencies, State and local government, not-for-profit entities, and private-sector vendors to join the NGP and one or more of our projects. To find out more about the NGP, please visit our Web site, at http://thengp.org. You may join the NGP by completing the form at http://thengp.org/members/join.htm.

I.C Your feedback

We welcome the opportunity to receive and review your comments on this paper, and all NGP products. NGP members will be provided with the opportunity to deliver comments on drafts of NGP white papers prior to publication. Please send all feedback to the co-chairs of the NGP White Paper Series Committee (WPSC).

If you would like to participate on the WPSC, and volunteer your time, energy, and expertise to the development of future NGP white paper products, please notify the co-chairs of the Committee.

NGP White Paper Series Committee Co-Chairs

David G. Cassidy	Tyson Whitney	Lori Michaelson
david.cassidy@tcg.com	twhitney@cfo.usda.gov	lori.michaelson@bearingpoint.com

II Moving Beyond the Barriers

Before implementing technology solutions that streamline grants management, it is crucial to obtain a complete understanding of context and alternatives.

Key Recommendations

- Analyze all key modernization drivers: policy, people, process, and technology.
- Understand the overall Federal grants management landscape, and how to leverage government-wide initiatives.
- Understand the state of the custom/GOTS/COTS grant management product offerings and determine where they fit in the Agency's modernization plan.

The GAO reports that:

"More than 5 years after passage of P.L. 106-107, cross-agency work groups have made some progress in streamlining aspects of the early phases of the grants life cycle and in some specific aspects of overall grant management; however efforts toward common electronic systems for reporting financial and performance information have not progressed . . . "[3]

Why might this be the case? What is impeding government's progress with streamlining grants management and what can be done about it?

II.A Analyze all key modernization drivers

Rather than set out on their grants streamlining in a piecemeal fashion, agencies need to begin their streamlining initiatives with an analysis of the scale and maturity of their existing grants management infrastructure—policy, people, process, and technology. In many agencies, grant making has been so decentralized that it is necessary to start with the most basic questions:

- For how many grant programs is the organization responsible?
- How many grants are given out in each program?
- How many *types* of grant programs is the Agency managing, and what are the salient features of each type?
- Do any of the different types of grant programs require different processes or resources?
- What grants management functions are centralized? At what level?

It is also critical for the agency to analyze and understand where its grant making policy is derived.

- Is each organizational component setting its own interpretation of Office of Management and Budget (OMB) guidance or is there an agency-wide implementation?
- Where does the agency expertise in grants management reside?

[3] *Grants Management: Additional Actions Needed to Streamline and Simplify Processes,* GAO, April 2005, GAO-05-335, http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d05335.pdf.

- Which grant programs have developed program-specific directives? Why?
- Are there best practices in these policy areas that should be promulgated more widely?

In terms of people:

- How are grants management functions divided?
- Do employees that perform grant administration functions receive recognition for their work?
- What types of users does the organization need to address, e.g., program staff; grants administrators; legal staff; public affairs; finance, budgeting, and accounting staff; grantees and subgrantees; and contractors?

For those closest to the grant making process, there is often a separation between the various grant making functions (e.g., program management, grant administration, budget management, financial accountability, legal advice, and regulatory services, etc.). The agency should understand its structure and why (or why not) the approach will work best for it. Questions to explore include:

- How are the various grant making functions administered?
- If the functions are separated by offices or other organizational units, how well do they work together?
- In the agencies that have integrated some of the functions into one office, how well has that worked?
- Is appropriate training being provided?
- How is the agency working with subgrantees?
- Are the same subgrantees working with multiple components of the agency?
- What is the satisfaction level of this constituency?
- What other groups of external users does the organization potentially need to interact with, e.g., reviewers, applicants, grantees, beneficiaries, Congress and other oversight bodies and advisory groups?
- How will all these entities be affected if the agency takes advantage of the opportunity to automate key components of the grants management process?
- What are the expectations of each of these stakeholder groups for the future of the agency's grant making operations?

While at a high level grant management can be described by a standard process model[4], significant differences exist between grant types and even between grant programs within a particular grant type. For example, the terms and conditions and even the grant award for many mandatory grants have been predetermined in the enacting legislation, greatly simplifying (if not eliminating) many activities, such as grant announcement, grantee's identification of and application for the grant, and the government's review of applications. For discretionary funding, however, these same processes can be quite involved, particularly application review requirements and award decision. Similarly at the program level, medical research grants may require terms and conditions above and beyond those required for a basic research and development grant, resulting in additional monitoring requirements. Agencies should ask themselves and each other:

- How are grant program processes similar? How *should they be* similar?

[4] *Grants Management: Additional Actions Needed to Streamline and Simplify Processes,* GAO, April 2005, GAO-05-335, page 7, http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d05335.pdf.

- How are grant program processes different? How *should they be* different?
- Can the different types of programs be classified into groups that have similar processes?
- Is there extensive subgranting?
- How does the subgrant process affect the grant process?
- What are the performance measurement and program evaluation requirements?
- How automated is the current process?
- Is additional automation desired?

With regard to this last question, the agency may want to consider how it is doing in terms of some common efficiency metrics, such as:

- Grant processing time
- Number of applications processed per full-time employee equivalent
- Number of grants awarded versus full-time employee equivalents

Of course, these metrics will vary depending on the specific application requirements. However, it is clearly possible to look at the application processing for a particular grant program and determine whether or not it is gaining efficiency over time. For example, through the institutionalization of its online grants systems, the National Science Foundation has been able to support a 10 percent increase in the number of applications it processes without adding headcount.[5] An agency can also take the next step in performance improvement by benchmarking itself against other agencies with similar grant programs to determine what it is striving for in these and possibly other metrics and whether or not it is achieving its targets.

This analysis should also consider the scale and maturity of the technical infrastructure that supports grants management:

- What are the legacy tools?
- What are their functions?
- How well are they performing them?
- What is the existing hardware and software configuration?
- Are existing data sources adequate and reliable?
- Is there an overarching organizational data model in place?
- Are dedicated grants management solutions in place?
- Has an Enterprise Resource Planning solution been implemented?
- What other integration points have been established or are available?
- What additional functionality is desired? For example, are there additional interfaces that would greatly enhance functionality?

II.B Understand the Federal grants management landscape

Having a reasonably detailed understanding of the full agency portfolio is critical to streamlining, modernization planning, and implementation decisions, but alone it is not enough. In order to move forward with grants streamlining, an agency must also understand the current Federal grants

[5] Statistic provided by BearingPoint project team at the National Science Foundation.

management landscape. OMB will continue to require government-wide consolidation around specific policies and processes. Armed with the knowledge of their strengths and weaknesses developed through the assessments detailed above, agencies should be proactively monitoring the progress of these government-wide streamlining activities to find ways to incorporate them into, or use them to advance, their own modernization strategies. Opportunities might take the form of leading in a particular area or shoring up a weakness by taking advantage of an existing initiative.

Agencies should pay particular attention to the focus of the OMB on consolidation of grant making activities. The GM LoB initiative has found that there is enough diversity among grant programs that multiple models will have to be supported, but it has not yet indicated what those models will be or how it intends to support them. Armed with their own understanding of their grant portfolios, grant making agencies can determine whether they are likely to be successful service providers for specific grant types or whether they will be seeking grants management support, and for which functions.

II.C Understand the state of grants management solutions

Development of a grants modernization strategy will include a determination of what back office functionality the agencies and the government as a whole will continue to support and for how long. To support these requirements, there are currently three choices for an agency and/or the government:

- Build a custom solution
- Invest in a Government Off-the-Shelf (GOTS) solution
- Buy a Commercial Off-the-Shelf (COTS) product

To date, action has been at the agency level and most agencies have invested in custom-building their grants management solutions piece-by-piece. This allows agencies to combine or upgrade to best-of-breed components from existing applications. While it involves significant integration complexity that can present technical difficulties and result in significant cost, this 'evolutionary' approach leverages existing system investments and results in gradual change that can be more acceptable to stakeholder groups. However, this is also the drawback of this approach. As the change occurs gradually, the effort encompasses a longer timeframe than a 'big bang' approach.

There are two ways to do a 'big bang'. One is to simply take one system in use at the agency and consolidate around it. This approach might be taken if the agency has one component that is the clear leader either in terms of the scope and scale of its grant making or if one component has a particularly strong legacy application. However, it should be noted that the other agency components may resent taking on a sister organization's solution.

The other approach is to bring in an entirely new custom, GOTS or COTS package. The benefits of the 'big bang' approach is that it typically involves a shorter timeframe. It also necessitates a more holistic evaluation of problems and solutions, creating greater consistency in grants management process and ensuring that the agency is not solving the same problem over and over again. In addition, it can be easier to take advantage of latest technology and functionality with this approach, which can be built upon service-oriented architecture principles.

Regardless of the implementation approach chosen, the agency will have to determine whether it will build, buy, or borrow its systems. It should be noted that the GOTS/COTS grants management market is still evolving. Many of the earliest commercial offerings were developed as extensions to financial management systems (such as those provided by CGI-AMS, Oracle/PeopleSoft, and SAP). These products focused exclusively on grantee accounting, although some of these same providers are now starting to develop grantor products. In addition, there are a variety of COTS grants management packages on the market. Many of them are best suited to competitive, discretionary grant activities. There are, at present, few proven COTS enterprise-wide grants management systems and few successful implementations in US Federal agencies, although the market is readying itself to respond to anticipated requests for such functionality.

As the discussion above illustrates, forming a grants streamlining and modernization strategy is a complex activity, and while many agencies are making significant progress much also remains to be done. The points raised in this discussion will help those working on this issue to develop a comprehensive grants modernization initiative in at least one major grant making agency.

III Integration of the Three Initiatives

Grants management must be addressed as a whole by a consolidated management team originating in OMB, with Executive focus on grants management as a distinct business function.

Key Recommendations

- Establish a Grants Ombudsman at OMB with the addition of resources focused on grants.
- Elevate grants streamlining to the President's Management Agenda.
- Establish an overall Program Management Office to oversee grant-streamlining initiatives and report to the Grants Ombudsman in the Office of Federal Financial Management.
- Create a Chief Grants Officer Council to address the unique processes and requirements of the grants management function and serve as an advisory body to the PMO.

P.L. 106-107 is the overarching legislation directing OMB and Federal agencies to streamline the Federal grant making process. Two initiatives have emerged from this legislation: Grants.gov and the GM LoB. Together they represent the scope of reform activity within the grants community.

Separate work groups were developed under P.L. 106-107, for Grants.gov, and for the GM LoB initiative, creating overlapping tasking, goal identification, priorities, and staffing, as well as uneven levels of commitment in the agencies leading each set of work groups. The April 2005 GAO Report noted that the overlapping program offices mean not only duplications but also gaps in responsibilities.

While P.L. 106-107, Grants.gov, and the GM LoB initiative are moving grants management forward, their critical paths now appear to overlap, creating confusion and inertia among Federal grantors. The three initiatives need to be brought together under one umbrella, both to recognize their importance and to guide them to complete success. We recommend that the emphasis be placed on the management of the original legislation—P.L. 106-107—and that the other efforts be subsumed under a single governing body. This will also have the benefit of giving grants management an elevated profile within the executive branch.

III.A Structural changes

Grants management is not solely a financial function yet the oversight of Federal grants management currently resides within the Office of Federal Financial Management at OMB. Its position within the existing management structure does not garner sufficient focus and emphasis to support the management of a government-wide grants management streamlining effort. This is the case despite the fact that grants account for 21.45% of the Federal budget, more than the proportion of the budget attributed to acquisition.

We propose establishing a Grants Ombudsman at OMB under the Office of Federal Financial Management with the addition of resources focused on grants. As part of its overall grants management oversight mission, the Grants Ombudsman would be charged to manage one cohesive program to implement P.L.106-107. The separate initiatives, P.L. 106-107, GM LoB, and Grants.gov, would be consolidated under the Grant Ombudsman's authority. Furthermore, OMB may wish to consider structural changes inside the agency to ensure that grants issues are fully addressed in the future, such as an Office of Federal Grants Management (OFGM).

The CFO Council and the CIO (Chief Information Officer) Council separately provide oversight to on-going grant reform initiatives. However, the grants management function is not fully addressed by either council. Therefore, the NGP recommends that each grant making agency appoint a Chief Grants Officer (CGO) and that a CGO Council be formed to address the unique processes and requirements of the grants management function as a whole.

The Grant Ombudsman and the CGO Council would be well positioned to make recommendations to Congress for effective legislation to facilitate the grants-management streamlining effort.

To provide further impetus for the grants-management streamlining effort, we also recommend that the initiative be added to the President's Management Agenda (PMA). Agencies are explicitly measured on their performance against the priorities identified in the PMA. Elevation of the grants management streamlining effort to the PMA places a higher priority on achieving success. This added visibility to ensure success is important because grants have a significantly greater impact on society than Federal government procurement expenditures because of the comparative amount of Federal grant funds awarded and that complimentary State programs multiply each dollar of Federal financial assistance many times over. Further discussion of this recommendation is provided in section VII.B of this paper.

The Grant Ombudsman should manage the grant streamlining effort through a single Program Management Office (PMO). The CGO Council would serve as an advisory body to the PMO. The PMO mandate would be three-pronged:

- Complete the requirements-gathering work groups process started by the GM LoB RFI from April 2004.
- Promulgate a Joint Grants Management Improvement Program (JGMIP).
- Implement key grant functionality with the continued rollout of Grants.gov and the creation of the consortia recommended by the GM LoB.

The organization of these initiatives and their governance is shown in the chart below. The three efforts are discussed in the following paragraphs.

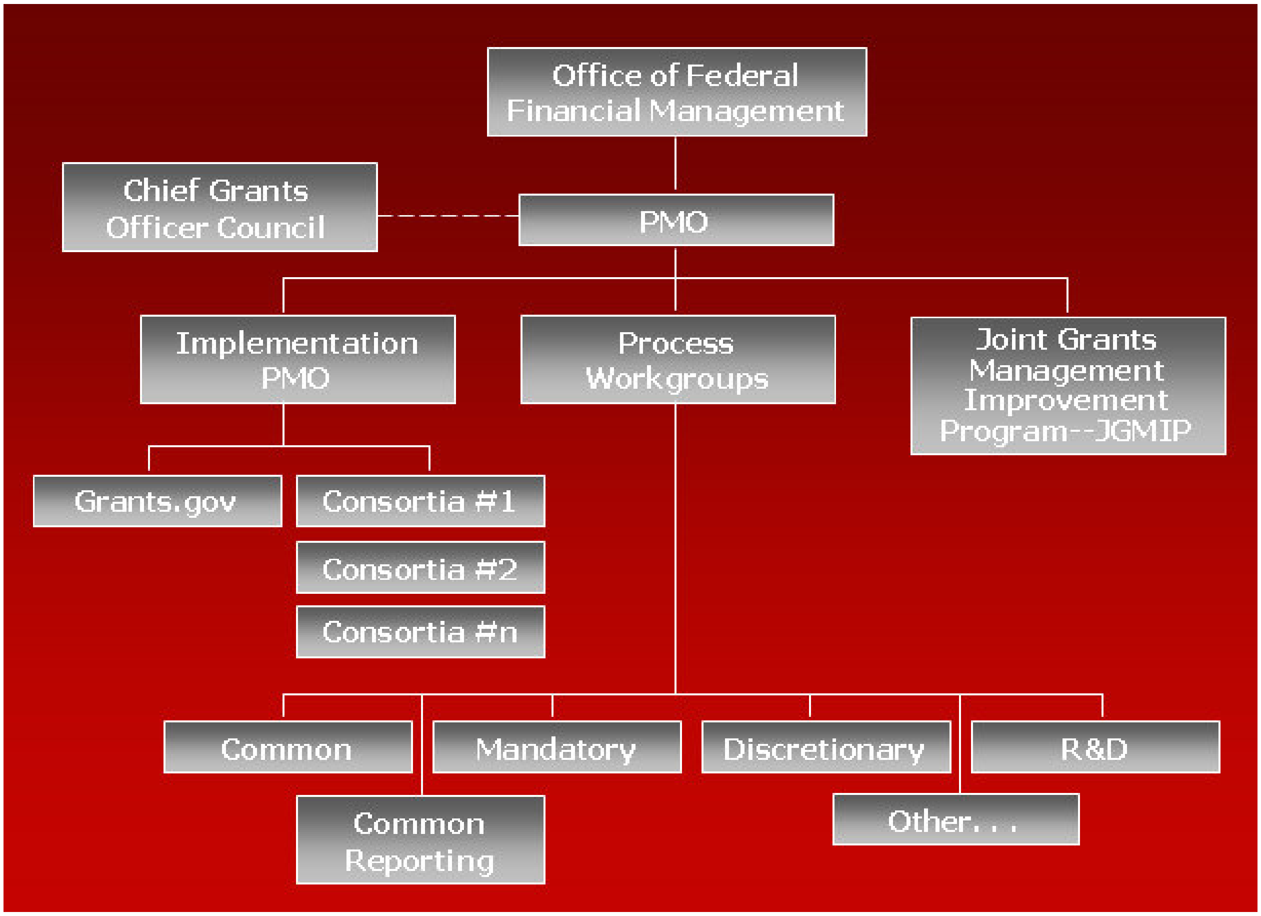

Figure 1: Grants Streamlining Initiatives Organization

III.B Requirements gathering work groups

The work groups and committees under the separate initiatives need to be reformed and consolidated. The work groups are generally organized around specific functions within the overall grant making process. Insufficient coordination between work groups has failed to reduce overlap and failed to provide clear direction to the agencies for reforming their grant management processes.

We recommend that the work groups be reorganized to deal with specific grant types (mandatory, discretionary, and research and development) and their life cycle processes. These work groups will focus on the full cycle of grant making and the standard data elements needed to effectively support automation and change management. The work groups will coordinate their processes and ensure commonality of data element definitions where appropriate.

It is imperative that the PMO and its work groups ensure constituency involvement throughout the requirements-gathering process and implementation. Including effective representation by key stakeholders (grantors and grantees) within the work groups will ensure more interactive dialogue throughout the process leading to better reforms and their greater acceptance.

We recommend that a complete catalog of the documents published under the purview of the three grant reform initiatives be compiled and published for reference purposes. It would serve as a means of communicating what has been accomplished within the grants community at large. The substantial body of work already developed will be a critical input to these work groups.

The process definitions should be mapped to the grant programs across the agencies, based on their grant type, and validated by those agencies. This mapping is crucial to provide concurrence from the grant making agencies and provide direction for the organization and development of the GM LoB consortia.

III.C Joint Grants Management Improvement Program (JGMIP)

There must be standardization of software requirements for back-office management of grants before effective inter-agency systems can be implemented. The establishment of standards for software should draw upon the Joint Financial Management Improvement Program (JFMIP) model to provide a set of basic system requirements to ensure grant system and process integrity. The Joint Grants Management Improvement Program (JGMIP) would be created as a reform process similar to the JFMIP. The JGMIP would also be used as a tool to certify the implementation of a full grants management system or key components used in more than one integrated grants management system. Once its mission is completed, the standards and controls for grants management systems implementations will be in place and the JGMIP program office can be closed and responsibility for its continued maintenance and development be transferred to the OFFM.

III.D Implementation Program Management Offices

The Implementation PMO will manage all the efforts for integrating and executing the process and procedure recommendations developed by the requirements work groups. Each program—Grants.gov, etc.—will have its own PMO for the day-to-day management of its particular effort and will report to the overall Implementation PMO.

Grants.gov is an on-going program that is meeting many of its goals. The current PMO should remain intact. However, Grants.gov will become one of the implementation PMOs managed by the Implementation PMO.

Creation of the inter-agency consortia will be managed by specific PMOs under the auspices of the Implementation PMO. Building the consortia will depend on the completion of the applicable process definitions and the JGMIP. The Federal Enterprise Architecture (FEA) is also a key input to building the consortia as it defines the authorized infrastructure technology.

IV Common Grant-Reporting Systems

Enormous savings of time and resources are possible if the Federal government creates and utilizes uniform grant application and reporting standards and forms.

Key Recommendations

- ✪ Expedite the adoption of reporting standards by providing leadership, responsibility and authority vested in a Grants Ombudsman in the Office of Federal Financial Management.
- ✪ Deploy a common grants reporting system by beginning to pilot existing flexible systems that can be integrated with Grants.gov.
- ✪ Commit to provide incentives for agencies to support ownership of reports.
- ✪ Commit to collaborate with industry to seek mature grants management solutions where standard technology structures for storing and transferring financial and performance reports are defined and updated in a manner that any grants management system that adheres to the standards can import, export, and store reports information seamlessly.

As identified in P.L. 106-107 and the GM LoB initiative, there is a need for common electronic systems for reporting performance and financial information. Common applications are but one part of P.L. 106-107. Common reporting is another opportunity that P.L. 106-107 specifically targets. In this section, we will discuss:

- Why are common system and reporting standards needed within each kind of program?
- What standards are needed?
- What has been done to date?
- What steps remain to be completed?
- What options do we have?
- Our recommendations

In particular, we recommend the following actions in order to achieve a standard, yet flexible common reporting system for grants:

- Expedite the adoption of reporting standards by:
    - Empowering the proposed Grants Ombudsman within OMB with the appropriate resources to coordinate and accelerate the standards creation and adoption process
    - Harmonizing legislation such that reporting requirements are consistent across Federal agencies for common grant programs and integrated with standard reporting requirements within similar types of programs
    - Establishing cross-cutting standard financial and performance metrics
    - Defining and publicizing a timeline for standards publication and finalization
    - Providing incentives to grantors for implementing new reporting standards
- Ensure the deployment of a common reporting system by:
    - Conducting a survey of existing systems
    - Creating pilots for one or more systems

- Developing the system to be flexible enough to be deployed as standards are created
- Integrating the final systems with Grants.gov as the common grants portal

IV.A Why are a common system and reporting standards needed within each kind of program?

A common IT system that incorporates standard formats for financial and performance reporting will provide the following benefits:

- Minimize administrative burden and improve reporting for grant recipients
- Remove duplication of effort and provide greater uniformity in Federal business processes for reporting
- Create a common format for reviewing grant performance across agencies to improve accountability
- Increase knowledge sharing across all grant making organizations
- Improve administrative efficiency of Federal grant agencies because with common reports, agencies can take advantage of economies of scale
- Increase collaboration across departments

To illustrate the inefficiencies of the current reporting process, we highlight some of the findings from a report published in April 2003[6] by OMB Watch, The Urban Institute, and Guidestar. Those groups sent a survey to a wide array of nonprofits, including national, State, and local organizations, and faith and community based organizations. Findings include:

- 177 of the 365 respondents (over 48%) provided examples of inconsistent standards and duplicate reporting requirements
- 33% of respondents said they are required to file multiple reports for the same activities, while 42.4% said their funding agencies have more than one definition for the same thing

Specific examples of these issues include:

- Different report formats are required, even within the same agency (they specifically cited the Department of Health and Human Services)
- Demographics are requested in different distributions. This requires re-counts for different grants. For example, some want age breakdowns of 0-5, 6-12, and 13-18; others want ages 0-2, 3-6, 7-9, and 10-18
- The Department of Commerce wants outcomes-based programmatic reporting but the Department of Education wants outputs reporting
- Some agencies require the use of on-line financial reports; some require reports on standard OMB forms; some even require copied invoices for every transaction: compliance rules (budget revision rules, etc.) vary from agency to agency, and that requires extra oversight

Such differences in standards, definitions, formats, and systems from one agency to the next creates a nightmare of administrative burden on the grantee, is costly to the Federal government, and makes it virtually impossible to measure grant performance and share information across agencies.

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[6] *Results and Findings: Survey of Nonprofits On Government Grants,* OMB Watch, http://www.ombwatch.org/article/articleview/1454.

IV.B What standards are needed?

The foundation of any streamlining effort is the development of standard formats and processes that meet the needs of all stakeholders participating in grants management and administration. The GAO said in its report that agencies should standardize financial and performance reporting with the following standard formats:

- Standard Federal Financial Report
- Standard Non-Research Progress Reports
- Standard Research Progress Report
- Standard Personal Property Report
- Standard Real Property Report
- Standard Summary Report of Inventions

The NGP Uniform Guidelines Coalition was formed to take the standard reporting formats initiative one step further and establish uniform guidelines for budgeting, accounting, financial reporting, and auditing for recipients of grant funds from Federal, State, and local governments, from foundations, and from other non-governmental funding sources. Too often the budget formats submitted in grant applications do not match the financial reporting requirements. Standard budget formats for grant applications that match the standard Federal financial reporting requirement would ensure the grantee can easily track financial progress against budget. A parallel effort should be implemented for performance reporting, with standard measures of performance established during the grant application process.

IV.C What has been done to date?

Coordinating standards across 26 Federal agencies is a tall order, and the Post-Award Workgroup that was formed under P.L. 106-107 has made significant progress in looking at business processes (monitoring and accountability) and recommending best practices and standards for different types of grants. The workgroup plans to include the use of these new reports in post-award monitoring of Federal assistance, and has made progress on each of the financial and performance progress reports identified in the GAO report. Each standard is in a different stage of the rules-creation process: draft, proposed, final, or codified. We look forward to the time when all standards have been codified.

IV.C.1 Federal Financial Report

A proposal for a consolidated Federal Financial Report (FFR) was published in the *Federal Register* on April 8, 2003[7]. The proposal consolidates the Financial Status Report (SF-269) and the Federal Cash Transactions Report (SF-272) into a single report, the FFR. Most grant recipients currently are required to submit either the SF-269 or the SF-272 under each award, and many recipients are required to submit both. The FFR would consolidate the collected information in a single form, and agencies could choose which sections need to be filled in.

The Post-Award Reporting Subgroup considered more than 200 public comments received on the April 8, 2003 *Federal Register* notice, made changes to the form and instructions in response to those comments, and is working with OMB to issue a final *Federal Register* notice. OMB also plans to

[7] *Federal Register,* Vol. 68, No. 67, April 8, 2003, [68 FR 17097], http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/fedreg/040803_consolidated_financial_rpt.pdf.

propose revisions to its financial reporting policies in 2 CFR part 215 (Circular A-110) and Circular A-102 to accompany the new FFR. These will be published in the *Federal Register* for public comment.

IV.C.2 Progress Reports

Due to differences in the types of federally supported activities, performance reporting was not suited to the single-form approach. The working group instead decided to pursue two approaches to performance or progress reporting, one for research awards and one for all other types of grant awards.

IV.C.2.1 Non-Research Progress Report

The proposed Performance/Progress Report (PPR), developed by the Post-Award Reporting Subgroup for use in non-research awards, would allow agencies to obtain the information they need for their non-research activities from a menu of standard choices. The PPR would allow agencies to:

- Establish similar reporting requirements for similar types of activities
- Better fulfill their responsibilities under the Government Performance and Results Act
- Use information from the PPR in completing the Performance Assessment Rating Tool required by OMB

The Post-Award Reporting Subgroup developed a draft PPR for programs other than research and informally coordinated the draft with the Federal agencies and constituency groups. Following informal review of the PPR, the Post-Award Reporting Subgroup will make needed changes, develop a formal proposal, and draft a *Federal Register* notice.

IV.C.2.2 Research Progress Report

Given their role in facilitating cross-agency efforts to address issues critical to the support of research, the Research Business Models (RBM) Subcommittee of the National Science and Technology Council Committee on Science has assumed responsibility for streamlining and standardizing progress reporting under Federal research awards. The RBM Subcommittee is working closely with OMB and the relevant P.L. 106-107 Work Groups and Subgroups in this effort. This past year the RBM Subcommittee of the Committee on Science began work on a standard format and instructions for research progress reporting. Once it is completed, the RBM Subcommittee will suggest the process for issuing and getting feedback on the proposed format and instructions.

IV.C.3 Personal Property and Real Property Reports

The Post-Award Reporting Subgroup developed a draft personal property report and instructions for cross-agency use, and sought informal agency comment. The group also developed a draft real property report for government-wide use. The draft reporting form incorporates and defines data elements commonly used by the Federal agencies. The next steps are to develop business rules for use of the government-wide real and personal property reports and prepare the forms, instructions, and business rules for issuance in the *Federal Register* for public comment.

IV.C.4 Summary Report of Inventions

OMB will publish in the *Federal Register* a final directive—developed by the Post-Award Reporting Subgroup following public comment—to establish standard data elements for a summary report of inventions. It should be noted that inventions and patents reporting is already consolidated into two major systems, Interagency Edison (iEdison), which is used by 23 Federal agencies, and ENTRe, which is used by NASA. Since iEdison is already used by most Federal agencies for invention reporting and tracking, electronic submission of summary reports of inventions may be consolidated through that system.

IV.D What steps remain to be completed?

The ultimate goal is to create a common, government-wide system for financial and performance reporting. The NGP envisions that this system will:

- Be the single site accessible through Grants.gov for submission of financial and progress reports
- Have the smallest possible number of standard report formats and requirements to minimize reporting requirements for grant recipients
- Issue automated notification and business rule capabilities to facilitate timely and accurate collection of financial and progress reports
- Provide a tool to provide grantees and grantors with indicators to monitor and correct their performance in real time
- Possess technology that can adapt with evolving business and grants management data and business process standards
- Use open standards and APIs to allow easy integration with other agency-specific systems
- Contain robust ad hoc query and reporting capability to provide cross-agency reporting, analysis, and knowledge sharing
- Incorporate PAR GPRA and the OMB PART to enable agencies the ability to develop, refine and integrate performance measures.

To accomplish this, the following milestones must be achieved:

- A study of existing grant reporting systems (COTS and GOTS) should be conducted to determine what systems are already in place that can be used as foundation for the future common system
- A pilot should be performed using one or more of these candidate systems. Any pilot should include the following characteristics as metrics of success:
  - A number programs (research and non-research)
  - A number of agencies
  - A variety of grant recipients, including educational institutions, State governments, local governments, Indian Tribal governments, and non-profit organizations.
  - Multiple reporting periods (annual, semi-annual, quarterly)
  - Individual report entry, batch reporting, and system-to-system interface reporting;
- Lessons learned from the pilots should be documented and published for comment and review
- Standard formats and processes for reporting should be finalized
- Cost-accounting principles and guidelines for both budget submission and financial reporting should be integrated
- Standard performance metrics and methodologies should be established for cross-cutting, non-financial performance measurement
- Production systems should be chosen and expanded

- The resulting systems should be integrated with Grants.gov

IV.E What options do we have?

The Post-Award Reporting Subgroup has already provided a solid foundation in developing reporting standards across the Federal government with their drafts and proposal for the various consolidated reporting formats. These drafts and proposals merely need to be given more urgency and attention so that they may be converted into final formats that are in use by the sunset of P.L. 106-107 in 2007.

The next area of emphasis is to proceed with identifying one or more common reporting candidate systems. Options include:

- Grants.gov
- U.S. Treasury Department's Financial Management Service (FMS)
- The National Science Foundation Fastlane Project Reports System
- The National Institutes of Health IMPAC II and SCS OnDemand System
- The U.S. Department of Commerce National Technical Information System Grants Reporting and Tracking Suite
- The U.S. Census Bureau Federal Assistance Award Data System
- Post-Award Grants Management Suite
- Outcomes Collection, Evaluation and Reporting Service
- GLOWS Grants Reporting System
- Minnesota Web Enabled Grant Operations (WEGO)
- New Jersey System for Administering Grants Efficiently (SAGE)
- Ohio Grant Records and Applications Network for Traffic Safety (GRANTS)
- U.S. Department of Education’s e-Reports

IV.F Our recommendations

Based on this analysis, the NGP recommends the following actions to ensure that the grant reporting objectives initially envisioned in P.L. 106-107 are realized.

IV.F.1 Expedite the adoption of grant reporting standards

Standards are the bedrock for streamlining any grant reporting initiative. If people do not speak the same language, they cannot share information. Consequently, reports have to be translated from one reporting language to another. But standards cannot be standard until they are defined, published, finalized, and used. The NGP urges action to expedite the drafting, publication, and finalization of these standards. Specifically, we recommend the following:

- Establish a Grants Ombudsman in OFFM at OMB: While progress has been made in developing reporting standards, many of these standards are not being cleared by OMB for final publication. The unfortunate reality is that there are not enough resources at OMB to give these standards attention and priority. With a staff hired specifically to focus on grants management, a Grants Ombudsman within OMB can provide sufficient resources to finalize these standards.
- Harmonize legislation: Many agencies’ reporting requirements are driven by legislative mandates. Because Congress addresses one program at a time, it may unwittingly create

different reporting requirements for organizations that receive grants from more than one agency. The OFFM can work with appropriate Congressional committees to harmonize legislation and synchronized reporting requirements across agencies on grant programs that serve similar populations. The OFFM could approach the problem many ways, including summarizing the legislation in an OMB bulletin or circular or by working with Congress on an omnibus grant-reporting bill.

- Establish cross-cutting standard financial and performance metrics: A core set of financial and performance metrics will not only alleviate administrative burden on the grantees, it will provide increased knowledge sharing and accountability across organizations and grant programs.
- Create and follow a detailed schedule for drafting, publishing, and finalizing the standards for each report format: This will provide interested parties time to prepare their comments and recommendations prior to the initial publication, thus expediting the process.
- Facilitate more comments and participation in future white paper efforts of the NGP and other similar associations.
- Create an outreach and communications office out of the OFFM Implementation PMO to promote the standards for acceptance and adoption in the grantee community.
- Involve vendors and solution providers during the publication and finalization of standards process to ensure that off-the-shelf systems are prepared for the new standards as soon as they are finalized.
- Provide incentives to grantors for implementing new reporting standards, such as incorporating adoption rate into the scorecard, PART, GPRA, or PMA.
- Commit to provide incentives for agencies to take on the responsibility of ownership of standard reports. While many agencies agree that standard reports are critical, the current issue is that there is no incentive to adopt the burden of owning and maintaining the reports.

IV.F.2 Ensure the deployment of a common grants reporting system

Software vendors are looking ahead and creating grants reporting systems that will be able to incorporate standard formats when they are finalized. OMB should be testing these systems now, even before the standards are finalized, to ensure that the government is ready to make recommendations about off-the-shelf systems when grants reporting is streamlined. We recommend a pilot project using one or more systems to allow OMB to gain the following benefits:

- Feedback on the draft reporting standards as they are used in real situations
- Preparation of the grantors and grantees for a common system
- A solid foundation for a production system by 2007

V Grantee Input

The lack of ownership of Federal initiatives among non-Federal levels of the grants enterprise inhibits progress in streamlining grants management.

Key Recommendations

- Establish better communications between Federal grant managers and state grant managers, and better communications within each group.
- The political leadership must be brought into grants streamlining efforts, through the NGP and other groups.

Hundreds of individual State grant programs exist, each with its own legal and regulatory requirements. Those requirements compel State and local officials to appropriate funding accordingly. Hundreds of billions of dollars flow from the Federal to State Governments each year. They fund everything from road construction to homeless-shelter operations. While the largest portions of these funds go to local governments, the vast majority of funds granted to local governments come from the States themselves. They are therefore allocated by State budgetary legislation and are subject to the influence and direction of State, local, and nongovernmental bodies. In essence, the business end of the vast majority of Federal policy, from agriculture to education to human services, is State government.

V.A Communication disconnects

In state and local governments a cadre of dedicated, hardworking staff members use text documents, spreadsheets, and—if they are lucky—home-grown databases to manage their stewardship of Federal and State grant funding. They are the people who will be most affected by P.L. 106-107 and its streamlining mandate, but they are unlikely to be aware of the law or its impact. This lack of awareness is the outcome of a communications disconnect at all levels: from the Federal to the State and local levels, between State grants managers, and between local government grants managers. There are a few reasons why this disconnect has occurred. The following sections outline a few possible explanations.

V.A.1 Lack of communication

States are good about two-way communication with subgrantees—groups that receive and use Federal grants funding. Federal officials disbursing mandatory grants may communicate with State grant program managers (discretionary, and research and development grants are less likely to go through State offices), but that communication is less likely to be two-way. Information flows well when it is going down but State grant managers have little or no say in what occurs at a Federal level. More importantly, many State and local officials cannot easily express the difficulties or challenges of administrating Federal requirements to those that make the requirements. Federal officials pass down new grant-related initiatives, programs, and guidelines without fully comprehending their effect on State and local offices.

For instance, a Federal grant program, the Federal Victims of Crime Act, established a national system for States to use to complete their Federal reporting requirements. The system, which minimized work on the Federal side, increased work for many State grant administrators. States that had their own automated systems needed an automated interface so they would not have to re-enter their information on the Federal system. Although the Federal agency finally provided an automated XML interface, it did not provide support for it. States had to figure out on their own how to use it with their internal systems. The Federal government needs to be aware of how its actions affect State and local governments, and be ready to work with them. Communication needs to be two-way.

And communication is most effective when there is a personal relationship. Within States, grants managers tend to know the subgrantees; between States and the Federal government, communication is most often based on official memos and not personal interactions. We suggest that each Federal grant program have an identified, accessible manager who interacts with State officials and knows (or can easily ascertain) how policy and procedure changes will affect them. This also allows communication of how legislation like PL 106-107 directly affects those who administer a specific grant program.

V.A.2 Inconsistent or incomplete peer communication

We need to encourage development of a formal process that encourages State grant managers to share lessons learned in managing Federal grants. While such sharing may occur within a state, it is less likely to occur between states. The result is that grants-management processes may be different in different states even for the same Federal grant program.

V.A.3 Lack of awareness of successful web-based grant-related initiatives

As it exists now, when most State grant program administrators determine that an electronic system is necessary for the administration of their grant programs, the search for information about appropriate solutions can take many different forms. Some search the Web for solutions. Others use message boards that are used by other State administrators that manage the same grant programs. Still others send email messages to any and all other grant administrators that have been helpful to them in the past. Almost all of this communication is lateral, from State to State, and very few, if any, turn to the Federal government for direction. Consequently, the search for effective electronic grant management solutions is being duplicated all over the nation. Countless hours are spent making the same evaluations that have been made time and time again in other States by other officials.

V.A.4 Lack of State data and process standards

Although establishing standard data elements across all Federal grant programs is a laudable goal, it may be better to begin by standardizing grant management processes for each grant program in each State. The ways in which States implement programs can vary widely, in part because of limited communication between States and the Federal government, or between States themselves, and in part because of State laws. Based on these standard processes, a consistent set of data elements could more easily be established for individual programs across all States. With a flexible standard—one established to accommodate regional and legal differences—States could help lead the standardization effort.

V.B Accomplishments evident on smaller scales

Some examples demonstrate that Federal grantees can contribute significantly to grants streamlining. Just under half of the States are using thin-client Web-based systems to apply for grants, get approved and funded, and make reports under the Federal government's No Child Left Behind Act of 2001[8]. These Web-based systems are either home-grown or commercial; the commercial systems have been utilized in more than one State. The Department of Education is building on this shared experience by establishing a working group of grant managers from States that are using common systems. This working group will help inform requirements gathering.

Additionally, over a dozen States have Web-based systems to manage their Justice and their Housing grants. Increasingly the States are using cutting-edge technology to deal with the "future potential to integrate with Grants.gov or other Federal grant management systems" (according to their requests for proposals). Many State grants management systems are making significant headway compared to a number of their Federal government counterparts.

V.C The streamlining audience

The question that is perhaps the most important in this discussion is "Who is grants streamlining and electronic grants management attempting to serve?" If the answer is Federal auditors, Federal financial officers, and the Federal budget staff, the constituency is roughly 500 people[9]. If the answer is to improve the lives of grant program staff in State and local agencies, grantees, and the people they serve, the constituency numbers in the millions. That audience needs to be represented in the policy-making process to ensure the successful outcome of the grants streamlining effort.

V.C.1 Governors

Governors have the following needs in terms of Federal grant making efforts:

- Awareness: knowing what is out there and how to maximize a State's share.
- Command and Control: leveraging grants to help fund State priorities and initiatives.
- Political: Federal grant programs support some of the most important services provided by the State, and help Governors advance their state agendas.
- Economic: Money is policy. Policymakers put money behind what governors and their constituents care about.

The National Governors Association could be encouraged to focus on grants streamlining if their costs could be offset by other sources, such as foundations, associations, think-tanks, or indeed the Federal government itself.

V.C.2 State legislators

State legislators determine the budgetary priorities of the State, and legislators generally have the same interests as Governors. All agencies' intergovernmental affairs divisions should make it a priority to reach out to organizations such as the National Conference of State Legislators and the National Speakers Conference to communicate the goals and reasons why grant streamlining will

[8] Data collected as part of a market research study conducted by Agate Software, 2004.
[9] Estimated on the basis of 50 states each employing five budget finance officers and five audit and accounts staff.

positively affect their memberships. Both will come to the table if it means being involved in policy setting.

V.C.3 Mayors and locally elected officials

This is the group closest to where the actual work of grant making occurs. These are the people that make sure the roads get patched and the garbage gets picked up. They and their constituents benefit if a streamlined grants process allows them to focus more on securing grant funding and providing services than on doing redundant and inefficient paperwork to meet overlapping requirements. They are also the first place their constituents turn when Federal funding is too difficult to get because of a patchwork of paperwork requirements. Reaching out to the U.S. Conference of Mayors, the National Association of State Legislators, or similar organizations and involving them in the process would be beneficial to both the Federal government and the local officials.

V.D Our recommendations

- Better communication must be established between Federal grant managers and State grant managers. Information must more readily flow between those who make Federal determinations and those who must implement those decisions. Lateral communication must be encouraged and strengthened so that States are not interpreting Federal grant requirements alone.
- Who is really driving this effort? What problem is it trying to solve? Agency career staff alone cannot make this happen. The NGP and others need to get the political leadership at the agency level in the room. Governors, mayors, state legislatures, and state government staff and their associations need to be involved in setting policy on Federal grants streamlining.
- Without political leadership involvement and administration buy-in, grants streamlining will remain an exercise in the safe margins of government.

VI Clear Goals for Completion

The integration of the goals and strategies of existing grants streamlining initiatives is a natural evolution of their progress, and agencies and grantees can speed this evolution while meeting their own goals in the short- and medium-terms.

Key Recommendations

- Stakeholders seeking to streamline grants management should focus on the business process of grant making before discussing information technology systems implementation or modernization.
- Grantors and grantees can make immediate and iterative improvements to their respective grants business processes, regardless whether improvements are made in the Federal government.
- OMB and the CGO Council should rationalize grants policies and have the capacity and responsibility to oversee all grants streamlining activities. (If our earlier recommendation for establishment of the CGO Council is not adopted, the CFO Council should participate.)

The streamlining of Federal government grant making represents a significant organizational transformation effort. In July 2003 the GAO published a study[10] on key practices used to ensure successful mergers and transformations of public and private organizations. The study identifies nine "key practices for Federal agencies":

- Ensure top leadership drives the transformation
- Establish a coherent mission and integrated strategic goals to guide the transformation
- Focus on a key set of principles and priorities at the outset of the transformation
- Set implementation goals and a timeline to build momentum and show progress from day one
- Dedicate an implementation team to manage the transformation process
- Use the performance management system to define responsibility and assure accountability for change
- Establish a communication strategy to create shared expectations and report related progress
- Involve employees to obtain their ideas and gain their ownership for the transformation
- Build a world-class organization

Not all of these key practices apply to grants streamlining activities, but the GAO noted in its grants streamlining report that the initiatives did not adequately address the second key practice for transformation: none of the initiatives have clearly defined goals for their completion. GAO also stated that their absence has resulted in a lack of progress in implementing the initiatives. Furthermore, the

[10] *Results Oriented Cultures: Implementation Steps to Assist Mergers and Organizational Transformations*, United States General Accounting Office, July 2003, GAO-03-669, http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d03669.pdf.

initiatives are not strategically integrated with one another, as discussed earlier in this paper, which exacerbates the effects of unclear goals.

VI.A Goals articulated

Each initiative has made attempts to articulate its goals for completion. In this section we will review the stated goals.

VI.A.1 Public Law 106-107, the grants streamlining initiative

P.L. 106-107 is clear in its purposes[11]:

> The purposes of this Act are to—
> (1) improve the effectiveness and performance of Federal financial assistance programs;
> (2) simplify Federal financial assistance application and reporting requirements;
> (3) improve the delivery of services to the public; and
> (4) facilitate greater coordination among those responsible for delivering such services.

The Grants Streamlining Initiative defines three general thrusts that should be pursued:

- Create an administrative infrastructure to instantiate the purposes of P.L. 106-107:
  - Develop plans by each participating agency
  - Designate agency leads responsible for P.L. 106-107
  - Develop an interagency process to work on streamlining activities
- Establish common systems and data standards:
  - Common application instruments
  - A common electronic grant application, management, and reporting system
- Create common rules, policies, and business processes:
  - Uniform interagency administrative rules
  - Improved interagency and intergovernmental coordination of information collection and sharing
  - Improved timeliness, completeness, and quality of information submitted by grantees to Federal grantors

VI.A.2 Grants.gov

Grants.gov's objective has been clear from the start. In early presentations regarding their mission, Grants.gov indicated that they would be the "front office" of Federal financial assistance, as illustrated in the diagram in Figure 2.

The first phase of Grants.gov was to create a single location where grantees could find and apply for all Federal government grant opportunities, as indicated in the first oval to the left in the diagram. The Grants.gov PMO, located at HHS, has done an excellent job of tracking their progress in achieving these goals. The second phase that was articulated for Grants.gov is represented by the dotted-line oval on the right in the diagram, and deals with the review and award of grants, and the reporting associated with oversight of grants.

[11] *Public Law 106-107, Federal Financial Assistance Management Improvement Act,* Section 3, November 20, 1999, http://www.grants.gov/assets/GSI/PL106107.pdf.

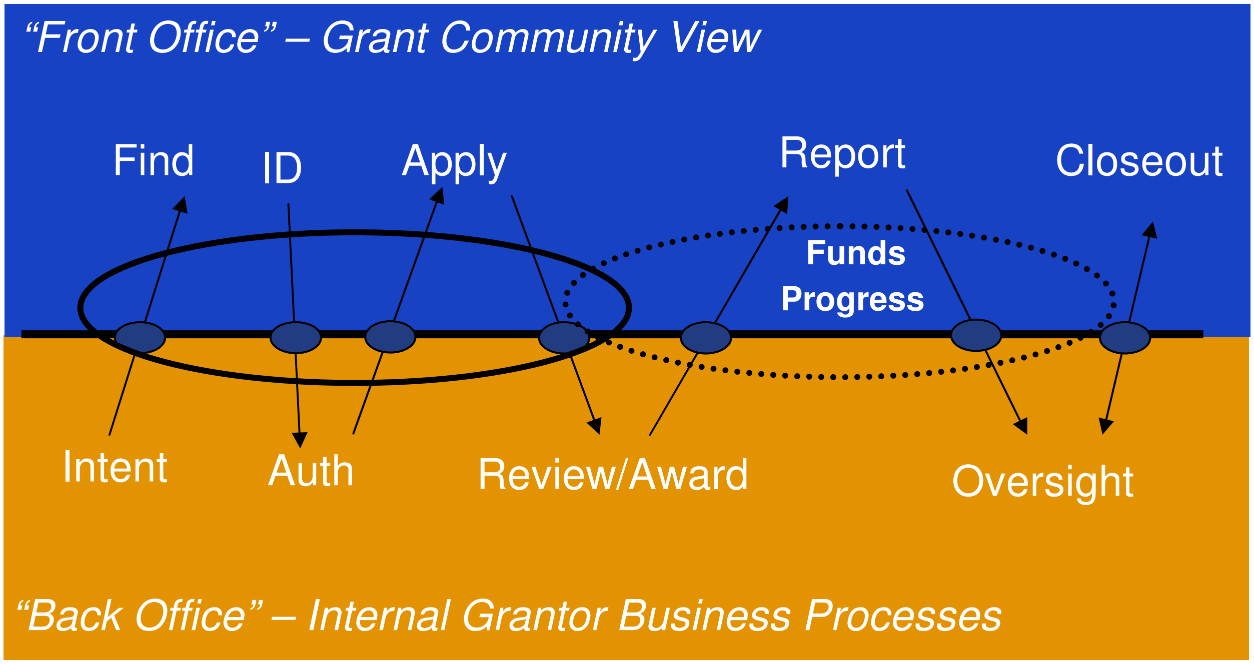

Figure 2: Front office and back office functions of grant making

VI.A.3 Grants Management Line of Business (GM LoB)

In the Request for Information (RFI) issued to industry and government in April 2004[12], GSA stated that "the complete success" of the GM LoB would be "A government-wide solution to support end-to-end grants management activities that promote citizen access, customer service, and agency financial and technical stewardship."

VI.B Progress towards goals

P.L. 106-107's stated purposes suggest a few specific goals, which have been addressed as shown in Table 2. Grants.gov has almost completed its Phase 1 goals and the system has entered a mature state (especially when compared to other eGov initiatives). Now it is unclear whether Grants.gov's mandate and funding will be extended or curtailed. Grants.gov is widely expected to continue operation as the government's "Find & Apply" portal for grants, and to extend functionality to include Phase 2-like business processes such as grant reporting. However this remains speculation and that uncertainty leaves Grants.gov's customers—Federal agencies and grantees alike—unclear about a major component of the Federal grant making enterprise.

[12] *Line of Business Opportunity Development Initiative, Lines of Business (LoB) Enterprise Architecture, Request for Information (RFI)*, Office of Management and Budget, April 15, 2004, http://www2.eps.gov/servlet/Solicitation/R/GSA/OGP/OAP/Reference-Number-RFI-04-001.

Table 2: How the specific goals of P.L. 106-107 have been addressed

Specific Goal	Addressed By
Development of plans by each participating agency, and Designation of agency leads responsible for P.L. 106-107	In May 2001, the P.L.106-107 PMO submitted a "common plan" to Congress and OMB, having coordinated with 26 grant making agencies to define steps to achieve the purposes of the legislation[13].
Common application instruments	Grants.gov's use and standardization on the SF-424 as the 'core data set', with cross-agency, agency-specific, and program-specific supplemental data sets.
A common electronic grant application, management, and reporting system	Deployment of Grants.gov, which satisfies the need for a common electronic grant application system.

The GM LoB initiative has developed models that describe the grant making business process across government, and developed common approaches to grant making upon which agencies are collaborating. With HHS, DoEd, and NSF leading the initiative, and after rejecting a "one size fits all" approach to grants management systems in government, the current proposal is to develop grants service centers that will provide technology and grants servicing across the government. This model has worked well for functions such as government payroll, and there is already significant consolidation on two or three major financial management vendors. However, unlike financial management, which has standardized on JFMIP (Joint Financial Management Improvement Program), the ability for the same to happen for grants management is significantly inhibited by the lack of common grants business processes and standards across agencies. There is no JFMIP-like set of standards for grants management. Therefore the GM LoB must now turn its attention to creating those standards, which agencies can adopt in preparation for the GM LoB Service Center approach.

VI.C Evolution toward integration

As shown in Table 2, the specific goals of P.L. 106-107 have, to date, been addressed by the administrative structures put in place to implement the legislation (the P.L. 106-107 Project Management Office) and a technical solution (Grants.gov). Significant parts of P.L. 106-107's intentions remain unfulfilled, namely:

- Administrative infrastructure to instantiate the purposes of P.L. 106-107:
  - Development of an interagency process to work on streamlining activities
- Common systems and data standards that must be established:
  - A common electronic grant management and reporting system
- Common rules, policies, and business processes:
  - Uniform interagency administrative rules

[13] *Federal Financial Assistance Management Improvement Act of 1999, Plublic Law 107-107, Initial Plan*, May 18, 2001, http://www.grants.gov/assets/GSI/PL106107InitialPlan.pdf.

  - Improved interagency and intergovernmental coordination of information collection and sharing
  - Improved timeliness, completeness, and quality of information submitted by grantees to Federal grantors

The remaining purposes and thrusts of P.L. 106-107 do not have specific goals. Indeed, it could be argued that the legislation is focused on *improving* Federal financial assistance and that improvement of any organization is an inherently iterative and ongoing process with only intermediate goals. It is our contention, therefore, that P.L. 106-107 can never be "completed" as it is currently defined. Indeed, we may never wish to complete the process of Federal financial assistance management improvement. This should not excuse a lack of measurable performance improvement in each of the functions that together comprise the organization. However, it is important to note that the ability to say, "Yes, we have improved Federal financial assistance" is dependent on a plethora of goals that are not fully described in P.L. 106-107. Those goals should be articulated and pursued through initiatives governed in the fashion described in the *Integration of the Three Initiatives* section of this paper.

To date, the greatest progress in grants streamlining, from a grantee's point of view, has been made by implementing technologies and data standards (Grants.gov, the SF-424 data set, etc.). But the remaining objectives cannot be solved by using technology as leverage for change, or in a few meetings of the stakeholders. The remaining goals are the harder problems to address, requiring ongoing, consistent, and dedicated effort across agencies and governments.

The Grants Management Line of Business provides an opportunity to generate momentum and mind-share around these problems. The GM LoB has already produced drafts of a common, government-wide grants management business process, and set a vision to create a consortium of systems to instantiate the back-office functions for government grantors, as shown in Figure 2. The GM LoB's major flaw, in our opinion, is its focus on the implementation of consolidated IT systems (service centers) to eradicate stovepiped business processes and systems. The discussion should be in the opposite direction: development of consolidated, consistent business processes that can be adopted by all grantors, *enabling the implementation of systems to support efficient grants business processes*.

VI.D Agencies and grantees can make progress today

Grants streamlining is a management effort that involves the entire grant universe. Despite its sunset in 2007, P.L. 106-107 represents a set of initiatives that should generate iterative improvements over multiple years. There will never be a grants streamlining "switch on" moment, when grant making changes from disparate, fragmented rules, policies, procedures, and systems to a consolidated, streamlined approach that will remain static forever. Opportunities therefore exist today for grantors and grantees to improve their grants management businesses and therefore contribute to the improved definitions of grants streamlining goals.

Federal agencies and other grantors can:

- Adopt and collaboratively extend extant data standards, such as the Uniform Financial Data Elements and Definitions (as proposed by The National Grants Partnership)[14]

[14] See http://www.nasact.org/coalition.htm.

- Look for data standard consolidation opportunities across all grant programs
- Inventory the existing back office systems, and identify overlaps
- Develop a vision of consolidated grants-management business processes and systems at the agency level
- Develop consolidated interfaces with Grants.gov (as demonstrated by USDA's Grants.USDA.gov solution)
- Use consolidated "Apply" functionality as leverage to consolidate back-end business processes
- Map existing business processes to those drafted by GM LoB, and identify gaps and concerns; provide feedback, and demand dialog on this subject with OMB
- Interact with grantees proactively, repeatedly, and regularly to better understand their concerns and experiences with grant programs
- Use Grants.gov's 'Find' functionality to publicize grant opportunities
- Provide feedback to Congress on how consistency in grant policies and procedures can be achieved during the program-definition stage

Grantees can:

- Form and participate in groups (NGP, FDP) to consolidate opinion and lobby grantors
- Analyze their own grants-management business processes to identify consolidation opportunities
- Consolidate stovepiped State, local, tribal, and non-profit grant offices
- Adopt and collaboratively extend extant data standards such as the Uniform Financial Data Elements and Definitions (as proposed by The National Grants Partnership) [15]

VI.E What OMB and the CGO Council can do

OMB has developed an inventory of grants management systems in the Federal government, and this inventory needs further analysis to deliver a more accurate picture of how Federal government grants management is supported by IT today. Only by determining our current state can we confidently imagine and move towards a better future.

More importantly, however, more input is needed from the policy side of grant making. Up to this point the emphasis has been on reducing IT investments rather than the costs associated with duplicative, redundant, or outdated grant policies, procedures, and processes. These inefficient policies and procedures create flow-down costs by increasing the complexity of the business process and the IT systems that support them. Earlier in this paper we recommend establishment of the Federal CGO Council, and explain how this group could make a big impact in rationalizing grants management policies and, in effect, reduce the costs associated with grants administration and its associated IT investments. (If our recommendation is not adopted, the Federal CFO Council should participate.) For example, the creation of a grant making equivalent of JFMIP (JGMIP; as discussed in the *Integration of the Three Initiatives* section of this paper) would enable the promulgation of standards and cheaper, more flexible COTS products that comply with those standards and can be adopted more broadly.

[15] See http://www.nasact.org/coalition.htm.

The purposes of P.L. 106-107 that remain unmet are those that demand extensive grants domain knowledge from the business owners. They are not IT problems. An IT "solution" can gloss over these challenges but will never fully address them. Reliance on IT to fix a broken business process will continue to increase costs and eat tax dollars unnecessarily. The GM LoB might effect change by persuading the business owners that a better IT system is not the solution, and that the business itself needs to change. Such an approach will need ongoing effort, and should fully employ the key practices for transformation that GAO itself identified as necessary for success.

Everyone involved in the grants enterprise—grantors, grantees, and Congress—has the ability and an *obligation* to participate in this organizational transformation.

VII Supplemental Recommendations

In developing this paper's suggestions for implementation of GAO's recommendations, it became clear that additional opportunities exist to accelerate grants streamlining. These are supplemental recommendations to those detailed in GAO's report. Adoption of these recommendations will significantly ameliorate many of the problems in grants management government-wide, and the political blockades that have stymied progress to date.

Key Recommendations

- Government should harmonize grant legislation.
- Grants streamlining should be part of agencies' annual performance assessment.
- A common understanding of the grants enterprise business model should be established before the government embarks on any technical deliberations or implementations.
- Grantees should consolidate stovepiped grant offices.

VII.A Harmonize grant legislation

Grants are a means of delivering financial assistance to the citizenry. This assistance is approved through legislation, which specifies the purposes, means, and controls that are exacted on the assistance to be provided. The development and finalization of this legislation is not coordinated in any fashion. Programs are developed by legislators in response to an identified need in the nation. The responsive nature of the legislation that enacts a grant results in each grant program possessing unique characteristics. Excellent examples of this problem are provided earlier in the *Common Grant-Reporting Systems* section of this paper, and in OMB Watch's April 2003 report on its survey[16], which found that:

- 177 of the 365 respondents (over 48%) provided examples of inconsistent standards and duplicate reporting requirements
- 33% of respondents said they are required to file multiple reports for the same activities
- 42.4% said their funding agencies have more than one definition for the same thing

There are legitimate causes for these disparities. There are dozens of grant programs funding a broad spectrum of initiatives—from job skills development to airport construction—and those programs are controlled by different laws administered by disparate agencies that are overseen by different committees of Congress. However, even considering the legitimacy of the causes, we cannot ignore the fact that these disparities lead to massive inefficiencies in the grants enterprise. For example, government agencies must build business processes and systems to accommodate fractious and ever-changing programmatic demands. Grantees must accommodate in their processes and systems the demands of multiple programs that have different requirements.

[16] *Results and Findings: Survey of Nonprofits On Government Grants,* OMB Watch, April 2003, http://www.ombwatch.org/article/articleview/1454.

These outcomes have serious long-term implications across the enterprise:

- Grantor and grantee staff that become familiar with the unique demands of programs become irreplaceable: if an office relies on one or two people, the business's operations are fragile and prone to delays and serious cost implications if those people become unavailable
- The complexity of the business process demands a greater amount of management and administrative oversight to ensure accuracy in data
- IT systems reflect and do not simplify the complexity of the business processes
- Systems must be custom-built to deliver the flexibility required to meet the business's demands

If grant legislation were harmonized, many of these consequences would be significantly minimized. It is possible to model legislation as it is being drafted—just as it is possible to model the systems that support the legislation once enacted—to identify disparities early on and make the lives of the citizenry and government operations a great deal more efficient.

VII.B Grants streamlining and agencies' performance assessment

Federal Financial Assistance accounts for over 21.45% of government spending each year, second only to spending on national defense, and more than government acquisition activity. Grants are therefore the most significant monetary investment in the country that the government makes on behalf of the nation. Federal Financial Assistance has more volume, has more real-world impact, and affects more citizens than any other activity that the government undertakes. It also has a significantly greater impact on society than procurements of the Federal government because complimentary State programs multiply each billion of Federal dollars many times over.

The Government Performance Results Act was passed in 1993 to link government performance to results. This effort had less impact than anticipated due to the administrative burden of its implementation, which included demands upon agencies for 16,000 pages of performance plans and measures[17]. The President's Management Agenda (PMA)[18] was established in 2001 as "an aggressive strategy for improving the management of the Federal government." Its focus was on five government-wide areas, and agencies were scored on a red-yellow-green scale on their performance in each of the five areas. While grants featured heavily in the PMA as a vehicle for assistance delivery, streamlining the government grants enterprise was only addressed in the context of building a single e-grants portal, using technology as cure-all. Most recently, in 2003, OMB developed the Performance Assessment Rating Tool (PART)[19], which is a methodological and standardized tool through which individual government programs can be evaluated.

GPRA, PMA, and PART are integrated initiatives that have built upon each other over time. However, given the fact that Federal financial assistance constitutes a massive part of the annual Federal budget, it is puzzling why grants streamlining is itself not a major part of the performance improvement efforts. While the PART assesses the real-world impact of programs, it does not seem to address the inefficiencies and overhead costs of their implementation.

[17] *PART, GPRA, and PMA: Integration, Performance, and Management,* Jeffrey E. Bergin, The Performance Institute, 2003, http://www.performanceweb.org/images/media/03-12_bergin.ppt.
[18] See http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/budintegration/pma_index.html.
[19] See http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/part/.

Agencies are responding to the PART because failure to do so results in loss of programs and budgets. If the same consequences were to befall those who failed to improve their grants management enterprises, we believe that grants streamlining would become a much higher agenda item among those with the power to effect real change.

VII.C Establish a common understanding of the grants enterprise business process

Technology cannot repair broken business processes. At best, technology can smooth over the cracks in a business process, much as one can spackle holes in plasterboard. But if the holes are too large, the spackle cannot hold the wall up, and the room will eventually come crashing in on itself. IT systems are built upon the business process. Implementation of a technology solution on a fractured and inefficient business process will, at best, give the *appearance* of efficiency. True efficiency gains and true performance improvement across the grants enterprise can only be achieved through an honest, open, and collaborative examination of the grants enterprise business model.

The GM LoB initiative has begun this work, and developed a high-level model that most agencies participated in creating. But it is shallow, demonstrating agreement only on the highest levels of the model, and it is narrow, focused entirely on government agencies' own businesses, without input or consideration from non-Federal stakeholders. This allows stakeholders to maintain the claim that their grant programs are unique and, once you get down to a real-world level, they're not anything like the other programs under discussion.

The greatest progress possible today is to achieve real consensus on the details of the enterprise business process across all stakeholders.

VII.D Consolidate stovepiped grantee grant offices

To respond to the disparate demands of government grant programs, grantees often create offices devoted to those programs. On the surface, this makes sense, because if each program has unique requirements then there are few obvious opportunities for efficiency gains by consolidating these offices. But this surface view is flawed.

Despite its (to date) narrow and shallow view of the grants enterprise business model, the GM LoB has correctly identified that, at a high level, the grants business process is essentially the same across most grant programs. While a more in-depth analysis will reveal uniqueness among programs, the high level commonalities allow some consolidation today. For example, program officers could work on multiple programs across multiple domains; peer review operations can be consolidated; call centers can be brought under one roof; and so on. Moreover, grantee's grant offices are generally smaller and can be more nimble than government's, so they have a greater ability to effect change quickly.

Consolidation efforts can occur without changes in the legislation that enacts grant funding because consolidation of business activities is a question of organizational structure, not of funding sources. The way in which one grant program office receives and disburses funds is not significantly different from how another office does it, as the GM LoB has demonstrated. To begin consolidation, stakeholders in the grants enterprise must model their business processes, map them to the resources and contracts that support them, and identify overlaps and opportunities for efficiency gains. Based on this analysis, it would be possible to develop a vision of consolidated grants management operations that can be realized by organizational and contractual redesign.

VIII Conclusion

This paper furthers the recommendations made by the GAO in its April 2005 report. To implement GAO's recommendations, the government needs to take the actions detailed in the table on the following page and discussed in previous sections. The recommendations both further and supplement GAO's proposals, and will move the grants enterprise more swiftly towards the goals of P.L. 106-107.

While P.L. 106-107 is due to sunset in 2007, its goals will endure. The recommendations made in this paper suggest that the infrastructure implemented under P.L. 106-107 should be supplemented and elevated to a higher level of responsibility in government, namely the President's Management Agenda and the Office of Management and Budget. With the former delivering a clear message of the importance of grants streamlining, the latter can legitimately demand attention, inspire investment, and measure progress in the tasks required to achieve the goals of P.L. 106-107.

Table 3: Detailed summary of recommendations

Recommendations	Audience		
	OMB	Agencies	Grantees
Analyze all key modernization drivers: policy, people, process, and technology. A. Understand the overall Federal grants management landscape, and each agency's own position in it. B. Develop systems that are structured yet flexible to meet the ever-changing needs of financial and performance reporting. C. Develop systems and business processes in parallel to meet P.L. 106-107's 2007 sunset date.	●	●	
Understand the state of the custom, GOTS, and COTS grant management product offerings. A. Conduct a study of existing grant reporting systems (COTS and GOTS) to determine systems in place, or components of those systems, that can be used as a foundation for a common system. B. Pilot candidate common reporting systems. C. Integrate the common reporting system with Grants.gov.	●	●	●
Stakeholders should focus on the business process of grant making before discussing information technology systems implementation or modernization	●	●	●
Harmonize Federal financial assistance legislation A. Ensure that reporting requirements are synchronized across agencies for performance on common grant programs (i.e. if HUD and ACF are serving a similar population, then their reporting requirements should be harmonized so that the grantee can collect information in a common manner to meet the reporting requirements of both agencies and their respective legislations for which they are held accountable). B. Establish standard performance metrics and methodologies for cross-cutting, non-financial performance measurement. C. Annual reports should be based on comparable metrics, not free-form narrative. D. Agencies should provide feedback to Congress on how consistency in grant policies and procedures can be achieved during the program definition stage.	●	●	

Recommendations	Audience		
	OMB	Agencies	Grantees
Elevate grants streamlining to be part of the President's Management Agenda. A. Secure the participation of political appointees in the grants streamlining process and be responsive to their concerns.	●		
Establish a Grants Ombudsman in the Office of Federal Financial Management within OMB and provide additional resources focused on Federal grants management.	●		
Establish an overall Program Management Office to oversee grant streamlining initiatives and report to the Office of Federal Financial Management. A. Organize requirements gathering workgroups by grant type. B. Be mindful of work that's already been done, and don't duplicate the work. C. Create a bibliography of existing work for reference purposes.	●	●	
Create a Chief Grants Officer Council to address the unique processes and requirements of the grants management function and serve as an advisory body to the PMO.	●	●	
Work in partnership with constituencies to develop a grants business process that is standardized across the grants enterprise. A. Agencies should map existing business processes to those drafted by GM LoB; identify gaps and concerns; provide feedback; demand dialog on this subject with OMB. B. Agencies should develop a vision of consolidated grants management business processes at the agency level. C. Agencies should establish a common understanding of the grants enterprise business model before embarking on any technical deliberations or implementations. D. Grantees should analyze their own grants management business processes to identify consolidation opportunities.	●	●	
Implement a concerted effort to communicate the value of grants streamlining to non-Federal grantors.	●	●	
Adopt and collaboratively extend extant data standards, such as the Uniform Financial Data Elements and Definitions (as proposed by The National Grants Partnership's Uniform Guidelines Project), and look for further data standard consolidation opportunities across all grant programs. A. Institute a collaborative environment with grantees to create standard reporting formats that are useful to both parties. B. Develop an incentive mechanism to increase participation and acceptance of standards.	●	●	●

Recommendations	Audience		
	OMB	Agencies	Grantees
Inventory existing back office systems, identify overlaps, and consolidate similar functions. For example, Federal agencies can develop consolidated interfaces with Grants.gov, and use consolidated "Apply" functionality as leverage to consolidate back-end business processes. A. Non-Federal government grantors, including non-profits, should use Grants.gov's "Find" functionality to publicize grant opportunities.		●	●
Interact proactively, repeatedly, and regularly A. Understand stakeholder needs and expectations. B. Grantees should form and participate in groups (NGP, FDP) to consolidate opinion and contact grantors.		●	●
Consolidate State and local grantees' stovepiped grant offices.			●

IX Appendix A: Acronyms

The following acronyms are used in this document.

Table 4: Acronyms

Acronym	Full Text
CFO	Chief Financial Officer
CGO	Chief Grants Officer
CIO	Chief Information Officer
COTS	Commercial Off-The-Shelf
DOC	Department of Commerce
DoEd	Department of Education
FDP	Federal Demonstration Partnership
FFR	Federal Financial Report
GAO	Government Accountability Office (formerly the US General Accounting Office)
GC	Grants Committee
GM LoB	Grants Management Line of Business
GOTS	Government Off-The-Shelf
GPRA	Government Performance and Results Act
HHS	Department of Health and Human Services
IT	Information Technology
JFMIP	Joint Financial Management Improvement Program
JGMIP	Joint Grants Management Improvement Program
NGP	National Grants Partnership
NSF	National Science Foundation
NSTC	National Science and Technology Council
OCFO	Office of the Chief Financial Officer
OFFM	Office of Federal Financial Management
OFGM	Office of Federal Grants Management
OMB	Office of Management and Budget
P.L..	Public Law
PAR	Performance and Accountability Report
PART	Performance Assessment Rating Tool
PMA	President's Management Agenda
PMO	Program Management Office
PPOC	P.L. 106-107 Policy and Oversight Committee
PPR	Performance/Progress Report
RBM	Research Business Models
RFI	Request for Information
S.F.	Standard Form