

## Steps for completing a grants.gov application package

In order to complete a grant application package for submission to grants.gov, you complete the following steps:

1. Download the application package and directions from the grants.gov website to your local hard drive.
2. Rename the .pdf file with the WHOI proposal number followed by the file extension .pdf. Use an underscore in place of the period in the proposal number.
3. Open the .pdf file with Adobe Acrobat.
4. Complete forms and attach files – all attachments should be PDF files.
5. Save, Save, Save your work – it does not autosave anything for you.
6. Click the ‘Check for Errors’ button.
7. Print all forms and attachments
8. Create and complete a Green Sheet
9. Route the paper version of the proposal for signatures
10. Send the paper version of the proposal to GCS
11. Dept Admin uploads the .pdf file to the GCS website

## Grants.gov Tutorials on preparing an application

At the grants.gov website, click:

**Applicant Resources** in the left side menu.

The two most helpful printed resources are found under User Guides.

(PDF documents that are regularly updated)

– Applicant User Guide  
and

– Find and Apply for Grant Opportunities







The screenshot shows the grants.gov website interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the logo and the text "GRANTS.GOV™". To the right of the logo are links for "Search" and "Contact Us". Below the navigation bar is a sidebar menu on the left with various categories: "FOR APPLICANTS", "FOR GRANTORS", "ABOUT GRANTS.GOV", "HELP", "CONTACT US", and "SITE MAP". The "FOR APPLICANTS" section is expanded, showing options like "Applicant Login", "Find Grant Opportunities", "Get Registered", "Apply for Grants", "Track My Application", "Applicant Resources", "All About Grants", "Applicant FAQs", "Submit Application FAQs", "Search FAQs, User Guides and Site Information", "APPLICANT SYSTEM-TO-SYSTEM", and "FOR GRANTORS".

The main content area is titled "APPLICANT RESOURCES" and includes the following text: "There are several tools and documents available here to help you with Grants.gov." Below this text are two columns of links: "FAQs", "User Guides", "Checklists", "Animated Tutorials", "Quarterly 'Succeed' E-Newsletter", "Webcast Archive", "Brochure/Presentation Request Forms", "Download Software", "Glossary", "Stakeholder Webcast", "Related Links", "Exit Disclaimer", "Troubleshooting Tips", and "Additional Resources".

Below the links is a section titled "Frequently Asked Questions" with the text "The most frequently asked questions about Grants.gov for applicants." and a list of links: "Applicant FAQs", "Submit Application FAQs", "General FAQs", and "Public Law 106-107 FAQs".

Below that is a section titled "User Guides" with the text "Instructions for Applicant Registration, Finding and Applying for Grants." and a list of links: "Applicant User Guide", "Organization Registration User Guide", "Individual Registration User Guide", "Find and Apply for Grant Opportunities", "Track Your Application Package", and "Life of A Grants.gov Application Package".

**User Guides** – Instructions for Applicant Registration, Finding and Applying for Grants.

- [Applicant User Guide](#)  – A detailed guide to registration, finding and applying for grant opportunities.
- [Organization Registration User Guide](#)  – A detailed guide specifically focused on organization registration.
- [Individual Registration User Guide](#)  – A detailed guide for individuals registering on their behalf.
- [Find and Apply for Grant Opportunities](#)  – A detailed guide specifically focused on finding and applying for grants.
- [Track Your Application Package](#)  – A detailed guide on what to expect after submitting an application package.
- [Life of A Grants.gov Application Package](#)  – A diagram depicting the role of the Grantor, Grants.gov, and the application cycle of a grant application package.

<http://grants.gov/assets/FindApplyUserGuide.pdf>

In addition to printed manuals, there are animated tutorials available. One goes through the steps necessary to fill in a grants.gov package. Note: they specifically tell you first to fill in the cover page and then the SF424 (whatever flavor is in your package) so that data will populate to other places in the application package.

[FAQs](#)

[User Guides](#)

[Checklists](#)

[Animated Tutorials](#)

[Quarterly "Succeed" E-Newsletter](#)

[Webcast Archive](#)

[Brochure/Presentation Request](#)

[Forms](#)

**Animated Tutorials** – Learn more about specific topics by watching an animated overview.

- [Grants.gov Overview](#) – Watch an overview about Grants.gov.
- [Grants.gov Eligibility](#) – Determine whether you are eligible to apply for grants on Grants.gov.
- [Finding Grant Opportunities on Grants.gov](#) – Learn how to find grant opportunities and understand
- [Organization Registration Overview](#) – Watch an overview on how to register your organization with
- [Individual Registration Overview](#) – Watch an overview on how to register with Grants.gov.
- [Completing a Grants.gov Application](#) – Watch an overview on how to apply using Adobe Reader.

<http://grants.gov/flash/GDGApplication/index.htm>

## WHOI specifics about grants.gov applications

### 1. Saving and Acrobat

Once you have found the application package you want, download both the instructions and the package to your local hard drive (usually c:).

Check to make sure you have a compatible version of Acrobat installed on your computer. Grants.gov has a test you can run here: <http://grants.gov/applicants/AdobeVersioningTestOnly.jsp>

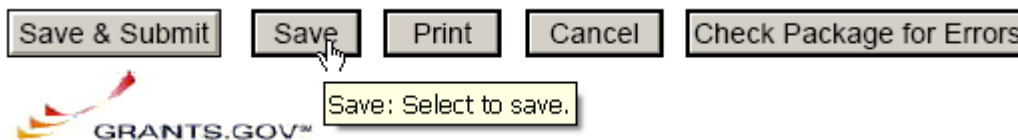
If you use a non-compatible version, your application may be rejected. Best practice is to use the same version of Acrobat to create all documents attached to the package as well as to fill in the application package itself.

**Big ‘Gotcha’ #1:** If you receive .pdf files from someone else, make sure you re-distill them in Acrobat so that you have consistent pdf formats in all your documents. Do NOT trust anyone else’s pdf – especially if the files come from another institution – chances are it is different than what you have.

**Big ‘Gotcha’ #2:** All attachments need to be .pdf files. Do NOT attach other formats unless it is specifically called for in the RFP. Attaching Word or Excel files can lead to declines/rejections by the agency. There may be rare times an agency specifically calls for a different format, but it is just that: An Extremely Rare Occurrence. Stick to .pdf and play it safe.

**SAVE** the package to your hard drive with the proposal number in the name.

Do NOT work on an application package on a shared or network drive. When working in an application package, you must save your work periodically. The application package has a button to use at the top of the form. Always save the package to your local hard drive.



### 2. Naming Convention for the application package:

**Grants.gov** rules for filenames:

- Do NOT include spaces in the filename.
- Do NOT include any special characters in the filename either.
- Maximum length for your application’s filename is 50 characters, including the ‘.pdf’.

The **WHOI** convention for naming grants.gov application packages is as follows:

2-character code for department followed by the proposal number, then an underscore followed by the submission number, followed by another underscore and the PI’s last name, then ‘.pdf’.

**Example:** 12345.03 is going to be submitted via grants.gov. The pdf application package will be named: DR12345\_03\_Wonderful.pdf

3. Cover Page

Do NOT check this box!

On the cover page: please follow the convention of:
**WHOI Proposal No 12345.00, PI name**
(Abbreviating the first/middle names is fine)

I will be submitting applications on my behalf, and not on behalf of a company, state, local or tribal organization.

\* Application Filing Name: WHOI Proposal No 13763.00, J. T. Smith

Save your work and then proceed to the SF424 form.

4. SF 424 Form: Standard or Boilerplate Content

The 'Applicant Identifier' field needs to be filled in with the WHOI proposal number and PI name - this field is not always found in the same location: it depends on the form included in your application package. In our sample, it is located in Section 2.

Section 5 contains the standard WHOI boilerplate with DUNS number and is the first place that the contact information for the Director of Grant and Contract Services appears.

Section 6 is our EIN.

Big 'Gotcha' #3: DUNS & EIN are to be entered as numbers only - no dashes or spaces, and please double-check your typing as if there is a typo, it is the wrong number and the submission will be rejected by grants.gov.

APPLICATION FOR FEDERAL ASSISTANCE SF 424 (R&R)
3. DATE RECEIVED BY STATE
State Application Identifier
1. \* TYPE OF SUBMISSION
Pre-application [ ] Application [X] Changed/Corrected Application [ ]
4. a. Federal Identifier
b. Agency Routing Identifier
2. DATE SUBMITTED
Applicant Identifier
WHOI # 13911.00 J.T. Smith
5. APPLICANT INFORMATION
\* Organizational DUNS: 001766682
\* Legal Name: Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution
Department: Grant and Contract Services Division:
\* Street1: 183 Oyster Pond Road
Street2: Fenno House, MS #39
\* City: Woods Hole County / Parish: Barnstable
\* State: MA: Massachusetts Province:
\* Country: USA: UNITED STATES \* ZIP / Postal Code: 02543-1501
Person to be contacted on matters involving this application
Prefix: Ms. \* First Name: Claire Middle Name: L.
\* Last Name: Reid Suffix:
\* Phone Number: 508-289-2462 Fax Number: 508-457-2189
Email: creid@whoi.edu
6. \* EMPLOYER IDENTIFICATION (EIN) or (TIN): 042105950
7. \* TYPE OF APPLICANT: M: Nonprofit with 501C3 IRS Status (Other than Institution of Higher Education)
Other (Specify):
Small Business Organization Type [ ] Women Owned [ ] Socially and Economically Disadvantaged [ ]

In Section 7, WHOI is always the choice 'M' shown above: "Nonprofit with 501C3 IRS Status (Other than Institution of Higher Education)"

In **Section 8**, please remember to select the application type and answer the yes/no question.

<b>8. * TYPE OF APPLICATION:</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> New <input type="checkbox"/> Resubmission <input type="checkbox"/> Renewal <input type="checkbox"/> Continuation <input type="checkbox"/> Revision		If Revision, mark appropriate box(es). <input type="checkbox"/> A. Increase Award <input type="checkbox"/> B. Decrease Award <input type="checkbox"/> C. Increase Duration <input type="checkbox"/> D. Decrease Duration <input type="checkbox"/> E. Other (specify): _____	
* Is this application being submitted to other agencies? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> What other Agencies? _____			
<b>9. * NAME OF FEDERAL AGENCY:</b> Office of Naval Research		<b>10. CATALOG OF FEDERAL DOMESTIC ASSISTANCE NUMBER:</b> 12.300 TITLE: Basic and Applied Scientific Research	
<b>11. * DESCRIPTIVE TITLE OF APPLICANT'S PROJECT:</b> This is the same title as is found on the Submission and the Green Sheet.			
<b>12. PROPOSED PROJECT:</b> * Start Date   * Ending Date 04/15/2010   04/14/2012		<b>* 13. CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT OF APPLICANT</b> Ten	
<b>14. PROJECT DIRECTOR/PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR CONTACT INFORMATION</b> Prefix: Dr.   * First Name: PI First Name   Middle Name: PI Middle Name * Last Name: PI Last Name   Suffix: _____ Position/Title: Senior Scientist * Organization Name: Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution Department: Applied Ocean Physics & Eng.   Division: _____ * Street1: 98 Water Street Street2: Bigelow 1, MS #12 * City: Woods Hole   County / Parish: Barnstable * State: MA: Massachusetts   Province: _____ * Country: USA: UNITED STATES   * ZIP / Postal Code: 002543-1026 * Phone Number: PI's phone number   Fax Number: Dept Fax Number * Email: PI's email@whoi.edu			

The title you enter in **Section 11** should **match the Green Sheet** and the submission title in WHOIgrants.

The dates in **Section 12** are those for the entire period of performance and should match the Submission and Frozen Version start and end dates.

The information for the lead PI (A1) is entered into **Section 14**. This is where the PI's office address and department fax numbers appear.

Section 15 is asking for the total for the period of performance of this submission. In Section 16, select 'No' and 'Program is not covered by E.O. 12372'.

<b>15. ESTIMATED PROJECT FUNDING</b>		<b>16. * IS APPLICATION SUBJECT TO REVIEW BY STATE EXECUTIVE ORDER 12372 PROCESS?</b>	
a. Total Federal Funds Requested	<input type="text" value="861,838.00"/>	a. YES	<input type="checkbox"/> THIS PREAPPLICATION/APPLICATION WAS MADE AVAILABLE TO THE STATE EXECUTIVE ORDER 12372 PROCESS FOR REVIEW ON:
b. Total Non-Federal Funds	<input type="text" value="0.00"/>		DATE: <input type="text"/>
c. Total Federal & Non-Federal Funds	<input type="text" value="861,838.00"/>	b. NO	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PROGRAM IS NOT COVERED BY E.O. 12372; OR
d. Estimated Program Income	<input type="text" value="0.00"/>		<input type="checkbox"/> PROGRAM HAS NOT BEEN SELECTED BY STATE FOR REVIEW
<p>17. By signing this application, I certify (1) to the statements contained in the list of certifications* and (2) that the statements herein are true, complete and accurate to the best of my knowledge. I also provide the required assurances * and agree to comply with any resulting terms if I accept an award. I am aware that any false, fictitious, or fraudulent statements or claims may subject me to criminal, civil, or administrative penalties. (U.S. Code, Title 18, Section 1001)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> * I agree</p> <p><small>* The list of certifications and assurances, or an Internet site where you may obtain this list, is contained in the announcement or agency specific instructions.</small></p>			
<b>18. SFULLL or other Explanatory Documentation</b>		<input type="text"/> <input type="button" value="Add Attachment"/> <input type="button" value="Delete Attachment"/> <input type="button" value="View Attachment"/>	

Section 17: Check the box! I Agree!

Section 18 is left blank.

17. By signing this application, I certify (1) true, complete and accurate to the best of terms if I accept an award. I am aware tha administrative penalties. (U.S. Code, Title

\* I agree

\* The list of certifications and assurances, or an Inte

Section 19 is the place where the complete contact information for the Director of Grant and Contract Services is entered.

<b>19. Authorized Representative</b>			
Prefix: <input type="text" value="Ms."/>	* First Name: <input type="text" value="Claire"/>	Middle Name: <input type="text" value="L."/>	
* Last Name: <input type="text" value="Reid"/>	Suffix: <input type="text"/>		
* Position/Title: <input type="text" value="Director"/>			
* Organization: <input type="text" value="Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution"/>			
Department: <input type="text" value="Grant and Contract Services"/>	Division: <input type="text"/>		
* Street1: <input type="text" value="183 Oyster Pond Road"/>			
Street2: <input type="text" value="Fenno House, MS #39"/>			
* City: <input type="text" value="Woods Hole"/>	County / Parish: <input type="text" value="Barnstable"/>		
* State: <input type="text" value="MA: Massachusetts"/>	Province: <input type="text"/>		
* Country: <input type="text" value="USA: UNITED STATES"/>	* ZIP / Postal Code: <input type="text" value="02543-1501"/>		
* Phone Number: <input type="text" value="508-289-2462"/>	Fax Number: <input type="text" value="508-457-2189"/>		
* Email: <input type="text" value="creid@whoi.edu"/>			
* Signature of Authorized Representative		* Date Signed	
<input type="text" value="Completed on submission to Grants.gov"/>		<input type="text" value="Completed on submission to Grants.gov"/>	
<b>20. Pre-application</b>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="button" value="Add Attachment"/>	<input type="button" value="Delete Attachment"/> <input type="button" value="View Attachment"/>

## 5. Entering Budget and Other Details

**Big ‘Gotcha’ #4:** When completing the budget details by period, you may have clicked ‘Next Period’ too many times and have extra periods that you do not need.

**RESEARCH & RELATED BUDGET - SECTION F-K, BUDGET PERIOD 1** Next Period

JNS:

Clicking the ‘**Check for Errors**’ button will find this for you when you think you are finished by finding fields that are not filled in. You need to DELETE unneeded periods from the budget pages before submitting your package to GCS. They cannot submit to grants.gov with blank budget periods.

Delete unneeded periods using the ‘Delete Entry’ button found on the budget pages.

**RESEARCH & RELATED BUDGET - SECTION F-K, BUDGET PERIOD 1**

Previous Period

\* ORGANIZATIONAL DUNS:

\* Budget Type:  Project  Subaward/Consortium

Enter name of Organization:

Delete Entry \* Start Date:  \* End Date:

A. Senior/Key Person

**Warning: JavaScript Window -**

Please complete all mandatory fields before moving to the previous year. Or, if you did not intend to create this year, please delete this entry using the 'Delete Entry' button)

OK

Cal. Acad. Sum. \* Requested \*1

**Big ‘Gotcha’ #5:** Budget Justifications. Every period needs to show the budget justification’s pdf file in **Section K**. The latest versions of the SF424 have corrected an earlier error and now will populate the name of the budget justification file in each period as long as you enter it for period 1 and BEFORE creating additional budget years.

**Remember:** If you are having trouble adding another period, please check to make sure you have attached a file as the Budget Justification. There is ONE Budget Justification for the package, but the filename is referenced on each period’s budget detail pages.

K. \* Budget Justification  (Only attach one file.) Add Attachment Delete Attachment View Attachment

Note use of underscore in File\_Name.pdf

### Big ‘Gotcha’ #6: Project/Performance Site Location Form

Make sure you enter the Congressional District as follows: MA-010

\* Project/ Performance Site Congressional District:

**Cognizant Federal Agency Information:** When completing the budget, you need to remember to complete the ‘Cognizant Federal Agency’ field. The proper information is shown below:

**Total Indirect Costs**

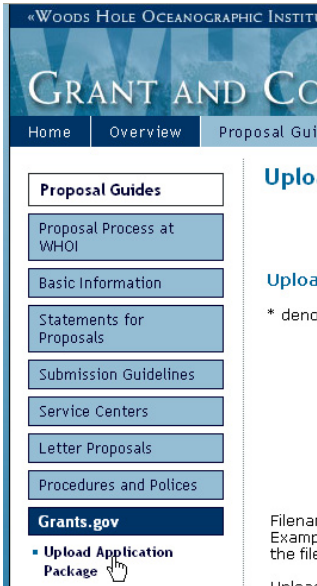
Cognizant Federal Agency

(Agency Name, POC Name, and POC Phone Number)



## 6. UPLOADING THE APPLICATION PACKAGE:

GCS will not submit your proposal via grants.gov without having received the paper copy of the proposal with the necessary signatures on the Green Sheet.



A web form has been developed to allow departmental users to upload the application package file and some identifying information about it. GCS will receive an email when you have submitted the file and will download it to their computers for review.

The web form is found off the GCS website in 'Proposal Guides' → 'Grants.gov'

### Upload a Proposal Application Package

\* denotes required fields

WHOI Proposal Number\*:

PI Name\*:

Agency\*:

Opportunity Close Date [mm/dd/yyyy]\*:

Email address of person uploading\*:

Filename format: WHOI proposal number followed by *.xfd*, *.xfd1* or *.pdf*  
 Example: For WHOI proposal number ZZ12345.00, the filename will be **ZZ12345\_00.xfd**

Upload proposal application package here (.xfd, .xfd1 or .pdf only!)

After you Click the 'Submit' button, a page will open telling you the upload was successful. You will also receive an email confirming your upload.

GCS will also receive an email notifying them of your file upload.

Once GCS has reviewed and approved the application package, and after the paper copy has been received with all signatures, GCS will submit the application package to grants.gov. GCS will email the department a copy of the confirmation of submission from grants.gov.



## 7. Errors and Rejections by grants.gov

When the Submission is NOT Validated, WHOI gets a **Rejection email**. In those cases, you have to correct the error and start all over again with the submission process. A completely new GRANT tracking number will be assigned. Some examples we have seen:

1. Error Message to GCS: *Error: A form attached to one of the forms in your submission is not the required form. Please verify that you have attached the correct form. For example, the RR Subaward Budget Attachments form requires that an RR Budget form be attached.*

This error message may be caused by:

- a. Some part of the Application Package was received from a subrecipient and there was something incompatible – which could not be identified. Completely redoing those budgets, etc at WHOI in the same version of Adobe as the rest of the package fixed the problem (after 8 attempts to submit!).
  - b. The application was rejected due to the fact that "attached" pdf files had spaces in the name.
2. Sometimes there is a box to check if “submitting as an individual or as an institution”. WHOI NEVER checks this box. One time the “individual” box was checked and GCS was not authorized as the ACO for this package.
  3. GCS gets the same reason for the rejection –not authorized as the ACO – when there is a typo in our DUNS number.
  4. GCS received a rejection by the funding agency because there was a non-PDF attachment in the package. DO NOT attach anything but pdf files that you have distilled yourself.

**To fix errors**, the grants.gov Help Desk gave GCS the following information:

You must...

1. Open your application package
2. Delete all attached files that are offending
3. Save and Close the application
4. Rename all of your pdf files that will be attached - if spaces are needed use \_ (underscore) not space
5. Reopen the application and reattach properly named pdf files
6. Resend to GCS and we will resubmit the application and get new tracking number, etc.