



## - OMB Releases New GMLoB Guidance

In an August 31, 2007 e-mail message to members of the Chief Information Officers (CIO) Council, the OMB E-Gov Administrator, Karen Evans made an important announcement on the future of the Grants Management Line of Business (GMLoB) initiative. The announcement began with a reminder that in the President's FY2007 Budget released on February 6, 2006, OMB designated three agencies as consortia leads for the GMLoB: the Department of Education, the Department of Health and Human Services – Administration for Children and Families, and the National Science Foundation.

The announcement further reminded agencies that in FY2008 budget guidance they were directed to seek OMB approval for any development, modernization and enhancement (DME) funding related to grants management systems. Ms. Evans noted that during FY2007 the GMLoB implementation plan milestones were moved "to allow the grants community to focus on plans to implement the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act (FFATA)." Now that the FFATA implementation requirements have been clarified, OMB is taking action for the GMLoB to "regain momentum and demonstrate success."

There are three specific steps that all grant-making agencies will need to take during FY2008. Because OMB will not be designating additional leads, agencies should align with one of the three consortia leads designated in the President's FY2007 Budget. The first step is each agency must sign by the end of Q1 FY2008 (December 31, 2007) an MOU with a consortia lead to work towards future migration. The second step involves agencies completing a Fit-Gap analysis with the consortia lead, using an OMB-issued Fit-Gap template. The third step will be developing a Migration Plan and submitting it to OMB by March 31, 2008.

OMB guidance defining agency implementation plan milestones is anticipated to be released in mid-October 2007. The OMB guidance will include a Fit-Gap template, as well as guidance for any agency that may wish to appeal if, after completing a Fit-Gap analysis the agency determines that it is unable to align with any consortia lead.

## - COE Honored by Kennedy School of Government

ACF was pleased to learn in mid-July that its Grants Center of Excellence (COE) was chosen as one of only five initiatives to advance in the IBM Innovations Award in Transforming Government competition, representing the top 5% of the initial applicant pool. IBM and the Ash Institute for Democratic Governance and Innovation at Harvard

University's John F. Kennedy School of Government announced last April the creation of a special award on the occasion of the Innovation Program's 20th Anniversary. The IBM Innovations Award in Transforming Government is designed to recognize the agencies and organizations throughout the world that have achieved comprehensive and profound change and have improved the lives of citizens. The award recognizes innovations across the globe that reflect tangible and sustainable improvements in policy, processes, quality, timeliness or effectiveness of public services, and the winner of this award will receive \$100,000.

The final step in the selection process was the site visit conducted July 30-31, when Dr. Jane Fountain from the Ash Institute came to perform an in-depth evaluation. During the two-day visit, Dr. Fountain met with HHS and ACF management, including: Terry Hurst, HHS Deputy Assistant Secretary for Grants; Dan Schneider, Acting Assistant Secretary for Children and Families; Curt Coy, ACF Deputy Assistant Secretary for Administration; and Michael Curtis, Director, ACF Office of Information Systems. Dr. Fountain interviewed current COE partners, as well as an agency (HUD) that has decided the COE does not meet its needs. The COE Team provided in-depth information about the Grants Management Line of Business (GMLoB) initiative and how the COE meets the needs of its many partner agencies.

## - GrantSolutions.gov New Enhancements

GrantSolutions 2.2 was released in August 2007 and now offers functionality including a dynamic number generator for funding opportunity numbers and grant numbers allowing agencies to define their own unique numbering schemes. This was a major milestone allowing the COE to incorporate the flexibility necessary for supporting unique business processes and requirements of partner agencies. The next release, planned for November 2007, will include a new dynamic Award workflow component, as well as the full integration of Funds Control capabilities. The Award workflow module will provide yet more enhanced flexibility allowing the COE to again match the unique business processes and requirements of partnering agencies in the area of Notice of Award generation and approval. The Funds Control capabilities will complete the full integration with the HHS Unified Financial Management System (UFMS) and the Payment Management System (PMS), as well as provide the baseline for supporting other external partner agency systems.

### OPHS GrantSolutions.gov stats on 2007 application submission:

- Total applications received was 1284
- Total application submitted electronically was 847
- Total percent electronic was 66 percent (up 10 percent from 2006)
- Received via Grants.gov was 55 percent (up 20 percent from 2006)

-OPHS System Administrator

### - Review Management Module Integration

Within three months, the Grants Application and Management Evaluation System (GAMES) has been integrated with GrantSolutions.gov and is targeted to be available to all COE partner agencies by January 2008. With the availability of GAMES, GrantSolutions will now be able to offer a full range of functionality to support the objective review process for competitive grant applications. Agencies that currently use the GrantSolutions system to process their discretionary grant workload will be able to take advantage of the ability to electronically transfer application information to GAMES, as well as retrieve application review status and scoring information as review panels are conducted. The COE will also be able to provide direct use of the GAMES review system capabilities for partnering agencies not currently using the GrantSolutions system for grant processing. Future endeavors will focus upon the expansion of existing review management functionality to provide more enhanced services to our partners.

### - COE Forms Collection Engine

The COE forms collection engine, On-Line Data Collection (OLDC), processed significantly more electronic grantee post-award reports in FY2007. OLDC now has over 52 agency-specific or program-specific forms being collected electronically. Usage of this module increased in FY2007 with the submission of 9,259 grantee reports (compared with 8,404 reports submitted in FY2006). Use of the OLDC module was expanded this year to include discretionary grant programs, and the number of programs jumped from 60 to 237 (almost a four-fold increase). The submission of grantee reports electronically via OLDC has significantly reduced Federal data entry, and the time to have reports reviewed, approved, and processed. The ability to have reporting forms pre-populated with grantee and program information, and to have them validated during the submission process, has saved grantees significant processing time, increased the accuracy of the data submitted, and reduced time spent in meeting the reporting requirements.

### - New ACF Award for the COE Team

The Grants Center of Excellence (CoE) Team is set to receive yet another award. On Tuesday, October 2, 2007, Daniel Schneider, Acting Assistant Secretary for Children and Families, sent his personal congratulations to the COE Team members, along with the news about this newest award. The COE Team has been selected to receive the ACF Assistant Secretary's 2007 Partnering for HHS Excellence Award. Mr. Schneider commended the COE Team for performing their duties and responsibilities in an exemplary manner. He noted that the COE Team's accomplishments have been recognized by ACF colleagues and by the ACF Honor Awards

Committee. The award presentation will be made on Thursday, November 1, 2007, at the ACF Assistant Secretary Honor Awards Ceremony, to be held in the National Transportation Safety Board Conference Center.

## NEWS in BRIEF

- **FFATA update:** The Grants Center of Excellence is sending data to the HHS TAGGS system, which is ready to support Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act (FFATA) requirements. For January 2008, Federal Assistance Award Data System (FAADS) data will be used [HHS FAADS data is provided via the accounting systems.] Meanwhile, ACF has been working with its grants staff to update DUNS numbers for grantees within the COE systems since this is an OMB and FFATA requirement.
- **Migrations in 2008:** Data has been loaded into a GrantSolutions.gov training database for USDA's Food Safety and Information Service (FSIS) and is being tested. Migration from the GATES client-server system will continue during FY2008. Training and migration to the GrantSolutions.gov Discretionary module is scheduled for the Administration on Aging (AoA), the Centers for Medicaid and Medicare (CMS), and ACF.
- **Grants.gov** has completed its transition from PureEdge to Adobe forms. The COE has resumed testing and expects to use the new Grants.gov Adobe application forms for funding opportunities posted after November 2007.

### - TIPS and ALERTS

- New release of OLDC version 3.0 anticipated for October 22, 2007, with a new "look-and-feel" and improvements to the Assignment Delegation module, the "View Assignments" screen for ACF staff, and the View Grant Application Packages option.
- The GrantSolutions.gov website has been expanded to include more information and news about the system, the Grants Center of Excellence (COE) and COE partners. Visit [www.grantsolutions.gov](http://www.grantsolutions.gov).

### - Events

- Oct 5 - OMB guidance to agencies on establishing Grants Management Line of Business (GMLoB) MOUs
- Oct 12 - OMB issuance of the GMLoB Fitgap Template for agency use
- Oct 24 - Center of Excellence User Group meeting
- Oct 30 - Grants Management Line of Business "All Agencies" open meeting
- Dec 31 - Deadline for agencies to sign MOU with a GMLoB lead
- 2008
- Jan 17 - Center of Excellence Executive Board meeting
- Mar 31 - Deadline for agencies to submit GMLoB Migration Plans to OMB