Grant Administration: Follow Through on Application Commitments – February 17, 2023

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An application for a grant is often called a grant "proposal" and it is exactly that – a proposal. It is just like any other RFP (request for proposals) process that you have experienced. If the *client* (**funder**) likes your *proposal* (**application**), then they will *select* (**award**) yours and legally obligate you to fulfill it through a *contract* (**grant agreement**) with *terms and conditions*. If you have said in your grant application that you will provide $X or X% as match, even if it was optional, then you need to follow through on this commitment. Even if your project costs come in under budget, you still need to provide your share of the match and not doing puts you at risk of serious consequences – think of it as a breach of contract. How would you feel about a contractor who didn't do what they said they would do in their contract? Two organizations in California were convicted of fraud for making match commitments in Federal grant applications then not providing the match during a grant award. If your municipality thinks it will be unable to meet a match commitment (or any other term or condition of the grant), talk to your funder immediately to explain what is happening. In many cases, funders will allow match source substitutions (example, paying a cash match when an in-kind match commitment was made) or the funder may have a policy related to reducing the award amount based on the pro-rated share of match provided. Your success is their success, so consider your funder as one of your key project partners. Having an open and honest dialogue, even when bristly problems arise, is critical - reputation matters if you want to continuing receiving grants. Communication is the key to negotiating project challenges successfully!

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