Tips for Navigating Uncertainty in the Federal Funding Landscape

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Adapting to changing conditions and extreme weather events has become a little more complicated with shifts in the federal funding landscape. Federal agencies have paused some funding programs and are adapting others. You can navigate this period of uncertainty by following these top takeaways from our March 11, 2025, *Grants and Funding Chat on Climate Resilience*.

Be Prepared

1. **Be patient.** The federal funding transition is expected to continue through September 30, 2025.
2. **Develop action and contingency plans** for existing awards.
    1. Make a list of actions that must be taken, such as providing contractors and staff with written stop work orders, if funding for your project is paused or rescinded.
    2. Consider how you would complete a project or move it to a logical stopping point if funding is rescinded.
3. **Plan for increased match requirements.** Some federal program guidance has been adapted to use "strong co-funding" as an application evaluation criterion.

Funding Applications

1. **Monitor the notice of funding weekly if you are pursuing a grant.** Funding notices are being amended with substantial changes after the original funding announcement is released.
2. **Write data driven applications.** Statements about project benefits or need should be backed up with data from reputable sources.

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3. **Focus on the *federal* benefits of your project.** Federal goals are benefits to the economy, the workforce, and families.
4. **Pay attention to language shifts.** Use the same language as the application and guidance. For instance, use "changing conditions and extreme weather events" instead of "climate change."
5. **Don't promise what you cannot deliver.** Accountability is increasing. If you promise something, you must deliver it.
6. **Include and treat everyone equally**. Engage all sectors of the community in your project, not just some of them.
7. **Know how you'll pay for project maintenance and replacement costs.** Expect to be asked, and be held accountable for, how you respond to questions about maintenance and replacement costs. Don't assume you'll be able to access future federal assistance. Consider developing an asset management or capital plan.

Funding Awards and Amendments

1. **Read any agreement and amendment terms and conditions.** Know whether you can commit to new terms and conditions before signing agreements or amendments. For example, a requirement for local compliance or cooperation with Federal immigration enforcement and with other goals and objectives specified by the President or funding agency secretary.
2. **Deliver what you promised.** Review your funding application and the funding award agreement. Make a list of benefit statements, deliverables, and associated metrics or measures of success. Ensure you meet them, then report that you met them.
3. **Focus on performance.** Increased emphasis on performance means greater scrutiny.

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1. Ensure your municipality has created and follows all required federal policies and procedures.
2. Submit all progress and financial reports and invoices on time. Ensure they are complete and accurate.
3. Document local match regularly if you've committed it. Don't wait for the grant's end.
4. Document when you've achieved any metrics or measures of success included in your funding application or award.

If you missed the chat, you can visit our Grants and Funding Chat Recordings and Resources webpage to access the recording, presentation, and Q&A for more tips on navigating change.

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