



A White Paper

Grant Governance Platform **G²P**

**Achieve Real World Success in
Post-Award and Monitoring
Phases:**

*Achieving Compliance and
Improving Programmatic Outcomes*

Marty Nagle

Alyx Technologies, Inc.
11410 Isaac Newton Sq. N., Ste 100
Reston, VA 20190
(571) 353-3201

g2pinfo@grantgovernance.com
<http://www.grantgovernance.com>

Powered by:

ALYX
TECHNOLOGIES

Introduction

Post-award monitoring represents the delivery processes of the grant lifecycle, during which the desired outcomes of the programs are achieved. Successful delivery of programmatic benefits requires program and grant managers to coordinate many moving parts. Federal guidelines provide governance frameworks that encompass *financial, administrative and programmatic* areas.

There is a wealth of information available to grants managers for effective financial management. There are accounting software platforms that have been tailored to grant funding processes, and a substantial amount of guidance on allowable, un-allowable, direct, and indirect cost allocation.

Rather than add to the available guidance on financial aspects of the grant process, this paper is focused on the processes that drive program execution and compliance with Federal standards.

Grant professionals are required to maintain strict compliance with regulations set-forth by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) 2 CFR Part 200, while at the same time provide support for the program managers who oversee resource allocation and ensure objectives are met.

We continue to see an increase in single audit findings, agency audits, and penalties for inadequate compliance management. The pace of corrective action either through process change, or adoption of software platforms appears still to be occurring slowly.

Opportunities to improve processes and become more compliant are being lost.

Grant professionals can regain lost ground and have an opportunity to exceed established benchmarks for program outputs by leveraging current available technology platforms and process improvements.

Baseline Measures of Program Success

Effectively delivering the expected value of a program requires the alignment of activities and resources to achieve the objectives of the grant. Starting with the initial design of the grant, the objectives and benefits need to be clearly defined, as well as measurable and obtainable.

In most cases the expected outcomes have been defined by the granting agency.



Ensuring Successful Outcomes

Are you sure you are achieving the goals of the program?

Achieving the goals for which a grant is established and executed requires discipline in administrative controls, management oversight, and a culture of continuous improvement.

However, even in cases where the requirements may be lacking specific measurements of outcomes, grantees should establish metrics for their own management and implement the processes and systems needed to ensure regular collection of quality data.

Project managers have access to various frameworks for planning and evaluation of programs to support these implementation efforts. The specific measurement of program progress will depend on the specific subject matter, but in all cases some form of measurable data must be collected to validate success. The required *core element is measurable data points*.

Reporting, monitoring, auditing during performance of grant activity won't bear much fruit without tracking to clearly defined and measurable expected benefits.

Some reporting requirements may come from the program requirements, and some will be unique to the recipient or sub-recipient. The Grants Management Body of Knowledge (GMBok) published by the National Grant Management Association (NGMA) describes the way these requirements are documented as a work plan. The work plan presents clearly articulated goals and objectives with measurable outputs.

A work plan consists of a narrative detailing of performance goals, objectives, metrics, and outcomes. A thorough work plan will include:

- *Goals (outcomes) that align to the purpose for which the funding was made.*
- *Objectives designed to achieve the outcomes.*
- *A planned methodology for measuring performance*
- *A proven technique for developing a budget and timeline.*
- *An analysis of planned mitigation of risk through internal controls and evaluation.*

Compliance and Process Improvement

Federal rules and guidance are in place to minimize opportunities for waste, fraud, and abuse in awarding grants. In addition to government oversight requirements, grants professionals also follow program-specific auditing and reporting guidelines, to measure the effectiveness of programs.

Audit reports can provide program managers with *quantifiable measures of success* and can provide insights into how to improve performance.

To maximize the benefits in reports from recipients and sub-recipients:

- Include as much specificity as possible in grantee reporting, documenting the level of detail that is required;
- Require supporting documentation;

- Progress reports submitted to the granting agencies should include measures that would indicate whether the program is achieving its intended objectives not just broad outputs such as the number of people served; and,
- Verbal assertions from subgrantees of program success are insufficient. Reports need to be submitted in writing.

To maximize the benefits from audits and other reviews:

- Desk reviews are focused on examinations of the relevant documentation and financial systems surrounding a grant program.
- Site visits are monitoring that occurs at a recipient's office or program location. They are intended to review the capacity, performance, and compliance of a recipient. Site visits can also benefit greatly from a platform that allows auditors to enter data on a mobile device such as a laptop or tablet, and audit results can be securely stored along with other program reports.
- Among other factors, site visits should ensure delivery staff are trained and qualified in the performance of the grant.

Desk reviews and site visits benefit greatly from a centralized platform where reports can be reviewed quickly, and results can be stored.

Risk Based Controls

Grants professionals are constrained by the realities of time and limited resources. It is increasingly difficult to monitor every grant project.

The solution lies in prioritizing the highest risk projects and focusing more attention on the recipients and programs that meet those criteria. This is referred to as "managed risk." Some of the factors that would drive an awarding agency or pass through entity to perform more extensive monitoring include the following:

- Size or complexity of the program
- Risk to people or property
- Past history of known issues
- Multiple subawards
- Cost sharing or matching conditions
- Significant number of procurements, or high budgeted travel

Improve Administration and Compliance

Managing the minutiae of tracking monitoring tasks, compliance requirements, and grant agreement terms can be tedious but it's critical to your program success. Most grants professionals manage this part of the job the best they can, with cobbled together spreadsheets, plethora of email correspondences, potentially some calendars, notes and an abundance of effort.

There is a better way emerging that is allowing organizations to adopt and use the tools they need without the cost and risks of large software implementations. The software industry is experiencing the most significant transformation in its history. The confluence of changes including cloud computing, Software as a Service (SaaS), user acceptance of "apps", and pay-as-you-go payment models have become a real turning point. Providers of software platforms - from accounting systems to time tracking tools, and even grants management systems, are becoming increasingly focused on fixing your biggest headaches quickly - at an affordable price, and without the weighty risks of enterprise software adoption and vendor lock-in.

The benefits now available in grant governance platforms add up to make it much easier, more affordable, and ultimately less risky to implement the tools your organization needs to succeed.

Improve Program Outcomes

All the reporting, audit, and collaboration requires systems to catalogue and aggregate the data. To collaborate effectively, everyone on your team needs to have access to the same set of documents and data. That includes your internal staff, but also counterparts at your funding source, and all your sub-recipients.

With a centralized platform to catalog reports and audit results along with quantifiable performance data, the actions needed to make improvements become easier to identify.

- Sub-grantees can select compliance tasks and upload documents and provide comments to fulfil reporting requirements.
- Users can track cost share.
- When responses are entered into the system, Grants Managers can be notified via system alerts.
- Workflows are initiated to review and approve reports.

Users can drill into dashboard reports to see details at any level – Department, Bureau, Agency, Program, Grantee and Sub-Grantee allowing the following:

- A single view of compliance status across the entire organization;
- A quick view of status by Department, Agency, Program, grantee, or sub-grantee; as well as,
- A drilldown capability to specific grants & sub-recipients.

These capabilities can save Grants Managers significant time dealing with simple issues like tracking submissions and sending reminders, allowing staff to concentrate on more important and high risk activities.

Grant Governance Platform – G2P

Alyx Technologies, makers of G2P, has been a part of the dynamic transformation of the software industry. Building on over 37 years of experience of assisting private and public sector clients use software to improve their operations, we are now bringing all of the advantages described above to the Grants community. We have created both a solution and pricing model that removes the typical stumbling blocks that prohibit many organizations from benefiting from a great set of tools.

We have created unique “Per Award” pricing model that we think accomplishes a number of great things for our users.

- Our pricing structure makes the system extremely affordable and accessible for both small and large organizations.
- We have one single line item price for each award that includes access to the system, configuration and setup, training and ongoing support. *No limit on the number of users.*

When we bill you, our invoice references your unique grant number. It’s easy to track your exact cost for managing compliance for each grant. This makes our service a direct cost, eliminating the need to track and interpret indirect rates for our service.

About Alyx Technologies

Alyx Technologies developed Grants Governance Platform, G2P, which addresses the requirements of OMB Guidance 2 CFR §200 and provides users with a configurable and easy-to-use Programmatic Risk Assessment and Award Governance module. Standard user dashboards provide a unified compliance view of grants across the entire portfolio. For more information, please visit: www.grantgovernance.com.

Alyx Technologies is a SaaS solutions and services company. We draw upon 35 years of industry and software development expertise to deliver solutions to help our clients rapidly gain efficiency, minimize risk and ensure compliance. Our highly targeted SaaS solutions are designed to be easy; easy to deploy, adopt, buy and protect. And of course, it's your data, so it is always portable and in your control.

For more information, please visit our web site or drop us a line:

<http://www.grantgovernance.com>

g2pinfo@grantgovernance.com

Powered by:

