

TIPSHEET

Spending All Your Time Sifting Through Grant Applications?

Learn how to expedite the grant application process while minimising ineligible and incomplete applications.

How many grant applications do you receive per year? A survey looking at over 1,000 giving organisations of all types and sizes revealed that the average foundation receives over 550 grant applications annually. And if you receive anywhere close to that many, odds are that you are spending a disproportionate amount of time processing applications. Time that could be better spent thinking strategically. But how can you minimise the time you spend processing grant applications? Read on for some best practices for streamlining your application process.

Power your organisation with:

- **GIFTS Online**

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1 Move away from a paper application process

Paper grant application processes are a time drain. You wait for applications to arrive in the mail. You check them for accuracy. Mail them back when applications are incomplete. Then wait for the revised application. Manually enter the data into spreadsheets—which opens the door for human error. Then send the decision letter or award packet to applicants in the mail. The entire process can take weeks or even months. However, if you move to an online grants management solution with an online application, applications flow in electronically, you can electronically route them to remote reviewers, and essentially complete all necessary steps in a fraction of the time.

2 Reduce the number of incomplete applications you receive

Many organisations receive far too many incomplete grant applications. Applicants miss required fields or inadvertently leave other fields blank, forcing you to go back and forth with them to get the information you need, pulling your time away from more important tasks. But with an online application process, you can mark certain fields required, preventing applicants from submitting anything less than a complete application. And the right online grants management solution will guide the applicant through the process, ensuring accurate applications every time. The fewer incomplete applications you have to wrestle with, the more time you get back to focus on fulfilling your organisation's mission.

3 Develop a strategy to weed out ineligible applications

If you move to the right online grants management solution, you can put eligibility quizzes in front of your online applications. These require applicants to complete a questionnaire before they are allowed to begin the application process. If they don't meet the requirements, they are prevented from submitting an application in the first place. And if you have multiple applications for different grants, you can use these quizzes to route applicants to the correct application based on their needs, reducing confusion on their part and slashing the number of incomplete applications you have to reject, letting you move to the review stage much more quickly.

4 Streamline applicant communications

With an online grants management solution you can conduct all of your applicant-related communications online as well. Electronically alert applicants when you need additional attachments and information. Inform successful applicants of their awards electronically from within the system. Not only does this expedite your communication process, it also saves you having to print and collate award packets—not to mention saving you money on postage.

5 Keep applicants informed of their application status

Once an organisation submits an application, they can log in to your application portal to check up on the status of their grant. Where is it in the review process? Is there outstanding information they still need to provide? When they can log in and access this information for themselves, they don't have to call you routinely to check on their application status, meaning you don't have to be pulled away from your daily tasks to answer their inquiries. Plus, once you do give an award, you can electronically push relevant information to grantees and automate electronic reminders when they have requirement deadlines coming up. It really does streamline the entire process, leaving you to spend your time on higher valued tasks.



Do you want to learn more about the benefits of an online grants management system?

- GIFTS Online is the leading end-to-end online grants management solution.
- You gain efficiency, reduce risk and collaborate more easily—so you can increase the impact of your giving.
- Call 0141 2434 252 or email solutions@blackbaud.co.uk to find out more.

Contact your sales representative today ▶