2019 Grant Clearinghouse Application Training

California Fire Safe Council

www.cafiresafecouncil.org

www.zoomgrants.com

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Acknowledgements

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Agenda

1. **Grant Program Overview**
2. **Federal Grants Basics**
3. **Grant Life Cycle Phases**
4. **Writing an Application**
5. **Submittal requirements**
6. **Selection and Award Process**

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Federal Grant Funds

CFSC federal grants are not free money (and you don't have to accept it).

A successful grant application is more than just a good project proposal.

Federal grants are subject to the applicable federal rules and regulations (2 CFR 200) and terms and conditions of the program.

This workshop is to assist you in how to write a competitive grant application while, also addressing all the rules and eligibility requirements of the grant program.

CFSC wants you to be prepared BEFORE submitting the application to receive and manage a federal grant.

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Who We Are

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The Grants Clearinghouse

Created by the California Fire Alliance and CFSC
• Operated by CFSC

A Single Place to Apply for Wildfire Prevention Grants
• Online at www.cafiresafecouncil.org

Agencies That Have Used The Grants Clearinghouse
• U.S. Forest Service
• Bureau of Land Management
• National Park Service
• Fish and Wildlife Service
• State Farm Insurance

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Resources

CFSC Website
- **www.cafiresafecouncil.org**

Application Handbook
Request for Applications
- **Both available on our website**

ZoomGrants
- **www.cafiresafecouncil.org/zoomgrantslogin**
- **www.zoomgrants.org**

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Sacramento Office

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We're here to help

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Sandra Lyons **Grant Specialist** **Email:** **slyons@cafiresafecouncil.org**	**Elizabeth LaMar** **Grant Specialist** **Email:** **elamar@cafiresafecouncil.org**

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Important Dates

2019 Cycle Opens **Call for Applications**	**April 24, 2019**
Grant Application Training Workshops **(Various Locations)**	**May 13-24, 2019**
Applications Due Online	**June 5,2019** **5:00 p.m. PDST**
Preliminary Award Announcements	**August 2019**

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Available Funding

$2 Million

SFA Program

- **State Fire Assistance Grant Program**
- **$2 million**
- **50/50 match requirement**
- **$200,000 maximum on funding requests**
- **Projects must be located in California or Tahoe Basin region of Nevada.**

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Program Funding

U.S. Forest Service "SFA "
State Fire Assistance Program

Assisting People and Communities in the Wildland Urban Interface to Moderate the Threat of Catastrophic Fire through:

1) **Community Hazard Mitigation and Planning**
2) **Prevention and Mitigation Education**
3) **Fuel Hazard Mitigation on Non-Federal Land**

Focus on the Cohesive Strategy and California Forest Action Plan

24-Month Term Grant

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SFA Program

Match Requirement

- **50/50 match (can be cash or in-kind)**

That means, 50% of project costs come from the federal grant and 50% from the match.

For example, a $100,000 request must be matched by $100,00 from the applicant.

Application Limit

- **$200,000 maximum request**
- **2 application limit**
- ***Fiscal Sponsors may submit 2 applications and receive up to $200,000 plus manage up to $300,000 for other organizations (up to 3 organizations total).***

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Types of Projects

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Eligibility

Organizations working in California and the Lake Tahoe Basin of Nevada, representing their Communities:

- **Nonprofit Organizations**
- **HOA/POAs**
- **Native American Tribes**
- **Resource Conservation Districts**
- **Towns and Cities**
- **Institutions of Higher Learning**
- **For-Profit Companies**
- **Special Districts**
- **School Districts**
- **Counties**
- **State Agencies**

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Grant Program Participants

Federal Government	• Congress/President • Department/Agency
Recipient/ Pass-through	• CFSC: Grantee of the Federal Agency and Pass-through Organization
Subrecipient	• Applicant Organization • Fiscal Sponsor, if applicable YOU!
Beneficiaries	• The public and specific groups that are supported by the grant activities

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The Role of the Sub-recipient

Project Implementation	Proper Grant Management

▪ **Accomplish the grant objectives**
▪ **Implement the project as approved**
  ▪ **Work with contractors, vendors, etc.**
▪ **Monitor and track accomplishments and progress**
  ▪ **Before/after photos**
	▪ **Follow all grant requirements**
	▪ **Provide accurate, complete, and timely reports**
	▪ **Meet all deadlines**
	▪ **Document, document, document!!**
	  ▪ **Expenses and Match**
	▪ **Keep complete accounting records**

TWO FACTORS FOR SUCCESS!

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Capacity Considerations

Does your organization have the *capacity* to manage the project and the grant funds in accordance with federal regulations?

- **Does your financial management system meet federal requirements?**
- **Do you have the necessary project management and technical expertise, or can you get it?**
- **Have you successfully completed similar projects?**
- **Do you need a Fiscal Sponsor?**
- **Can you handle the added workload?**

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The Role of the Fiscal Sponsor

Act on behalf of an applicant organization that is not incorporated or does not have the organizational capacity to receive federal grant funds

Assume legal responsibility for the management of grant funds

Fiscal Sponsor Duties:

- **Signing the Subaward Agreement**
- **Receiving the Grant Funds**
- **Full Accounting Services**
- **Prepare Reports**
- **Project Management**
- **Bid Solicitation and Contracting**
- **Processing Invoices or Work Orders**

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Federal Grant Rules

Federal grant funds may only be used in accordance with:

- **Code of Federal Regulations (2 CFR 200)**
- ***Office of Management and Budget (OMB) policies.***

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Federal Grant Rules

Regulations provide detailed guidance on how you must manage your grant funds and project activities.

- **There are consequences for not complying with the federal regulations – *including repayment of the grant funds!***
- **READ the regulations that apply to your organization *before* you decide to apply for a grant**

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Written Policies

- **Property Management: safeguard equipment; how to acquire/dispose of property**
- **Travel: reimbursement/approval of travel; mileage**
- **Conflict of Interest: procedure for handling conflicts; address Board and Staff**

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Written Policies

- **Financial and Accounting: protect the grant funds; determine allow-ability; maintain accurate documentation**
- **Personnel: proper time and effort reporting (for employees and volunteers); consistent, allowable charges**
- **Procurement/Purchasing: solicitation of services and goods; avoid unnecessary purchasing; allow-ability of costs**

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EXAMPLE OF AN ADMINISTRATIVE REQUIREMENT

Debarment and Suspension

- **Certain parties who are debarred, suspended or otherwise excluded *may not* be participants or principals in Federal assistance awards and sub awards, and in certain contracts under those awards and sub awards.**
- **Check your own organization *and* contractors**
- **Search for records at https://www.sam.gov/**

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COST PRINCIPLES

- Reasonable
- Necessary
- Allowable
- Applicable

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EXAMPLE OF COST PRINCIPLES

Support of Salaries and Wages

Wages, salaries, and fringe benefits of employees must be allowable

Documentation for these costs must meet the federal standards, which may be different from time-keeping and activity tracking procedures of your organization

2CFR 200.430 and .431

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EXAMPLE OF COST PRINCIPLES

Compensation for personnel services is allowable if:

- **It is reasonable for the services rendered,**
- **It Conforms to the established policy of the organization/agency and is consistently applied to both Federal and non-Federal activities**
- **It is determined by and supported with documentation as provided by the applicable cost principles.**

•Documentation for these costs must meet the federal standards, which may be different from time-keeping and activity tracking procedures of your organization

•2CFR 200.430

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Grant Funds and Matching Contributions

Grant funds are provided to the CFSC via a master grant from a funding agency.

Matching contributions are cash or in-kind goods or services that come from non-federal sources

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Matching Contributions

All matching contributions must meet ALL of the following criteria in order to be accepted:

- Are verifiable from the recipient's records.
- Are not included as contributions for any other federally-assisted project or program.
- Are necessary and reasonable for proper and efficient accomplishment of project or program objectives and allocable under 2 CFR 200
- Are allowable under applicable cost principles in 2 CFR 200 Subpart E (200.402-200.411)
- Are not paid by the Federal Government under another award

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Federal Grant Regulations

- **All Sub-recipients are required to comply with the applicable federal regulations**
- **The federal regulations specify how to properly implement the grant**
  - **2CFR 200**

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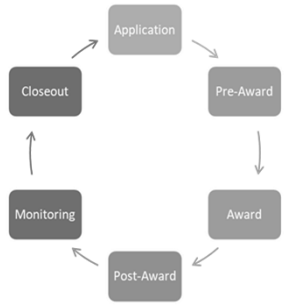
The Grant Cycle Phases



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Application Phase

PREPARATION	SUBMISSION

▪ Attend Grant Application Workshop
▪ Evaluate Organizational Capacity
  ▪ Policies and Procedures
  ▪ Financial & Business Systems
▪ Plan Project and Budget
	▪ **Complete Application Package**
	  ▪ Application Form
	  ▪ Letters of Commitment
	  ▪ Fiscal Sponsor Agreement (if applicable)
	  ▪ Maps (if applicable)
	  ▪ Federal indirect cost rate approval (if applicable)
	▪ **Submit by the Deadline**
	▪ Preliminary Selection

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Pre-Award Phase

PROJECT REVIEW	RISK ASSESSMENT
▪ Initial Screening for completeness ▪ Independent Review Committee scoring and recommends to CFSC Board ▪ CFSC Board reviews and ratifies list of projects	▪ Complete Pre-Award Report ▪ Submit required documents and maps ▪ Undergo organizational capacity risk assessment ▪ Complete revised application, if necessary ▪ Review and sign subaward agreement

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Post-Award Phase

Project Implementation

- **Environmental Compliance Review**
  - **Federal, State and Local**
- **Select Contractors, Vendors, etc.**
- **Complete Project Tasks**
- **Monitor and Track Project Accomplishments & Progress**
  - **Before, during and after photos**
- **Grant Specialist Site Visit**

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Post-Award Phase

Proper Grant Management

- **Request and Receive Grant Payments**
- **Submit completed Quarterly Reports *on time***
  - **Progress reports and Match/Expense reports**
- **Track all expenditures and match contributions**
- **Renew annually organizational information**
  - **Insurance, CAGE number, SAM registration**
- **Document, document, document!!**
- **Maintain an organized grant file**

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Close-Out Phase

- **Complete final Progress Report**
- **Complete Closeout Report**
- **Submit required documents**
- **Return unspent funds and excess interest**
- **Success Stories**
- **Confidential Questionnaire**

You must retain your grant file until three years after CFSC's master grant closes.

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Avoiding Grant Fraud

Increased Accountability and Transparency

Grant fraud includes:

- **Conflict of Interest**
- **Materially false statements**
- **Theft**

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Penalties

Penalties for grant fraud may include:

- **Repayment of grant funds to the awarding agency**
- **Criminal prosecution and civil fraud remedies**
- **Suspension, debarment and cancellation of current and/or future grant awards**

Potential and actual grantees need to understand and follow the requirements!

Ignorance of the law is no excuse

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Common Misconceptions

"I'm just a volunteer, so I don't need to comply."

- **The regulations and requirements apply to ALL grant recipients, regardless of the size and/or complexity of the organization.**

"I didn't have to do this on our other grant. I've never seen anything like this before."

- **Increased accountability and transparency have led to increased monitoring and scrutiny of federal grants.**

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Common Misconceptions

"It's too much of a hassle, so I don't need to comply"

- **If you want to receive federal funding, you must fulfill all of the responsibilities of a grantee. If you do not want to do that, do not take the money.**

"My application was selected, I'm doing everything right, and I'll receive the grant funds no matter what."

- **Successful applicants will undergo Pre-Award evaluations and ongoing monitoring throughout the grant term.**

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Remember

- **There are many rules and regulations that govern the use of federal grant funds!**
- **Your agency will have to abide by <u>ALL</u> of the applicable federal grant regulations if your agency accepts the funds!**
- **<u>It is *your* agency's responsibility to review and abide by all of the regulations governing the grant.</u>**

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Part II
Writing the Application

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Create an Account to Apply for Grants

http://www.cafiresafecouncil.org/zoomgrantslogin/

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ZoomGrants login page

Once you've started an application, you can log in directly at www.zoomgrants.com

Contact the ZoomGrants Technical Support Team
8 am to 5 pm Mountain Time
Monday-Friday

Toll Free: 866-323-5404

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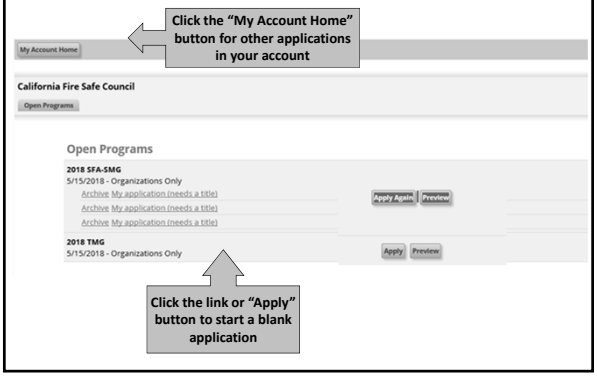
My Account Home



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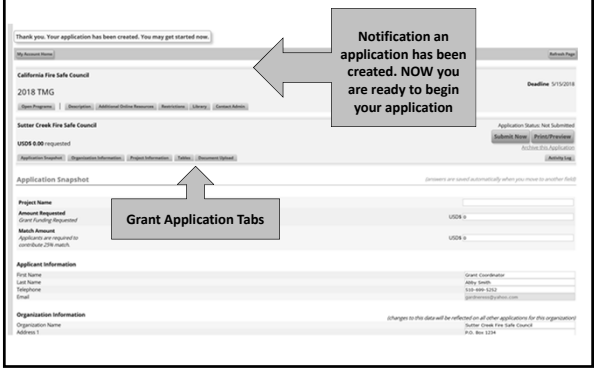
Start an Application



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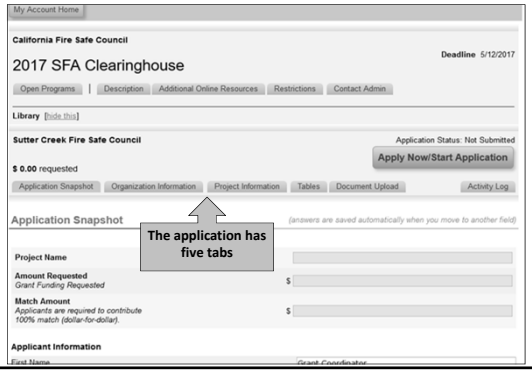
Grant Application Tabs



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Tab 1: Application Contacts

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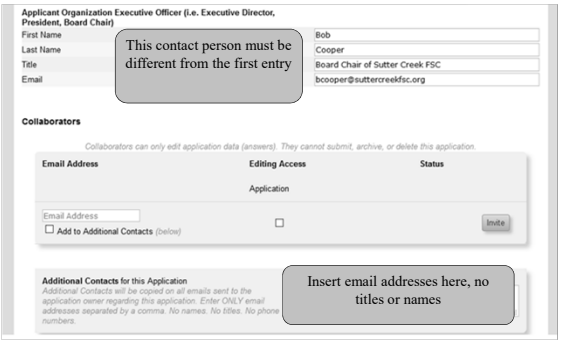
Tab 1: Application Contacts



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Tab 2: Organizational Capacity

Organizational Capacity

- Multiple people involved
- Roles and Responsibilities
- Processes and separation of duties
- Documentation

History & Accomplishments

- Ability to complete target objectives
- Ability to manage a project start to finish

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Tab 3: Project Information

Project Narrative

- **Identify the problem**
- **Describe the project activities**
- **How do the activities address the problem**

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Tab 3: Public Engagement and Sustainability

Outreach Efforts To Engage The Public

Promotion Of Community Investment During And After The Grant

How Will The Project Accomplishments Be Maintained

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Tab 3: Community Impacts

Communities Affected

- **Communities at risk**
- **Other communities**
- **Firewise communities**

Political Boundaries

- **Congressional District, Senate, State Assembly and the County your project is located within**

Federal Land Adjacency

- **Planning, Fuels, and Education**

Employment

- **Contractors and employees**

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Tab 3: Cohesive Strategy

Cohesive Strategy Objectives

- **Restore and maintain resilient landscapes**
- **Fire-Adapted Community development**
- **Response to Wildfire**

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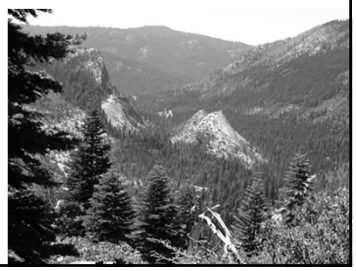
Tab 3: California Forest Action Plan

Priority Landscapes

Three Themes:

- **Conserve**
- **Protect**
- **Enhance**



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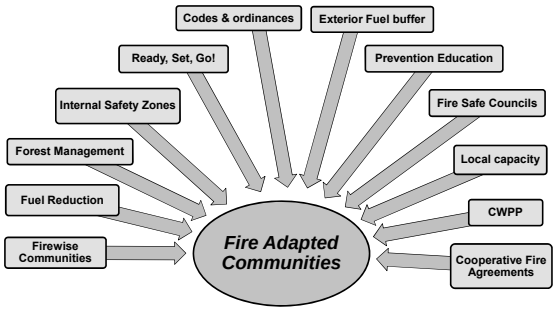
Tab 3: Building a Fire Adapted Community



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Tab 3: Location and Condition of Project Area

Latitude and Longitude

- **Use a GPS or find your project location on a mapping website**
- **Fire Hazard Severity Zone**
- **Fire Regime and Condition Class**

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Vicinity Maps

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Tab 3: Fuels Treatment - Project Information

- **Describe the vegetation type at the treatment site**
- **Describe the planned vegetation treatment in detail**
- **Describe the pre- and post-treatment site**
- **If the project will generate biomass what type and quantity, and how is it being used?**

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Tab 3: Fuels Treatment – Project Information

Total acreage of the project area

- **Project footprint**

Number of fuels treatment projects will be completed with this grant

- **Count by unique project**
- **Describe the method used to calculate this number**

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Tab 3: Environmental Compliance

All Projects must be reviewed for compliance with the following federal environmental regulations:

- ❑ Endangered Species Act (ESA)
- ❑ Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA)
- ❑ National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA)
- ❑ Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act (BGEPA)

Other Laws that may apply:

- ❑ California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)
- ❑ California Endangered Species Act (CESA)

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More on the Federal Environmental and Cultural Protection Acts

Your project area may include <u>species, habitats, cultural resources, or historical sites</u> that require special protection

Record Searches or Surveys may be required prior to the project implementation

- **Include the potential costs in your budget**

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Consult with a Registered Professional Forester

Management of Forested Landscapes

- **RPFs are licensed by the state**
- **RPF involvement is required when managing forested landscapes**

RPFs Can Assist With:

- **Prescriptions for treatment**
- **Sale of forest products**
- **Environmental and site considerations**
- **Environmental surveys**

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Tab 4: Tables

Work Plan

Sequential Task/Activity

- **A sequence of major activities needed to complete the project**

Timeframe (in months)

- **Representing the span of time needed to complete the project**

Responsible Party

- **Applicant and cooperator roles are identified**

Expected Outcome/Result (Deliverables)

- **There are defined objectives for the project**

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Tab 4: Project Deliverables

How to report Deliverables:

1. **Enter Projected Quantity and Associated Cost only ONCE**
2. **Federal Grant Funded**
3. **Match Funded**

Enter whole numbers ONLY

- **No decimals or cents**

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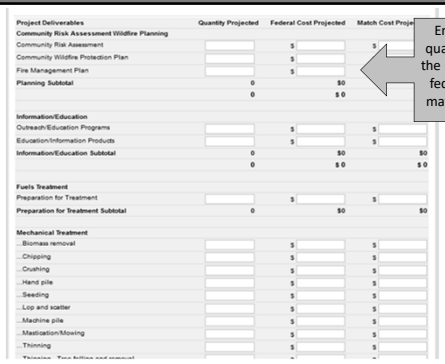
Completing the Project Deliverables Table



Project Deliverables	Quantity Projected	Federal Cost Projected	Match Cost Proje
Community Risk Assessment Wildfire Planning			
Community Risk Assessment		$	$
Community Wildfire Protection Plan		$	
Fire Management Plan		$	
Planning Subtotal	0	$0	
	0	$ 0	
Information/Education			
Outreach/Education Programs		$	$
Education/Information Products		$	$
Information/Education Subtotal	0	$0	$0
	0	$ 0	$ 0
Fuels Treatment			
Preparation for Treatment		$	$
Preparation for Treatment Subtotal	0	$0	$0
Mechanical Treatment			
...Biomass removal		$	$
...Chipping		$	$
...Crushing		$	$
...Hand pile		$	$
...Seeding		$	$
...Lop and scatter		$	$
...Machine pile		$	$
...Mastication/Mowing		$	$
...Thinning		$	$

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Tab 4: Types of Project Deliverables

COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT WILDFIRE PLANNING

- **Community Risk Assessment**
- **Community Wildfire Protection Plan**
- **Fire Management Plan**

INFORMATION/EDUCATION

- **Outreach/Education Programs (includes workshops)**
- **Education/Information Products**

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Tab 4: Types of Project Deliverables

HAZARDOUS FUEL TREATMENT DELIVERABLES

Preparation for Treatment:

- **Activities undertaken to prepare the area for fuels treatment**

Mechanical Treatment:

- **Work that removes or modifies fuel and vegetation**

Prescribed Fire:

- **To attain planned resource management objectives**

Other Treatment:

- **using chemicals and/or biological methods like grazing**

Mechanical Treatment with by-products utilized

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Budget Detail

List individual budget items under these cost categories

Cost Categories	(1) Grant	(2) Applicant	(3) Other Partners	(4) Total
a. Personnel (employees only)				
b. Fringe Benefits				
c. Travel				
d. Equipment (Items > $5,000/unit)				
e. Supplies				
f. Contractual				
g. Other				
h. Total Direct Costs				
i. Modified Total Direct Costs				
j. Indirect Costs				
Project Total				

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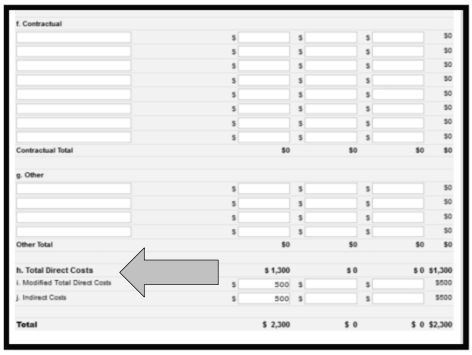
Budget Detail: New Cost Category



f. Contractual				
	$	$	$	$0
	$	$	$	$0
	$	$	$	$0
	$	$	$	$0
	$	$	$	$0
	$	$	$	$0
	$	$	$	$0
	$	$	$	$0
Contractual Total	$0	$0	$0	$0
g. Other				
	$	$	$	$0
	$	$	$	$0
	$	$	$	$0
	$	$	$	$0
Other Total	$0	$0	$0	$0
h. Total Direct Costs	$ 1,300	$ 0	$ 0	$1,300
i. Modified Total Direct Costs	$ 500	$	$	$500
j. Indirect Costs	$ 500	$	$	$500
Total	$ 2,300	$ 0	$ 0	$2,300

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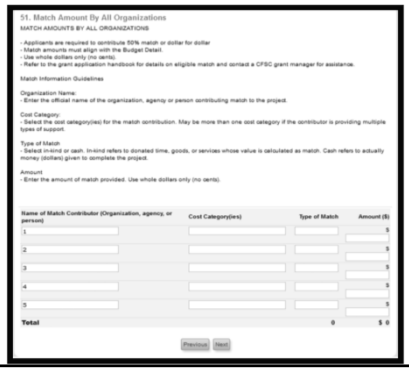
Match Amount by all Orgs



51. Match Amount By All Organizations

MATCH AMOUNTS BY ALL ORGANIZATIONS

- Applicants are required to contribute 50% match or dollar for dollar
- Match amounts must align with the Budget Detail.
- Use whole dollars only (no cents).
- Refer to the grant application handbook for details on eligible match and contact a CFSC grant manager for assistance.

Match Information Guidelines

Organization Name:
- Enter the official name of the organization, agency or person contributing match to the project.

Cost Category:
- Select the cost category(ies) for the match contribution. May be more than one cost category if the contributor is providing multiple types of support.

Type of Match
- Select in-kind or cash. In-kind refers to donated time, goods, or services whose value is calculated as match. Cash refers to actually money (dollars) given to complete the project.

Amount
- Enter the amount of match provided. Use whole dollars only (no cents).

Name of Match Contributor (Organization, agency, or person)	Cost Category(ies)	Type of Match	Amount ($)
1			$
2			$
3			$
4			$
5			$
Total		0	$ 0

Previous Next

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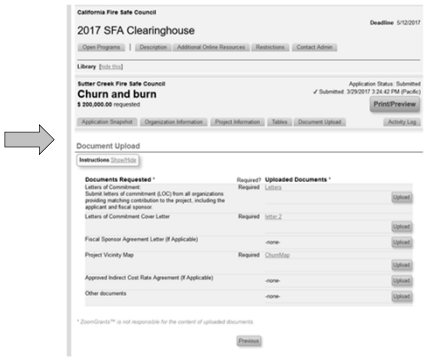
Tab 5: Documents



California Fire Safe Council

2017 SFA Clearinghouse

Deadline 5/12/2017

Open Programs | Description | Additional Online Resources | Restrictions | Contact Admin

Library [hide this]

Sutter Creek Fire Safe Council

Churn and burn

$ 200,000.00 requested

Application Status: Submitted
✓ Submitted: 3/29/2017 3:24:42 PM (Pacific)

PrintPreview

Application Snapshot | Organization Information | Project Information | Tables | Document Upload | Activity Log

Document Upload

Instructions Show/Hide

Documents Requested *	Required?	Uploaded Documents *
Letters of Commitment: Submit letters of commitment (LOC) from all organizations providing matching contribution to the project, including the applicant and fiscal sponsor.	Required	Letters
Letters of Commitment Cover Letter	Required	letter 2
Fiscal Sponsor Agreement Letter (If Applicable)		-none-
Project Vicinity Map	Required	ChumMap
Approved Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (If Applicable)		-none-
Other documents		-none-

* ZoomGrants™ is not responsible for the content of uploaded documents.

Previous

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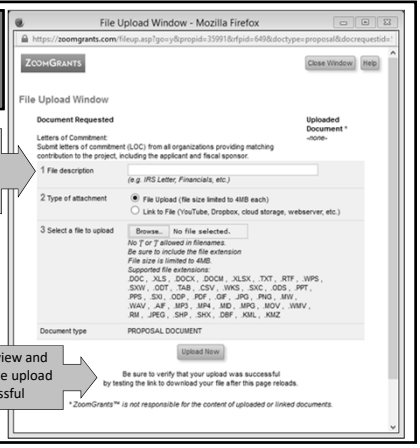
Document Upload



Include the contributor name in the LOC description such as "ABC Consulting LOC"

Refresh your view and confirm that the upload was successful

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Matching Contributions

Match Amounts by All Organizations are listed in the Application.

Organization	Cost Category	Type of Match	Value
CAL FIRE	Contractual	In-Kind	$
Foothills FSC	Other	Cash	$

Match items are:

- **Cash or in-kind**
- **From the applicant or third parties**
- **Listed in the budget and have a letter of commitment**
- **Conform to grant rules (OMB guidelines)**
- **Allowable and relevant to the grant funded project**
- **Verifiable (documentation will be required)**
- **Not counted as match for another federal grant**
- **Not from a federal source**

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Fiscal Sponsor Agreement

For those groups using a fiscal sponsor, the signed fiscal sponsor agreement must be submitted with your application. The agreement will define:

- **The fiscal sponsor's responsibility to manage the grant funds**
- **Communication between the fiscal sponsor and applicant**
- **The process for reimbursement or payment of grant expenses**
- **The role each organizations will have in managing the project**
- **How grant documentation will be collected and stored**
- **Who will complete grant related reports**

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Letters of Commitment

Letters of Commitment (LOCs) are required from all contributors of cash or in-kind match.

- **Must be uploaded with your grant application on ZoomGrants.**
- **Must be on organizational letterhead or as an email with organizational identification (such as logo)**

LOCs Must Include:

1. **A description and dollar value of the match provided and how it relates to the project**
2. **Contributor contact information**
3. **Timing of match provided**
4. **Type of match (cash or in-kind)**
5. **Signature of an appropriate organization representative**

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Letters of Commitment

LOCs Must Include:

1. **A description and dollar value of the match provided and how it relates to the project**
2. **A statement of "commitment" not support**
3. **Contributor contact information**
4. **Timing of match provided**
5. **Type of match (cash or in-kind)**
6. **Signature of an appropriate organization representative**

Additionally, the letter must be on letterhead.

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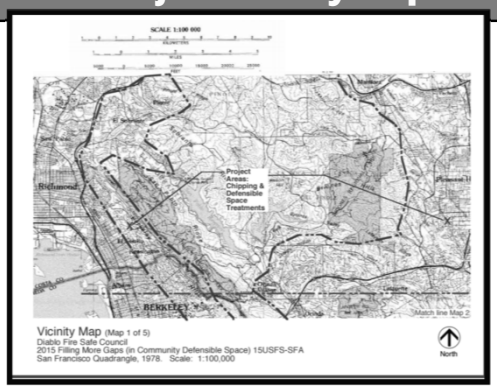
Project Vicinity Map



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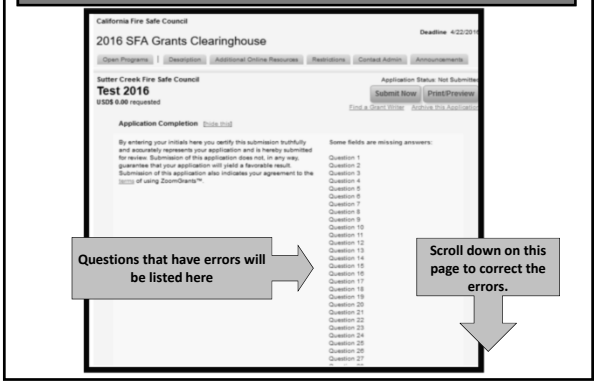
Error Check



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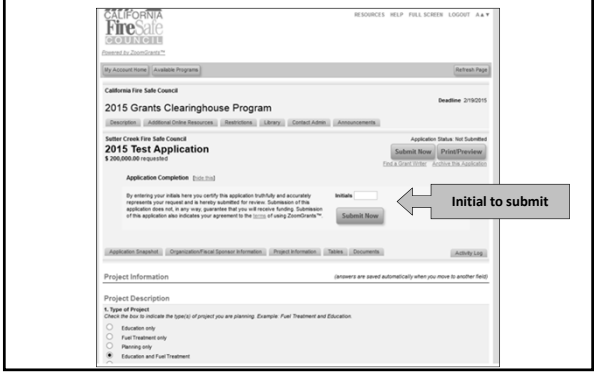
Submitting the Application



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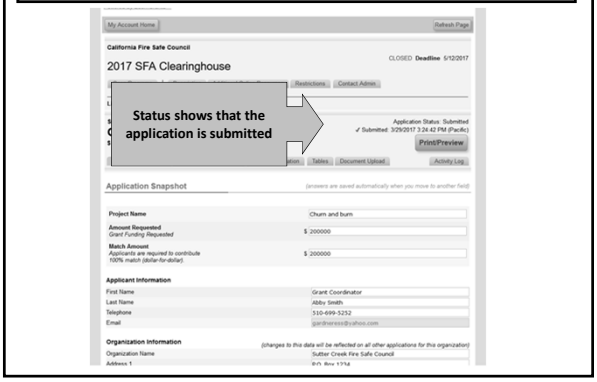
Submitted Confirmation



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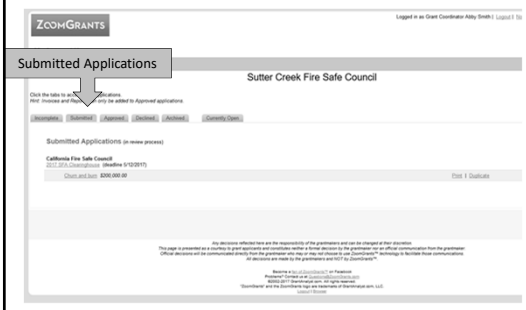
Viewing Submitted Applications



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Submitting Your Grant Application

Things You Can Do To Submit Successfully:

- **Determine what you need to do and make a schedule**
- **Make sure cooperators understand their roles**
- **Identify match sources and obtain "Letters of Commitment"**
- **Check to see that the application responses are consistent**
- **Ask others to proofread your application**
- **Evaluate your application based on the scoring criteria**
- **Make sure the application is complete and is submitted on time**

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Keys for Success

- **Use the handbook!**
- **Set a schedule**
- **Contact your partners and collaborators ASAP**
- **Be clear, specific and concise when describing your project**
- **Plan a reasonable, accurate budget**
- **Proofread your application**
- **Contact CFSC for assistance**
- **Don't wait until the last minute!**

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Next Steps: After Applications are Submitted

Applications Due Online	June 5, 2019 5:00 p.m. PST
Phase 1 Review: Initial Application Screening and Review Committee Process	June- July 2019
Notification of Selected Projects	August 2019
Phase 2 Review: Organizational Capacity and Risk Assessment	August- September 2019

All dates are tentative and subject to change.
Contact CFSC for questions about the timeline and steps in the process.

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Phase 1: Project Review

Initial Screening

1. **Application submitted on time &complete.**
2. **Applicant organization is eligible.**
3. **Application is 1 of 2 maximum.**
4. **Grant amount requested on application(s) does not exceed maximum allowable.**
5. **Letters of Commitment are complete and properly uploaded.**
6. **Match amounts in LOCs are consistent with budget.**
7. **A fiscal sponsor agreement and map was submitted (*if applicable*).**
8. **If proposing to purchase equipment, applicant contacted a CFSC grant specialist and submitted the required cost-benefit analysis via email.**
9. **Budgeted costs are allowable and figures are consistent with the funding request amount.**
10. **Deliverable costs are consistent with the budget totals.**

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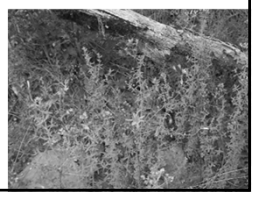
Phase 1: Project Review

Review Committee

Applications passing initial screening will be reviewed and scored by the volunteer Grant Review Committee.

The Committee is a panel of experts in wildfire issues and application review and selection. This Committee recommends projects for funding to the CFSC Board of Directors.



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Phase 2: Organizational Capacity and Risk Assessment

- **Complete Pre-Award Report**
- **Submit required organizational documents**
- **Self-certify organization's written policies and procedures**
- **Sign and submit required certifications and assurances**
- **Undergo interview with CFSC on organizational capacity**

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