

# *The City of Pittsburgh*

## *Grants Office Manual*



Office of Management and Budget, June 2015

## GRANTS OFFICE

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The City of Pittsburgh's Grants Office is situated within the Mayor's Office of Management and Budget (OMB) and is tasked with centralizing the City's grant-seeking efforts as well as providing guidance and oversight to City departments in managing their post-award grant administration and reporting processes.

The mission of the Grants Office is to increase the City's capacity to compete for federal, state, county, corporate, and foundation grants and to effectively assist in the full life-cycle of grant management from award through closeout. Our aim is to increase grant-related revenue, limit the City's exposure to any grant-related legal liability, and improve the efficiency and impact of programs and services funded through grant dollars.

The Grants Office utilizes eCivis, a leading cloud-based grants management system designed for state and local governments and school districts. The software allows our staff to search and analyze a comprehensive listing of federal, state, and foundation grant opportunities, and enables us to effectively manage the tracking and reporting of grants in the post-award stage.

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

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INTRODUCTION	1
GRANT PROCESS FLOWCHART	2
<i>PART 1: GRANTSEEKING</i>	
I. GRANTSEEKING PROCESS OVERVIEW	3
II. IDENTIFYING A GRANT OPPORTUNITY	4
III. APPLYING FOR A GRANT	6
IV. APPLICATION SUBMISSION	8
<i>PART 2: POST-AWARD GRANT MANAGEMENT</i>	
I. GRANT NOTIFICATION AND ACCEPTANCE	9
II. MANAGING YOUR GRANT	10
III. CLOSE-OUT PROCEDURES	12
IV. AUDITS	12
V. DOCUMENT RETENTION	12
<i>APPENDIX</i>	
SAMPLE BUDGET	13
SAMPLE RESOLUTION	14
LOGIC MODEL	15

## INTRODUCTION

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Grant funds received by the City of Pittsburgh support important programs and services that the City provides to our community. These funds allow the City to extend pre-existing services, introduce new initiatives, gain technological advances, and subsidize programmatic staffing and equipment. Grant funds are dispersed throughout the City and impact a variety of efforts, including public safety, economic development, social services, recreation, and infrastructure improvement and maintenance, among many others. Because grant funding allows the City to leverage local public funds in order to extend and enhance the services it offers to the community, the impact of grant funding upon the City of Pittsburgh is significant.

The purpose of this Grants Manual is to develop, implement, and maintain meaningful grantseeking coordination and post-award oversight across all departments, allowing us to achieve our mission more fully. The policies and procedures contained herein are intended to foster exceptional stewardship of the public trust through a rigorous adherence to ethical standards associated with grant-related activity.

The policies and procedures laid out in this Grants Manual aim to achieve the following:

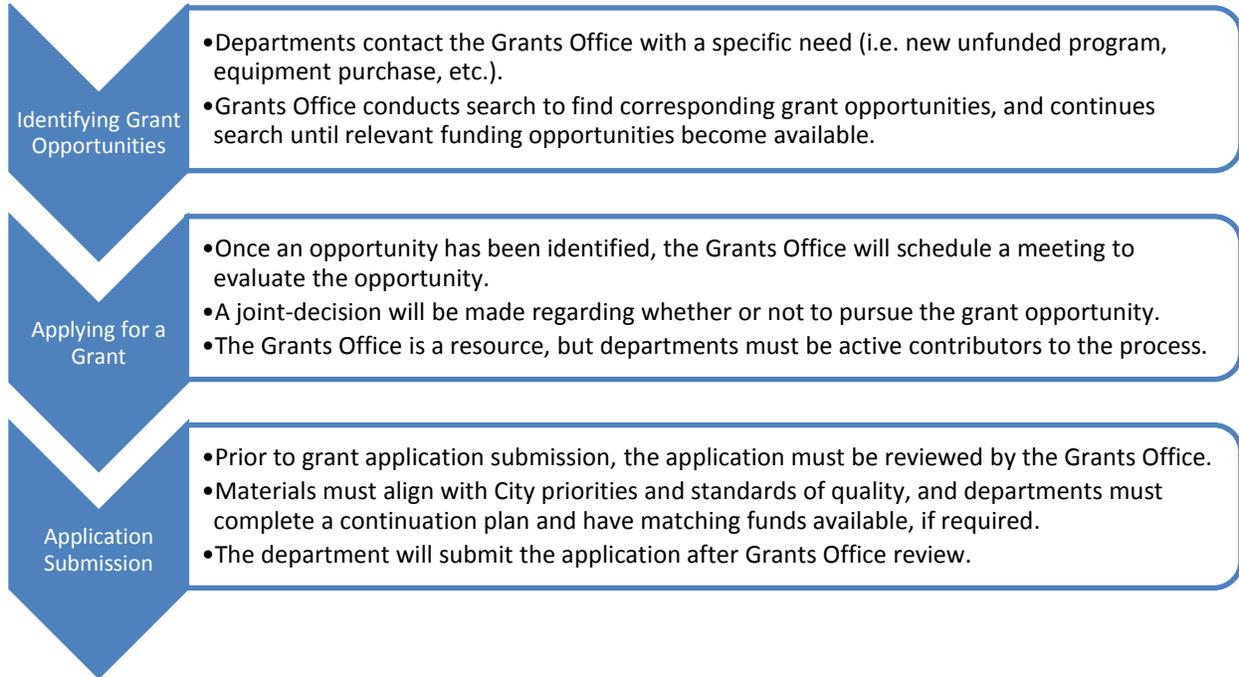
- Ensure that all grant-related activity is consistent with the strategic priorities of the Mayoral administration;
- Ensure the integrity of the City's good standing among grantmaking entities, from local foundations to Federal agencies and everything in between;
- Ensure accountability for financial and programmatic elements of grant management, as well as the detection and mitigation of potential grant-related problems;
- Serve as a resource for all steps of the grants lifecycle including grantseeking, post-award management, and closeout for all City departments; and
- Centralize grant seeking and management to promote collaboration and coordination of the grants process between City departments.

If specific direction relative to grants cannot be located in this policy, please refer to existing City of Pittsburgh policies and procedures or contact the Grants Office staff for assistance.

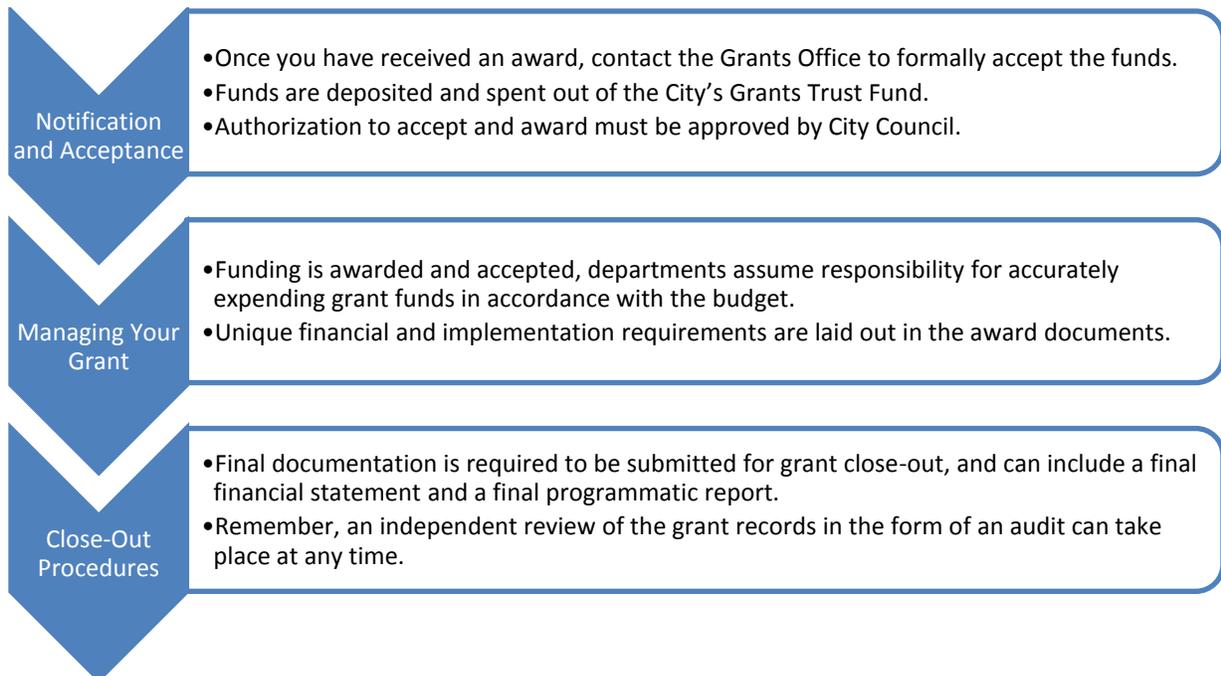
## GRANT PROCESS FLOWCHART

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### The Grantseeking Process:



### The Post-Award Grant Management Process:



## **PART 1: GRANTSEEKING**

### **I. GRANTSEEKING PROCESS OVERVIEW**

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The Grants Office aims to help departments find and apply for grant opportunities, thereby allowing each department to expand its overall capacity without placing greater burden on the City's Operating and Capital budgets. In order to do this, the Grants Office must have knowledge of all departmental needs that can potentially be met through grant funding. Understanding a department's needs and priorities will allow the Grants Office staff to conduct research to find possible grant opportunities that suit its needs.

The following methods will be used to match departmental needs with grant opportunities:

- I. Annual meetings with department heads
  - As part of the yearly formation of the City's Operating and Capital budgets, the Grants Office will meet with department heads to identify the current needs and priorities of the department. These identified priorities will inform regular searches of our grants database. Department heads and the designated grants liaisons for each department will be notified throughout the year as promising new grant opportunities are identified.
- II. Ad-hoc grantseeking
  - At any time during the year, all City employees are encouraged to bring new ideas or initiatives to the Grants Office. In these cases, our staff will work to match your idea to existing grant opportunities and add the information to our internal department priority lists.

Once a grant opportunity is identified, the Grants Office will work with the department head or application team to complete a high-quality application for submission prior to the deadline.

## II. IDENTIFYING A GRANT OPPORTUNITY

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You may have a great idea for a new program, or your department might be in need of a piece of equipment. However, the City's Operating or Capital Budgets are not always realistic sources of funding for new purchases or initiatives. Fortunately, the Grants Office is here to help you identify grant opportunities that match your specific needs.

The process below will be followed for all new requests brought to the Grants Office:

- I. Departments contact the Grants Office with a specific need (i.e. new unfunded program, equipment purchase, etc.).
- II. The Grants Office will use eCivis, our grant software, and funding expertise to locate the most appropriate grant opportunities.
- III. If we are able to match your idea to promising grant opportunities, we will contact you to schedule an initial grant evaluation meeting.
- IV. The Grants Office will mark the identified grant opportunity as "of interest" in the eCivis system for tracking purposes.
- V. If we are unable to identify promising grants immediately, the Grants Office will set-up a notification in eCivis that will alert us when relevant funding opportunities become available.

## HOW GRANT OPPORTUNITIES DIFFER

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**Foundation Grants:** Local and national foundations exist to give away monies from their endowments to programs of specific interest to their founders or board of directors and/or to benefit specific locations or populations. They make decisions following only their own bylaws. As such, requests for funding from foundations should reflect the unique priorities of each organization. The City of Pittsburgh is in regular conversations with local foundations regarding funding priorities. Therefore, funding requests from local foundations will need to be evaluated and approved by the Mayor's Office before an application can be submitted. Examples of Foundations include: Heinz Endowments (local), The Pittsburgh Foundation (local), Rockefeller Foundation (national). ***Notify the Grants Office at least 1-month prior to the application deadline.***

**Corporate Grants:** Corporate philanthropies are private funders who are endowed by corporations, and in some cases even receive a designated percentage of profits each year to give away. They too make funding decisions based on their own bylaws, which often dovetail with the sector in which the associated corporation operates. Usually, a corporation's website will detail its grant-making priorities and application guidelines. Examples of corporate philanthropies include: Alcoa Foundation (local), DICK'S Sporting Goods Foundation (local), and AT&T Foundation (national). ***Notify the Grants Office at least 1-month prior to the application deadline.***

**County Grants:** Allegheny County and its associated agencies offer a limited number of grant opportunities each year which are open to local municipalities. They are often competitive, and the City may choose to submit multiple prioritized applications. Applications may be filed by private developers, the Urban Redevelopment Authority, or non-profit organizations. As such, all Allegheny County grant applications must be brought to the attention of and approved by the Mayor's Office. ***Notify the Grants Office at least 1-month prior to the application deadline.***

**State Grants:**

The State of Pennsylvania offers a number of grant opportunities for municipalities through various agencies like the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) and the Department of Transportation (PennDOT). These grants cover a wide variety of subject matter including environmental issues, transportation funding, economic development, and historic preservation. ***Notify the Grants Office at least 2-months prior to the application deadline.***

**Federal Grants:**

The most time-consuming and competitive opportunities, Federal grant applications are substantial undertakings that can require project teams working upwards of 3 months to successfully complete. These grants often provide very substantial funding for longer-term initiatives, pilot projects, equipment, infrastructure-related projects, etc. that may be too costly to otherwise fund. These opportunities are often offered through the relevant agencies like the Department of Agriculture (USDA), Department of Education (DoED), etc. ***Notify the Grants Office at least 3-months prior to the application deadline.***

### III. APPLYING FOR A GRANT

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Once a grant opportunity has been identified, the Grants Office will schedule a meeting to evaluate the competitiveness of a possible City of Pittsburgh application. During the meeting, the following steps will be completed by Grants Office staff and department representatives:

- I. Review the application material in-depth
- II. Identify all content and application components that must be developed for a successful application
- III. Identify financial implications
  - Total anticipated project cost
  - Match requirements and sources
  - Partner organizations/sub-contractors
  - Staffing requirements (including salary and benefits increases for multi-year grants)
  - Documentation of a clear continuation plan\*
- IV. Identify programmatic implications
  - Alignment with Mayoral administration's strategic priorities
  - Alignment with the department's goals
  - Department's capacity to administer the programmatic, financial, and administrative aspects of the grant

\*In evaluating grant opportunities, departments are required to develop continuation plans prior to applying for grants. The plan should address strategies for sustaining grant funded programs should funding be reduced or terminated. Departments must plan responsibly for either termination or reduction of the program, or, plan to seek alternative sources of funding. Departments must understand that grants are temporary and additional costs cannot be absorbed by the City's operating budget.

Upon reviewing the factors above, a decision will be made regarding whether or not to pursue the grant opportunity. The process below will be followed to determine the next steps for all grant opportunities:

- I. Reach a joint decision on whether the opportunity should be pursued
- II. Develop an application timeline, assign tasks, and, if necessary, identify a larger project team to aid in application development
- III. Schedule any necessary follow-up meetings

The process of assembling a grant application can vary greatly, as can the time commitment necessary to complete a competitive application. Keep in mind, the Grants Office is always available as a resource, but departmental staff must be active contributors to the application to provide the necessary technical and operational expertise and knowledge. The following can be expected from the Grants Office during the application process:

- Attend regular project team meetings and provide expertise and feedback
- Offer writing and editing assistance, as time permits
- Assist with securing letters of support to be included with the grant application
- Offer guidance on best practices for developing budgets, logic models, and other commonly required application components.

## COMMON APPLICATION COMPONENTS

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**While each grant opportunity will have specific requirements, this section is intended to provide information that can be applied to all grant pursuits in general.**

**Writing an Executive Summary:** The abstract or executive summary is a brief, page-limited overview of what the grant reviewer will find in the full grant application. Brevity is important - this section should be no longer than one page unless the guidelines indicate the need for a two-page summary. We recommend writing your abstract or summary after you have written the entire grant application narrative. Always follow the funder's guidelines regarding word or line limits and the structure of the abstract or executive summary.

**Developing a Budget:** Your budget should contain two parts, (1) a budget and (2) a budget narrative. The budget will include a list of all line items and the specific dollar amounts, as well as a total cost for all expenses. The budget narrative is the more detailed, written explanation of how you plan to spend monies if your project is funded. In the section, you will explain and justify the calculations you used to arrive at the budget figures.

**Coordinating a Letter of Commitment or Support:** A letter of support comes from a partner organization and states that the partner is committed to providing leveraging assets to your grant-funded program when funded. Partner organizations can commit to providing cash, facilities, technical assistance, equipment, supplies and materials, or loaned staff. Ask for letters of support from affiliates early in the planning process (*Note: the number of support letters required will vary*). In addition, letters of support can be written by local elected officials or organizations that underline their favorable opinion of the projects without specifically committing resources or funding to the proposal.

**Creating a Logic Model:** The Logic Model is a graphic blueprint of the key elements of a proposed program. It looks at inputs, activities, outputs, outcomes, and impacts. If you live and work in the world of grants, avoiding the Logic Model is difficult. Many different funders require a Logic Model in the program design of your grant application narrative. They are a helpful tool to help you think through your entire project plan.

***See the Appendix for a sample budget, Council resolutions, logic models, and more. In addition, the Grants Office website is a resource for additional grant application tools.***

#### **IV. APPLICATION SUBMISSION**

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Prior to grant application submission, the application must be reviewed by the Grants Office. The goal is to ensure that program and application materials align with established City priorities, meet the City's document quality standards, have matching funds available (if required), and that the means for continuation of the project or program after the grant period ends have been given realistic consideration.

The department submitting the grant application is responsible for ensuring that the pre- application assessment factors noted above have been evaluated and completed prior to submission.

The process below will be followed prior to submitting your grant application:

- I. Departments provide the Grants Office with all relevant application materials to review and authorize prior to submission.
- II. The Grants Office verifies any necessary information with department heads, OMB Budget Analysts, and the Mayoral administration.
- III. The Grants Office authorizes application submission.
- IV. Departments then submit the application following the procedures laid out by the funder.
- VI. The Grants Office uploads all application materials to the eCivis platform and change the grant status to "applied" in eCivis.
- VII. If you received notification that you will be awarded the grant, please move on to the post-award policies and procedures.

## PART 2: POST-AWARD GRANT MANAGEMENT

### I. GRANT NOTIFICATION AND ACCEPTANCE

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Once grant funding has been awarded, the work of project implementation begins. The department receiving the award must focus on the implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of the grant funded program. Those charged with managing the program must work to ensure that they maintain high standards, achieve their stated goals and objectives, meet agreed upon deadlines, stay within budget, expend funds as required, comply with the grantor's terms and conditions, maintain appropriate records, meet financial and programmatic reporting requirements, and communicate results. Oversight of this process is critical to ensure that the interests and responsibilities of the City are met. Grants management entails the establishment of standard operating procedures and clear, regular communication by the responsible department with the Grants Office staff about the status of the grant funded project and required communication with the grantor.

***In some cases, grant awards require a quick turnaround to execute grant agreements. The Grants Office will work with departments to meet funder deadlines.***

The process below will be followed for all grant award acceptance:

- I. Contact the Grants Office to begin the process to formally accept the funds immediately upon notification of a grant award.
- II. Grant funds are deposited and spent out of the grants trust fund. Authorization to accept and expend an award must be approved by City Council through the legislative process (If you are working with a partner organization, please see the partner organization section for details).
- III. Once you contact the grants office, you will be given a unique number for your grant (job number) that you will use in JD Edwards for managing deposits and expenses related to the grant. This number will also be used as part of sections 1 and 2 of the resolutions for council. (If you have already received a check, forward it to OMB. The check can be deposited after grants are approved by council. Departments write legislation and submit it to OMB for approval.)
- IV. Once Council has approved acceptance of the grant you can officially proceed with the next stages of the grant acceptance process.
- V. Forward grant documentation to the Grants Office before it is presented to the Mayor for signature. Grant awards will need to be signed by the Mayor in order for them to be accepted by the grantor and become a fully executed agreement. The Mayor will sign grant awards following City Council approval. The Grants Office will then send executed agreements back to the departments. In addition, grants agreements may require additional signatures depending on the funder, which could include a department director and the Law Department. **Pay attention to the deadline to accept a grant. Some grant award acceptances require a quick turnaround.**
- VI. Each department is responsible for sending executed and signed grant documentation to the funder. This is usually a paper file, but may in some cases be electronic. The final award document (executed award) will be sent from the grantor. When copies are received, departments must forward copies to the Grants Office and the Law Department, and upload a copy onto eCivis.

**Partner Organizations:** There may be circumstances in which the City of Pittsburgh will partner with an outside organization. For example, the City is often approached by local non-profits, authorities, and other agencies to serve as the lead applicant for grant opportunities that are only open to municipalities. As the lead applicant, the City assumes all the responsibilities for the grant, and must contract with the secondary organization. In the case of all partnerships, a Cooperation Agreement between partner organizations is required.

A Cooperation Agreement is a document which outlines each organization's roles and responsibilities in fulfilling the grant requirements. The Law Department will be instrumental in writing the agreement, which will then be folded into the process of accepting the grant award. At the time when legislation is presented, the Cooperation Agreement will also be included in the accompanying resolution.

## II. MANAGING YOUR GRANT

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Once grant funding is awarded and accepted, departments assume responsibility for accurately expending grant funds in accordance with the budget as well as implementing the scope of work for the project. There are unique financial and implementation requirements for every grant, which will be laid out in the award documents. The Grants Office is available to assist with any questions about these requirements.

Grant Implementation Plan:

- Parallel to the legislative process, all departments that receive grant funding must work with the Grants Office to develop a Grant Implementation Plan that identifies the goals and objectives to be achieved, the project timeline, milestone events, an anticipated expenditure schedule, roles and responsibilities, and takes into account grantor terms and conditions. The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all grant funded programs or projects are managed according to the terms set forth in the grant agreement, the City of Pittsburgh Grants Manual, and other applicable City policies and procedures.

Procurement:

- All procurement activity associated with grant funds must be consistent with the City's established procurement policies and procedures, as well as the approved grant budget and overall requirements of the grantor.

Requests for Payment/Expenditures:

- Departments must request payment from the funder if a check is not received up front. The specific payment method will be disclosed in the executed agreement. All copies of payment transactions must be forwarded to the Grants Office and requests for payment are required for Federal grants and necessary in order to avoid audit findings.
- The Grants Office will periodically check grant expenditures and meet with departments throughout the life cycle of the grant. Expenditures go through the City's regular approval process and can be viewed in JD Edwards (individual expenses, purchase orders, and encumbrances).

Progress Reports:

- Most funders require progress reports, which can vary greatly. Departments must submit progress reports (if required) on time. Timely submission is necessary to avoid audit findings and/or hold up payments for the City of Pittsburgh via the same funding agency. Progress report deadlines will be entered into eCivis. Copies of reports will be sent to the Grants Office and uploaded into eCivis.

Interim Reports:

- Funders may require additional reports in addition to progress reports. One example would be a quarterly financial report required by most federal grants. As with the other reports, departments must submit interim reports on time and forward all copies to the Grants Office to be uploaded into eCivis.

Budget or Programmatic Changes to the Grant:

- Funders must approve any significant budget or programmatic changes through a written request. For example, if an item costs significantly more or less than what was entered in the budget, if there is a change of staff, or a change in project scope, departments will need funder permission to implement changes. If a modification request is not submitted, it is likely that grant funds will need to be returned (to the Grantor) or they will not be reimbursed, etc.
- Departments that anticipate significant changes in budget or scope of work/project goals should immediately contact the Grants Office to discuss an action plan.
- Note: Budgetary and program discrepancies are often revisited even years after a grant has closed when the grant is undergoing an audit.

Award Extension Requests:

- If a project is taking longer to complete than originally anticipated, immediately contact the funder to request an extension within 60-90 days prior to the end of the grant period.

### **III. CLOSE-OUT PROCEDURES**

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As grant awards comes to an end, final documentation is required to be submitted for final close-out. This documentation will usually include a final financial statement and a final programmatic report.

The following process will be followed for grant award closeout:

- I. The Grants Office will meet with departments three months prior to the end of grant close-out period to discuss any procedures and/or developments and to ensure submission of final paperwork.
- II. If a Cooperation Agreement was included in the grant paperwork, the Grants Office will also ensure that all paperwork from the partner organization is submitted.
- III. The Grants Office will upload final documentation to eCivis.

### **IV. AUDITS**

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An independent review of the City of Pittsburgh grant-related records in the form of an audit can take place at any time. The goal of an audit is to ensure that the City has fully complied with all requirements of a given grant agreement and to verify the accuracy of all associated financial records. Some audits are predictable and take place on a regular basis, while other audits are performed by funders on an ad-hoc basis.

Certain types of grants that are automatically audited on a yearly basis include the following:

- The Single Audit is a yearly review overseen by the Finance Department and conducted by an outside entity. During the process, auditors review all Federal grants as well as any grants in which the source of funds originated from the Federal government (called Federal flow-through grants). The audit includes all expenditures and receipt of payments for all relevant grants.
- The State of Pennsylvania's Department of Community & Economic Development (DCED) audits all grants over \$100,000 on a yearly basis. The City of Pittsburgh is required to pay for this audit, which is conducted by outside auditors who bid for the contract. These audits are overseen by the Office of Management and Budget.

The possibility for a grant audit always exists, which underscores the importance of record retention (see section V. below for details). Departments should contact the Grants Office immediately in the instance that a grant is being audited.

### **V. DOCUMENT RETENTION**

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Grant documentation must be kept a minimum of five years past the official close of the grant. If the grant is re-opened due to an audit, the five years starts from the end of the audit. All records must be retained including receipts, any spreadsheets, grant award documentation, required forms, etc.

**APPENDIX**

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**Sample Budget:**

	<b>YEAR 1</b>	<b>YEAR 2</b>	<b>YEAR 3</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
<b>REVENUE</b>				
TBD	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
TBD	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
TBD	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
<b>EXPENSES</b>				
<b>PERSONNEL</b>				
Full-Time Salaries	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Full-Time Benefits (30%)	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Part-Time Wages	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
<i>Personnel Total</i>	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
<b>NON-PERSONNEL</b>				
Equipment & Supplies	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Printing	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Communications	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Food/Refreshments	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Travel	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Promotional Items	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Postage	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Rental Fees	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Other	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
<i>Supplies Total</i>	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -

**Sample Resolution:**

Resolution authorizing the Mayor and Director of [department, ex. "Department of Public Works"] to execute relevant agreements to receive grant funding to support [brief summary of how the grant purpose] and further providing for an agreement and expenditures not to exceed the written amount of grant [dollar amount of grant award, ex. "\$50,000"] dollars for this stated purpose.

Be it resolved by the Council of the City of Pittsburgh as follows:

**Section 1.** The Mayor and the Director of [department] of the City of Pittsburgh are authorized to execute relevant agreements with the [name of grantor, ex. "Pennsylvania Department for Economic Development"] in order to receive a grant award of written amount of grant [dollar amount of grant award] for the [brief summary of how the grant funds will be used] in the City. Monies from the grant agreement shall be deposited into the Grants Trust Fund account [insert job number here].

**Section 2.** The Mayor and the Director of [department] of the City of Pittsburgh are further authorized to enter into an Agreement, or Contract, or utilize existing Agreements or Contracts and not to exceed written amount of grant [dollar amount of grant award] dollars, [brief summary of how the grant purpose] under the terms of the agreement between the City and the Grantor [name of grantor]. Said agreement or agreements, contract or contracts, or expenditures shall not exceed written amount of grant [dollar amount of grant award] dollars chargeable to and payable from the Grants Trust Fund account [insert job number here].

*Note: The Grants Office will provide appropriate job numbers for your resolution.*

**Logic Models:**

A logic model (also referred to as *a Theory of Change*) is used to evaluate the effectiveness of a program. Logic models help us summarize key elements of a program, explain the rationale behind certain program activities, and more clearly explain our intended outcomes. Funders of all types request logic models, so, it’s crucial to understand how they work. Below is an example:

INPUTS	STRATEGIES	OUTPUTS	INTERMEIDATE OUTCOMES	LONG-TERM OUTCOMES (FINAL GOALS)
What do you need to make your program happen?	What will the program do?	What are you measuring? (The direct quantitative product of your program activities)	Benefits for participants during and after program activities	Changes in systems and processes after expending funding
Examples include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Money</li> <li>• Partners</li> <li>• Facilities</li> <li>• Equipment and supplies</li> <li>• Transportation</li> <li>• Staff time</li> <li>• Volunteers</li> </ul>	Examples include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide...</li> <li>• Develop...</li> <li>• Implement...</li> <li>• Create...</li> <li>• Educate...</li> <li>• Coordinate...</li> </ul>	Examples include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• #of classes taught</li> <li>• #of hours of service</li> <li>• #of residents served</li> <li>• #of projects completed</li> <li>• # of materials distributed</li> </ul>	Examples include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved condition</li> <li>• New knowledge</li> <li>• Increased skills</li> <li>• Changed attitudes</li> <li>• Changed behavior</li> </ul>	Examples include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New approaches</li> <li>• New services</li> <li>• Stronger partnership working agreement</li> </ul>

IMPACT STATEMENT (Post 2-3 years). This should be written in the past tense, as if the project has already been funded. In an ideal world (and in one sentence), what would happen as a result of your proposed project?

(Example: Students who once struggled to maintain a D grade point average have achieved phenomenal levels of success; they have celebrated As and Bs, increased state standardized test scores, and assumed leadership roles in after school activities).

*Adapted from: Grant Writing for Dummies 4<sup>th</sup> Edition*