

December 2021 e-Blast



This monthly e-newsletter serves to provide you with the latest updates on grants news, initiatives, and featured events.

What's happening now?

[Executive Order 13985 – Submission of the NASA Equity Action Plan](#)

On November 30th, NASA submitted its draft Equity Action Plan (EAP) to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB). The EAP describes how NASA plans to address barriers to equitable participation in programs and the intended impacts of those actions. OMB is expected to provide feedback on the draft EAP to NASA shortly.

NASA initially identified four primary focus areas in the EAP:

- Office of Science, Technology, Engineering & Mathematics Engagement (OSTEM) Internship Program,
- Science Mission Directorate's (SMD) Scientific Competition Process,
- Office of the Chief Financial Officer's (OCFO) Grants/Cooperative Agreements with Minority Serving Institutions (MSI), and
- Enterprise Procurement Strategies/Product Service Lines Set-Aside for Underserved Communities and has since added the Office of Small Business Programs.

Through the EAP drafting process, systemic barriers were identified to accessing NASA's grants, fellowships, and programs. NASA is aware of the need to substantiate these barriers with data and is actively working to overcome gaps in the collection system throughout the agency.

A final draft of the EAP is due to OMB on January 20, 2022. It is OMB's expectation that agencies' EAPs be made available to the public.

[Release of the 2021 Grant and Cooperative Agreement Manual \(GCAM\) and GIC 22-02](#)

On November 30, 2021, GPC released the newest iteration of the *Grant and Cooperative Agreement Manual* (GCAM). The GCAM provides policy guidance to NASA Grant Officers, Technical Officers, Program Managers, and all other award-management-related personnel to implement government-wide and NASA-specific regulations for awarding and administering grants and cooperative agreements.

This iteration of the GCAM has been updated in response to financial statement audit findings, OIG audit findings, and feedback received from the NASA grant community. The GCAM has also been updated to incorporate all relevant Grant Information Circulars (GICs) released since the GCAM was last updated in November 2020.

Along with the release of the GCAM, GPC also issued GIC 22-02 which includes a description of major revisions made to the GCAM.

The revised GCAM and GIC 22-02 will be posted on the [GPC webpage](#) shortly.

Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act - Potential Implications for NASA Grants and Cooperative Agreements

On November 15, 2021, President Biden signed the [Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act](#) (Act) which includes provisions to ensure that Federal infrastructure programs (1) require the use of materials produced in the United States, (2) increases the requirement for American-made content, and (3) strengthens the waiver process associated with Buy American provisions. All financial assistance vehicles that support infrastructure, as defined by the Act, shall adhere to these requirements.

The Act requires each agency to submit a report to the OMB that provides information about each of its Federal financial assistance programs for infrastructure. OMB sent out a data call to agencies to assist them in meeting the 60-day report requirement, and GPC submitted NASA's response on December 7, 2021.

The Act also requires the OMB to develop guidance that will assist agencies in implementing the Act's requirements. This guidance is set to be released to agencies no later than 180 days from the Act's signature. GPC will provide additional information to the NASA grants community about the implications for grants and cooperative agreements as it becomes available.

Executive Order 14042 Ensuring Adequate COVID Safety Protocols for Federal Contractors - Injunction

Executive Order (EO) 14042, *Ensuring Adequate COVID Safety Protocols for Federal Contractors*, was signed by the President on September 9, 2021 (and published in the Federal Register on September 14, 2021 at 86 FR 50985). This EO impacted 13 "contract-like" cooperative agreements identified by the Office of Inspector General and issued by NASA. However, on December 7, 2021, GPC was notified of a nationwide injunction issued by a Federal Court enjoining implementation of provisions of EO 14042 for the identified cooperative agreements and any other future cooperative agreements.

GPC is consulting with the Office of the General Counsel on next steps, and we will continue to provide updates on NASA's implementation of EO 14042 and any updates related to litigation of EO 14042 as it is received.

NASA Financial Statement Audit – 2021 Grant 01 Recommendations

In November 2021, the auditing firm Ernst & Young (EY) completed their work on the 2021 Financial Statement Audit (FSA). EY recommended that NASA develop policy related to post award monitoring oversight activities and continue to build upon the monitoring and oversight activities already implemented. Additionally, EY recommends that NASA management evaluate the level of resources needed to implement the new advanced monitoring related recommendations.

The language of the two recommendations from the 2021 FSA Grant-01 report is as follows:

1. Continuing to develop policies and procedures for how:

- a. desk reviews and on-site visits will be conducted and documented, including the frequency with which such grantee monitoring will occur to cover programmatic and financial requirements, and
 - b. the status of reviews conducted on grantees, including grantees' compliance with the financial management requirements in 2 CFR 200, will be documented.
2. Ensuring the newly developed policies and procedures are implemented and assessing the level of additional resources that would be necessary to ensure proper implementation of desk reviews and site visits to identify potential issues in a timely manner.

Pursuant to the recommendations outlined above from EY, GPC is building out the Advanced Monitoring Plan policy that will provide guidance for staff performing advanced monitoring activities (desk reviews and site visits) and is engaging with NASA leadership to ensure that the necessary resources are allocated to ensure the successful implementation of advanced monitoring activities across NASA.

GPC will meet with EY in January 2022 to provide corrective action updates on progress made toward satisfying the two recommendations listed above ahead of the 2022 FSA kickoff in February 2022.

[NASA Shared Services Center Grant and Cooperative Agreement SharePoint Site](#)

The NASA Shared Services Center (NSSC) grants team maintains a SharePoint site that may be a useful resource for the NASA grants management community. The NSSC Grants and Cooperative Agreements SharePoint site allows users access to grant related forms and provides quick links to grants related policies, regulations, systems, procedures, and reference documents. The SharePoint site also allows recipients to input basic requests such as a No-Cost Extension and/or Grants PI Transfer Request.

The SharePoint Site is available at <https://nasa.sharepoint.com/sites/nssc/SitePages/Grants.aspx>

Trainings, Meetings, & Webinars

[FACE Meeting](#)

Please join the next monthly GSA-led Financial Assistance for E-Government (FACE) meeting on **December 15, 2021, at 1:30 pm EST**. It is the functional community group dedicated to addressing the needs of the federal financial assistance community as it pertains to collecting, using, disseminating, and displaying federal financial assistance data.

If you have interest in attending the meeting please contact GPC: hq-dl-grants-policy-compliance@mail.nasa.gov

[GPC Monthly Meetings](#)

GPC will host the next monthly meeting with the NASA grant community on **December 16, 2021, at 1:00 pm EST**. This meeting's objective is to provide updates, deliver announcements, solicit feedback, share information, and participate in a team environment. The past meetings have been a success with positive engagement and

feedback. If you have not received a meeting invitation for the meeting, please contact corey.a.walz@nasa.gov to make sure you are included on the GPC meeting subscription list.

Federal Demonstration Partnership Meeting

The Federal Demonstration Partnership (FDP) is an association comprised of federal agencies, academic research institutions, and research policy organizations, working to streamline the administration of federally sponsored research. The FDP hosts three meetings on an annual basis, which includes updates on agencies' policies, Notice of Funding Opportunities, processes, and other relevant topics that may impact the grant research community.

The next FDP meeting is scheduled from January 10-13, 2022. Please reach out to Christiane Diallo at christiane.diallo@nasa.gov if your program office/mission has any information (e.g., program, policy, or process update) that you would like us to share at the next FDP meeting.

If you are interested in learning about the FDP or would like to view recordings and presentations from previous meetings, click [HERE](#).

UPCOMING TRAINING OPPORTUNITY! – Introduction to 2 CFR: Uniform Guidance

GPC will be releasing the Introduction to 2 CFR: Uniform Guidance course in SATERN shortly. This course provides an introduction to the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) and an overview of various aspects of Title 2 of the CFR (2 CFR): Subtitle A, OMB Guidance for Grants and Cooperative Agreements; Part 200, Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements; and Subtitle B, Federal Agency Requirements for Grants and Agreements.

The course is intended for NASA Federal agency officials who award or oversee grants and cooperative agreements, including Grant Officers, Technical Officers, and Program Officers.

**Do you have comments, questions, or feedback for our next e-Blast?
We welcome your suggestions! Send an email to Corey Walz.**

Thank you,
Grants Policy & Compliance Branch

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