NSDI Cooperative Agreements Program (CAP)
Submitting an NSDI CAP Proposal

Step-by-step guidance on how to submit a proposal to the National Spatial Data Infrastructure (NSDI) Cooperative Agreements Program

fgdc
FederalGeographicDataCommittee

vers. 20121015

Learning Objectives

After completing this module the student can:

- ▶ Access the NSDI CAP program announcement
- ▶ Plan and execute proposal preparation in accord with the CAP schedule
- ▶ Download the application package from Grants.gov
- ▶ Complete each CAP proposal form and address each requirement
- ▶ Identify contacts and resources that can aid in developing the CAP proposals
- ▶ Submit a complete CAP proposal via Grants.gov
- ▶ Outline the steps of the CAP review process
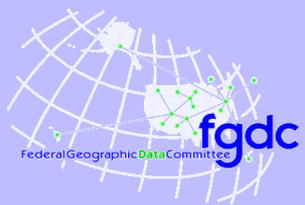
Access CAP Grant Information

Where to find the CAP announcement

- **NSDI CAP Web site**
  http://www.fgdc.gov/grants
  includes schedule information and brief descriptions
  of the categories

- **Grants.gov Web site**
  http://www.grants.gov/
  centralized site for federal government grant
  programs

Access CAP Grant Information

Where to find help

▶ **Grants.gov Applicant Resources**
http://www.grants.gov/applicants/app_help_reso.jsp
tutorials and documents to help with Grants.gov

▶ **CAP Frequently Asked Questions**
http://www.fgdc.gov/grants/2013CAP/FAQ_2013NSDICAP

▶ **USGS Geospatial Liaisons**
**http://liaisons.usgs.gov/geospatial/**
great resource for support and helping with collaborations

Schedule

Proposal Submission

- Submittal period varies between sixty and ninety days after the Announcement opens
    - Program Announcement will be posted by November 2012
    - 2013 program expected to close on January 29, 2013 at 2 pm

- **All** proposals must be submitted electronically via Grants.gov therefore you must register with Grants.gov *before* you can submit your proposal
    - the registration process requires 1-4 weeks so register early… register now!
    - once registered, you can apply to all federal grant programs

Schedule
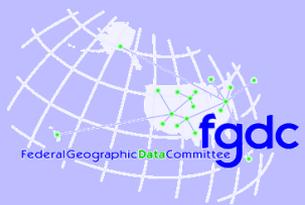
Proposal Review and Award

- ▶ Proposal review period requires four to six weeks after the closing date

- ▶ CAP Awards are announced as soon as the reviews are completed and a final decision is made
  - 2013 CAP Awards will be announced in Spring 2013

Schedule

Project Implementation

- Project Start Date
  - based on the date listed by recipient in the proposal
  - must start before end of fiscal year (September 30)
- Category-specific Orientation Workshops or Kick-Off Meetings
  - generally scheduled within 60 days of award
  - Category Lead coordinates workshop site and date with recipients
  - in 2013 these will be held via teleconference/webinar
  - purpose is to meet, collaborate, review schedule and reporting requirements
  - if necessary, CAP funding is used to cover travel costs and is considered part of the award

Submitting Your Proposal via Grants.gov

Submitting a proposal application package:

1. Register with Grants.gov

   http://www.grants.gov/

   > Registration takes 1 to 4 weeks **so start early**. Once registered, your organization can use the same information for all other Grant.gov applications

2. Prepare proposal

   > Pay attention to CAP and category specific requirements

3. Submit package to Grants.gov
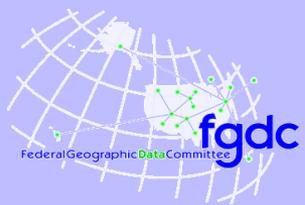
Register with Grants.gov

Grants.gov

A centralized location to explore, access and apply to U.S. federal government grant opportunities

- ▶ **ALL** CAP proposals must be submitted via Grants.gov

- ▶ **NO** hardcopy proposals are accepted

- ▶ Grants.gov application process requires prior registration with external federal and business registries – so plan ahead and register now

- ▶ More information is available at: http://www.grants.gov/

GRANTS.GOV℠

Register with Grants.gov

Steps for registration on Grants.gov

1. Obtain DUNS Number

   - Same day

2. Register with SAM (System for Award Management)

   - Three to five business days or up to two weeks

3. Complete AOR (Authorized Organization Representative) profile on Grants.gov

   - Same day

4. AOR Authorization by E-Business Point of Contact (E-Biz POC)

   - Time depends on responsiveness of your E-Biz POC

Information at

http://www07.grants.gov/applicants/organization_registration.jsp

Register with Grants.gov

Step 1: Access your DUNS Number

A Data Universal Number System (DUNS) Number is required to submit a CAP Proposal

▶ A DUNS Number is a unique nine-digit sequence recognized as the universal standard for identifying and keeping track of over 100 million businesses worldwide

▶ If your organization does not have a DUNS Number request one from:
http://www.dnb.com/

Register with Grants.gov
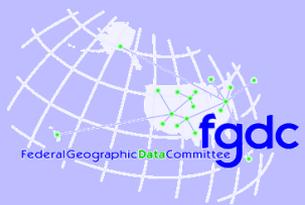
Step 2: Register with System for Award Management (SAM)

Registrant database for government contractors (it replaces CCR)

▶ For information and to register

- https://www.sam.gov/
- 877-252-2700
- Additional link - https://www.uscontractorregistration.com/

Register with Grants.gov

Step 3: Complete AOR (Authorized Organization Representative) profile on Grants.gov

- ▶ Need organization's DUNS Number to complete this step
- ▶ Create your username and password

Register with Grants.gov

Step 4: AOR Authorization by E-Biz POC

- ▶ The E-Business Point of Contact (E-Biz POC) at your organization must login to Grants.gov to confirm you as an Authorized Organization Representative (AOR)
- ▶ There can be more than one AOR for your organization
- ▶ In some cases the E-Biz POC is also the AOR for an organization
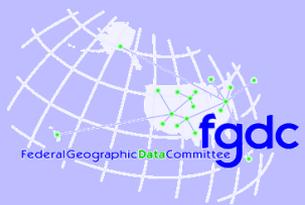
Prepare Proposal

**While the Grants.gov registration process
is being completed
you can prepare your NSDI CAP proposal**

Prepare Proposal

Steps for Preparing and Submitting Proposal on Grants.gov

1) Download Application Package

2) Complete the Application Package

3) Submit the Completed Application Package

4) Track the Status of a Submitted Application Package

Information at

http://www.grants.gov/applicants/apply_for_grants.jsp

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Prepare Proposal

Step 1: Download the NSDI CAP Application Package from Grants.gov

Downloading a grant application package allows you to complete it offline and route it through your organization for review before submitting

▶ Download the application package from: http://www.grants.gov/applicants/apply_for_grants.jsp

▶ Provide the CFDA Number, '**15.809**' to access the NSDI CAP application package

Prepare Proposal

Step 2: Complete the NSDI CAP Application Package

Complete the application on your own computer

- Instructions on how to open and use the forms in the package are on the application package cover sheet

- Edits to your application are saved locally

- The package cannot be submitted until all required fields have been completed

- A narrated tutorial on how to complete a grant application package is provided at:

  http://www.grants.gov/applicants/apply_for_grants.jsp

Example Application Cover Sheet

Prepare Proposal

Summary of <u>Required</u> Proposal Components

- ▶ Application for Federal Assistance - SF 424
- ▶ Budget Information - SF 424A
- ▶ Assurances – SF 424B
- ▶ Project Narrative
- ▶ Budget Breakdown
- ▶ Negotiated Rate Agreement for State and university applicants
- ▶ Other category-specific requirements as specified in the CAP announcement

Format for submittal

- ■ Adobe Acrobat (.pdf)

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Proposal Components

Summary of <u>Optional</u> Components

- ▶ Letters of Support or Participation
- ▶ Related Reports
- ▶ Documents that affirm leadership role
- ▶ Memoranda of Understanding or other formal agreements
- ▶ Project personnel resumes or Curriculum Vitae

Format for submittal

- ▪ Adobe Acrobat (.pdf)
- ▪ Tagged Image File Format (.tif) or other scanned document format

Required Proposal Components

Application for Federal Assistance SF-424

The core government-wide standard forms for grant application packages

▶ SF424 Core Form

A general information page that documents the:

- contact information for submitting organization
- CAP category to which the proposal is submitted
- project title
- project duration
- geographic impact of the project
- amount of funding requested

Required Proposal Components

Application for Federal Assistance SF-424

▶ SF424 Core Form (cont'd)

- Once registered at Grants.gov much of the required information automatically loads into the form

- Item 8f: *Name and Contact Information*

  provide information for the NSDI CAP project lead, all project correspondence will go to this person

- Item 15: *Descriptive Title of Applicants Project*

  be sure to preface your project title with the NSDI CAP Category

- Item 17: *Proposed Project*

  the start and end date can be modified after the award is granted, sometimes this is to accommodate the CAP orientation workshop but grant period should not exceed one year

Required Proposal Components

Application for Federal Assistance SF-424

- SF424-A: Budget Information Non-Construction Programs
  A summary of the project budget by:
    - tasks
    - expense categories (salary, travel, supplies, etc.)
    - In Column 1 - cost category allocation of federal funds
    - In Column 2 - cost category allocation of applicant in-kind match
    - This is addition to the detailed Budget Breakdown document

- SF424-B: Assurances Non-Construction Programs
  A listing of varied assurances that the applicant must make with regard to eligibility for funding and compliance with federal laws

Required Proposal Components

Project Narrative

A brief (max. 5 page, about 3000 words) project description

▶ Primary document evaluated by the review panel

▶ Exact content specified for each CAP Category but generally includes:

- project scope
- expected benefits
- technical approach
- deliverables
- project and/or NSDI-related experience
- commitment to effort
- organizational capacity and resources
- budget breakdown

Required Proposal Components

Budget Breakdown

An explanation of the specific individuals, events and/or materials that are supported by the following SF 4242-A

This expands on the information provided in the SF-424A and is required if the proposal is awarded

See the CAP Announcement for budget breakdown details

Required Proposal Components

Budget Breakdown (con't)

Budget Items:
- Salaries and wages
- Travel/field expenses
- Other direct costs such as:
  - supplies
  - equipment
  - contracted services
- Indirect / overhead charges

Example of a Budget Breakdown is in the 2013 CAP announcement

Required Proposal Components

Budget Breakdown (con't)

- Itemize the costs to the greatest extent possible
- Travel expenses need to be justified
  - Examples:
    - Give presentation on the project at a conference
    - Attend training
- For contractual services provide the criteria by which contractors will be or have been selected.
- If purchasing hardware, software, or supplies these need to be dedicated to the project

Example of a Budget Breakdown is in the 2013 CAP announcement

Required Proposal Components

Budget Restrictions

Individual CAP Categories may exclude or limit the use of funds for expenditures such as:

- Data collection
- Data purchase
- Hardware purchase
- Software purchase
- Contractor support

Read the CAP Announcement carefully to determine funding restrictions that may apply to your project

Required Proposal Components

In-kind Resource Match

- ▶ Requirement varies for each category and ranges between 30% to 50%
- ▶ Funding commonly used as In-kind Match:
  - ▪ salaries
  - ▪ funds from non-federal contributors
  - ▪ hardware and/or software dedicated to the project
  - ▪ indirect costs
- ▶ Funding that cannot be used as In-kind Match:
  - ▪ funding from other federal agencies
  - ▪ value of geospatial data holdings (some exceptions)

Read the CAP Announcement carefully to determine the In-kind Match requirements specific your project

Required Proposal Components

Category-specific Requirements

Each CAP Category may require specific proposal components. For example:

▶ *Category 4: Fifty States Initiative: Business Plan Development and Implementation* is not open to institutions that have received a Category 4 CAP award in 2011 or 2012

▶ *Category 7: Geospatial Platform Cloud Service Test-bed* is not open to institutions that have received a Category 7 CAP award in 2012

▶ State Geospatial Strategic Plan

▶ Letters of Support or Participation

▶ Negotiated Rate Agreement for state and university applicants

Optional Proposal Components

Optional Proposal Components

- ▶ Letters of Support/Commitment
  - from collaborators and/or project stakeholders
  - may be **required** for Categories focused on partnership and collaboration
  - Federal employees **cannot** provide letters
- ▶ Related Reports
  - related project summaries that exhibit capabilities and capacity
  - annual reports that demonstrate engagement in the NSDI

Optional Proposal Components

Optional Proposal Components

- ▶ Other supporting documents
  - ▪ organizational documents that affirm leadership role
  - ▪ items that support statements made in the Project Narrative
- ▶ Project personnel resumes or Curriculum Vitae
  - ▪ Principal Investigator
  - ▪ key technical personnel
  - ▪ consultants (if allowed by the category)

Prepare Proposal
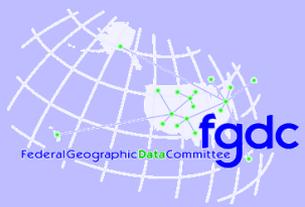
**Remember to read
the CAP Announcement
carefully to determine
the application requirements
specific your project**

Help with Proposals
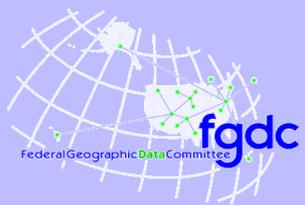
Topic Development and Collaborative Resources

▶ Contact your regional USGS Geospatial Liaisons at: http://liaisons.usgs.gov/geospatial

▶ Review reports from past CAP recipients available from: http://www.fgdc.gov/grants

▶ Contact the CAP Coordinator or CAP Category Lead identified in the CAP Announcement

▶ Review a successful, past proposal by:

  ▪ sending a formal request for the proposal information via the FOIA office (http://www.usgs.gov/foia/index.html), or

  ▪ sending an informal request to the CAP Coordinator who will request permission from the submitting organization to share the document

Prepare Proposal

Step 3: Submit the Completed NSDI CAP Application Package

- This cannot be done until the Grants.gov registration process has been completed
- The AOR (Authorized Organization Representative) does this step
- The AOR could be you, the E-Biz POC, or someone else in your organization

Prepare Proposal

Step 3: Submit the Completed NSDI CAP Application Package (con't)

- Click the submit button located at the top of the application package cover page. It will not be active until you have:
  - completed all required forms
  - attached all required documents
  - saved your application package
- Log in to Grants.gov using your AOR username and password
- Click the "Sign and Submit" button on the summary page
- A Grants.gov tracking number will be provided at the bottom of this screen, as well as the submission's official date and time - *record the tracking number*

Step 4: Track the Status of a Submitted Application Package

- Once your application has been submitted, you can check the status on the Track My Application
  - https://apply07.grants.gov/apply/checkApplStatus.faces
- You can identify your application by
  - CFDA Number
  - Funding Opportunity Number
  - Competition ID
  - Grants.gov Tracking Number

# Submitting Multiple Proposals

Organizations may submit proposals for more than one category.

▶ A complete and separate application package is required for each category submission.

Proposal Selection Process

1. CAP Coordinator and Category Leads review proposals to ensure compliance to all requirements
2. Category Leads recruit individuals with Category-specific expertise to serve on Review Panels
3. Compliant proposals are shared with Review Panel members
4. Each Review Panel member reviews the assigned proposals individually using a provided score sheet
   - scoring is based on the exact criteria and point allotment specified in the CAP Announcement
   - completed score sheets are preserved so that the selection process can be revisited at any time
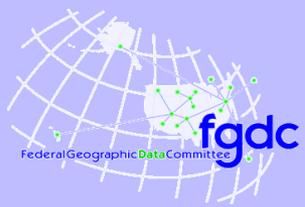
Proposal Selection Process

- ▶ The panels meet either in person or via teleconference to discuss the proposals and their scores

- ▶ The Category Lead compiles all the reviews and scores and ranks the proposals

- ▶ The information is passed to the FGDC Secretariat Director for final selection
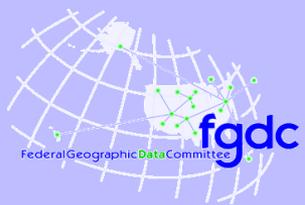
Proposal Selection Process

Review Panels

- Category leads recruit volunteers from:
  - previous CAP recipient organizations
  - USGS Geospatial Liaisons
  - FGDC Coordination Group
  - Federal, state and local government
  - University, non-profit and private sector organizations
- Recruitment attempts to diversify the type of organizations represented by review panel members
- Panels are composed of 5 to 16 individuals depending on the number of proposals to review and the CAP category

Proposal Selection Process

Hints for Successful Proposals

- ▶ Address <u>all</u> criteria and provide <u>all</u> requested items and information

- ▶ Comply with proposal size/length limitations

- ▶ Follow the proposal format provided in the CAP announcement

- ▶ Observe CAP and category-specific funding restrictions

- ▶ Budget work and expenditures to meet both project objectives and funding limits

- ▶ Clearly state the source and value of in-kind match

Proposal Selection Process

Hints for Successful Proposals (con't)

- ▶ Include Letters of Support for organizations indicated as project collaborators or prime benefactors
- ▶ Discuss how your organization will sustain the project outcomes after the CAP project ends
- ▶ Focus on partnerships with other organizations
- ▶ Discuss plans to share the project outcomes
- ▶ Proposed realistic, achievable goals

and…

did we mention?

Read the CAP Announcement carefully

Proposal Selection Process

Notification of Awards

- Successful applicants receive:
  - informal notification from the CAP Coordinator or Category Lead
  - formal notification from the USGS Office of Acquisitions and Grants
- Selected projects are posted to the FDGC Web site and announced to the public via email
- Unsuccessful applicants receive notification from the CAP Coordinator that includes:
  - reason(s) the project was not selected
  - suggestions for other funding venues, if known
  - USGS Geospatial Liaisons or other organizations that could help move the project forward

Proposal Selection Process

Award Processing

Award processing requires two to four weeks to complete

- ► A requisition is issued to authorize the expenditure of CAP funds to support the project
- ► The Office of Acquisitions and Grants (OAG) assigns a Federal Project Number
- ► An OAG Grants Officer is assigned to the project to review the budget and complete the award package
- ► An audit report is performed if the CAP recipient has expended over $500,000 in federal awards in a fiscal year
- ► Award package is signed by USGS Contracts Officer
- ► Completed award package is sent to the CAP recipient

Summary

This is the conclusion of "NSDI Cap Proposal" You now should be able to:

- Access the NSDI CAP program announcement
- Plan and execute proposal preparation in accord with the CAP schedule
- Complete each CAP proposal form and address each requirement
- Identify contacts and resources that can aid in developing the CAP proposals
- Download the application package from Grants.gov
- Submit a complete CAP proposal via Grants.gov
- Outline the steps of the CAP review process

Conclusion

Successful submittal of an NSDI CAP proposal requires:

- ▶ Advanced planning and registration
- ▶ Careful review of the CAP Announcement
- ▶ Collaboration and partnership
- ▶ Demonstrated capabilities

Conclusion

For more information

Visit

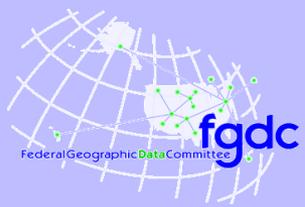www.fdgc.gov/grants

http://www.fgdc.gov/grants/2013CAP/2013CAPDescriptions

Contact CAP Coordinator

Gita Urban-Mathieux

burbanma@fgdc.gov

703-648-5175

Finally ....

Start writing your proposal …

Other Lessons

NSDI Cooperative Agreements Program:

Introduction to CAP

How to Implement Your NSDI CAP Project