

Huge

A vibrant photograph capturing a moment at an outdoor farmers market. A woman with curly hair, wearing a denim jacket and a colorful scarf, is smiling warmly as she hands a purple onion to a man. The man, dressed in a plaid shirt, is reaching out to receive it. In the background, there's a wooden cart filled with various fresh vegetables like beets and leafy greens, and a sign that reads "100% ORGANIC". The scene is bathed in bright sunlight, creating a lively and positive atmosphere.

Grants.gov

Product Vision & Strategy Presentation

June 9, 2023

## Agenda

1. Overview
2. Strategy
3. Guiding Principles & Experience Concepts
4. Roadmap

Agenda

1

# Overview

## Where we are

**DISCOVERY****1.23-2.14**

Research recruitment & Immersion

Huge collaborated with Grants Solutions to recruit 12 grantors and 38 applicants from key Equity buckets for 1:1 interviews.

**2.14 - 2.28**

User research & Stakeholder interviews

Huge conducted fifty 1 hour 1:1s user interviews with 50 participants, covering equity barriers across the Find & Apply journey.

**3.9.23**

Research Read out & topline

Huge shared topline grantor and applicant findings and insights to invite feedback and discussion ahead of the Tissue and Vision sessions.

**SYNTHESIS EXPLORATION****04.05**

Tissue Session

Review interstitial work product as input into the final vision session

**04.17**

Vision Presentation

Share future grants.gov experience strategy vision

**04.21**

Roadmap Presentation

Share and discuss the roadmap that brings the strategic vision to life

## Overview

# Today's objective

Review and align on the product strategy, a foundation that links user needs with organizational goals to communicate the ultimate purpose and position of the product.

## Expectations for today

### What this is.

- Seeks to answer the question, “who do we want to be when we grow up?”
- An aspirational future-state for the experience of our product & services
- High level recommendations of signature moments we can be creating
- Illustrative concepts with directional and descriptive copy

### What it isn’t.

- Prioritization & planning for optimizations and product development
- Detailed high-fidelity flows and screen designs for implementation
- Final visual design approach and copy ready for approval and handoff

Agenda

# Strategy

2

## The ask

Create a long-term strategic vision  
and plan to transform grants.gov  
through the creation of a best in  
class user experience.

## Narrowing the focus

More than a design modernization, the new experience must be more equitable, making it easier for all applicants, including underserved communities, to find and apply for grants.

The key word

More than a design modernization, the new experience must be more equitable, making it easier for all applicants, including underserved communities, to find and apply for grants.

What do we mean when say equitable?

## Stakeholder

“We need to make it **accessible** to everyone.”

What do we mean when say equitable?

## Stakeholder

"We need to make it **accessible** to everyone."

## User

"**Simplifying** the grant process and just keeping track of what those outcomes measurements are at the basic level, it just makes it more equitable for everybody."

What do we mean when say equitable?

## Stakeholder

"We need to make it **accessible** to everyone."

## User

"**Simplifying** the grant process and just keeping track of what those outcomes measurements are at the basic level, it just makes it more equitable for everybody."

## The White House

"Members of underserved communities — many of whom have endured generations of discrimination and disinvestment — still confront significant barriers to realizing the full promise of America. The federal government has a responsibility to make every effort to **remove these barriers**."

Translating our ambition for a website.

Simple to use.  
Accessible for all abilities.  
Welcoming and inclusive.  
Unbiased content and design.

Driving choice

# But what is our real value proposition?



While equitable design is a priority, the reality is that we must increasingly drive choice for users faced with other grants related sites and experiences - many of which aren't focused on equitable access.

“When grants.gov was born in 2002, the value was putting all of ‘find’ in one place.”

Stakeholder

Today the site largely works as a functional repository

Opportunities posted on Grants.gov

Applications received through Grants.gov

25K

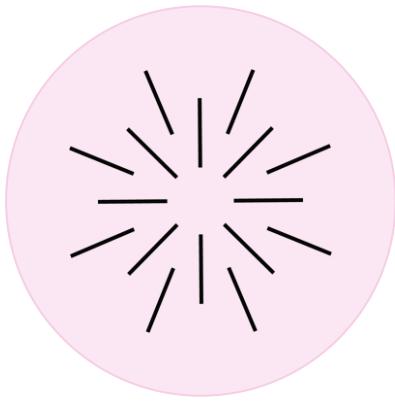
1.2M

*Data from 2018-2022*

Audience

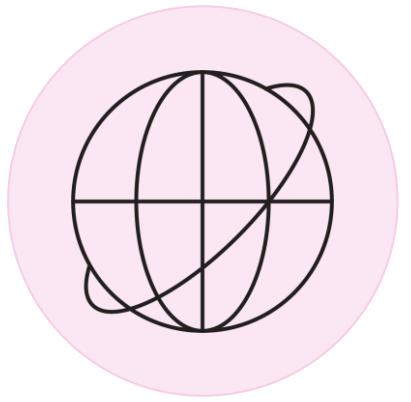
But who is the site  
working for?

## Our main applicant archetypes



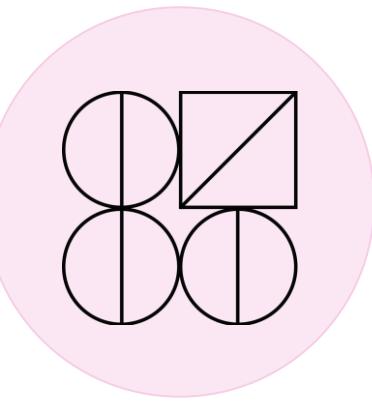
### The Novice

Applicants who lack familiarity with the grant process, including first time or infrequent applicants.



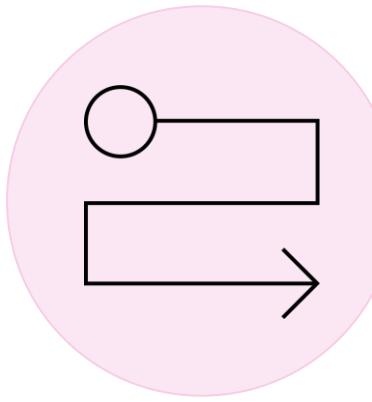
### The Collaborator

Applicants who coordinate with partners to increase their chance of success



### The Maestro

Frequent applicants who manage multiple work streams at once



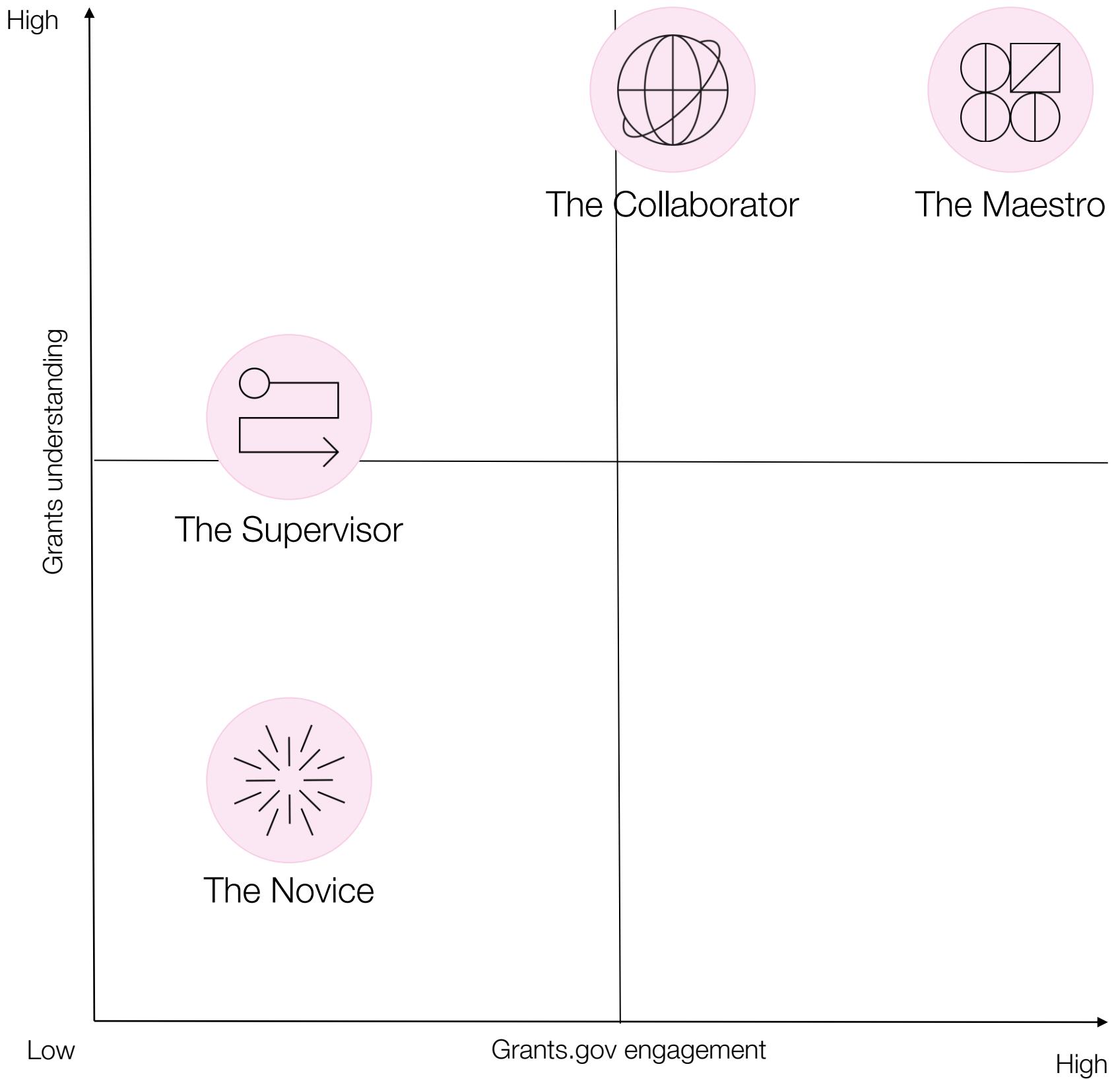
### The Supervisor

Applicants in senior positions responsible for oversight

User behavior

# Familiarity drives engagement

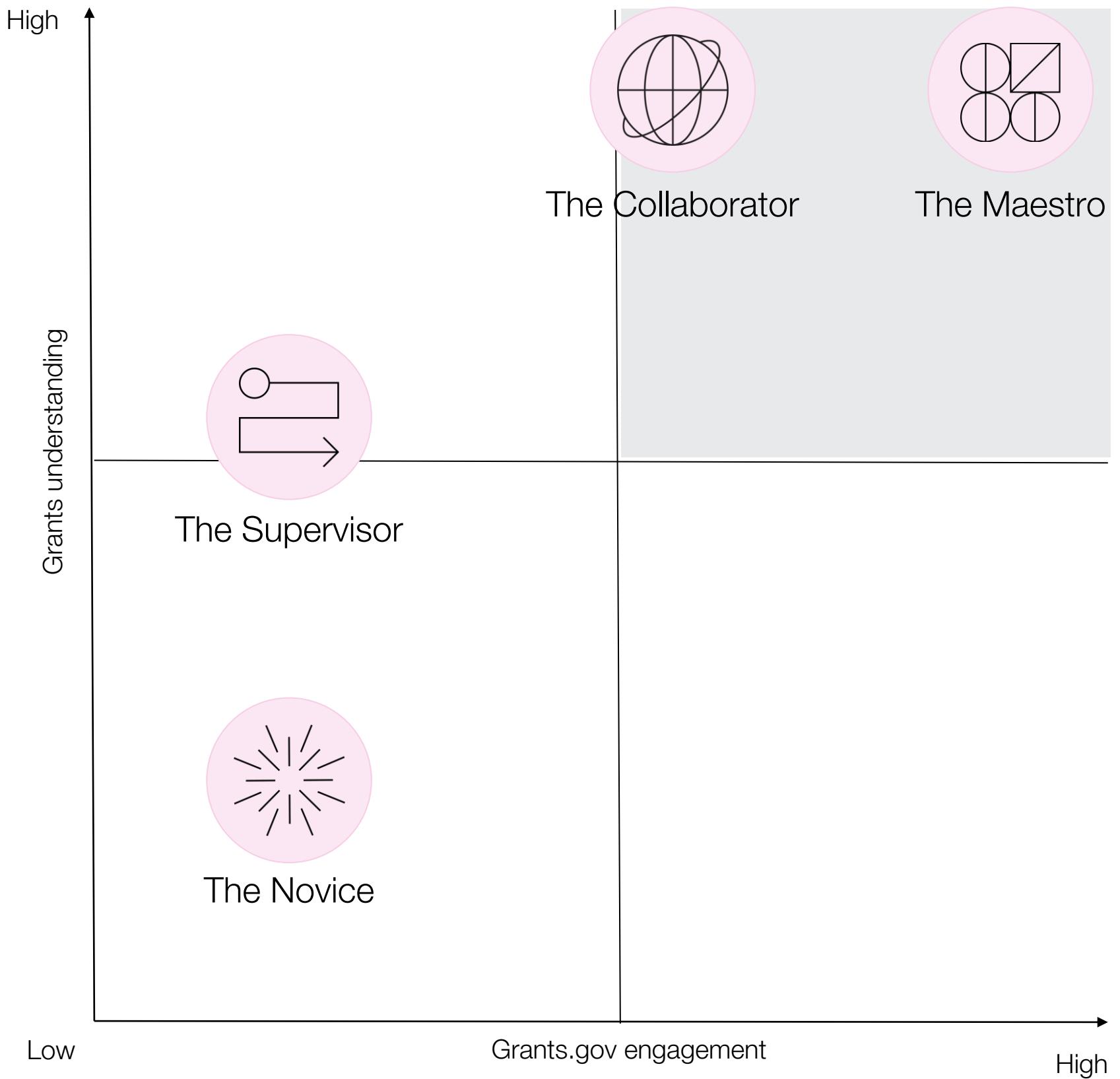
User behavior within the digital experience is driven by institutional knowledge and a familiarity of the grants system.



User behavior

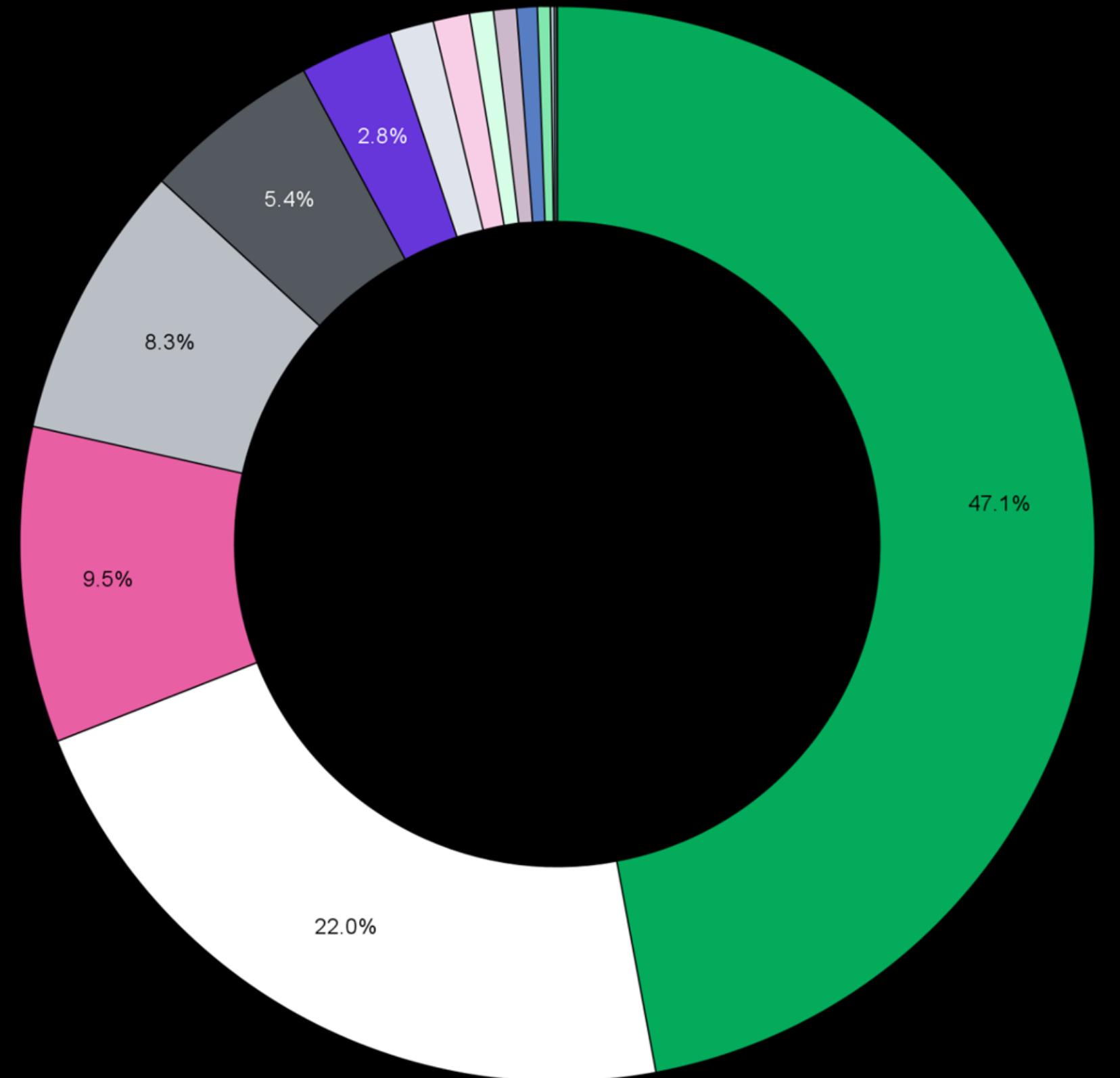
# Familiarity drives engagement

User behavior within the digital experience is driven by institutional knowledge and a familiarity of the grants system.



## Our current user set

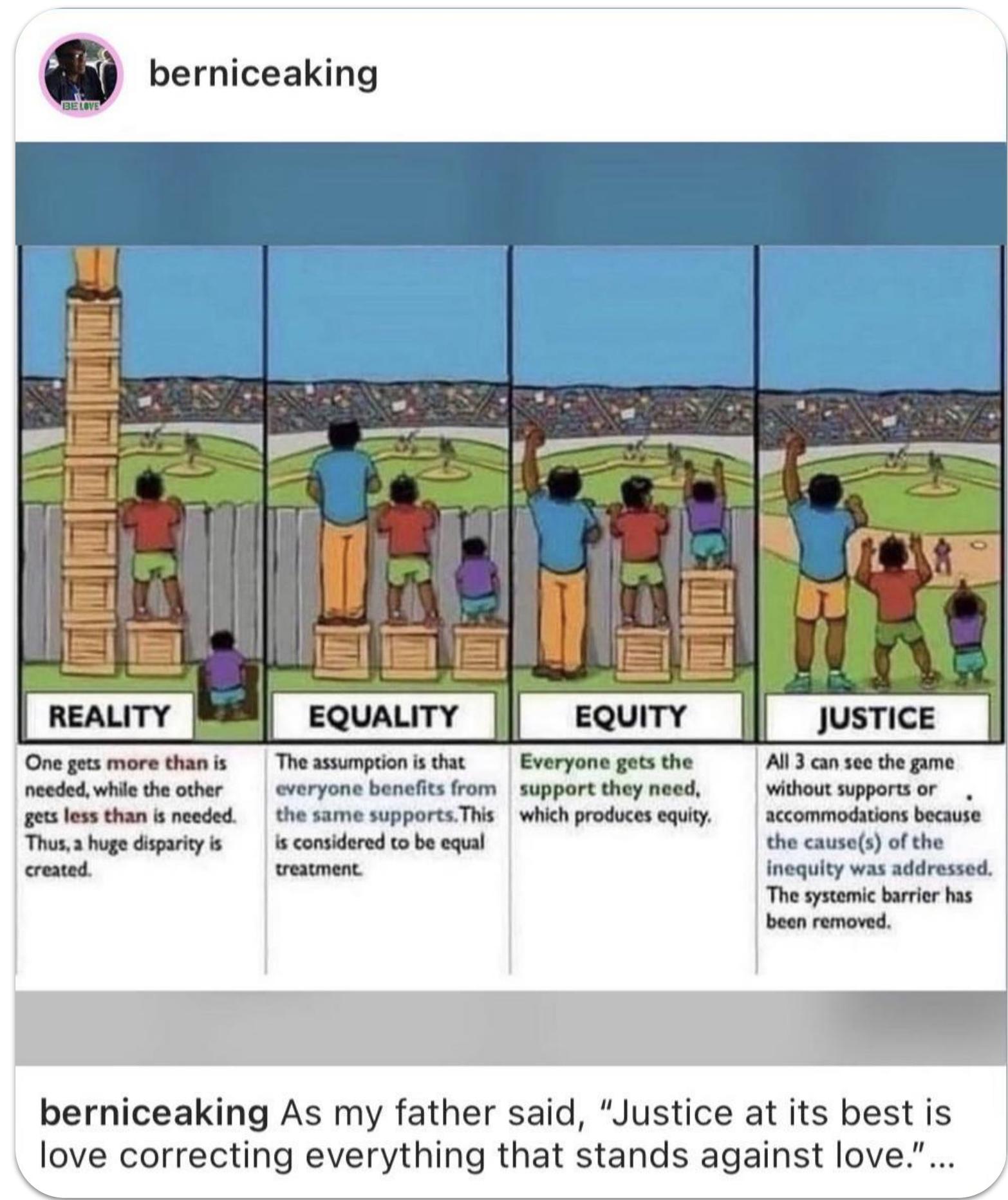
- Higher Education
- Non-profit
- Government
- Small Business
- Other
- Native American Tribal
- Independant School District
- Non-domestic (non-US) Entity
- For-profit
- Hispanic-serving institution
- HBCU
- Regional Org
- Individual
- TCCU
- Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian Serving Institutions



Our successful applicants trend towards larger organizations, that likely work with a team of people and are already familiar with the grant process.

To target everyone is target no one

Unlock the experience  
where we can impact  
the most.

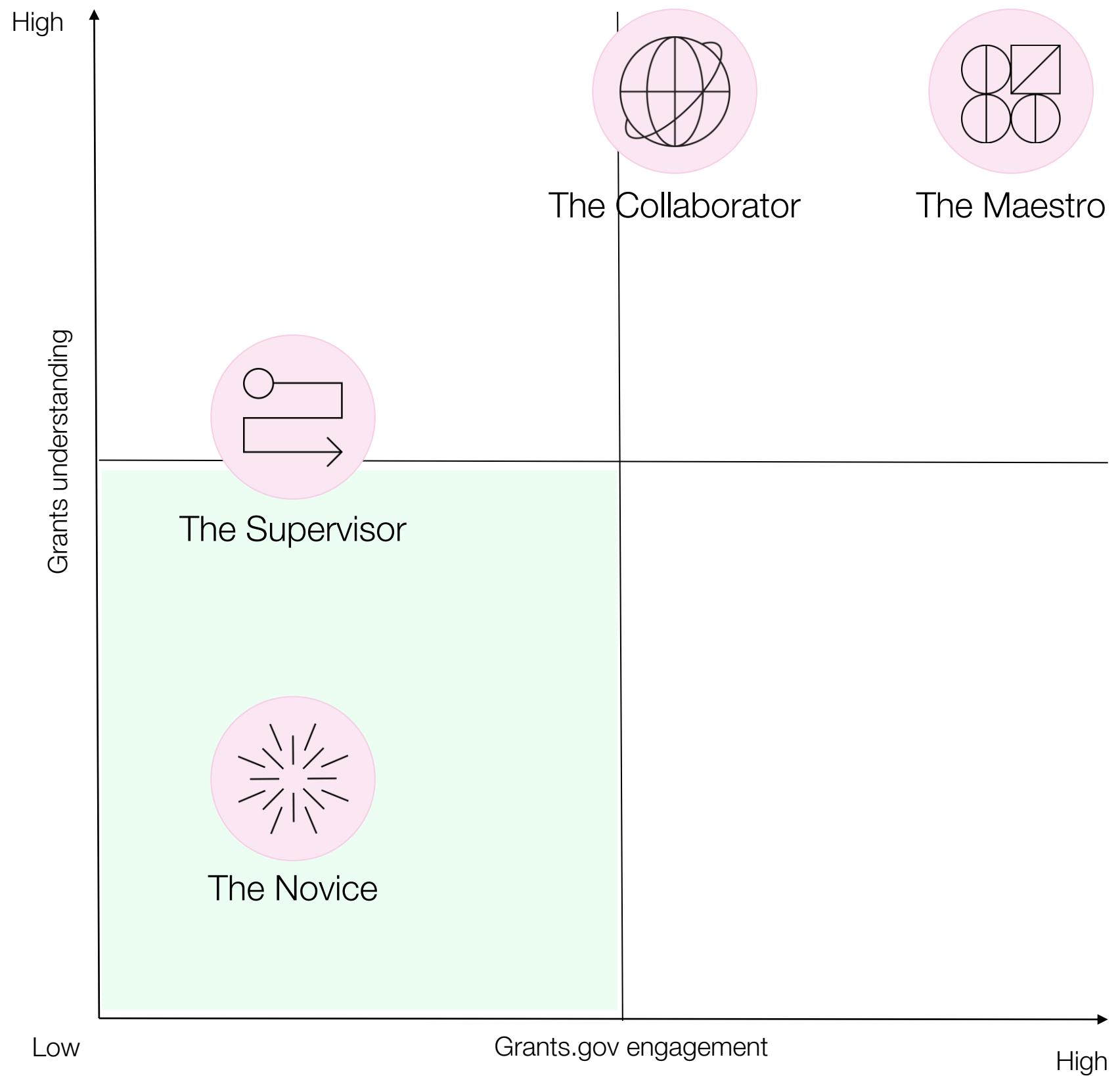


Where we can make an impact

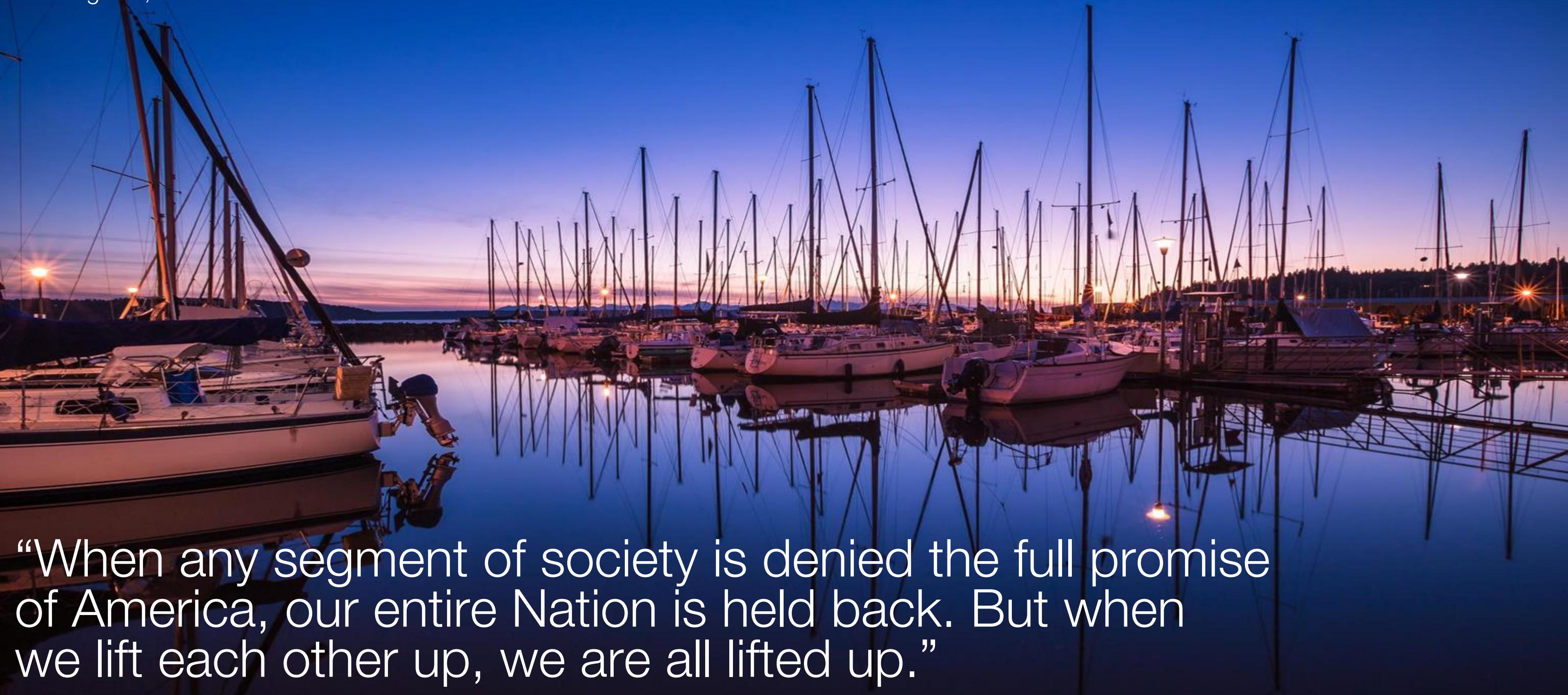
# The unaddressed opportunity

In order to execute our mission on behalf of taxpayers, there is a need to drive awareness, access, choice - that requires reaching those left out.

With the least amount of engagement and the most unaddressed needs, our novices, who share attributes with our underserved communities, need our support to become successful applicants and grant holders.



A rising tide, raises all boats



“When any segment of society is denied the full promise of America, our entire Nation is held back. But when we lift each other up, we are all lifted up.”

The struggle is real

The burden is on the novice to become the expert on the grants process AND the grants system.

## Divergent views between expert and novice

“People just need to take the responsibility and dig in... If you want the money - do the work.”

Grantor

“Looking at this, I don’t know where to start.”

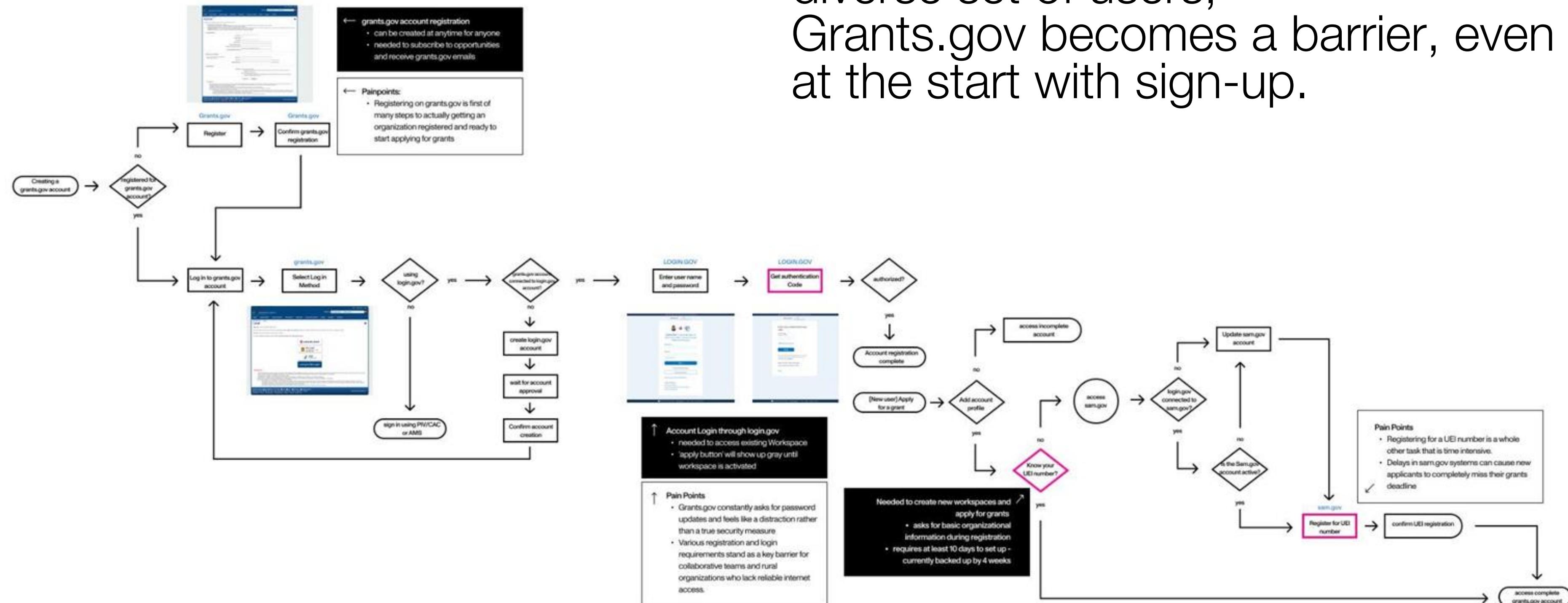
First time applicant, small business

“I have not applied because the requirements are just too labor intensive for the amount of money that we get... Basically, it's not worth it me.”

First time applicant, small non-profit organization

## Part of the problem

Rather than a tool that supports our diverse set of users, Grants.gov becomes a barrier, even at the start with sign-up.



Grants.gov sign-up & registration flow

## Equity barriers against our applicants

### Underserved Organizations

#### **Connectivity**

Based on availability and geography, stable internet connection is not a guarantee to support a digital-only experience.

#### **Organization Size**

Not all organizations have a dedicated resource for seeking grant funding. Many are 1-man shops, who are trying doing it all.

#### **Maturity**

New organizations are still working through their paperwork and building infrastructure to support funding and reporting.

#### **Expertise**

Small organizations face higher turnover, taking institutional grants knowledge and expertise with them.

## Equity barriers against our applicants

### Underserved Organizations

### Underserved Individuals

#### **Cognitive load**

Applicants often apply for grants across many agencies, requiring them to learn multiple processes and address varying requirements.

#### **Language**

Applicants are faced with a lot of jargon without context or definition, especially if English may not be their native language.

#### **Education**

The complexity and language of the NOFO often require a very high level of education for comprehension.

#### **Time**

Most of users are wearing a lot of hats - community advocate, program lead, etc. Grants writer is only part of their responsibilities and require efficiency.

#### **Connectivity**

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## Equity barriers against our applicants

### Underserved Organizations

### Underserved Individuals

#### The Novice on Grants.gov



##### Lost at the start

Novices don't see a clear homepage CTA to begin, and can't find 1:1 help.

##### Overwhelmed by search

New applicants misuse the keyword search function, and have trouble understanding acronyms and terminology.

##### Confused by NOFOs

Novices have difficulty determining their eligibility and understanding the details of the full announcement.

##### Blindsided by requirements

New applicants are caught off guard by SAM.gov registration, and often miss format and file name requirements.

##### Cognitive load

Applicants often apply for grants across many agencies, requiring them to learn multiple processes and address varying requirements.

##### Language

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##### Expertise

Small organizations face higher turnover, taking institutional grants knowledge and expertise with them.

Our opportunity

An experience that  
helps the novice while  
empowering the expert.

An evolution.

A connector



A companion

A complex repository



An intuitive platform

An insider's game (iykyk)



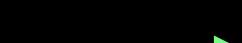
A proactive partner

“Another grants website”



The trusted standard

High effort journey



Rewarding engagement

Agenda

# Guiding Principles & Experience Concepts

3

Getting to our future state

## Guiding Principles

Inspiring values that will guide the design of our future-state vision: an equitable, best-in-class digital experience.

## Experience Concepts

Big picture signature moments and features across our experience that will have the most impact for our users.

## Getting to our future state

**Guiding principles**

**Create an ownable identity**

**Demystify the grants process**

**Frictionless functionality**

**Sophisticated self-direction**

## Getting to our future state

### Guiding principles

**Create an ownable identity**

**Demystify the grants process**

**Frictionless functionality**

**Sophisticated self-direction**

### Experience concepts

A Warm Welcome

Grant Matchmaker

Streamlined Access

Smart Support Center

A Branded Experience

Forecast Tracker

Multi-Channel Task Reminders

Guided Application

## Guiding Principle

More than a color palette and logo, a strong, trustworthy presence is a reflection our mission and an emotional differentiation to our varied audiences across many channels.

**What if** we could build positive experiences that facilitate deeper human connections, inspire users, and ultimately deliver greater engagement?

# Create an ownable identity.

A first pass at look and feel

# A note on site visuals...

To help us visualize how our vision concepts come to life, we have applied a first pass on look and feel. It is meant to be illustrative and not final designs. We will discuss more about the branded experience later in the presentation.

Logo



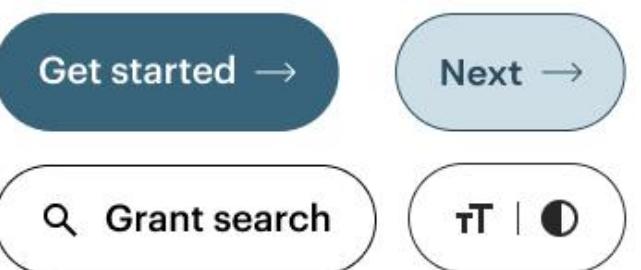
Color Palette



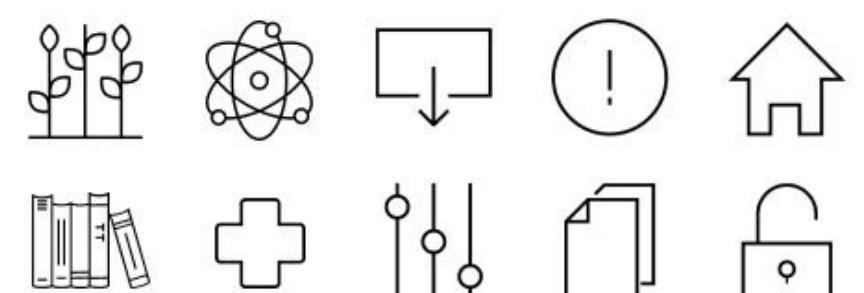
Imagery



UI Components



Iconography



Typography &amp; Layout

A screenshot of a website page for the US Department of Agriculture's Beginning Farmer Development Program. The page features the USDA logo, the program title "Beginning Farmer Development Program", and a description of the grants provided for education, mentoring, and technical assistance.

Concept 1

1

# A Warm Welcome

Set an inviting tone for first time users. Give them the sense that we're here to help, that we value their trust and offer an equitable opportunity to all those who apply.

## A Warm Welcome

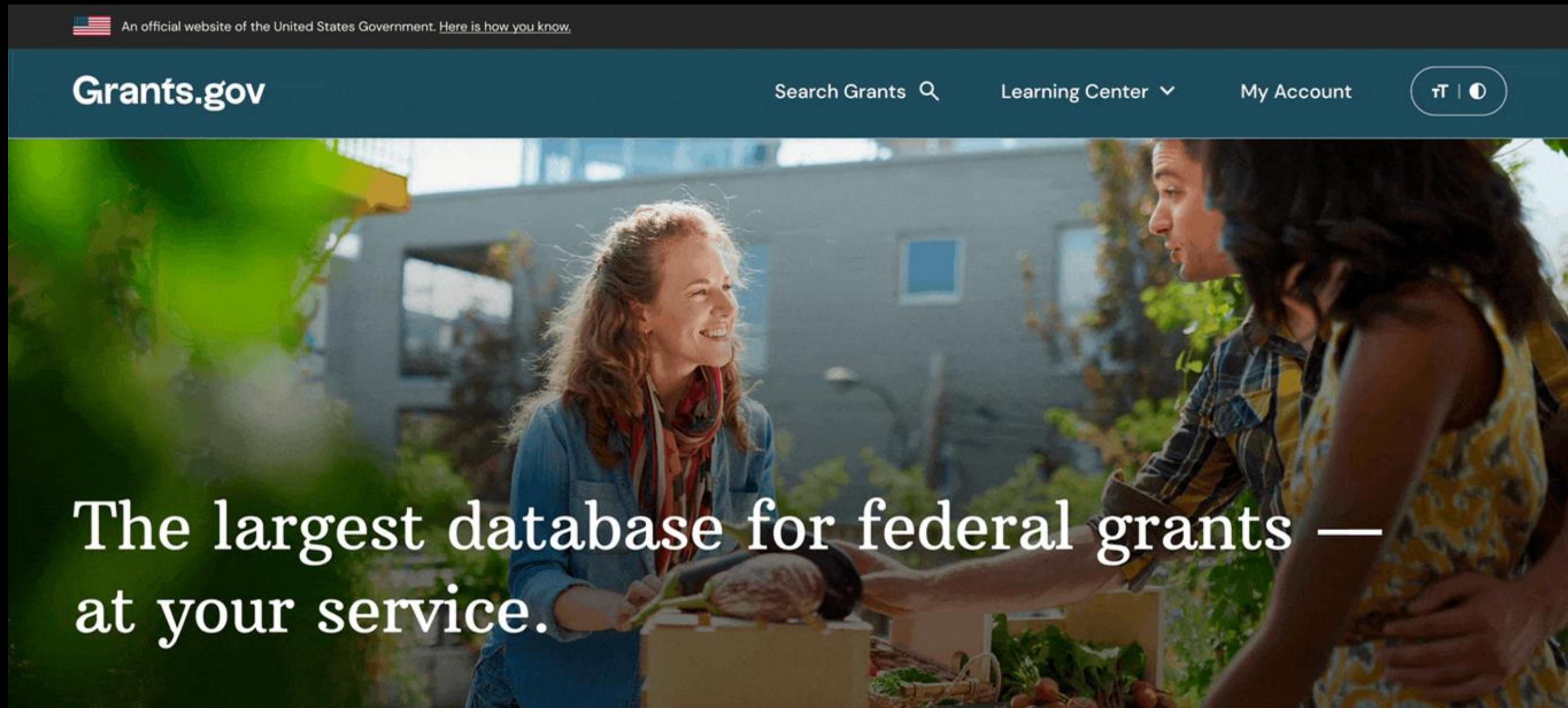
### Problem

The Novice user is greeted with an outdated and overwhelming site that does not direct them into any single action or introduce the purpose of grants.gov.

### Perspective

Novices should be oriented to the mission of grants.gov and be able to browse the most important actions and information.

## A Warm Welcome

The image shows a woman with long, wavy hair smiling while holding a box of fresh produce, including onions and leafy greens. She is standing outdoors in front of a building with a blue door. In the background, another person is visible, and there are trees and a fence. The overall atmosphere is positive and suggests a community service or food distribution event.

An official website of the United States Government. [Here is how you know.](#)

**Grants.gov**

Search Grants 

Learning Center 

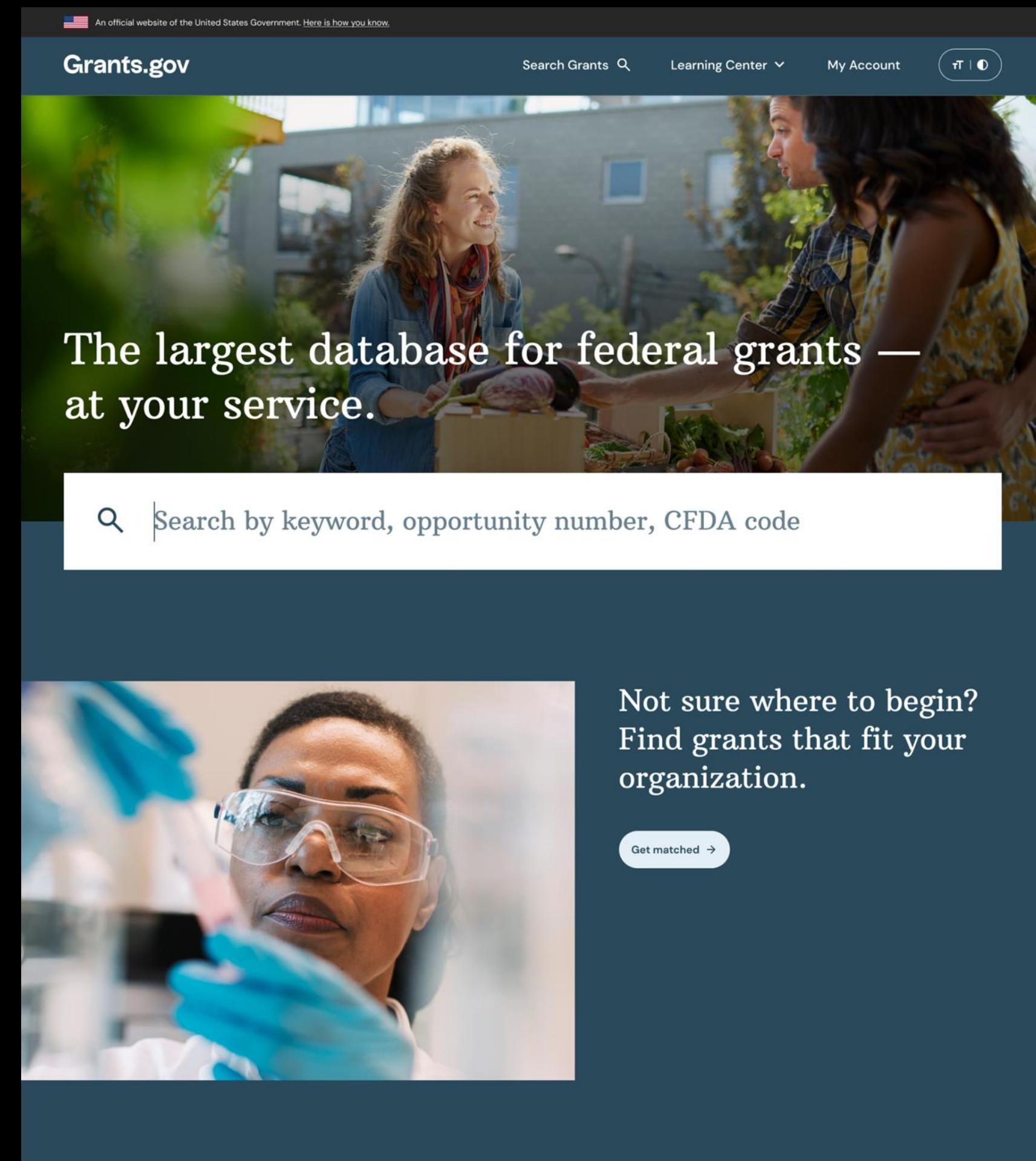
My Account



The largest database for federal grants —  
at your service.

 Search by keyword, opportunity number, CFDA code

## A Warm Welcome



The Grants.gov website homepage is displayed. At the top, a banner reads "An official website of the United States Government. Here is how you know." followed by the Grants.gov logo and navigation links for "Search Grants", "Learning Center", "My Account", and accessibility options. The main headline "The largest database for federal grants — at your service." is overlaid on a photograph of three people at a farmer's market. Below this is a search bar with the placeholder "Search by keyword, opportunity number, CFDA code". A smaller image of a woman in a lab coat and safety goggles is shown on the left, with text encouraging users to "Get matched" for grants. The overall theme is user-friendly access to federal grant opportunities.

An official website of the United States Government. Here is how you know.

Grants.gov

Search Grants Learning Center My Account

The largest database for federal grants — at your service.

Search by keyword, opportunity number, CFDA code

Not sure where to begin?  
Find grants that fit your organization.

Get matched →

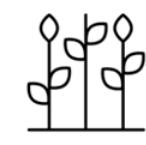
Discover Grants



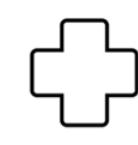
Sciences



Humanities



Agriculture



Health



Environmental  
Science



TRENDING

NEWLY ADDED

MOST POPULAR



DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

**U.S. Embassy  
Amman, PAS Annual  
Program Statement**

[View grant](#)



NATIONAL AERONAUTICS AND SPACE  
ADMINISTRATION

**ROSES 2023: F.3  
Exoplanets Research**

[View grant](#)



NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE ARTS

**NEA Challenge  
America, FY2024**

[View grant](#)



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

**National  
Community  
System for  
Disaster  
Preparedness**

[View grant](#)



Impact Spotlight

JCAC receives

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Impact Spotlight



## JCAC receives American Rescue Plan grant

The Jersey City Arts Council (JCAC) received an American Rescue Plan grant to help the Jersey City arts and cultural sector recover from the pandemic.

With it, Christina Pena, Yuchen Li, Sasha Mowstofi established an afterschool arts program.

2021 Winners  
Grant opportunity: [SAA-RAO-NASAA-ARP](#)

[Read more](#)

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Frequently Asked Questions

Who is eligible for grants?

How long does it take to apply for a grant?

Where can I find the right grant for my organization?

How do I get started?

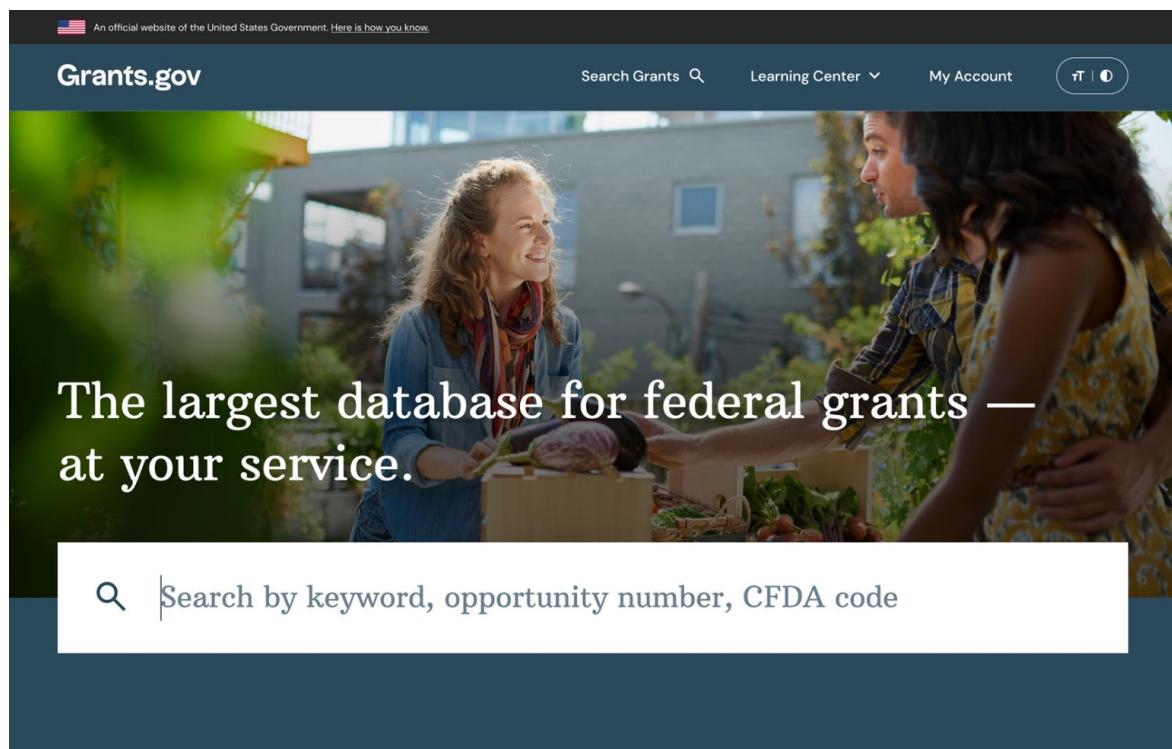
[Learn more →](#)

Join thousands of American organizations who are making an impact in their communities.

How it drives equity

# Welcome me to the world of grants.

## Focus on:



An official website of the United States Government. Here is how you know.

Grants.gov

Search Grants  Learning Center  My Account

The largest database for federal grants — at your service.

Search by keyword, opportunity number, CFDA code



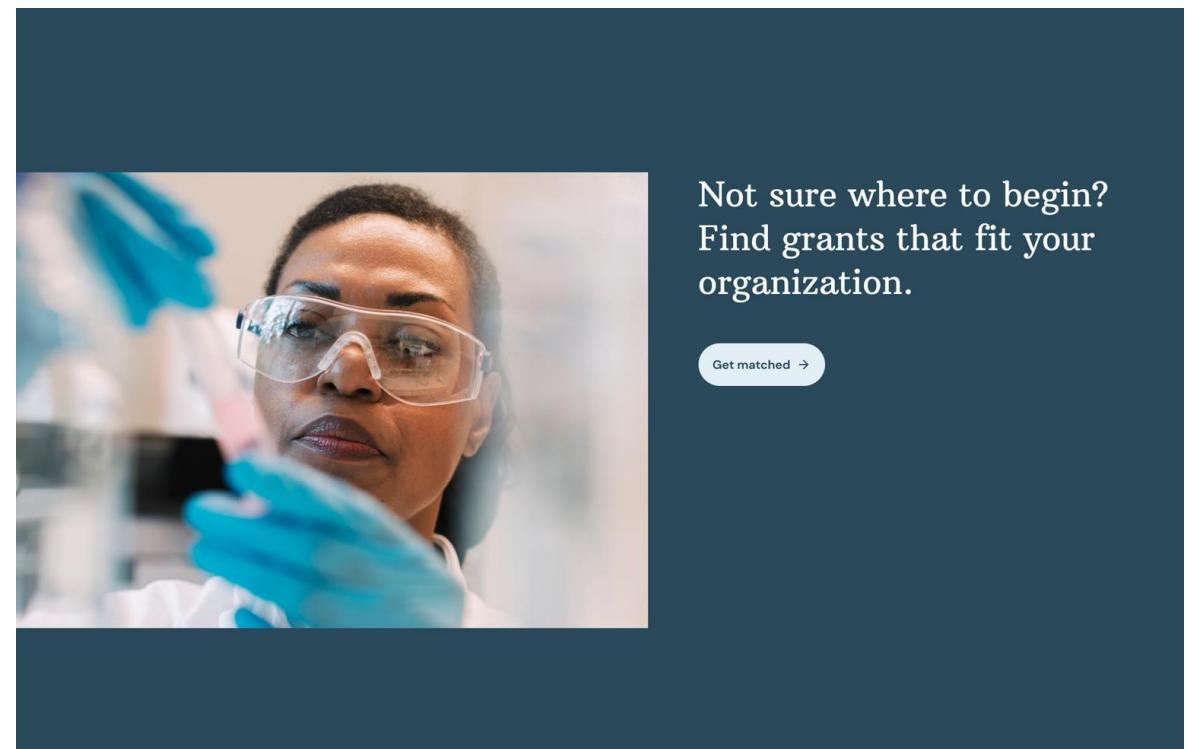
IMPACT SPOTLIGHT

JCAC receives American Rescue Plan grant

The Jersey City Arts Council (JCAC) received an American Rescue Plan grant to help the Jersey City arts and cultural sector recover from the pandemic. With it, Christina Pena, Yuchen Li, Sasha Mowstof established an afterschool arts program.

2021 Winners  
Grant opportunity: SAA-RAO-NASAA-ARP

Read more →



Not sure where to begin? Find grants that fit your organization.

[Get matched →](#)

Making the impression of the site welcoming and purposeful.

Motivating new users by sharing diverse success stories of grant applicants across all spectrums.

Clearly guiding users to next steps whether it is searching for opportunities, learning more, or getting connected with help.

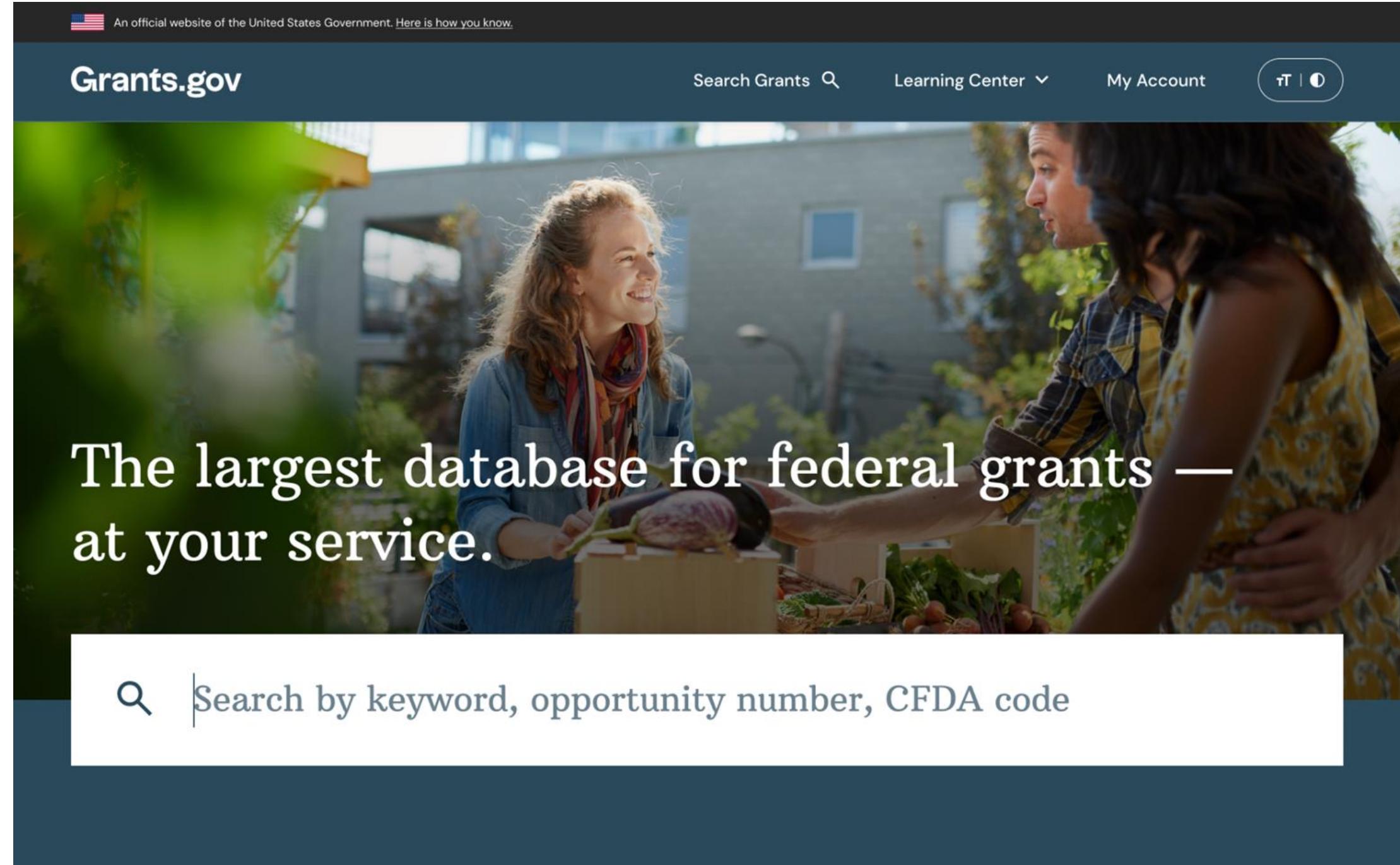
## Quick wins to future state

### Quick wins

- Update current home page hero image and header to focus on welcoming new users
- Highlight a primary call to action (eg: search) directing users to next steps

### Future state

- Create a homepage with the enhanced brand including an updated digital design system
- Include alternate accessibility features such as additional language options



## Guiding Principle

An equitable experience ensure users have easy access to all the same information, but curated for relevancy and efficiency.

**What if** we could seamlessly match applicants to the right opportunities and maximize the time they have to prepare?

# Demystify the grants process

Concept 2

2

# Grants Matchmaker

A recommendation engine that promotes a more nuanced, personalized browsing experience rather than searching for exact matches based on specific tags, industry terminology and acronyms.

## Grants Matchmaker

### Problem

The Novice user faces the task of parsing through hundreds of grants to find the one that fits what they are looking for.

### Perspective

Grants.gov should focus attention to the top potential matches taking the burden of deciphering hundreds of search results away from the Novice.

Grants.gov



X

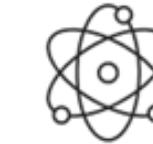
Hello! Welcome to Grants.gov. I'll be helping you find grants  
that are a good fit your organization.

## Grants.gov



X

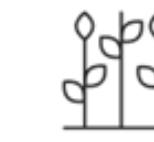
First, which of these best describes your organization?



Sciences



Humanities



Agriculture



Health



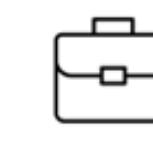
Environment



Arts



Law and Justice



Business

# Grants.gov



X

What kind of structure does your organization have?

For-profit

Non-profit

Small business

5013c status

Individual

Other

I don't know what these mean

X

Grants.gov



Pulling up the grants your organization is eligible for....

# Grants.gov



🎉 Congratulations! 🎉

Your organization qualifies for **10 grant opportunities!**



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF  
AGRICULTURE

Beginning Farmer  
Development Program



USDA NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF  
FOOD AND CULTURE

Food and Agricultural  
Education Information System



USDA AGRICULTURAL MARKETING  
SERVICE

Micro-Grants for Food  
Security Program



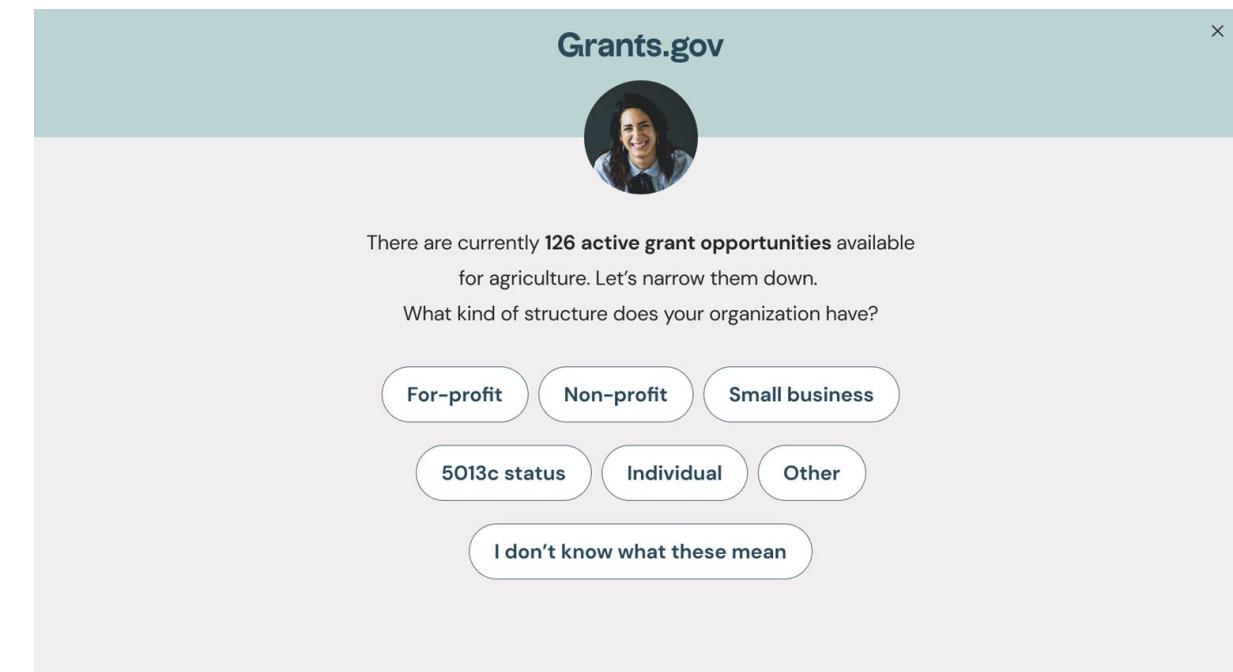
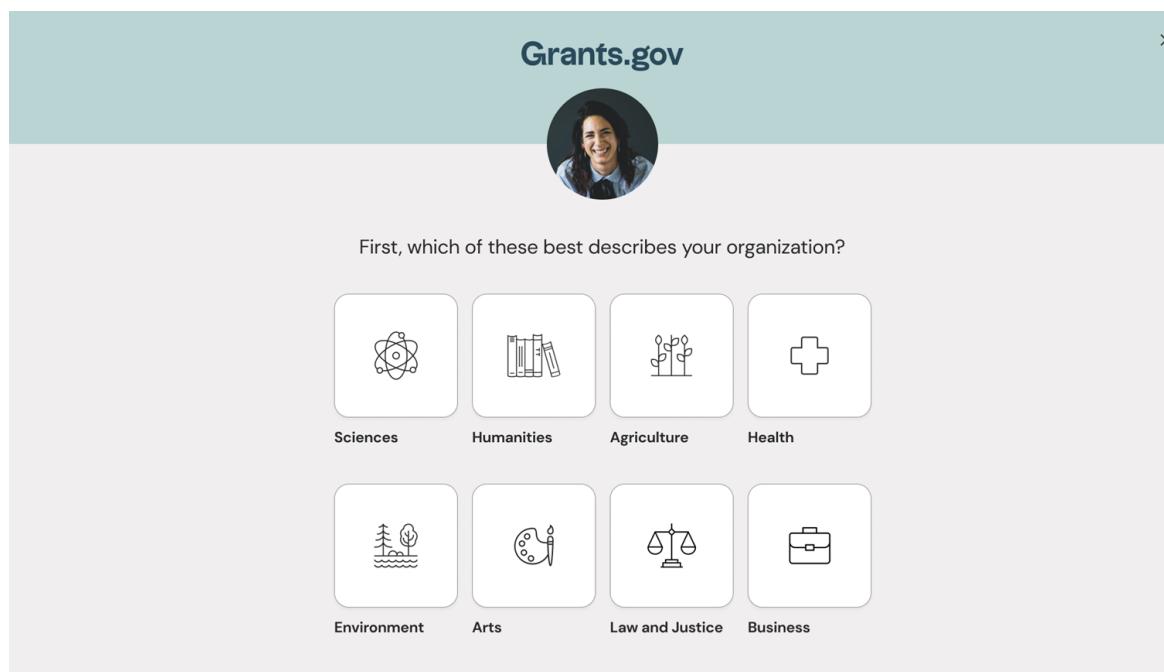
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF FOOD  
AND CULTURE

New Beginning for Tribal  
Students Program

How it drives equity

# Match me to the right opportunities.

Focus on:



Reducing cognitive load required when looking for an opportunity by guiding users through a conversational set of questions.

Helping users make informed decisions and quickly assess parameters to see if an opportunity seems feasible.

Guiding Novices to direct their attention on a few select opportunities that could be a good match.

## Quick wins to future state

### Quick wins

- Enhance sorting of search results by displaying the ‘best-first’ (ex: pre - filtered by opportunity status or region)
- Keyword highlighting in search results

### Future state

- Users are matched to most relevant grants through an AI
- Reverse the search process, by inputting their organization’s details and objectives in order for Grants.gov to match them with relevant grants

The screenshot shows a Grants.gov interface. At the top right is a circular profile picture of a smiling woman. Below it is the text "Grants.gov" and "Congratulations! 🎉". A message states "Your organization qualifies for 10 grant opportunities!". Below this, there are four program cards arranged in a grid:

- USDA** UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
Beginning Farmer Development Program
- USDA NIFA** USDA NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF FOOD AND CULTURE  
Food and Agricultural Education Information System
- USDA AMS** USDA AGRICULTURAL MARKETING SERVICE  
Micro-Grants for Food Security Program
- USDA NIFA** NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF FOOD AND CULTURE  
New Beginning for Tribal Students Program

Concept 3

3

# Forecast Tracker

Keep users updated on upcoming grant opportunities based on their profiles and interests — giving them a head start for the planning and application process.

## Forecast Tracker

### Problem

The benefit of the forecast functionality is not fully utilized by grantors and the benefits of utilizing a forecasts is not well explained.

### Perspective

Forecasts should help the novice users increase their chances of finding and applying to an eligible grant.

## Forecast Tracker

Grants.gov <info@grants.gov>  
to me April 25, 2023, 12:37 PM

# Grants.gov

## Forecast Update

Hello Beatriz! There has been a new update to this forecast you follow:

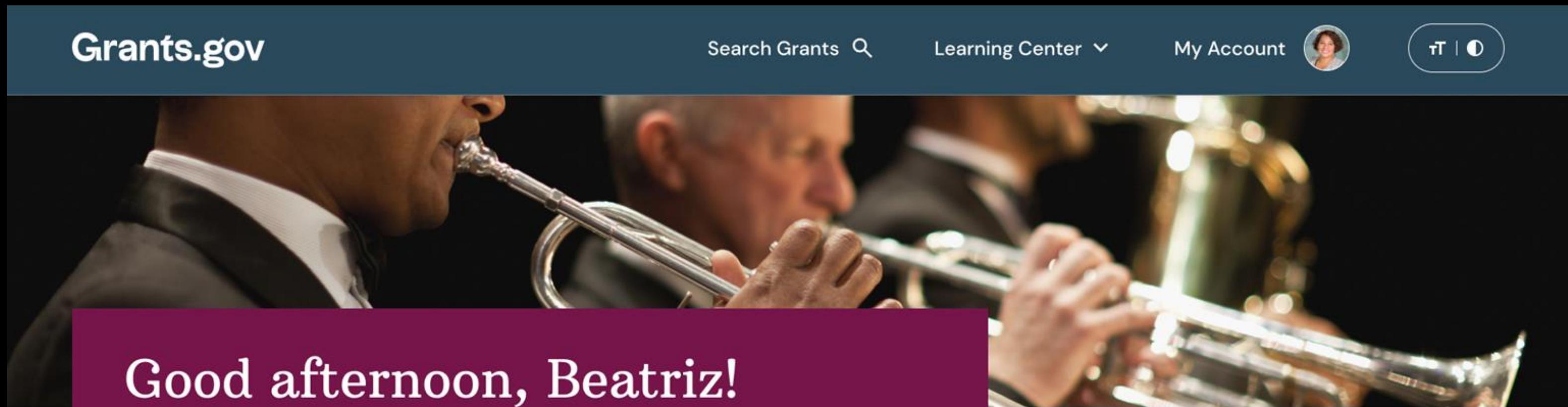


US DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
ECA  
FY2023 Creative Arts Exchange

! Forecast update:  
Applicant eligibility has been updated to include  
Nonprofits that do not have a 501(c)(3) status with the IRS.

Posted: April 23, 2024  
Closing: September 23, 2023

[View opportunity →](#)



**Grants.gov**

Search Grants  Learning Center  My Account  

# Good afternoon, Beatriz!

Welcome to your grants workspace.

**My Forecasts**  **My Workspace** **My Organizations**

 Forecast update: Applicant eligibility has been updated to include Nonprofits that do not have a 501(c)(3) status with the IRS. 

 BUREAU OF EDUCATIONAL AND CULTURAL AFFAIRS (DOS)  
**FY2023 Creative Arts Exchange**  
Creative Arts Exchange (CAE) is an open competition for up to three cooperative agreements to support thematic projects in film, music, and musical collaboration as civic engagement.

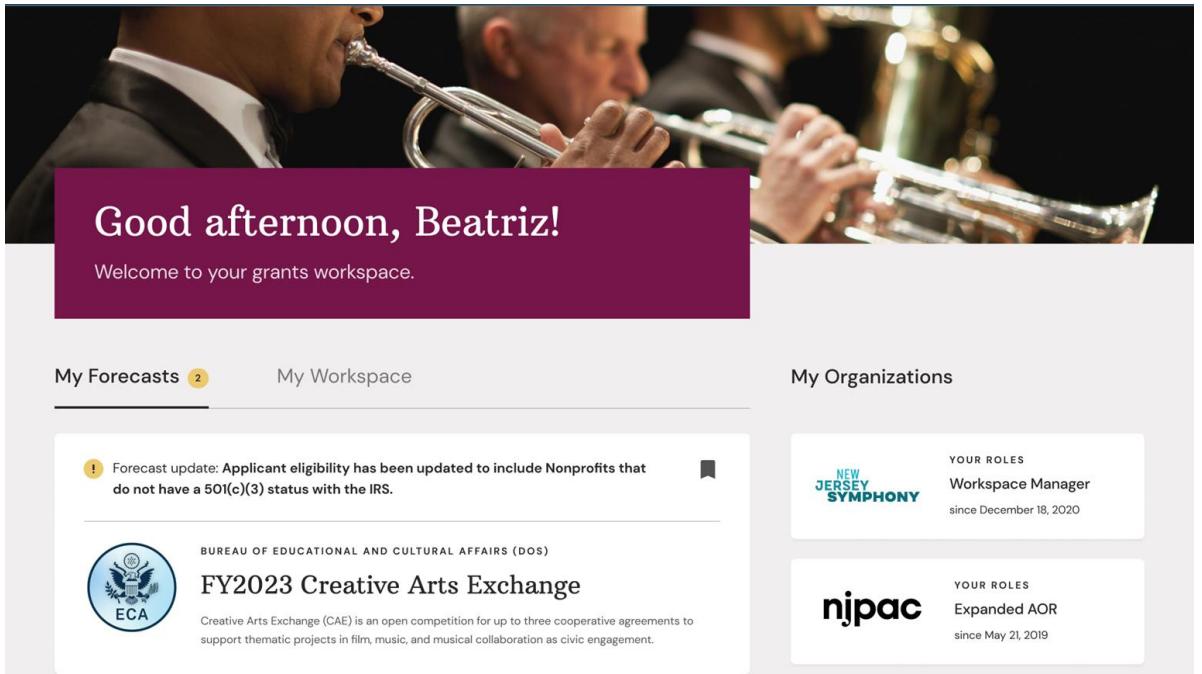
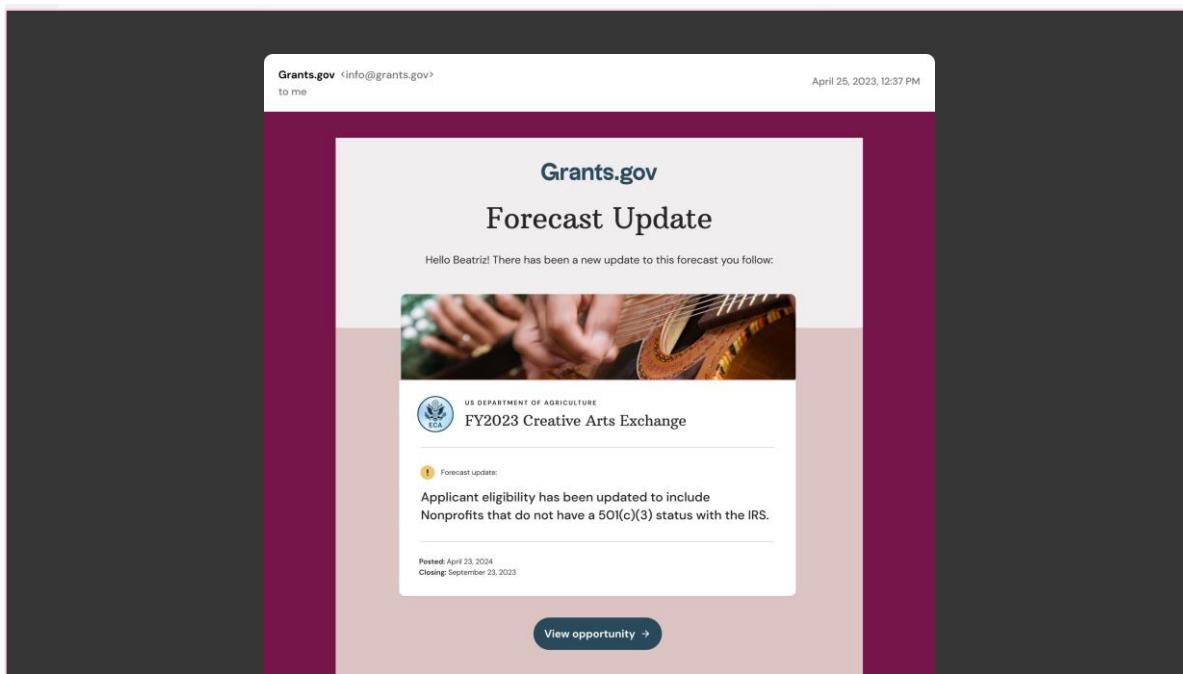
 YOUR ROLES  
Workspace Manager  
since December 18, 2020

 YOUR ROLES  
Expanded AOR  
since May 21, 2019

How it drives equity

# Give me more time to plan.

**Focus on:**



Updating users as soon as possible when changes are made to forecasts and directing their attention to the exact points of change.

Offering a high-level profile view for workspaces that includes saved forecasts, active applications and organizational information.

## Quick wins to future state

### Quick wins

- Redesign of email template to direct user attention to most important changes
- Encourage grantors to utilize the forecast feature and provide ample caveats to frame forecasts as fluid opportunities

### Future state

- Highlight areas of the forecast where information has been updated
- Include context in the forecast for how likely requirements are to be posted as is or change



Good afternoon, Beatriz!

Welcome to your grants workspace.

My Forecasts 2

My Workspace

My Organizations

YOUR ROLES  
Workspace Manager  
since December 18, 2020

YOUR ROLES  
Expanded AOR  
since May 21, 2019

ECA Forecast update: Applicant eligibility has been updated to include Nonprofits that do not have a 501(c)(3) status with the IRS.

BUREAU OF EDUCATIONAL AND CULTURAL AFFAIRS (DOS)

FY2023 Creative Arts Exchange

Creative Arts Exchange (CAE) is an open competition for up to three cooperative agreements to support thematic projects in film, music, and musical collaboration as civic engagement.

## Guiding Principle

Reduce the burden on applicants by adopting a “less is more” approach. Address major pain points and simplify the experience - both from a grants process and system perspective.

**What if** we lowered barriers to sign-up and registration and provide targeted reminders so we can improve application outcomes for the greatest number of people?

# Frictionless Functionality

Concept 4

4

# More Streamlined Access

A more simplified sign up experience for new users. Along with a single login that provides a consolidated and guided view of all grants-related information across different government sites.

## More Streamlined Access

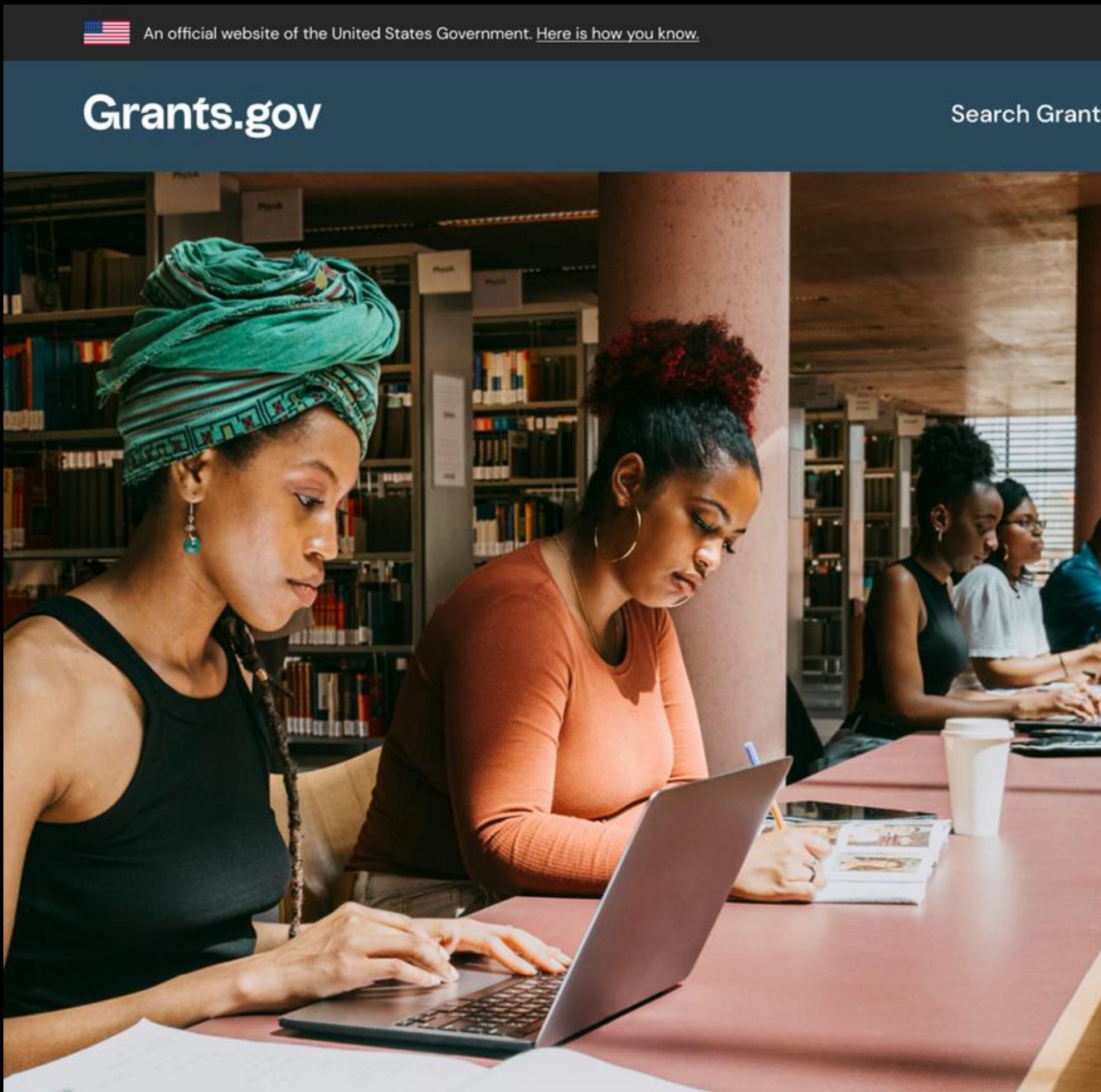
### Problem

Users face cognitive overload having to jump from site to site just to get registered

### Perspective

Streamline difficult processes and be transparent to set better expectations for users.

## More Streamlined Access

A photograph showing two women sitting at a long table in a library, both looking at their laptops. One woman is wearing a green turban and the other has curly hair. In the background, other people are sitting at tables, and bookshelves are visible.

An official website of the United States Government. [Here is how you know.](#)

**Grants.gov**

Search Grants 

Learning Center 

My Account



## Create your own Grants.gov account

1. Create account      2. Organization Profile      3. Apply for grants

\*required

Full Name\*  
Beatriz Gutiérrez

Email address\*

Primary phone number\*

Continue →

## More Streamlined Access

A photograph showing two women sitting at a long table in a library or study area. One woman, wearing a green turban and a dark top, is looking down at a laptop. The other woman, wearing an orange top, is also looking at the laptop screen. They appear to be working together on a project. In the background, there are bookshelves filled with books and other people sitting at tables, suggesting a quiet study environment.

An official website of the United States Government. [Here is how you know.](#)

# Grants.gov

Search Grants

Learning Center

My Account

## Get started by making your own unique ID

1. Create account

2. Organization Profile

3. Apply for grants

**Please note:** Complete profile registration may take up to **2 weeks** and may cause unexpected delay to meeting NOFO deadlines. If you have questions, please reach out to [info@grants.gov](mailto:info@grants.gov).

\*required

Legal Business Name\*

Country\*

Address 1

Address 2

How it drives equity

# Streamline sign up to help me get started

Focus on:

Get started by creating a unique ID

Create account      2. Organization Profile      Apply for grants

Complete profile registration may take up to 2 weeks and may cause unexpected delay to meeting NOFO deadlines. If you have questions, please reach out to [info@grants.gov](mailto:info@grants.gov).

\*required

Legal Business Name\*

Helper Tip  
If you are acting on behalf of a limited partnership, LLC, or corporation, your legal business name is the name you registered with your state filing office.

Keeping users from having to jump across government systems and having to relearn how to navigate it



Providing realistic timelines for how long certain processes may take so users can prepare

Create your own Grants.gov account

1. Create account      2. Organization Profile      3. Apply for grants

Outlining steps in advance to show progress

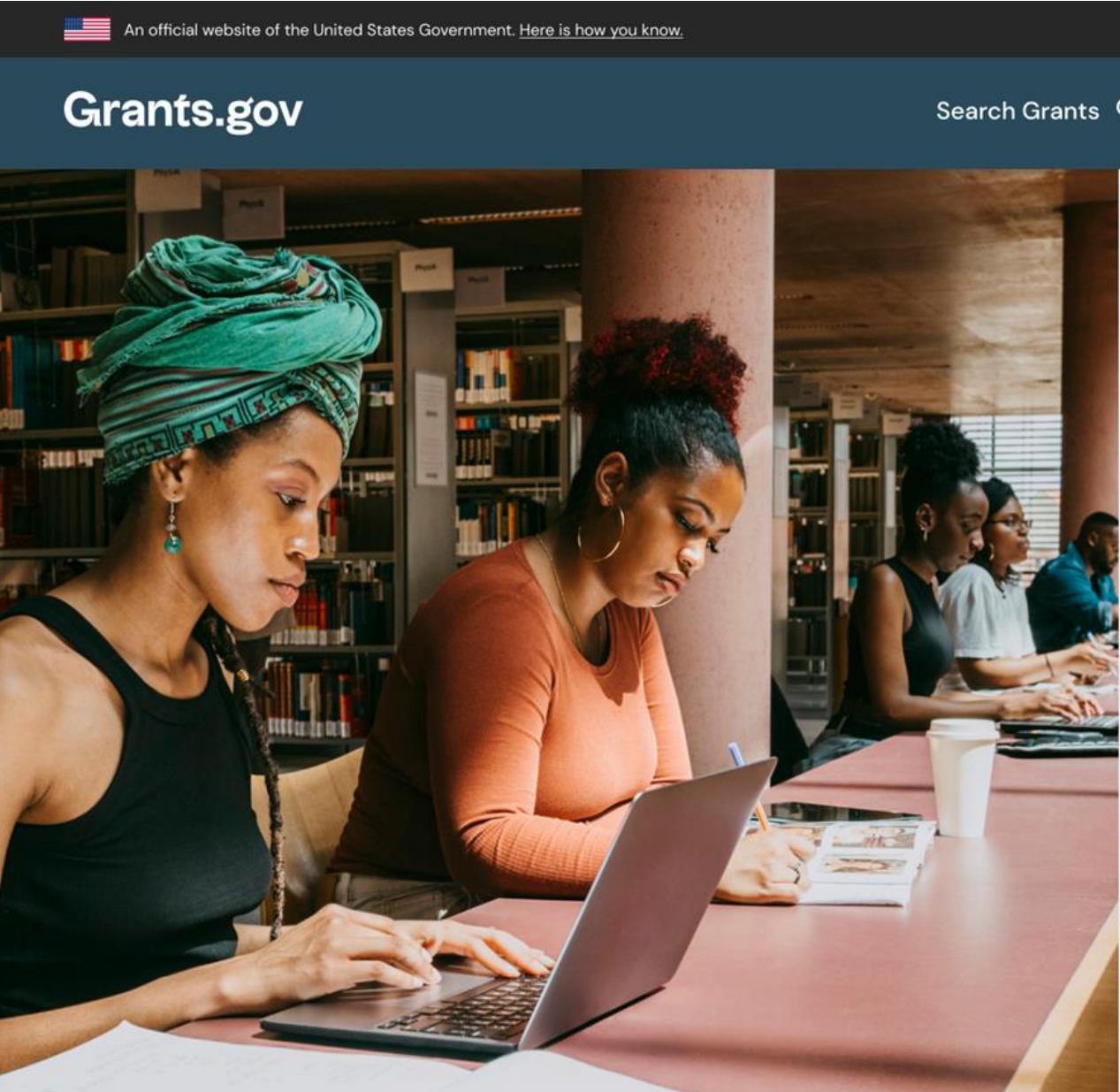
## Quick wins to future state

### Quick wins

- Clearer upfront timeline expectations in the grants.gov registration flow
- Consider increasing the time before password updates so that users don't feel like they are constantly jumping in and out of grants.gov

### Future state

- Presentation layer seamlessly combining registration across grants.gov, login.gov and sam.gov



The screenshot shows the Grants.gov homepage with a dark header. The header includes the American flag icon, the text "An official website of the United States Government. [Here is how you know.](#)", the "Grants.gov" logo, a search bar with "Search Grants" and a magnifying glass icon, a "Learning Center" dropdown, a "My Account" link, and a sign-in button with "T" and "O" icons. Below the header is a large photograph of three women working at a table in a library or study area. To the right of the photo, the text "Get started by making your own unique ID" is displayed above a three-step navigation bar: "1. Create account" (which is highlighted in blue), "2. Organization Profile", and "3. Apply for grants". A note below the steps states: "Please note: Complete profile registration may take up to 2 weeks and may cause unexpected delay to meeting NOFO deadlines. If you have questions, please reach out to [info@grants.gov](mailto:info@grants.gov)". At the bottom, there are input fields for "Legal Business Name\*", "Country\*", "Address 1", and "Address 2", each with an asterisk indicating it is required.

Concept 5

5

# Multi-Channel Task Reminders

A system of alerts reminding novices about pending tasks and providing contextual, timely information to help them stay on track.

## Multi-Channel Task Reminders

### Problem

Tasks to be completed are divided by applicants and add additional administrative burden to

### Perspective

Forecasts can help the novice users increase their chances of finding and applying for a grant.

## Multi-Channel Task Reminders

Grants.gov <info@grants.gov>  
to me

April 25, 2023, 12:37 PM

# Grants.gov

## Application Reminder

Hello David! You only have **2 tasks** left until your application is ready for submission. It takes most users **3 weeks** to complete this task.



**USDA** US DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
Beginning Farmer Development Program

Outstanding sections to be completed:

- Section II: Research & Related Budget
- Audited Financial Statements
- Federal Financial Report

Posted: April 23, 2024  
Closing: September 23, 2023

Complete task →

How it drives equity

# Help me stay on top of things

Focus on:

**Grants.gov**

## Application Reminder

Hello David, just a friendly reminder that you have 2 tasks to be completed before submitting this application. There are 42 days until this grant opportunity closes.

Walking users through remaining tasks that need to be completed and gives them a heads up on timelines updated by crowdsourced data



Providing a topline understanding of milestones and requirements for each Opportunity so they don't miss key details.



Giving users the option to follow a direct CTA

## Quick wins to future state

### Quick wins

- Set realistic expectations for how long processes could take rather than just individual forms.

### Vision

- Develop a robust CRM strategy and notification center to send targeted communications to applicants
- Expanded email as a channel for discovering new grant opportunities for prospective and returning applicants.

Grants.gov <info@grants.gov>

to me

April 25, 2023, 12:37 PM



## Guiding Principle

Meet the users where they are by providing “opt-in” support, reducing task abandonment or the need to leave the system for help.

**What if** we could anticipate applicant issues before they arise and provide simplified and guided support?

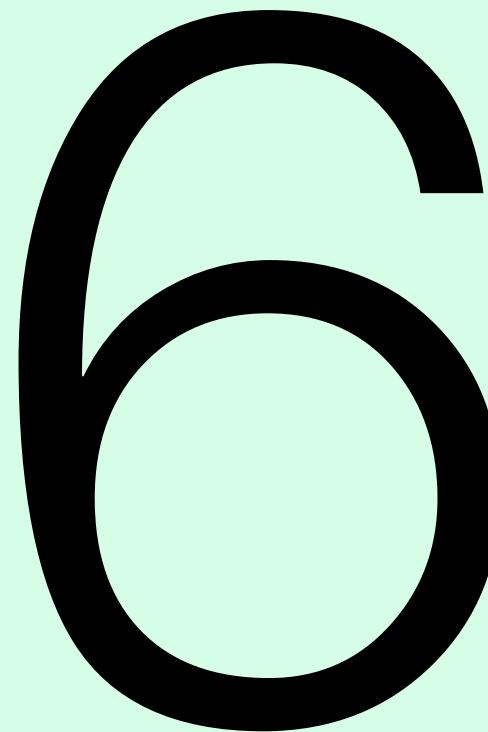
# Sophisticated self-direction

## Sophisticated Self Direction

“[Help] often it looks like reaching out to the program manager and telling them about my work, and then having them tell me whether or not it's the right fit... I'm privileged in a number of ways. Some people just wouldn't feel comfortable reaching out to a federal grant program manager.”

**First time applicant, university**

Concept 6



# Smart Support Center

A centralized base for all learning resources and service requests -- making access to relevant information easier and more equitable.

## Smart Support Center

### Problem

Access to information is not equitably distributed and Novices are often at a disadvantage because they don't know who to turn to for information.

### Perspective

Grants.gov should be able to predict the types of questions Novice users have and offer preemptive support in a centralized location.

What can we help you with today?

# How can I check eligibility?

Answers

Read articles on how eligibility works →

Listen to audio guides and podcasts on how eligibility works →

Watch videos on how to understand funding opportunities →

How it drives equity

# Make information accessible to me.

**Focus on:**

The screenshot shows the Grants.gov website. At the top, there is a search bar labeled "Search Grants" and a "Learning Center" dropdown menu. Below the search bar, a large blue button with the word "How" is prominently displayed. To the left of this button, a sidebar lists several questions: "What can we help you with today?", "How do I apply for a grant?", "How can I check eligibility?", "How long will it take to hear back from a grant opportunity?", "How does the application process work?", "How do I create an account?", and "How does the grant process work?".

Inviting users to ask all types of questions and offering suggestions as they type.

This screenshot shows a user interface for checking eligibility. At the top, a question "What can we help you with today?" is followed by the title "How can I check eligibility?". Below this, under the heading "Answers", are three interactive cards: "Read articles on how eligibility works" (yellow background), "Take our eligibility quiz that matches you with grants" (light blue background), and "Watch videos on how to understand funding opportunities" (pink background).

Offering alternate forms of help (alternate languages, video, text, community, phone etc.) to offer options to different types of users.

This screenshot shows a user interface for checking eligibility. At the top, a question "What can we help you with today?" is followed by the title "How can I check eligibility?". Below this, under the heading "Answers", is a section titled "Read articles on how eligibility works" with three cards: "How does eligibility work and why does it change?" (blue card with a cartoon character icon), "Testimony: how we became eligible for grants" (yellow card with a group of people icon), and "Step-by-step g through the eligibility proc" (green card with a person at a computer icon).

Highlighting diverse forms of content and offering ways to get deeply familiar.

## Quick wins to future state

### Quick wins

- Clearer sitewide search to help users find learning resources provided by grants.gov

### Future state

- Create a centralized repository for learning resources that can be consumed in a simple and accessible manner.

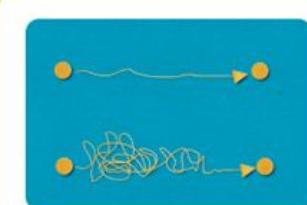
What can we help you with today?

# How can I check eligibility?

Answers

Read articles on how eligibility works →

---



ARTICLE

How does eligibility work and why does it change?

2 min read



ARTICLE

Testimony: how we become eligible for grants

6 min read



ARTICLE

Step-by-step g through the eligibility proc

12 min read

Concept 7

7

# Guided Application

A collection of helpful tips on how to understand grant documents and complete applications. Gathered from various resources in the grants ecosystem and presented in a digestible, visually appealing way.

## Guided Application

### Problem

Understanding and prioritizing requirements is a major challenge for novices, and leads to discouragement and opportunity abandonment

### Perspective

Grants.gov should be at the forefront of offering help to novice users and guiding users through the process.

**Grants.gov**

1. Project Intro

## Section I: Project Intro

### Part 1: Applicant Information

2 Organization / Applicant Name

A. Enter Legal Name\*

3 Use saved information

Do you want to enter the same details from your recent Department of Education grant application?

Rural, Insular, and Native Achievement Programs: Native Hawaiian Education (NHE)  
ED-GRANTS-031423-0030

No Yes

Physical Address

How to apply for an opportunity on workspace

Section I gives an overview of your application progress. In the next sections, you will enter your organization's details.

Section Breakdown

1. Progress bar
2. Organization or applicant name
3. Enter saved information
4. Physical address

How it drives equity

# Proactively guide me step by step.

**Focus on:**

The screenshot shows a dark blue header bar with a yellow circle containing the number '1'. Below it, a white section starts with '1. Project Intro'. The main title 'Section I: Project Intro' is in bold. Underneath, 'Part 1: Applicant Information' is listed. A yellow circle containing '2' is located on the left side of the input field for 'Organization / Applicant Name'. The input field contains 'A. Legal Name\*'.

Providing a detailed voice over that is easy to understand with clear visuals and descriptions.

The screenshot shows a light gray background with the title 'How to apply for an opportunity on workspace'. Below it, a text block says: 'Section I gives an overview of your application progress. In the next sections, you will enter your organization's details.' A horizontal line separates this from a 'Section Breakdown' section. This section contains four dropdown menus: '1. Progress bar', '2. Organization or applicant name', '3. Enter saved information', and '4. Physical address'.

Breaking down potential jargon or acronyms and not assuming that users are familiar.

The screenshot shows a light blue dialog box with the heading 'Use saved information'. The text asks: 'Do you want to enter the same details from your recent Department of Education grant application?'. Below this is a circular logo for the 'DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION UNITED STATES OF AMERICA' with a tree in the center. To the right, the text reads: 'Rural, Insular, and Native Achievement Programs: Native Hawaiian Education (NHE)' and 'ED-GRANTS-031423-003O'. At the bottom right are two buttons: 'No' and 'Yes'.

Highlighting helpful tools and features that users may not be aware of.

## How it can be brought to life

### Quick wins

- Update 'learn grants' pages with better hierarchy to direct users towards the right kinds of tutorials
- Highlight definitions by showing how certain words/jargon gets used in context

### Future state

- Standardize forms and synopsis in content and format to make it easier for users to navigate requirements

The screenshot shows the Grants.gov application interface. At the top, there's a dark header bar with the 'Grants.gov' logo and some icons. Below it, a large white form area is titled 'Section I: Project Intro'. The first section is 'Part 1: Applicant Information'. It has a sub-section 'Organization / Applicant Name' with a field labeled 'A. Enter Legal Name\*'. Below this is a 'Use saved information' section with a 'Yes' button. The right side of the screen features a sidebar with the title 'How to apply for an opportunity on workspace'. This sidebar includes a 'Section Breakdown' section with three numbered items: '1. Progress bar', '2. Organization or applicant name', and '3. Enter saved information'. Each item has a dropdown arrow next to it.

## Guiding Principle

More than a color palette and logo, a strong, trustworthy presence is a reflection our mission and an emotional differentiation to our varied audiences across many channels.

**What if** we could build positive experiences that facilitate deeper human connections, inspire users, and ultimately deliver greater engagement?

# Back to an ownable identity.

Concept 8

8

# A Branded Experience

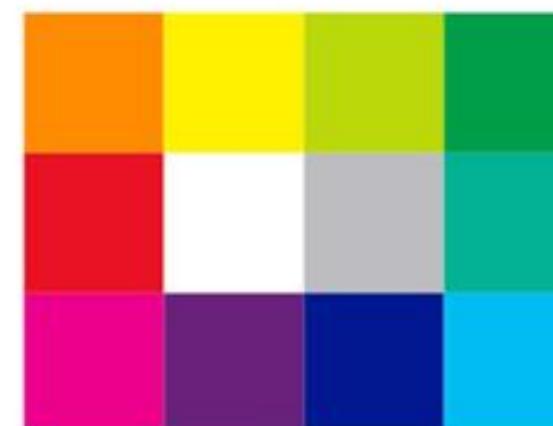
A look and feel that conveys a warm, accessible, and approachable first impression. One that represents the diverse people and relationships Grants.gov serves.

Well branded experiences create emotional connections with the audience through a wide spectrum of assets

## Logo



## Color



## Typography

Segoe Light  
Segoe Regular  
**Segoe Bold**

Segoe is our type family

We use Segoe, a completely custom type family created for Microsoft that has become a longstanding core element of our visual identity.

Segoe Pro is the brand font used for print and graphic executions. Segoe UI is the Windows OS font, and the font that is used for on-screen and digital executions.

To download the Segoe Pro font family, visit Media Bank: <https://mediabank.partners.extranet.microsoft.com>

## Imagery



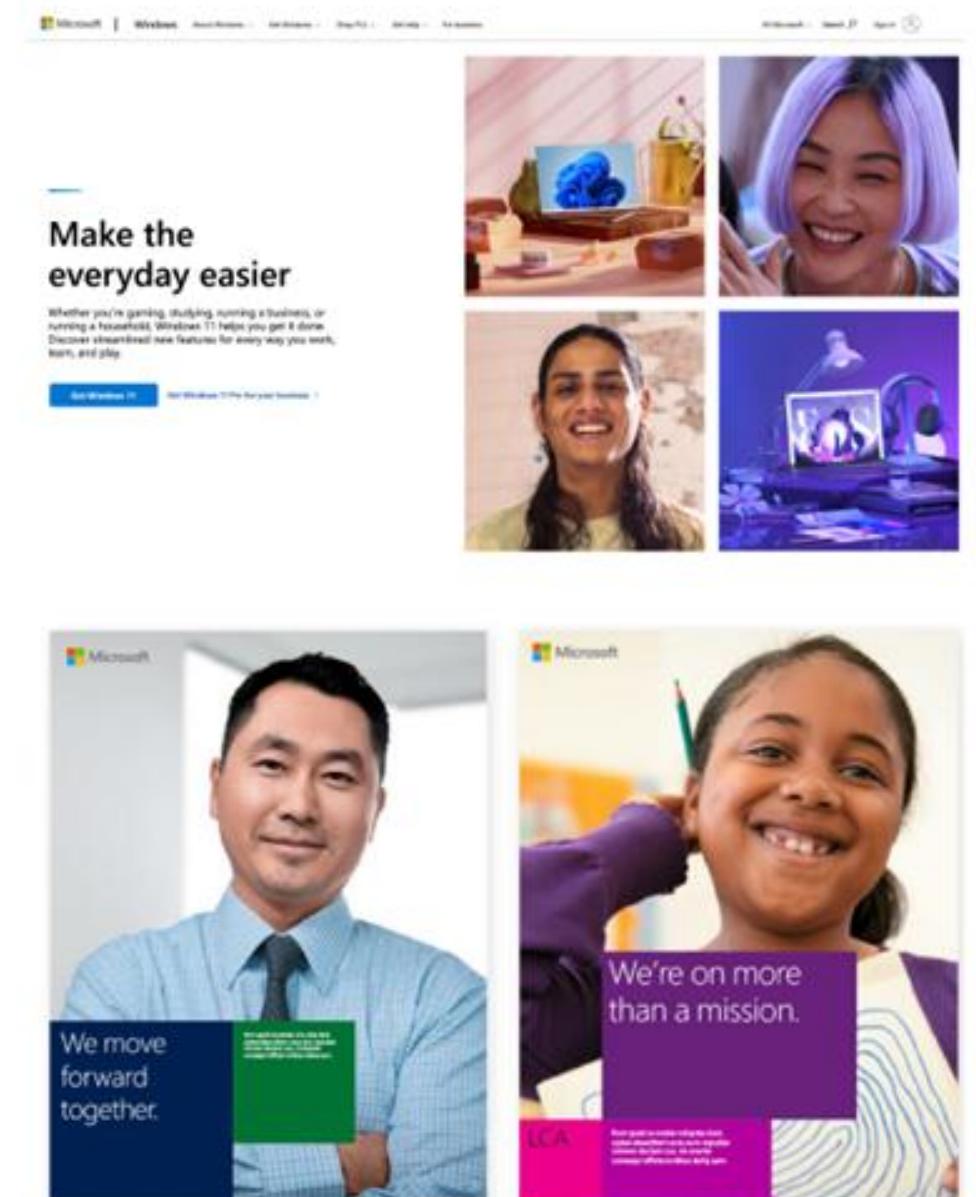
## Tone of Voice

Simple and Human

Warm & Relaxed  
Crisp & Clear  
Ready to lend a hand



## Layout



# What if Grants.gov felt **warm** and **instructional**?

Discover simple yet effective ways to search and apply for grants that are right for you. We believe it's vital to provide fair funding opportunities for worthy causes. And we'll do all we can to support you through this journey.



# What if Grants.gov felt official and **institutional**?

Grants.gov is the world's largest federal database dedicated to providing accessible, diverse and equitable funding to help drive positive impact.



# What if Grants.gov felt **bold** and **accessible**?

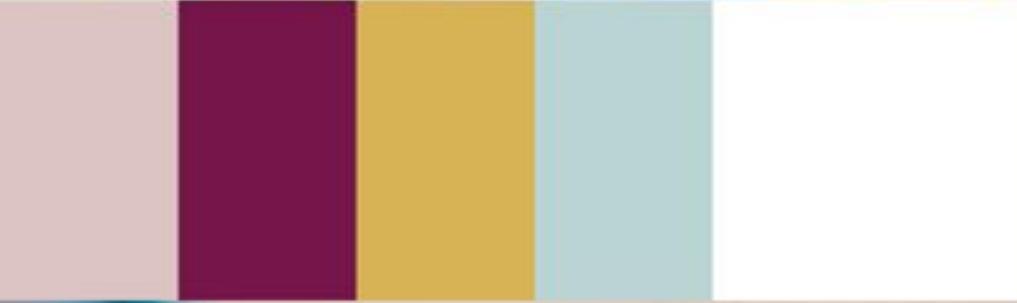
The road to bringing transformative ideas to life is through equitable access to federal funds. We're building a world where all programs, projects and communities have the power to drive meaningful change. Partner with us because we can accomplish more together.



A Branded Experience

We took an initial pass at crafting at what Grants.gov could look and feel like – not final, or recommended

An approachable brand and design system that is warm and inviting without compromising its officiality or accessibility.



## GRANT ELIGIBILITY

Let's figure out which grants you qualify for.

Take this quick survey and we'll populate all the current and upcoming grants that your organization automatically qualifies for.

20 MIN EXPERIENCE

[Get started →](#)

# Grants.gov



We're the largest database for federal grants - all in service of you.

FUNDING OPPORTUNITY NAME	FUNDING OPPORTUNITY #	AGENCY
Beginning Farmer Development	23-575	USDA
Farm Business Management and Benchmarking Competitive Grants Program	2024NEIA41GAP3	USDA-NIFA
Organic Agriculture Research and Extension Initiative	USDA-NIFA-ICGP-009743	USDA-NIFA
Agriculture and Food Research Initiative	USDA-NIFA-AFRI-009755	USDA-NIFA

## BUSINESS STRUCTURE

For-profit organization

Small business

Non-profit

501c status



Commonly asked questions

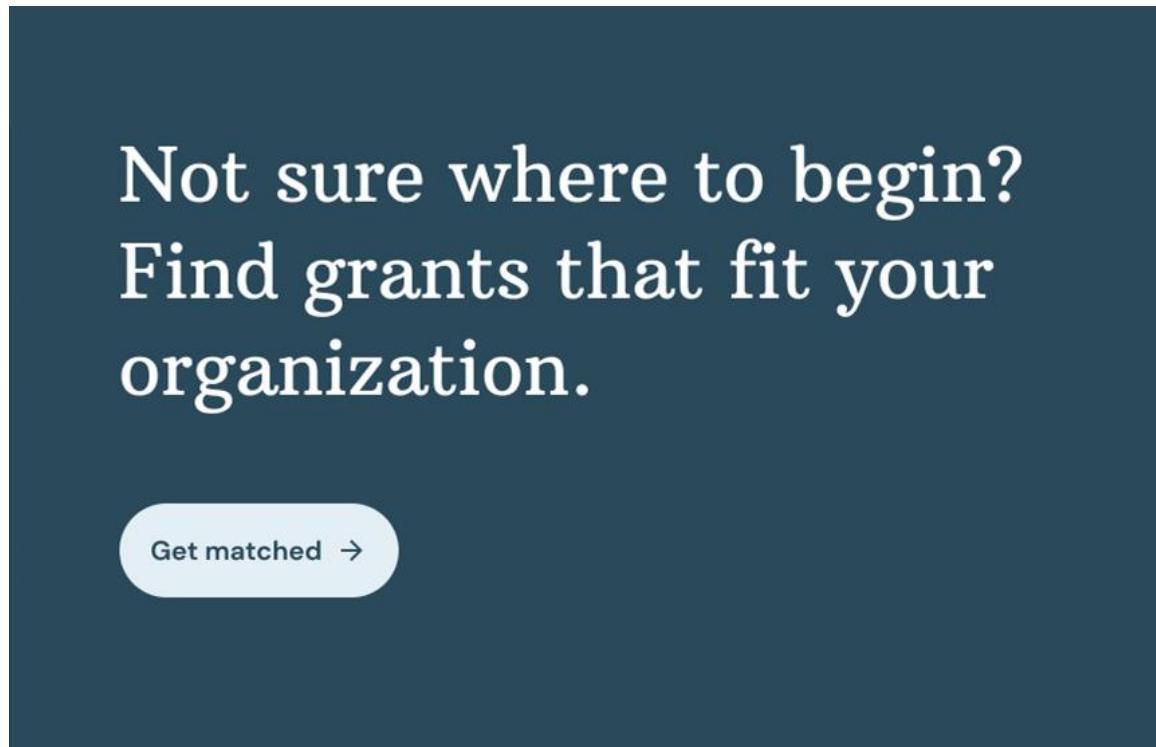
Why do you ask for organization type?

What if our organization is unclear?

A Branded Experience

# An initial look and feel

**Focus on:**



Using typography inspired by educational text that is distinct, simple, and understandable



Differentiating from the “sea of sameness” by using a rich color palette that is inspired by colors of officiality and trust with a contemporary approach



Authentic photography and illustrations that celebrate the diversity of applicants and the human connections that grants.gov is helping to build.

# Concept Summary

## Guiding principles

**Create an ownable identity**

**Demystify the grants process**

**Frictionless functionality**

**Sophisticated self-direction**

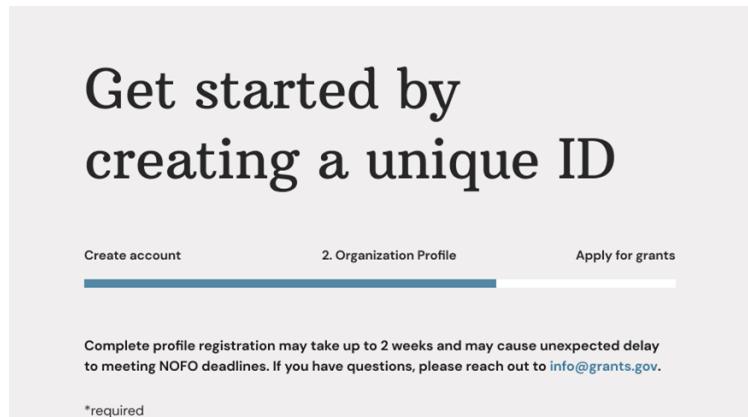
## Experience concepts



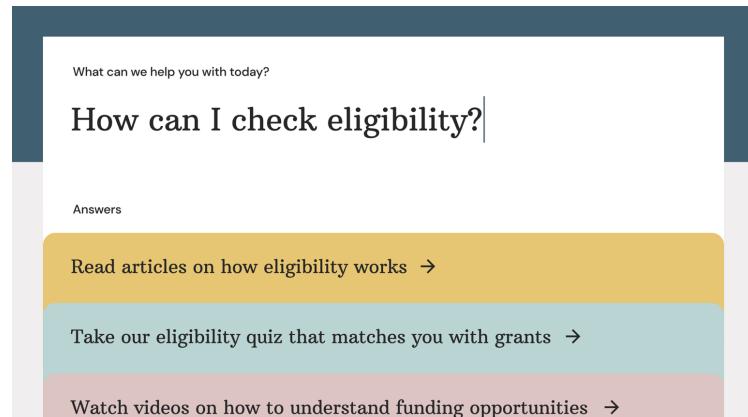
A Warm Welcome



Grant Matchmaker



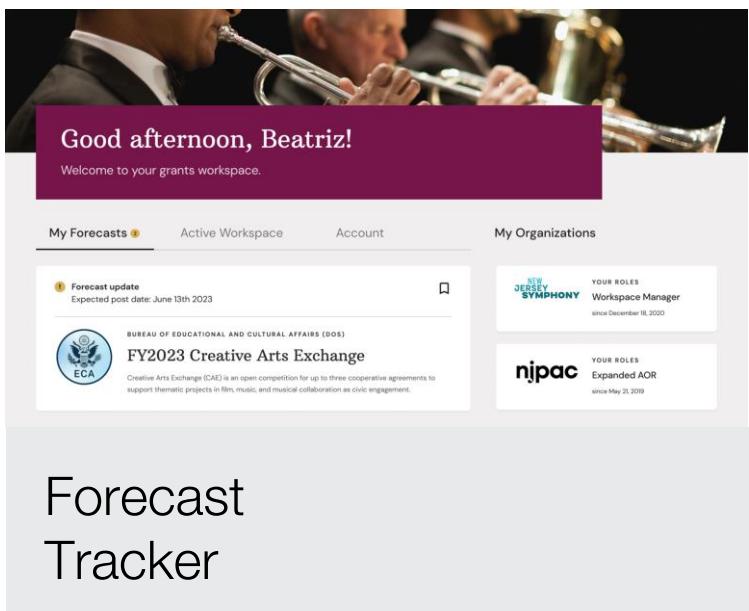
Streamlined Access



Smart Support Center



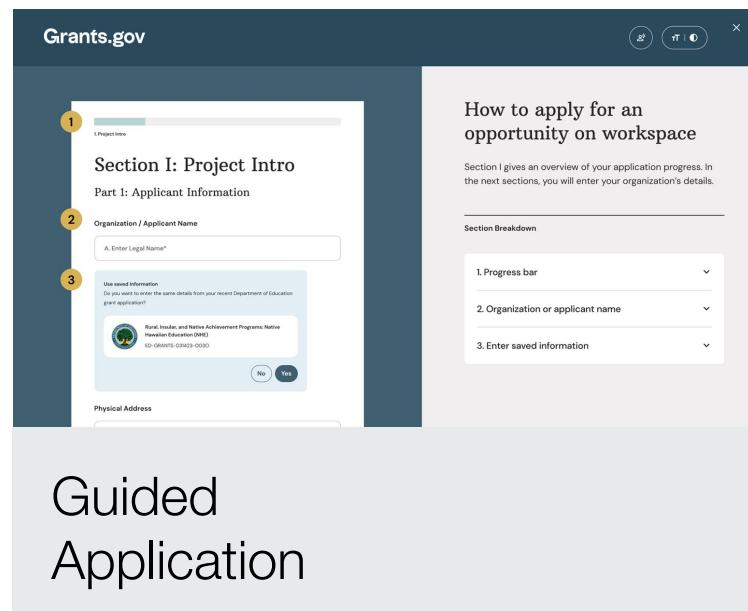
A Branded Experience



Forecast Tracker



Multi-Channel Task Reminders



Guided Application

## Guiding Principles

### Create an ownable identity.

More than a color palette and logo, a strong, trustworthy presence is a reflection our mission. Appeal to our varied audience to create engagement.

### Demystify the grants process.

An equitable experience ensure users have easy access to all the same information, but curated for relevancy and efficiency.

### Frictionless functionality.

Reduce the burden on applicants by adopting a “less is more” approach. Address major pain points and simplify the experience - both from a grants process and system perspective.

### Sophisticated self-direction.

Meet the users where they are by providing “opt-in” support, reducing task abandonment or the need to leave the system for help.

Guiding principles meet archetype priority needs

Addressing the primary needs of the novice will solve core issues across all audiences and create a more equitable Grants.gov experience.

Guiding Principle	<b>Novice</b>	<b>Collaborator</b>	<b>Maestro</b>	<b>Supervisor</b>
<b>Create an ownable identity</b>	Help me get started.		Remember me.	Give me a bird's-eye view.
<b>Demystify the grants process</b>	Match opportunities with my needs.	Help me make sure my community is eligible for new opportunities.	Help me determine opportunity feasibility.	
<b>Frictionless functionality</b>	Proactively guide me step by step.	Help me resume my progress.  Help me help my partners.	Help me keep track of my to-dos.  Keep me updated on NOFOs.	Help me stay ahead of approvals.  Help me share access.
<b>Sophisticated self-direction</b>	Make information accessible to me.	Make coordination easier for me.		

Agenda

# Roadmap

4

An iterative process



## Product Roadmap

*Product roadmaps answer the question:*

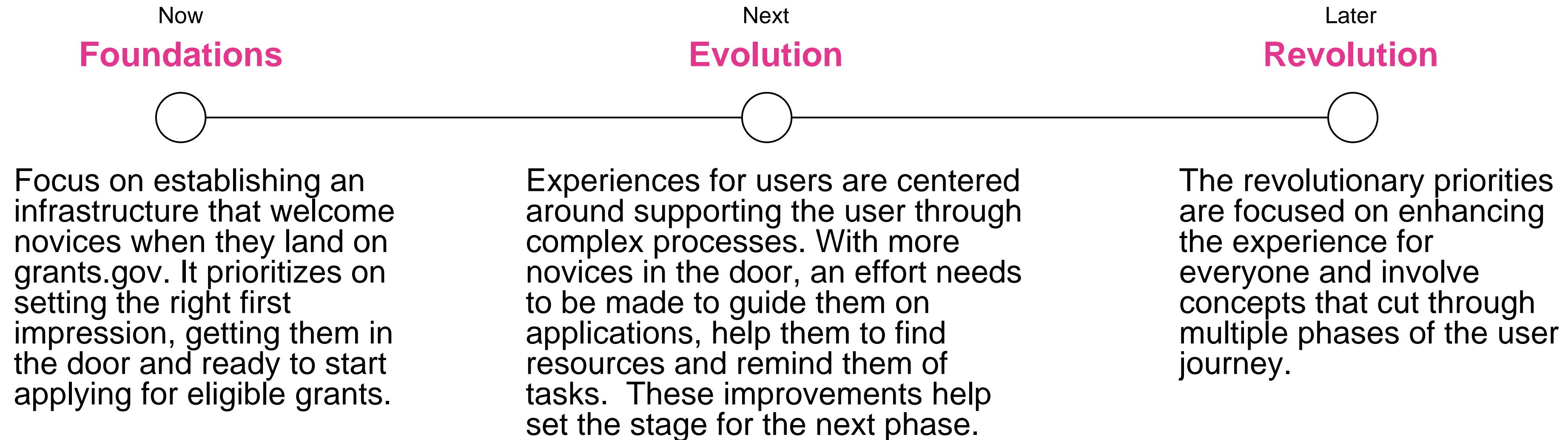
What is first vs. later that can still drive impact?

## Product Roadmap

*Inputs to our high-level roadmap:*

1. Product Strategy
2. User Need

# Organizing structure



## Measurement of success examples

Identity	A branded experience	<p>Sets the foundation for our system modernization and information future design work</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- qual survey: change in brand perception / favorability (using old brand as control)</li> <li>- increase in brand awareness among underserved novice applicants</li> </ul>
	Design system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- quant user test: ability to complete tasks, engage with features on the homepage and search pages</li> <li>- increase in usage among underserved novice applicants</li> </ul>
Applicant	Pre Login Pages	<p>Even before our users create a registration, welcome them into the grants world that informs and educates</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- quant user test - ability to complete tasks, engage with features on the homepage and search pages</li> <li>- increase in usage among underserved novice applicants</li> </ul>
	Registration / Login Flow	<p>Address the number one barrier to entry for our novice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- increase number of registrations</li> <li>- decrease drop-off / failure rate at each stage of the flow</li> </ul>
Find	Search	<p>As the NOFOs improve, search's utility also improves, laying the architecture for more robust features like Grant Matching making and Forecast tracker</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- increase in the total number of searches and use of filters</li> <li>- time on search</li> </ul>
	Grant Matchmaker	<p>As the underlying foundations of NOFO and search are enhanced and behaviors begin to shift, we can begin to realize complex but robust features like Grant Matchmaker and Forecast tracker.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- applicant adoption of the tool</li> <li>- conversion rate of the matchmaker tool in comparison to manual search</li> <li>- success rate of applicants who used matchmaker vs manual search</li> </ul>
Apply	Forecast Tracker	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- applicant adoption of the tool</li> <li>- reduce time in application window</li> </ul>
	Opportunity Detail Page (NOFO)	<p>NOFOs are the backbone of the search experience and should be addressed early in the roadmap.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- increase in number of completed applications</li> <li>- increase first-time applicants</li> </ul>
Support / Manage	Application List/ Dashboard View	<p>A new feature based on lessons learned from Grant Solutions - helps our users manage their workload, increasing application completion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- usagage and engage in the dashboard</li> <li>- reduce abandoned applications</li> </ul>
	Application Workspace	<p>Enhance the application process to set to the stage for later enhancements like guided application and reminders</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- increase completed applications</li> <li>- increase first-time applicants</li> </ul>
Support / Manage	Guided Application	<p>Much like Grant Matchmaker and Forecast tracker, these concepts can be realized as we set the foundation of applications</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- reduce help desk inquiries</li> <li>- increase completed applications</li> </ul>
	Multi-channel task reminders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- increase in number of applications that begin via email</li> <li>- increase in email application completion conversions</li> </ul>
Support / Manage	Account Management	<p>Include features that make it easier to manage applications</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- reduce help desk inquiries</li> <li>- reduce application LOE</li> </ul>
	Smart Support Center	<p>With all the contextual help and improvements throughout the system, the help center is the culmination of the experience if the user still needs support.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- decrease in the a certain type of support question to the help center</li> <li>- increase in the amount of self service applications / troubleshooting</li> </ul>

Concept Name	Description	Desirability (from user perspective)	Quick Win	Vision
A warm welcome	Set an inviting tone for first time users. Give them the sense that we're here to help, that we value their trust and offer an equitable opportunity to all those who apply.	<b>High</b> - Users want to be better oriented when they first come on the site and have clear next steps to follow	Update current home page hero image and header to focus on welcoming new users  Highlight a primary call to action (eg: search) directing users to next steps	Create a homepage with the enhanced brand including an updated digital design system  Include alternate accessibility features such as additional language options
A branded experience	A look and feel that conveys a warm, accessible, and approachable first impression. One that represents the diverse people and relationships Grants.gov serves.	<b>Medium</b> - Users want a brand that feels modern and trustworthy	Brand and design system evolution. Foundational components at the start needed for a core experience  Templates for core pages	Expanded brand and design system which can include tone of voice, assets for other channels like CRM and social.
Streamlined access	A more simplified sign up experience for new users. Along with a single login that provides a consolidated and guided view of all grants-related information across different government sites.	<b>High</b> - Users want to be able to access the systems in order to apply.	Clearer upfront timeline expectations in the grants.gov registration flow  Consider increasing the time before password updates so that users don't feel like they are constantly jumping in and out of grants.gov	Presentation layer seamlessly combining registration across grants.gov, login.gov and sam.gov
Guided Application	A collection of helpful tips on how to understand grant documents and complete applications. Gathered from various resources in the grants ecosystem and presented in a digestible, visually appealing way.	<b>High</b> - In lieu of consistent forms/processes across agencies, novice users want to be guided through how to read NOFOs and use workspace forms.	Update 'learn grants' pages with better hierarchy to direct users towards the right kinds of tutorials  Highlight definitions by showing how certain words/jargon gets used in context  Embed tool-tips across the site	Standardize forms and synopsis in content and format to make it easier for users to navigate requirements
Smart Support Center	A centralized base for all learning resources and service requests -- making access to relevant information easier and more equitable.	<b>Medium</b> - 'Learn grants' can be difficult to navigate for novice users but also has valuable resources once they find what they need	Clearer sitewide search to help users find learning resources provided by grants.gov	Create a centralized repository for learning resources that can be consumed in a simple and accessible manner.
Multi-Channel Task Reminders	A system of alerts reminding novices about pending tasks and providing contextual, timely information to help them stay on track.	<b>Medium</b> - Users have been managing with external services to manage tasks but want an integrated tool with grants.gov	Set realistic expectations for how long processes could take rather than just individual forms.	Develop a robust CRM strategy and notification center to send targeted communications to applicants  Expanded email as a channel for discovering new grant opportunities for prospective and returning applicants.
Grant Matchmaker	A recommendation engine that promotes a more nuanced, personalized browsing experience rather than searching for exact matches based on specific tags, industry terminology and acronyms.	<b>High</b> - Novice users want help searching for opportunities and pre-checking their eligibility	Enhance sorting of search results by displaying the 'best-first' (ex: pre-filtered by opportunity status or region)  Keyword highlighting in search results	Users are matched to most relevant grants through AI  Reverse the search process, by inputting their organization's details and objectives in order for Grants.gov to match them with relevant grants
Forecast Tracker	Keep users updated on upcoming grant opportunities based on their profiles and interests — giving them a head start for the planning and application process.	<b>Medium</b> - Users can track upcoming opportunities through external services but want more accuracy for forecasts	Users are matched to most relevant grants through an AI  Reverse the search process, by inputting their organization's details and objectives in order for Grants.gov to match them with relevant grants	Highlight areas of the forecast where information has been updated  Include context in the forecast for how likely requirements are to be posted as is or change

## Example priority frameworks - Grant Solutions

<b>HUGE</b>		NAME: _____			
	Epic	User story	User Value 5=High 1=Low	Tech LOE See above	Dependencies Add the number
5	Pre-Award	As an applicant / grantee worker bee, I want to create an application for a new funding opportunity so that I can compete for new grants.			
6	Pre-Award	As an applicant / grantee approver, I want to approve and submit an application for a new funding opportunity so that I can compete for new grants.			
7	Post-Award	As a grantee worker bee, I want to create a continuation application so that I can continue work on my current grant.			
8	Post-Award	As a grantee approver, I want to approve and submit an application for a NCC so that I can continue work on my current grant.			
9	Pre-Award	As a grantee worker bee, I want to create an application for directed funding opportunities so that I can apply for a grant.			
10	Pre-Award	As a grantee approver, I want to approve and submit an application for a directed opportunity so that I can apply for a grant.			
11	Pre-Award	As an applicant / grantee, I want to view the status of any submitted application so that I know where it is at in the process			
12	Award	As an applicant / grantee, I want to be able to provide supplemental application information if required by the grantor			
13	Award	As an applicant / grantee, I want to collaborate with the grantor as a part of a budget negotiation			
14	Award	As an applicant / grantee, I want to view a Notice of Award so that I can see the award amount, T&Cs, etc.			
15	Award	As a grantee, I want to view and accept a Notice of Award so that I can receive grant funding			
16	Post-Award	As a grantee, I want to create and submit my performance progress report.			
17	Post-Award	As a grantee, I want to create and submit my financial status report (SF-425).			

<b>HUGE</b>		NAME: _____			
	Epic	User story	User Value 5=High 1=Low	Tech LOE See above	Dependencies Add the number
18	Post-Award	As a grantee, I want to view the complete history of all grant actions associated with my grant project			
19	Post-Award	As a grantee, I want to view the contents of my official grant file			
20	Post-Award	As a grantee, I want to submit requests to modify my grant award (e.g., no cost extension, carryover, change in personnel)			
21	Post-Award	As a grantee, I want to contact the Federal Program Officer or Federal Grants Officer so that I can ask questions related to my grant			
22	Post-Award	As a grantee, I want to be able to easily see overview information about my grant, such as project / budget periods, upcoming tasks that are due, etc., so that I can more easily manage my work			
23	Post-Award	As a grantee, I want to be able to easily respond to official correspondence from the Federal Agency			
24	Post-Award	As a grantee, I want to be able to add documents and other files to the file so that it can be part of the Agency's record.			
25		As a grantee, I want to be able to find and select which grant project I want to work on so that I can do my grants work.			
26		As a grantee user, I want to see my upcoming tasks so that I can see what I need to do and easily go do it.			
27	Post-Award	As a grantee, I want to view the Current Account Balance & History at the Award Level, Cumulative Obligations; Drawdowns; Funds Returned; etc. High level with drill-down			
28	Post-Award	As a grantee, I want a chronological View of Award History; including email correspondence			
29	Post-Award	As a grantee, I want to view Audit Clearinghouse Reports			
30	Post-Award	As a grantee, provide the federal government indirect cost rate documentation and rate			

Huge

Thank You

Grants.gov  
Product Vision & Strategy Presentation

Agenda

# Appendix

## Appendix

# Experience Concept - Static Images

Concept 1

1

# A warm welcome

Set an inviting tone for first time users. Give them the sense that we're here to help, that we value their trust and offer an equitable opportunity to all those who apply.

A warm welcome

The screenshot shows the Grants.gov homepage. At the top, there's a banner with the text "An official website of the United States Government. Here is how you know." followed by the Grants.gov logo and navigation links for "Search Grants", "Learning Center", "My Account", and accessibility options. Below the banner is a large photograph of three people at a farmers market, smiling and interacting over fresh produce. Overlaid on this image is the text "The largest database for federal grants — at your service." To the left of the search bar is a magnifying glass icon. The search bar itself contains the placeholder text "Search by keyword, opportunity number, CFDA code". In the bottom right corner of the main content area, there's another smaller image of a person wearing safety goggles and gloves, focused on a task. Next to this image is the text "Not sure where to begin? Find grants that fit your organization." and a button labeled "Get matched →".

An official website of the United States Government. Here is how you know.

Grants.gov

Search Grants Learning Center My Account

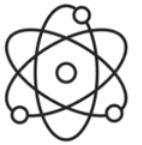
The largest database for federal grants — at your service.

Search by keyword, opportunity number, CFDA code

Not sure where to begin?  
Find grants that fit your  
organization.

Get matched →

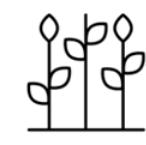
Discover Grants



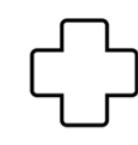
Sciences



Humanities



Agriculture



Health



Environmental  
Science



TRENDING

NEWLY ADDED

MOST POPULAR



DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

**U.S. Embassy  
Amman, PAS Annual  
Program Statement**

[View grant](#)



NATIONAL AERONAUTICS AND SPACE  
ADMINISTRATION

**ROSES 2023: F.3  
Exoplanets Research**

[View grant](#)



NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE ARTS

**NEA Challenge  
America, FY2024**

[View grant](#)



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

**National  
Community  
System for  
Disaster  
Preparedness**

[View grant](#)



Impact Spotlight

JCAC receives

---

Impact Spotlight



## JCAC receives American Rescue Plan grant

The Jersey City Arts Council (JCAC) received an American Rescue Plan grant to help the Jersey City arts and cultural sector recover from the pandemic.

With it, Christina Pena, Yuchen Li, Sasha Mowstofi established an afterschool arts program.

2021 Winners  
Grant opportunity: [SAA-RAO-NASAA-ARP](#)

[Read more](#)

---

Frequently Asked Questions

Who is eligible for grants?

How long does it take to apply for a grant?

Where can I find the right grant for my organization?

How do I get started?

[Learn more →](#)

Join thousands of American organizations who are making an impact in their communities.

---

Frequently Asked Questions

---

Who is eligible for grants? ▼

---

How long does it take to apply for a grant? ▼

---

Where can I find the right grant for my organization? ▼

---

How do I get started? ▼

---

[Learn more →](#)

Join thousands of American organizations who are making an impact through federal grants.

[Find grants →](#)





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Grants.gov in Numbers

**26**

Federal agencies represented

**\$500 billion**

Given away yearly as grants

**25,000**

Opportunities posted

**1.2 million**

Applications received

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES	COMMUNITY	CONNECT WITH US
EEOC / No Fear Act	Whitehouse.gov	Blog
Accessibility	USA Spending.gov	Twitter
Privacy	SBA.gov	Youtube
Disclaimers	SAM.gov	Alerts
Site Map	Report Fraud	RSS
		XML Extract
		Adobe Reader

Concept 2

2

# Grants Matchmaker

A recommendation engine that promotes a more nuanced, personalized browsing experience rather than searching for exact matches based on specific tags, industry terminology and acronyms.

Grants.gov



X

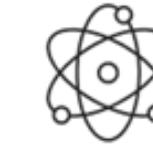
Hello! Welcome to Grants.gov. I'll be helping you find grants  
that are a good fit your organization.

## Grants.gov



X

First, which of these best describes your organization?



Sciences



Humanities



Agriculture



Health



Environment



Arts



Law and Justice



Business

Grants.gov



X

There are currently **126 active grant opportunities** available  
for agriculture. Let's narrow them down.

# Grants.gov



X

What kind of structure does your organization have?

For-profit

Non-profit

Small business

5013c status

Individual

Other

I don't know what these mean

Grants.gov



X

Pulling up the grants your organization is eligible for....

# Grants.gov



🎉 Congratulations! 🎉

Your organization qualifies for **10 grant opportunities!**



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF  
AGRICULTURE

Beginning Farmer  
Development Program



USDA NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF  
FOOD AND CULTURE

Food and Agricultural  
Education Information System



USDA AGRICULTURAL MARKETING  
SERVICE

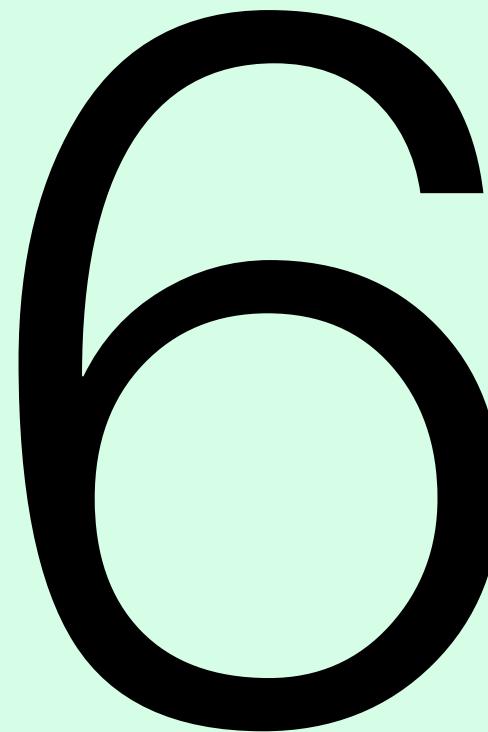
Micro-Grants for Food  
Security Program



NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF FOOD  
AND CULTURE

New Beginning for Tribal  
Students Program

Concept 6



# Smart Support Center

A centralized base for all learning resources and service requests -- making access to relevant information easier and more equitable.

*What can we help you with today?*

How

How do I apply for a grant?

How can I check eligibility?

How long will it take to hear back from a grant opportunity?

How does the application process work?

How do I create an account?

How does the grant process work?

What can we help you with today?

# How can I check eligibility?

Answers

Read articles on how eligibility works →

Take our eligibility quiz that matches you with grants →

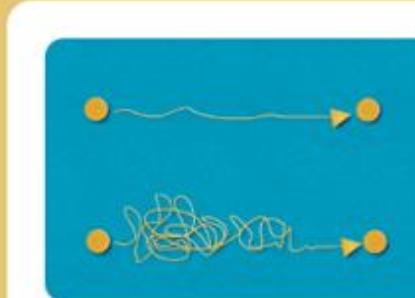
Watch videos on how to understand funding opportunities →

What can we help you with today?

# How can I check eligibility?

## Answers

Read articles on how eligibility works →



ARTICLE

How does eligibility work and why does it change?

2 min read



ARTICLE

Testimony: how we become eligible for grants

6 min read



ARTICLE

Step-by-step guide through the eligibility process

12 min read

Concept 7

7

# Guided Application

A collection of helpful tips on how to understand grant documents and complete applications. Gathered from various resources in the grants ecosystem and presented in a digestible, visually appealing way.

**Grants.gov**

1. Project Intro

## Section I: Project Intro

### Part 1: Applicant Information

2. Organization / Applicant Name

A. Enter Legal Name\*

3. Use saved information

Do you want to enter the same details from your recent Department of Education grant application?

Rural, Insular, and Native Achievement Programs: Native Hawaiian Education (NHE)  
ED-GRANTS-031423-0030

No Yes

Physical Address

How to apply for an opportunity on workspace

Section I gives an overview of your application progress. In the next sections, you will enter your organization's details.

Section Breakdown

1. Progress bar
2. Organization or applicant name
3. Enter saved information
4. Physical address

# Grants.gov

4

## Physical Address

 No Yes

B. Street 1\*

Street 2

B. City\*

B. County or Parish\*

B. State\*



B. Country\*



B. Zip or Postal Code\*

3

## Type of applicant

D. Select applicant type code(s)

E. Employer or Taxpayer Identification Number (EIN/TIN)

## Section Breakdown (continued)

### 4. Physical address

The applicant should put in the address of their organization, *not* their individual address. You need a physical address for your organization in order to confirm the location and to receive mail.

Here are some helpful definitions:



**Parish or County** — County is the principal geographic and political subdivision of the states. All states divide their territories into counties except Louisiana, where the equivalent units are called parishes, and Alaska, where they are called boroughs.

### 5. Type of applicant

## Appendix

# User Archetypes

## A quick note on archetypes

# Archetypes are

Compelling stories that bring to life core customer archetype and illuminate specific details that speak to a type of person.

Informed by behavioral data.

An important tool that's part of the process in driving marketing communication and design thinking.

# Archetypes are not

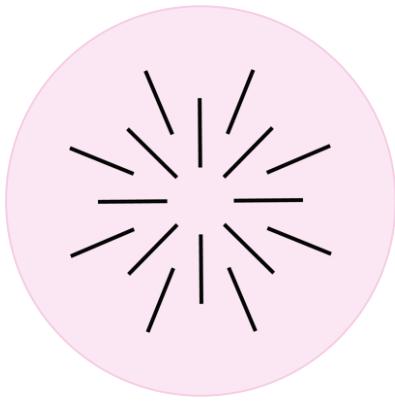
An exhaustive, scientific taxonomy of every possible customer type.

Statistical categorical classifications of groups of people.

Based on demographic data.

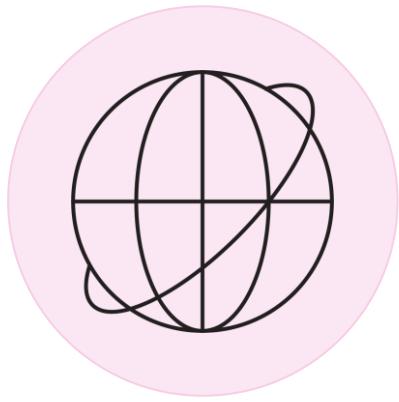
Intended to be used in isolation.

## Our main archetypes



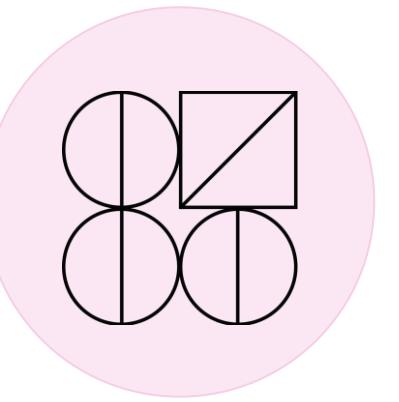
### The Novice

Applicants who lack familiarity with the grant process, including first time or infrequent applicants.



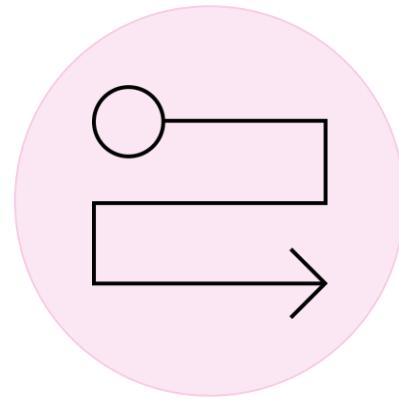
### The Collaborator

Applicants who coordinate with partners to increase their chance of success



### The Maestro

Frequent applicants who manage multiple work streams at once



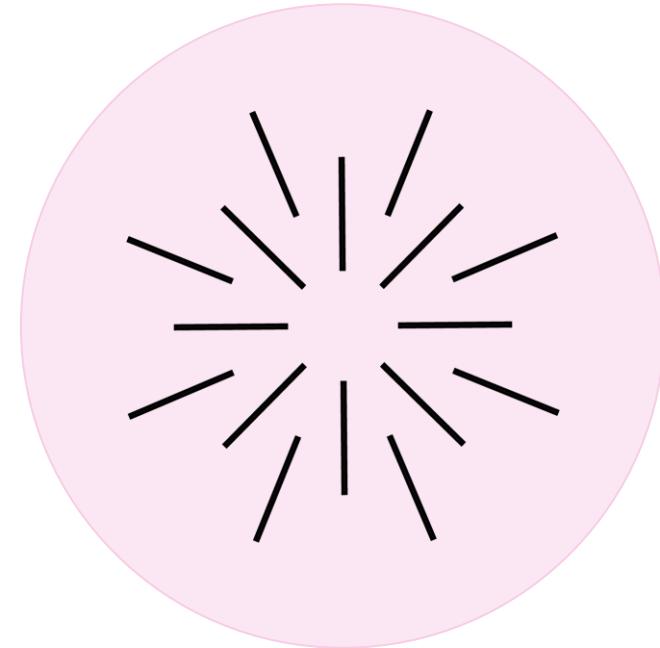
### The Supervisor

Applicants in senior positions responsible for oversight

Archetype 1

# The Novice

## Archetype 1

**Mindset**

Overwhelmed & intimidated  
Browsing for leads

Eager to learn about grants

**Equity Buckets**

Tribal Organizations  
Rural US / International  
BIPOC-Led and Serving Organizations

# The Novice

Applicants who lack familiarity with the grant process, including first time or infrequent applicants. Novices are often coming from low-capacity organizations and face a steep learning curve for Find and Apply. Solving the needs for this audience will generate a more inclusive Grants.gov experience.

**Goals**

Seek funding opportunities that match a specific initiative or project

Gain experience and skills in grant writing

Understand grant eligibility

**Constraints & challenges**

Not registered

Lacks familiarity with grants and Grants.gov

Lacks organizational support: responsible for finding and applying on their own

Lacks understanding of work required to prepare application, infrastructure to receive and support a grant

## The Novice

## Ecosystem.



Google & YouTube  
searches



Learn Grants.gov



TA Centers



Consulting groups for  
underserved communities

Barriers. **Lost at the start.**

Novices don't see a clear homepage CTA to begin, and can't find 1:1 help.

**Overwhelmed by search.**

New applicants misuse the keyword search function, and have trouble understanding acronyms and jargon.

**Confused by NOFOs.**

Novices have trouble determining their eligibility and understanding the details of the full announcement.

**Blindsided by requirements.**

New applicants are caught off guard by SAM.gov registration, and often miss format and file name requirements.

Drivers. **Trust in Grants.gov.**

General trust and familiarity with .gov properties may encourage hope with site.

**Entrepreneurial grit.**

Some new applicants have already overcome many odds to get their organization started and are determined to learn.

**Other newbies' success stories.**

Hearing about other organizations that were awarded grants gives them motivation to apply.

***"The other thing I probably would do, because the whole process seems really fraught with potential frustration, is probably, if I did get my UEI, I would ask Learn Design Apply [Inc.] to hold my hand through it so I don't get too frustrated. Like, 'Okay, I'm gonna start this application. Can I check in with you? Or could you guys give me a checklist of things to do, so I don't get bogged down in the minutiae?"***

— Executive Director, Small Rural Non-Profit Organization

## Novices: equity considerations

# Novice rural and tribal organizations face acute barriers to find and apply.

### High turnover.

Familiarity with the site, experience in grant application processes, and established working relationships with partner and grantmaking organizations support applicants' confidence and comfort throughout the process. High turnover at organizations means that Grants.gov knowledge may leave with the individual, dramatically inhibiting underserved organizations' ability to leverage this institutional knowledge.

### Poor broadband access, digital inequity.

It takes longer for organizations in rural areas or tribal land to apply due to unreliable internet access, resulting in grantors having to waive paper or email applications, or even delay UEI registration until after the grant is awarded. Additionally, the required two-factor authentication process for Login.gov is a key barrier for rural and international organizations, who lack coverage for SMS texts.

### Reliance on PO Box addresses.

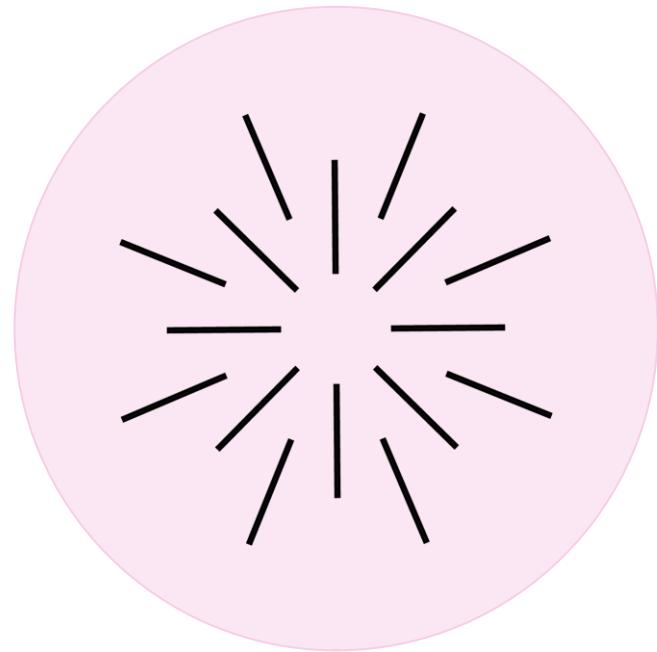
Organizations in rural areas or on tribal land may not have a recognizable USPS address and therefore have to rely on a PO Box. Organizations in these areas are simply unable to obtain a UEI number without a unique physical address.

***"There's only 10 of us. So it took two of us [to apply]. Then we had experienced some turnover at the same time so I was just like, 'Wow!,' so it's just a lot of hours to do it. And there's so much anxiety about, 'Did we get everything that was asked for?' Because there's so many parts, and some of the parts apply to us, and some of them don't, and it's confusing."***

— Occasional applicant, Tribal Organization

## Archetype 1

# The Novice



*"It was really challenging. I spent a lot of time calling the Help Desk and having people walk me through step by step. I didn't understand the EBiz POC and all of the different layers of who has what responsibility."*

— Operations Director, Small Non-Profit

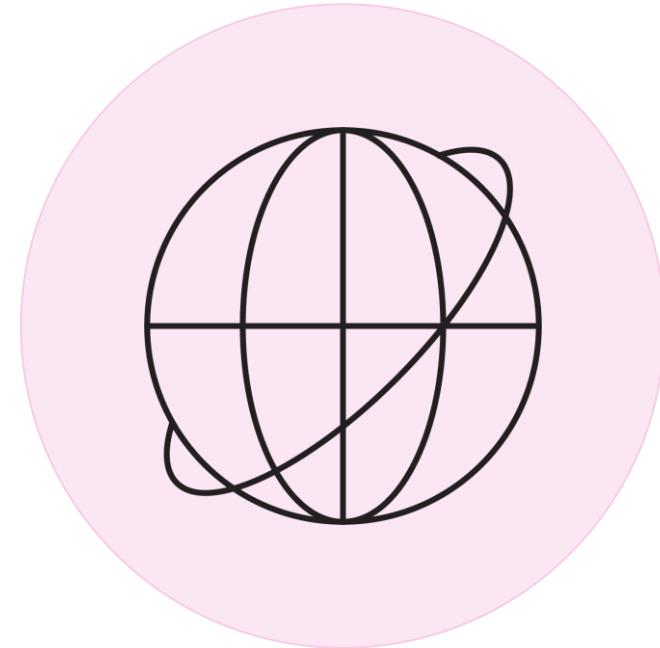
## Priority Needs

1. **Help me get started.** Lower the barrier to entry for Novices by providing a clear homepage CTA, a proactive and simple registration process, a formalized and easily accessible orientation, and success stories from relatable organizations to keep them motivated.
2. **Match opportunities with my needs.** A recommendation engine that emphasizes personalized browsing over exact searches could quickly align Novices with realistic opportunities. Definitions and tips along the way will boost confidence to apply.
3. **Make information accessible to me.** Accessible design and vocabulary will prevent Novices from giving up at the Find stage of the application journey. Providing context and guidance on program officer contact information will create more equitable communication for first-time applicants.
4. **Proactively guide me step by step.** Requirement checklists and milestone reminders, form design standardization, clearer error states, and guidance on next steps will help Novices overcome hidden hurdles and adequately prepare their application.
5. **Help me understand LOE.** From what it takes to apply for a grant to managing an awarded grant, help me understand the level of effort needed so I can better manage my time and implement the right infrastructure, especially in my under-resourced organization.

Archetype 2

# The Collaborator

## Archetype 2



### Mindset

Eager to partner and connect  
Pressure to coordinate on time  
Fear of overriding collaborators

### Equity Levers

Team size and experience  
Location and internet access  
Institutional knowledge

# The Collaborator

Applicants who have applied to Grants.gov before and are collaborating with colleagues or partner organizations for a stronger application. Collaborators have greater familiarity with the site but face challenges with coordinating application materials, often resorting to tools and resources outside of Grants.gov.

### Goals

Forming partnerships for a stronger application

Fluid editing and collaboration across roles and teams

Identifying grants in the interest of their community

### Constraints & challenges

Staying organized

Coordinating with and familiarize new team members with Grants.gov

Role setting and permissions

Building trust and relationships across organizations

## The Collaborator

### Ecosystem.



Local network knowledge sharing.



Google Docs, Word for collaborating (instead of Workspace)



Established program officer relationships



Grant writers/consultants/evaluators (splits costs with partners)

### Barriers.



#### **Confusion about ownership.**

Lack of clarity around Workspace roles adds friction to the collaborative process.

#### **Cumbersome onboarding.**

Workspace training is text-heavy and overwhelming for organization leaders who are short on time.

#### **Registration errors.**

Cross-organization errors in SAM.gov registration can delay submissions or result in the wrong organization managing the grant award.

#### **Getting partners in line.**

Collaborators spend significant effort forming personal relationship with partners, and coordinating letters of commitment.

### Drivers.



#### **Workspace collaboration.**

The ability to collaborate on Workspace, especially the Lock/Unlock feature, is compelling those who know how to use it.

#### **Capacity boosts.**

Partnering means not only makes the application content stronger, but creates shared responsibility for the application effort.

#### **Knowledge sharing.**

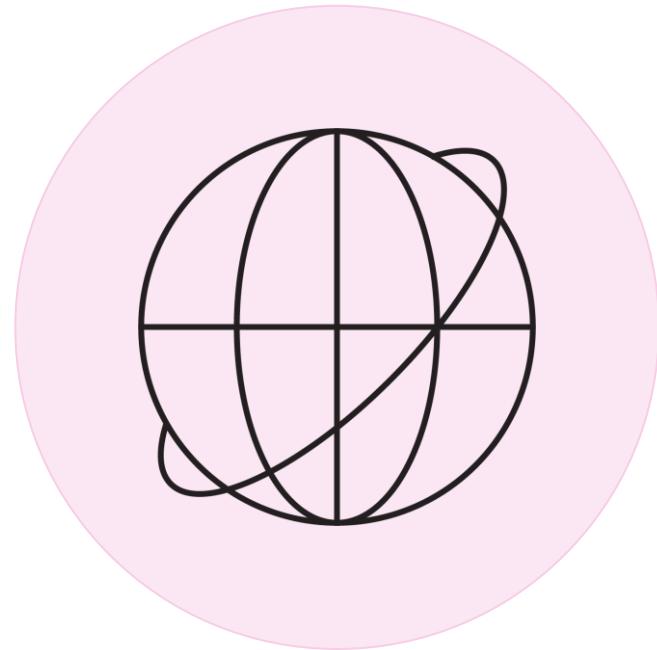
When organizations partner, the more experienced organization may share a successful case study for a jumpstart on the application.

***"The biggest challenge was getting it submitted...we were working with an organization. at the time, we were writing it, we developed all these partnerships and then our ED somehow did not secure the SAM and the DUNS numbers in order for us to apply. So it got crazy chaotic...he paid someone to expedite the SAM number and it was fraud...Our one partner did have everything we needed almost at the 11th hour...so he absorbed us as staff for a period of time."***

— Operations Director, small non-profit

## Archetype 2

# The Collaborator.



*“Because we're a fully remote organization, we have our whole team on OneDrive. So we use that and Slack for questions and we had Zoom meetings. Those are all the tools we used to collaborate. But we didn't use Workspace to collaborate.”*

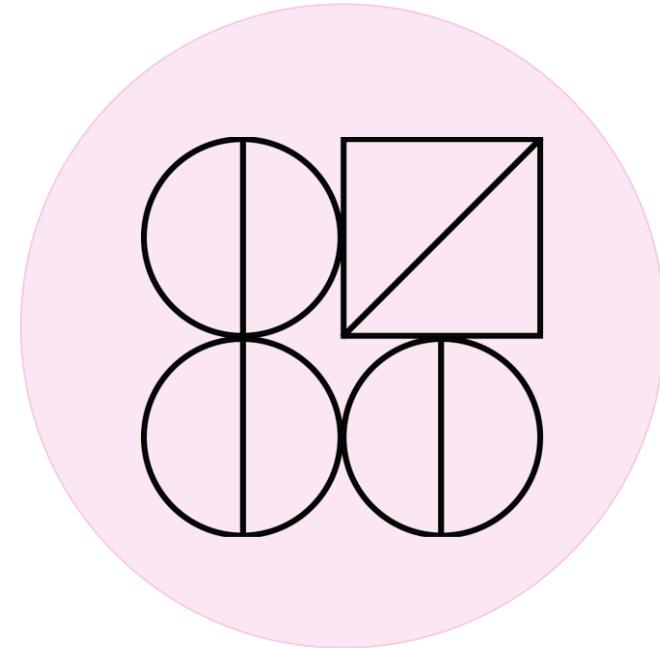
## Priority Needs

1. **Make coordination easier for me.** Collaborators are looking for guidance and reminders about Workspace capabilities and roles, a simpler way to change permissions and provide feedback, and emergency access for a more fluid team application process.
2. **Help me help my partners.** Collaborators often have to train and onboard new team members, and need Grants.gov to provide more self-service support to alleviate this burden.
3. **Help me resume my progress.** Collaborators want to quickly jump into a clear view of their Workspace activity when they log back into Grants.gov.
4. **Help me make sure my community is eligible for new opportunities.** Collaborators need ways to stay notified about Forecast updates and new opportunities that might be relevant for partnerships from a community perspective. To improve equity, newer applicants need to be made aware of the possibility of partnerships, including the work and time it might add to their application

Archetype 3

# The Maestro

## Archetype 3

**Mindset**

Familiar yet change-averse  
Cautious about feasibility  
Strategic  
Hunting for new opportunity

**Equity Levers**

External support  
Location and internet access

# The Maestro.

Applicants who are familiar with Grants.gov and are directly responsible for managing multiple applications at once. Maestros have an established approach to applying, which may include software and tools outside of Grants.gov. Their primary concerns are rooted in determining grant feasibility and staying ahead of deadlines.

**Goals**

Exploring opportunities that support fundraising strategy

Determining if opportunity is worth applying for

Give team the most possible amount of time to apply

Lifting old content for new applications

**Constraints & challenges**

Forecast planning

High volume of paperwork

Shared logins

Navigating multiples in all forms

Overhead and bureaucratic red tape

# The Maestro

## Ecosystem.



Grants.gov newsletter,  
listervs



Webinars & FAQs



Established program officer  
relationships



Opportunity tracking  
spreadsheets



Google Docs, Word for  
collaborating, Notes for  
references

## Barriers.



### Misleading Forecasts.

Maestros like to plan ahead for grants, so inaccurate Forecasts often triggers a need to recalibrate.

### Cluttered navigation.

Despite familiarity with the site, Maestros feel it takes unnecessary time to find what they need on Grants.gov

### Duplicative requests.

Extraneous form fields and sometimes submitting the same application through an agency website (like JustGrants) makes the process cumbersome.

### Unclear about eligibility.

Maestros sometimes have to reach out to program officers directly about eligibility.

## Drivers.



### Workspace archives.

Maestros appreciate the ability to access their Workspace archives to repurpose content from previously submitted applications.

### Institutional knowledge.

Experience with Grants.gov means that Maestros can anticipate issues and have established workarounds.

### Annual timing is consistent.

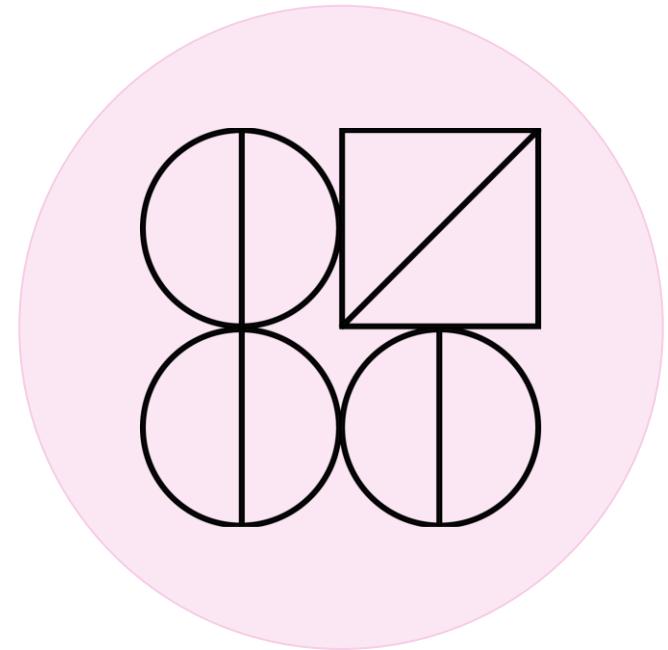
Maestros know that they can mostly rely on the consistent timing of annual grants and are able to plan their resources accordingly.

***"This is step one. You have to go to Grants.gov. And then step two, I guess a week later, you go to JustGrants. I've been on calls for some – some other grantees have missed a deadline because of the confusion with the dates."***

— Frequent Applicant, State Government

## Archetype 3

# The Maestro.



*"We always laugh at things like this:  
'This should only take you an  
hour'...but it's the narrative. I spent  
four months straight, basically all of  
my time at work writing an  
application. Don't insult me with  
'this takes an hour.'"*

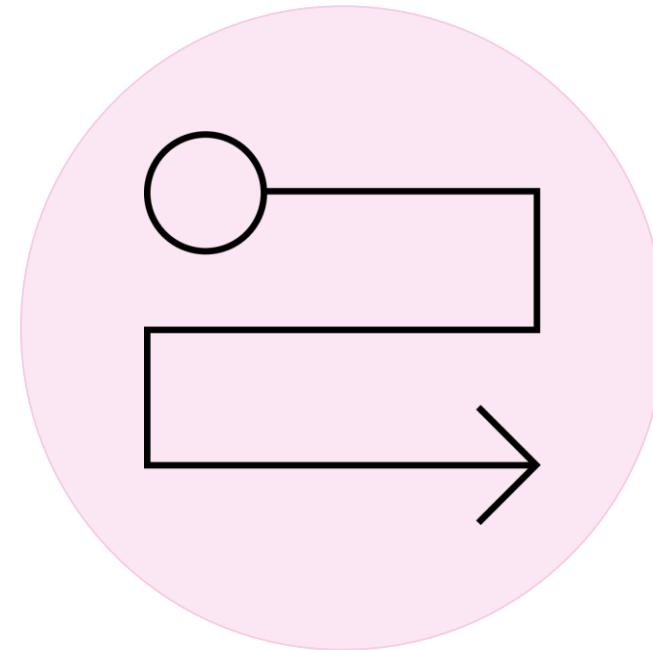
## Priority Needs

1. **Remember me.** As frequent users, Maestros need to save time with repeat activity, such as searching and application drafts. They need a simple homepage navigation that acknowledges their history with Grants.gov.
2. **Help me determine opportunity feasibility.** When Maestros find an opportunity that might be relevant, they are assessing its parameters with stakeholders at their organization, and need this information streamlined for faster decision-making.
3. **Keep me updated on NOFOs.** Maestros tend to approach grant opportunities from a fiscal strategy perspective, and need notifications as soon as a Forecast changes.
4. **Help me keep track of my to-dos.** As the point person responsible for multiple grant applications, Maestros need a topline understanding of milestones and requirements for each Opportunity so they don't miss key details.

Archetype 4

# The Supervisor

## Archetype 4



# The Supervisor.

Applicants who have a more senior role at organizations and have less frequent direct involvement with Grants.gov than Maestros. Supervisors are responsible for approvals, final submissions, and keeping their Grants.gov registration up to date.

## Mindset

Busy and distracted

## Equity Levers

Location and internet access  
Organization turnover

### Goals

Ensuring application workflow is efficient

Managing employee permissions

Submitting applications

Accessing application history

### Constraints & challenges

Shared logins

Organization turnover

Time capacity

## The Supervisors

### Ecosystem.



Grants.gov newsletter,  
Listservs



Advisory Boards



Established program officer  
relationships



Employees/consultants  
dedicated to application  
prep

### Barriers.



#### Lack of time.

EBiz POCs may delay application submissions because their final approval is needed, but they are hard to reach and busy with other matters.

#### Layers of logins.

Login.gov has complicated the process for team members who share credentials: two-factor authentications prevent remote employees from accessing their work.

#### Deterred by instructions.

The Workspace overview is cumbersome and confusing to Supervisors, who need to grant access to colleagues or subcontractors quickly.

### Drivers.



#### Team support.

Supervisors may have colleagues or consultants dedicated to managing grant applications, who can improve their workflow and keep track of credentials.

#### Experience with help desk.

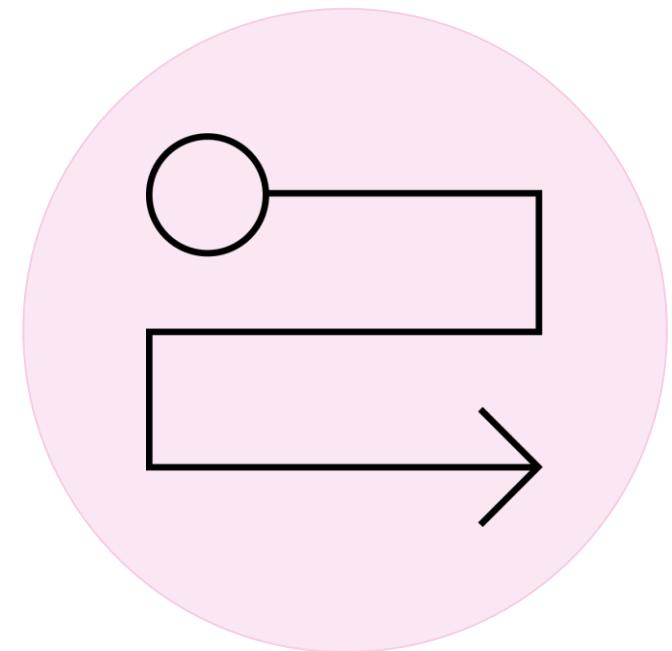
Seasoned Supervisors know from experience who they need to contact based on the circumstance of their issue.

***"Login.gov is a headache. I'm sure they have good reason, but it always it always mystifies me how I have to sign in 16 times to get where I want to go. If I want to get to eRA Commons, I have to go through Login.gov and then eRA Commons. If I need to get into ASSIST, same kind of thing, it's all going through a central Login.gov and then a second layer of security."***

— Prevention Supervisor, CBO

Archetype 4.

# The Supervisor.



*“...The CEO had to give me permission...We had to go through her executive assistant who knows computer work more than my CEO does. So it took about two weeks to figure out the whole application.”*

— Nurse, Tribal Organization

## Priority Needs

1. **Give me a bird's-eye view.** Supervisors are likely busy with the numerous other aspects of running their organization, and need a simple way to see their overall status on Grants.gov so they can tend to their most urgent needs.
2. **Help me stay ahead of approvals.** Supervisors need warnings and notifications when their registration needs updating or an approval for submission is expected so they don't miss deadlines.
3. **Help me share access.** Supervisors need topline overviews of role setting and granting access in order to keep their workflow running smoothly.

Guiding principles meet archetype priority needs

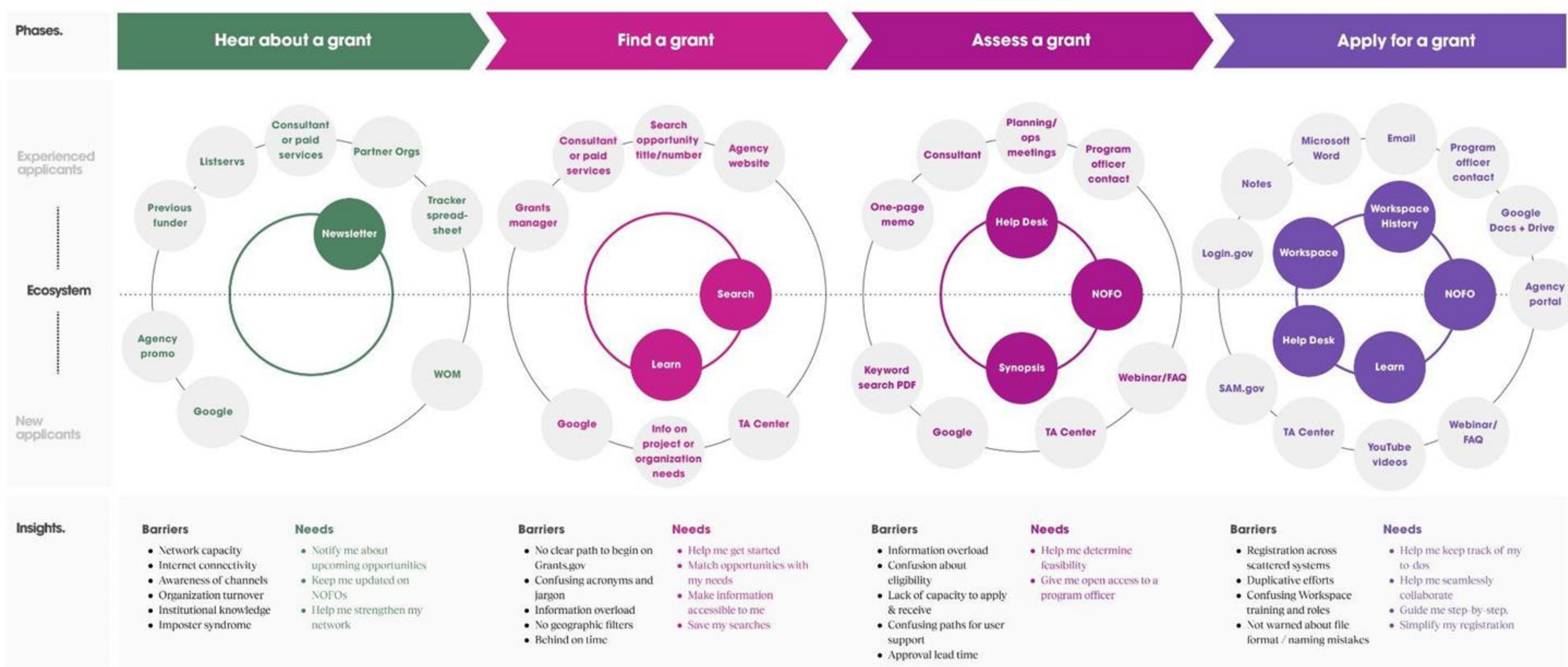
# Addressing the primary needs of the novice will solve core issues across all audiences and create a more equitable Grants.gov experience.

Guiding Principle	Novice	Collaborator	Maestro	Supervisor
<b>Create an ownable identity</b>	<p><b>Help me get started.</b> Lower the barrier to entry for Novices by providing a clear homepage CTA, a proactive and simple registration process, and success stories from relatable organizations to keep them motivated.</p>		<p><b>Remember me.</b> As frequent users, Maestros need to save time with repeat activity, such as searching and application drafts. They need a simple homepage navigation that acknowledges their history with Grants.gov.</p>	<p><b>Give me a bird's-eye view.</b> Supervisors are likely busy with the numerous other aspects of running their organization, and need a simple way to see their overall status on Grants.gov so they can tend to their most urgent needs.</p>
<b>Demystify the grants process</b>	<p><b>Match opportunities with my needs.</b> A recommendation engine that emphasizes personalized browsing over exact searches could quickly align Novices with realistic opportunities. Definitions and tips along the way will boost confidence to apply.</p>	<p><b>Help me make sure my community is eligible for new opportunities.</b> Collaborators need ways to stay notified about Forecast updates and new opportunities that might be relevant for partnerships from a community perspective. To improve equity, newer applicants need to be made aware of the possibility of partnerships, including the work and time it might add to their application.</p>	<p><b>Help me determine opportunity feasibility.</b> When Maestros find an opportunity that might be relevant, they are assessing its parameters with stakeholders at their organization, and need this information streamlined for faster decision-making.</p>	
<b>Frictionless functionality</b>	<p><b>Proactively guide me step by step.</b> Requirement checklists and milestone reminders, form design standardization, clearer error states, and guidance on next steps will help Novices overcome hidden hurdles and adequately prepare their application.</p>	<p><b>Help me resume my progress.</b> Collaborators want to quickly jump into a clear view of their Workspace activity when they log back into Grants.gov.</p> <p><b>Help me help my partners.</b> Collaborators often have to train and onboard new team members, and need Grants.gov to provide more self-service support to alleviate this burden.</p>	<p><b>Help me keep track of my to-dos.</b> As the point person responsible for multiple grant applications, Maestros need a topline understanding of milestones and requirements for each Opportunity so they don't miss key details.</p> <p><b>Keep me updated on NOFOs.</b> Maestros tend to approach grant opportunities from a fiscal strategy perspective, and need notifications as soon as a Forecast changes.</p>	<p><b>Help me stay ahead of approvals.</b> Supervisors need warnings and notifications when their registration needs updating or an approval for submission is expected so they don't miss deadlines.</p>
<b>Sophisticated self-direction</b>	<p><b>Make information accessible to me.</b> Accessible design and vocabulary will prevent Novices from giving up at the Find stage of the application journey. Providing context and guidance on program officer contact information will create more equitable communication for first-time applicants.</p>	<p><b>Make coordination easier for me.</b> Collaborators are looking for guidance and reminders about Workspace capabilities and roles, a simpler way to change permissions and provide feedback, and emergency access for a more fluid team application process.</p>		<p><b>Help me share access.</b> Supervisors need topline overviews of role setting and granting access in order to keep their workflow running smoothly.</p>

## Appendix

# Applicant Ecosystem

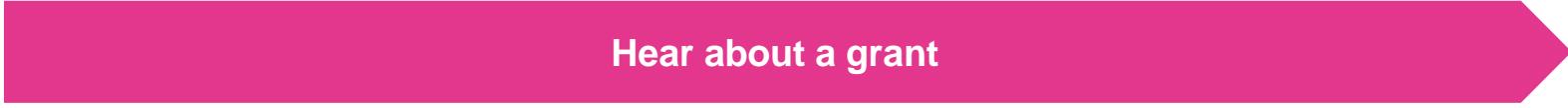
# Grants.gov Applicant Ecosystem



## Appendix

# Applicant Journeys

Phases


**Hear about a grant**

**Find a grant**

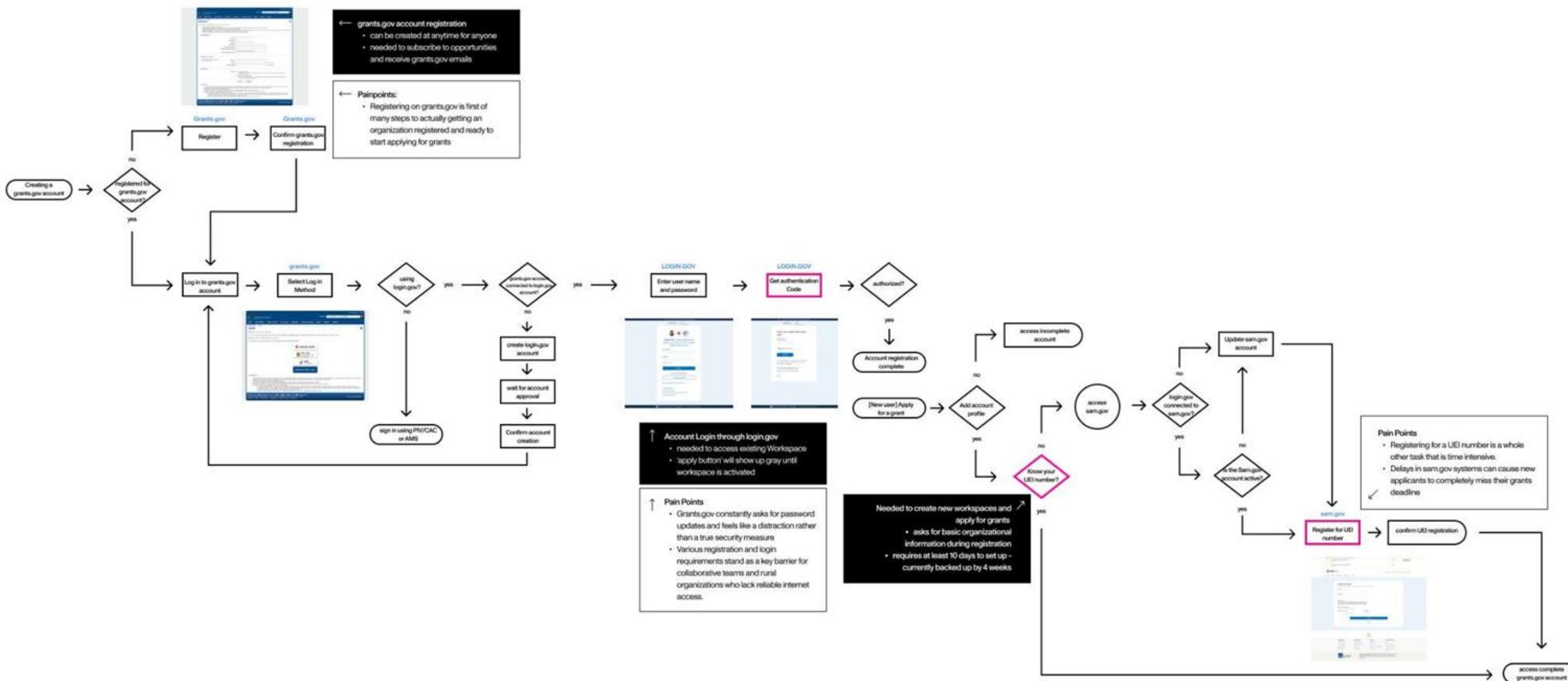
Equity Barriers	Hear about a grant					Find a grant				
	Network capacity	Internet connectivity	High turnover	Unclear how to subscribe	Confusion about government funding.	Information overload	Lacking a direct path for support	Lacking geographic filters	Unsure what to search for	Confusing language
Ecosystem	<b>Grants.gov</b> Newsletter Subscribe	<b>Federal Efforts</b> RPN IWG Tribal Access IPC WHIT for Build.gov Puerto RICO IPC Thriving Communities Program at DOT Distressed Cities and Persistent Poverty Program Technical Assistance Program at HUD Energycommunities.gov Broadband USA at DOC	<b>Grants.gov</b> Search Learn Grants	<b>External - Experienced Applicants</b> Grants manager Consultant or paid service Known Opportunity Title/Number Federal agency website	<b>External - New Applicants</b> Google Needs assessment The Opportunity Project US Digital Response Local Infrastructure Hub	<b>External - New Applicants</b> Google Needs assessment The Opportunity Project US Digital Response Local Infrastructure Hub	<b>Federal Efforts</b> TA Centers	<b>External - Experienced Applicants</b> Grants manager Consultant or paid service Known Opportunity Title/Number Federal agency website	<b>External - New Applicants</b> Google Needs assessment The Opportunity Project US Digital Response Local Infrastructure Hub	<b>Federal Efforts</b> TA Centers
Needs	<b>Notify me about upcoming opportunities</b> Keep me updated on NOFOs Help me strengthen my network				<b>Help me get started</b> Match opportunities with my needs Make information accessible to me Save my searches					
Opportunities	<b>Forecast Tracker</b> - Keep users updated on upcoming grant opportunities based on their profiles and interests — giving them a head start for the planning and application process.					<b>A Warm Welcome</b> - Set an inviting tone for first time users. Give them the sense that we're here to help, that we value their trust and offer an equitable opportunity to all those who apply. <b>Grants Matchmaker</b> - A recommendation engine that promotes a more nuanced, personalized browsing experience rather than searching for exact matches based on specific tags, industry terminology and acronyms.				

Phases	Assess a grant					Apply for a grant						
	Equity Barriers	Information overload	Uninformed about preparation workload	Unclear paths for support	Long approval lead time	Misaligned with needs	Scattered registration and logins	Confusion about UEIs	Unfamiliarity with Workspace	Duplicative efforts	Lacking capacity	Blindsided by requirements
Equity Barriers	<b>Confusion about eligibility</b> The eligibility sections in the Synopsis is confusing due to the amount of information that is crammed into a block text. Applicants must dig through the full NOFO to find match requirement information.	<b>Information overload</b> Full Announcements are often upwards of 30 pages long, overwhelming applicants with information and making it difficult to navigate requirements.	<b>Uninformed about preparation workload</b> Underserved applicants aren't warned about the amount of time and resources required for a successful applications and need guidance to meet deadlines and expectations.	<b>Unclear paths for support</b> New applicants are unaware of the value of contacting a program officer, resulting in inequitable distribution of information. Customer support is confusing to navigate.	<b>Long approval lead time</b> Tribal Organizations report that the need for Tribal Council to review and sign off for applicants is a barrier to meeting timeline requirements.	<b>Misaligned with needs</b> Program requirements and measures may misalign with Tribal needs.	<b>Scattered registration and logins</b> Various registration and login requirements across scattered systems stand as a key barrier, compounded by unreliable internet access for tribal and rural organizations.	<b>Confusion about UEIs</b> New applicants miss the message that registering in SAM and having a UEI is different. Many wonder why the "Apply" button is gray, finding out too late that their UEI is missing and it takes days to weeks to complete registration.	<b>Unfamiliarity with Workspace</b> New applicants lack awareness of Workspace and have trouble navigating its cumbersome onboarding materials and tasks.	<b>Duplicative efforts</b> Extraneous form fields and completing an application across agency systems complicates the process.	<b>Lacking capacity</b> Underserved organizations lack the time and resources to stay on track with their application, often leaving tasks to the last minute and missing deadlines.	<b>Blindsided by requirements</b> Applicants aren't warned about file format and naming error states in Workspace, causing ineligibility.
Ecosystem	<b>Grants.gov</b> Help Desk NOFOs Synopses Webinars			<b>External - Experienced Applicants</b> Program officer contact Consultant One page memos Strategic plan Operations meeting			<b>Grants.gov</b> Workspace NOFOs Learn Grants Help Desk		<b>External - Experienced Applicants</b> Program officer contact Consultant or paid service Dedicated grant manager Google Drive Microsoft Word Grant trackers			
Needs	<b>External - New Applicants</b> Google Webinars Agency FAQs			<b>Federal Efforts</b> TA centers OSTP NOFO scoring HHS NOFO improvements			<b>External - New Applicants</b> YouTube tutorials Agency FAQs and webinars Local Infrastructure Hub Email Google Drive Microsoft Word		<b>Federal Efforts</b> TA Centers SAM.gov Login.gov			
Opportunities	Help me determine feasibility Connect me to the right support Help me adequately prepare Make information accessible to me						Help me keep track of my to-dos Guide me step-by-step Simplify registration for me Help me seamlessly collaborate		<b>Guided Application</b> - A collection of helpful tips on how to understand grant documents and complete applications. Gathered from various resources in the grants ecosystem and presented in a digestible, visual appealing way. <b>Smart Support Center</b> - A centralized base for all learning resources and service requests -- making access to relevant information easier and more equitable.		<b>Guided Application</b> - A collection of helpful tips on how to understand grant documents and complete applications. Gathered from various resources in the grants ecosystem and presented in a digestible, visual appealing way. <b>Multi-channel task reminders</b> -A system of alerts reminding novices about pending tasks and providing contextual, timely information to help them stay on track. <b>Streamlined access</b> - A more simplified, single sign login that provides a consolidated and guided view of all grants-related information across different .gov sites.	

## Appendix

# Registration Flow

# Grants.gov sign-up & registration flow



## Appendix

# Application Questions

## Applicant questions about NOFOs

- What is this funding for?
- How much money is available in total?
- How many grants will be awarded / how competitive is this?
- What's the expected average award amount?
- What is the award ceiling and floor?
- Am I eligible?
- Is there a match required?
- What is the limit on the indirect cost rate?
- Are partners required for this grant?
- What letters of commitment do I need?
- When is this application due?
- What does this specific term mean? (*I need to see a definition*)

# Follow up Research Findings

## Priority Needs

1. **Set my expectations.** Applicants are seeking clearer information from Grants.gov to understand if they have the capacity to manage an award if they win one. The stakes are higher for new and under-resourced applicants, who need adequate warning about the organizational capacity necessary to receive and manage an award. Burdensome reporting requirements can hamper an organization's grant performance, which many fear will damage their reputation in the federal funding space.
2. **Update my skill set.** Underserved organizations crave new applicant orientations, and periodical Grants.gov training in order to feel more confident and comfortable with the site.
3. **Clarify Eligibility.** The “Additional Information on Eligibility” section can be confusing to applicants due to the amount of information that is crammed into a block text. Often, Disability Specific Institutions (DSI) are missing from the list of eligible or targeted University types. Additionally, applicants are looking to quickly find key details such as match requirements to decide if they should move forward with evaluating the Opportunity. Many find that Category filters do not accurately reflect their needs, which might lead to misguided or missed Opportunities.

## Quick Wins

- Change columns on ‘search grants’ to start with opportunity title rather than opportunity number to make it easier for people using text-to-speech tools to skim information
- Call out additional additional DSIs (Disability Specific Institution) under eligibility to be included with institutions like HBCUs, TCUs
- Add additional filters for subfields (in Health) or levels in Academia (graduate program level, early research etc.) to make filtering more custom