Grants QSMO

Shared Services Forum: Grants QSMO Overview

February 11, 2021

Today's Federal Grants Ecosystem

State, local & tribal governments

Colleges & universities

Non-profit organizations

Scientific researchers

For-profit, small businesses & private institutions

Foreign entities

$1.4T federal funds

1.5K+ grant programs

38 Awarding agencies

1M+ applicant/ grantor users

Source: USASpending.gov

# Current Grants Systems: Customized, Aging Technology Landscape

To meet their diverse needs, agencies historically turned to customized solutions

Applicants / Recipients

Fragmented recipient experience

Expansive footprint with 300+ systems and some adoption of shared solutions

Many manual and time-consuming processes

Highly customized systems with limited interoperability

Agency A   Agency B
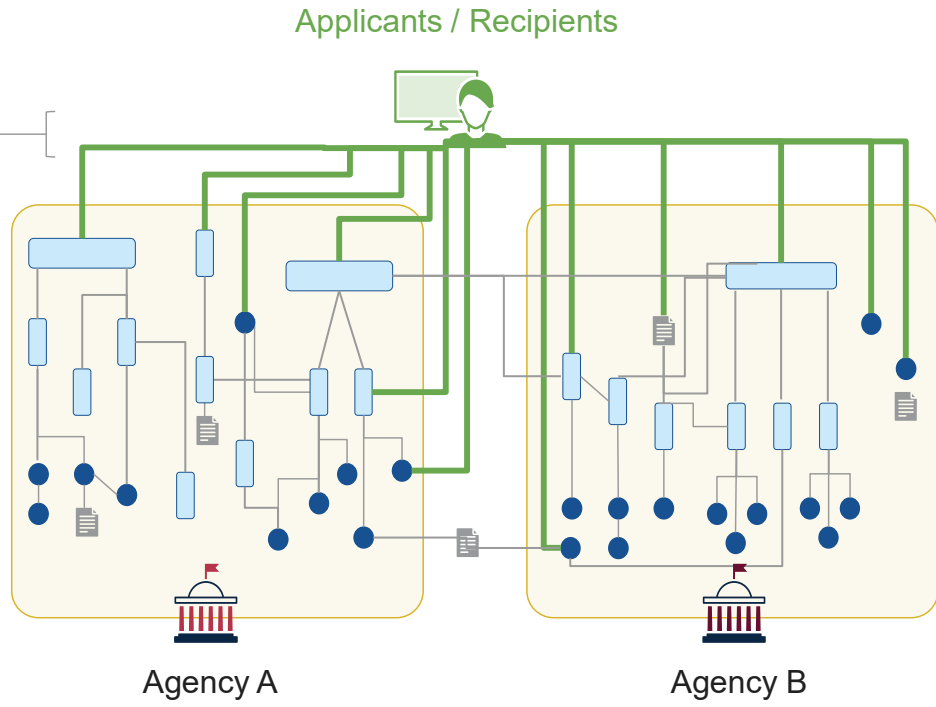
> " …not user friendly and not easy to navigate[2]

> " …requirements are duplicative, unnecessarily burdensome, and conflicting[3]

> " …We have to take that same information and re-enter it…into any one of the other dozen or so systems[4]

> " …critical information in 3 or 4 different places makes it very cumbersome[2]

Grants QSMO

Quality Service Management Offices (QSMOs) seek to:

- Enhance customer satisfaction
- Modernize and automate processes and technology
- Standardize processes and data
- Achieve efficiencies

Grants Management

- HHS designated as the Grants QSMO January 2021
- Designated for entire grants management lifecycle
- Customers include Grantor agencies & external applicant/recipients

Financial Management

- Treasury designated as FM QSMO June 2020
- Initial focus on core financial management systems (SaaS and Cloud), professional services (e.g., Integration), and Treasury Centralized Services (e.g., E-Invoicing)

Cyber Security

- DHS CISA designated as Cyber QSMO April 2020
- Initial offerings include a Vulnerability Disclosure Platform and Protective Domain Name System (DNS) Resolver

Civilian HR

- GSA designated as Civilian HR QSMO June 2020
- Initial offering is NewPay shared service offering for payroll

Source: https://ussm.gsa.gov/qsmo, agency websites

Role and Responsibilities of the Grants QSMO

Market Coordinator

Execute responsibilities as outlined in OMB memo M-19-16

Establishing a marketplace for grants systems and designating high-quality services based on standards

Overseeing investments in grants systems and making recommendations to OMB's Investment Review Board

Solution Manager

Bring grants management solutions to the marketplace and oversee operations for QSMO-approved solutions and systems

Examples of potential solutions:

Risk Management

Recipient Seamless User Experience

Community Builder

Establish and foster a community of practice for grant professionals, for example:

Creating a repository of training resources for grants professionals and recipients

Supporting the adoption of best practices by creating a central repository of forms, sharing forums, etc.

Applicants / Recipients

Seamless user experience for applicants / recipients

Enable a seamless user experience

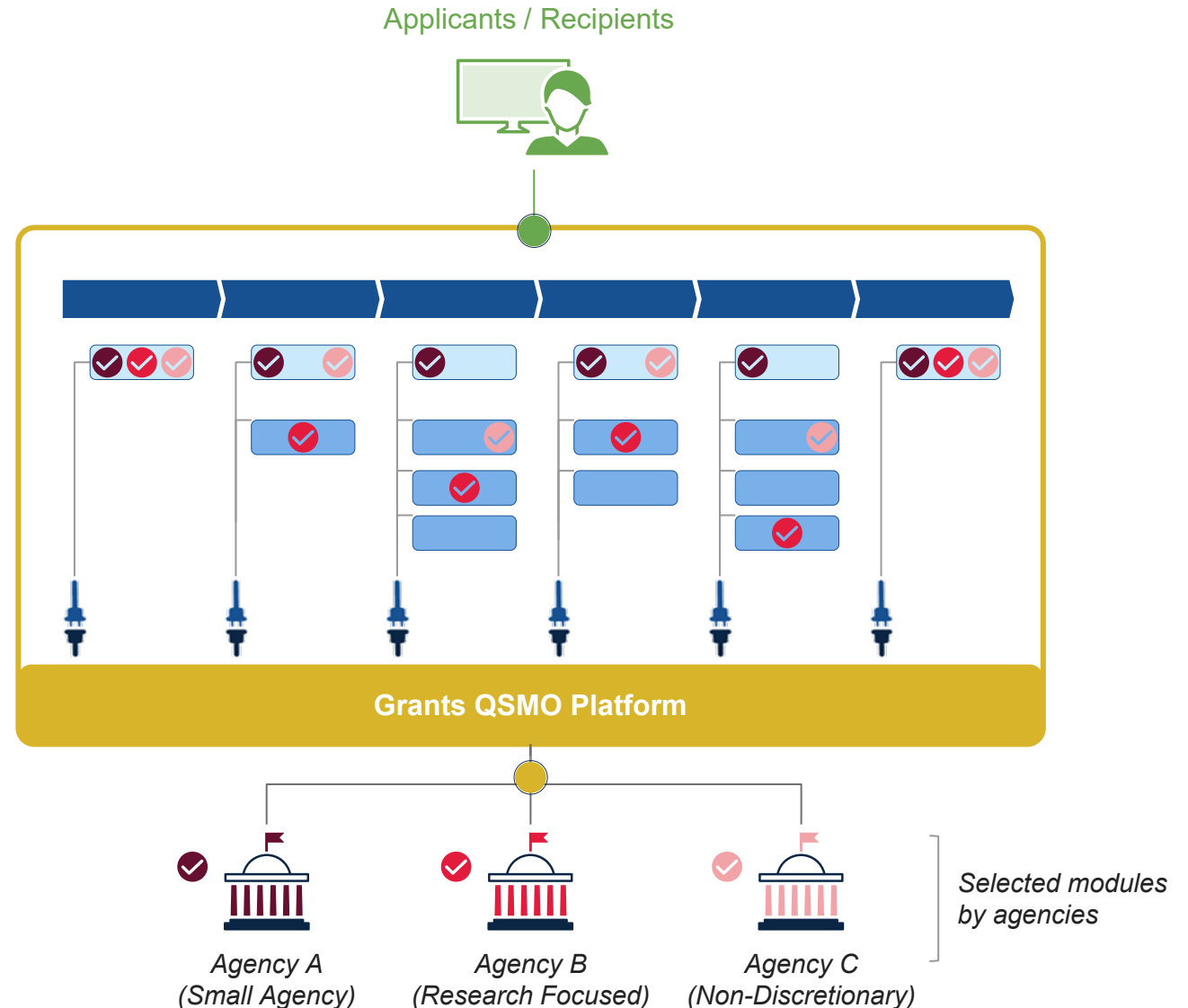**Modular design by FIBF service activities**

Mix of mandated, centralized, and standardized systems available across grants management lifecycle

For select functions, alternative systems available with differentiated capabilities to enable competition in the marketplace

Interoperability

Technology and data connectivity through a common platform, e.g., technical design standards, API management, data infrastructure

Grants QSMO Platform

Selected modules by agencies

Agency A (Small Agency)

Agency B (Research Focused)

Agency C (Non-Discretionary)

If you ~~build it,~~ they will come.

listen

Step Back Exercise

The Shared Services Governance Board feedback included a question:
Could / should there be an "Industry Advisory Board"?

How can the Grants QSMO best engage with the vendor community to quickly get advice on key initiatives, including market research for new shared IT solutions?

Tell us by:

1 Responding live, either by phone or the chat function

2 Emailing your ideas to GrantsQSMO@hhs.gov

Appendix

Grants 2030 Vision

Empower and enable applicants, recipients, and federal awarding agencies to efficiently and effectively deliver on the mission

Pillars of 2030 Vision

Enabled by the Grants QSMO

EASE BURDEN AND DRIVE EFFICIENCIES

through standardization, modernization, and streamlining technology footprint

RESPOND TO CUSTOMER NEEDS

through continuous engagement and robust feedback loops

LEVERAGE DATA AS A STRATEGIC ASSET

through adoption of data standards and increased system connectivity

Marketplace 1.0 | Externally Shared Federal Grant Management Systems

	System	Provider	Contact details	Agency Customers	Pricing	Customer satisfaction	GRM 01: Program Administration	GRM 02: Pre-Award Management	GRM 03 & 04: Award Management	GRM 03: Payment Processing	GRM 05 & 06: Program Oversight
Apply	Grants.gov	HHS	Grants.gov / support@grants.gov	**Apply**: DOC, DOI, DOL, DOT, EPA, HUD, IMLS, NARA, NEH, SBA[1]	*TBD*	*TBD*		X			X
Award Management	eGMS	NEH	eGMS / egms-ogm@neh.gov	NEH, IMLS, NEA, NARA NHPRC	*TBD*	*TBD*	X	X	X	X	
Award Management	eRA	HHS NIH	eRA.NIH.gov / eRAinfo@mail.nih.gov	HHS, VA	*TBD*	*TBD*	X	X	X	X	X
Award Management	Grant Solutions	HHS	GrantSolutions.gov Renee.Lobanovskyy@acf.hhs.gov	CPSC, GCERC, Denali Commission, DHS, DOI, DOT, EPA, HHS, HUD, SBA, SSA, TREAS, USDA	*TBD*	*TBD*	X	X	X	X	X
Pymt. Processing	ASAP	TREAS	ASAP.gov / asaphelpdesk@fiscal.treasury.gov	DHS/CGFC, DOC, DOE, DOI, EPA, GCE, NRC, SSA, TREAS, USDA/FNS, USDA/NIFA	*TBD*	*TBD*				X	
Pymt. Processing	PMS	HHS PSC	PMS.PSC.gov / PMSSupport@psc.hhs.gov	ASC, HHS, CNCS, DHS, DOD, DOL, DOS, EOP, NASA, SBA, TREAS, USAID, USDA, VA	*TBD*	*TBD*			X	X	X
Other	Cost Allocation (Indirect)	HHS PSC	Rates.PSC.gov / CAS-Bethesda@psc.hhs.gov	HHS, CNCS, DHS/FEMA, DOD/WHS, DOT/NHTSA, EAC, HUD, MCC, USDA/FSIS, USDA/NASS	*TBD*	*TBD*					X
Other	Federal RePORTER & RePORTER	HHS NIH	ProjectReporter.NIH.gov FederalReporter.NIH.gov	HHS[1], VA[1], USDA, NSF, NASA, EPA, DoD	*TBD*	*TBD*					X

1. HHS and VA are customers for both Federal RePORTER and RePORTER, other listed agencies are only customers for Federal RePORTER.
Source: Federal Service Provider Work Group, OMB Readiness Assessment, As-Is GRM Environmental Analysis, HHS AMD ITSC Presentation

Business capabilities key
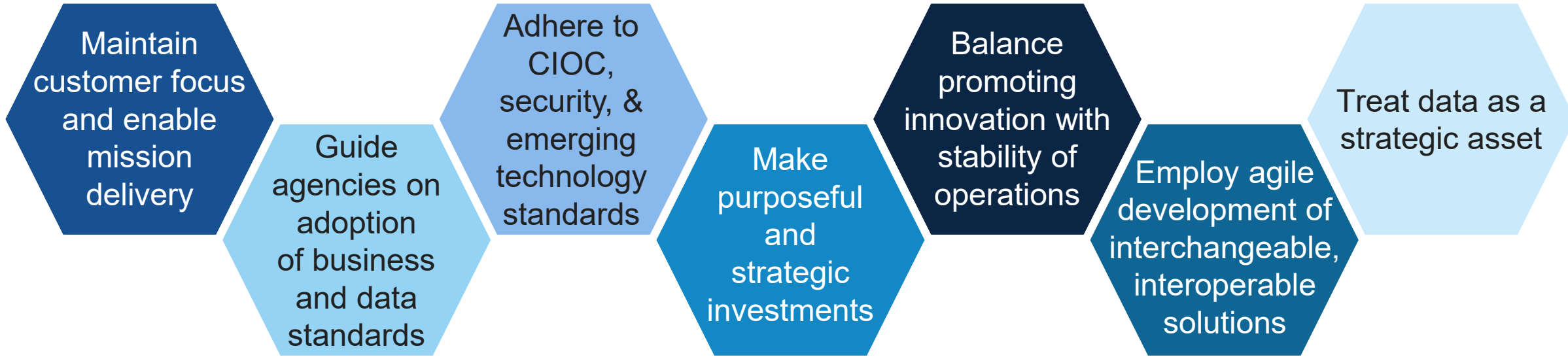X Full coverage   X Partial coverage

Marketplace 1.0 | Mandatory Federal Grant Management Systems

System	Provider	Contact details	Customer Satisfaction	Notes	GRM 01: Program Administration	GRM 02: Pre-Award Management	GRM 03 & 04: Award Management	GRM 03: Payment Processing	GRM 05 & 06: Program Oversight
Grants.gov (Find)	HHS	Grants.gov Beta.Grants.gov support@grants.gov	*TBD*			X			X
SAM.gov	GSA	SAM.gov Beta.SAM.gov	*TBD*	In process of merging 10 websites (e.g., SAM.gov, FAPIIS, FPDS) into one.	X	X		X	
FAPIIS	GSA	FAPIIS.gov webptsmh@navy.mil	*TBD*	In process of merging with SAM.gov		X			
FSRS	GSA	FSRS.gov		In process of merging with SAM.gov					X
FAC	DOC	Harvester.Census.gov /FacWeb govs.fac.ides@census.gov							X

Business capabilities key
X Full coverage   X Partial coverage

Source: Federal Service Provider Work Group, OMB Readiness Assessment, As-Is GRM Environmental Analysis, HHS AMD ITSC Presentation

Marketplace | Criteria for QSMO-Approved Solutions

Guiding Principles

Maintain customer focus and enable mission delivery

Guide agencies on adoption of business and data standards

Adhere to CIOC, security, & emerging technology standards

Make purposeful and strategic investments

Balance promoting innovation with stability of operations

Employ agile development of interchangeable, interoperable solutions

Treat data as a strategic asset

Criteria

Maintain customer focus	Guide agencies	Adhere to standards	Make investments	Balance innovation	Employ agile	Treat data
If existing solution, high customer satisfaction	Solution meets government-wide business and data standards (e.g., FIBF, GREAT Act)	Meets current standards (e.g., CloudSmart, FedRAMP)	Confirmed customers with identified funding	Fit-for-purpose use of innovative technology that advances business need	Modules are interoperable	Data is readily accessible to assess performance, risk, process, and compliance
Detailed user-centered design approach	Solution architecture aligns with Grants QSMO technology vision	Data migration and integration leverages innovative and modern exchange technologies (e.g., API, microservices)	Accessible and able to scale government-wide	Innovation and investment roadmap defined	Defined agile approach to develop and test new capabilities	Government maintains ownership of data
Robust and transparent customer feedback loops			Clear support and commitment from providing agency's leadership	Reliable reporting of cost, operational performance	Robust project management approach and clearly defined milestones	
			Scalable, tiered pricing model			

1. Stand-alone, interchangeable, and interoperable solution such that each contains everything necessary to execute only one aspect of the desired functionality and business process.
Note: The QSMO may set stricter criteria for systems to become an approved solution over time

Recipient Seamless User Experience

Iterative approach to improve Recipient Seamless User Experience (RUX)

Single Sign-On (SSO)
Authentication via a single ID/password

Ex. Use of Login.gov for SSO across federal grant recipient-facing solutions

Minimally Invasive Portal
User testing a portal prototype

Ex. A single point of entry for recipients to access active grants links via a dashboard

Innovation Hub
Encourage pilot effort cross-collaboration

Ex. Links to open-source code with project descriptions and video demos

Impacts already made to improve user experience:

- 5 recipient-facing systems (Sam.gov, Grants.gov, GrantSolutions, eRA, PMS) currently use an SSO solution (Login.gov), which represents **59% of all Federal Grants volume**

- Award management system footprint reduced through use of shared services (e.g., DOI, SBA, and IMLS migrated to a shared service)

- Single portal under recipient design-testing to provide single point of entry and dashboard views

Case Study: Recipients Interact with Many Federal Systems Due to Fragmentation

State of Nevada

- FY19: $5B received from 24 federal agencies
- 20+ departments within state gov't received funds

Illustrative - Further Evaluation Needed

Nevada interacts with 8+ distinct award management systems…

…and 4+ payments/ financial systems

While Federal Audit Clearinghouse is mandatory for Report Intake, case management is highly manual

	Register, Find & Apply				Primary award management system			Payments			Reporting	Single Audit		
Award. Agency[1]	SAM.gov	Grants.gov Find	Grants.gov Apply	Other Apply	Grant Solutions	eRA	Other/custom	PMS	ASAP	Other/custom	FSRS	FAC (Report Intake)	Custom Corrective Action System	Manual Processes
HHS	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■			■	■	■	■
DOT	■	■			■		■			■	■	■		■
ED	■	■		■			■		■		■	■	■	■
USDA	■	■		■			■	■			■	■		■
DOL	■	■	■				■	■			■	■		■
DOI	■	■	■				■			■	■	■		■
VA	■	■	■			■				■	■	■		■
EPA	■	■	■		■					■	■	■		■

While Grants.gov "Find" function is mandatory, some programs post only award synopsis

Grants.gov "Apply" usage varies by program

Though select mandated systems, many financial and performance reporting capabilities are decentralized across grants lifecycle[2]
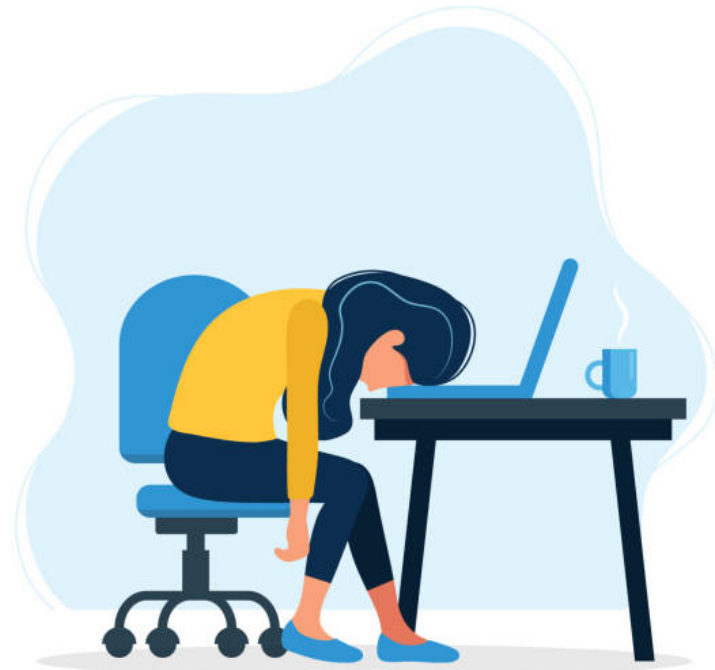
1. Awarding agencies listed in descending order by $ awarded to recipient (Source: USASpending.gov FY19); list of awarding agencies is not exhaustive
2. Multiple systems include reporting modules/capabilities (e.g., GrantSolutions, eRA, PMS)

How it is for Lisa ….

- Inefficient and time-consuming
- Needs to remember multiple logins and passwords
- Needs to interact with multiple grant systems
- Relies heavily on the Help Desk to troubleshoot login

How it could be for Lisa ….

- Logs in once to access grants information
- Saves her time
- Saves her organization money
- Saves the federal government money

Children's Aid Society of Alabama

Recipients are invested.

Lisa Maher is the Director of Grants and Contracts at the Children's Aid Society of Alabama. She frequently searches for and applies for federal grants that are crucial to her organization's mission.