

Grant Management Foibles

With the variety of grants available to heritage organizations and individuals, including those from the Heritage Programs Division (HPD), the differing requirements can be confusing.

There are a few things that are common to almost all grant management requirements:

1. The Contract or Agreement must be in place before work begins.
2. The work must follow the scope and budget in the Contract or Agreement, or that document must be amended prior to any change of work items.
3. Financial and work records must be complete and kept separately, as a distinct project of the grantee. This will simplify reporting and an audit of the Grant, should one be carried out by the State.
4. The work to be carried out must be reasonably timed so as to be completed by the Contract or Agreement end date.
5. Any variations that will occur related to timing, goals or work accomplishment must be communicated to the granting agency as soon as possible, so a common understanding can be reached, and any problems can be solved.

So, what are the foibles? Small details, easy for anyone to overlook... Some may be...

1. Addition that doesn't add up on payment request forms;
2. Not getting the required signature on payment or report forms;
3. Change of staff mid-project, and not training them for their grant responsibilities;
4. Not filling in the blanks in a form with the required information;
5. Not tracking any matching staff and/or volunteer hours during the project;
6. Going ahead on the hiring of consultants or contractors without following the applicable state or federal procurement regulations, or without approval of the process and choice by the granting agency;
7. Forgetting to send reports in, or sending reports in late;
8. Not reading the Grant Administration Manual;
9. Not calling the grantor with questions;
10. Not documenting the project in progress.

Thinking of the grant management needs often is second place in the busy schedules of people working to accomplish the project goals, with other tasks and priorities tugging on their attention. But, paying attention to schedules, records, photographs and reporting from the beginning of a project can save you many frustrations when you must report to those that gave you the grant.

“Foibles: The weaker section of a sword blade, from the middle to the tip.”