

The Tribal Government Guide to Managing Grants

OPTIMIZE RESOURCES TO AMPLIFY COMMUNITY IMPACT

A Guide to Tribal Grant Funding and
Tips for Successful Grant Management





First American nations sustain their communities with grant funding. These awards fuel everything from infrastructure to healthcare, education, and housing that tribal governments provide for their citizens. Along with funding community services that improve tribal members' quality of life, grants are vital for cultural and natural resource preservation. So, when tribes receive funding for projects, it is crucial for them to effectively manage those dollars to ensure maximum impact and compliance.

However, many tribes struggle with limited resources and capacity, making it incredibly difficult to prioritize finding and winning more funding, let alone manage the funding they already have. Increased capacity is a key benefit gained by our tribal government customers after we assist them in implementing grant management processes and our software. Based on our learnings, we created this guide to share some of the process improvements.

Read on to access best practices and resources for addressing common grant management challenges that many tribes face, such as:

- 1. **Limited resources and capacity**
- 2. **Difficulty implementing standard processes and workflows**
- 3. **Inefficient reporting and organizational tools**
- 4. **Difficulty finding and winning new funding**
- 5. **Staying current with compliance requirements**

1. **Limited resources and capacity**

First American Nations may be faced with managing a multitude of programs with minimal staff. This can be exacerbated by turnover or challenges finding and training



employees. To maximize the benefits of your grant funds, therefore, it is crucial to find ways to optimize the resources and capacity that do exist.

Best Practices

- * **Identify the key areas and initiatives that align with your nation’s needs and goals and prioritize projects that can have the highest impact.**
- * **Leverage the resources of any community organizations, nonprofits, or other stakeholders your tribe partners with to close any gaps.**
- * **Implement grant management software or tools that can automate administrative tasks, track progress, and streamline reporting to reduce administrative burden.**
- * **Invest in existing grant staff by enhancing their skills and knowledge through training sessions, workshops, and mentoring programs to build expertise and encourage retention.**
- * **Apply for capacity-building grants that will provide you with the funding to increase sustainability, improve governance, support collaboration, and strengthen internal infrastructure.**



Resources

There are many funders who understand the importance of capacity building, so it’s critical that you know where to find them and how to win those funds. Check out our “Ultimate Guide to Capacity-Building Grants” to learn more.

[Download Guide](#)

2. Difficulty implementing standard processes and workflows

Implementing a strong set of standard processes and workflows for your grant-funded programs helps you report accurately, maximize drawdown, support compliance, and create capacity for your team. Knowing where to start when designing them is extremely difficult, however.

When standardizing processes, keep the following best practices in mind:

Best Practices

- * **Make a process map to help you visualize your current processes and workflows so you can establish standard operating procedures that promote the implementation of best practices and consistency.**



- * **Maintain existing, effective workflows, and incorporate new processes to avoid disruptions.**
- * **Identify areas where additional steps or adjustments can enhance your organization's overall efficiency.**
- * **Consider implementing grant management software to help your team streamline and standardize processes across the board.**



Resources

We know that this is easier said than done. Access step-by-step instructions on how to redesign efficient processes for your team, in our "Efficient Process Design for Grants Professionals" eBook.

[Download eBook](#)

3. Inefficient reporting and organizational tools

Grant managers who are still utilizing spreadsheets and email to manage funds and programs are feeling stretched thin with the federal government's increased focus on performance. These tools lack the built-in reporting capabilities and organization required to efficiently meet specific and

non-negotiable budgeting and reporting requirements from federal agencies.

You need to use the best tools for the job. Whether that be project management tools or grant management software, make sure your technology can enable the following best practices:

Best Practices

- * **Standardize the way you capture and collect grant-related data to automate financial and programmatic reporting.**
- * **Get real-time snapshots of program effectiveness and internal status reports.**
- * **Keep your team all on the same page with shared organizational tools to help you manage deadlines and due dates.**
- * **Procure supportive technology, such as a grant management system, that can integrate with your existing ERP and financial systems and perform all of these tasks for you.**



4. Difficulty finding and winning new funding

Finding and winning grant funding can be a crucial endeavor for tribes seeking financial support for various projects and initiatives. When your resources are already at capacity, it can be extremely difficult, if not impossible, to ensure you are seeing every opportunity that your tribe is eligible for. Even if you do find opportunities, having the ability to get an application together can feel out of reach.

While it may seem impossible or overwhelming, there are some ways you can streamline researching and applying for funding. Here are some best practices that tribes can use to increase their chances of finding and winning the funds they need:

Best Practices

- * **Set alerts to be notified when opportunities that specifically support First American Nation communities or initiatives related to your tribe's cultural, social, economic, or environmental needs are posted.**
- * **Research and identify grants that align with your tribe's goals, projects, and priorities by saving your search parameters in your grant management software.**

- * **Save all of your organization's information that is commonly requested in your grant management system to reuse in multiple applications.**
- * **Thoroughly review the eligibility criteria, guidelines, and requirements of each opportunity to ensure that your tribe meets all the criteria.**
- * **Consider the resource requirements managing an award will take before starting the proposal.**
- * **Ensure you can clearly articulate how the project aligns with the funder's priorities, and how it will benefit your tribe and community.**
- * **Make sure your proposal shows that you will be addressing a problem, improving the situation, or creating an initiative the funding agency values.**

Resources

For more assistance in crafting a clear, well-structured, and compelling grant proposal that outlines your tribe's project, goals, objectives, and expected outcomes, download our "How to Write an Effective Grant Proposal" eBook.

[Download eBook](#)



Vendors like AmpliFund take a lot of the guesswork out of finding funding tribes are eligible for. With AmpliFund’s Research Tool, you can find and apply for over 12,000 active opportunities, including those on grants.gov, as well as independent, community, and corporate foundation grants. Each opportunity listed in the Research tool includes an Executive Summary that provides an overview of the award, eligibility information, key dates, and more, so you have everything you need to make an informed decision about applying.

Let’s Chat

5. Staying current with compliance requirements

Understanding federal compliance requirements is more crucial than ever, and the complexities are often difficult to navigate. For example, Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) funding dispersed through the Treasury often has different compliance requirements than IIJA funding dispersed through the Department of Energy, and both have different requirements than American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding.

Tribes have the additional burden of staying up to date with Bureau of Indian Affairs compliance requirements as well.

Failing to adhere to compliance guidelines can have legal consequences, such as loss of funding, being charged fines, or even being debarred from receiving federal funding in the future and placed on the exclusion list.

The stakes are extremely high for tribal nations, and ensuring you have access to the latest compliance information is essential. Take some time to review these best practices that will help you stay current:

Best Practices

- * **Identify a resource in your organization with expertise in grant management, legal compliance, and/or interest in relevant policy areas, and request that they take ownership of monitoring federal compliance guidelines.**
- * **Regularly review official government websites, such as those of federal grant-making agencies or departments responsible for overseeing grant programs, to stay current on updates, policy changes, and specific instructions for compliance.**



- * **Participate in training sessions, workshops, webinars, or conferences organized by federal agencies or other relevant organizations.**
- * **Sign up for newsletters, email lists, or other communication channels provided by federal agencies, departments, and relevant organizations.**

 **Resources**

Identifying which regulations take precedence over the others can be time-consuming, and guidance often seems conflicting or contradictory. Check out “Understanding the Hierarchy of Federal Grant Regulations & Guidance” for help resolving conflicting guidance directives.

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Next steps for improving grant management

As tribal nations implement grant management best practices, they will experience more tangible and demonstrable results from their grants. These can include reducing audit findings, increasing drawdown, improving compliance, and amplifying your impact on your citizens’ quality of life.

That being said, change does not happen overnight. Having some tangible next steps that you can start on immediately will help ensure that you make incremental improvements and stay motivated.

Here are some ways to start improving your nation’s grant management today:

1. Automate reminders

Automated reminders help you stay on top of deadlines and tasks and plan well for the future. For example, AmpliFund has a Calendar that automatically imports your tasks and deadlines, gives you and your team visibility into what is due and when, and sends you email reminders to make sure nothing slips through the cracks.



2. Prioritize program evaluation

Collect data on program and project success, cost-effectiveness, and community impact. This information can demonstrate to you and funders what is working and areas for improvement. This will help you refine strategies, allocate resources effectively, and demonstrate outcomes against goals.

3. Get guidance from experts

With the pressure of compliance, standardization, and creating impact, grant teams need more than just access to supportive software. When considering a grant management solution, select a team that understands the industry. The AmpliFund team stays current on legislation and best practices and maintains a variety of certifications to ensure they can provide guidance and support for your programs and your staff.

Unlock team capacity, ensure compliance, and maximize funding with AmpliFund. Schedule a demo for access to tools, resources, and exceptional support.

[Schedule a Demo](#)



More than Software™

AmpliFund grant management software empowers funders and recipients to manage every phase of the grant lifecycle. State, local, and tribal governments rely on AmpliFund's tools, resources, and exceptional support to create capacity for their teams, drive compliance, and realize the full potential of their funding.



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