

Foundant Online Grant System Tips and FAQs

Getting Started

Which browser should I use?

Google Chrome 14 or higher, or Safari 4 or higher. You may use Internet Explorer or Firefox, but you may experience some technical issues and we do not recommend them. The Microsoft Edge browser is not recommended; it will not autosave and will not save data that is copied-and-pasted into fields.

How do I create an account?

If you do not have an existing VCA grant account, from the logon page, just click “Create New Account” to register and create an applicant profile. Once you have registered, be sure to keep your logon information in a secure place for your records.

Note: Some grantees will be pre-registered in the system and will not need to create an account. If we have provided you with logon information, please DO NOT create a new account, as it will not give you access to your existing grant information.

If you already have an account with the online grant management system (Foundant Grant Lifecycle Manager): Enter your login (e-mail address) and the password you chose when you set up your account. Click the “Log On” button. If you have forgotten your password, do not create a new account. Instead, click the Forgot your Password link, enter your User ID, and your password will be emailed.

Helpful Hint: Do not use your browser’s “back” button during the registration process. Use the “Next” and “Previous” buttons to navigate through the registration steps.

IMPORTANT NOTES FOR ORGANIZATIONS

- In the first registration section, labeled Applicant Information, provide your organization’s information (name, address, phone, etc.), not your personal information.
- In the next registration section, labeled User Information, provide your work contact information (business address, email, etc.), not your home or personal information.

IMPORTANT NOTES FOR ARTISTS

- In the first registration section, labeled Applicant Information, please do not enter your Social Security number; leave the “EIN/Tax ID” field empty.
- The second registration section, labeled User Information, will require some of the same information as you entered on the Applicant Information section.
- In the third registration section, for the Authorized Official question, answer “Yes,” then skip the “Additional Authorized Official Information” questions.

YOUR USERNAME IS YOUR EMAIL ADDRESS

Your email address becomes your username, so each user account must have a unique email address. If you need to use the same email address to manage grants for more than one organization, we suggest:

1. Set up an email account for each of the organizations on whose behalf you'll be applying. This may be an account within the organization's own email system, or an account with one of the many free email providers (such as Gmail).
2. If you'd rather not have to check multiple email accounts to get communications from us (email is our primary method of correspondence), set up the new account(s) to automatically forward incoming messages to your main email address.
3. Create an online grants management account for each organization, using the email address(es) you have set up for that purpose.

What if someone else in my organization already has an account?

Please **DO NOT** create a new account for yourself. Contact your grants coordinator so we can add you as a contact on the organization's existing account.

Catherine.Welborn@vca.virginia.gov for General Operating Support Grants (GOS), Project Grants, Creative Community Partnership Grants, Technical Assistance Grants, Presenter Touring Assistance Grants and Touring Artists applications OR

Casey.Polczynski@vca.virginia.gov for Artists in Education Grants, AIEEx Grants, Teaching Artist Roster Applications and Poetry Out Loud

Why isn't my password working?

Helpful Hints

- Try again; you may have just mis-typed your password, or there may have been a momentary glitch with your internet connection or the system.
- Passwords are case-sensitive, so be sure you're using the correct upper- and lowercase characters.
- Be sure you're using the email address with which you are registered for the applicant organization in the Foundant system.
- Try the "Forgot your Password?" link on the Logon page, to send a password reset link to your email address.

And of course, you can always contact the VCA for assistance! But most password issues can be quickly resolved by one of the methods above.

What if I forgot my password?

Use the "Forgot your Password?" link on the Logon page, to send a password reset link to your email address. If you no longer have access to the email address you once used in the Foundant system, please contact either:

Catherine.Welborn@vca.virginia.gov for General Operating Support Grants (GOS), Project Grants, Creative Community Partnership Grants (CCPG), Technical Assistance Grants, Presenter Touring Assistance Grants and Touring Artists applications or

Casey.Polczynski@vca.virginia.gov for Artists in Education Grants, AIEEx Grants, Teaching Artist Roster Applications and Poetry Out Loud

How do I change my password?

There are two ways to change your password:

- Click the “house” icon in the top left of the screen to go to your Applicant Dashboard. Then click the “pencil” icon to the right of the “Applicant” information at the top of your profile.
- Click your name at the top right of the screen and choose “Edit My Profile” from the dropdown menu.

Once you are on the Applicant Profile screen, scroll down and click the “Change Your Password” button, change your password in the pop-up window, and click “Save Password.”

How do I update my contact information?

There are two ways to change your user information:

1. Click the “house” icon in the top left of the screen to go to your Applicant Dashboard. Then click the “pencil” icon to the right of the “Applicant” information at the top of your profile.

OR

2. Click your name at the top right of the screen and choose “Edit My Profile” from the dropdown menu.

Once you are on the Applicant Profile screen, update your user information and click “Save.”

What if my email address changes?

The system uses your email address as your user name. So, if your email address changes:

1. Log on using your old email address (the one associated with your Foundant account)
2. Either:

Click the “house” icon in the top left of the screen to go to your Applicant Dashboard. Then click the “pencil” icon to the right of the “Applicant” information at the top of your profile. **OR**

Click your name at the top right of the screen and choose “Edit My Profile” from the dropdown menu.

3. Enter your new email address in the “Email/Username” field, then click “save.”
4. The next time you log on, use your new email address as your user name.

How do I update my organization's contact information?

There are three ways to change your organization’s information:

1. Click the “Organization History” link at the top of the screen. Once you’re on the Organization Summary page, click the “Organization Info” tab, then click the “Edit” button in the lower right. **OR**
2. Click your name at the top right of the screen and choose “Edit Organization” from the dropdown menu. **OR**
3. Click the “house” icon in the top left of the screen to go to your Applicant Dashboard. Then click the “pencil” icon to the right of the “Organization” information at the top of your profile.

Applying For and Managing Your Grant

Can I look at the application before I start?

Not quite ready to apply? For many grant categories, you can preview the application before you log in or create an account.

1. Visit the “Apply” page (it will open in a new browser tab or window) to see all of our currently-available applications.
2. Scroll through the page to see what’s available. To the right of each grant category, there’s a note about when applications will be accepted.

You can use the “Quick Search” box at the top to find a specific grant category.

If you’ve been given an Access Code for a specific grant, you won’t see it in the list. Type your Access Code in the box in the upper right corner of the screen and click the “Enter Code” button. The screen will refresh and your grant category should appear.

3. When you’ve found the grant in which you’re interested, click the “Preview” button.

While you are previewing the application, you can also click the “Question List” button in the upper right to generate a blank application in PDF format.

Some grant applications include different content for different types of applicants. This content will only be available for Preview if:

- you are logged in to your Foundant account, or
- you click the “Question List” button in the upper right to generate a blank application in PDF format (be aware, however, that the PDF will contain content for ALL types of applicants).

If you have difficulty previewing an application, please contact either:

Catherine.Welborn@vca.virginia.gov for GOS, Project Grants, CCPG, Technical Assistance Grants, Presenter Touring Assistance Grants and Touring Artists applications **OR**

Casey.Polczynski@vca.virginia.gov for Artists in Education Grants, AIEG Grants, Teaching Artist Roster Applications and Poetry Out Loud

Applying for a Grant

After logging on, click the “Apply” link at the top of the screen, to see currently-available grant opportunities. Note: If you have been provided an Access Code for a specific grant application, you will need to enter it in the field at the top right of the screen, to see that grant category’s application information. You will need to enter the Access Code every time you need to find that grant opportunity, until you have started your application (after which, your application in progress will appear on your “Home” page).

Helpful Hint: To ensure the correct person is listed as the primary contact for your application, that person should be the one to log on and click the “Apply” button to start the application. The primary contact person for this grant should be the person who will:

1. edit and submit the grant application;
2. manage this grant’s activities, and
3. receive and respond to communications from the Arts Commission about this grant.

Other users in the organization can view the application, but only the user whose name appears at the top of the application will be able to edit and submit.

Can I apply for more than one grant at a time?

Yes. The online grants manager allows you to start multiple applications to the funds for which you want your proposal to be considered. It is not possible to submit the same proposal to multiple programs, however.

Do I have to complete my application all at once?

No. At the bottom of the application is a **Save as Draft** button. We recommend you save your application often and before logging out. You can log in at a later time to continue working on your application. We recommend that you cut and paste your application answers after each question into a Word document to save as backup.

Why are there character limits to the application questions?

There are limits on the amount of text you can submit. You will see a character counter displayed below the entry field. This will actively tell you how many characters you have entered and will let you know when you are approaching the limit. You will not be able to save a draft of your application if you exceed the character limit. A page is a little over 3,000 characters. You are not required to reach the character limit!

Why don't I see my grant category in the list of available grants?

Some grant applications are restricted (for example, Short Form applicants) so only those who are eligible in a particular year are given access, to avoid accidental applications. Restricted categories will not appear in the public list. If you are eligible to apply using a Short Form, you should have received an Access Code with notification that the application is available. Type your Access Code in the box in the upper right corner of the screen and click the "Enter Code" button, and your grant category should appear.

How do I continue an application I've already started?

- If you have already begun the application process, you will find your draft application on your Applicant Dashboard (the first page after you log on, or click the "Home" icon at the top left of the screen).
- Find your in-progress application, and click the "Edit Application" link to the right.
- DO NOT click "Apply;" that will start a new application, instead of taking you to your application in progress.

What if more than one person needs to work on my application?

The person who starts the application is the primary contact for that application, and the only user who can edit or submit. However, that user may allow others to work on their application by:

- Downloading and sharing any of the spreadsheets within the application (for example, you may want your treasurer to complete the budget spreadsheet).
- Sharing the questions (and character limits) for which you want others to draft the answers (which you can then copy and paste into the application online).
- Allowing another person to log on to the system with the primary contact's log on information. Please note that we do not recommend sharing your log on information with any more people than necessary, and only share your log on credentials with trusted individuals.

What time do I need to submit my application by?

All applications must be submitted by 5:00 pm (Eastern Standard Time) on the day of the deadline. You will not be able to submit your application after that.

What file formats will be accepted for attachments?

We prefer that you attach files in a PDF format (.pdf). We will also accept files in Microsoft Word (.doc or .docx) or Excel (.xls or .xlsx). Unacceptable formats include files with "exe," "com," "vbs," and "bat" extensions.

I do not have the required attachments in electronic form? Can I make other arrangements to deliver them to you?

No. The online system will not allow you to submit your application unless you attach the required materials. If you do not have the documents filed electronically, you can scan the information into a PDF file. If you do not have a scanner at your organization, you can scan your documents at a copy shop or a public library.

Download your converted documents to your computer and save them. Upload the documents to the appropriate questions on the online form.

How do I delete a file that I have uploaded to the application?

There are two ways to remove an uploaded file from an application:

- Once the file has been uploaded, a delete button will appear below the file name. Clicking **Delete** will remove the file.
- To replace the file, a new file can be uploaded in its place. Simply upload the correct form to the question and the old uploaded form will be erased.

Can I upload more than one file upload per category?

Applicants can only upload a single document in response to an upload question. If an applicant has more than one file they need to upload, they need to combine the files either electronically or via scanning. There are two methods applicants can use:

If the file to be uploaded are in a format that is editable (such as Word or Excel), the applicant may take multiple Word documents or Excel sheets and combine them into one file.

Will the Virginia Commission for the Arts' staff follow-up with me if my proposal needs clarification?

Yes, however, we highly suggest that you ask someone to review your application before submission – do they understand the project/request

How do I see my grant history?

Click the “Historical Requests” tab on your Dashboard (reached by clicking the “Home” icon at the top left of the screen).

Where's my contract, payment request, etc.?

Our online grants management system allows us to handle most documents electronically, including your contract, payment requests, and final report, all of which are called “Follow Ups” in the system. Most full-year contract packets will be issued electronically, starting in late summer. This electronic contract packet replaces the paper documents and folder we have traditionally sent via postal mail.

Important! You will receive an email from administrator@grantinterface.com letting you know that your contract packet is ready to be accessed in the online system. Please check your spam filters to be sure you can receive email from that address.

How do I make sure I'm listed as the contact person on my application?

The account holder who is logged on and begins the application will become the Contact Person for that grant application. When you begin your application, please review the “Applicant” information shown at the top of the page. The name and contact information should be that of the Contact Person for this grant’s activities. If a different person’s information is shown, we will need to reassign the application to the correct Contact Person’s account.

System Features

Which browser should I use?

Google Chrome 14 or higher, or Safari 4 or higher. You may use Internet Explorer or Firefox, but you may experience some technical issues and we do not recommend them. The Microsoft Edge browser is not recommended; it will not autosave and will not save data that is copied-and-pasted into fields.

NOTE: At present, users of Safari 5.1.x may experience some technical issues. You should revert to Safari 5.0 or upgrade to Safari 6.

How often do I need to click the "Save" button?

The system will automatically save your work:

- When you exit a field
- Every 100 characters
- When you click the “Save” button at the bottom of the screen. (It’s not necessary, but it never hurts!)

Exception: The autosave does not work in the Microsoft Edge browser. If using Edge, you must manually save your work by clicking the “Save” button often.

What happens if the system "times out"?

The system will give a warning message after a period of inactivity, letting you know it is about to log you out for security purposes. You can click to continue. If the system does log you out, it will save your work first.

How do I print or save my documents (applications, final reports, etc.)?

If you would like a paper copy of your application for your own records, login to the application portal and choose the Application Packet link. This will create a PDF of your application. You can print or save this document. You will always have access to your application by logging back into the application portal, even after you submit it.

- Click the “Question List” button near the top right of the screen for a “blank” application or final report (so you can see what is required, and gather the information offline if you like).

- Click the “Packet” button (e.g., “Application Packet,” “Follow Up Packet”) near the top right of the screen for a copy of your completed (or in progress) application or final report.

Both of these options will generate a PDF file of the document, which you may then print and/or save to your computer.

What does the "Public Profile" button do?

On the Applicant Dashboard, you can click the “Public Profile” button to access your GuideStar, 990, or other public information.

What does this term mean?

This system uses specific terminology that may be different from our usual language.

- A “Request” is an application, which (if funded) becomes a grant. A Request record contains all pieces of that grant’s cycle (application, payments, reports, etc.).
- A “Process” is the grant cycle for that year and category (e.g., “FY21 General Operating Support”).
- “Follow up Forms” are all of the items which come after grant funding is decided, including contracts, payment requests, and final reports.

STATUS

- “Draft” = the item has been started, but not submitted.
- “Submitted” = the item has been submitted, but not reviewed by SCAC staff.
- “Undecided” = No decision has been made yet about funding for the Request.
- “Approved” = The Request was funded.
- “Denied” = The Request was not funded. It will appear in the “Historical Requests” on the Applicant Dashboard.
- “Complete” = the item has been submitted, reviewed by SCAC staff, and approved; no further action is needed.
- “Closed” = The Request record is complete, the grant period has ended, and the record has been closed. It will appear in the “Historical Requests” on the Applicant Dashboard.

What does “fiscal year start and end dates” mean?

The term "fiscal year" refers to the twelve-month period or financial calendar that your organization uses. The start and end dates of the fiscal year can vary from organization to organization. Your accounting staff, board treasurer, or bookkeeper should be able to tell you when your fiscal year starts and ends.

Is there a spellcheck feature?

No. We strongly suggest that you cut and paste into Microsoft Word to check spelling.

Help! Why did I lose my edits?

There are a few common reasons why this can happen:

- If you stay on one page for an extended period of time without saving, your account may “time out” without warning.

- A weak internet connection may momentarily disconnect your computer while you are working on the application.

As a safeguard, we recommend that you:

- Save your application often.
- Cut and paste your application answers after each question into a Word document to save as backup.

To restore your edits, try:

- Re-loading your internet page, as sometimes the browser will cache an older version of your page.
- Logging out, wait a few minutes, and then log back in and re-open your application.

Why am I having problems uploading files?

- Double check that there are no symbols in the file name, the file type and size are OK, then try one or more of these suggestions:
- Sometimes the problem can be a corrupt file. Try saving a new, renamed version of the document.
- Try saving your file as a different type. For instance, if you tried to upload a (.pdf) file, try uploading the original Word or Excel version of this document. If it is a Word (.doc or .docx) or Excel (.xls or .xlsx) document, try saving it as a (.pdf) file and then uploading this version. If you scanned a document to create a .jpg file, try saving it in a .pdf format instead.
- Use a different computer to do the upload.

What if the system freezes when I try to submit?

During times of high traffic (e.g., deadline days), the system may take a little extra time to process your submission. You may see a message that asks if you want to wait, or if you'd rather stop or "kill" the process. We recommend clicking "wait" to allow the system to finish processing your submission. (The message may come up more than once; just keep clicking "wait.") The system is checking your submission to be sure you haven't missed any required questions, and/or if you've gone beyond the character allotment in any fields. If so, it should eventually provide you with a message to that effect, so that you can answer the missed question or retype your answer with fewer characters.

ADDITIONAL TIPS

- Give yourself plenty of time! **DO NOT WAIT UNTIL THE FINAL DAY** to begin this online process.
- Type and save your narrative answers in a word processing document and cut-n-paste into the application form. There have been instances of the web application crashing and taking narrative answers with it. Always keep a word processing document backup.
- Narrative fields have a character count at the bottom. Punctuation and spacing are included in the count.

- If your application is in draft status for three months or more it will be marked as “abandoned” in the online system. Abandoned applications will be deleted after six months and can no longer be accessed.
- The Application packet shows how the application will appear to the reviewers as a pdf file. You can save this pdf to your hard-drive, print it or send it as an email attachment. If something you have attached in an upload field does not appear correctly in the packet format, convert the document to a pdf file and re-upload it.
- If you want to attach a document that is only available in hard copy you can scan the document, save the file, and upload it to the application form.
- Only one file can be uploaded to each upload field. If an applicant has more than one file that needs to be uploaded to a field (a series of bios, for example) please combine the files.

Questions?

For additional information, please contact the Grants Team:

Catherine.Welborn@vca.virginia.gov for General Operating Support Grants (GOS), Project Grants, Creative Community Partnership Grants (CCPG), Technical Assistance Grants, Presenter Touring Assistance Grants and Touring Artists applications

or Casey.Polczynski@vca.virginia.gov for Artists in Education Grants, AIEx Grants, Teaching Artist Roster Applications and Poetry Out Loud