



Should Grantmakers Move Online?

Online Grants and Scholarship *Management* vs. Online Applications

When considering the move to “online” options, it is very important to understand if you are looking for “Online Applications” or “Online Grants and Scholarship Management.” These are two different solutions, addressing separate problems.

Online Applications

Many people believe that “online granting” is just about capturing electronic applications through a website or email, but online applications actually include only a small portion of the bigger picture.

- Grantmakers and scholarship programs post application forms on their website or purchase software specifically aimed at capturing online applications.
- Primarily benefit foundation staff by saving time on data entry and envelope shuffling.
- Do *not* streamline the entire granting process, nor deliver benefits to all users involved with the grant program.

Online Grants and Scholarship Management

- Facilitate collaboration between the grantmaker and the applicant/grantee.
- Capabilities *well beyond* simply capturing online application information.
- A more holistic approach that considers the unique workflow for each giving program and provides tools for the three major user groups involved in grant programs: 1) Applicants/Grantees, 2) Administrators/Staff, 3) Evaluators/Reviewers.
- Unique needs for each of the three major user groups are met:
 - **Applicants/Grantees:** “One Stop Shopping” (i.e., a single location) for all interactions with your foundation, access to complete history of past funding requests and grants, ease of use and reliability, real-time status updates on applications/grants, ability to save in draft format, option to print all current and past submitted work, paper-based document conversion capabilities, and collaboration tools for working with the grantmaker.
 - **Administrators/Staff:** Access to all information at a glance, including the number of submittals from applicants, how many grant reports, etc. are due, quick access to details of an application or grant record, ability to—quickly change all forms, reduce or eliminate hours of copying, collating, filing and mailing, total the amount of money the foundation has granted, research an organization’s past grant history, reduce tedious data entry tasks, print information stored electronically with the push of a button.
 - **Evaluators/Reviewers:** *Easy* to use system, view only their assigned evaluations, print capability, receive applications for review as assigned (rather than all at once), access from anywhere to review and score applications, complete details about current and historical grant information and/or organization if needed, option to not participate in online system, hold more efficient decision meetings.
- Should provide for the capture of applications, but also make it easy to receive and evaluate online applications, record decisions, capture grant reports, and measure outcomes.
- Should include the option to simplify your workflow, make collaboration easier, and be more responsive to your grantees.

Instead of shuffling paper, manually entering data and performing tedious, time-wasting tasks—manage your grants online with a cost effective, intuitive grants management solution.