

Grant Readiness Scorecard

How ready is your institution?

Some federal competitions only give you a month to apply. Institutions that submit a winning proposal in that time are almost never starting from scratch. This scorecard assesses readiness to respond to a competitive grant notice. Rate your institution as it stands today and fill it out with the two or three people who would work together on an application.

0 Not in place Nothing in place. We would be building this from the beginning.	1 Partly Underway, or one person knows it but it has never been written down.	2 In place Current, documented, and at least one person is responsible for it.
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1 Registrations and eligibility

	NOT IN PLACE	PARTLY	IN PLACE
Our SAM.gov registration is active, and we know its renewal date well ahead of any competition.	☐	☐	☐
We know our UEI, we know who holds the Grants.gov credentials, and we know who is responsible for renewing them.	☐	☐	☐
We can confirm our eligibility for the programs we care about fairly quickly.	☐	☐	☐

2 Project lists

	NOT IN PLACE	PARTLY	IN PLACE
We have a running list of the projects or research we would fund if the money became available.	☐	☐	☐
For each one we note the outcome, a rough cost, and the priority it serves.	☐	☐	☐
The list draws on ideas from more than one part of the institution.	☐	☐	☐

3 Institutional profile

	NOT IN PLACE	PARTLY	IN PLACE
We have boilerplate language and current data about who we are as an institution.	☐	☐	☐
We can get a specific data request filled by Institutional Research within a few days.	☐	☐	☐
We can break our data out by student group when a program asks for it.	☐	☐	☐

4 Partnerships

	NOT IN PLACE	PARTLY	IN PLACE
We stay in touch with our external partners even when we are not collaborating directly on a project.	☐	☐	☐
We could arrange a letter of support from our partners within a couple of days.	☐	☐	☐

5 Funders

	NOT IN PLACE	PARTLY	IN PLACE
We keep track of the federal programs that fit our mission and have a rough sense of when new notices will be issued.	☐	☐	☐
We are knowledgeable about federal priorities and how they relate to our own.	☐	☐	☐
We look at what a program has funded before and what its reviewers valued.	☐	☐	☐

6 Objectives and outcomes

	NOT IN PLACE	PARTLY	IN PLACE
We can set measurable objectives with a baseline and a target.	☐	☐	☐
We collect, analyze, and report outcomes data on a regular basis.	☐	☐	☐

What your total says

My total: _____ out of 32

Add up your sixteen scores. The section where you scored lowest is the place to begin.

0–14

EARLY

Very little of this is in place, so a short turnaround would mean building nearly all of it at once. Work like this only gets done in the quieter months.

15–23

DEVELOPING

You have real pieces in place and some clear gaps. You could pursue the right opportunity, but the work would land on the same few people it always does.

24–32

READY, WITH SOME GAPS

Most of what a strong proposal needs already exists here. What remains is coordination. Look at anything you scored below a 2 and decide who owns it.

If this scorecard turned up gaps you would rather not discover in the middle of a competition, [email me](#) and we can talk through where to start.