California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE)

eCivis Grants Portal

Application Submittal User Guide

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Introduction

This *eCivis Grants Portal – Application Submittal User Guide* is intended to provide an applicant with general guidance on accessing the Grants Portal to submit a grant application for a CAL FIRE Grant Program. You will need to refer to the Program Grant Guidelines for specific requirements including details and format of information to be included with your submission. The link to apply should also be contained within the Program Grant Guidelines or the Program webpage.

We recommend the following browsers for the best user experience and Grants Portal system functionality:

- Google Chrome
- Microsoft Edge
- Mozilla Firefox

You may contact [CALFIRE.Grants@fire.ca.gov](mailto:CALFIRE.Grants@fire.ca.gov) for general questions related to CAL FIRE Grant solicitations. For Program specific questions, please refer to the Program Contact identified in the grant guidelines. For any technical questions on the submission portal, contact eCivis staff at [support@ecivis.com](mailto:support@ecivis.com).
Reviewing the solicitation

The solicitation is broken up into five parts:

- Overview
- Eligibility
- Financial
- Contact
- Files

In the **Overview**, **Eligibility**, and **Financial** tabs, you can review the program information, applicant eligibility, and general financial information associated with the grant solicitation.

In the **Contact** tab a program contact is listed for additional program related questions.

In the **Files** tab you will find program and application submittal guidance files along with the documents you are required to complete and submit along with the application. The Files may be included as a link within the solicitation in lieu of attached directly within the solicitation.
Downloading the required documents

Before beginning the application process, it is critical that all required documents are downloaded and completed. Also, the guidance documents should be downloaded for reference during the application process. The files may be included as a link within the Files Notes in lieu of being attached directly.

Click on the title of the file to download the document.

Beginning the application process

When you are ready to begin the application process, click on the “Apply” button on the top left side of the screen.
You will be taken to the online grant application portal (https://portal.ecivis.com/) where you can begin filling out your application and uploading all the required documents.

If you are a current eCivis user, you can enter your eCivis username and password to log in. If this is your first time using the Portal you will need to click on the green Create an account button to create your account.

On the Create an account page, enter basic information:

1. First name
2. Last name
3. Email address
4. Password (Passphrase)
After clicking **Sign up** you will be sent an email confirming your email address to complete the process.

**Email verification**
Verification confirmed

Once you have logged in and verified your email address, you will be brought back to the original application you desired to apply for. You will start your application by clicking on the green Create New Application button toward the top of the page.

You may be prompted to verify your account on your first time accessing this application. You must then enter the same username and password used to log into the Grants Portal system.
Application Components

Open any program guidance files and use this to reference how each section of the application should be completed.

There are three primary sections to the application:

1. Profile
2. Application
3. Budget
4. Goals

Depending on the solicitation you are applying for, there may be additional sections to be completed. You will be prompted to complete additional sections if required prior to submittal. Please refer to the grant guidelines for additional details that are specific to the solicitation you are applying for.

Completing your profile

To begin working on the profile, click the “Open” button. The Profile contains all the information relative to the applying organization.
Complete the applicable fields for your project. Required fields are marked with a red asterisk.

If you plan to complete your profile at a later time, select Save Draft. To complete your profile, select the “Create Profile” button.

Your profile will need to be completed prior to starting the application:

Starting the Application

After you have completed your profile, the application will be available. The two main sections of your submission are the Application and Budget sections.

Your application will appear as an Untitled application. Click on the blue box titled Application Process to access your application:
Application

You will be directed to the Application Process to complete the appropriate sections. The Application section will contain a mix of dropdown lists, checkboxes, option selectors, complete narrative fields, and file uploads. Refer to your program grant guidelines on the appropriate content for each field and required uploads. If the application is broken into multiple sections, additional sections will appear below the “Applications” heading as part of the Application Process.

Complete applicable fields for your project including all required fields. You can select Save Draft (located on the top and bottom of the page) to save your work and complete at a later time. To complete your profile select Mark Complete button.

You may also click on the triangle next to the Application to preview or print the questions to assist with planning or collaborating with others on your application. Keep in mind that there may be conditional questions that appear depending on your responses.
Budget and Goals

To complete the Budget and Goals associated with your project, you will need to scroll down to the bottom of the page using the outermost scrollbar until you see the Applications Budget and Goals Section.

You will need to select the icon with the three lines to edit the Budget or Goals associated with your project.
Grant Budget Settings

Indirect Costs

The *Budget* section contains a breakdown of the budget categories applicable for the grant solicitation you are applying for, including an optional budget narrative section. Refer to your program specific guidance for additional instructions regarding types of costs covered under each of the categories as well as details to include in the Title and Description.

The Budget Settings allow you to change how your indirect cost rate and cost share is calculated and view different stages of your budget. To set the Budget Settings for your project, you will need to select the dropdown arrow to the far right of the Budget Settings.

From the Indirect Costs drop down menu, there are several different options to calculate your indirect costs:
Recommended Selection:

**Negotiated Rate**: This should be used if you are applying an indirect cost as a percentage of eligible costs. Please refer to the grant guidelines to identify types of costs that are not eligible to apply an indirect rate. Generally, CAL FIRE does not allow an indirect rate to exceed 12%.

Example: 12% indirect cost applied against Salaries and Wages

![Budget Settings](image)

**Other available Selections:**

**De Minimus Rate**: This is the standard 10% indirect cost rate that can be used for a federally funded grant if you do not have a Federally approved indirect negotiated rate.

De Minimus Rate/Negotiated Rate/Percentage example:

![Budget Items](image)

**Itemized**: This will change the indirect cost calculation from a percentage to a manual entry amount. **Do not select this option.** Indirect costs, when applicable, are only reimbursed at a percentage basis of actual costs incurred.
Itemized budget example:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Limits</th>
<th>Unit Cost</th>
<th>Extended Cost</th>
<th>Cost</th>
<th>Gl Code</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PPE</td>
<td>Full Time Employees</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>$5,000.00</td>
<td>$5,000.00</td>
<td>$5,000.00</td>
<td>$5,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PPE</td>
<td>Part Time Employees</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>$0.00</td>
<td>$0.00</td>
<td>$2,500.00</td>
<td>$2,500.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Not Applicable:** This will remove indirect costs from overall calculation and allow you to enter it as a line item entry. If this is selected, an option will be made available in each line item to indicate the type of item it is (Direct Cost, Indirect Cost, or Cost Share). **Do not select this option unless you will not be including indirect costs as part of your project.** Indirect costs, when applicable, are only reimbursed at a percentage basis of actual costs incurred.

Not Applicable budget example:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Limits</th>
<th>Unit Cost</th>
<th>Extended Cost</th>
<th>Cost</th>
<th>Gl Code</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PPE</td>
<td>Full Time Employees</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>$5,000.00</td>
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<td>$5,000.00</td>
<td>$5,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PPE</td>
<td>Part Time Employees</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>$0.00</td>
<td>$0.00</td>
<td>$2,500.00</td>
<td>$2,500.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Match / Cost Share**

From the Match/Cost Share drop down menu, there are several different options to calculate your Match/Cost Share:
**Percentage**: This will calculate your Match/Cost Share as a percentage of the budget items included based on the percentage (%) identified. Select this option only if all cost share applicable items will have the same percentage applied.

**Itemized**: This will change the Match/Cost Share calculation from a percentage to a manual entry amount by budget item and category.

**Total Amount**: This allows you to enter a single total amount for the entire project amount for your Match/Cost Share. **Do not select this option as CAL FIRE will want details on how the match will be met and reported on by category.**

**Not Applicable**: this will remove Match/Cost Share from overall calculation and allow you to enter it as a line item entry. If this is selected, an option will be made available in each line item to indicate the type of item it is (Direct Cost, Indirect Cost, or Cost Share).

**Grant Budget Summary**

As you enter your budget line items, the total Direct Cost, Indirect Cost, Total Proposed, Match/Cost Share, and Program Income will update the Budget Summary at the top of the page.

**Total Direct Costs**: Sum of all Direct Cost across all budget categories  
**Total Indirect Costs**: Sum of all Indirect Costs across all budget categories  
**Total Proposed**: Sum of all Direct Costs and Indirect Costs across all budget categories  
**Match/Cost Share**: Sum of all Match/Cost Share across all budget categories  
**Program Income**: Sum of program income line items listed in the *Program Income* section

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**Budget Items**

In the Budget Items section, you will need to add and/or adjust your budget item, add subcategories, and enter line item budget entries. The Budget Items may vary based on the grant program you are applying for, but the functionality will be identical. Click on the Budget Category “1. Salaries & Wages” in blue hypertext to begin adding budget entries.
Beneath each budget item you can add a table to begin entering specific line items. Using this table, you can include specific budget line items:

**Title**: the name of the budgeted item (255 max characters)

**Description**: explanation/detail on the budgeted item (255 max characters). Generally, you will at least include the basis of the units (i.e. Hours, Acres, etc.)

**Unit**: if more than one, you can enter multiple units

**Unit Cost**: per unit cost (NOTE: if Unit and Unit Cost is used, the Cost field will automatically be populated with the Unit number multiplied by the Unit Cost)

**Extended Cost**: this is indented to represent the total item cost including requested funds and cost share if applicable, which could differ from the budgeted amount

**Cost**: total amount budgeted for this item, represents the amount of grant funding requesting for this item

**GL Code**: Optional Field.

**Indirect Cost**: this field can be calculated in different ways based on your budget settings. If included as a percentage, you can check or uncheck this field to include it in your total indirect costs. If included as Itemized, you can put any amount desired for this item in the Indirect Costs field. If included as Not Applicable, you can mark this budget item as Indirect Cost and the amount in the Cost field will be included in your total indirect costs.

**Cost Share**: this field can be calculated in different ways based on your budget settings. If included as a percentage, you can check or uncheck this field to include it in your total Cost Share. If included as Itemized, you can put any amount desired for this item in the Cost Share field. If included as Not Applicable, you can mark this budget item as Cost Share and the amount entered in the Cost field will be included in your total Cost Share.

If there is no table below the grey subtotal display boxes, click the grey gear icon to Add Table:

The budget should already have tables present and the first row is populated with detailed instructions on how to fill each line item.
### 3. Contractual

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Units</th>
<th>Unit Cost</th>
<th>Extended Cost</th>
<th>Cost</th>
<th>GL Code</th>
<th>Indirect</th>
<th>Cost Share</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Use Titles to briefly describe each item. Cost Share from the grantee and from a partner can be tracked on separate lines. Note that your indirect cost rate setting (which must be between 0 and 12%) will automatically apply to each line.</td>
<td>In each row, Description, enter the unit of measurement and choose from only the following labels: Hours, Days, Each, Report, Contract, Miles, Daily, Acres.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contract with Myers</td>
<td>Hours</td>
<td>500.00</td>
<td>$123.00</td>
<td>$61,500.00</td>
<td>$61,500.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Edit the existing line item (or click Add Row if you prefer to keep the instructions visible and simply add new line items). Then, fill the **Title, Description, Units, and Unit Cost** fields.

**NOTE:** The Indirect Cost Column will leave a checkmark next to each line to which you may want to apply the Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate. Lastly, you will enter matching costs in the Cost Share column.

**NOTE:** Except for GL Code, all fields will need to be completed before you can complete the budget, even if the value is zero. The Extended Costs and Costs will automatically calculate when you initially add in the Units and Unit Cost into the table. **If you make any updates to the Unit or Unit Cost, you will need to manually recalculate the Extended Costs, Costs and if applicable, Cost Share.**

To delete a row, or to insert new rows between existing line items, right-click anywhere on the row in question. A dropdown menu should appear with the options to Insert row above, Insert row below, and Remove row.
Multi-Phase Budgets (Applicable to Forest Research Grants only)

For *Forest Research* grants, you will notice two additional columns in your budget tables for showing *Phase 1* and *Phase 2* amounts for each cost line. Please refer to the Forest Research Grant Guidelines for applicable funding periods for each phase. The *Phase 1* column is what your budget uses to calculate the cost column for that line and will be used to determine your grant request (and award if selected for funding). The *Phase 2* column is for display purposes only. As a result, you will not see any of your *Phase 2* amounts added to the Totals in your *Budget Summary*.

If your project is awarded that includes *Phase 2* funding, you will receive a new award, contingent upon CAL FIRE’s subsequent funding availability, that contains those *Phase 2* amounts now in the *Phase 1* column.
Narrative

The budget narrative is available to provide additional detail, explanation, and/or justification to specific budget line items (up to 8000 characters). The budget narrative is also fully compatible with Microsoft Word. Already developed narratives can be cut and pasted into this section. Once completed click on the Save Narrative icon. You can export your budget narrative by clicking on the PDF icon. Please refer to the grant guidelines for your specific grant program as additional budget narrative may be requested in another portion of the application or included within the Scope of Work for your project.

Finalizing Grant Budget

Once you have finalized your *Pre-award* budget click on the Save Icon at the top of the page or Save Changes Button located above the Budget Narrative section. You can also export your budget to Excel by clicking on the Excel icon towards the top of the page.
Goals Worksheet
Your application may require that you complete and submit activity goals for your proposal.

Scroll to the bottom of the Application Submissions page. As mentioned above, the Budget and Goals Worksheet will appear as one unified line that corresponds with the application you have created. This will appear in the Applications Budget and Goals section.

Click the icon containing three lines and select Edit Goals to get started.

Fill in Target amounts for the goals provided by the Grantor in the fillable boxes. Some goals will have subgoals underneath them that calculate a total into the goal row containing grey boxes.
To save your goals, select *Save Goals* at the bottom of the screen or select *Return to Application* to go back to your application.

**Printing the Application**

You can click *View* on the boxes within your application submission to reference and print for your records:

21-FH-MMU - 33307747
To print out a copy of the form on that application step, you can click the dropdown arrow next to the title in the form’s heading. (You can also preview the print view from this dropdown):

Add another application

**NOTE:** For programs allowing multiple applications for the same grant solicitation from the same organization, you may prepare a separate application by selecting the green *Create New Application* button. Please verify that you are applying for the correct solicitation listed under “California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE)” in case there are concurrent solicitations available.

The new application will utilize the same Profile previously created. The new application will appear as “Untitled” until you give your project a name. You will need to complete a new Application and Budget sections for the 2nd submission. Repeat this process until desired submissions have been made. Please verify that the budget you are editing corresponds to the correct Project Title.
Submitting your application

Once all sections of the application are completed, click on Submit to send your application to the funding agency. All applications must be submitted prior to the due date indicated in the grant solicitation for your application to be considered.
Your application has been submitted and is now Under Review:

You may still view your submitted application; however, you will not be able to revise any of your application data. If there is still time remaining in the application period, you may contact the Program Contact listed in the solicitation to request the application to be returned to you for further editing. You will need to re-submit the application by the application period for your application to be considered.

If you are contacted by program staff that your application is re-opened for edits, you will see the status of the application is moved back to Draft when you log into your account and land on the My Applications homepage.

Click the Actions icon next to your application and select View Application. You will then navigate to your application content as before.
Once finished, be sure to save your changes and follow the same instructions as above to *Submit* your application.

Lastly, When the awarding period begins, you should receive an email containing either an Award Letter or a note that you have NOT been awarded. While a Denial notice can vary in appearance, the award notification looks like the below. You will find a link in this email that takes you back into Portal to accept your award. (Refer to the subsequent Grantee manual for all instruction related to accepting and managing an award):

![Award Notification Letter](image)

**NOTE:** If you believe you should have received your notification and would like to check your response within portal, check the *Status* column from Point #1 above. Where the image above says *Draft*, it will read *Under Review* if it is still being reviewed, *Grant Awarded* if you have been awarded, or *Denied* if your application was not awarded.