

The Federal Grant Competitiveness Project: Ensuring Nevada Receives its Fair Share of Federal Grant Funding

Nevada is Working to Correct a Decades-old Problem

For decades Nevada has been among the lowest performing states in the U.S. in terms of receiving competitive federal grants, excluding Medicaid, despite having some of the highest documented need in the country. In the past five years, however, the State, under Governor Sandoval's administration and with leadership from the Legislature, has made many improvements in federal grant procurement and management, including:

- Establishing the Office of Grant Procurement, Coordination and Management (Nevada Grants Office) in 2011, a statewide office tasked with coordinating and supporting federal grant applications and award management. During fiscal years 2015 and 2016, combined **the Office assisted with 113 grants that resulted in approximately \$131 million in awarded dollars, a return of \$219 in grant revenue for every \$1 dollar invested in the Office's salaries.**
- Establishing the Nevada Advisory Council on Federal Assistance (Nevada Grants Council) in 2015, to advise and assist State and local governments with respect to obtaining and maximizing federal grants, including helping to identify barriers, opportunities, and solutions. The Council is comprised of appointed representatives from local government, nonprofits, and the business community, along with two elected legislators, the Chief of the Grants Office, and Director of the Governor's Finance Office.
- Securing many new, highly-beneficial grant programs such as "Breakfast After the Bell", which will yield \$14M in federal dollars to increase food access for Nevada's neediest students.

Still, much work remains to ensure that Nevada receives its fair share of federal grant dollars and delivers the highest return on investment for those dollars.

2017 Legislative Session Priorities

Based on research, analysis, discussion, and testimony presented during its hearings, the Nevada Grants Council prepared several recommendations for consideration and proposed action during the 2017 Legislative Session, including:

1. Establish a statewide grants management system that allows users – across state and local governments and nonprofits – to more effectively identify grant opportunities, coordinate with each other to submit grants, secure grant funding, and track and report outcomes and spending related to federal grants. This grants management system, along with a much-needed administrative staff position, is included in the Governor's Executive Budget 2017-2019. See [Budget 1341](#).
2. Streamline the review and authorization (or denial) process for grant-related work plans by the Interim Finance Committee, as the current process significantly hinders state agencies' ability to comply with strict processing timelines required by most grants. Assembly Bill 81, sponsored by the Assembly Committee of Government Affairs, addresses this issue. See [AB81](#).
3. Remove limitations in the State Grants Office statute to allow for more flexibility and positive impact in its service to the State. Assembly Bill 98, sponsored by the Assemblywoman Bustamante Adams and Assemblyman Paul Anderson, addresses this issue. See [AB98](#).

In addition to these specific items, the Nevada Grants Council's report urges policymakers to find opportunities to address: equitable distribution of grant funds and State Grants Office's services statewide; adequate staffing in the State Grants Office and grant units within state agencies; and significantly increasing coordination and communication among state government, local governments, and nonprofits.

Increasing Federal Grant Funding is an Important, Valuable Strategy for Nevada

The State's past low rate of federal grant investment creates a unique opportunity to secure hundreds of millions of dollars in new funding that can be used to fuel the economy, improve quality of life, and increase opportunity for Nevadans. Indeed, securing more federal grants will have many benefits, including:

- Funding much-needed enhancements to programs, projects, and services in the areas of health care, transportation, income security, education, job training, social services, community development, and environmental protection. According to Pew Charitable Trust's *Federal Spending in the States* analysis, increasing Nevada's ranking in per capita grant receipts from 49th to 48th would yield an estimated \$258 million in new grant funding for the State.
- Significantly expanding Nevada's revenue without adding tax burden to its residents and businesses.
- Returning Nevadans' federal tax dollars to the State and their communities for local use.
- Stimulating Nevada's economy by locally spending tens of millions of dollars in federal tax dollars (returned to us through federal grants), that will otherwise be spent in Washington D.C. and the other 49 states.

About The Federal Grant Competitiveness Project

The Federal Grant Competitiveness Project is an initiative to engage and educate stakeholders and policymakers on the need to increase federal grant funding in the State, and identify and advocate for opportunities to do so. The Nevada Community Foundation, Council for a Better Nevada, and Las Vegas Metro Chamber of Commerce are active participants in the initiative, working alongside representatives from local and state government and nonprofit organizations.

Contact:

Miles Dickson
The JABarrett Company
e. mdickson@jabarrettcompany.com
c. 702-580-6614