

title, organization, postal address, telephone number, and E-mail address in the text of the message. Comments may also be submitted via facsimile to 202-395-3952. Comments may be mailed to Sandra Swab, Office of Federal Financial Management, Office of Management and Budget, Room 6025, New Executive Office Building, Washington, DC 20503.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Sandra Swab, Office of Federal Financial Management, Office of Management and Budget, telephone 202-395-3993, and E-mail: sswab@omb.eop.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Standard Set of Data Elements and Definitions

The Federal E-Grants initiative, one of 24 initiatives of the Administration's overall E-Government program for improving access to Government services via the Internet, calls for the development of a one-stop, electronic grant portal where potential grant recipients will receive full service electronic grant administration. OMB is seeking to develop a standard set of data elements that will be used by grant-making Federal agencies to develop web-based grant application software. The application software, E-Apply, will permit the use of on-line grant applications by October 2003. This **Federal Register** announcement seeks public comment on establishing the current data elements and definitions of the SF-424 with the proposed five additional data elements as the standard data set that Federal agencies would include in the first version for electronic grant applications. The standard data elements are found in the attachment to this notice. The attachment identifies the current data elements and definitions found on the SF-424. The proposed data elements have been required of grant applicants when submitting SF-424s to which OMB is proposing to add five new elements: (1) Requesting entity's universal identifier (see proposal to use the DUNS in the October 30, 2002 **Federal Register**); (2) requesting entity's e-mail address; (3) requesting entity's country location; (4) requesting entity's facsimile (Fax) number; and (5) for Not-For-Profit entities only, requesting entity's indicator for "Type of Applicant."

Additional efforts not included in this initial proposal, seek to have the Federal government review various grants management processes that focus on different types of business lines that cut across similar grant programs. For example, grant programs that focus on

research may need to have different grant application information than programs that focus on education. However, many different agency grant programs may be similar in a broad subject category and collect similar information. For those grant programs found in broad subject categories and cut across various Federal agencies, the data may be standardized and shared by collecting the data only once. This cross-agency standard data may become a subset to the standard data collected on the SF-424. When such data is identified and approved, it is the intention to revise the suite of SF-424 standard collection forms to identify cross-agency data. This effort will be done in consultation with the grants community at-large through the public comment process. It is thought the standardization of data and establishment of standard data for similar types of grant programs will enhance the collection of data and help to overall simplify the grants application and management processes.

Policy for Electronic Grant Applications

The SF-424 data elements, including the five proposed data elements, are attached for review and comment and are contained within the American National Standards Institute's (ANSI) Grant Application or Assistance Application 194 Transaction Data Set, a national electronic standard for the Federal grant application. The 194 Transaction Data Set has evolved under the auspices of the Inter-Agency Electronic Grants Committee (IAEGC), ANSI, Federal Demonstration Partnership, universities, research institutions, and Federal grant-making agencies. Using an established national electronic standard to implement the E-Apply software application helps to standardize the data conventions and provides a foundation upon which to build future applications. The attachment correlates the SF-424 data to the related data found in the 194 Transaction Data Set. Information on the 194 Transaction Data Set can be found on the Inter-Agency Electronic Grants Committee's (IAEGC) Web site at www.iaegc.gov.

Consolidated Assurance of Compliance for Grant Applicants

We further propose to revise the SF-424 to provide a streamlined way for Federal agencies to obtain assurances of compliance with applicable requirements. Currently, a Federal program office that uses the entire suite of SF-424 forms for its applications would require an applicant to submit

assurances on, either a SF-424B, "Assurances—Non-Construction Programs," or a SF-424D, "Assurances—Construction Programs."

The assurance forms (SF-424B/D) list many individual national policy requirements and a few selected administrative requirements based in statute, Executive Order, regulation, or OMB circular language. The national policy requirements address societal objectives such as protection of the environment or ensuring civil rights. The selected administrative matters, such as conduct of audits, relate to stewardship of public funds. The forms require the applicant's "authorized certifying official" to sign, thereby agreeing that the applicant will comply with the requirements if an award is made.

We propose an approach that coordinates the business processes of application and award at the time of announcing funding availability. Agencies' announcements will identify administrative and national policy requirements with which applicants must comply if they receive awards, thereby helping potential applicants make more informed decisions about whether to apply. If an entity is unable or unwilling to comply with any of these requirements, it should not invest time and money in preparing an application.

At time of application, applicants would be asked to sign the following consolidated assurance on the cover page of the SF-424, which would replace the lists of individual requirements that currently appear on the SF-424B and SF-424D:

I have reviewed the requirements that apply to recipients of awards under this program* and assure, as the duly authorized representative of the applicant, that the applicant will comply with those requirements and other terms and conditions if it receives an award.

*If you are submitting this application in response to a Federal agency announcement of a funding opportunity, consult that announcement or any associated application instructions for the Internet site or other location where you may view the generally applicable requirements. Otherwise, if you do not know where to view them, contact the office to which you are submitting this application to ask about the location.

At time of award, a successful applicant would receive an award document with terms and conditions incorporating the applicable national policy and administrative requirements. These would be the same requirements for which the applicant provided an assurance of compliance at time of application, except for any award-specific requirements that the agency