




eLINK Guidance Document


Completing a Funding Request



January 2018

Purpose: This document provides basic guidance on how to complete a competitive or non-competitive funding request (sometimes also referred to as an “application”) in eLINK. Each grant program may have unique requirements; be sure to review the individual grant program policies, Request for Proposal (RFP), or other program materials prior to completing a funding request in eLINK. Requestors must have an eLINK user account to submit a request; see the *eLINK Guidance Document Setting up an Account* for more information.

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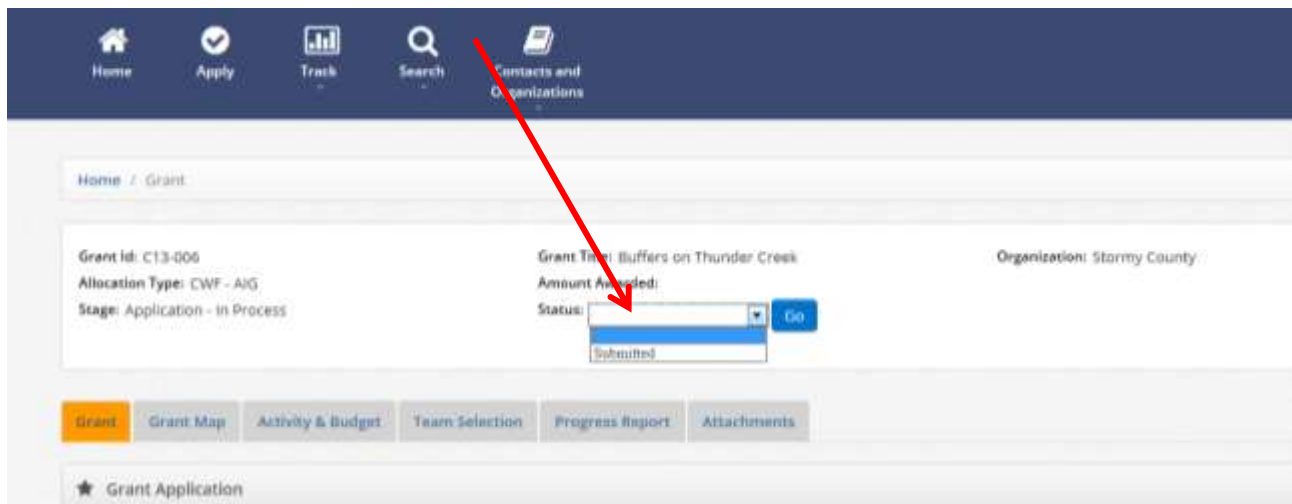
To start or create a new funding request, take the following steps. To access a request that has been started, find the grant on your **Home** page and click the edit icon  to continue editing.

1. In the main menu at the top of the screen, click **Request Funds**.
2. Type the name of the applicant Organization. This field will auto-complete with only those organizations that are eligible to apply for available funds, and to which you the user are associated with. If the organization you are looking for does not appear, send an email specifying the missing organization connection to elinksupport@state.mn.us with the subject line of “Account Assistance”.
3. Click **Search** to generate a list of available grant funds.
4. Select the fund to which you are going to apply by clicking the start request action icon . This will create a unique funding request identification number.
5. Enter a **Grant Title** (required) and **Abstract** (can be filled in later in the request process) and click **Save**. To complete the request, enter information in the following tabs.
 - a. **Grant** tab: the grant tab contains questions unique to the grant program being applied to. In general, all questions in this tab are required for a complete and competitive request. See the RFP guidance on the [Apply for Grants](#) page of the BWSR website for specific information on completing the questions.
 - i. **Day-to-Day Contact:** Enter the name of the person who will be the primary contact responsible for the day-to-day operations of the proposed project. This person must have a recognized eLINK association with the applicant organization. The day-to-day contact, in addition to the request submitter, will receive automated messages about the request from the system until after submittal. If the request is granted funding, automated messages will only be sent to the day-to-day contact.
 - ii. **County:** Select a county, or hold down the Control key to select multiple counties, in which the proposed activities will occur. This field is used to provide information to the [Legislative Coordinating Commission](#).
 - iii. **Upload Application Image:** One image attachment is allowed per funding request. The image must be submitted in a common raster image file type, e.g. *.jpeg, *.gif, *.bmp, or *.png, which


- can be loaded into the request document, and thus seen by reviewers. Uploading your image as a Word or PDF document will cause an error in rendering the request.
- iv. **Grant Abstract:** Succinctly describe what you are trying to achieve and how you intend to achieve those results. Many, but not all, requests will also have a series of questions to answer after the abstract.
 - v. **Fiscal Agent:** The fiscal agent is the organization to whom BWSR should make payment--if different from the applicant organization--if the request is successfully funded.
 - vi. **Proposed Measurable Outcomes:** Provide a brief description of proposed measurable outcomes. (The character limit is imposed by the Legislative Coordinating Commission, to whom BWSR needs to provide these proposed measurable outcomes.)
 - vii. Complete responses to all program-specific questions. Be sure to click **Save** at the bottom of the screen after entering information and before leaving this tab.
- b. **Grant Map** tab: Some programs require a grant map identifying the primary project area, which is used to provide consistent context to reviewers of the funding request. The map is typically not required if the proposed project area exceeds 50 12-digit HUCs.
- i. **Zoom in** and **Pan** to the area of the state where the activities will occur. **Deactivate** will switch off the tool last selected.
 - ii. Click **Select HUC12 by Box** to draw a box in the general area the activities will occur. The map will highlight the selected HUC12s and show the centroid of the selected area. You can also use **Start Editing HUC12** to select or deselect a singular HUC12 by clicking within that HUC12. The HUC12s will be displayed to the right and recorded with your request to allow for statewide geographic summaries of fund requests.
 - iii. If the HUC 12 selection appears incorrect, repeat steps i and ii.
 - iv. After you have finished selecting, click **Save** to add the map to your request. Wait for the confirmation message that the map has been saved and added to the request before moving to the next tab.
- c. **Application Budget** tab: this tab is where the details of the request are built. Required activity information includes a description, a budget, indicators, and a few additional questions depending on the grant program. The sum of the activity budgets is displayed and match amount is entered in the fund summary.
- i. To add a new activity, click **Add New Activity**. This will open a window. Enter information in all appropriate fields. See *eLINK Guidance Document Activity Categories* for definitions of Activity Categories. Click **Save**, then click **Close**. The new activity will appear in the grid. Click the edit icon  to edit or change previously entered information. Review the individual program RFP to make sure only allowable activities are entered.
 - ii. After saving and closing each activity, click the  icon for each activity in the grid to open the window for entering **Proposed Activity Indicators**. Activity categories such as Administration, Planning, and Technical Engineering do not require indicators. Activity categories such as Forestry, Urban Stormwater Practices, Agricultural Practices, etc. must have indicators to be considered complete requests. See the *eLINK Guidance Document Lumping and Splitting Activities* for assistance.
 - iii. After entering all activities for the request, enter the amount of match and other funds intended to be used on the request in the fields to the right of the total BWSR amount requested in the

Fund Summary box. Be sure that the match meets minimum requirements for the grant. After entering, click **Save**.

- d. **Team Selection** tab: This tab is optional; it allows the submitter to select team members from other organizations as partners on the funding request and to set permissions of team members to either read-only or edit. Team members must have registered eLINK user accounts. Members assigned read-only privileges will be able to access and view the request. Note: members of the submitter's organization are default team members with view permissions, these can be updated to edit as needed.
 - e. **Attachments** tab: Read the RFP carefully for instructions regarding attachments; some programs require an attachment, while others will not consider attachments as part of the review process. Images should be uploaded on the Grant tab
6. To review the request before submitting, go to **Home** and type the title of the grant into the **Quick Reports**. Select "Grant Application Report" from the dropdown and click **Go**.
 7. To submit the request, select **Submitted** from the status dropdown in the header of the Grant Screen. Click **Go**. You should see a confirmation that your application has been successfully submitted, and the "Stage" should show "Application – Submitted."



- a. To edit a request at any time prior to the request deadline, select **Application in Process** from the dropdown in the banner, click **Go**. Note: submitting a request creates a snapshot (PDF for review) of the request information; however, the request fields do not lock until after the RFP deadline. Changes to fields will not be reflected in the PDF for review unless the request has been resubmitted.
- b. To withdraw a submitted request at any time prior to the request deadline, select **Application in Process** from the dropdown in the banner, click **Go**. The request will remain available for possible resubmittal until after the RFP deadline at which time non-submitted requests will be closed and removed from the system.
- c. Applications not in the status of **Submitted** at the time of the request deadline will not be considered.

To access a grant that has been started, find the funding request on your home page and click the edit icon  to continue editing the request.

Funding Requests/Applications have multiple statuses:

- **Application - In Process:** active request that can be edited by requestors/applicants up to the submittal deadline. Must be submitted (see #6 above) to be considered.

- **Application – Submitted:** active request that has been submitted and can be withdrawn and/or updated and resubmitted up to the request deadline.
- **Application – Closed:** a request that was not in **Submitted** status at the time of the request deadline. Closed requests will not appear on the **Home** Page and will be removed from the system.
- **Application – In Review:** Application was submitted prior to the deadline and the request is in the review process. To withdraw a request at this stage, contact your Board Conservationist. Applications withdrawn after the deadline has passed cannot be resubmitted.
- **Application – Eligible:** Application has been reviewed for eligibility (as defined in policies and/or RFP) and is moving on to further review and scoring. Ineligible requests will not appear on the **Home** Page.