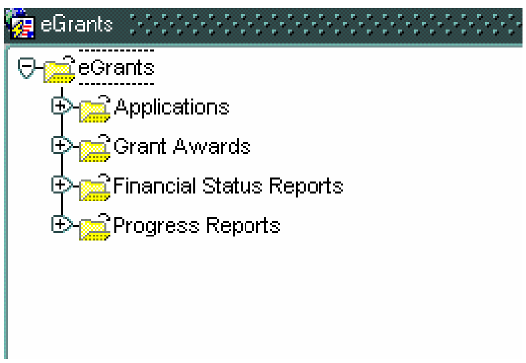
COMPLETING THE APPLICATION FOR FEDERAL ASSISTANCE – SF424
SENIOR CORPS GRANT APPLICATION
(RSVP, FGP AND SCP)

3.1 Overview

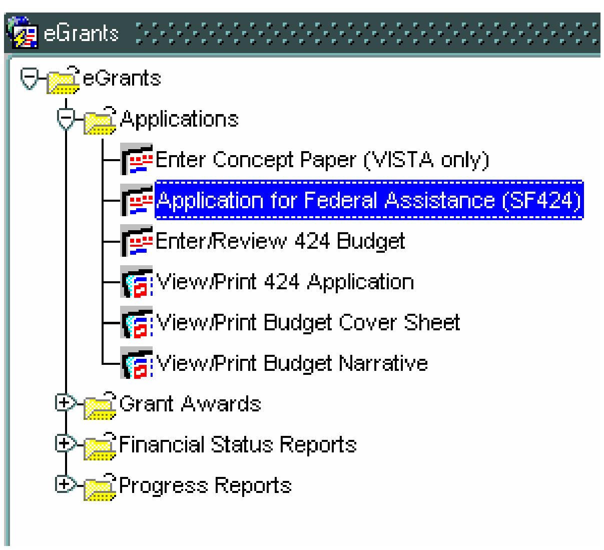
All organizations requesting funds from the Corporation for National and Community Service must complete the **Application for Federal Assistance (SF424**). The program to which you apply will determine the application requirements and deadline. Refer to the Senior Corps program guidelines for specific application instructions and deadlines.

To access the **Application for Federal Assistance (SF424**):

1. Log into *eGrants.*
2. From the *eGrants* menu tree, click on the **Applications** node (plus sign next to the folder).



3. Open the **Application for Federal Assistance (SF424)** (double click).

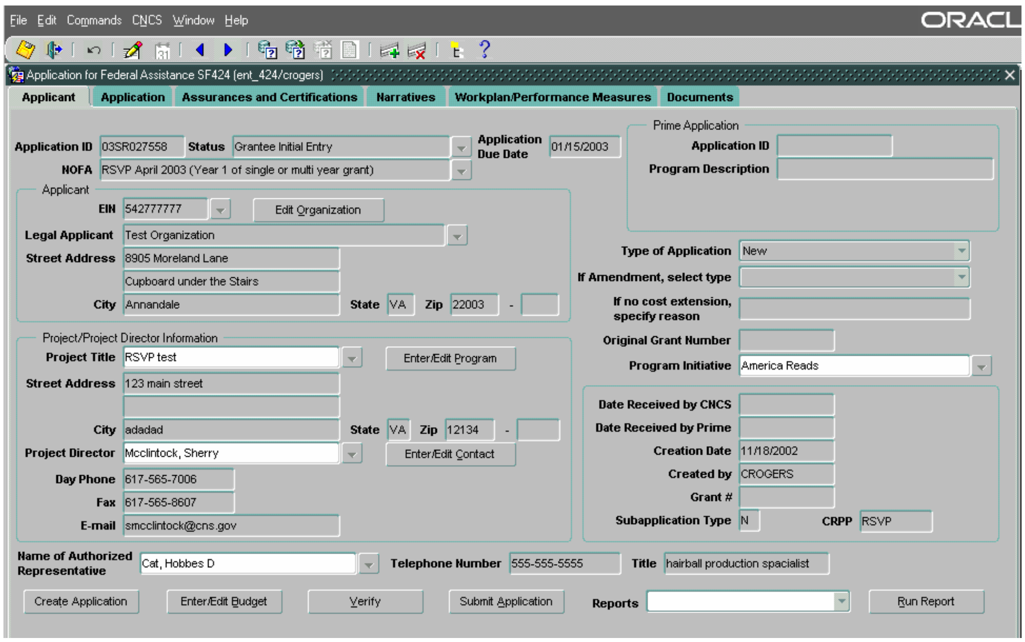


There are several **tabs** within the Application for Federal Assistance. These include the Applicant, Application, Assurances and Certification, Narrative, Work Plan and Documents Tabs. Clicking on each of these tabs will provide you with a screen for completing each portion of the Application.

Note that there is no Budget Tab: The budget is accessed through the "Enter/Edit Budget" button at the bottom of the Applicant Tab.

Following are instructions for completing each tab, entering the budget, and submitting the application.

Tabs →



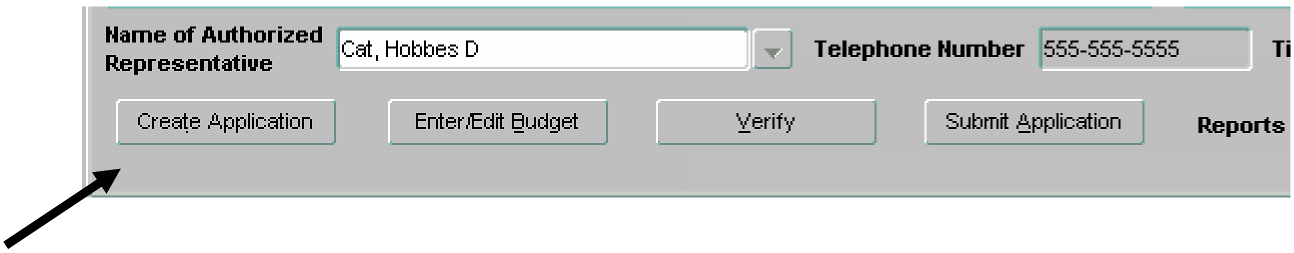
Information on Your Previous Grants from the Corporation

The Corporation has transferred information about current and former grants from its other databases in *eGrants*. As a result when the Application for Federal Assistance (SF424) opens, you may see data in the fields if you previously received a grant from the Corporation. If you see incorrect information, or the words "conversion" or "conversion data" in text boxes, this is due to the conversion process and does not need to be corrected. As you create a new application, you will be able to ensure that all information is correct.

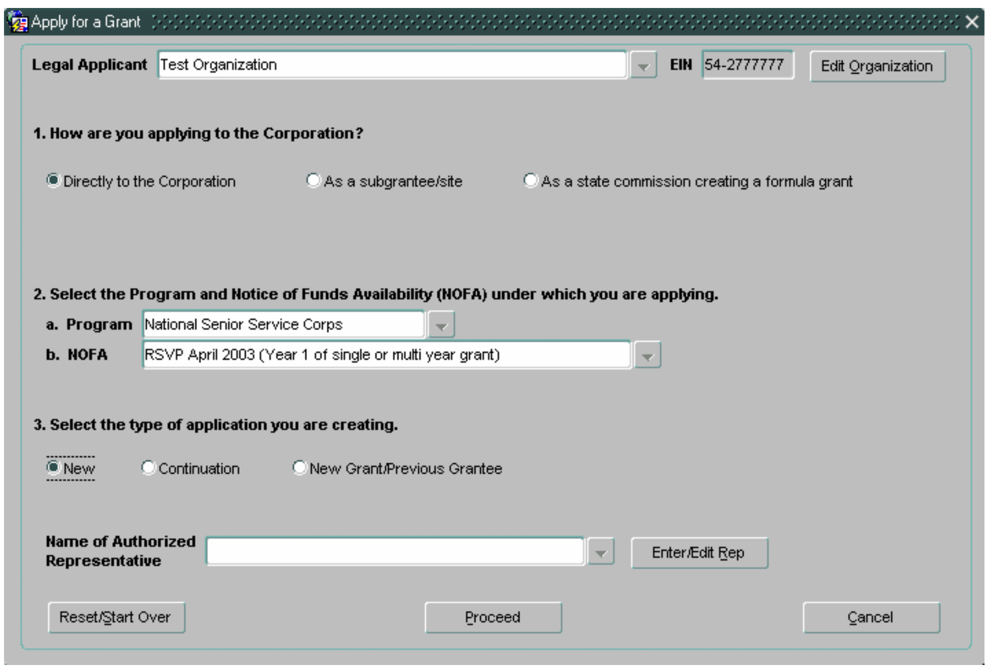
If your organization has had a previous grant with the Corporation, the information from the old grant may have been pre-loaded into *eGrants*. If this is the case, check the project information displayed on the screen to make sure it is yours. If another project's information from your organization is displayed, use the blue arrows on the tool bar to scroll through the records to find your project information.

3.2 Creating an Application

To begin your new application, press the **Create Application** button at the bottom left corner of the screen.



A pop-up window is displayed. *The Legal Applicant* and *EIN* fields are filled in with your organization's information.



The pop-up window asks for the following information:

1. ***How are you applying to the Corporation?***

   a) **Directly to the Corporation** – If you are applying directly to the Corporation, select this option. (This option applies to all Senior Corps grantees.)

   b) **As a subgrantee/site** – If you are applying as a subgrantee or site, select this option.

c) **As a state commission creating a formula grant –** If you are a state commission creating a formula application, select this option.

2. ***Select the Program and Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) under which you are applying.***

   To select the type of program, click on the inverted arrow (pull-down menu button) and select **National Senior Service Corps.**

   The NOFA is the grant or funding to which you are applying. It is critical that you select the appropriate Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA), otherwise you will have to begin your application again.

   Click on the inverted arrow for a pull-down list to find the correct NOFA for your current program and grant cycle. If you have a question on which NOFA to select, please contact your State Office.

3. ***Select the type of application you are creating.***

   a. New – If you are applying for a new grant, select this option.

   b. Continuation – If you are a grantee applying for a second or third year of funding within a 3-year grant, select this option. You will be prompted to select the current grant number.

   c. New/Previous Grantee – ***This option is only available for Senior Corps grantees***. If you are ***an existing grantee*** and are beginning the first year of funding for a 3-year grant, select this option.

4. ***Name of Authorized Representative.*** The authorized representative is the person from your organization who will electronically sign the assurances for your grant application. This person, along with others completing the grant application in *eGrants*, will be required to obtain an account and access *eGrants*. If the authorized representative already has an *eGrants* account, click on the inverted arrow to get to the drop-down list and select the appropriate person. If the person is not listed, click on the “Enter/Edit Rep” button to enter the person’s name.

To continue with your application, press the **Proceed** button on the bottom of the pop-up window. You will receive an alert notifying you that your application has been saved, and providing you with your **Application ID number**. You may continue completing your application or return to it later.

Make a note of your Application ID number (also found in the top left of your screen). This is a unique identifier that is helpful when retrieving your application later or when contacting Corporation or other support staff about your application.

3.3 <u>Applicant Tab</u>

The first section (tab) of the **Application for Federal Assistance (SF424)** is the **Applicant Tab**. Some of the information in this tab is completed when you press the **Start Application** button on the bottom of screen and provide the requested information (see Section 3.2). This section details how you complete the remainder of this tab.

3.3.1 Applicant (Organization Information)

This section will already be completed with your organization's EIN and address. If you need to make changes to the information, press the "**Edit Organization**" button and make the necessary changes. Once the changes are made, save your information before your proceed

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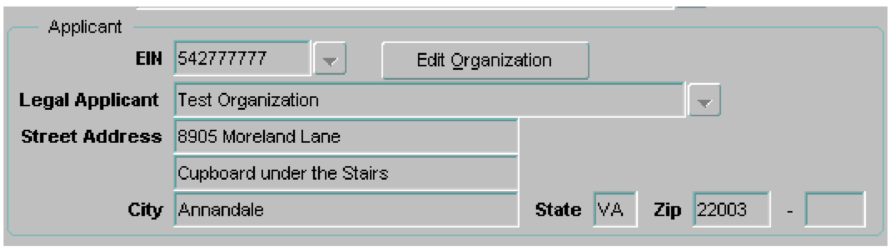
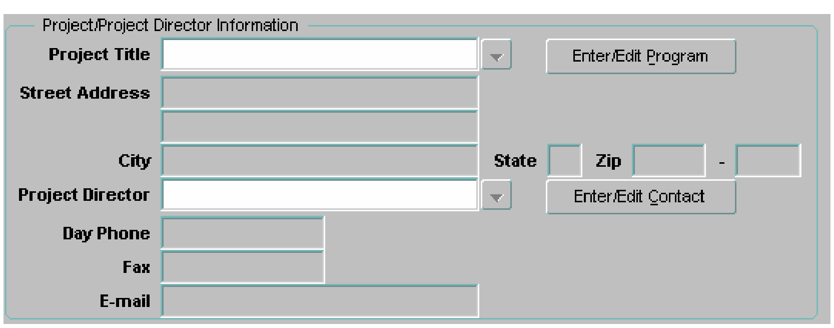


3.3.2 Project/Project Director Information

This section is used to identify the specific project title and information for the particular grant.

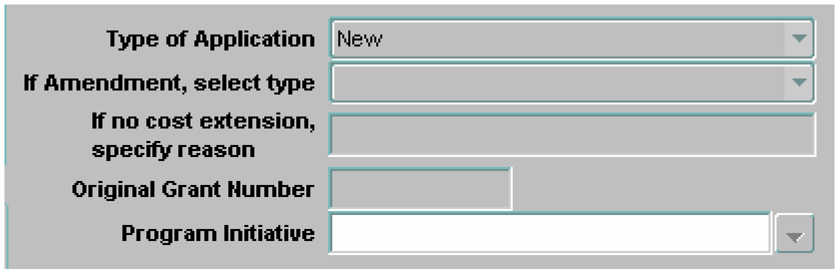
3.3.2.1 Project Title – If you have prior grant applications on file with the Corporation under the current EIN, you may select the project name from those on file. To do this, click on the arrow and select the project from the drop down. If the project title is not listed or it is a new project, press the "**Enter/Edit Program**" button. Enter the project information and save.

3.3.2.2 Project Director – If the project director is on file under the current EIN, you may select the project director's name from those on file. To do this, click on the arrow and select the project from the drop down. If the project director is not listed or it is a new project director, press the "**Enter/Edit Contact**" button. Enter the project director's information and save.



3.3.3 Program Initiative

This field is located to the right of the screen in the center and is a drop-down list. If one of these Program Initiatives applies to your grant, please select it. If none of the Initiatives listed apply to your project as a whole, disregard this field.



3.3.4 Action Buttons

There are 5 action buttons on the applicant tab. Each is used at various points in the application process to begin or complete an action.

3.3.4.1 Create Application – Click on this button to begin a new application. See Section 3.2 “Starting an Application” for more details.

3.3.4.2 Enter/Edit Budget – Click on this button to begin entering or editing your budget. See Section 3.9 “Budget” for details on completing your application budget.

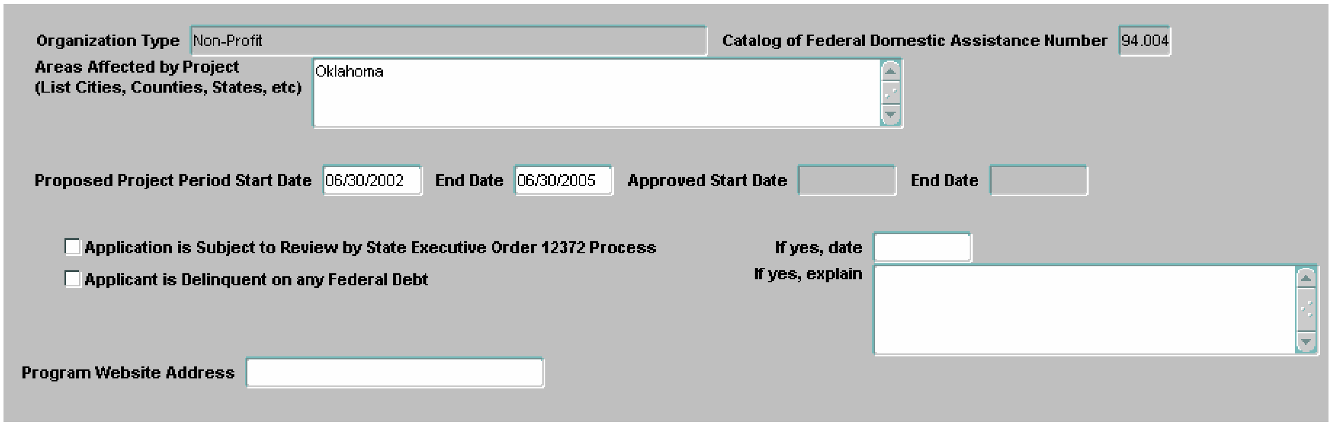
3.3.4.3 Verify – This allows you to verify that your application has been completed correctly. See Section 3.10 “Submitting Your Application” for more details.

3.3.4.4 Submit Application – Click on this button to submit your application to the Corporation. See Section 3.10 “Submitting Your Application” for more details.

3.3.4.5 Run Report – This button allows you to view your application in its entirety. See Section 3.10 “Submitting Your Application” for more details.

3.4 <u>Application Tab</u>

The **Application Tab** is the second tab of the Application for Federal Assistance (SF424). Complete the following information for your application.



3.4.1 Areas Affected by Project – List all the geographic areas that your project will serve, using cities, counties, and/or states.

3.4.2 Proposed Project Period Start and End Dates – Enter the proposed start and end dates for your project. These are the (usually) three-year performance dates and should begin with the date the grant was first funded. (e.g. if this is the second of a three year grant, the dates should start with year one and end with year three.)

3.4.3 Whether your application is subject to review by State Executive Order 12372 Process – Indicate if this application is subject to review by the state Executive Order 12372 Process.

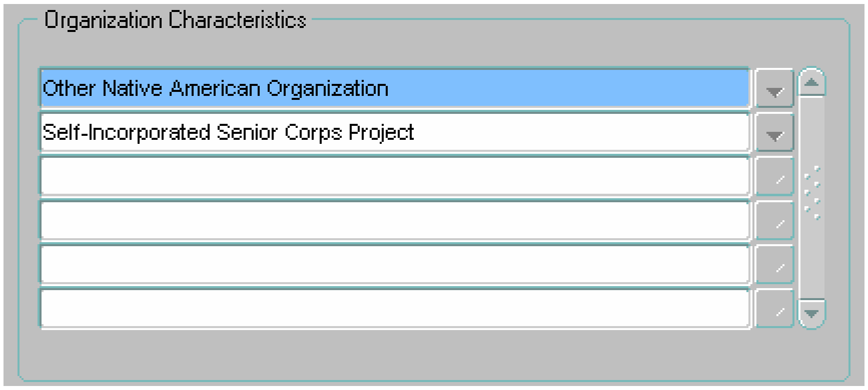
Executive Order 12372, "intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs," was issued with the desire to foster the intergovernmental partnership and strengthen federalism by relying on state and local processes for the coordination and review of proposed federal financial assistance and direct Federal development. The Order allows each state to designate an entity to perform this function. A list of these "Single Point of contact" entities can be found at: http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants/spoc.html. Contact the Single Point of Contact to determine whether your application is subject to the state intergovernmental review process.

If you indicate yes, you must enter the date a copy of your application was submitted to the state for review under the 12372 Process.

3.4.4 Whether your organization is delinquent on any Federal debt – Indicate whether your organization is delinquent on any Federal debt including federal tax or non-tax debts. If you indicate yes, you must enter an explanation.

3.4.5 Program Website Address – Enter your project's website address, if applicable.

3.4.6 Organization Characteristics – Enter one or more characteristics of your organization by clicking on the arrow and selecting from the list of values. Organization characteristics that have previously been entered will already be displayed. If you have more than 6 characteristics, put your cursor in the last row and press the green insert button at the top of the screen. This will enable you to list additional characteristics. Repeat until all characteristics for your organization are listed.



3.4.7 Estimated Funding
The Estimated Funding fields will remain blank until you have completed your budget. Once the budget is final, come back to the Application Tab. You will see that the Federal Funds and Applicant Share have automatically been totaled for you. You will now have to manually enter the amounts in the "State," "Local," "Other," and "Income" boxes as applicable. The total of these amounts must be equal to the Applicant amount in the budget.

All other fields in this section are automatically completed during the application process.

3.5 Assurances and Certifications Tab

The **Assurances and Certifications Tab** allows applicants to agree to perform all actions and support all intentions in the Assurances and Certifications Documents. Your authorizing and certifying official(s) must view and electronically sign the assurances and certifications in this tab ***before the application can be submitted***.

The person logged into eGrants at the time of the assurances and certification must be the authorizing official.

3.5.1 Authorization

The name of the person selected as the Authorized Representative on the **Applicant** tab automatically appears in the authorization section on this tab. The name cannot be changed on this tab. If you need to change the name, you must do so on the Applicant Tab.

To authorize the application, complete the following steps:

1. The person who will be authorizing the application must log into eGrants and access the application.

2. On the Assurances and Certifications tab, read the statement in the Authorization section, then click on the "**I Agree**" button directly below. The current date will appear in the date field.

3.5.2 Assurances

The name of the person selected as the Authorized Representative on the **Applicant** tab automatically appears as the certifying official for the Assurances. The name cannot be changed on this tab. If you need to change the name, you must do so on the Applicant Tab.

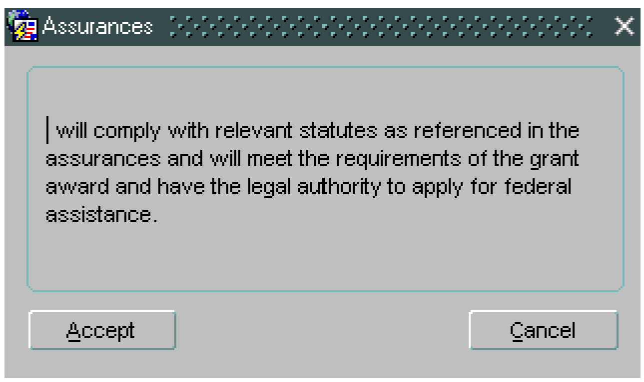
To electronically sign the Assurances, complete the following steps:

1. The authorized certifying official must log onto *eGrants* and access the application.

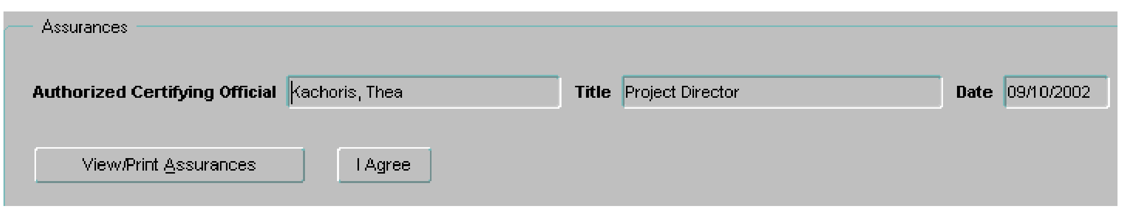
2. In this tab, press the "**View/Print Assurances**" button. This will open a new window containing the text of the Assurances. You may print the Assurances or read them on the screen. When you are finished, close the window.

3. Click on the "**I agree**" button.

4. An assurances window will appear. Click on the "**Accept**" button.



5. The date field will be automatically filled with the current date.



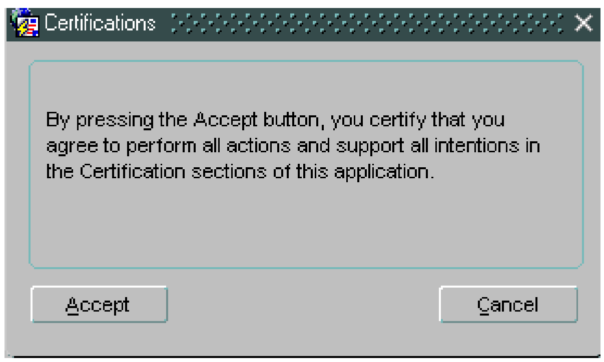
3.5.3 Certifications

The name of the authorized certifying official for the Certifications can be the same person as the authorizing certifying official for the Assurances or a different person. This person can be selected here by clicking on the arrow and selecting a person on file. If the person needed is not on file, he/she must create his/her own *eGrants* account.

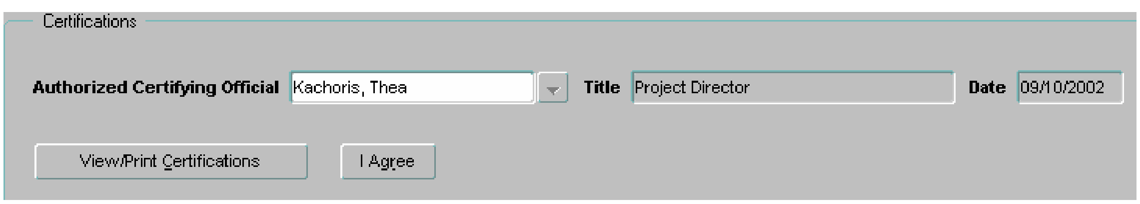
To electronically sign the Certifications, complete the following steps:

1. The authorized certifying official must log onto *eGrants* and access the application.
2. In this tab, press the "**View/Print Certifications**" button. This will bring up a new window. You may print the Certifications or read them on your computer screen. When you are finished, close the window.
3. Click on the "**I agree**" button.

4. A certifications window will appear. Click on the "**Accept**" button.



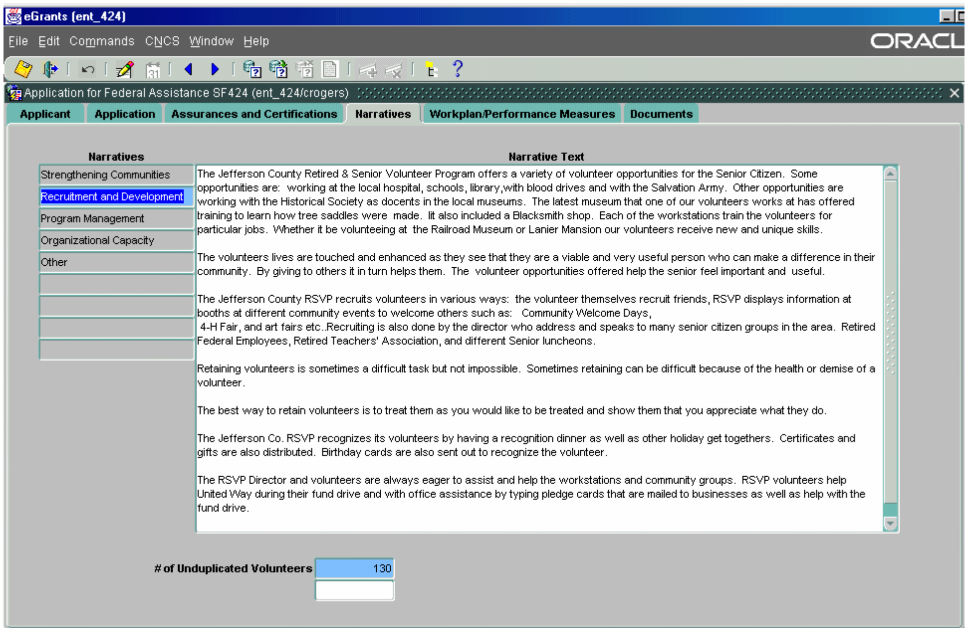
5. The date field will be automatically filled with the current date.



3.6 Narrative Tab

Use the **Narrative Tab** to enter your application narratives, and to indicate the total number of volunteers enrolled in your project.

On the left of the screen you will see the five **Narrative categories** that are required for a Senior Corps grant application. On the right you will see the **Narrative Text** field. For each Narrative category, enter your information into the Narrative Text field that is next to it. You will see that when you highlight each of the categories, the text field changes depending on what you have entered.

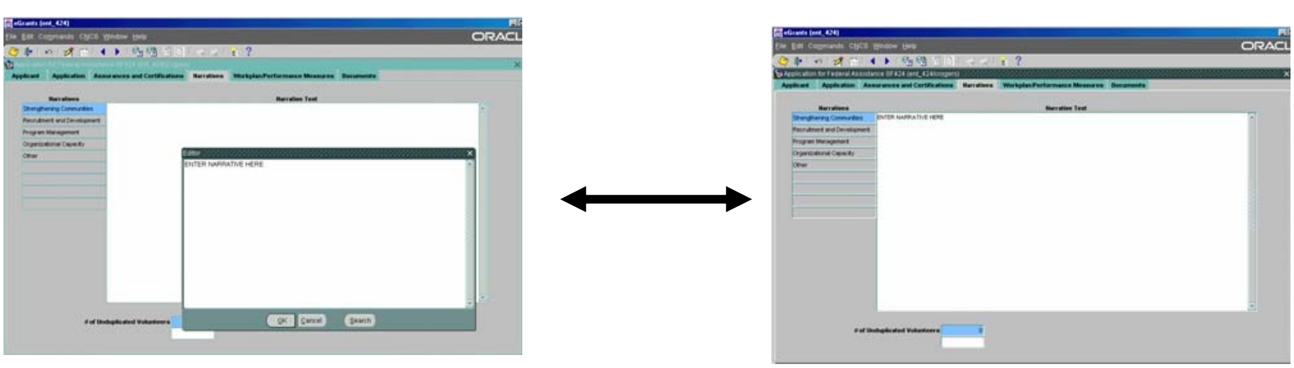


3.6.1 Entering Text

There are two methods for entering text into the Narrative field:.

Method #1:

Double click on the white space and open the Editor Box. Begin typing your narrative directly into the Editor. When you are finished, click on **OK** and the text will appear in your Narrative Field.



Method #2:

Compose your narrative in a Microsoft Word (or other word processing) document and then “Cut and Paste” it into the Narrative Text field. To do this, follow these steps:

1. Compose your narrative in a Word document.
2. Log into *eGrants* and click on the **Narratives Tab.**
3. Open the Word document that contains your narrative
4. Highlight the text you want to copy
5. Go to the **Edit** menu and select “**Copy**”
6. Go to *eGrants* and put your cursor in the appropriate narrative field
7. Go to the Edit menu again and select “**Paste**.”

Helpful Hints:

If eGrants does not accept your information, you may be trying to put too much text into the field. Try the Cut and Paste operation again, but move a smaller amount of information at a time.

Be sure to ***Spell Check*** your document while it is in Word. eGrants cannot perform this function.

EGrants* does not accept most Word formatting features.** To ensure that your information is copied correctly, ***do not use Bold, Italics, Bullets, Underlines or other formatting tools.

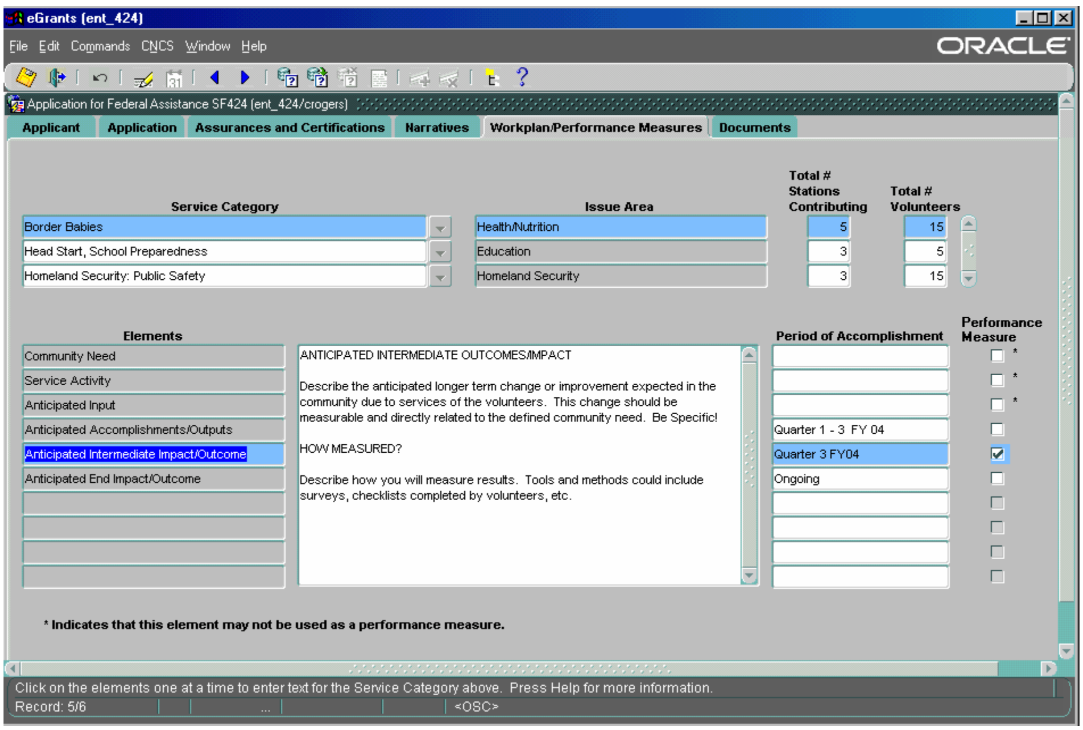
3.6.1 Total Number of Unduplicated Volunteers

Beneath the Narrative field, you will see a box for Total Number of Unduplicated Volunteers. In this box, enter the total number of individuals enrolled throughout your project. These should be “unduplicated” numbers: if an individual is volunteering in two or more activities, count that person only once.

3.7 <u>Work Plan/Performance Measures</u>

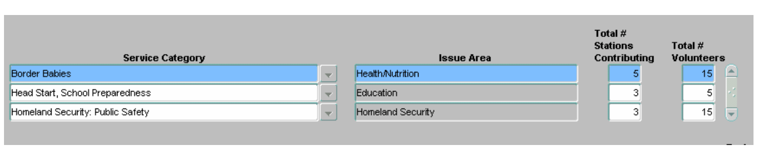
The Work Plans for all Senior Corps programs are organized by Service Category. To complete your Work Plan, select the Service Categories that correspond to your project's goals and objectives. For each Service Category, you will:

1. Enter the number of Volunteer Stations that contribute to that category;
2. Enter the total number of Volunteers who contribute to that category;
3. Complete your description of the appropriate elements;
4. Select the elements, if any, you propose to be used as Performance Measures
5. Enter the Periods of Accomplishment (by element).



To begin your Work Plan, follow these steps:

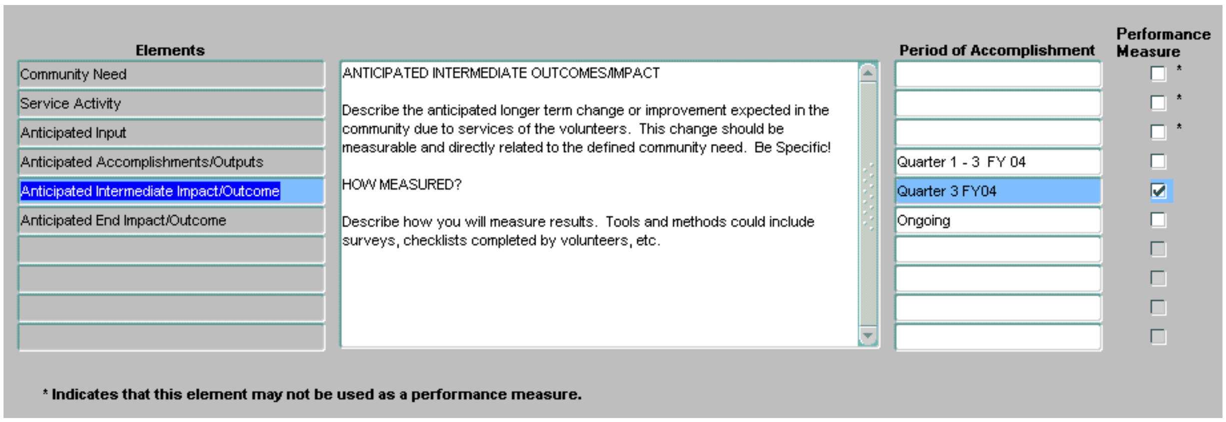
1. Select a **Service Category** by placing your cursor in the first blank space below the "Service Category" heading. Click on the arrow to the right to get to a drop-down list, and select the correct category. ***Note: Once you select the Service Category, notice that the "Issue Area" field is automatically filled in. You do NOT have to enter anything in this field.***



2. Indicate the **Total # of Stations** Contributing to that Category by entering the appropriate number in the field provided.

3. Indicate the **Total # of Volunteers** Contributing to that Category by entering the appropriate number in the field provided.

4. After you have selected your Service Category, highlight each appropriate **element** for that category**,** and in the text field provided to the right, enter the **narrative** that addresses each element as follows. ***(For tips on entering narrative into a text field, see Section 3.6.1)***



5. To select an element to propose as a Performance Measure, check the box to the right of the narrative field. **Note that you can only select Performance Measures from the Anticipated Inputs, Intermediate Outcomes or End Outcomes elements. eGrants will not accept a check mark in any other box**.

6. For each element, enter the **Period of Accomplishment** as appropriate. Using federal fiscal quarters (Oct-Dec is 1st Quarter, Jan-March is 2nd Quarter, etc.), enter when each element is expected to be accomplished. Multiple quarters are okay for ongoing activities.

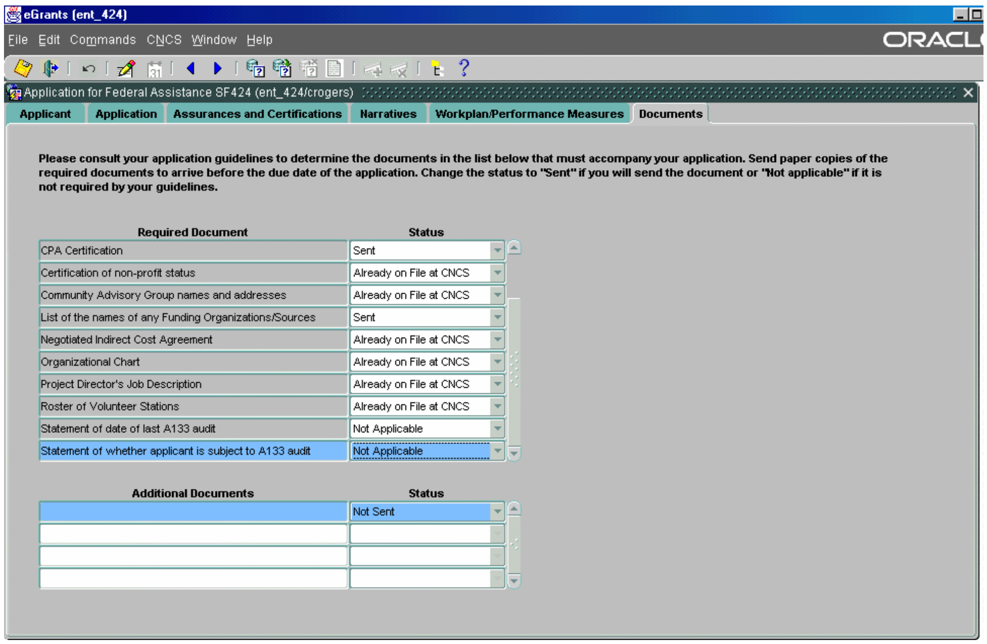
7. When you have completed the first Work Plan, you may work on the second one by repeating steps 1 – 5. Keep repeating these steps until you have entered all of the Work Plans needed for your project.

> **TIP**: ***Save*** after each service category. This section can be difficult to work with. By saving often, it will ensure that you will not lose any data you have entered.

If you need to enter more than three Service Categories, you may "**insert a record**" by placing your cursor in the bottom field, and clicking on the green plus sign in the toolbar. A new blank field will become available.

3.8 Documents Tab

The **Documents Tab** includes a list of the documents that are required for your application, but must be submitted separately from eGrants.



For each required document, select the appropriate status from the drop-down list:

> Select ***"Already on File"*** if the document is already on file with the Corporation and a duplicate document is not needed
>
> Select ***"Not Applicable"*** if your application guidelines do not require that you send the document with your application.
>
> Select ***"Sent"*** if you have sent the document listed to the Corporation. Documents must be submitted within 5 business days of the submission of your application.

If any required documents are listed as "***Not Sent,"*** you will not be able to Verify or Submit your application.

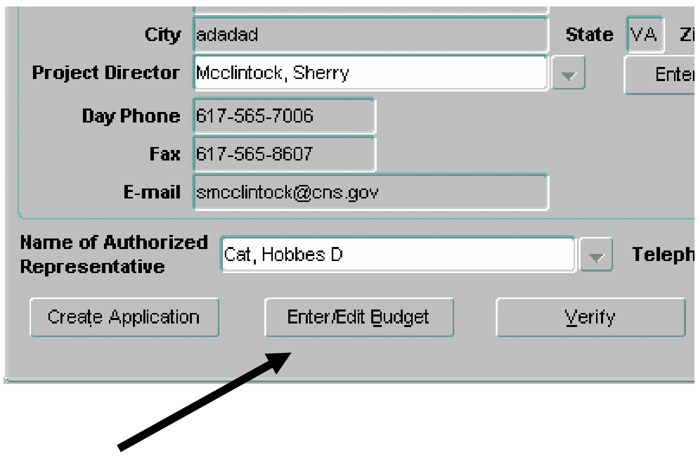
If you have documents that you are sending to the Corporation, but that are not required, you may list them in the **Additional Documents** section. Type in the name of the document, and select the appropriate status.

If you have questions about any of the required documents, refer to the Senior Corps application instructions or contact your State Office.

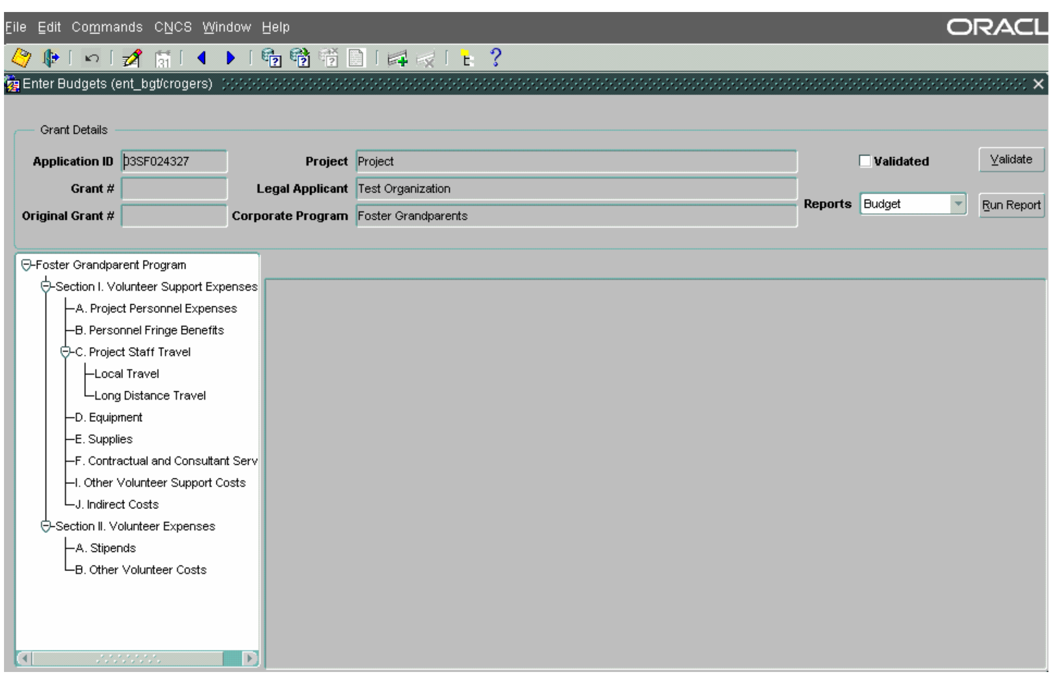
3.9 Entering a Budget

Open the Enter Budgets Screen

To enter your budget, click on the "**Enter/Edit Budget"** button at the bottom of the Applicant Tab on the **Application for Federal Assistance 424** screen.

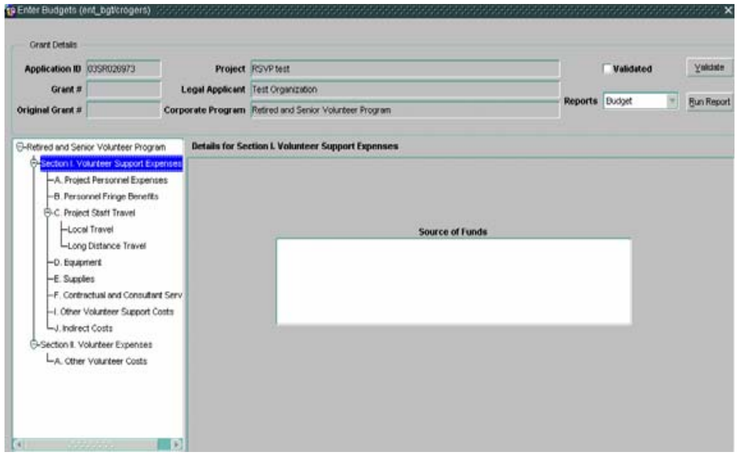


This will take you in the **Enter Budgets** screen (seen below for a Foster Grandparents grant application). Note that most of the screened is grayed out. This will change as soon as you highlight a budget category or sub-category.



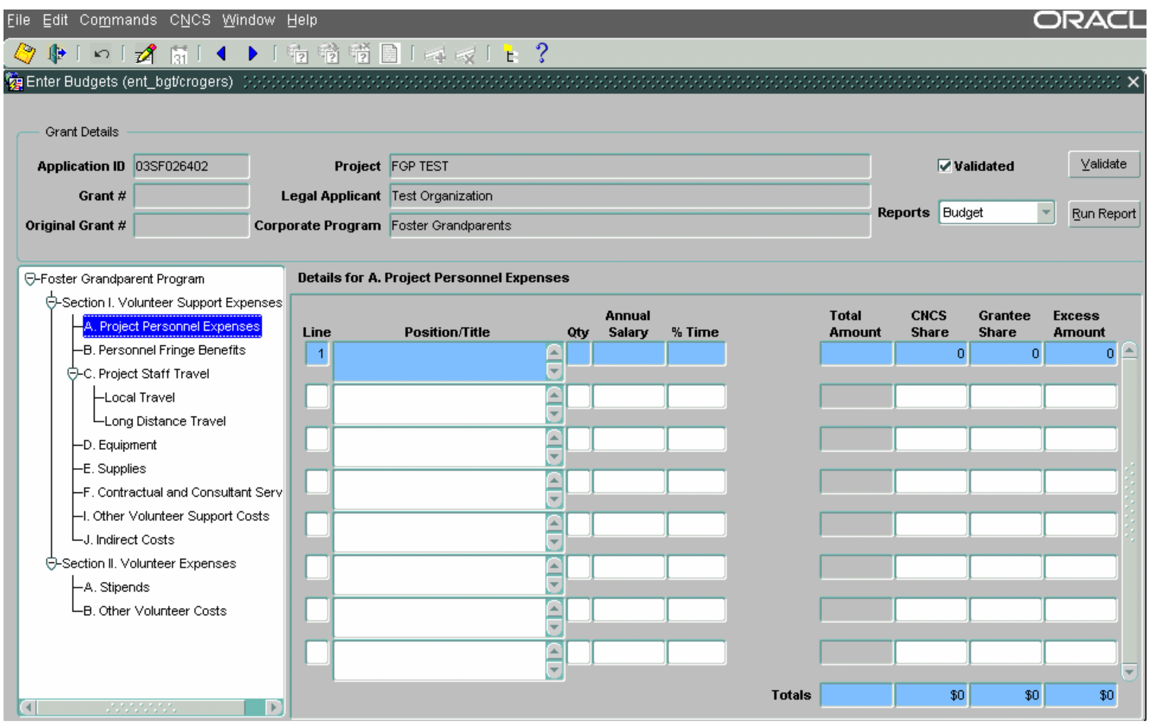
Source of Funds

When you highlight Section I or Section II of the budget, you will notice a text box appear entitled **Source of Funds**. ***This field is entirely optional for Senior Corps.*** You may tell us the source of your non-Federal funds if desired. If you do so, the information will appear at the end of your budget narrative.



Select a Budget Category

On the left side of the **Enter Budgets** screen, you will see a menu tree with a list of budget categories appropriate for your program. To enter your budget details, put your cursor on each of the budget categories or sub-categories. You will notice that the fields to the right change depending on which category or sub-category you have highlighted. ***(If your cursor is on a main heading and/or section title, the screen to the right will appear entirely gray.)***



3. Enter Budget Information

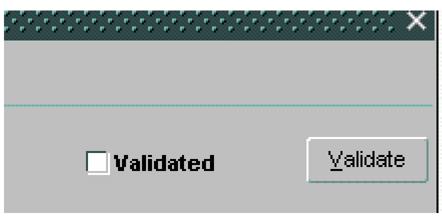
For each budget category, enter the budget details, according to the application guidelines for your program. (***See section 3.9.2 for Senior Companion/Foster Grandparents budget guidelines, and section 3.9.3 for RSVP budget guidelines.)*** You must enter a value for the CNCS share and the Grantee share. You may also enter an excess amount. The total of CNCS share, grantee share, and excess amount must equal the Total Amount.

4. Save

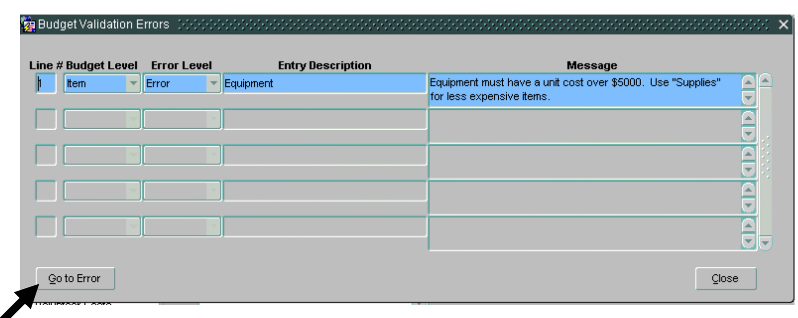
Remember to save often! You can return to this screen at any time to continue working on your budget.

5. Validate the Budget

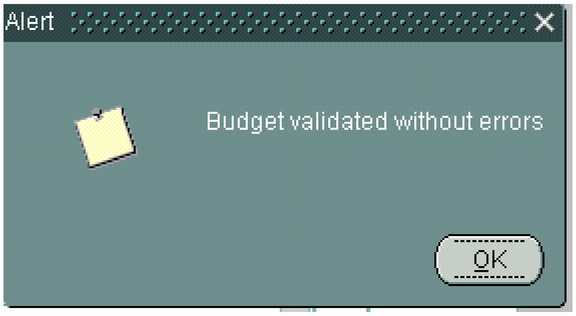
Before you can submit your application to the Corporation, you must have a valid budget that follows the guidelines for the program to which you are applying. For example, the grantee share may need to be a minimum percentage of the total amount. Before you can validate the budget, you must **Save**. To verify that your budget meets program guidelines, click the **Validate** button at the top right of the screen.

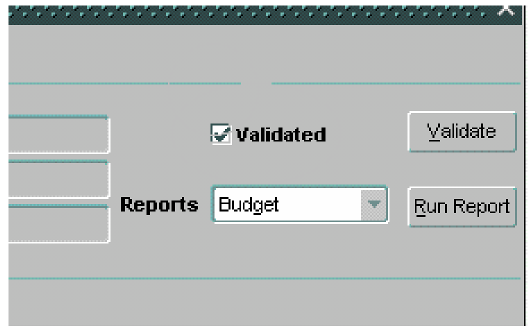


If there are any problems with the budget, a window listing the problems will be displayed. Note all of the corrections that are needed.



Click on “**Go to Error**” and make the adjustments to the budget and attempt to validate again. If your budget is valid, a message will confirm this:





Notice that the “**Validated**” checkbox is now checked. If you make any changes to the budget after validating, you will need to validate again.

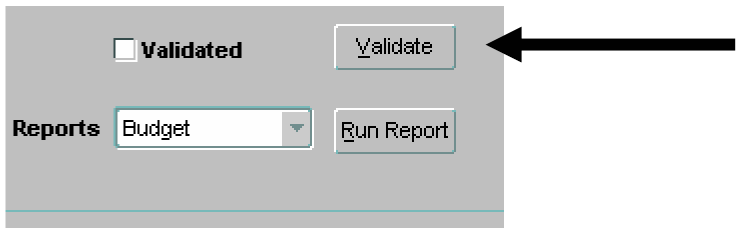
The information that you enter in this screen becomes both your budget cover sheet and your budget narrative. A separate form is not required for the budget narrative.

3.10 Submitting Your Application

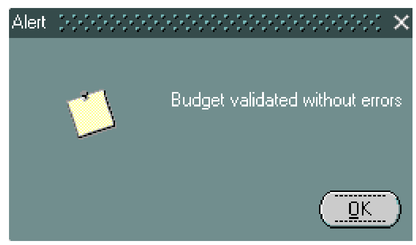
3.10.1 Validating and Verifying Your Application

In order to submit your application, your budget must be validated and your application must be verified. If there are any errors, you will not be able to submit your application.

- **To validate the budget,** click on the "**Enter/Edit Budget**" button from the **Application for Federal Assistance (SF424**). Click on the "**Validate**" button from the **Enter Budgets** screen.

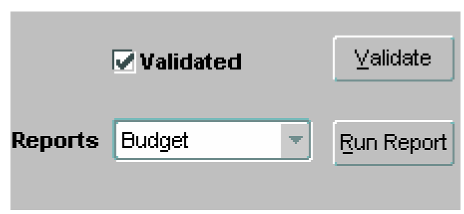


If there are no errors, you will receive a message:

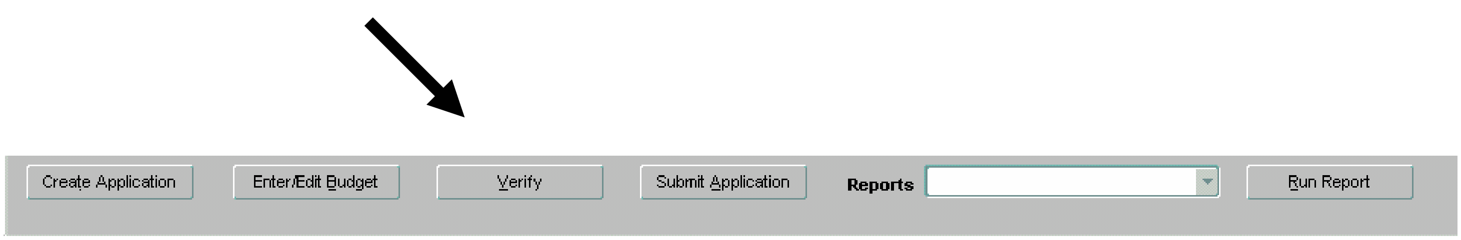


If there are errors in your budget, a box will be displayed with each error. Correct the errors and ***re-validate the budget until there are no errors***.

The system indicates that the budget has been validated in the upper right of the screen with a check mark in the "validated" box.



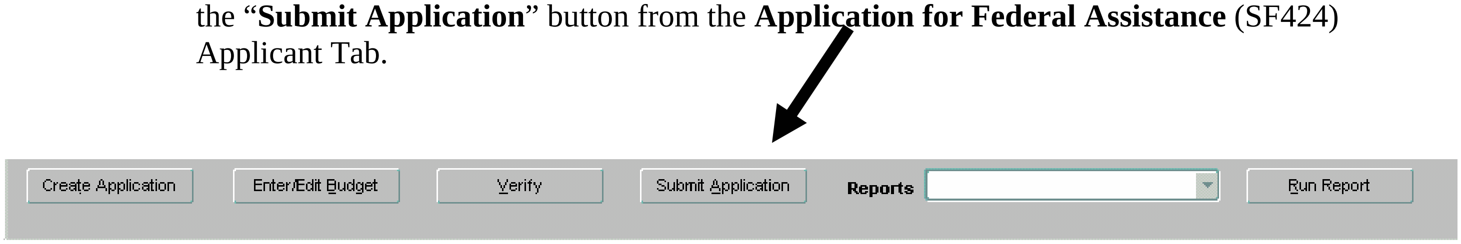
- **To verify the Application for Federal Assistance (SF424),** click on the "**Verify**" button from the **Application for Federal Assistance** (SF424).



If there are no errors, you will receive a message that there are no errors. If there are errors in your application, a box will be displayed with each error. Correct the errors and ***re-verify the application until there are no errors***.

3.10.2 Submitting Your Application

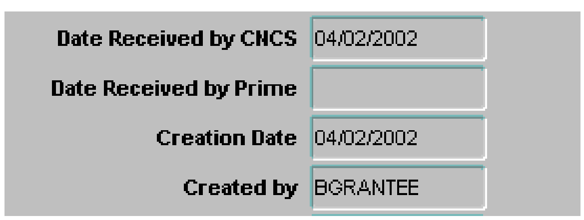
When the application is verified, submit your application to the Corporation by clicking the "**Submit Application**" button from the **Application for Federal Assistance** (SF424) Applicant Tab.



You will receive a pop-up window that says your application has been successfully submitted to the Corporation. In addition, you will note that:

1. The status of your application changed from "Grantee Initial Entry" to "Submitted to CNCS" in the **Application for Federal Assistance** screen.

2. The date the application was submitted is entered in the "Received by CNCS" date field in the **Application for Federal Assistance** screen.



Once an application has been submitted to the Corporation you cannot make any changes to the application.