

Nevada State Plan for Maximizing Federal Assistance

NEVADA GOVERNOR'S OFFICE OF FEDERAL ASSISTANCE

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Executive Summary

Federal grants play a critical role in funding essential programs across Nevada, including healthcare, education, infrastructure development, and public safety. However, Nevada has consistently underperformed in securing federal funding compared to other states, ranking near the bottom in per capita federal grant awards. This underperformance has resulted from several systemic issues, including fragmented grant management systems, insufficient coordination across agencies, and legislative barriers such as *supplanting* provisions in Nevada Revised Statute (NRS) 353.335, which have discouraged state agencies from aggressively pursuing federal grants.

In response to these challenges, Nevada has adopted a new state plan to maximize federal assistance, focusing on proactive grant-seeking, building internal capacity, and fostering collaboration across state, local, and tribal governments, as well as with the private sector. This plan is centered around three key areas:

Capacity Building: The plan emphasizes training and providing resources to state agencies to strengthen their ability to apply for and manage federal grants. The Governor's Office of Federal Assistance (OFA) will also serve as a prime recipient and pass-through entity to support local governments and nonprofits in accessing federal funds.

Centralization and Streamlining: Nevada will implement a Centralized Grant Management System (CGMS) to consolidate grant application, tracking, and reporting processes across all state agencies. This system will ensure real-time monitoring, standardized procedures, and enhanced data sharing, leading to greater efficiency and transparency.

Collaboration and Partnerships: The plan promotes fostering partnerships with local governments, tribal entities, nonprofits, and the private sector to maximize the impact of federal funds. Public-private partnerships will be particularly critical for securing federal discretionary grants and supporting long-term economic development.

The strategic goals are broken down into short-term, medium-term, and long-term objectives. In the short term, the plan aims to increase the number of federal grants awarded to Nevada by 10%. Over the medium and long term, it seeks to improve grant management capacity and foster a statewide culture of continuous improvement and collaboration.

The plan also prioritizes compliance through robust monitoring and advisory support, ensuring that Nevada meets all federal grant requirements and avoids financial penalties. The Nevada Advisory Council on Federal Assistance will provide ongoing advocacy on behalf of the state and support, while OFA will develop compliance tools, such as self-risk assessment questionnaires and monitoring schedules.

A key element of the plan's success is the Nevada GRANTS Repository, which will act as an interim data collection system until the automated CORE.NV CGMS system is fully implemented. This repository will track all federal awards, facilitate monitoring, and enhance transparency.

This state plan marks a turning point in Nevada's approach to federal funding. By addressing historical barriers and implementing structured processes, Nevada is well-positioned to increase its share of federal dollars, improve services for residents, and relieve pressure on local budgets. The plan provides a comprehensive roadmap for ensuring that federal funds are effectively utilized to support the state's growth and development.

1. Background and Overview of Federal Assistance

Federal grants are a crucial source of funding for state programs across the county, and Nevada is no exception. These funds support a wide range of essential services, including healthcare, education, infrastructure development, public safety, and community services. In a typical year, the federal government distributes between \$700 and \$800 billion to states and localities through more than 1,200 different programs (Nevada Grant Lab, 2023). Despite the vital role these funds play, Nevada consistently

ranks near the bottom in per capita federal funding across numerous key sectors. For example, Nevada ranks 45th overall in federal funding per capita, and even lower in specific categories like education (54th), healthcare (55th, excluding Medicaid), and income security (51st) (Nevada Grant Lab, 2023)¹.

Historically, Nevada's underperformance in securing federal funds has been driven by several factors. First, the state's smaller population relative to other states often puts it at a disadvantage in formula-based grant programs, which allocate funds based on population size. Second, the state has struggled with fragmented grant management systems and insufficient coordination between state agencies, making it difficult to streamline grant applications and track federal awards. Nevada's grant-seeking efforts have been largely reactive, with agencies applying for grants as they become available rather than proactively identifying funding opportunities that align with the state's strategic priorities.

1.1 Historical Barriers and Legislative Challenges

Several key evaluations and task forces have highlighted these challenges over the years. Governor Guinn's Task Force on Tax Policy in 2002 and the Nevada Spending and Government Efficiency (SAGE) Commission in 2010 both pointed to the state's underperformance in federal grant acquisition (Guinn Center, 2021)². These task forces underscored the need for more centralized grant management processes and better coordination across agencies. In response to these concerns, the Nevada Legislature passed Assembly Bill 445 (AB455) in 2021, which created the Governor's Office of Federal Assistance (OFA). OFA was established with a clear mandate: to develop a statewide plan to maximize federal assistance, centralize grant management processes, and improve Nevada's overall competitiveness in securing federal grants.

While the establishment of OFA marked a significant step forward, deeper systemic changes are still necessary. One of the most pressing legislative barriers Nevada faces is the restrictive language found in its state budgetary laws, Nevada Revised Statute (NRS) 353.335, which addressed the Authorized Expenditures Act. Under this law, state agencies that receive new federal grants may see their fund appropriations reduced as a result of the new funds—known as the “supplanting” issues. This has historically disincentivized state agencies from aggressively pursuing federal grants because they face the risk of losing state funds when new federal money is secured.

NRS 353.335, which governs how agencies' budgets are adjusted when they receive federal funds, includes language that effectively reduces the general fund appropriation to an agency when federal funds are received. This reduction is designed to prevent *supplanting* or replacing state funds with federal funds. While the statute includes a provision allowing agencies to demonstrate that the new grant funds will not supplant existing state funding, the burden of proof rests heavily on the agency. This administrative burden and uncertainty around the approval of exceptions to the supplanting rule discourage agencies from aggressively seeking new federal funding opportunities, even when such grants could significantly benefit the state.

The impact of this legislative barrier cannot be overstated. This supplanting concern has created a culture where state agencies are hesitant to pursue additional federal funding, even when it could fill critical funding gaps. Agencies are often reluctant to take on the additional workload that comes with federal grants without a guarantee of sufficient resources to manage the increased demands. Nevada continues to leave funding *on the table* and continues to see shortfalls in funding that places additional pressure on local taxes and fees, and leaves key programs, especially in healthcare and education, underfunded.

1.2 Nevada's Philosophy in Seeking Grants

Given the various challenges Nevada has faced in securing federal funds, the state must adopt a more strategic approach and proactive approach to grant-seeking. In the past, Nevada relied heavily on a

¹ Nevada Grant Lab. (2023). *Getting Nevadans Their Fair Share of Federal Grants: Reforms, Improvements, and Investments*. Retrieved from [Nevada Grant Lab](#).

² Guinn Center for Policy Priorities. (2021). *Nevada Federal Grant Performance Report*. Retrieved from Guinn Center.

reactive strategy, pursuing grants only as they became available. This approach is no longer sustainable. As outlined in Governor Lombardo's Three-Year Strategic Plan, the state must shift toward a more integrated and intentional strategy that aligns federal grant opportunities with the broader goals of economic growth, workforce development, healthcare, and infrastructure improvement (Lombard, J., 2023)³. The strategic priorities outlined in the Governor's plan emphasize the need for Nevada to "create jobs and support economic development, protect our most vulnerable residents, and invest in education and infrastructure". This vision requires a more coordinated effort in securing federal funding, ensuring that federal grants are utilized to advance the state's priorities, including housing, transportation, healthcare access, and education reform.

This state plan reflects this shift in philosophy. It emphasizes building the capacity of state agencies to apply for and manage federal grants, improving inter-agency coordination, and leveraging public-private partnerships to enhance Nevada's ability to compete for discretionary grants, and a more balanced approach that combines proactive and reactive strategies to ensure that Nevada not only responds to available federal funding opportunities but also actively seeks grants that align with the state's long-term strategic priorities. By adopting a proactive and collaborative approach, Nevada can ensure that federal funds are used to their fullest potential, benefiting the state's residents and economy.

The creation of this state plan marks a turning point in Nevada's approach to federal funding. The plan addresses key systemic issues identified in previous audits and evaluations and offers a roadmap for overcoming them. It is designed to position Nevada as a competitive force in securing federal grants, with the goal of increasing the state's federal funding per capita, improving services for Nevada residents, and relieving pressure on local budgets.

At its core, this plan focuses on three key strategic focus areas:

(1) Capacity Building

A critical aspect of Nevada's new philosophy is building the capacity of state agencies to effectively apply for and manage federal grants. Creating more efficient government operations and improving accountability across state agencies are top priorities. To support this, the state must provide specialized training, tools, and resources to help state agencies strengthen their grant-seeking efforts and compliance with federal requirements, including:

- Investing in grant writing and management training for state employees, ensuring they have the knowledge and skills needed to navigate the complexities of federal grants,
- Establishing dedicated grant managers and writers within the centralized grant office to ensure focused efforts on securing federal funds and building internal capacity for grant management, and
- Enhancing internal systems for monitoring and reporting grant performance to ensure compliance with federal regulations and to improve transparency and accountability.

Additionally, the Governor's Office of Federal Assistance (OFA) will serve as the prime-recipient and pass-through entity for federal grants, further enhancing Nevada's capacity to manage federal funds. By acting as a pass-through entity, OFA will facilitate the distribution of federal funds to subrecipients, such as local governments, nonprofits, tribal entities, and other state agencies. This approach ensures that Nevada's stakeholders are supported in their efforts to secure and manage federal funding.

- As a **prime recipient**, OFA will manage large-scale federal grants that benefit statewide initiatives. By holding this responsibility, the office will directly engage with federal agencies to ensure that Nevada maximizes the impact of its federal funds.
- In its **pass-through** capacity, OFA will distribute federal funds to subrecipients while providing technical assistance, compliance support, and oversight to ensure that these funds are used effectively at the local level. This role is vital in empowering local and tribal

³ Lombardo, J. (2023). *Governor's Three-Year Plan: Strategic Priorities for 2023-2023*. Nevada Governor's Office.

governments and nonprofits to participate in federal grant programs without being overwhelmed by the administrative and compliance burdens.

These capacity-building efforts will enable Nevada to apply for a broader range of federal funding and ensure agencies and subrecipients are well-equipped to manage the funds effectively once they are awarded. In turn, the state will maximize its ability to secure federal dollars that support job creation, public services, and infrastructure development.

(2) Centralization and Streamlining

Creating efficient government operations is a key priority. Nevada will implement a Centralized Grant Management System (CGMS) that consolidates the grant application, tracking, and reporting processes across all state agencies. This system will streamline operations, reduce redundancies, and provide better oversight of grant funds, ensuring that federal dollars are spent efficiently and in compliance with federal guidelines. The CGMS will support:

- Real-time monitoring and reporting: Agencies will be able to track the status of their grants and ensure they meet federal compliance deadlines.
- Standardized processes: A unified system will provide consistent procedures for grant applications, reducing errors and improving the chances of securing federal funds.
- Enhanced data sharing: By centralizing grant data, the state can ensure that information is readily available to all relevant agencies, supporting better decision-making and inter-agency collaboration.

These improvements align with Governor Lombardo's goals of enhancing government accountability and improving the transparency of state operations. By centralizing grant management, Nevada will alleviate administrative burdens on state agencies while enhancing the efficiency and effectiveness of its grant-seeking efforts.

(3) Collaboration and Partnerships

One of the key components of Nevada's philosophy is fostering greater collaboration between state agencies, local and tribal governments, nonprofits, and the private sector. According to Governor Lombardo's plan, public-private partnerships are essential for driving long-term economic growth in the state. Federal grants can play a significant role in facilitating these partnerships, particularly in areas such as infrastructure development, housing, and education. This state plan supports a more coordinated approach to pursuing federal grants, emphasizing the need to:

- Leverage public-private partnerships to maximize the impact of federal dollars, particularly in infrastructure and workforce development projects
- Strengthen relationships with local and tribal governments to identify shared priorities and pursue joint funding opportunities, and
- Collaborate with nonprofits to ensure that federal funds reach Nevada's most vulnerable populations, addressing critical needs in healthcare, housing, and education.

By building a more collaborative environment for grant-seeking, Nevada can ensure that federal funds are utilized in ways that benefit the entire state, from urban centers to rural and tribal communities.

The strategic goals and objectives laid out in this plan aim to create a culture of continuous improvement and a collaborative environment for grant-seeking. With this shift, Nevada can ensure that federal funds are utilized in ways that benefit the entire state, from urban centers to rural and tribal communities.

1.3 A New Approach to Federal Funding

The creation of this state plan marks a turning point in Nevada's approach to federal funding. The plan addresses key systemic issues identified in previous audits and evaluations, and it offers a roadmap for overcoming them. At its core, this plan is designed to position Nevada as a competitive force in securing

federal grants, with the goal of increasing the state's federal funding per capita, improving services for Nevada residents, and relieving pressure on local budgets.

1.4 Overview of Nevada's Federal Assistance Approach

Nevada's federal assistance strategy focuses on key areas that align with the state's growth and development goals. At its core, this plan focuses on three key areas:

Focus Areas for Federal Grant Participation: The state prioritizes areas such as economic growth, job creation, and innovation, while emphasizing sectors like energy, healthcare, education, and homeland security.

Prioritization Framework: A structured framework helps determine which grants to pursue based on state needs, ensuring that resources are allocated to the most impactful opportunities.

Alignment with State Policies: All federal grant efforts are aligned with Nevada's broader policy objectives, including renewable energy, affordable housing, healthcare expansion, and public safety initiatives.

Collaboration is at the core of Nevada's approach to maximizing federal assistance. OFA and the Nevada Advisory Council are working to foster greater collaboration not only between state agencies but also with local governments, tribal entities, nonprofits, and private sector partners. By building a more connected and transparent grant management ecosystem, Nevada can ensure that funding opportunities are shared equitably and that duplication efforts are minimized.

1.5 Strengthening Capacity and Building a Centralized Grant Management System

One of the key objectives of the Nevada OFA is to build the capacity of state agencies to not only apply for federal grants but also manage them effectively once awarded. Many agencies in Nevada face barriers such as limited staff, insufficient training, and complex regulatory requirements that impede their ability to compete for and manage grants. OFA recognizes that overcoming these challenges requires a structured and coordinated approach.

To address these barriers, OFA is informing the development of a Centralized Grant Management System (CGMS) in partnership with CoreNV. This system is designed to unify grant management processes across all state agencies, creating a platform where grants can be tracked, monitored, and reported in a streamlined manner. The CGMS will be an essential tool in reducing the administrative burden on agencies, allowing them to focus on more strategic aspects of grant management, such as identifying funding opportunities and ensuring compliance with federal regulations. In addition to the implementation of the CORE.NV grants module, OFA will also host comprehensive training workshops, webinars, and peer-learning networks with state employees. These initiatives will ensure that staff across all state agencies are equipped with the knowledge and tools necessary to manage grants effectively. Additionally, OFA's online resources will provide on-demand training resources, accessible to all state employees, further enhancing their capacity to manage federal grants.

As part of its broader strategy to improve grant-seeking efforts, OFA is focusing on three key areas:

Proactive vs. Reactive Grant-Seeking: Nevada is shifting from a reactive approach, where grants are pursued only when available, to a proactive stance. This involves anticipating future funding opportunities, aligning them with state priorities, and actively seeking grants that match these needs.

Federal Funding Grant Performance: Nevada's past performance in securing federal funds has been below the national average. Limited state capacity and fragmented coordination among agencies have been contributing factors. The state is now focused on addressing these challenges by improving internal processes and collaboration across sectors.

Collaboration and Coordination: OFA is committed to fostering collaboration with state agencies, local governments, tribal government, and nonprofits. These partnerships are crucial in maximizing federal assistance and ensuring that Nevada’s grant applications reflect diverse needs across sectors.

2. Strategic Goals and Objectives

OFA’s plan for federal grant management is built around a structured framework of short-, medium-, and long-term objectives. These objectives are designed to address the key challenges identified through previous audits and evaluations while capitalizing on new opportunities to maximize federal assistance.

Each phase aims to progressively improve the state’s capacity to access and manage federal funds, ultimately enhancing the impact of these funds on the state’s economic and social well-being. The strategic goals reflect the need for improved capacity, compliance, and collaboration.

2.1 Short-Term Objectives

The focus for the short-term is on immediate actions that can result in tangible outcomes, particularly in areas of pressing need, such as healthcare, education, and workforce development.

Goal: Increase the number of federal grants awarded to Nevada by 10% of the next year.

Target Areas: Healthcare, education, and workforce development.

Actions: Launch targeted training workshops for state agencies, expand grant technical assistance, writing, and management support, and introduce basic compliance measures to streamline the grant application process (e.g., statewide guidance memos).

Measurable Outcomes:

Number of grants (discretionary and non-discretionary) awarded to the State of Nevada.

Percentage increase in grant funds secured.

Number of workshops and training sessions conducted for state agencies.

2.2 Medium-Term Objectives

The medium-term focus is on building sustainable systems and improving the overall capacity of state agencies to manage federal funds more efficiently.

Goal: Strengthen grant management capacity by supporting the implementation of the Centralized Grant Management System (CGMS) across all state agencies.

Target Areas: Grant application processes, compliance, financial tracking, and inter-agency coordination.

Actions: Roll out the CGMS to streamline grant tracking, reporting, and monitoring; improve data-sharing systems between state and local agencies; and enhance compliance procedures through automated tools.

Measurable Outcomes:

Number of agencies using the CGMS.

Compliance improvement percentages across agencies.

Reduction in administrative burden for grant applications.

Improved reporting accuracy and timeliness.

2.3 Long-Term Objectives

In the long term, Nevada aims to foster a culture of continuous improvement, collaboration, and increase competitiveness for discretionary grants.

Goal: Enhance Nevada’s ability to compete for discretionary grants by building a statewide culture of collaboration, compliance, and innovation.

Target Areas: Discretionary grants, public-private partnerships, and long-term economic development projects.

Actions: Foster partnerships with local governments, private sector entities, and community organizations to pursue large-scale, transformative federal grants; establish best practices for grant management across all sectors; and continuously improve grant application strategies base on past performance.

Measurable Outcomes:

Number of discretionary grants pursued and awarded.

Total federal funds received.

Jobs created through federal-funded projects.

Improvement in statewide ranking for federal funding per capita.

Outcomes Chart				
Phase	Strategic Goal	Actions	Measurable Outcomes	Timeline
Short-Term	Increase number of federal grants by 10%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Conduct workshops for state agencies (2) Expand grant support (3) Streamline compliance measures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) 10% increase in grants awarded (2) Number of workshops conducted (3) Number of monitoring site visits conducted (4) Number of site visit findings (5) Percentage increase in federal funds secured 	1 Year
Medium-Term	Strengthen grant management capacity via CGMS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Implement CGMS across all state agencies (2) Improve data-sharing protocols (3) Automate compliance tracking 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Number of state agencies using CGMS (2) Compliance improvement percentages (3) Reduction in administrative burdens (4) Improved reporting 	2-3 Years

			accuracy and timeliness	
Long-Term	Build a statewide culture for competing for discretionary grants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Foster public-private partnerships (2) Establish best practices (3) Create continuous improvement processes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Number of discretionary grants awarded (2) Jobs created through grants (state positions?) (3) Increase in total federal funds received by state agencies (4) Improvements in Nevada's federal funding per capita ranking 	4-5 Years and beyond

2.4 Plan for Achieving Goals

The strategic goals will be achieved through a coordinated effort among state agencies, local governments, and tribal partners, supported by sufficient resources and clearly defined responsibilities.

Timelines	Each goal is accompanied by timelines for completion with goals being set within a short-, medium-, and long-term period.
Responsible Agencies	Each objective will be spearheaded by designated partners in coordination with the Governor's Office of Federal Assistance. The CGMS rollout, for example, will be managed by CoreNV and in collaboration with OFA, while grant writing and compliance workshops will be facilitated by OFA and supported by various partners with capacity to provide subject matter expertise.
Coordination Mechanism	<p>Regular inter-agency meetings, workshops, and feedback loops to ensure that all stakeholders are aligned with the state's priorities.</p> <p>Data-sharing and real-time monitoring of grant applications.</p>
Required Resources	Achieving these goals will require an investment in personnel, including grant writers and compliance officers, technology, i.e., the CGMS software solution, and expertise to include training and capacity building.

Ensuring Compliance through Monitoring and Advisory Support

Effective grant management goes beyond the successful application for and securing of funds—it requires a sustained commitment to compliance throughout the lifecycle of the grant. Federal regulations surrounding grants are complex and continuously evolving, posing significant challenges for state agencies that must adhere to strict guidelines on reporting, financial management, and program execution. Non-compliance with federal rules can result in costly financial penalties, jeopardizing ongoing funding, and limit the state's

ability to secure future grants. Recognizing the critical importance of compliance, the Governor's Office of Federal Assistance has made it a central pillar of its strategic plan.

The Importance of Compliance in Federal Grant Management

Federal grants come with stringent requirements that govern how funds must be used, how performance is reported, and how projects are evaluated. These regulations are designed to ensure transparency, accountability, and effectiveness in the use of federal dollars. Non-compliance—whether due to mismanagement of funds, late reporting, or failure to meet program objectives—can lead to serious consequences, including:

Financial Penalties: Federal agencies may require the return of misused funds or impose fines for non-compliance, draining state resources and harming programs.

De-obligation of Funds: Unspent or mismanaged funds can be "de-obligated," meaning they are returned to the federal government, which deprives the state of crucial financial resources.

Ineligibility for Future Grants: States or agencies with poor compliance records may be deemed ineligible for future grant opportunities, severely limiting the potential for securing future federal funding.

To address these risks, OFA is focused on creating a robust compliance infrastructure that ensures state agencies meet all federal regulations, including financial oversight, timely reporting, and adherence to programmatic requirements. Compliance is not simply a back-office function but a critical enabler of long-term success in securing and utilizing federal funds.

Monitoring as a Key Component of Compliance

A core strategy for ensuring compliance is the implementation of a comprehensive monitoring system. Monitoring allows OFA to track the performance of state agencies in managing their grants, ensuring that all requirements are met and that potential issues are identified early. To achieve this, OFA has established a systematic framework for internal monitoring within state agencies.

Internal Monitoring:

- OFA will collaborate with state agencies to conduct routine internal audits and assessments of grant-funded projects. This will ensure that all programs are meeting their goals, spending their funds appropriately, and complying with all federal guidelines.
- State agencies will use tools like the Centralized Grant Management System (CGMS) to document and track compliance metrics in real time, providing continuous visibility into grant activities.
- A key aspect of internal monitoring is the development of a Pre-Monitoring Self-Assessment Questionnaire, which will be rolled out across all state agencies. This self-assessment will help agencies evaluate their own practices and identify areas where they may need additional support or resources.

2.5 Role of the Nevada Advisory Council on Federal Assistance in Compliance Support

The Nevada Advisory Council on Federal Assistance plays a crucial advisory role in supporting the state's compliance efforts. Per its statutory mandate under NRS 358.040, the Council provides guidance on how state agencies can improve their compliance practices, helping to prevent potential issues before they arise. The Council's involvement in the compliance process includes:

- (1) **Developing Compliance Recommendations:** Based on the results of internal monitoring and self-assessments, the Council will provide yearly recommendations that are based on data-driven insights and aligned with federal best practices.

- (2) **Assisting in the Development of Monitoring Schedule:** The Council will work with OFA to create an annual monitoring schedule that prioritizes agencies and programs with the highest risk of non-compliance. This approach will allow the state to allocate its monitoring resources effectively, focusing on areas that require the most oversight.
- (3) **Providing Feedback on Compliance Tools and Processes:** The Council will evaluate the effectiveness of compliance tools like the CGMS and provide feedback on how these systems can be improved to better support agencies in meeting their regulatory obligations.

2.5 Training and Capacity Building for Compliance

One of the major barriers to compliance is the lack of capacity within state agencies to manage the complex regulatory landscape of federal grants. Many agencies are understaffed and lack the specialized expertise needed to navigate federal regulations. To address this, OFA is committed to offering comprehensive training programs that focus specifically on compliance management. This includes:

- (1) **Training on Federal Regulations:** state agencies will receive regular training on the latest federal grant regulations, ensuring that staff are up to date on compliance requirements. This training will cover key topics like financial management, reporting deadlines, and audit preparation.
- (2) **Workshops and Webinars on Best Practices:** OFA, in partnership with the Nevada Grant Lab and other partners, will host workshops and webinars that provide practice guidance on how to manage compliance effectively. These sessions may also include case studies on compliance failures and successes to illustrate the real-world impact of proper grant management.
- (3) **Mentorship and Technical Assistance:** OFA will provide ongoing technical assistance to state agencies, offering mentorship from compliance experts who can help agencies navigate complex federal requirements. This will ensure that even agencies with limited capacity are equipped to meet compliance obligations.

2.6 The Role of Technology in Enhancing Compliance

The Centralized Grant Management System (CGMS) plays a pivotal role in improving compliance across the state. This system will provide state agencies with the tools they need to track grant activities, report on progress, and ensure that all federal requirements are being met. The CGMS will:

- (1) **Automate Compliance Tracking:** the system will automatically flag upcoming reporting deadlines and compliance milestones, reducing the risk of missing key deadlines and ensuring that state agencies are always aware of their obligations.
- (2) **Provide Real-Time Monitoring:** with the ability to track grant activities in real time, the CGMS will allow state agencies and OFA to proactively identify potential compliance issues before they escalate.
- (3) **Streamline Reporting:** by centralizing all grant data. The CGMS will simplify the reporting process, ensuring that agencies can provide accurate, timely reports to federal agencies without the administrative burden of managing multiple systems.

2.7 A Culture of Compliance for Sustainable Success

Ensuring compliance is not a one-time effort—it requires ongoing vigilance and a commitment to continuous improvement. By placing compliance at the heart of its strategic plan, OFA aims to foster a culture of accountability and transparency across all state agencies. Through rigorous monitoring, advisory support from the Nevada Advisory Council on Federal Assistance, and the development of advanced tools like the CGMS, Nevada is well-positioned to meet the complex demands of federal grant compliance. These efforts will not only protect the state from financial penalties and funding losses but will also ensure that federal grants are used efficiently and effectively to serve the people of Nevada.

3. Policy Recommendations

3.1 Legislative and Regulatory Changes

To maximize Nevada's ability to secure and manage federal grants, several legislative and regulatory reforms are necessary to create a more supportive and efficient environment for state agencies.

First, state legislation should focus on aligning Nevada's laws with federal grant criteria. This includes state matching fund requirements and revising the supplanting language in NRS 353.335 to remove barriers that disincentivize agencies from aggressively pursuing federal funding. These changes will help remove obstacles that currently hinder Nevada's ability to compete for and utilize federal dollars effectively.

Second, Nevada should focus on streamlining grant applications by reducing bureaucratic barriers. This involves simplifying internal approval processes to speed up grant application submissions, award negotiations, and post-award management. By leveraging tools like the CORE.NV Grants Module for proposal submission, tracking, and reporting, the state can create a more efficient transparent system for managing grant applications (5-Year Strategic Plan). Such reforms would not only reduce the administrative burden but also improve the alignment of grant processes with state priorities.

3.2 Legislative Policy Adjustments

Nevada's policies must be further refined to enhance the state's eligibility for federal funds and foster stronger partnerships with the private sector. Aligning state policies with federal requirements will ensure that state agencies remain competitive in securing federal grants, particularly those that encourage collaboration across sectors. By supporting cross-sector initiatives, Nevada can improve its competitiveness in obtaining federal funding for projects like infrastructure and workforce development.

New regulations should be implemented to incentivize private-sector involvement in grant applications. Public-private partnerships are a key component of successful grant strategies, as outlined in OFAs 5-Year Strategic Plan. By fostering partnerships, Nevada can expand the scope and impact of its federal grant applications, making the state a more attractive candidate for large-scale funding.

3.3 Collaboration with the Legislature and Executive Branch

To ensure alignment across agencies, the Governor's Office of Federal Assistance will develop a formal coordination structure that fosters regular engagement between the Executive Branch and the Legislature. This structure will enable all agencies the opportunity to better align their grant-seeking efforts with broader state priorities, creating a unified and strategic approach to maximizing federal assistance, as outlined in the 5-Year Strategic Plan.

OFA will provide regular reports and briefings to both the Legislature and Executive Branch on grant opportunities, the status of applications, and the economic impacts of secured funding. This will ensure that leadership is informed about the state's progress in securing federal funds, facilitating better decision-making regarding resource allocation and strategic priorities. Ongoing recommendations for legislative sessions will be based on real-time data and feedback from agencies, ensuring Nevada's legislative framework evolves to support effective grant management.

4. Data Gathering and Assessment

4.1 Metrics for Measuring Success

A critical aspect of Nevada's strategic plan is the development of clear, measurable performance indicators to track the success of the state's federal assistance efforts. These key performance indicators (KPIs) will include:

- **Number of grant awards:** tracking the increase in the number of grants awarded to state agencies.
- **Federal funds received:** measuring the total dollar of federal funds secured annually.
- **Job creation and economic impact:** monitoring the number of jobs created and the broader economic impacts of grant-funded projects.
- **Improvement in Statewide ranking for federal funding per capita:** tracking Nevada's progress in improving its position among states for federal funding received per capita, ensuring the state secures a fair share of available federal resources relative to its population size.

Project timelines will be monitored to ensure that grant-funded projects are completed efficiently and in compliance with federal guidelines. These timelines will be crucial in identifying areas where the state can improve its ability to manage grant funds effectively.

4.2 Data Collection Methods

The state will implement a centralized database, supported by the CORE.NV. Grants Management System, to track all federal grants pursued and awarded by state agencies. This system will centralize grant data, improving transparency and allow for more effective tracking of grant performance across the state, as outlined in OFAs 5-Year Strategic Plan. By providing real-time access to grant data, agencies will be better equipped to manage and report on their federal awards, ensuring compliance with federal guidelines.

In addition to centralizing data collection, Nevada will establish data-sharing protocols between state agencies and local governments to ensure seamless coordination in the collection and analysis of grant performance data. This improved data sharing will enable more accurate and timely assessments of grant-funded projects, helping to identify best practices and areas for improvement.

A critical component of this system will be the introduction of self-risk assessment questionnaires. This tool will allow agencies to regularly evaluate their own compliance and grant management capabilities. The results of these assessments will be used to identify high-risk areas that require additional oversight or technical assistance, providing agencies with targeted resources to improve their performance.

While the Grants Management System is implemented, to enhance Nevada's management and understanding of federal funds in the immediate, OFA will implement the Nevada Grant Repository and Notification Tracking System (NV GRANTS). This interim system will serve as a centralized repository for collecting and tracking information on federal awards and spending. The NV GRANTS will provide:

- (1) A comprehensive and up-to-date list of all federal awards, ensuring better oversight of funds.
- (2) Improved integration of federal funding information into Nevada's state budget processes.
- (3) Timely information on federal awards to facilitate more strategic planning.
- (4) Greater transparency by making award data available for public and legislative review.

The NV GRANTS will enable state agencies to upload and monitor critical grant documentation, such as financial award letters, monitoring notices, and federal grant agreements, ensuring that Nevada's federal funding efforts are organized and transparent. Until the automated CORE.NV GMS becomes fully operational, the repository will provide a vital framework for collecting and managing federal award data that can then be migrated into the CGMS.

State agencies will be required to:

- (1) **Upload financial award letters and documentation** into an established SharePoint folder, following standardized naming conventions.

- (2) **Complete an inventory of federal awards** to ensure all ongoing, new, and ended grants are accurately tracked.
- (3) **Participate in monitoring reviews** conducted by OFA, where agencies will provide updates on their grant management process.

The repository will categorize grants into four key areas:

- New Prime Awards
- Continuing Prime Awards
- Ended Awards
- Subawards

In collaboration with the Governor’s Finance Office (GFO) and the Nevada State Controller’s Office, OFA will designate a point of contact within each state agency to oversee this process. These individuals will attend webinars and briefings to ensure a clear understanding of roles, responsibilities, and the importance of the repository for compliance and transparency purposes. This structure will remain in place until the automated CORE.NV system is fully implemented.

Monitoring and Reporting

OFA will conduct annual reviews, where agencies will submit their grant documentation to the repository as part of their monitoring. This process will ensure that all federal awards are tracked and managed effectively. Monitoring outcomes will be shared with the legislature and executive branch through reports that summarize funding levels, project timelines, and any unspent balances that may need to be addressed.

4.3 Feedback Loop for Future Recommendations

Nevada will establish a comprehensive feedback loop to provide continuous improvement in federal grant management. A key part of this process is the NV GRANTS Repository, which will provide data on federal awards and their outcomes. This system will enable regular evaluations of the success of grant applications and management practices, ensuring that lessons learned can be used to refine future strategies.

Self-risk assessment questionnaires completed by state agencies will be a critical tool for identifying areas of non-compliance or operations inefficiencies. Data collected from these assessments will inform the development of customized monitoring plans for each agency, with a focus on improving financial management and compliance with federal regulations. The Nevada Advisory Council on Federal Assistance will play a role in analyzing this data and providing recommendations on how to support the improvement of grant management practices.

As part of the feedback loop, impact assessments conducted via NV GRANTS will provide valuable insights into the social, environmental, and economic outcomes of federal grant funded projects. This information will help state agencies adjust their grant-seeking strategies to focus on high-impact programs that align with Nevada’s broader strategic priorities.

The continuous improvement process will incorporate finding from the self-risk assessments, impacts assessments, and repository data to inform future policy changes and strategic adjustments. OFA will regularly review feedback from state agencies, local governments, and private-sector partners to refine the state’s federal funding strategies. This process ensures that Nevada remains competitive for future federal funds while improving the efficiency and transparency of grant management.

5. Conclusion

Nevada’s state plan for maximizing federal assistance represents a significant shift in how the state approaches the acquisition and management of federal grants. By addressing long-standing barriers—such as fragmented grant management systems, legislative obstacles, and limited internal capacity—the plan sets the foundation for a more proactive, efficient, and collaborative strategy for securing federal funding.

The plan's focus on capacity building, centralization through the Centralized Grant Management System (CGMS), and fostering partnerships across public and private sectors provides a comprehensive approach to improving grant management. The introduction of interim solutions, such as the NV GRANTS Repository, will enable the state to make immediate progress while more advanced systems are developed and implemented.

By embracing a culture of compliance, continuous improvement, and inter-agency coordination, Nevada will not only increase its share of federal dollars but also ensure that these funds are used effectively to meet the state's strategic priorities. These efforts will ultimately relieve pressure on local resources, improve essential services, and position Nevada as a competitive force in securing and managing federal grants.

As Nevada implements this plan, the state will see measurable outcomes in areas such as job creation, economic development, healthcare access, education, and infrastructure. The collective efforts of the Governor's Office of Federal Assistance, the Nevada Advisory Council on Federal Assistance, and state agencies will drive the success of this plan, ensuring that Nevada maximizes every opportunity to leverage federal funds for the benefit of its residents.

This plan is not just a roadmap for short-term improvements; it is a long-term strategy that will continually adapt and evolve as Nevada strengthens its capacity and partnerships, making federal funding an integral part of the state's growth and prosperity.