

DUNS Q&A

What is a DUNS number?

The Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number is a unique nine-digit identification number provided by Dun & Bradstreet (D&B). The DUNS number is site specific. Therefore, each distinct physical location of an entity such as branches, divisions and headquarters, may be assigned a DUNS number.

Who needs a DUNS number?

Any *institution* that wants to submit a grant application to the federal government. Individual researchers do not need a DUNS number if they are submitting their application through a research organization.

How do I get a DUNS number?

Dun & Bradstreet have designated a special phone number for federal grant and cooperative agreement applicants/prospective applicants. Call the number below between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m., local time in the 48 contiguous states and speak to a D&B representative. This process will take approximately 5 – 10 minutes and you will receive your DUNS number at the conclusion of the call.

1-866-705-5711

What do I need before I request a DUNS number?

Before you call D&B, you will need the following pieces of information:

- Legal Name
- Headquarters name and address for your organization
- Doing business as (dba) or other name by which your organization is commonly recognized
- Physical address
- Mailing address (if separate from headquarters and/or physical address)
- Telephone number
- Contact name and title
- Number of employees at your physical location

How much does a DUNS number cost?

There is no charge to obtain a DUNS number.

Why does my institution need a DUNS number?

New regulations taking affect Oct. 1, 2003 mandate that a DUNS number be provided on all federal grant and cooperative agreement applications. The DUNS number will offer a way for the federal government to better match information across all agencies.

How do I see if my institution already has a DUNS number?

Call the toll free number above and indicate that you are a federal grant and/or cooperative agreement applicant. D&B will tell you if your organization already has a number assigned. If not, they will ask if you wish to obtain one.

Should we use the +4 extension to the DUNS number?

Although D&B provides the ability to use a 4-digit extension to the DUNS number, neither D&B nor the federal government assign any importance to the extension. Benefits, if any, derived from the extension will be at your institution only.

Is there anything special that we should do for multi-campus systems?

Multi-campus systems can use what is called a parent DUNS number to aggregate information for the system as a whole. The main campus will need to be assigned a DUNS number. Then each satellite campus will need to reference the main campus DUNS number as their parent DUNS when obtaining their own DUNS number. For NIH grantees, if each campus submits grant applications as a unique grantee organization, then each campus needs to obtain their own DUNS number.

Does the DUNS number need to be included on individual fellowship applications?

Yes with one exception. It is the DUNS number of the sponsoring institution that should be put on the application. Individual Kirschstein-NRSA fellowships that propose training at Federal laboratories do not require a DUNS number.

What does the DUNS number have to do with the Central Contractor Registry (CCR), soon to be the Business Partner Network (BPN)?

Registration in the CCR is mandatory for anyone wishing to submit a grant application electronically through Grants.gov. Your organization will need a DUNS number in order to register in the CCR. The CCR is the central registry for organizations that have received federal contracts. If your organization has received federal contracts, it is already registered in the CCR, but this is a good opportunity to verify that your organization information is up to date. For more information about the CCR, please visit the CCR web site at: www.ccr.gov.

What should we do if our institution has more than 1 DUNS number?

Your institution will need to decide which DUNS number to use for grant application purposes and use only that number.

Does this apply to non-US organizations?

Yes, this new requirement applies to all types of grantee organizations including foreign, non-profit, for profit as well as for state and federal government agencies.

Does this apply to non-competing progress reports?

No. This new requirement applies only to competing applications.

Are there any exceptions to the new DUNS number rules?

Individuals who would personally receive a grant or cooperative agreement award from the Federal government apart from any business or non-profit organization they may operate are exempt from this requirement. Also individual Kirschstein-NRSA fellowships that propose training at Federal laboratories do not require a DUNS number.

Who at my institution is responsible for requesting a DUNS number?

This will vary from institution to institution. This should be done by someone knowledgeable about the entire structure of your institution and who has the authority to make such decisions. Typically this request would come from the finance/accounting department or some other department that conducts business with a large cross section of the institution.

We are an organization new to Federal grant funding so we obviously need a DUNS number. But we don't want to be included in any marketing list. What can we do?

Inclusion on a D&B marketing list is optional. If you do not want your name/organization included on this marketing list, request to be de-listed from D&B's marketing file when you are speaking with a D&B representative during your DUNS number telephone application.

Who do we contact if we have questions?

If you have questions about applying for a DUNS number, contact the Dun & Bradstreet special phone number 1-866-705-5771. If you have questions concerning this new Federal-wide requirement, contact Sandra Swab, Office of Federal Financial Management, 202-395-3993 or via e-mail at sswab@omb.eop.gov.