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Grant Funding for Public Safety Initiatives

White Paper and Application Workbook



Genetec

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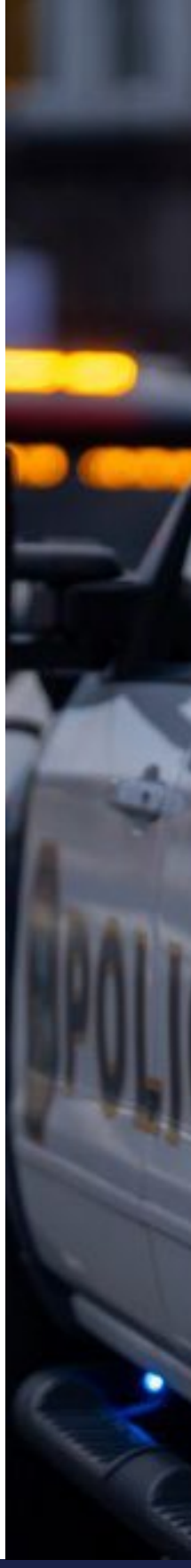
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Introduction

A common challenge for public safety agencies is finding funding to upgrade technology and equipment to keep our communities safe. Grants are a great option for getting initiatives off the ground and funding technology needs. Going through the grant process can be time-intensive, and for agencies that lack a dedicated grants team, getting the process started with confidence can be overwhelming and difficult. However, this guide walks you through the foundational questions and information that most grant applications require. By working through each section, you will build a clear picture of your agency's needs, strengths, and goals before you ever open a formal application.

If you are new to grant seeking, this workbook also introduces the three main sources of grant funding, foundation, state, and federal, and the key characteristics of each. You will find example opportunities and a set of funded, technology-rich project abstracts to spark ideas for your own initiatives.

This workbook is organized to help you think through the grant process step by step. The sections build on one another, starting with a broad overview of your agency and working toward the specific details that funders want to see.

You can use this document in several ways:

- As a solo planning tool to organize your thoughts before drafting a proposal
- As a team resource to align staff and leadership on project goals
- As a starting point for conversations with a grant writer or consultant
- As a reference document you return to and update over time

Think of this as a flexible tool: **a place to capture your ideas, shape your project framework, and set yourself up for success in the grant writing process!**



Once a grant opportunity opens, always review that program's specific requirements carefully; every funder is different.

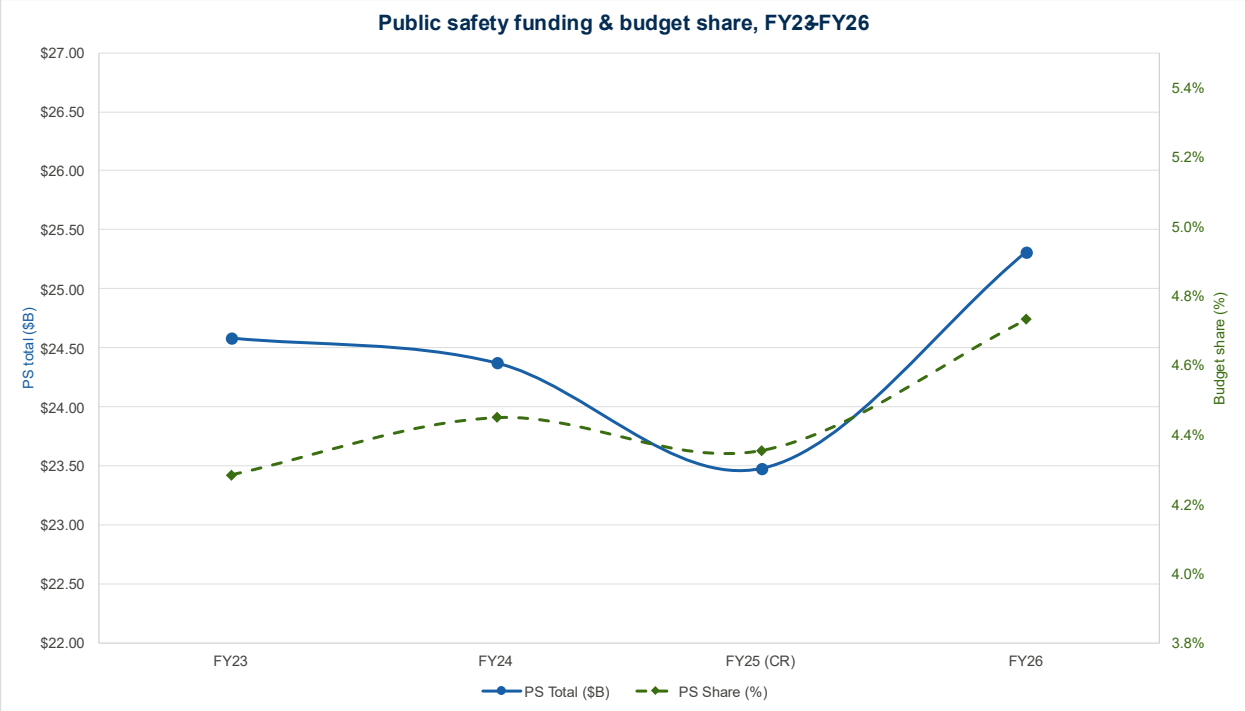
Who is Eligible for Public Safety Funding?

Across our country, federal, state, tribal, and local public safety agencies work to make our communities safer. These agencies include law enforcement, fire departments, emergency medical services, emergency management agencies, 911 centers, and corrections. These agencies are vital in enforcing the law, responding to emergencies, and providing disaster relief, whether they are in a rural, suburban, or urban area.

Understanding the Grants Landscape

There are three types of grant funding in the United States: federal, state, and foundation grants. Federal funding offers the largest bucket of funding, followed by state grants, and finally, private foundation grants.

When it comes to federal funding for public safety, the graph below shows the total amount flagged for public safety from the federal budget, as well as the percentage of funding that went towards public safety. This graph shows that funding for public safety stays pretty stable from year to year.



With so many grants out there, it can be difficult to find the right ones for your project and organization. That is why, on the grantseeking journey, it's important to have knowledge of the best resources out there to find grants. The sources you will turn to will vary greatly by the type of grant you are seeking.

Foundation Grants

Foundation funding refers to any grant that is not taxpayer-funded. These opportunities come from corporate, community, and family foundations on local, regional, or national levels.

While many online research platforms exist, they often require a subscription. Since public safety agencies serve communities, we recommend starting right in your backyard:

Leverage Community Connections: Foundation members live and work in the community you protect. Because small, local foundations rarely have a strong web presence, word-of-mouth is your best tool.

Prioritize Direct Communication: Don't hesitate to pick up the phone or visit a foundation in person. The worst answer you can get is "no," but frequently, you will get valuable feedback or a resounding "yes."

Why Start Here? While foundation grants are generally smaller, they have a much lighter administrative burden and a highly approachable application process. If you are new to grants, this is a great place to start.

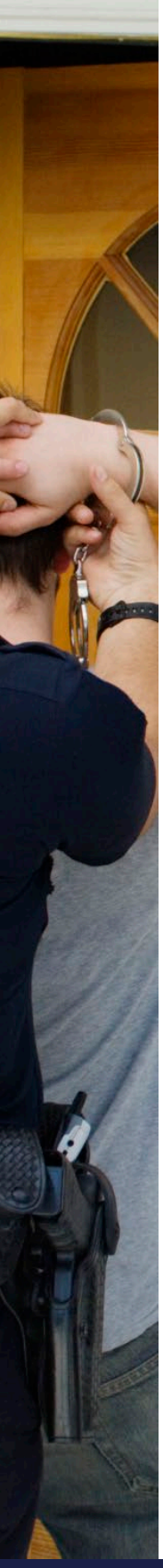
Examples of Foundation Funding Opportunities:

The Sinise Foundation First Responders Grant: Supports first responder departments by providing funding for essential equipment and training. It aims to enhance the capabilities of law enforcement, firefighting, EMS, and SAR organizations, ensuring they have the necessary tools and training to effectively respond to emergencies and protect communities.

Firehouse Subs Public Safety Foundation: Assists first responders and public safety organizations in acquiring life-saving equipment and resources with the goal to help protect and save lives in their communities.

CSX Pride in Service Grants: Offers monetary and in-kind resources to public safety agencies within regions where the railroad operates.





State Grants

State grants sit right between federal and foundation funding. They are less competitive than federal grants, since you only compete against agencies in your own state, rather than nationally, but generally tougher to secure than foundation grants.

There are two types of state grants:

State-Budgeted Grants: These are funded directly through your state's budget.

> **The Benefit:** These grants are highly flexible and directly address your state's current priorities.
>
> **The Drawback:** Grant programs are not always consistent, and funding may vary year to year. A governor and legislature that prioritize public safety might fund these initiatives heavily, while the next administration might pivot elsewhere.

Federal Pass-Through Grants: These are federal funds allocated to state agencies, which then distribute ("pass through") the money to local applicants.

> **The Benefit:** Like state grants, competition is limited to your state. However, unlike state budgeted funds, they are highly reliable from cycle to cycle because they are based on congressional appropriations.
>
> **The Drawback:** These grants follow federal priorities, so it's important, as with any grant, to read the application guidance to ensure you understand the priorities and that they align with your agency's policies and goals.

Examples of State Grants for Public Safety:

California Organized Retail Theft Prevention Grant Program: supports local law enforcement agencies in preventing and responding to organized retail theft, motor vehicle or motor vehicle accessory theft, or cargo theft.

Missouri Local Violent Crime Prevention: supports the establishment and enhancement of local violent crime prevention programs within local law enforcement, and improves the quality of crime data reporting in compliance with the National Incident-Based Reporting System.

Tennessee Downtown Public Safety Grants: support the purchase of technology and equipment to reduce crime in Tennessee communities and increase public safety.

Federal Grants

Federal funding is the largest source of grant money in the country. While it offers the biggest award sizes, it also comes with the highest competition and the most demanding application process.

The Core Agencies: Out of 26 federal funding agencies, law enforcement and criminal justice departments will find most of their funding through the **Department of Justice** and the **Department of Homeland Security**.

Where to Start: A full listing of federal grants can be found at **Grants.gov**. We recommend subscribing to email updates from grants.gov to stay informed.

Find examples of federal funding opportunities on **page 14.**

The Benefits of Genetec™ Solutions in Public Safety

Genetec™ Security Center is a unified security, operations, and intelligence platform. Security Center manages all systems through a single application, addressing an organization's multiple security needs and providing a consistent experience and savings in training, infrastructure, and lifecycle management.

Security Center simplifies the path to unification with access to multiple modules out of the box:

- Synergis™ access control
- Omnicast™ video management system
- AutoVu™ automatic license plate recognition
- Sipelia™ SIP protocol communication management
- Intrusion monitoring
- KiwiVision™ analytics
- Advanced mapping features
- Visitor management
- Threat-level management

Learn about services available through the Genetec™ Grants Support Team on **page 17.**

As an open architecture platform, Security Center allows agencies to monitor and control other Internet of Things (IoT) devices used in their jurisdictions from the same interface. Examples include gunshot detection, fire and smoke alarms, HVAC systems, AED devices, and more.

For multi-jurisdictional operations, an agency may also federate Security Center with other organizations within its jurisdiction, such as school districts or law enforcement agencies. Federation provides centralized access to various system components to allow first responders to access cameras, change the threat level, and monitor intrusion alarms. Federating your jurisdiction's security system gives first responders visibility and actionable information when responding to an incident.

Basic Applicant Information

Organization Name

Organization's SAM UEI

Organization's EIN/TIN

State grants Portal ID Number (if known/needed)

Name of Grants Portal Organization Administrator

Agency type (e.g., municipal police department, fire district, campus public safety, sheriff's office, etc.)

Jurisdiction or service area

Population of community served

Number of full-time sworn officers/personnel

Number of part-time or volunteer personnel

Does leadership approve of this grantseeking effort? (Note: this is needed before any further progress is made)

Yes ☐ No ☐

Organization Point of Contact (POC) for this project

Project Activities

Name the different activities you plan to undergo to address the needs you have identified. Provide an estimated time you will need complete these activities and how these activities will meet the needs you identified in your vulnerability assessment. Also designate a person or group who will oversee this activity.

Project Activity	Estimated Time Needed to Complete	How does this activity address the needs you have identified	Who will oversee this?

Internal Partners

Who within your organization that may need to be involved in your project's activities but not as overseers of any specific activity? These internal partners may be those that have knowledge, influence, or access beyond your own capability, such as security personnel, IT staff, or other leaders. Use the space below to identify internal individuals, departments, or partners who may have valuable expertise, decision-making authority, or responsibility for carrying out project activities. Consider how they may contribute to your project's success.

Potential Internal Partners	Who will this partner help your project succeed?

External Partners

Many projects also benefit from the involvement of partners and stakeholders outside of your organization. These individuals and organizations can provide expertise, guidance, coordination, support, or services that help strengthen both the project and any future grant application. These partners may include other public safety agencies or community-based organizations. In some cases, external partners may play a direct role in project implementation, while in others they may simply provide advice, feedback, letters of support, or help coordinate activities. Use the space below to identify any outside individuals, agencies, organizations, or community partners who may have an interest in the project or whose involvement could contribute to its success.

Organization Name (List a POC if known)	**How will this external partner contribute to the project?** Indicate if they will contribute directly to project activities, if you have already talked with them about these activities, and if they will give a letter of support.

Identify the Problem or Need

Every grant application is built around a problem that needs solving. Funders want to understand the specific challenge your agency faces and why addressing it matters. This is often called the “Need Statement” or “Problem Statement.”

Think about what gap in capacity, equipment, training, or service is holding your agency back. Be as specific as possible.

What is the specific public safety challenge your agency is trying to address?

Who is directly affected by this problem (e.g., residents, students, first responders, specific neighborhoods, etc.)?

What happens if this problem is not addressed? What are the risks or consequences?

Gathering Data

Funders expect you to back up your need statement with facts. Even basic data makes your application much stronger. Local crime data, CAD reports, state crime statistics, census data, and community surveys are all strong sources. Your state's department of public safety may also publish relevant statistics.

What data or statistics support the existence of this problem?
(Examples: crime rates, incident response times, equipment age, training gaps, community survey results, etc.)

Who are the sources for this data?



Curious to see how public safety agencies like yours are leveraging the power of grant funds for their technology needs? Check out some of the funded project abstracts in the Appendix on **page 16**.

Budget and Budget Justification

Use this sheet to draft what your project's potential expenses may be. As you list each item, think not only about its cost, but also about why it is necessary for the project. In most grant applications, funders will ask for a budget justification, or a brief explanation of how each expense supports the proposed project and helps address the need you identified. As you work through this exercise, try to connect each budget item to a specific project activity, goal, or vulnerability. Doing so will help you develop a stronger and more realistic budget while preparing you for the budget narrative requirements commonly found in grant applications.

Direct Cost Items	Total Estimated Cost	Why is this expense needed for the project to succeed?
Salaries & Wages		
Employee-related expenses		
Contractual Services		
Consultant Services		
Equipment		
Supplies		
Tavel		
Construction		
Other		
Indirect Costs (if applicable)		
Refer to the allowable limit within the guidance (usually determined by your previously negotiated indirect cost determination)		
Total:		

Appendix

Examples of Federal Funding Opportunities

Below are a few examples of federal grant opportunities to give your agency a starting point.

State Homeland Security Program (SHSP)

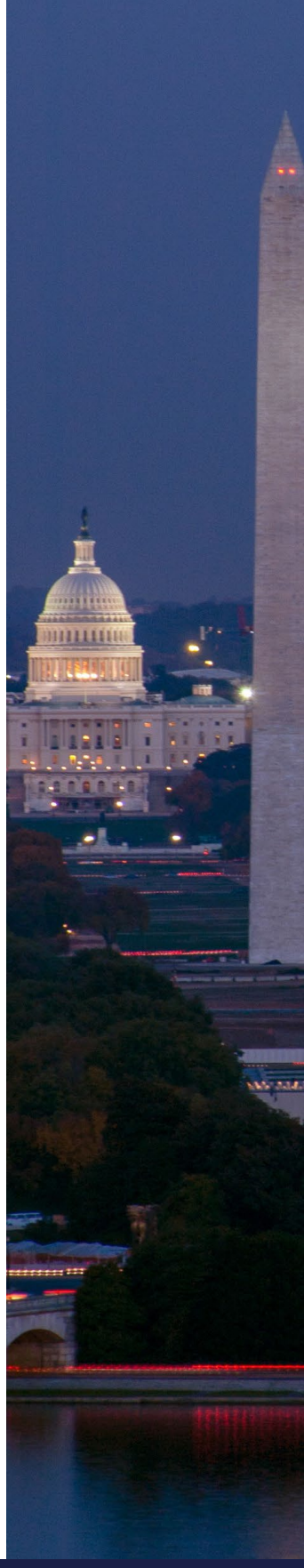
Purpose: The goal of SHSP is to support statewide and state, local, tribal, and territorial (SLTT) governments in building, enhancing, and sustaining the capabilities needed to prevent, prepare for, protect against, and respond to acts of terrorism. For FY2025, the national priority areas (NPAs) are:

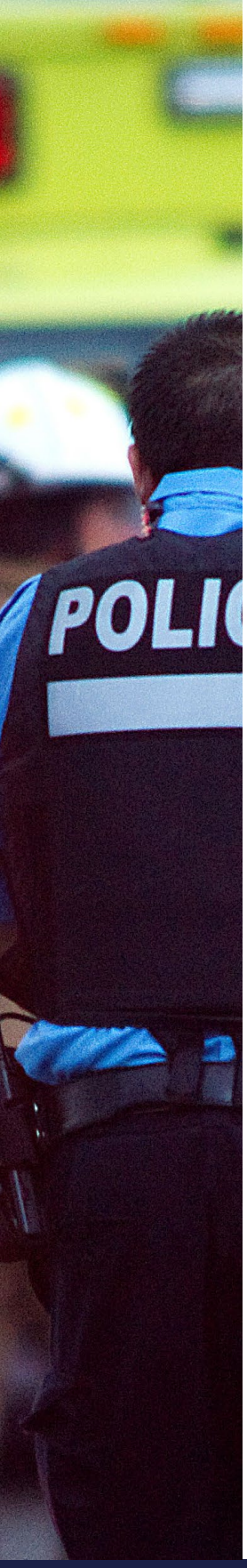
- Enhancing the protection of soft targets and crowded places
- Supporting Homeland Security Task Forces and fusion centers
- Enhancing and integrating cybersecurity resiliency
- Enhancing election security
- Border Crisis Response and Enforcement Support

Funding Amount: Up to $373,500,000 is available in total funding for FY25.

Eligible Applicants: Awards are made to State Administrative Agencies (SAA's) of all 56 states and territories. State agencies, local law enforcement agencies, and other nonprofit organizations may apply to states for sub-grants.

Deadline: Deadlines vary by state.





Emergency Management Performance Grant (EMPG)

Purpose: EMPG provides state, local, tribal, and territorial emergency management agencies with the resources required for implementation of the National Preparedness System and works toward the National Preparedness Goal of a secure and resilient nation. Allowable costs support efforts to build and sustain core capabilities across the prevention, protection, mitigation, response, and recovery mission areas.

Funding Amount: Up to $319,500,000 is available in total funding for FY2025.

Eligible Applicants: Awards are made to State Administrative Agencies (SAA's) of all 56 states and territories. State agencies, local emergency management agencies, and other nonprofit organizations may apply to states for sub-grants.

Deadline: Deadlines vary by state.

Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant (JAG) Program

Purpose: The Bureau of Justice Assistance's Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant (JAG) Program provides the critical funding necessary to support a range of program areas, including law enforcement, prosecution and court programs, prevention and education programs, corrections and community corrections, drug treatment and enforcement, crime victim and witness initiatives, planning, evaluation, and technology improvement programs. Funding is available through either direct formula funding ("JAG Local") or passthrough funding ("JAG State").

Funding Amount: A total of $199,222,278 was available in 2025 for State JAG funding, and $96,384,585was available in 2025 for Local JAG funding.

Eligible Applicants: State agencies, local law enforcement agencies, and other nonprofit organizations.

Deadline: Applications were due on April 28, 2026. A similar deadline is anticipated annually.

Example Awarded Project Abstracts

Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant (JAG) Program

Sheriff Department, TX $50,800

The Sheriff's Office has enacted progressive policies in the use of body-worn cameras (BWC's) and in-car camera technology. There is a current need for additional in-car camera systems to be installed in patrol and jail or detention transport vehicles, so our mission is fulfilled with full transparency and safety of all at the forefront of future planning. The new technology is an upgrade from the current in-car camera system to the newer in-car camera system. While being used in patrol vehicles, the cameras not only capture evidence such as driving behavior in driving while intoxicated investigations, but this system can also be used as a license plate reader to capture additional criminal activity while operating on county roadways. This additional criminal activity could be stolen vehicles, suspect vehicles, abduction alerts, silver and amber alerts, as well as capturing those who have arrest warrants. By purchasing these systems now, we are preparing for the future growth of the county and ensuring our ability to serve all of our citizens fairly and with transparency, while growing our agency.

State Homeland Security Program

Small Police Department in Mississippi $34,050

The police department is a smaller agency with 35 sworn officers serving a population of just over 17,000. The department lacks funding to purchase much of the equipment needed to prevent a terrorist attack. The department is requesting funding for license plate readers (LPRs), which will allow the agency to locate and identify criminal activity and persons of interest. From agency-shared LPR camera feed or Hotlist data, we would also have a better opportunity to locate potential known terrorism threats as they travel into and out of our city by capturing events in real time. The visual documentation will allow us a greater opportunity to locate and intercept the vehicle subject, thus possibly preventing or mitigating a terrorist attack.

Rural and Small Department Violent Crime Reduction Program

Police Department, NJ $300,000

*F*acing escalating violent crime rates, particularly gun violence, necessitates urgent intervention due to its dense urban population and significant socioeconomic challenges. The proposed initiative, designed for small agencies like PPD, aims to reduce violent crime while fostering fair and accountable policing standards. With a comprehensive strategy rooted in evidence-based practices, community engagement, and collaborative partnerships, the project targets gang-related violence and recidivism. Key components include data analysis, targeted interventions, community outreach, and surveillance enhancements through CCTV cameras. Performance measurement involves systematic data collection, rigorous evaluation, and transparent reporting to ensure accountability and guide decision-making. Through this initiative, PPD endeavors to fulfill its mission of protecting and serving the community while addressing the root causes of crime in the community.



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This free resource was created by the grants intelligence team at Grants Office, LLC, on behalf of Genetec.

The Genetec™ Grants Support Team

In partnership with Grants Office LLC, the Genetec™ Grants Support Team (GGST) offers complimentary services to help agencies in the US navigate grant funding processes. Organizations served include public sector agencies, educational institutions, public utilities, transit agencies, and healthcare organizations, among others.

GGST Assistance Includes:

- Research and Consultation: Identify best-fit grants for upcoming projects and provide next steps.
- Project Building: Advise on project development and material gathering with a particular grant in mind.
- Grant Proposal Writing & Review: Write a competitive and engaging proposal or provide feedback on application materials, ensuring compliance with submission requirements

Get started today!
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