

SmartyGrants Snapshot: Industry Grants Statistics

Simon Herd, Director of Grantmaking Reform, SmartyGrants
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This SmartyGrants Snapshot is a look at some of the key statistics that we have been able to draw out of the AIGM SmartyGrants system.

I am going to focus my attention on two aspects today:

- Comparing grant rounds across different grantmakers.
- Individual application form details.

SmartyGrants

SmartyGrants is a hosted online grants management system, which has been designed by the AIGM to meet the needs of Australia grantmakers.

It covers the entire life cycle of a grant program and the number of people using it has grown enormously over the last few years.

We are now at the point where we can start to draw from it some very interesting numbers.

SmartyGrants figures

From having 40 organisations using SmartyGrants in 2010, we have grown to having more than 200 use it today.

And from four programs we have grown to almost 900 programs, and more than 1100 grant rounds.

Cumulative Numbers	Organisations	Programs	Rounds
2009	11	4	3
2010	46	110	150
2011	126	462	566
2012	234	884	1123

And 2012 is only two-thirds over!

Applications are increasing and will continue to increase. We have gone from 6500 applications to more than 50,000 applications today.

Just with the current organisation we will hold more than 100,000 applications by some point next year – simply through organisations running more grant rounds in their existing programs.

2009	0
2010	6463
2011	24803
2012	50243

Comparing grant rounds

Grant round closures

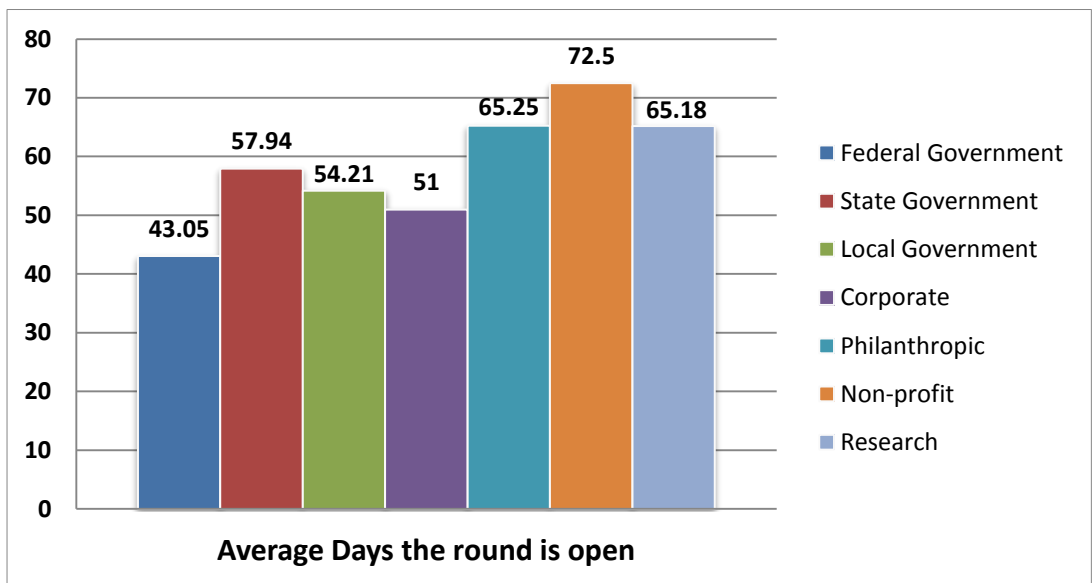
The most popular day for closing a grant round is Friday; although it is not as popular as you might think as only 25% of rounds close on a Friday. Monday is the next favourite day.

However, more than 80% of grantseekers won't get to stop filling out their application at the end of the work day, as only 20% of rounds close at 5pm. The majority of grantseekers will continue to sweat it out right up until midnight – when most rounds close.

Round length

It is interesting to see the variation here and to compare it against your own rounds.

The average length of a grants round is 58 days, or around eight weeks. Also note that while corporates have close to the shortest round length on average, they do very well on a number of other measures.



Application submission time

The average time to submit an application is seven days.

Again corporates have are noticeably quicker than the average.

“Research” is generally referring to academic institutions or programs accepting academic research applications, so the doubling of time (compared to the average) is understandable.

Submission percentage

For everyone that worries about those un-submitted applications sitting in their rounds – fear not; we actually see, consistently, that only roughly 60% of applications that are started are actually submitted.

Its also worth noting that applicants can view the entire form before they even start an application, so this number is for those that have read the form and thought it worth starting, but have not actually submitted it.

Days from round close until decision

Again you can see that corporates standout – with an average turnaround of only 29.86 days compared to the overall average of 70 days.

This may be because they are not subject to such rigorous processes or as many assessment/decision panels as other grantmakers.

Interestingly, while grantmakers in the research category have much larger forms which take longer to fill in, the turnaround is quite short (51.83 days compared to an overall average of 70).

As for average, is just over two months really a good average? I think it is certainly something we can work to improve on.

I'd also note that I think the figure for Federal Government grantmakers – 131.84 days – might be out by 10-20%. It just doesn't seem quite right.

Individual application form details

So, that's some of the key points on grants rounds; what about individual application forms?

There are two key points I'd like to point out here.

Length matters

A strong relationship exists between with application form length and a number of factors.

The submission rate drops – by one percent for every extra page in your form. This is significant as even those grantseekers that don't submit have invested time in at least starting an application.

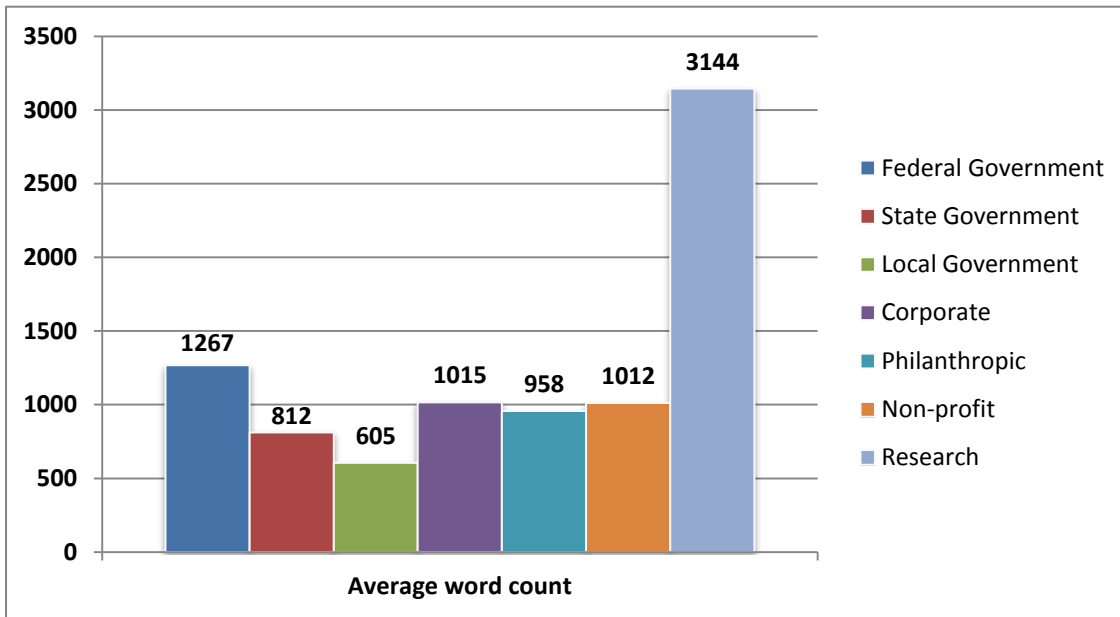
In addition, it also takes the grantseeker more time to fill out – five hours on average per page on a form.

So if you think about the length of your form and then multiply that out by your success rate, think about how many hours of work you are costing the community you are trying to help through having a form that hasn't been trimmed back to bare essentials.

Not only does it impact on the grantseeker, a long form also makes your job larger and longer.

Our figures show that for every extra page on your form it takes an extra day and a half to make a decision.

Average word count



The average word count for applications was 1250 words. But that figure dropped to 950 words when we excluded the “research” category applications which are generally far longer and more detailed.

When considering the length of your form, also consider how much content you are asking for. Is it enough for groups to actually express themselves?