What is a Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number?

A Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number is a unique nine-digit identifier for each government contractor and federal grant applicant. The federal government has contracted with D&B since 1978 to provide proprietary DUNS numbers for use in government-wide data systems, and since October 1, 2003, the OMB policy requires the use of a DUNS number on any application for federal grants or cooperative agreements. DUNS numbers are associated with contractor and grant recipient information and are required for each listed organization address.

What is the System for Award Management (SAM)?

The System for Award Management (SAM) is the federal government's primary contractor and federal grant applicant database used by agencies to validate grantee information. Current and potential government contractors and grant applicants are required to register with SAM in order to be awarded federal government contracts or grants. SAM requires a one-time registration from each potential government vendor, and collects basic procurement and financial information from contractors and grant applicants.

SAM consolidates government-wide acquisition and grant award support systems into one new system. The consolidation is planned for four phases. In 2012 the first phase of SAM was launched and phase one systems continue to be consolidated. The first phase of the consolidation included nine information databases: Central Contractor Registration (CCR), Federal Agency Registration (FedReg), Online Representations and Certifications Application (ORCA), and Excluded Parties List System (EPLS). Once completed, the consolidation will also include:

- Electronic Subcontracting Reporting System (eSRS);
- FFATA Sub-award Reporting System (FSRS);
- Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA);
- FedBizOpps.gov (FBO);
- Wage Determination Online (WDOL);
- Federal Procurement Data System-Next Generation (FPDS-NG);
- Past Performance Information Retrieval System (PPIRS);
- Contractor Performance Assessment Reporting Systems; and
- Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System (FAPIIS).

Some of the systems that will be consolidated by SAM include data on federal contractors and may not necessarily contain information on federal grant recipients.

What is the Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA)?

The Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) is a publicly searchable reference source for federal grants and nonfinancial assistance programs. The CFDA lists and describes over 2,300 federal programs and includes program-specific information such as program objectives, eligibility requirements, application and award processes, program contact information, and related CFDA assistance programs. CFDA is continuously updated and enables information seekers to search assistance programs by keyword, subject, funding department or agency, and other criteria. Additionally, CFDA provides sources of information on developing and writing grant applications, guidance to review processes, and links to agency and department websites for more in-depth program information and eligibility explanations.

The CFDA is maintained by the General Services Administration (GSA) pursuant to the Federal Program Information Act. However, OMB is responsible for the collection of assistance program information from federal agencies. OMB also issues guidance to federal agencies for establishing procedures to ensure accurate and timely data is contained within CFDA.