FAAST: Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Updated July 1, 2024
TARGET AUDIENCE: Applicants (or those submitting on behalf of an applicant)

BACKGROUND INFORMATION
What is FAAST?
FAAST stands for Financial Assistance Application Submittal Tool. It is a web-based system developed by the State Water Board's Division of Financial Assistance to accept and store applications electronically.

FAAST is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Any scheduled outages will be posted on the FAAST main page in red bold font.

What are the usage recommendations?
FAAST does not have computer system requirements, but it does have usage recommendations:
- Use of a Personal Computer (PC) and Microsoft Edge;
- Disable pop-up blocking software while using FAAST; and
- Save work often – System will time out after 90 minutes of inactivity.

GETTING STARTED
How do I know what funding programs are currently accepting applications in FAAST?
Check the **FAAST webpage** where a list of currently accepting applications is posted.

What is a PIN?
A PIN is a proposal identification number automatically assigned when an application is started.

Note: When you are requesting help from the FAAST Help Desk, please include the PIN in your request.

Where can I find more information about a specific Request for Proposal or Solicitation found in FAAST?
Please visit the **Funding Program Resources (https://faast.waterboards.ca.gov/LoginLinks/FundProg.aspx**) page to find the link to the specific funding program.

What is included in the character count in FAAST?
The character count in FAAST includes alphanumeric, spaces, punctuation, and hidden formatting code. The character count in word processing programs such as MS Word, do not include the hidden formatting code as part of the word (character) counts.

Is the information I submit online secure?
Yes. All data transmitted through the application process is secure by using SSL encryption. This means that information traveling from your computer to the State Water Boards' servers cannot be read if intercepted by a third party.

Note: All application materials submitted in FAAST are potentially subject to public disclosure pursuant to the California Public Records Act. Information entered or uploaded in FAAST should not include any personally identifiable information (i.e., social security numbers, home addresses, personal cell phone numbers).

Is my organization eligible to apply for loans and grants available through FAAST?
Each funding program has specific eligibility requirements. Please visit the Funding Program Resources page to find the link to the specific funding program.

What is a UEID? How do I obtain one?
UEID stands for Unique Entity ID is a 12-character alphanumeric ID to an entity by SAM.gov. On April 4, 2022, the unique entity identifier used across the federal government changed from the DUNS Number to the Unique Entity ID.

Existing registered entities can find their Unique Entity ID by following the steps outlined **here**. To register a new entity or obtain a new Unique Entity ID follow the steps **here**. To get a Unique Entity ID you will need to validate the following:
- Legal business name
- Physical address
- Entity's start year and/or State of Incorporation or establishment for US entities only
- Entity's start year and/or National Identifier for Non-US entities

If your entity information is not found based on the values above, you will be required to provide document to prove your entity information. For more information, please visit: federal service desk at: **https://www.fsd.gov/**

USER ACCOUNTS
As of July 2, 2024, all FAAST users will need a WBKey account to access FAAST. To start the WBKey account registration process, please visit the FAAST webpage at: **https://faast.waterboards.ca.gov/** and click on the "WBKey Registration" button.

Note: All FAAST users, whether existing or new will need to register for a WBKey account.

How do I register for a WBKey account if I had a FAAST account?
To begin the WBKey registration process, click on the WBKey Registration button and then enter your email address. You will need to follow the prompts to complete the WBKey registration process.

All applications started/submitted previously associated with the email address associated with the WBKey account will transfer over. The WBKey account will reflect the associated organizations and user roles.

Note: You can refer to the WBKey Account: Getting Started document posted on the FAAST page for step by step instructions on how to set up a WBKey account.

How do I register for a WBKey account if I am new to FAAST?
To begin the WBKey registration process, click on the WBKey Registration button and then enter your email address. You will need to follow the prompts to complete the WBKey registration process.

Note: You can refer to the WBKey Account: Getting Started document posted on the FAAST page for step by step instructions on how to set up a WBKey account.

How do I request access to FAAST if I already have a WBKey Account?
The process for requesting access remains the same as creating an account. Visit FAAST, locate the WBKey Registration button, and follow the prompts using your existing WBKey email address.

Help! I need help completing the WBKey registration process?
If you encounter any difficulties during this process or have any questions, please request assistance from the FAAST Help Desk at **FAAST_Admin@waterboards.ca.gov.**

A screen shot or a detailed description of what you are trying to do and where you are stuck will help us help you.

What can I expect the first time I sign into FAAST using my WBKey account?
You recently registered for your first WBKey account. Here's what will happen when you sign in for the first time:

1. **Account Credentials**: Click the "FAAST Sign In" button on FAAST to log on. Enter your email address and click "Next" button. On the next screen, enter your password and click "Sign In" button. If you need to reset your password, please click the "Forgot your password?" link and follow the remaining prompts on the screen.

2. **Multi-Factor Authentication (MFA)**
   To further enhance the security of your account, you will be prompted enroll in Multi-Factor Authentication (MFA). This is an extra layer of protection that helps ensure that only you can access your account, even if your password is compromised. Follow the prompts to set up MFA. You'll need to provide a second authentication method using a mobile app.

3. **Accepting Conditions of Use and Privacy Policy**

State Water Board Resources Control Board's **Conditions of Use** and **Privacy Policy**. Next, you'll be asked to review and agree to the Conditions of Use and the Privacy Policy. These documents outline the terms and conditions for using WBKey, Water Board systems, and how your data will be handled. It's important to read them carefully and, if you agree, accept them by checking the box.

4. **Security Questions**
   As an additional security measure, you will be asked to provide answers to three security questions. These questions are meant to verify your identity in case you need to reset your MFA or access your account in the future. Choose questions that you can easily remember the answers to.

Note: You can refer to the WBKey Account: Getting Started document posted on the FAAST page for step by step instructions on how to enroll in MFA.

What is Multi-factor Authentication (MFA)?
To further enhance the security of your account, all FAAST users will need to enroll in Multi-Factor Authentication (MFA). This is an extra layer of protection that helps ensure that only you can access your account, even if your password is compromised.

Note: You can refer to the WBKey Account: Getting Started document posted on the FAAST page for step by step instructions on how to enroll in MFA.

What if I don't have a mobile phone to use MFA?
At this time, all WBKey accounts must use MFA on a mobile phome.

Outside MFA, what other security features does the WBKey account have?
On the initial attempt to sign onto FAAST, users will need to set up three security questions and provide the answers. These questions are meant to verify your identity in case you need to reset your MFA or access your WBKey account in the future.

Note: Choose questions that you can easily remember the answers to.

What is the State Water Board's privacy policy?
The State Water Board does have a **Privacy Policy**. The Privacy Policy outlines the State Water Board's privacy practices regarding information collected from users of FAAST and any other public facing systems that collects information.

Does the WBKey account have any conditions of use?
The State Water Board does have a **Conditions of Use** document that WBKey account holders must read and accept.

Is the WBKey email address and password case-sensitive?
The WBKey email address is not case-sensitive. The WBKey password is case-sensitive and must include at least one lower case and one upper case.

What are the WBKey password requirements?
Your password must be at least 15 characters long and contain at least one uppercase letter, one lowercase letter, one number, and one special character.

I forgot my WBKey account password. What should I do?
FAAST users must reset their passwords by utilizing the "Forgot Password?" option when trying to sign in into FAAST. Note: The FAAST Help Desk staff do not have the ability to look up or reset passwords for users.

If you forgot your WBKey account password, please use the "Forgot Password" feature that appears on the FAAST Sign In.

Note: You can refer to the WBKey Account: Getting Started document posted on the FAAST page for step by step instructions on how to set up a new password.

Can I sign up for a WBKey account even though I am not ready to submit an application?
Yes. Having a WBKey account will put you on the list to receive automatic emails for notification of funding programs using FAAST.

I'm a consultant, should I create a separate WBKey account for each client?
No. If you are a consultant, please create a single WBKey account that associates you with your consulting firm. You are able to submit applications on behalf of multiple clients using a single username/password. At the time of starting a new application, you (as a consultant) will have the option of submitting an application on behalf of another organization (your client's organization).

Can I submit multiple applications using the same WBKey account?
Yes. With one email address and password, you can submit multiple applications.

I don't want to receive any more FAAST email announcements. How can I unsubscribe from the FAAST email alerts?
To unsubscribe from the FAAST email alerts, please do the following:
- Log onto FAAST;
- Click on Update User Profile option on Main Menu;
- Select NO from the Subscribe to Email Alerts drop-down menu;
- Click the SAVE CHANGES button; and
- Click the LOGOUT link on upper right hand corner.

COMPLETING AN APPLICATION
When is a Proposal Identification Number (PIN) assigned?
A PIN number is automatically assigned when an application is started. The PIN will appear on the screen in red text just above the application tabs. When you are requesting help from the FAAST Help Desk, please include the PIN in your request.

My project spans across multiple Counties. What should I enter for County?
When your project spans across several counties, you should select "Multiple Counties" from the "County" drop down list. If your project is a statewide project, you should select "Statewide" from the "County" drop down list.

My project spans across several Regional Water Quality Control Board boundaries. What should I enter for "Responsible Regional Water Board"?
When your project spans across multiple Regional Water Quality Control Board boundaries, you should select "Statewide" from the "Responsible Regional Water Board" drop down list. Please refer to the solicitation notice or guidelines for the funding program you are applying to for direction on how to fill out the "Responsible Regional Water Board". You can check the **Funding Program Resources** (**https://faast.waterboards.ca.gov/LoginLinks/FundProg.aspx**) page to find the program guidelines or solicitation notice.

What should I enter in the Latitude and Longitude fields?
For the latitude and longitude coordinates, select a single point for your project. This information will be used for GIS maps to show general distribution of funding throughout the state.

Note: If your project is a multi-regional project, we understand that one point may not be the best representation of your project. More details on how to enter the latitude and longitude may be described in the solicitation notice for the RFP or funding program you are applying for. Please visit the Funding Program Resources page to find the link to the specific funding program.

Where can I find the Watershed, County, and Responsible Regional Water Board information based on the Latitude and Longitude of the project location?
On the General Information tab in the application, there is a button titled "Obtain Lat and Long". Click on this button to input the project's latitude and longitude. The following fields of Watershed, County, and Responsible Regional Water Board will be automatically filled.

Does the Latitude and Longitude need to be entered in degrees?
No. The latitude and the longitude should be entered in decimals. The latitude for California has a range of 32.0000 to 42.0000. The longitude for California has a range of -125.0000 to -114.0000.

Can my application be saved and completed at a later date?
Yes. You may start an application, save your work as "in progress" and return to FAAST at a later time to work on your application as many times as you need. The application is considered in-progress until it has been submitted or the application deadline has passed.

Note: Applicants are encouraged to initiate their applications early so they know what information is needed to complete the application.

I don't know what the UEID number is for my organization? Can I add the UEID number at a later time?
Yes. To add the UEID number for an organization, please log onto FAAST and following steps:

- Click on UPDATE ORGANIZATION PROFILE.
- Click on the ORGANIZATION CHANGE REQUEST button.
- Add the UEID on the right hand side under Modified Organization Details.
- Add a note as to the reason for updating the organization profile.
- Click on the SUBMIT TO WATERBOARD button.

Is it possible to copy and paste text into the FAAST application?
Yes. You may copy text contained in word processing documents, spreadsheets or emails and paste directly into the FAAST application.

Note: Formatted text copied and pasted into FAAST may include hidden formatting code (characters) which count towards the maximum allowed characters in a text field. To ensure you have utilized the maximum allowed characters in a text field, please first paste the text into Notepad to clear the formatting before pasting into FAAST.

How do I know which supporting documents (i.e., project narrative, budget, project map) to submit with my application?
Consult the solicitation notice or guidelines for the funding program you are applying for. Please visit the Funding Program Resources page to find the link to the specific funding program and its solicitation notice or guidelines. It will have details on what comprises a completed application. These supporting documents will be submitted as electronic attachments.

Is there a preferred file format for attachments?
It is recommended that attachments be converted to .pdf. This file format is easy to open. However, please refer to the solicitation notice or guidelines for the funding program you are applying to for specific information on attachments. You can check the Funding Program Resources page to find the program guidelines or solicitation notice.

How do I upload a document in FAAST?
All documents associated with the application should be uploaded via the ATTACHMENT tab in FAAST. For step-by-step instructions on how to upload documents in FAAST, please the User Manual found at: **https://faast.waterboards.ca.gov** under FAAST on the left hand side of the FAAST homepage.

I have a file to attach which is larger than 25 megabytes. How do I submit the attachment?
When a single file is larger than 25 megabytes (mb), it cannot be submitted through the FAAST system as is. The document will need to be split into several smaller size files and upload via FAAST.

How do I upload more than one file for a specific attachment category
Select the appropriate attachment category, which then populates the Suggested Attachment Title field. If you have more than one of a particular type of attachment, i.e. you have two project maps, you can add some text to the end of the Suggested Attachment Title such as "1 of 2" or "2 of 2". Then, proceed as before and browse your computer system to select the actual file to be attached.

Who should be entered on my application on the Contacts tab or the Cooperating Entities tab?
Please refer to the solicitation notice or guidelines for information on who should be entered on the Contacts or the Cooperating Entities tab. You can check the Funding Program Resources page to find the program guidelines or solicitation notice.

When is my application due?
The application deadline is set by each funding program. Please refer to the solicitation notice for the specific funding program to determine the due date. You can check the Funding Program Resources page to find the program guidelines or solicitation notice.

Note: A reminder email is sent to those who have started an application one (1) day before the application deadline.

I accidently started an application. How can I delete that application?
Only the FAAST Administrator can delete an application. Please contact the FAAST Help Desk by email at **FAAST_ADMIN@waterboards.ca.gov** or by telephone (toll-free) at **1-866-434-1083** Monday through Friday from 8:00AM - 5:00PM and provide the following information:
- Proposal Identification Number (PIN) for each application; and
- Reason for deletion.

APPLICATION SUBMITTAL
What is the Application Completion Check?
The Application Completion Check is a behind-the-scenes validation of the application to check for required fields and attachments. The validation results are displayed either in green or red. If the results are in green, the application is complete is ready to be submitted. If the results are in red, you must return to the application to enter the missing required information or upload the missing required attachments. If the validation results show that the application is complete, please read the certification statement and enter your initials and then click the SUBMIT button.

I can't submit my application. Results from the Application Completion Check show that I'm missing required attachments. I have verified that the attachments are uploaded.

Selecting from the attachment category drop-down on the attachment tab is necessary as it is the only way of letting FAAST know that a required attachment has been uploaded. If you did not use the attachment category drop-down on the attachment tab when uploading a required attachment, please go back to the attachment tab to do so.

I tried to preview/submit the application and when I do, I noticed all of the empty answer fields appear with a red sold box. What does this mean?

As a courtesy, FAAST highlights answer fields left blank. It is the applicants responsibility to answer all questions per the funding programs guidelines.

When is my application considered submitted?

Your application is considered submitted when you type in your initials and click the "Submit Application Now" button. A confirmation screen will appear verifying you submitted and you will receive a conformation email stating that FAAST has received your application.

Note: FAAST is used to collect the documents that comprise the application for the following programs: Water Recycling, Drinking Water SRF, or Clean Water SRF programs. The application is not considered completely submitted until all four application packages are submitted, reviewed, and the SRF Project Manager has notified the applicant that the application is complete.

What happens to my application after I submit it?

For most funding programs, applications undergo an eligibility screening. Applications deemed eligible by the funding program staff are then assigned for review. Applicants will be notified of any funding decisions by the funding program.

I submitted an application for the Drinking Water SRF program, when will I know what the next step is?

Applications submitted in FAAST for Drinking Water SRF, Clean Water SRF, and Water Recycling are checked and assigned a Project Number and a Project Manager. The Project Manager will review the initial submission and any subsequent submission of the four application packages.

I have submitted my application. The deadline has not passed. I just noticed an error. How do I fix an error on my application?

To correct an error once your application has been submitted, you must contact the FAAST Help Desk by email at **FAAST_ADMIN@waterboards.ca.gov** or by telephone (toll-free) at **1-866-434-1083** Monday through Friday from 8:00AM - 5:00PM. The application will be returned to the applicant. The application will need to be submitted again, after whatever changes/corrections are made, and before the deadline.

Note: Your application cannot be edited after the application submission due date has passed.

Should I retain copies of all submitted materials?
The FAAST system will maintain an electronic copy of your submitted application. The decision to keep a copy of the submitted materials is up to you.

How do I verify the application was successfully submitted?
There are several ways to verify that an application has been successfully submitted in FAAST:
- Confirmation screen letting you know you have successfully submitted an application in FAAST;
- Confirmation email is automatically sent to the email address for the submitter; or
- Checking for your application in SUBMITTED APPLICATIONS on the Main Menu.

I submitted my application and I have not yet received a confirmation e-mail. Is there a problem?
You may have to wait up to 4 hours before receiving a confirmation e-mail. Or you can verify that your application is submitted by logging onto FAAST, clicking the "Submitted Applications" link and verifying that the PIN appears on the list of submitted applications.

When will I know if the project is recommended to receive funding?
In most cases, the funding program will contact the applicant organization directly if selected to receive funding. Please check with the funding program for any updates or announcements regarding who has been recommended to receive funding. To find the contact information for a specific funding program, please visit the Funding Program Resources page to find the contact information for the funding program.

Where do I upload a post award document (such as a Final Project Summary Report)?
Final project documents can be uploaded on the Post-Award attachment sub-tab. To get to the sub-tab, do the following:
- Confirm you have access to the PIN in FAAST;
- Log onto FAAST;
- Click on PROCESSED APPLICATIONS on the Main Menu;
- Click on the Title of the Awarded Project;
- Click on the Attachment tab;
- Select from the Attachment Category drop-down;
- Modify the file title (if applicable);
- Browse computer for the file that will be uploaded;
- Click on the Upload Selected File button.
- Scroll down to view the list of documents uploaded on the Post-Award attachment sub-tab.

TROUBLE SHOOTING

I received an error while using FAAST. What should I do?
If you receive an error, please contact the FAAST Help Desk by calling **1-866-434-1083** or emailing **FAAST_ADMIN@waterboards.ca.gov**.

The following information is useful in troubleshooting the error you encountered:
- Type of computer used;
- Internet browser used to access FAAST;
- Identify the tab within the application where the error appeared;
- PIN assigned to the application; and
- Screen shot of the error.

Every time I try to save on the questionnaire tab, I get an error. Why?
A likely cause is that one or more of the responses in the text fields has exceeded the character count in one or more of the question fields. To successfully save the responses in the text fields, please shorten the responses and/or try saving the responses individually by clicking the SAVE AS WORK IN PROGRESS button each time a response is entered. This way you will know when the character count has been exceeded.

I created a WBKey account to upload a post-submission (or post award) document but I can't see the project. Why can't I see the project on the list of submitted applications?
Applications in FAAST are associated with users, not organizations. If you need access to a proposal that was submitted by someone else within your organization, please send an email to the FAAST Help Desk by email at **FAAST_ADMIN@waterboards.ca.gov** or by telephone (toll-free) at **1-866-434-1083** Monday through Friday from 8:00AM - 5:00PM. The email should contain the following information:
- Proposal Identification Number (PIN).
- Name of the person who submitted the application.
- Reason why you need access (i.e., the submitter is not longer with the organization).

Then the FAAST Administrator will associate the PIN to your account and you will be able to access the application.

I can't find where to upload the post award documents?
For projects that have been awarded funding, post award documents should be uploaded via the POST AWARD attachment sub-tab. If you do not see this sub-tab when you are viewing the application, please contact the FAAST Help Desk by email at **FAAST_ADMIN@waterboards.ca.gov** or by telephone (toll-free) at **1-866-434-1083** Monday through Friday from 8:00AM - 5:00PM. The email should include the Proposal Identification Number (PIN) or Grant Agreement Number.

RESOURCES
User Manual
A step-by-step guide on using FAAST is provided in the form of a User Manual. The User Manual is found at: **https://faast.waterboards.ca.gov** under FAAST on the left hand side of the FAAST homepage.

Note: The User Manual is under review for an update. Expected release date in mid-August 2024.

FAAST Help Desk
The FAAST Help Desk is open from Monday through Friday from 8:00AM – 5:00PM. Please contact the FAAST Help Desk for technical assistance with FAAST. All program related questions will be referred to Funding Program staff.

Email at **FAAST_ADMIN@waterboards.ca.gov**; or
Telephone (toll-free) at **1-866-434-1083**.

How-To Videos
To view FAAST How-To Videos, please visit the FAAST How-To Videos page located at: **https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/videos/faast.html**. As of July 2, 2024, we have 3 how-to videos:
- How to Create a WBKey Account;
- How to Start/Submit a CWSRF Application; and
- How to Upload Post Submission Attachments.

Note: The how-to videos are useful to all users, not just SRF applicants.