

# The Nonprofit's Introductory Guide to Google Ad Grants



## Introduction

Google Ad Grants offers nonprofits \$10,000 per month for in-kind Google Ads advertising to promote their mission and grow their nonprofit on Google search result pages. While Google Ad Grants offers a tremendous opportunity for nonprofits, it requires active maintenance and optimization to maintain the eligibility requirements.

This guide offers an introduction to Google Ad Grants, including:

- Eligibility requirements
- Rules and restrictions
- How to apply for a Google Ad Grant
- Where to go for help with your Google Ad Grant

## Rules and Requirements

Google Ad Grants display your message to people who are searching for nonprofits like yours. If you qualify, you'll receive \$10,000 USD in in-kind Google Ads advertising each month. This section describes Google Ad Grants rules, restrictions, and eligibility requirements.

*Note that Google Ad Grant policies may change at any time. Be sure to review the Google Ad Grants Policy Compliance Guide<sup>1</sup> to ensure you know the latest details.*

### Eligibility Requirements

These regulations must be followed to maintain eligibility within the Google Ad Grants program. Violations may cause your account to be suspended!

- Hold current, valid charity status (for example, within the U.S., you must have a current 501(c)(3) status).
- Acknowledge and agree to Google Grant's required certifications<sup>2</sup> regarding how to receive and use donations obtained from the grant.
- Have a website that is functioning and provides adequate detail about your nonprofit.
- Maintain a **click-through rate (CTR) of 5%** for your Ad Grant campaigns. If your account average CTR drops below 5% for two consecutive months, Google can suspend your account without warning.
- Link ads to **one** website domain.

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<sup>1</sup> [https://support.google.com/grants/answer/9042207?hl=en&ref\\_topic=3500093](https://support.google.com/grants/answer/9042207?hl=en&ref_topic=3500093)

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.google.com/grants/eligibility/>

- Do not link to pages composed of links to other websites.
- Do not include commercial advertising.
- Do not display Google AdSense ads or affiliate advertising links on your website.
- Ads and keywords should match your programs and services.
- Each Campaign must have at least **two** Ad Groups with **at least two** ads each.
- You must use **at least two** sitelink extensions<sup>3</sup>, either for each Ad Group or each Campaign.
- You must log in and make changes to your account on a **monthly** basis, if your account goes longer than a month without someone logging in, it can be suspended.
- Campaigns **MUST** target a specific location. You cannot have a campaign that is open to the entire world.
- Maintain a quality website. If your website fails to meet the following standards, Google can automatically suspend your account with no warning:
  - Your site must have a clear description of your organizational mission, and each page must have sufficient information for visitors to understand your purpose. Also, your site must function well and have no broken links, and your ads may not make claims that promise results after a consultation, service, or purchase.
  - Commercial activity must not be the purpose of your website. This means sales of products and services, consultations, lead generation, or providing referrals. If your site does have commercial activities, they must support your non-monetary mission, and if your site does charge for products or services, the site must describe how your organization uses the funds.
  - Advertising on your site must be relevant to your mission and not obtrusive to visitors, and your site may not make use of Google AdSense or affiliate advertising links.

The following organizations are NOT eligible for Google Grants:

- Governmental entities and organizations
- Hospitals and medical groups
- Schools, childcare centers, academic institutions, and universities (philanthropic arms of educational organizations are eligible). *Note that Google has a similar program for educational institutions<sup>4</sup>.*

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<sup>3</sup> <https://support.google.com/google-ads/answer/7106946>

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.google.com/edu/>

## Rules and Restrictions

- \$10,000 USD in in-kind Google Ads advertising each month, which is equivalent to \$329 per day.
- Must enable and use “Maximize Conversions<sup>5</sup>” to avoid \$2.00 bid cap.
- You can run text ads only (no video or image ads).
- Ads will appear only on Google search result pages under paid search results.
- Grant ads will rank below paid ads.
- Campaigns must be keyword-targeted. While Google Ads provide several methods of targeting, your Ad Grant account must target only keywords<sup>6</sup>, and you need to be careful about the keywords that you target. You may NOT target the following types of keywords:
  - Single-word keywords (with the exception of branded words, recognized medical conditions, or words such as donate and donation)
  - Keywords with a Quality Score<sup>7</sup> of 1 or 2
  - Very generic keywords like “best videos,” “today’s news,” “job alert,” or names of other organizations, places, historical events, or people
- All grantees must complete an annual program survey.

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<sup>5</sup> [https://support.google.com/grants/answer/117827?ref\\_topic=3500093](https://support.google.com/grants/answer/117827?ref_topic=3500093)

<sup>6</sup> <https://support.google.com/google-ads/answer/1704368?hl=en>

<sup>7</sup> [https://support.google.com/grants/answer/9042207?hl=en&ref\\_topic=3500093](https://support.google.com/grants/answer/9042207?hl=en&ref_topic=3500093)

## How to Apply for the Google Ad Grant: 5 Easy Steps

### 1. Meet the Google Ad Grant eligibility requirements.

### 2. Register your nonprofit with TechSoup<sup>8</sup> and get a validation token.

TechSoup is a nonprofit that partners with corporations like Google to help bring technology and other resources to nonprofits at a discounted rate. To get started:

- Go to the TechSoup registration page<sup>9</sup>.
- Choose the country your organization is based in and your preferred language.
- Click New Member, register, and agree to the terms. In some cases, it may take up to 30 days to be validated, and TechSoup may contact you to request additional information.
- Once your organization has been validated, log in and you will be presented with a TechSoup Validation Token that looks something like: 315c793@YourOrgName. Copy this code and include it in your Google for Nonprofits enrollment (see next step).

### 3. Enroll in Google for Nonprofits.

Sign up for Google for Nonprofits<sup>10</sup>. You need to have this set up before you can apply for the Ad Grant. Being a Google Nonprofit also gets you other Google perks, including:

- Special features on YouTube, including a donate button and video annotations that link to your site
- Free Google apps, like Gmail and Google Drive, under your domain
- Listing on One Today<sup>11</sup>, Google's mobile fundraising app
- To enroll in Google for Nonprofits, you'll need your tax-id number (or employer ID, EIN) and your TechSoup validation token. From there:

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<sup>8</sup> <http://www.techsoup.org/>

<sup>9</sup> <https://app.ngok.techsoupglobal.org/Default.aspx?vendorAppid=7E8863C3-0002-4BED-B32E-796B311A4B9A>

<sup>10</sup> <http://www.google.com/nonprofits/>

<sup>11</sup> <https://onetoday.google.com/>

- Go to the Google for Nonprofits registration site<sup>12</sup>.
- Agree to Google's statements about non-discrimination.
- Insert your validation token.
- Fill out your personal contact and organization info and agree to be contacted by Google. Make sure you're signed in with an email address that you check often since this is where Google will send important announcements about your Google Ad Grant account.
- Submit. Google should approve your application within a few days and will send you an email when they do.

#### 4. Apply for the Google Ad Grant.

Follow this three-step process:

- **Log in and create your Google Ads account.** You can do this as soon as you're approved for the Google for Nonprofits program. A few tips:
  - Use [this link](#), which skips the billing process. **It is important that you skip the billing process.** Make sure you use the same email address you used for the Google for Nonprofits application.
  - Choose USD as your currency<sup>13</sup>.
  - **Never enter any credit card info — even if it asks for it.** If you do, you'll be setting up a standard paid account, not a Grant account, and you'll have to start the process over again.
- **Create your first campaign.** Your first campaign can be something simple, like a branded campaign using your organization's name as the main keyword vertical. Pages 10-14 of Google's guide<sup>14</sup> offer helpful steps for setting up your first campaign.

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<sup>12</sup> <http://www.google.com/nonprofits/join/>

<sup>13</sup> <https://support.google.com/grants/answer/1689506?hl=en>

<sup>14</sup> <http://static.googleusercontent.com/media/www.google.com/en/us/grants/pdf/external-nonprofit-guide-2014.pdf>

- **Wait for Google to approve your account.** Google will get back to you within 30 days. Once Google gives you approval, you can start spending up to \$329 per day in free Google Ads.

**5. Maintain your Google Ads account correctly.** Make sure you comply with *all* Google Ad Grants requirements<sup>15</sup>. Google says that any violation of the guidelines can result in removal from the Google Ad Grants program. And, be sure to spend the full grant every month: it's use-it-or-lose-it!

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<sup>15</sup> <http://www.google.com/grants/eligibility.html>