2014 Entry Form
(Complete one for each entry.)

Fill out the entry name *exactly* as you want it listed in the program.

Entry Name   Universal Funding Application System

HFA   Kentucky Housing Corporation

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Qualified Entries must be received by **Tuesday, July 1, 2014**.

For more information about Qualified Entries, click here to access the 2014 Entry Rules.

Use this header on the upper right corner of each page.

HFA   Kentucky Housing Corporation

Entry Name   Universal Funding Application System

Communications	Homeownership	Rental Housing	Special Needs Housing
☐ Annual Report ☐ Promotional Materials and Newsletters ☐ Creative Media	☐ Empowering New Buyers ☐ Home Improvement and Rehabilitation ☐ Encouraging New Production	☐ Multifamily Management ☐ Preservation and Rehabilitation ☐ Encouraging New Production	☐ Combating Homelessness ☐ Housing for Persons with Special Needs
Legislative Advocacy	**Management Innovation**	**Special Achievement**	**Are you providing visual aids?**
☐ State Advocacy ☐ Federal Advocacy	☐ Financial ☐ Human Resources ☐ Operations ■ Technology	☐ Special Achievement	■ YES ☐ NO

Description

Kentucky Housing Corporation (KHC) has an application process that awards funds to organizations throughout the state. Each funding application administered by KHC has specific requirements to ensure each project meets all federal, state, and agency guidelines. KHC was able to streamline the application process by developing the Universal Funding Application (UFA).

Prior to the development of the UFA, the Corporation utilized different methods for our partners to apply for funding, including two groups using different Web-based application systems and another group using paper forms. UFA has been developed to allow various funding applications to be received through one portal.

Development

A designer tool was developed for staff to be able to design an application to fit the needs of specific funding requirements. This designer tool provides flexibility in customizing questions by assigning specific properties and behaviors. Properties are assigned to questions to ensure completion prior to the funding application submission. Some properties permit only numeric values as valid responses. Behaviors are used to control other questions within the funding application.   For example, if a question is answered "yes," the next two questions require a response. If the response is no, those same questions will not require a response.

By creating the funding application with the designer tool, it is published as a Web application that has a consistent appearance and functionality.

Partners create one account to access any application KHC has published for funding. These accounts can be used to access additional features, including the creation of teams that consist of a group of individuals from within or outside their agency. This allows individuals to complete different sections of the funding application at the same time. The UFA also supports the ability to attach required documents in various electronic formats as part of the funding application.

After a funding application has been submitted by the applicant, the information is transferred electronically to KHC's project management system, simplifying and reducing staff time to manually transfer information.

Innovation

The UFA was developed as an Application Programming Interface (API) for flexibility in utilizing the system within or separate from KHC's current project management software. The question controls provide the tools to capture information in a format that the funding application writer needs. This system controls the applicant's data entry to reduce KHC's need to reenter key data points within the project management system.

Replicable

The customized code is integrated into KHC's project management software, but can become a stand-alone software application. This provides KHC the ability to use the software in other areas of the Corporation. Because it is an API, it has the potential to be used by other organizations.

Problem Solving
Each funding application had a different appearance and functionality. The UFA was created to standardize the funding application process for staff and users.

Partners were required to maintain user IDs for each funding application. The UFA provides one portal for all funding applications.

The prior Web application systems would not allow multiple users to access the same funding application to complete a set of questions; team functionality was introduced to eliminate this issue.

As funding requirements change each year, KHC's Technology Services was required to update the Web application systems. This included all changes from spelling corrections to adding new questions. The development of UFA has transferred most of that responsibility to the business groups.

KHC staff no longer manually enter key data points into the project management system. They may now review their applications in electronic forms.

Results and Success
Since the introduction in fall 2013, the UFA has been utilized for four funding application rounds. Partners experienced cost savings with the elimination of providing printed applications, printed supporting documentation, and postal cost. KHC eliminated most services required from KHC's Facilities and Customer Service staff due to the reduction in distributing and receiving mailed applications.

The UFA allows staff to review and control application information that is electronically transferred to the project management system. This has helped to eliminate data entry errors.

Putting a Price on It
A qualitative benefit is the positive feedback we have received from our partners. The system allows the business group to be less dependent on technology services and their timelines. Technology Services has freed resources to work on other initiatives.

All competitive funding applications for KHC resources will go through this system, including multifamily and single-family development along with homeless programs. The entire application process for all funding sources and activities will be paperless, from the application itself to all required follow-up evidentiary or technical submission items. This system also will house all correspondence between KHC and the recipient of funds, thereby reducing the reliance upon long-term imaging solutions. The application information will be uploaded into a corporate database, thereby reducing manual entry by staff.

The savings for KHC is monumental with the reduction of staff hours and shipping costs. The estimated cost of production for the UFA was $27,000 with a net savings of $48,000 the first year and an ongoing savings of $75,000 yearly for KHC.

Effective Use of Resources
The UFA is more dynamic in nature and less a technology services dependent system. The business group has more control of changes, which reduced the time from funding application conception to funding application implementation.

Because partners enter their data utilizing UFA, information is electronically transmitted into the project management system, reducing staff time by not re-entering project information. Documents uploaded into UFA during the application process are also submitted electronically, reducing either paper or electronic media processed by the Corporation's mailroom.

Conclusion
Optimizing resources and enhancing corporate efficiencies was a main reason for the development of the UFA. Other important aspects were to provide a single system for funding applications, a single login for partners, achieving a corporate-wide standardized process, and enhancing our partners' experience.

This project brought together a cross functional team whose objective was to partner in developing one primary funding application system. By using a mix of agile and waterfall development methodology, KHC was able to develop and implement the first online funding application in less than ten months.

Screenshots on Remaining Pages

Users only have to create one login account for the UFA. Accounts can be used for any funding application, which improves the experience with KHC partners.
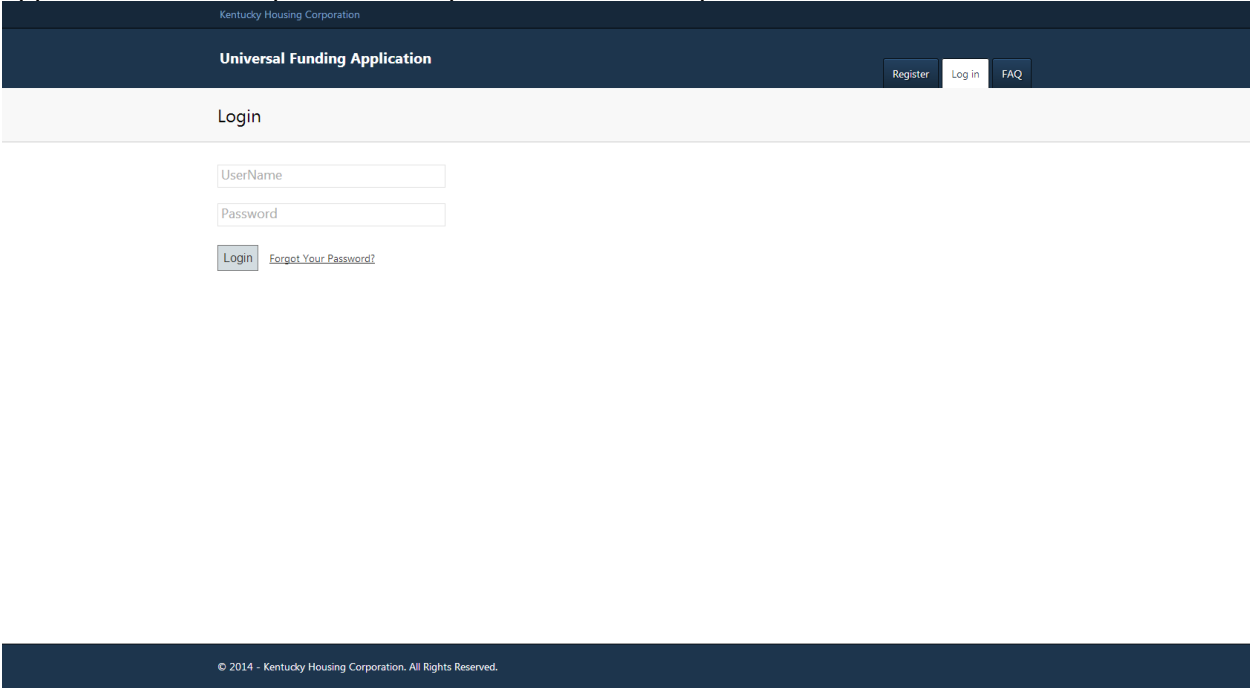
The UFA can be modified to grant access to one or more business group's funding applications, which can save time for partners and KHC.

Sections are created within the designer to structure the application process. This allows for applicants to access different sections of the application when needed. The designer can format stages to be submitted individually or all at one time.

Sections are used to manage each step of the application process. The UFA also provides a checklist, information, and guidelines for all applicants to use throughout the process.

Options are shown within the designer to set questions to a required field or to give flexibility for the applicant to fill in this portion at a later time.
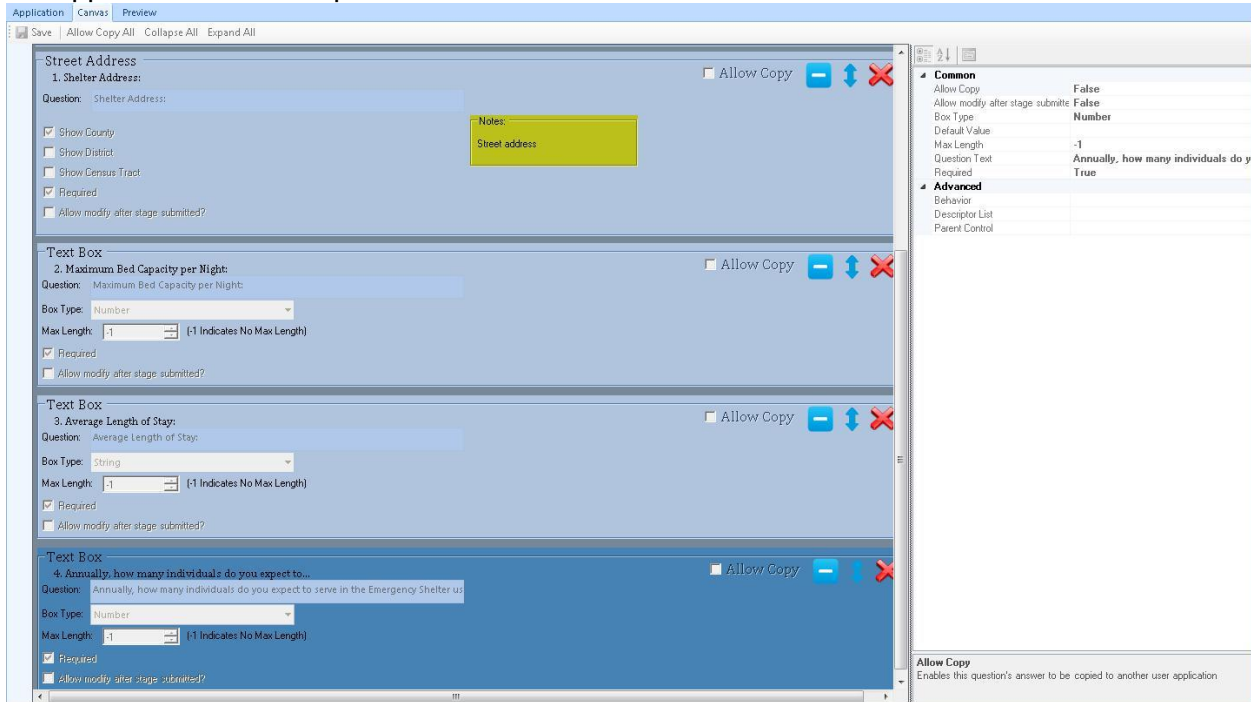
As a result, each application contains specific information that is required to be able to complete the next step of the process. If the application isn't filled out completely, then the applicant will not be able to continue to the next section.