



**Empire State
Development**



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Strategic Planning and Feasibility Studies

ESD Strategic Planning and Feasibility Studies

\$1 Million Grant Funding
Available in Round 6

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Eligible Applicants

- Cities
- Counties
- Municipalities
- Business Improvement Districts
- Local Development Corporations
- Not-for-profit Economic Development Organizations*

*If awarded funding, prior to ESD Directors' approval and execution of a contract with ESD, a not-for-profit corporation must be registered and up-to-date with filings with the New York State Office of the Attorney General's Charities Bureau and the New York State Office of the State Comptroller's VendRep System and must be prequalified in the New York State Grants Gateway.

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Program Objectives

- Matching Grants of up to \$100,000 each to support the following types of programs:
- Strategic development plans for a city, county, or municipality or a significant part thereof; and/or
- Feasibility studies for site(s) or facility(ies) assessment and planning.
- The program promotes economic development in the State of New York by encouraging economic and employment opportunities and stimulating development of communities and urban areas.
- Projects should focus on economic development purposes.
- Preference shall be given to projects located in highly distressed areas.
- Projects should clearly define project scope, work plan, and anticipated results.

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Project Costs (Eligible)

Funds may be used for the following:

- Salaries, wages, fringe
- Contractual services
- Supplies and materials
- Travel

Funds may not be used for site assessment or planning for residential development, although program funds may be used for a study involving for a mixed-use project.

Pre-Application Requirements:

Applicants must complete and submit a Consolidated Funding Application (CFA) for review by ESD and the Regional Council for the region in which the proposed project is located.

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Other Information

- Project budgets should include only costs for the specific project (or phase, if the project has multiple phases) for which funds are being requested via the CFA.
- A commitment to undertake the project should not be made, and expenses should not be incurred, prior to award announcement.
- In accordance with the requirements of Article 15-A of the New York State Executive Law: Participation By Minority Group Members and Women With Respect To State Contracts by providing opportunities for MBE/WBE participation, projects awarded funding shall be reviewed by ESD's Office of Contractor and Supplier Diversity, which will set business and participation goals for minorities and women. Such goals shall typically be included in the incentive proposal.
- Please note that ESD's agency-wide MWBE utilization goal is 30%. Each project will be assigned an individual contract-specific goal, which may be higher or lower than 30%. Should an Applicant receive a funding award, the Applicant shall be required to use good faith efforts to achieve the prescribed MWBE goals assigned to this project. Applicants must maintain such records and take such actions necessary to demonstrate such compliance.

ESD Strategic Planning and Feasibility Studies

- Notice of a funding award will be given in the form of an incentive proposal outlining the terms of the proposed assistance. The award is subject to approval of the ESD Directors and compliance with applicable laws and regulations. Project funding may only be used for expenses incurred after date that notice of the funding award is given. Applicants are strongly encouraged to review and countersign ESD's incentive proposal prior to starting the project.
- The essential terms for the assistance are included in the incentive proposal. Although funding is offered prior to project commencement as an inducement to undertake the project, funds are disbursed in arrears, as reimbursement for eligible project expenditures.
- All Applicants will be requested to certify and agree that any decrease in the scope of work described in the Applicant's final CFA submission including, but not limited to, total project costs, jobs retained, and jobs created, may result in ESD's reduction of the award, in ESD's sole discretion, in an amount proportionate to any such decrease.
- All Applicants will be requested to certify and agree that any expansion of the scope of work described in the Applicant's final CFA submission including, but not limited to, total project costs, jobs retained, and jobs created, will not result in the increase of the award by ESD.

ESD Strategic Planning and Feasibility Studies

- ESD requires that the Applicant contribute a minimum of ten percent (10%) of the total project cost in the form of equity contributed after the Applicant's acceptance of ESD's incentive proposal.
 - Equity is defined as cash injected into the project by the Applicant or by investors, and should be auditable through the Applicant's financial statements or accounts, if so requested by ESD. Equity cannot be borrowed money secured by the assets in the project or grants from a government source.
- Projects generally are presented to the ESD Directors once all project expenditures have been undertaken and disbursement of ESD assistance is sought.
- The Applicant must always disclose whether it is pursuing or intends to pursue multiple ESD funding sources, including grants, loans and tax incentives.
- All required public approvals must be in place prior to the start of construction (should the project result in construction) and approval by the ESD Directors, including State Environmental Quality Review (SEQR) and consultation with the State Historic Preservation Office, if applicable.

ESD Strategic Planning and Feasibility Studies

- Please note that awarded grants are **not transferable** and reimbursement payments may only be made to the awardee.
- It is expected the project will proceed in the time frame set forth by the Applicant. If the implementation of a project fails to proceed as planned and is delayed for a significant period of time and there is, in the exclusive judgment of ESD, doubt as to its viability, ESD reserves the right to cancel its funding commitment to such project. If awarded, the Incentive Proposal expires two years from the date of acceptance by the Recipient. ESD reserves the right to require Recipient to provide any additional information and/or documentation ESD deems necessary and terminate the project at any point if the applicant fails to provide such documentation in a timely manner.
- Projects should focus on economic development purposes, such as increasing viability of existing businesses, stimulating new enterprises, and analyzing potential development opportunities or obstacles to development.
- Priority will be given to projects located in Highly Distressed Areas
 - In determining whether a project is in a highly distressed area, ESD considers whether the area is characterized by pervasive poverty, high unemployment, and general economic distress.

ESD Strategic Planning and Feasibility Studies

For more information, eligible Applicants should contact the local Empire State Development Regional Office.

A complete list of the ESD Regional Offices can be found at:

<http://esd.ny.gov/RegionalOverviews.html>