Empire State Development

ESD Grants Program

Q. Can my project start before the award is officially announced?

A. Yes, however, expenses incurred before the award announcement are ineligible for reimbursement.

Q. Is the 1% commitment fee netted out at the end of the project? Not at the time of the award, but at the time of funding?

A. The 1% commitment fee is required upon execution of the Grant Disbursement Agreement.

Q. What are the match requirements for the program?

A. ESD may provide up to twenty percent (20%) of the financing for any particular project. 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.

Q. How far along is too far along in a project? For example, you have paid for architectural plans, but construction hasn't advanced.

A. A project should not begin and expenses should not be incurred before funding awards have been announced. Expenses incurred prior to submission of a CFA should not be included in CFA project budgets, nor should expenses that will be incurred after submission of a CFA but prior to an award announcement.

Q. How much emphasis is placed on MWBE requirement?

A. If a project is funded, MWBE goals will be established for the project. The goal ascribed depends on eligible expenses as identified by our MWBE team.

Q. Is the ESD Grants Program subject to the July 29th 4PM deadline?

A. No, the ESD Grants program is an Open Enrollment program. Applications can be submitted at any time until funding is exhausted. An emphasis will be placed on project readiness and alignment with the project's strategic plan.

Q. How will projects seeking ESD Grant funds be reviewed now that it is an Open Enrollment program?

A. Projects submitted will be batched for review. Expected dates and deadlines for application submission to be considered for review are below. Again, an emphasis will be placed on project readiness and alignment with the region's strategic plan. Projects are strongly encouraged to submit their project once it is ready.

Batch 1 review- submit/finalize applications by 7/29/2022

Additional batch reviews- dates TBD

Q. Can I reapply for funding if my application was rejected in the first batch?

A. Yes, applicants can reapply for funding for projects not funded in the past if the program is still open and funding is available. Applicants are strongly encouraged to consult their Regional Council strategic plan to enhance project proposals to better align their project with their Region's strategic plan and consult with their ESD Regional Office for the region in which the project is located.

Q. Can I apply to both ESD Grants and other CFA programs that follow the standard CFA timeline with the July 29 deadline? What about other Standalone CFA Programs?

A. Yes, you can apply to multiple programs on the same CFA application, including both other REDC programs and other Standalone programs. However, if you are applying to both an open enrollment program and a program that is subject to the July 29th 4PM deadline on the same application, it must be finalized by 4PM on July 29th in order to be reviewed and considered for funding.