

Application Instructions
Phase 1
Government Restricted Municipality Planning Grants

Background

Using funding from the New Jersey Economic Recovery Act of 2020 (“Economic Recovery Act”), the Government Restricted Municipality Planning Grants Program-Phase 1 will provide grants to qualified applicants to create long-term strategic action plans to assist New Jersey’s Government Restricted Municipalities (GRM) maximize their growth potentials and implement new or stalled community-focused economic growth projects

The strategic action plans will provide resources for projects that are most actionable and have the greatest potential for broad community benefit .Through this process, applicants will develop clear action plans based on the library of research and planning completed by the GRM’s governing body and executive departments, major civic organizations, business stakeholders and strategic anchors such as higher education institutions, transportation partners, arts organizations and health care organizations. . This planning funding will have great potential to focus the flow of private capital and economic investment into communities that have historically faced economic challenges.

The follow up program, Government Restricted Municipality Planning Grants Program-Phase 2, will award implementation funding for technical planning gaps identified in the phase 1 strategic action plans for Government Restricted Municipalities of Atlantic City, Paterson, Trenton.

Overview

Applicants must apply to work with one of the designated government restricted municipalities.

Recipients will be tasked with the design and submission of a detailed, long-term, and action-oriented strategic plan that incorporates existing plans of the GRM and identifies technical capacity needs that have held these projects back from completion. The strategic action plans developed through this grant program will better position GRMs to implement and execute on these stalled projects.

The funding opportunity is open to all qualified applicants and for the express benefit of government supported municipalities which are defined as the cities of Atlantic City, Paterson and Trenton.

Qualified applicants are defined as:

- New Jersey municipalities,
- New Jersey counties,
- New Jersey authorities,
- accredited higher education institutions,

- public interest research groups and/or
- professional services providers

Qualified applicants must have completed at least one municipal, county or New Jersey state government plan focused on economic revitalization.

Vested interest in close co-operation must be shown by a letter of support from the chief executive of the eligible government restricted municipality. The strategic plan and subsequent supporting documentation will then be disseminated to the public for use in community focused economic planning opportunities in government restricted municipalities.

Applicants may apply to work with more than one GRM. Each GRM will be the focus of at least one grant.

Applications will be accepted up and until sixty days after the opening of applications.

Applications will then be reviewed for completeness and scored by an evaluation committee based on the criteria set forth in below.

Proposals with scores equal to or greater than 50 will be presented to the Board for review and award. The Committee will make award recommendations to the Board of the highest ranked application for each GRM

The expected date of the grant award will be fourth quarter 2021. The term of the grant shall be for a period of six (6) months. The six-month term will begin on the date of the execution of the grant agreement by the Authority. One extension of one month may be issued as the sole discretion of the Authority.

Scope of Work

The Authority is seeking applications from New Jersey municipalities, New Jersey counties, independent authorities of New Jersey municipalities, counties, regions or State of New Jersey, accredited higher education institutions, public interest research groups and/or professional services providers who have completed at least one New Jersey municipal, county or state government plan.

The plan(s) are focused on the development of long-term strategic action plans comprising an in-depth analysis of community planning activities that will lead to actionable project plans focused on community goals, attracting socially responsible investment, and building localized investment planning capacities.

The use of grant funds must be focused on planning and long-term economic development planning efforts in the government restricted municipalities identified in the Economic Recovery Act with the ultimate goal of actualizing community-focused economic growth projects.

Applicants are encouraged to leverage any pre-existing or uniquely relevant community plans from a wide variety of stakeholders as well as the knowledge, skills, and abilities of community stakeholders; anchor partners in medicine, higher education, and the arts; and local business stakeholders and unions.

Applicants may propose to hire or subcontract with outside experts and may consider any approach or combination of approaches to achieve the program goals of strategic economic planning with an action focus.

Eligible Respondents

Qualified applicants are defined as New Jersey municipalities, New Jersey counties, New Jersey authorities, accredited higher education institutions, public interest research groups, and/or professional services providers who have completed at least one municipal, county, or New Jersey state government long-term strategic action plan focused economic revitalization.

Applicants must clearly articulate how their respective plans will position the GRM to activate projects as part of an overall economic development strategy. Applicants should also articulate how the plans will enhance local civic capacity to attract socially responsible investment. Proposals must clearly demonstrate a viable path to implementation and show a collaborative stakeholder engagement process.

Applicants should identify any specific difficulties, challenges, or issues that have the potential to impede project investment in their GRM and should explain how the proposed strategic plan would be used to identify or work toward a solution in that gap.

All applicant proposals must be focused on long term action oriented strategic economic planning. Applicants may submit multiple individual applications where each individual application is focused on one GRM.

Community support

Each applicant must provide a letter of support from the Chief Executive of the GRM which will be the subject of the applicant's proposed plan.

A GRM municipality may propose to author a plan. This will not preclude the Chief Executive of the GRM from issuing additional letters of support to other applicants.

Application Requirements

The Applicant shall describe its approach to undertaking a strategic planning project as outlined in **Scope of Work** by clearly explaining how the planning project will work to accomplish the goals of the Government Restricted Municipality Planning Grants program.

In line with these goals, the application must contain, at a minimum, the required information identified below (as applicable):

- Completed Application Information Form (Attachment A), and any additional information related to the Scope of Work that the applicant feels is relevant but not specifically requested on Attachment A.
- Completed Budget that demonstrates how the full project budget is being utilized. The budget must detail hard and soft costs, which include, but are not limited to, labor costs, contract/technical services and support costs, and material costs. The budget must project out that the final deliverable will be met within six (6) months of grant agreement execution. The budget will be outlined in a fee schedule.
- Demonstration of the plan's ability to achieve the substantive planning goals of the Government Restricted Municipality Planning Grants Program as outlined in Scope of Work.
- Demonstration of the project effort's ability to achieve the goal of a long term strategic action plan.
- Demonstration of the ability to analyze multiple plans in order to find actionable items that will catalyze projects of merit.
- Demonstration of an investment strategy.
- Demonstration of a defined collaborative stakeholder engagement process and strategy.
- Signed letter of support from the chief executive of the government restricted municipality expressing support for the application. A government restricted municipality may only submit one application but may issue letters of support for other applicants.
- Outline of roles, responsibilities and resources which the applicant and its partners (as applicable) will contribute to the project effort.
- Examples or information reflecting prior experience of applicant in executing planning projects of a similar size and scope.
- Information relating to organization and/or personnel that will work on the proposed planning, as well as any partners or subcontracted organizations or individual(s) that will conduct the proposed planning, including contact names and telephone numbers, evidence of the applicant's qualifications, and capabilities to perform the services

required by this application, as well as resumes or bios for all key personnel who will or who are expected to perform the work outlined in the application.

- Any information specific to personnel should emphasize relevant qualifications and experience of these individuals in successfully completing contracts of a similar size and scope, relative to the Scope of Work in this application.

Disbursement

Grant disbursements by the Authority will *only* be made to the grantee(s) who shall be responsible for assuring the compliance of any sub-contractors with all terms and conditions of the program and who assumes the sole and absolute responsibility for any payments due to any sub-contractors pursuant to applicable laws.

Disbursements to Grantees will be made pursuant to the following disbursement schedule: 50 percent of the grant amount upon execution of the grant agreement; 25 percent of the grant amount on or around the halfway point of the grant term (3 months), upon EDA's receipt and approval of a progress report; and 25 percent upon completion and submission of the final plan.

At a minimum, the progress report referenced above must include:

- Summary of funds expended to date and
- Narrative detailing milestones achieved and overall progress toward completion of final plan.

Evaluation/Scoring Criteria

Applications will be evaluated by a cross-organizational Evaluation Committee composed of the Authority's staff and management, with the advice of state Agencies/Department Subject Matter Experts (SME's) to evaluate, score, and rank applications.

Proposals will be evaluated and scored on each of the criteria below according to a scale of one to twenty (1 – 20) based on the information submitted in applications

It is the policy of the EDA that to be considered for award, a Proposer must achieve or exceed an overall score of fifty with one hundred being the highest rating. The Authority will make no awards to proposals that score below a 50.

Evaluation Criteria -

The point scale is as follows for:

- 0 points - Absence of ability to meet the criteria.
- 1 – 7 points – Minimal ability to meet the criteria.
- 8 – 11 points – Satisfactory ability to meet the criteria.
- 12 – 17 points – Exceptional ability to meet the criteria.
- 18 – 20 points - Unique ability to meet the criteria.

- 1) Demonstration of the plan's ability to achieve the substantive planning goals as outlined in Scope of Work.
- 2) Demonstration of the ability to achieve the goal of a long term strategic action plan.
- 3) Demonstration of the ability to analyze multiple plans in order to find actionable items that will catalyze projects of merit.
- 4) Demonstration of an investment strategy within the strategic plan proposal.
- 5) Demonstration of a defined collaborative stakeholder engagement process and strategy.

In the case of a tie score, the score on question 3 will be used to determine ranking criteria and award recommendation as necessary.

Additional Documentation and Reviews

Applicants will be required to submit additional documentation pending the award of the grant. This will include Tax Clearance Certificates and Business Registration Certificates for non-governmental entities. All entities will be required pass additional compliance reviews with related New Jersey state government agencies. Examples include reviews by Department of Labor and Department of Environmental Protection.

Questions & Answers

The Authority will electronically accept written questions and inquiries from all potential Applicant(s) via the web at NJEDAGRM@njeda.com. Phone calls/faxes shall not be accepted.

The subject line of the e-mail should state:
"Questions – GRM Phase 1"

All Questions received, and Answers given in response to this Application will be answered in the form of a Frequently Asked Questions document to be posted and continually updated on the Authority's website, <https://www.njeda.com/grmpgp>, up until the total program allotment has been exhausted, or 90 days after publication of notice and release of application (whichever is sooner). The Authority will also post any addenda on the same website. It is the responsibility of any potential applicant to review the website on a frequent basis to become aware of any answers and addenda.

Application Submission

Applications will be accepted no later than Monday September 13, 2021, 5:00 PM.
The Applicant must submit applications electronically, in PDF file format, to be viewable and "read only" by Authority evaluators using Adobe Acrobat Reader software.

The electronic applications must be uploaded to the Authority's ShareFile system via

<https://njeda.sharefile.com/r-r4c4093d10f61408b8707180e61d284cf>