



Northern Border
Regional Commission

FALL 2026

*Application Review &
Office Hours*



FOSTERING VIBRANT FUTURES FOR RURAL COMMUNITIES



AGENDA

This webinar will cover:

-  Timeline for fall funding programs
-  How to view your invitation to apply and start the application in NBRC's Grants Management System (GMS)
-  Common pre-application feedback and tips for developing a strong project budget
-  Resources available to help you prepare and submit your application and supporting documents
-  A live question-and-answer session



FALL TIMELINE

Fall 2026 Application Key Dates:

September 30 and October 7	➤ Application Office Hours
October 16	➤ Applications due before 5pm
December	➤ Notification of awards
December	➤ New Grantee Training

DEVELOPING YOUR APPLICATION

1. Save **invitation to apply** and pre-application **feedback** for reference during application process
2. Locate and review [application support resources](#)
3. **Create** Application and **Save** often!
4. **Identify required forms and files for your project.** Submit all forms and files, including letters of support, through the GMS. We recommend starting these early!
5. If applicable, confirm **LDD Contact** is associated with application.
6. Review, edit and build on **project information** that carries over from pre-application.
7. Complete all **budget documentation**.
8. Complete **Technical Proposal** narrative responses. It is not necessary to use the full 5,000 characters allowed in the system for each narrative response. Use the suggested length of responses listed in the Program User Manuals, generally 1-3 paragraphs in length.
9. **Submit early!** Allow time to resolve any error messages that may occur

INVITATION TO APPLY

- All pre-applications receive a response from NBRC.
- Invited applicants receive an automated email notification.
- Many pre-applications receive feedback. Review and address feedback provided in email through Collab Tab of pre-application record.

Subject

2024 NBRC Invitation and Feedback

Body Content

A pre-application you're associated with has been invited to apply--congratulations! We

Please find below any important notes/Action items from NBRC's Program Manager:

- Action: Locations Tab - Unclear what location is being referenced;needs GEOIDs (Rate
- Workforce Development Classification: Projects need to address employer needs and

Please review the general notes provided about your submission:

- Action: Letters of Support — A competitive application will include letters of support
- FYI: Notice of Federal Interest — NBRC investment in real property triggers the requi
- Action: List Sources of Matching Funds — The Funding Sources and Commitments ta

Notes from your state's NBRC Program Manager:

no comments

FEEDBACK

Understanding feedback

- Feedback related to **project classification or maximum award size** must be addressed in full application to remain eligible.
- Feedback related to procurement, NEPA and timeline should be addressed in narrative and budget
- LDD Contact (if applicable) and Budget documentation must be correct to avoid delays if awarded

Questions about feedback?

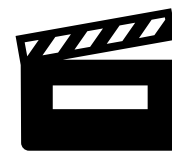
- Contact state program manager for questions about state specific feedback
- Contact NBRC for questions about project classification, award size, ineligible costs, procurement and NEPA using admin@nbrc.gov. Include your GMS assigned ID (PR-NBRC-XXXX) in the subject line.

APPLICATION RESOURCES

Application Resources

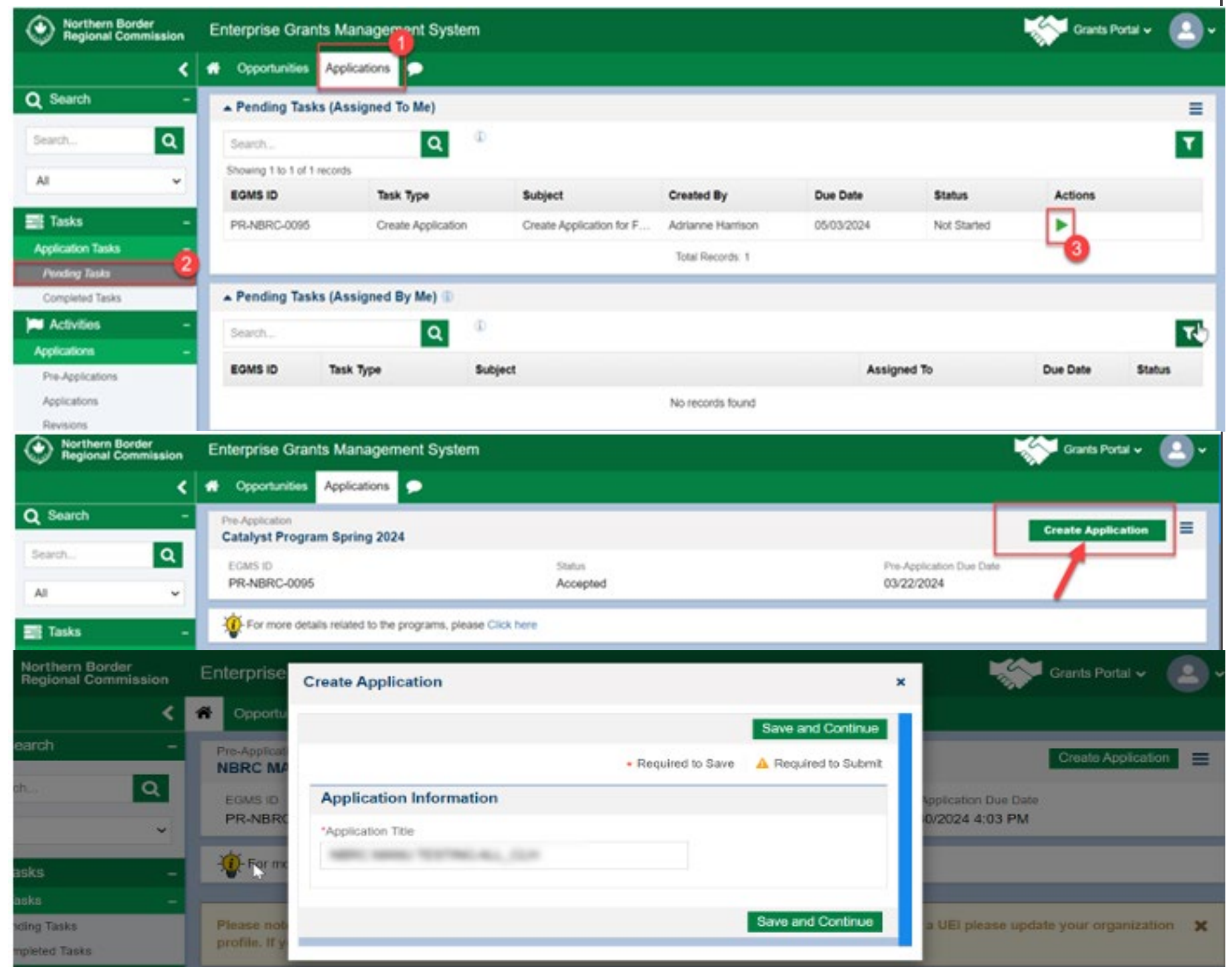
Find and open application resources:

- [Creating and submitting an application](#)
GMS guidance document is a *technical* guide to completing and submitting the application in the GMS.
- [Application Narrative Guidance](#) (Also in Appendix E of the Program User Manual) to help craft strong narrative responses that align with program priorities.
- [Application Supporting Document Checklist](#)
- Annotated sample forms and documents: [SF-424, SF-LLL, SF-424cbw](#)
- Program Pages—including Grant Programs User Manual, Project Relevance and links to State Priority resources, and more. Grant Programs User Manual Appendices J-M provide essential scoring criteria.
 - [Catalyst](#)
 - [Forest Economy](#)
 - [Timber for Transit](#)
- [Watch 2026 Application Information Session](#)
- [View Application Workshop Series](#)



CREATE APPLICATION

- Create the application in the GMS using the guidance provided in [Creating and Submitting an Application](#)
- Click the **Pending Tasks** menu of Applications tab
- Locate the **Create Application** task and click the **start icon**
- Click the **Create Application** button to initiate the application and open a pop-up window
- Enter **title**, click **Save and Continue**, and write down **ID number** (AP-NBRC-0000)



CREATE APPLICATION

After you select "create application" you can review your **Organization Profile** for updates that may be needed:

- Home > Organization Profile
- Review UEI # and SAM.gov account expiration date
- Verify details with SAM.gov using the "verify" button
- Confirm SAM.gov account is not expired
- See Sam.gov if your organization does not have a UEI #
- Need help updating your UEI in the GMS? See the [NBRC Resources page](#) for guidance. Note – you will not be able to update your UEI until you create your application.

INFO FROM THE PREAPPLICATION

- 
- **Overview" project information** from the pre-application will carry forward to the application:
- Project Abstract
 - Goals and Outcomes
 - Beneficiaries and Community Context
 - Statement of Need
 - Program Investment Priorities
 - Contacts

- \$ **Budget information** that was created in the pre-application will carry forward to the application Budget tab:
- Budget Categories/Periods Table
 - Budget Narrative
 - Funding Sources and Commitments Table

Pro Tip: Review all information that carries over from pre-application and edit to address feedback or requested revisions.

LDD CONTACT

- All applications, unless there is an approved LDD Waiver request or the applicant is an entity of state or LDD themselves, must associate an LDD Contact in the Contacts table**
- Make sure the LDD Contact role is assigned**
- By associating an LDD, they have access to **view, edit, and upload** to your application.
- Please coordinate via EMAIL with your LDD to ask for an application review.

**** Common pre-application feedback**

▲ Contacts ⓘ

To add a new co-applicant, please click the New button and enter the co-applicant contact details. If you are associating a co-applicant, you have previously added within an application in GovGrants, click the Associate button and select the co-applicant.

To associate an LDD with the application, click the Associate button and select the LDD contact.

Showing 1 to 3 of 3 records

Project Role	Name ↑	Email	Is Key Contact	Is User	Actions
Project Director/Manager	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	✓	✓	👁
LDD Contact	Jessie L. Cyr	jcyr@kvcog.org	✗	✓	👁
Grants Administrator	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	✓	✗	👁

UPDATE BUDGET DOCUMENTATION

Budget information is located in 5 documents and forms:

- SF-424cbw detailed project budget
- Budget Categories/Budget Periods Table
- **Budget Narrative
- **Funding Sources and Commitments Table
- SF-424 Application for Federal Assistance Form

Amounts in all budget documentation need to match.

Pro Tip: To streamline the budgeting process, complete the SF-424cbw Budget Details form before editing the GMS budget section. Ensuring the SF-424cbw is accurate and complete will make it easier to update the GMS budget information.

**** *Common pre-application feedback***

COMPLETING THE SF-424CBW

- Download, complete, and upload back to the Supporting Documents Checklist
- A sample SF 424-cbw is available NBRC's resources page, [here](#).
- Use the Instructions tab of the SF-424cbw for guidance on the types of costs in each category.

[illegible]

COMPLETING THE SF-424CBW

- The SF-424cbw categories are the same as the GMS budget table categories.
- Include descriptions for costs in each category. Without descriptions in the category column, it's difficult for the reviewer to determine how funds will be spent. Do not leave this column blank!
- If applicable, add LDD Grant Administration costs as a line item in Category 9 Other Direct Costs. **LDD costs should be \$8,000 for projects requesting less than \$400,000 OR 2% of the requested NBRC amount for projects requesting above \$400,000**

					Applicant Match	Other HUD Funds	Other Federal Share	State Share	Local/Tribal Share	Other	Program Income
9. Other Direct Costs	Quantity	Unit Cost	Estimated Cost	HUD Share							
Item											
NEPA review			\$1,000	\$1,000							
Contract with LDD for Grant Administration	2%		\$20,000	\$20,000							

LDD costs should be included in budget under 9. Other Direct Costs. For projects requesting less than \$400,000, LDD costs are \$8,000. For project requesting more than \$400,000 LDD costs are 2% of the requested amount.

NEPA Review cost estimate should be included in budget under 9. Other Direct Costs. Consult NEPA webpage for estimated costs that may be needed.

COMPLETING THE SF-424CBW

- Add NEPA costs as a line item in the SF-424cbw detailed budget document. These costs should be clearly identified in Category 9, Other Direct Costs. The costs should range from \$500-\$10,000+ depending on the expected level of review or actions to complete the environmental review process.

CATEX	CATEX + Section 106	Environmental Assessment
Brief review, no public comment period	Required Section 106 review for historic or eligible structures	Robust review
<1 month to develop	2-6 months depending on consultation	6-12+ months
\$0-\$500+	~\$500-\$1,500	~\$5,000-\$10,000+

Questions about NEPA? Refer to NBRC's NEPA resources page: <https://www.nbrc.gov/NEPA>

COMPLETING THE SF-424CBW

Review the completed SF-424cbw for common issues and errors:

- Each line item cost has a description associated
- Estimated total costs are equal to sum of contributions from all shares
- Total of NBRC Share (Column G) matches the NBRC requested amount and does not exceed the amount your project is eligible for
- NBRC Share + Other Federal Funds (Column G+K) does not exceed 80% of the total project costs.
- Projects in distressed counties must meet a minimum 20% match and stay within the 80% Federal Cap
- Row and column totals need to match information provided in the Budget Periods Table, Funding Sources and Commitments Table and the SF-424 Application for Federal Assistance.

Pro Tip: Use the SF424cbw Summary tab to easily view totals.

COMPLETING THE BUDGET NARRATIVE

A high-quality budget narrative will clarify the connection between the costs and the proposed project.

- Explain and justify costs above \$5,000
- Explain how NBRC funds will be used
- Describe how the cost estimate was determined and where possible, reference sources for cost estimates
- Provide a breakdown of expenses that make up each budget category total
- For contracts and service quotes, please note that if awarded funding, you will be required to comply with federal procurement guidelines
- See the [NBRC Compliance Manual](#) for more information and procurement requirements.

BUDGET WORKSHOP

Application Workshop #1: Budgets, Budgets, Budgets!

In this workshop, NBRC staff covers all budget related pre-application and application requirements, from calculating match to developing a budget narrative to completing the detailed SF424cbw budget, and more!

Topics for today's session:

1. **How to Create an Application** – quick review and resources
2. **Review budget information that carries into the application**
3. **Common budget feedback from pre-applications**
4. **Budget Details – Completing the SF424cbw**
 - Important Costs to Include
5. **Finalizing GMS budget information**
 - Budget Categories/Periods Table
 - Budget Narrative
 - Funding Sources and Commitments Table
6. **Common Errors Messages**
7. **SF-424 Application for Federal Assistance**

TECHNICAL PROPOSAL

You are
limited to
5,000
characters!

Overview

Locations

Budget

Proposal

LDD Support

Forms and Files

History

- Review the information you submitted in the pre-application and build on it here. Do not repeat information provided in the Overview tab.
- Have the detailed Scoring Criteria open and available for reference.
- Follow guidance for narrative responses in Application section of the Program User Manual.
- **Approach & Methodology:** Provide a detailed explanation of the approach and methodology that will be used to implement the proposed project.
- **Economic Impacts:** Provide a robust but realistic description of the expected direct economic outcomes.
- **Project Readiness:** Provide a detailed milestone schedule for completing the project and explanation of the applicant's ability to complete the proposed work within the 3-year period
- **Capacity & Qualifications:** Provide an explanation of the capacity of the organization and personnel to meet the project objectives, including any partnerships with other entities to support the project.

TECHNICAL PROPOSAL WORKSHOP

Application Workshop #2: The Technical Proposal

This session focuses on the elements of the technical proposal. NBRC staff cover guidance and best practices for each of the narrative questions in the application. We highlight what narrative information gets carried over from the pre-application. At completion, funded projects will be asked to report on the project's success in meeting the goals and outcomes set at time of application.

Topics for today's session:

1. How to Create an Application
2. Information that carries into the application
3. Key Performance Indicators
4. Technical Proposal Elements + Program Tips
 - Approach and Methodology
 - Economic Impacts
 - Project Readiness
 - Capacity and Qualifications
5. LDD Support
6. Common GMS Errors

APPLICATION FORMS & FILES

Application Supporting Document Checklist:

- [Download](#) and fill it out!
- Provides applicant with information about requirements, location of forms, location of samples, applicability details, and other notes from NBRC.

Application Files:

- This section is for any additional documentation you would like to submit with your application

Supporting Documents Checklist:

- This section is complete with the required documentation for the project and includes links to the various forms required to be completed and uploaded.

Forms:

- Forms in this section will be completed within the GMS. Sample forms located on the [application resources page](#)



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NBRC Application Supporting Document Checklist

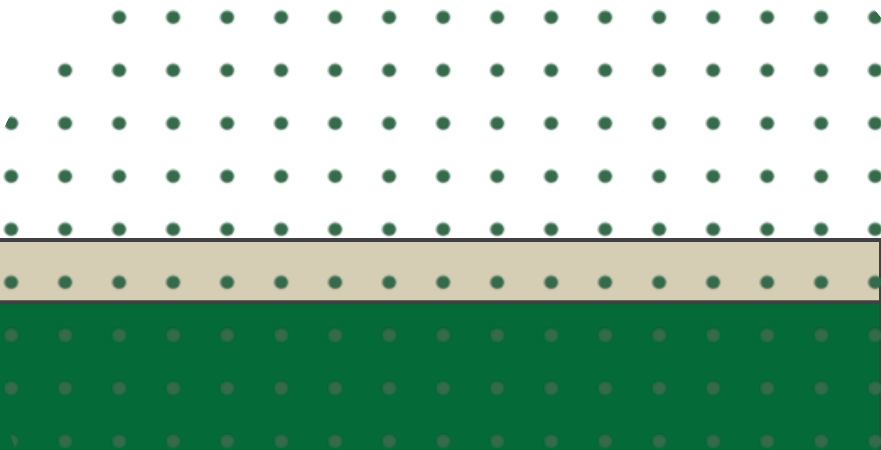
Catalyst Program, Forest Economy Program & Timber for Transit Program

Applicants for all NBRC Programs are required to submit various application support documents. *If an applicant does not submit the required documentation, the application may be deemed ineligible.*

Some forms are mandatory, while other forms are only required if applicable to the applicant or project. Mandatory documents must be completed and uploaded to the application within the online grants management system (GMS). Sample forms are located on the NBRC website and provide detailed guidance on how to complete the form. **Use this checklist to access templates, sample forms, and to confirm your application is complete.**

Application Files: ✓

Submitted	Form Name	Form Location	Sample Form (click link to access)	Applicability	Notes
☐	Be sure to give your file a descriptive name to help the reviewer quickly understand what it is.	N/A	N/A	Optional - All Grantees	The Application Files section is a place to upload any documentation in addition to those documents listed in the Supporting Documents Checklist and All Forms sections (below)
☐					
☐					



FORMS & FILES WORKSHOP

Application Workshop #3: Application Forms, Files and Checklists

This session covers the required forms and files to be completed for application, and common mistakes to avoid. We'll make sure you have the resources you need to check all the boxes.

Topics for today's session:

1. Application Resources
2. Components of the Forms and Files Tab
3. Helpful Resources for the Forms and Files Tab
4. Forms within the GMS
5. The Supporting Documents Checklist
 - Required forms and where to find them
 - Form Purpose, Samples (if applicable), and Common Errors
6. Optional Support Documents

APPLICATION REVIEW and SCORING

NBRC and State partners each review and score applications using Scoring Criteria found in Appendices J-M of the Grant Programs User Manual. *

NBRC and the States will consider the following when selecting projects for funding awards at the application phase:

- Project's alignment with program priorities (score)
- Balanced geographic distribution of investments
- Well-documented community or regionally supported need for the project
- Projects deemed a priority by the State where the project is located

*Projects submitted to the Forest Economy and Timber for Transit Programs are also reviewed by an Advisory Board of sector experts who provide valuable insights to NBRC and States to inform proposal evaluation and scoring.

PRO-TIP SUMMARY

Use these Pro-Tips to craft your application narrative and details.

1. **Review and address pre-application feedback.** Review all information that carries over from pre-application and edit to address feedback or requested revisions.
2. **Review [Application resources and webinars](#).**
3. **Be clear and concise.** It is not necessary to use the full 5,000 characters allowed in the system for each narrative response. Use the suggested length of responses listed in the Program User Manuals, generally 1-3 paragraphs in length.
4. **Streamline budget development** by completing the SF-424cbw Budget *before* editing the GMS budget section. Use the SF424cbw Summary tab to easily view totals.
5. **Identify required forms and files for your project.** Nonprofit organizations have additional required documents. Submit all forms and files, including letters of support, through the GMS.
6. **Submit early!** When you "Submit" an application, the GMS checks it in several ways. If there's an error, you'll need to fix it before the system accepts your application.

RESOURCES!

- [NBRC Program Webpages](#)
 - User Manuals, Program One Pagers, Timeline, Regional Initiatives and Project Relevance, Eligibility Guidance, and more
- [NBRC Application Resources Webpage](#)
 - Recorded info sessions and office hours, workshops, Standard Forms, Templates, Grants Management System resources: Registration, Pre-application and Application guidance, etc.
- [NBRC NEPA Webpage](#)
 - About NEPA, NEPA resources and trainings
- [NBRC BABAA Webpage](#)
 - About BABAA, Guidance, FAQs, Waivers, Trainings

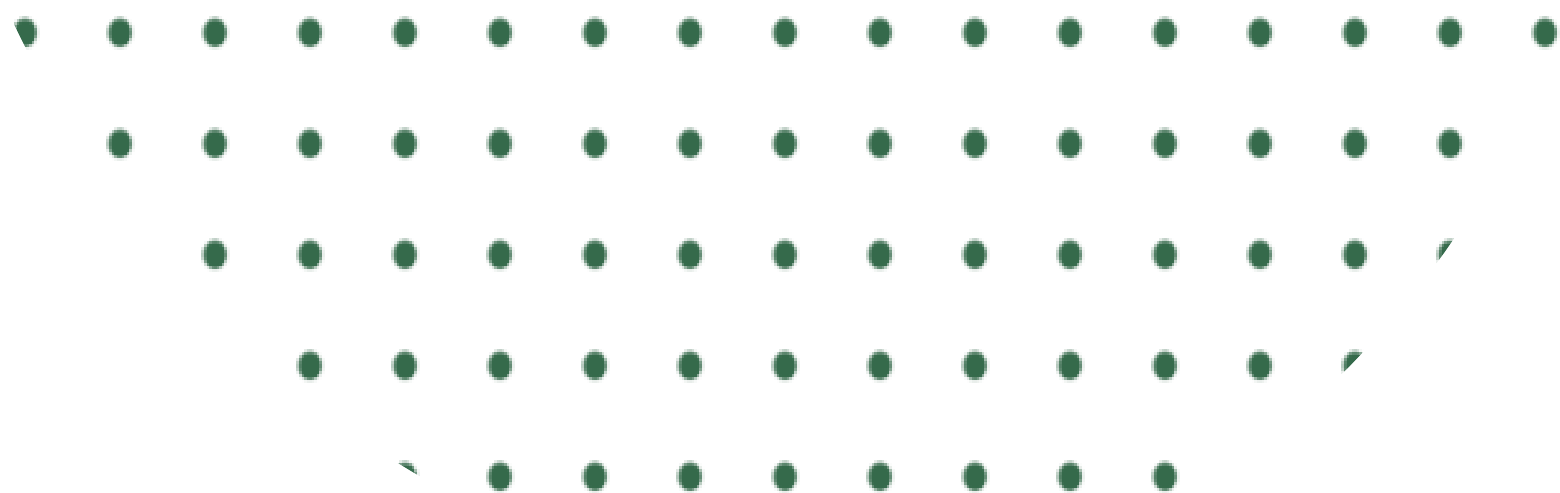


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QUESTIONS





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THANK YOU!

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