



Northern Border
Regional Commission

FALL 2025

*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 2025 Application Key Dates:

September 22	➤ GMS opens for invited applicants only
Sept 30/Oct 1	➤ Application Office Hours
October 10	➤ Applications due before 5pm
December	➤ Notification of awards
January	➤ 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.** Nonprofit organizations have additional required documents. 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 and submit optional **LDD Support review** request.
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.

Good day,

On behalf of the Northern Border Regional Commission (NBRC) and your state program manager, we are pleased to inform you that your organization has been invited to submit a **Catalyst Program Fall 2025** application, through NBRC's Grants Management System (GMS), no later than **10/10/2025**. Please retain this e-mail as it contains important information you will need to complete the application portion of the process.

Detailed information and guidance related to the application can be found on the applicable program page. GMS guidance documents, templates and forms for the application are available [here](#). Additionally, NBRC will also be hosting application information sessions. Registration details will be provided on the [Events page](#) of the NBRC website.

Your Next Steps:

1. Log into the GMS and navigate to your pre-application **PR-NBRC-** View the Files or Collab tab to check if NBRC has provided additional feedback.
2. Go to NBRC's Resources webpage to view the GMS Guidance for Creating an Application. Convert your pre-application to an application.
3. Go to the NBRC program page to view the Program User Manual application guidance.
4. Go to NBRC's Events webpage to register for upcoming application information sessions.

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
- ** Common feedback provided by NBRC

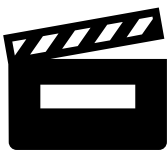
Questions about feedback?

- 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

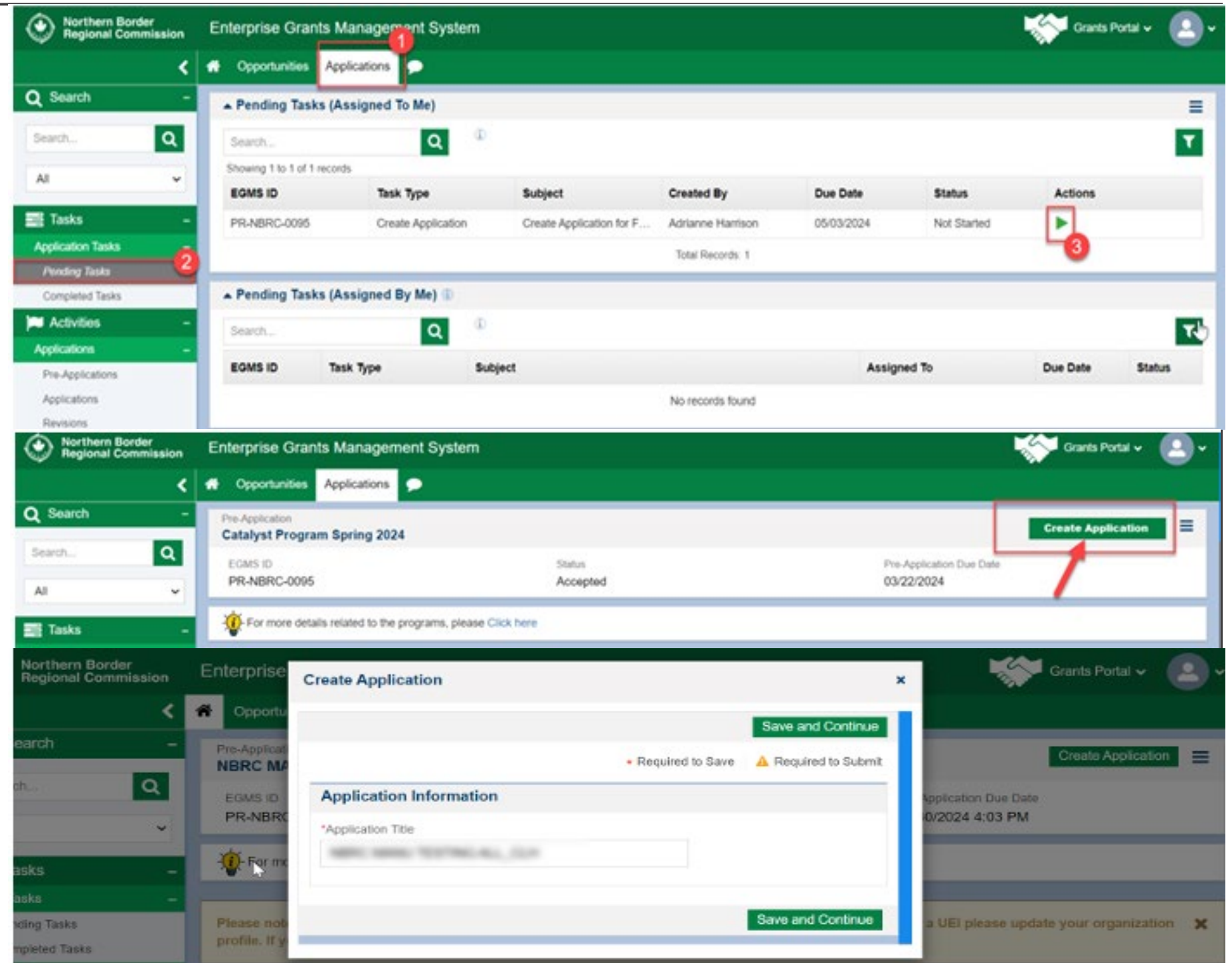
Application Resources

Find and open application resources:

- [Creating and submitting an application](#)
GMS guidance document is a step-by-step *technical* guide to completing and submitting the pre-application in the GMS.
 - [Application Supporting Document Checklist](#)
 - Annotated sample forms and documents:
[SF-424](#), [SF-LLL](#), [SF-424cbw](#)
 - Program Pages—including User Manuals, FAQs, and other resources—provide essential scoring criteria and application guidance to help applicants craft strong narrative responses that align with program priorities.
 - [Catalyst](#)
 - [Forest Economy](#)
 - [Timber for Transit](#)
- 
- [Watch 2025 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 or Enter **UEI #** and validate it with Sam.gov

- 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.

LDD CONTACT

- ****All Catalyst Program 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**
- FEP and T4T applicants should review invitations to apply for potential LDD requirement
- ****Make sure the LDD Contact role is assigned**
- ****Optional LDD Support to request review of application**
- More information on LDDs on NBRC website

**** Common pre-application feedback**

The screenshot displays the 'Contacts' section of a web application. At the top, there is a header 'Contacts' with an information icon. Below the header, two instructional paragraphs are provided: '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.' and 'To associate an LDD with the application, click the Associate button and select the LDD contact.' Below these instructions, it says 'Showing 1 to 3 of 3 records'. A table follows with columns: 'Project Role', 'Name ↑', 'Email', 'Is Key Contact', 'Is User', and 'Actions'. The table contains three rows: 'Project Director/Manager' (redacted), 'LDD Contact' (highlighted with a yellow circle, with Name 'Jessie L. Cyr' and Email 'jcyr@kvcog.org'), and 'Grants Administrator' (redacted). Below this table, there is a navigation bar with tabs: 'Overview', 'Locations', 'Budget', 'Proposal', 'LDD Support' (active), 'Forms and Files', and 'History'. Under the 'LDD Support' tab, there is a section titled 'Local Development District Support' with a 'New' button. Below this, another table is shown with columns: '#', 'Reviewer Name ↑', 'Organization', 'Description', 'Due Date', 'Allow Record Editing', 'Status', and 'Actions'. This table has one row with the reviewer 'Stacey Austin' from 'NBRC' with a due date of '04/16/2024' and status 'Created'.

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

#	Reviewer Name ↑	Organization	Description	Due Date	Allow Record Editing	Status	Actions
1	Stacey Austin	NBRC	test	04/16/2024	Yes	Created	[Edit Icon] [Share Icon] [Delete Icon]

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.

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 6 Consultants. **LDD costs should be \$8,000 for projects less than \$400,000 OR 2% of the requested NBRC amount for projects above \$400,000**

	Days	Rate per Day	Estimated Cost	HUD Share	Applicant Match	Other HUD Funds	Other Federal Share	State Share	Local/Tribal Share
6. Consultants (Type)									
Contract with LDD for Grant Administration	2%		\$20,000	\$20,000					
Consultants, NEPA review			\$15,000	\$15,000					
Total Consultants Cost			\$35,000	\$35,000					
7. Contracts and Sub-Grantees (List individually)									
7a. Contracts	Quantity			HUD Share	Applicant Match	Other HUD Funds	Other Federal Share	State Share	Local/Tribal Share
Subtotal - Contracts									
7b. Sub-Grantees (List individually)	Quantity	Unit Cost	Estimated Cost	HUD Share	Applicant Match	Other HUD Funds	Other Federal Share	State Share	Local/Tribal Share
Subtotal - Sub-Grantees									
Total Contracts and Sub-Grantees Cost									
8. Construction Costs									
8a. Administrative and legal expenses	Quantity	Unit Cost	Estimated Cost	HUD Share	Applicant Match	Other HUD Funds	Other Federal Share	State Share	Local/Tribal Share
Permits & Fees			\$20,000	\$20,000					
Subtotal - Administrative and legal expenses			\$20,000	\$20,000					

LDD Administration costs in section 6. LDD costs should be \$8,000 for projects less than \$400,000 OR 2% of the requested NBRC amount for projects above \$400,000.

NEPA Review cost estimate should be included in budget under 6. It is recommended to include some funding for NEPA even if you believe your project will be a CATEX

Construction in support of infrastructure projects and non-infrastructure projects with a construction component will use categories 8a-8l to provide details on construction costs. If there are construction costs, applicant will also need to submit a SF424-D.

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 6, Consultants. 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/content/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!



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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 Budget Errors**
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 – Approach and Methodology, Economic Impacts, Project Readiness, Capacity and Qualifications

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. In this session, we cover how to set realistic yet competitive economic development goals.



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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 [NBRC resources page](#)



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NBRC Application Supporting Document Checklist

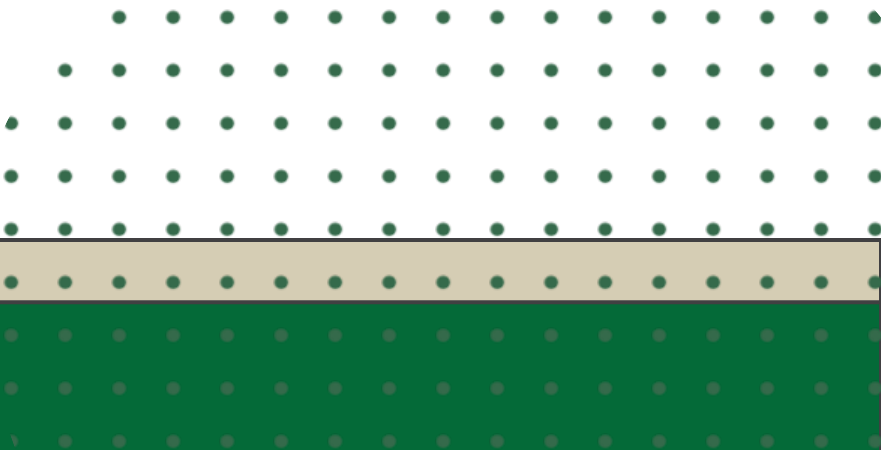
Catalyst Program, Forest Economy Program & Timber for Transit Program

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
<input type="checkbox"/>	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.



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Topics for today's session:

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

APPLICATION REVIEW and SCORING

NBRC and State partners each review and score applications using Scoring Criteria found in the Program 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 Program are also reviewed by the FEP Advisory Board - a panel 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, FAQs, Project Interest Form, Regional Initiatives, Award History, Eligibility Guidance, and more
- [NBRC Application Support Webpage](#)
 - Events and office hours registrations, recorded info sessions, workshops, etc.
- [NBRC NEPA Webpage](#)
 - About NEPA, NEPA resources and trainings
- [NBRC BABAA Webpage](#)
 - About BABAA, Guidance, FAQs, Waivers, Trainings
- [NBRC Resources Webpage](#)
 - Standard Forms, Templates, Grants Management System resources: Registration, Pre-application and Application guidance, etc.

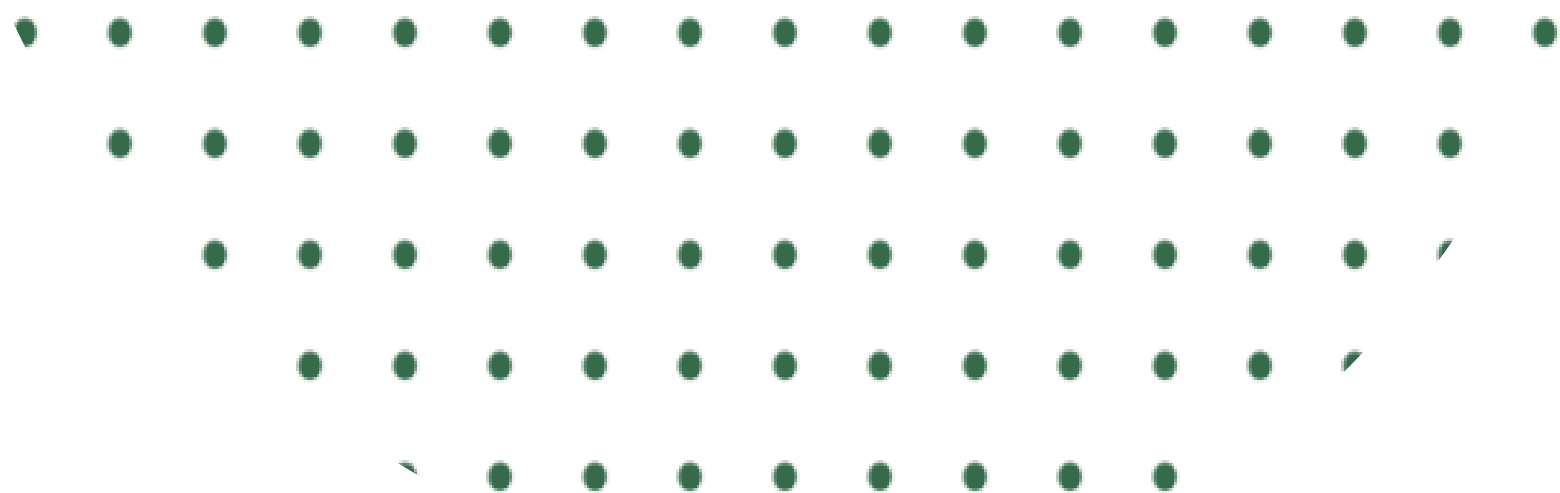


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QUESTIONS





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THANK YOU!

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