



**Northern Border
Regional Commission**



2024 CATALYST PROGRAM USER MANUAL

CATALYST PROGRAM

Preapplication (Required) Deadlines

March 22, 2024 (Spring Round)

September 6, 2024 (Fall Round)

Application by Invitation Only Deadlines

May 3, 2024 (Spring Round)

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INTRODUCTION

Established by Congress in 2008, the NBRC is a partnership between the federal government and the States of Maine, New Hampshire, New York, and Vermont. NBRC investment funds originate from the Federal Government but are approved by the Federal Government's NBRC representative (Federal Co-Chair) and the Governors of the four States. The mission of the Northern Border Regional Commission is to catalyze regional, collaborative, and transformative community economic development approaches that alleviate economic distress and position the region for economic growth.

The Catalyst Program is NBRC's flagship program and is designed to stimulate economic growth and inspire partnerships that improve rural economic vitality across the Northern Border Regional Commission (NBRC) four-state region. The Catalyst Program supports a broad range of economic development initiatives that will: modernize and expand water and wastewater systems; revitalize transportation infrastructure; establish workforce development programs and facilities; grow outdoor recreation infrastructure and economies; and construct new childcare and healthcare facilities.

The Catalyst Program will prioritize funding for projects that demonstrate both readiness and projected direct impacts on the region's economy and communities. All projects must be consistent with the economic development goals of the region and advance a combination of NBRC and member state [strategic investment principles](#). NBRC investment priorities include:

- 1) Projects that provide direct benefits to communities who have been underrepresented in past NBRC investments. Priority will be given to projects that demonstrate direct benefits to rural communities with populations of less than 5,000 and underserved communities. NBRC identifies a underserved community as those who suffer from a combination of economic, health and environmental burdens, including high unemployment and poverty, basic resources or conditions, such as standard housing, medical and educational facilities, and civil rights and vulnerable populations, including minority, low income, rural, tribal, indigenous, homeless and limited English-speaking populations.
- 2) Projects that address multiple needs across eligible infrastructure and non-infrastructure categories. Priority will be given to projects that

demonstrate efficiencies gained from including multiple funding categories in one project.

- 3) Projects that adapt to changing climate conditions and extreme weather events. Priority will be given to projects that demonstrate how they help communities prevent, reduce, withstand, and/or improve recovery from climate related impacts and disasters.

PART I. PROGRAM INFORMATION

SECTION A. GENERAL INFORMATION

I. AVAILABLE FUNDING

The Northern Border Regional Commission (NBRC) anticipates making available up to \$50 million in Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) funding in 2024 for the Catalyst Program. The amount of funding ultimately awarded is subject to the availability of funds, the quantity and quality of applications received, and other applicable considerations. Upon completion of the Fiscal Year 2024 appropriations process, additional funds will be made available through the Catalyst Program and will be shared in a revised program announcement.

These federal resources will be competitively awarded through the Catalyst Program in 2024. The Catalyst Program will run two funding rounds with up to \$30MM available in Round 1 and up to \$20MM available in Round 2.

II. PROJECT CATEGORIES

Projects will be classified according to non-infrastructure or infrastructure categories during the Preapplication review process conducted by both NBRC and the member States (New York, Vermont, New Hampshire, and Maine).

Non-infrastructure projects include assistance in obtaining job skills training, skills development and employment-related education, entrepreneurship, technology, and business development. Non-infrastructure projects may also include improving basic health care, enhancing nutrition and food security, as well as the promotion of resource conservation, tourism,

recreation, and preservation of open space consistent with economic development goals.

Infrastructure projects typically include assistance for construction in support of transportation infrastructure, basic public infrastructure, telecommunications infrastructure and renewable and alternative energy infrastructure.

Definitions and examples of infrastructure and non-infrastructure projects can be found in Section C of this document.

III. AWARD SIZE

Non-infrastructure projects will have an award size up to \$500,000.

Infrastructure projects will have an award size up to \$1,000,000.

Projects classified as construction in support of infrastructure may be eligible for up to an additional \$2,000,000 in funding (for a total maximum award of \$3,000,000) if the project meets one of the following criteria:

- 1) construction takes place in 2 or more eligible communities, counties, or states, OR
- 2) construction involves 2 or more infrastructure categories (basic public, transportation, renewable energy, or telecommunications).

Eligibility for the higher maximum award will be determined in the preapplication review process conducted by both NBRC and the member States (New York, Vermont, New Hampshire, and Maine). Additional information regarding eligibility for the higher maximum award can be found in Section C of this document.

Applicants may propose projects with a federal funding request less than these amounts. There will be no preference given to larger funding requests and proposals for all award sizes will be considered.

IV. PERIOD OF PERFORMANCE

Projects funded under the 2024 Catalyst Program will have a three-year period of performance. If you anticipate your project will take more than three years from the time of award, we recommend postponing your application to a future round of funding when the project can be completed within three years.

V. COMMISSION SERVICE AREA

Only projects within the NBRC's service area are eligible for funding under 40 U.S.C. §15733. The NBRC service area is:

Maine: Androscoggin, Aroostook, Franklin, Hancock, Kennebec, Knox, Oxford, Penobscot, Piscataquis, Somerset, Waldo, and Washington counties.

New Hampshire: Belknap, Carroll, Cheshire, Coös, Grafton, and Sullivan counties

New York: Cayuga, Clinton, Essex, Franklin, Fulton, Genesee, Greene, Hamilton, Herkimer, Jefferson, Lewis, Livingston, Madison, Montgomery, Niagara, Oneida, Orleans, Oswego, Rensselaer, St. Lawrence, Saratoga, Schenectady, Seneca, Sullivan, Warren, Washington, Wayne, and Yates counties.

Vermont: all counties within the State

NOTE: See Section VI of this manual for detailed information on the 2024 Distress Criteria. See Section VII for a breakdown of Distressed, Transitional and Attainment Counties by State.

VI. 2024 DISTRESS CRITERIA

By statute, the NBRC is required to annually assess the level of economic and demographic distress within its region.

Federal law (**40 U.S.C., Subtitle V, §15702**) states that, '**distressed**' counties are those that, "have high rates of poverty, unemployment, or outmigration" and "are the most severely and persistently economic distressed and underdeveloped." The NBRC is required to allocate 50% of its total appropriations to projects in counties falling within this designation. The maximum percent of a "distressed" project that can be funded by the NBRC is **80%**.

'**Transitional**' counties "have recently suffered high rates of poverty, unemployment, or outmigration" or "are economically distressed and underdeveloped." The maximum percent of a "transitional" project that can be funded by the NBRC is **50%**.

'**Attainment**' counties are those that are neither 'distressed' nor 'transitional.' The NBRC is not allowed to fund projects within an attainment

county unless the project is within an 'isolated area of distress,' or has requested and been approved for a significant benefit waiver. Isolated areas of distress are "areas [municipalities] that have high rates of poverty, unemployment, or outmigration.". The maximum percent of an "attainment" project that can be funded by the NBRC is **50%**.

Because poverty, unemployment, and outmigration are only parts of an economic situation, the NBRC has adopted categories above and beyond those directed by statute. These "Secondary Distress Categories" provide a more in-depth survey of the NBRC's service area as well as greater opportunities to gauge the success of the NBRC's programs over time. These include Educational Attainment (bachelor's degree or higher), Household Income, and Seasonal Home Ownership.

Data that is collected and priorities given to the data

1. "Primary" Distress Categories:

- a. Percent of population below the poverty level
- b. Unemployment rate
- c. Percent change in population

2. "Secondary" Distress Categories:

- a. Percent of population with a bachelor's degree or higher
- b. Median household income
- c. Percent of secondary and/or seasonal homes

VII. DESIGNATED DISTRESSED COUNTIES

The following counties are designated as **Distressed** for the purposes of prioritization and match.

Maine: Aroostook, Franklin, Oxford, Penobscot, Piscataquis, Somerset, and Washington

New Hampshire: Cheshire, Coös, and Sullivan

New York: Cayuga, Clinton, Essex, Franklin, Fulton, Genesee, Greene, Herkimer, Jefferson, Lewis, Livingston, Madison, Montgomery, Niagara, Oneida, Orleans, Oswego, St. Lawrence, Seneca, Sullivan, Warren, Washington, Wayne, and Yates

Vermont: Caledonia, Essex, Orleans, and Rutland

VIII. DESIGNATED TRANSITIONAL COUNTIES

Accordingly, the following counties are designated as **Transitional** for the purposes of prioritization and match.

Maine: Androscoggin, Hancock, Kennebec, Knox, and Waldo Counties

New Hampshire: Belknap and Carroll Counties

New York: Hamilton, Rensselaer, and Saratoga Counties

Vermont: Addison, Bennington, Chittenden, Franklin, Lamoille, Orange, Washington, Windham, and Windsor Counties.

IX. DESIGNATED ATTAINMENT COUNTIES

The following counties are designated as **Attainment**.

New Hampshire: Grafton County

Vermont: Grand Isle County

NBRC funds may not be awarded to projects located within a designated Attainment County. There are three exceptions to this:

1. Isolated Areas of Distress

When a county is designated as Attainment, the Commission will collect economic and demographic data within that county to identify Isolated Areas of Distress. Isolated Areas of Distress are municipalities that have high rates of poverty, unemployment, or outmigration. For a listing of the Isolated Areas of Distress see the Distress Criteria on the NBRC website.

If a project is located within an Isolated Area of Distress, an application may be submitted, but the applicant must indicate the location of the isolated area in the application.

2. Multi-County Projects

Projects within an Attainment County may be funded if the project is part of a multi-county project that includes at least one other Distressed or Transitional County. Match for multi-county projects will be the average of the counties that make up the project.

3. Significant Benefit Waiver:

There are two exceptions that **require** a Significant Benefits Waiver to allow those projects or applicants/co-applicants that fall outside of the designated

distressed counties, transitional counties and Areas of Isolated Distress within an Attainment county to apply for NBRC funds. Those exceptions are:

1. An exception exists for **projects** located within an Attainment County but outside of one of the identified “Areas of Isolated Distress” that will bring significant economic benefits to NBRC Distressed or Transitional counties.
2. An exception exists for **applicants or co-applicants** located outside of the NBRC service area in a member state with projects that will bring significant economic benefits to NBRC Distressed or Transitional counties.

If one of the above two scenarios apply to applicants and/or co-applicants, a Significant Benefit Waiver along with the documentation of economic impacts is required at the time of preapplication submission. See Appendix E for waiver details and affidavit. **If a Significant Benefit Waiver is being requested, the waiver and the documentation supporting the waiver request must be submitted together with the Preapplication by 5:00 p.m. EST March 22, 2024 [Spring Round] and September 6, 2024 [Fall Round]. The Significant Benefit Waiver requires approval by the Federal Co-Chair and the Governor’s Alternates of the four NBRC States.**

The required documentation includes: narrative and/or other documentation of clear and convincing evidence of a project’s economic impact to NBRC Distressed or Transitional counties, and documentation must clearly identify costs and activities that will occur in distressed counties, transitional counties, or outside of the NBRC service area. This information will be used in the waiver review process to determine the eligible reimbursement/match ratio and in the NBRC Federal Co-Chair and 4 Governor’s Alternates approval process.

The match ratio is determined based on the amount of funds invested in counties designated as distressed or transitional.

- A project with more than 50% of requested funds invested in an Attainment county, outside of an Areas of Isolated Distress is eligible for the 50% reimbursement, **50% match ratio**.
- A project with more than 50% of requested NBRC funds invested in a transitional county is eligible for the 50% reimbursement, **50% match ratio**.

- A project with more than 50% of requested NBRC funds invested in a distressed county is eligible for the 80% reimbursement, **20% match ratio**.
- A project with more than 50% of requested NBRC funds being invested in both distressed and transitional counties is eligible for an **averaged match ratio**.
- If more than 50% of requested funds being used by the applicant/co-applicant entity to support administration of the project outside of a distressed or transitional county, the project is eligible for the 50% reimbursement, **50% match ratio**.

SECTION B. PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY AND INELIGIBILITY

I. ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

The NBRC Economic and Infrastructure funding is available to:

- State governments of Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, and New York
- Local governments (village, town, city, and county)
- Secondary and career technical centers
- Other political subdivisions of States (regional planning commissions, authorities of the state)
- Non-profit entities. The term 'nonprofit entity' means any organization described in section 501(c) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 and exempt from taxation under 501(a) of that Code. The non-profit entity must be able to demonstrate they have federal grant experience related to economic development.
- Indian Tribes; § 200.54 [Indian tribe](#) (or "federally recognized Indian tribe"). Indian tribe means any [Indian tribe](#), band, nation, or other organized group or community, including any Alaska Native village or regional or village corporation as defined in or established pursuant to the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act ([43 U.S.C. Chapter 33](#)), which is recognized as eligible for the special programs and services provided by the United [States](#) to Indians because of their status as Indians ([25 U.S.C. 450b\(e\)](#)). See annually published Bureau of Indian Affairs list of Indian Entities Recognized and Eligible to Receive Services

II. INELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

Ineligible applicants include for-profit entities, LLCs and other entities that are not a 501(c), 40 U.S.C. §15101(c). Ineligible entities are also those entities normally deemed eligible but, due to prior federal or state funding history have been identified as ineligible for future investments. Additionally, a non-profit identified by a state that does not have a federally recognized 501(c) status is not an eligible applicant.

III. INELIGIBLE PURPOSES

No pass-through funding will be awarded. Eligible entities may not be conduits for ineligible entities such as private-sector businesses or other entities that are not listed as Co-Applicants. Property purchased with NBRC funding cannot, in turn, be sold or donated to the private entity beneficiary.

- No financial assistance will be authorized to assist any relocation from one area of the region to another.
- NBRC investment funds cannot be used to “supplant” existing federal programs.
- Funds may be used to match other federally funded projects (when both federal agencies allow) only when the total grant funds from NBRC and other federal funders does not exceed 80% of the total project budget. 40 USC §15506(e).
- Projects that promote unfair competition between businesses with the same immediate service area.

IV. ELIGIBLE COSTS

Following the receipt of a Notice to Proceed from NBRC, Catalyst Program funds may be used for:

- Reasonable fees to contractors but not any fee or profit to the recipient or sub-recipient.
- Construction and pre-construction costs such as engineering.
- Bid, performance, or payment bonds are eligible costs.
- Indirect costs for work performed by the recipient staff. Indirect cost must be documented by a Federal Cognizant Agent or an entity acting on their behalf and documentation of same submitted with the application. If you do not have a federally approved indirect cost rate (such as many non-profits) you may use 10% as your indirect cost rate for the purposes of this application.
- Applicable and allocable costs as outlined in the Federal Cost Principles. Uniform Guidance (2CFR 200).
- All project related costs must be reflected in the project budget (SF424cbw)

V. INELIGIBLE COSTS

- Application preparation
- Food and beverages*
- Meals and lodging
- Alcohol
- Entertainment
- Appraisals of property to be purchased or used as match
- Allowance or payment of debts
- Maintenance, such as routine maintenance, deferred maintenance, and short-term operational needs
- Any committed or expended costs incurred prior to receiving a Notice to Proceed. This includes both NBRC funds and any funds documented as match to the project.
- Project costs committed or expended prior to receipt of a Notice to Proceed from NBRC

*NBRC will only cover the cost of food and beverages when being purchased for the express purpose of a conference or forum held in support of the project and is clearly outlined in the project budget. NBRC will not cover the costs of alcoholic beverages, or tips associated with the purchase of food or beverages.

VI. PREVIOUS NBRC PRIOR INVESTMENT AWARDEES

If an applicant has received a prior NBRC award, the entity is only eligible to receive additional NBRC investment if they have submitted reimbursement requests totaling 75% or more of the project and demonstrated that 75% of the cost share has been expended by March 1, 2024 [Spring round] or September 1, 2024 [Fall round].

If the 75% expenditure has not been met, the entity can apply for a waiver. **To be considered, a 75% Expenditure Waiver request must contain a fully executed Affidavit and supporting documentation and must be submitted together with the preapplication by 5:00pm EST on March 22, 2024 [Spring round] or September 6, 2024 [Fall round].**

The waiver must be approved by the State(s) where the prior award(s) were made and NBRC for the applicant to be eligible to seek funding under NBRC programs. If an applicant or co-applicant is required to submit a 75% Expenditure Waiver and does not, the preapplication will be considered ineligible for further consideration.

Please see the waiver policy and a link to the fillable PDF waiver form, including what documentation should be included in support of the waiver, in the Appendix D of this manual.

SECTION C. PROGRAM FUNDING CATEGORIES

The following funding categories constitute eligible activities for NBRC CATALYST PROGRAM investments under 40 USC Subtitle V.

I. INFRASTRUCTURE

CATALYST PROGRAM funding will be used to support the community and economic revitalization of Northern Border communities within member states by investing in projects that modernize public infrastructure. Congress defines public infrastructure projects in NBRC’s authorizing language as “transportation”, “basic public,” “telecommunications,” and “energy” and requires NBRC to award 40% of all funds to public infrastructure projects. To ensure the 40% threshold is met, NBRC allows a maximum grant amount of \$1MM for projects classified as ***construction in support of infrastructure***.

Projects classified as construction in support of infrastructure may be eligible for up to an additional \$2,000,000 in funding (for a total maximum award of \$3,000,000), which will be determined in the Preapplication review process conducted by NBRC and the members states. To be eligible for the higher maximum, the project must meet one of the following criteria:

Projects classified as construction in support of infrastructure may be eligible for up to an additional \$2,000,000 in funding, for a total maximum award of \$3,000,000. Projects requesting the higher maximum need to demonstrate the project meets one of the following criteria:

- 1) Construction takes place in two or more eligible communities/counties/states. To meet this criterion, the construction of an infrastructure category will need to physically occur in 2 or more eligible communities, counties, or states. The purpose of this criteria is to allow for regional approaches to infrastructure and efficiencies gained from constructing a multi-jurisdiction project at the same time. Examples include but are not limited to a wastewater treatment project that connects a new community to an existing facility, pedestrian or bicycle infrastructure that connects two village centers, or construction of childcare centers in multiple towns. OR

- 2) Construction involves two or more infrastructure categories (basic public, transportation, renewable energy, or telecommunications). To meet this criterion, the project will need to demonstrate construction of infrastructure in two categories as part of the same project. The purpose of this criteria is to allow for efficiencies gained from pairing construction projects in the same community and to encourage creative infrastructure projects. Examples include but are not limited to sidewalk and road construction paired with sewer or water upgrades, installation of water and telecommunications infrastructure as part of an industrial park development, construction or installation of renewable energy generation as part of construction or renovation of a community space. **These criteria will not be satisfied by proposing two or more distinct projects that are not inherently connected in attempt to be deemed eligible for the higher funding threshold.**

Grant recipients must maintain ownership/control over all investments made with NBRC funds, ownership of physical equipment and/or structures may not transfer to any other entity, unless fully depreciated.

Definitions for the eligible categories are listed below:

Transportation Infrastructure:

Transportation infrastructure shall mean construction, alteration, or repair, for the purpose of transporting people and goods, including fixed installations and rights of way necessary for transporting from one point to another, including infrastructure that improves economic mobility for individuals, and may include roads, railways, airways, waterways, canals and terminals such as airports, railway stations, bus stations, parking, refueling depots (including fueling docks and fuel stations), EV charging stations, EV Make Ready infrastructure, and seaports. Where applicable, applicants should demonstrate how proposed transportation infrastructure investments will increase economic mobility within a community and/or increase access to resources (such as food assistance programs) and economic opportunity for underserved populations.

Basic Public Infrastructure:

Basic public infrastructure shall mean construction, alteration, or repair, including those services that are generally necessary to conduct business. Public infrastructure are facilities, systems, and structures that are owned or available for use by the public to catalyze economic development, and includes core infrastructure (such as water, wastewater, and energy) critical infrastructure (such as those required to maintain public health and

economic vitality), and community infrastructure (such as those required to improve health outcomes and increase community connectedness). This definition includes specific projects such as: collection and distribution systems, treatment plants and other infrastructure that collects, treats and delivers drinking water and wastewater-related services; electric power generation and transmission to include renewable energy and storage; solid waste to include recycling, composting, disposal, and waste-to-energy via incineration; systems for heat distribution through sources such as co-generation, biomass, geothermal heating, heat pumps and central solar heating; childcare facilities, outdoor recreation infrastructure and public meeting spaces such as community centers which facilitate and improve health outcomes and physical activity and increase community connectedness.

Telecommunications Infrastructure:

Telecommunications infrastructure shall mean construction, alteration, or repair to accommodate any part of the infrastructure of a telecommunications network, including lines, equipment, apparatus, towers, antennas, etc., and/or cyber infrastructure (routing and switching software, operational support systems, etc.) necessary to transmit information from one location to another, for use, or in connection with, a telecommunications network. Investments in telecommunications infrastructure support reliable and affordable broadband to provide local businesses and entrepreneurs access to the digital marketplace, facilitate online learning and workforce development, and connect communities.

For the purposes of this program, awards to public safety entities will only be made where the investments primary use of equipment and infrastructure is to support outdoor recreation by increasing the confidence of potential user groups that they will have access to communications networks or where projects seek to minimize or improve the role for search and rescue operations due to the increase in outdoor recreation in remote areas of the four states. Public safety facilities and communications equipment as stand-alone projects are not eligible. Applications related to public safety must clearly demonstrate an impact to matters that are within the scope of the NBRC program.

Renewable and Alternative Energy Infrastructure:

Renewable energy shall mean construction, alteration, or repair including what is generally defined as any naturally occurring, theoretically inexhaustible source of energy, such as biomass, solar, wind, tidal, wave, and hydroelectric power that is not derived from fossil or nuclear fuel.

Publicly owned and non-profit entities are eligible. Facilities that are owned by a for-profit entity or who will serve to benefit as a pass-through from an eligible entity will NOT be eligible.

II. NON-INFRASTRUCTURE

Non-infrastructure projects will have an award size up to \$500,000, even if the project will cover multiple categories of non-infrastructure funding or occur in multiple jurisdictions. These projects include assistance in obtaining job skills training, skills development and employment-related education, entrepreneurship, technology, and business development. Non-infrastructure projects may also include improving basic health care, enhancing nutrition and food security, particularly on issues of equity, access and disparities, and other public services, as well as the promotion of resource conservation, tourism, recreation, and preservation of open space consistent with economic development goals.

Business and Workforce Development:

Business Development shall mean those areas of business development which include entrepreneurship, the creation of new businesses or the retention or expansion of existing businesses in the local communities and are deemed eligible. Projects shall document job-creation or job-retention. Funding of start-up projects, such as business incubators or industrial parks, must have committed business tenants. Expansion of existing business incubators and industrial parks are also allowed.

Business Incubation shall mean a business support process that accelerates the successful development of start-up and early-stage companies by providing entrepreneurs with an array of targeted resources and services.

Workforce Development shall mean job training or employment-related education for a specific employer to fill immediate job openings or retain current jobs which are documented as such by that specific employer. Such training shall be delivered using existing public educational facilities (EPEFs) located in the region. However, if, the applicant demonstrates (1) sufficient information demonstrating an EPEF's inability (e.g., insufficient capacity, curriculum, and/or accessibility) to satisfy the defined need, and the applicant (2) demonstrates a compelling need to use a non-EPEF for such training, then a project may be eligible. Projects whose primary focus is supporting participation in the workforce, or those designed to direct general operating support for educational institutions, early education, childcare and related programs are not considered to be workforce development for the purposes of this grant program and are not eligible.

Revolving loan funds may be used for the purpose of making loans to create and/or retain jobs. (Any applicant interested in applying for revolving loan funds should read the Appendix of this Program Manual to understand the uses and limitations of any revolving loan fund set up through NBRC.)

Basic Health Care:

Basic health care projects shall include structural and technological improvements to non-profit medical facilities, such as hospitals, clinics, community health and mental health centers, public health centers, rehabilitation facilities, etc., with a focus on medically underserved areas. Projects will also include health education services and those actively addressing health inequities and social determinants of health, initiatives that expand remote clinical services through telehealth, provide technical assistance to health care facilities/networks, focus on provider training and advancement opportunities as well as recruitment and retention services and health education services.

Key components of basic health care include the capacity to assess, evaluate, monitor, and respond to both acute (emergency) threats and chronic (ongoing) challenges to public health as well as addressing systemic inequities and incorporating preventative health practices. This includes but is not limited to prioritizing the role of nutrition and food security in overall health, including disease prevention and management, recruiting, training, and retaining a capable and qualified workforce, up-to-date data, and information systems, developing policies and plans that support community health efforts, link people to needed personal health care services, and research for innovative solutions to solve community health problems. Basic health care services shall also mean treatment of mental illness and substance use disorder. Operating costs of facilities are ineligible.

Resource Conservation, Tourism, Recreation:

Projects that promote resource conservation, tourism, recreation, including those that foster an awareness of the benefits of physical activity, in part by ensuring that everyone has access to safe places to be active, and preservation of open space, such as access roads, bridges, signage, etc., are eligible projects. Programs that prepare individuals to plan, develop, and manage tourism in a natural resource setting, with an emphasis on applying environmentally sound, culturally sensitive, and economically sustainable principles, as well as projects in support of sustainable tourism that can potentially mitigate the harmful impacts of visitation to natural areas while supporting the conservation of the ecosystem are also eligible under this category of funding. While easements and land purchases are eligible under the federal criteria, an economic development case needs to be made to substantiate the use of funds. All projects must also be consistent with the

economic development goals of the region. Projects in this category that do not include construction in support of basic public infrastructure are eligible for a maximum award of \$500,000. Projects that include construction in support of basic public infrastructure are eligible for a maximum award of \$1,000,000. Projects classified as construction in support of infrastructure may be eligible for up to an additional \$2,000,000 in funding (for a total maximum award of \$3,000,000) if the project meets one of the following criteria: 1) construction takes place in 2 or more eligible communities/counties/states, OR 2) construction involves 2 or more infrastructure categories (basic public, transportation, renewable energy, or telecommunications). The maximum award amount eligibility will be determined in the Preapplication review process conducted by both NBRC and the member states.

SECTION D. PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

I. MATCH and COST SHARE*

NBRC defines **match** as the minimum amount of funds or contributions that needs to come from other sources to complete the NBRC funded project required by law to receive NBRC funds. **Cost share** is defined as the total of other funds necessary to complete the project. Refer to Section XV (above) in this Application Manual to determine the amount of required matching funds for your project. To calculate the required match, multiply the NBRC award amount by the designated match rate for the project location. Additional details on match and examples are available in the Catalyst FAQ. The recipient will be required to demonstrate that funds necessary to complete the project are documented as committed to receive a Notice to Proceed. With the following qualifications and exceptions, matching or cost sharing requirements may be satisfied by any of the following:

- Applicant is providing cost share: Letter from the appropriate authority stating that the entity will provide the cost share. Letter is required to have the following elements:
 1. state the amount of the commitment;
 2. the dates the commitment will cover, consistent with the period of performance; and
 3. the funds are for the purpose outlined in the application;
 4. document hours dedicated to project as differentiated from their "normal employment" responsibilities.

If the funds will be used for paying staff within the applicant's organization, the letter should also state the following:

1. the # of hours staff are anticipated for work on the project;
 2. the pay of those staff (hourly rate);
 3. and the indirect cost rate that will be used (if applicable).
- Municipal lending: NBRC requires proof of authorization to spend. This may be different for different states, and may take the form of city council approval, Town or City manager approval, or demonstration of town meeting approval. It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure that they have the appropriate authority to loan/bond funds for the project, but there must be some sort of authorization documented.
 - Commitment from project partner: A letter is required to have the following elements:
 1. state the amount of the commitment;
 2. the date that the award was made;
 3. the purpose of the funds must match the scope outlined in the application.

Please note - A letter of submission, or status notification of 'application received' or 'pending' is NOT a letter of commitment.

- Volunteer Services: Provide a written plan of how the volunteer donation amount will be calculated. (Ex: 4 meetings a year, taking place quarterly that are expected to last 1.5 hours and 5 volunteers will participate. $4 \times 1.5 \times 5 = 30$ hours $\times 24.14 = \$723.60$.) The volunteer rate may be used as cost share and should be consistent with the national average [www.independentsector.org/volunteer time](http://www.independentsector.org/volunteer_time), or consist of the professional fee charged in any situation. Volunteers may not be: a) counted for the same activity in a different project (counted twice), or b) be federal employees. Additionally, their time must be recorded and be submitted as an invoice. You may include any Indirect Cost Rate in addition to the volunteer rate. Note: the rate that is calculated at the time of the grant agreement will be the rate for the remaining project period until project completion. While the national rates may fluctuate, it is not feasible to renegotiate these rates during the project period. In-kind services in the form of volunteers on a construction site are highly discouraged.
- Municipal Force Accounts: Applicants must document that they have experienced staff. Force account work is limited to work that the municipality can demonstrate is within the technical skill and managerial ability of the applicant and its forces. The applicant must

provide an accounting of time and costs and provide appropriate documentation of indirect costs, if being used. Both salaries of staff and cost of mobilization and fees for vehicles may be counted as cost share when those costs are appropriately documented.

- Land or other donated real property or equipment: A Letter of Intent from the current property owner stating that they will provide the land to the project stating the sale and 'appraised' value of the land, the anticipated date of transaction, and identification of the property. Even if the property is being donated, a professional appraisal is required. NOTE: A municipal assessment is NOT an appraisal. An appraisal of the property must have been completed within the past 18 months, or an appraisal must be made prior to issuing a Notice to Proceed if the project is being donated. RE EQUIPMENT: The entity that is donating equipment must provide a letter with the following elements: 1. Date that the equipment will be transferred to the grantee; 2. market value of the equipment; 3. a description of the equipment, and 4. A statement that the donation is for the purpose of the project as detailed in the grant agreement. [NOTE: 2 CFR 200.306(i)(1) does not address the timing of the donation of property]
- Cost sharing or matching requirements may be met by other Federal grants when authorized by those other agencies, but only up to 80% of the total project cost.
- Neither costs nor the value of third-party in-kind contributions may count towards satisfying a cost sharing requirement of a grant agreement if they have been or will be counted towards satisfying a cost sharing requirement of another Federal grant agreement, a federal procurement contract, or any other award of Federal funds in another project.
- Unless NBRC expressly approves use of program income under the additive alternate contained in 2 CFR 200.307(e)(2) or the cost share alternative in 2 CFR 200.307(e)(3), it is required to treat program income under the deductive method as outlined in 2 CFR 200.307(e)(1). This means that if program income is received it will reduce the NBRC award amount. This does not apply to Revolving Loan Fund projects. See the Appendix of this manual for how program income is treated under a RLF project.
- Costs and third-party in-kind contributions counting towards satisfying a cost sharing requirement must be verifiable from the records of the applicant. These records must show how the value placed on third party in-kind contributions was derived. To the extent feasible, volunteer services will be supported by the same methods that the organization uses to support the allocability of regular personnel costs.

- If an applicant includes matching funds/cost share in their application, cost share must be committed within one year of grant award. This date allows for extraordinary situations that may occur. If an applicant will have difficulty securing all match and cost share necessary to complete the project within a year of grant award, the applicant should consider postponing the application until a later date.

II. MULTI-STATE PROJECTS

Applications that cover multiple states are acceptable. Within the preapplication and application documents, the financial request for each state involved in the application must be provided. If yours is a multi-state or multi county application, please make sure to include within your application a comprehensive list of the counties and states in which the project will occur. If the project is multi-state, each state will review applications independently. It is possible to be funded in one state and not another.

III. FEDERAL FUNDING CEILING

If a project uses funds from multiple federal sources (including the NBRC), no more than 80% of a total project cost* can be comprised of federal grant funds. For example, if an applicant receives \$100,000 from another federal source, such as the Economic Development Administration, and the total project cost is \$200,000, the total NBRC award could not exceed \$60,000. **It is equally important for applicants to check with other federal sources, as each federal agency may have its own restrictions.** See 40 USC §15506(e).

SECTION E. PROGRAM INVESTMENT PRIORITIES AND SCORING

I. AGENCY INVESTMENT PRIORITIES

The Catalyst Program will prioritize funding for projects that demonstrate both readiness and projected direct impacts on the region’s economy and communities. All projects must be consistent with the economic development goals of the region and advance a combination of NBRC and member state [strategic investment principles](#). NBRC investment priorities include:

1. Projects that provide direct benefits to communities that have been underrepresented in past NBRC investments. Priority will be given to projects that demonstrate direct benefits to rural communities with populations of less than 5,000 and underserved communities. NBRC identifies a underserved community as those who suffer from a combination of economic, health and environmental burdens, including high unemployment and poverty, basic resources or conditions, such as standard housing, medical and educational facilities, and civil rights and vulnerable populations, including minority, low income, rural, tribal, indigenous, homeless and limited English-speaking populations.
2. Projects that address multiple needs across eligible infrastructure and non-infrastructure categories. Priority will be given to projects that demonstrate efficiencies gained from including multiple funding categories in one project.
3. Projects that adapt to changing climate conditions and extreme weather events. Priority will be given to projects that demonstrate how they help communities prevent, reduce, withstand, and/or improve recovery from climate related impacts and disasters.

II. AGENCY SCORING

NBRC reviews and scores project proposals based on 5 categories: Project Readiness, Alignment with Investment Goals and Program Priorities, Economic Impacts, Project Costs and Match, and Organizational Capacity. The NBRC can award up to a total of 50 points out of the available 100 points based on the following criteria:

- 1) **Project Readiness.** This category reflects an applicant's ability to perform the proposed work within the 3-year performance period and begin to draw down NBRC funds within 12 months of award date. (10 points)
- 2) **Project Costs and Match.** Budgets and costs, including contingency for construction projects, are clear and reasonable. Projects have identified secured match and are leveraging non-federal funds. (10 points)
- 3) **Alignment with Agency Investment Priorities.** This category reviews how a project aligns with the NBRC strategic investment goals and program priorities. The applicant describes how the project meets NBRC investment priorities in the project summary.

Projects will receive a higher score based on completeness of addressing relevant investment priorities outlined in the program materials. (15 points)

- 4) **Economic Impacts.** Projects will be reviewed for anticipated economic impact. Economic impacts should be consistent and, where possible, supported by feasibility studies, and/or local, state, or regional data. (10 points)
- 5) **Organizational Capacity.** Applicants should demonstrate they have sufficient organizational capacity to successfully meet NBRC program requirements (ability to complete project on time, staff qualifications, partnerships, etc). If an applicant has received prior NBRC awards, their performance in administering those awards will also be considered. Applicants should demonstrate early outreach with the LDD in their project area. (5 points)

The remaining 50 points will be awarded by the state program in which the project is proposed. States use a similar set of review criteria with an emphasis on state economic development and infrastructure priorities. Please review the scoring matrix for NBRC and the state specific scoring for each State.

NBRC and the States will consider a project's alignment with the funding priorities for these program dollars when both issuing invitations to apply at the preapplication phase and in scoring projects at the application phase. When issuing invitations to apply at the preapplication phase, NBRC and the States will also consider the costs and expected benefits associated with the requested NBRC investment as well as the benefits provided to the broader community and region. When selecting projects for funding awards at the application phase NBRC and the States will also consider a balanced geographic distribution of investments as well as a community or regionally supported need for the project.

III. PROGRAM SCORING CRITERIA

NBRC and each State scores all eligible applications received independently, utilizing the scoring criteria provided within this manual. **The maximum point value is 100.**

NBRC reviews projects and determines eligibility of the applicant, co-applicant and use of funds. NBRC reviews and scores projects for a maximum of 50 points from NBRC. Member states review and score project proposals based on their state specific program priorities for a maximum of 50 points. The scoring system for NBRC and each member state is provided below.

If the application is for a multi-state project, each state will score the application independently. A multi-state application may be awarded in one state and not in another. Final decisions about awards are approved jointly between the Federal Co-Chair and the Governors' Alternates.

Please see Appendix K for the NBRC and State scoring matrix.

PART II. PREAPPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

FOR CATALYST PROGRAM 2024, applicants must submit a Preapplication (formerly known as a Letter of Interest) to be considered for an invitation to submit a Catalyst Program application.

Preapplications are required and are due by 5:00 p.m. EST, on March 22, 2024 (Spring Round) and September 6, 2024 (Fall Round). If a 75% NBRC Prior Investment Waiver or Significant Benefit Waiver is required and not submitted with the Preapplication, the project will be deemed ineligible at the Preapplication phase of the process.

If an LDD waiver is required, the waiver must be submitted at time of preapplication. If the waiver is not submitted and the project is invited to the application phase, LDD grant administration will be required, and the associated costs must be included in the project budget submitted in support of the application.

Preapplications will be required to be submitted via NBRC's Grants Management System. Detailed instructions for registration and submitting a preapplication are available on the NBRC website on the [Program Areas page](#).

EARLY PREAPPLICATION DEVELOPMENT STEPS:

- Review program materials, with specific attention to eligibility and funding priorities for this program.
- View a recorded Program Information Session. For details, visit <https://www.nbrc.gov/content/Catalyst>.
- Reach out to NBRC with questions regarding eligibility and NBRC funding priorities.
- Discuss projects with a State Program Manager to determine alignment with the State's priorities.
- Review eligibility requirements to determine if your project is required to submit a waiver with the preapplication. Waiver details are available in the Catalyst Program User Manual.
 - Local Development District (LDD) Waiver

- Significant Benefit Waiver
- 75% NBRC Prior Investment Waiver

REQUESTED APPLICANT INFORMATION:

Applicants will be required to register for an account with the NBRC Grants Management System. The **Authorized Official** will need to be responsible for registering the organization. Additional project contacts can be added to the organization once registration is complete and those contacts will be allowed to create and develop the preapplication content.

Detailed instructions for registration are available on the NBRC website on the Program Areas page. Applicants can go to the online grants management system to register. Information to be collected as part of the **registration process** includes:

- Applicant Employer Identification Number (EIN)
- Applicant Unique Entity ID (UEI)
 - Applicants should enter UEI if one is available. UEI is not required to submit a preapplication but will be required to receive an award. If an applicant does not have an UEI, please visit <https://sam.gov/content/entity-registration>. Submitting a registration and getting a Unique Entity ID are FREE.
- Vendor ID – Not Applicable
- Applicant organization name, type, address, congressional district, county, country, and contact information
 - SAM Expiration Date, Organization FY End Date, and 4-Digit Zip Code Extension are not required.
- Authorized Representative name, title, address, email, phone number
 - The Authorized Representative (aka Authorized Official) is the person with signing authority for the organization and will be responsible for submitting documents like applications, amendment requests and committing the organization to funding opportunities and formal grant agreements.

Detailed instructions for using the online grants system to submit a preapplication are available on the NBRC website on the Program Areas page. Requested information as part of the **preapplication process** includes:

- Preapplication information including title and if there is a co-applicant
- Project Narrative information including Project Abstract, Project Goals and Outcomes, Project Beneficiaries and Community Context, Statement of Need, and Program Investment Priorities. See Requested Narrative Information below for detailed guidance on response requirements.
- Information including
 - Have you previously received NBRC funds? If yes, please provide NBRC grant number
 - Does this project serve a rural community with a population of less than 5,000?
 - Does this project benefit an underserved community? A community who suffers from a combination of economic, health and environmental burdens, including high unemployment and poverty, basic resources or conditions, such as standard housing, medical and educational facilities, and civil rights and vulnerable populations, including minority, low income, rural, tribal, indigenous, homeless, and limited English-speaking populations. See Appendix H for additional resources on identifying underserved communities in the NBRC region.
- Project Contacts including adding any project key contacts.
- Project location including state(s) and county(ies).
- Detailed Budget information. See Requested Budget Information below for more guidance on Budget requirements.
- Budget Narrative information. See Requested Budget Information below for more guidance on Budget Narrative requirements.
- Submit waiver supporting documents that apply to your project.
 - All waivers are required at the preapplication phase. Applicants should review the Catalyst Program User Manual for information on waiver requirements.

REQUESTED NARRATIVE INFORMATION

- Preapplication asks for responses to 5 narrative questions. Each narrative text box has a 10,000-character limit and formatting/editing capabilities. Applicants should consider developing narrative responses in a word processing document to easily copy and paste into the preapplication text boxes.
- **Project Abstract**
 - Provide a summary of the proposed project.
 - What NBRC eligible purpose and project category does this project address?
 - Describe the status of the project – ready for implementation, planning tasks ongoing, early stages.
 - What is the project scope? Over what period of time will this project be completed?
- **Project Goals, Outcomes and Outputs**
 - What are the expected economic outcomes (e.g. impacts on jobs, employment and wage growth) of this project
 - Describe the scale of expected economic impacts on the community, county, or region?
 - Appendix G lists examples of Economic Outcomes and Outputs
- **Program Investment Priorities**
 - Which NBRC Agency Investment Priorities best apply to this project?
 - Which state program priorities best apply to this project?
 - Refer to the NBRC Agency Investment Priorities and State Scoring Criteria in the Catalyst Program User Manual.
- **Project Beneficiaries and Community Context**
 - Who will benefit?
 - Why does this project matter to the community?

- If applicable, how does this project serve or benefit rural communities with populations of less than 5,000 or underserved communities?
- If applicable, how does this project help communities prevent, reduce, withstand, and/or improve recovery from climate related impacts and disasters?
- **Statement of Need**
 - What is the challenge or problem the project seeks to address?
 - What is the proposed solution?
 - Why is this project important?
 - Describe the opportunity gained by funding this project now.
 - Why is NBRC funding important for this project?
 - If applicable, Higher Maximum Infrastructure Request: If applicable, describe how project meets criteria for a higher maximum infrastructure award. Include description of how funds will be allocated to 2 or more infrastructure categories or to 2 or more jurisdictions.

REQUESTED BUDGET INFORMATION:

Budget Narrative

- Preapplication asks the applicant to complete a Budget Narrative text box including a funding sources table. There are no support documents required for the Budget Narrative.
- The Budget Narrative should include a cost-justification for each expense over \$5,000 included in the detailed budget provided to NBRC.
- The funding sources table must be completed to provide an overview of the sources of funds for the proposed project. The funding sources table will ask for the source (name and federal or non-federal), type (loan, grant, other), amount, date of commitment or anticipated date of commitment, and status (secured/committed, pending/anticipated).

- The funding sources table will assist a grantee in identifying how much of their project is made up from federal funds. No more than 80% of total project costs can come from federal funds. 40 USC §15506(e).
- NBRC funds may be used to match other federally funded projects (when both federal agencies allow).
- NBRC funds may not be used to “supplant” existing federal programs.

Detailed Budget

- Preapplication asks the applicant to complete a detailed project budget. The rightmost columns allow the applicant to identify how the costs will be allocated between the NBRC Share and other contributors (including Match funds). This information will help the reviewers understand how NBRC funds and Match and/or Cost Share funds will be used.
- The match must meet or exceed the minimum required match amount. If you do not enter adequate match, you will receive an error message. Detailed online grants management system guidance is available to navigate error messages and submitting the preapplication.
- The Budget categories align with the SF-424cbw budget form. This form is not requested with the preapplication, but is required as a supplemental document with the full application (by invitation only).
- The preapplication detailed budget allows the applicant to enter costs within each budget category. The category totals and total project costs will reflect all lines entered in each category.
- The budget categories in the detailed budget include:

- Personnel:

This section should show the labor costs for all individuals supporting the grant program effort (regardless of the source of their salaries). The hours and costs are for the full life of the grant. If an individual is employed by a contractor or subgrantee, their labor costs should not be shown here. Please include all labor costs that are associated with the proposed grant program, including those costs that will be paid for with in-kind or matching funds. Do not show fringe or other indirect costs in this section. Please use the hourly labor cost for salaried

employees (use 2080 hours per year or the value your organization uses to perform this calculation). An employee working less than full time on the grant should show the numbers of hours they will work on the grant.

- Fringe Benefits

Use the standard fringe rates used by your organization. You may use a single fringe rate (a percentage of the total direct labor) or list each of the individual fringe charges. The spreadsheet is set up to use the Total Direct Labor Cost as the base for the fringe calculation. If your organization calculates fringe benefits differently, please use a different base and discuss how you calculate fringe as a comment.

- Travel and Transportation

If you plan on reimbursing staff for the use of privately owned vehicles or if you are required to reimburse your organization for mileage charges, show your mileage and cost estimates in this section. Show the estimated cost of airfare required to support the grant program effort. Show the destination and the purpose of the travel as well as the estimated cost of the tickets. If you or are charged monthly by your organization for a vehicle for use by the grant program, indicate those costs in this section. Provide estimates for other transportation costs that may be incurred (taxi, etc.). For travel which will require the payment of subsistence or per diem in accordance with your organization's policies. Indicate the location of the travel.

- Equipment

Equipment is defined by NBRC as tangible, nonexpendable, personal property having a useful life of more than one year and an acquisition cost of \$5,000 or more per unit.

- Supplies and Materials

Supplies and materials are consumable and non-consumable items that have a depreciated unit value of less than \$5,000. Please list the proposed supplies and materials as either Consumable Supplies or as Non-Consumable Materials. List the consumable supplies you propose to purchase. General office or

other common supplies may be estimated using an anticipated consumption rate. List furniture, computers, printers, and other items that will not be consumed in use. Please list the quantity and unit cost.

- Consultants

Please indicate the consultants you will use. Indicate the type of consultant (skills), the number of days you expect to use them, and their daily rate.

- Contracts and Sub-Grantees

List the contractors and sub-grantees that will help accomplish the grant effort. Examples of contracts that should be shown here include contracts with Community Based Organizations, liability insurance; and training and certification for contractors and workers. If any contractor, sub-contractor, or sub-grantee is expected to receive over 10% of the total Federal amount requested, a separate Grant Application Detailed Budget (Worksheet) should be developed for that contractor or sub-grantee and the total amount of their proposed effort should be shown as a single entry in this section. Unless your proposed program will perform the primary grant effort with in-house employees (which should be listed in section 1), the costs of performing the primary grant activities should be shown in this section. Types of activities which should be shown in this section: • Contracts for all services • Training for individuals not on staff • Contracts with Community Based Organizations or Other Governmental Organizations (note the 10% requirement discussed above) • Insurance if your program will procure it separately Please provide a short description of the activity the contractor or subgrantee will perform, if not evident.

- Construction

Enter estimated amounts needed to cover administrative expenses. Do not include costs that are related to the normal functions of government. Enter estimated site and right(s)-of-way acquisition costs (this includes purchase, lease, and/or easements). Enter estimated costs related to relocation advisory assistance, replacement housing, relocation payments to

displaced persons and businesses, etc. Enter estimated basic engineering fees related to construction (this includes start-up services and preparation of project performance work plan). Enter estimated engineering costs, such as surveys, tests, soil borings, etc. Enter estimated engineering inspection costs. Enter the estimated site preparation and restoration costs that are not included in the basic construction contract. Enter the estimated costs related to demolition activities. Enter estimated costs of the construction contract. Enter estimated cost of office, shop, laboratory, safety equipment, etc. to be used at the facility, if such costs are not included in the construction contract. Enter any estimated contingency costs. Enter estimated miscellaneous costs.

- Other Direct Costs

Other Direct Costs include a number of items that are not appropriate for other sections. Other Direct Costs may include: Staff training, Telecommunications, Printing and postage Relocation, if costs are paid directly by your organization (if relocation costs are paid by a subgrantee, it should be reflected in Section 7)

- Indirect Costs

Indirect costs (including Facilities and Administration costs) are those costs that have been incurred for common or joint purposes. These costs benefit more than one cost objective and cannot be readily identified with a particular final cost objective without effort disproportionate to the results achieved. Indicate your approved Indirect Cost Rate (if any) and calculate the indirect costs in accordance with the terms of your approved indirect cost rate and enter the resulting amount. Also show the applicable cost base amount and identify the proposed cost base type.

EVALUATION OF PREAPPLICATIONS

The evaluation of preapplications includes three factors:

1. NBRC reviews preapplications for eligibility, including eligible project locations, eligible applicant and co-applicant criteria, and waiver completion.
 - Preapplications that are found to be eligible will receive further review.
 - Preapplications that are found to be ineligible will receive a response from NBRC that includes a description of the ineligible determination.
2. NBRC and State Programs review preapplications for alignment with the Catalyst Program priorities. The priorities are highlighted in the NBRC and State Program scoring criteria, available in Appendix K.
 - Eligible preapplications will be prioritized based on alignment with both NBRC and state program priorities.
3. NBRC and State Programs will also consider a) the costs and expected benefits associated with the requested NBRC investment, and b) the benefits provided to the broader community and region.

Preapplications prioritized for invitations to apply, will receive a response from NBRC with information on the application process, application information sessions and any feedback that was noted by the State Program Manager or NBRC on the proposed project.

- When selecting projects for funding awards at the application phase, NBRC and the States will also consider a balanced geographic distribution of investments as well as a well-documented community or regionally supported need for the project.

Preapplications that do not receive an invitation to apply for the current funding round will receive information about submitting a preapplication for future funding rounds and any feedback that was noted by the State Program Manager or NBRC on the proposed project.

PART III. APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS (BY INVITATION ONLY)

FOR the CATALYST PROGRAM 2024, application submission is by invitation only. An applicant must submit a Preapplication (formerly known as a Letter of Interest) and have been issued an invitation to submit a Catalyst Program application to be eligible for funding.

LINK TO GMS:

<https://nbcgrants.my.site.com/ApplicantLanding?username=null>

Applications (by invitation only) are due by 5:00 p.m. EST, on May 3, 2024 (Spring Round) and October 18, 2024 (Fall Round)

Applications will be required to be submitted via NBRC's Grants Management System.

Additional guidance regarding application requirements will be covered during the application programmatic information sessions.

Visit the [Program Areas page](#) of the NBRC website for more details, including step by step instructions for how to complete and submit an application.

EARLY APPLICATION DEVELOPMENT STEPS:

Applicants are strongly encouraged to:

- Review the Invitation to Apply for feedback from NBRC and State Program Manager.
- Attend an application information session. Visit <https://www.nbrc.gov/content/program-areas> for more details.
- Reach out to NBRC with questions regarding eligibility and NBRC funding priorities.
- Discuss their projects with a State Program Manager to strengthen alignment with the State's priorities.
- NBRC and the States will consider a project's alignment with the funding priorities for these program dollars when scoring projects at the application phase.
- When selecting projects for funding awards at the application phase NBRC and the States will also consider:
 - 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

REQUESTED APPLICANT INFORMATION:

- Application Content – Complete the application by entering the required information for each of the following tabs. **Save often!**
 - **Overview Tab** of the Application
 - The applicant’s registration and all applicant information entered at the preapplication stage will be carried over into the application stage.
 - Applicant Information. Applicants should enter their **Unique Entity ID** (UEI). The UEI is required to receive an award. If an applicant does not have an UEI, please visit <https://sam.gov/content/entity-registration>. Submitting a registration and getting a Unique Entity ID from SAM.gov are FREE. See the available guidance for “How to Update UEI” on the [NBRC Resources webpage](#).
 - Opportunity Overview. This section is pre-populated with information related to the NBRC opportunity announcement.
 - Project Information. This section includes sections titled: “Project Abstract”, “Project Goals and Outcomes”, “Project Beneficiaries and Community Context”, “Statement of Need”, “Program Investment Priorities”, “Have you previously received NBRC funds?”, “Does this project benefit an underserved community?”, and “Which of these is most applicable to the applicant organization?”. ***Your answers from the preapplication will be populated, and you can further edit your answers to include new information or revisions in response to NBRC and State feedback.***
 - Contacts. Your organization’s authorized representative will be listed under Project Role as the “Project Director/Manager”. This contact also needs to be designated as a key contact.
 - Associate your LDD in the contacts section.
 - See the available guidance for “Adding Users in the GMS” on the [NBRC Resources webpage](#).

- Acknowledgement. Check “I Agree”
- **Locations Tab** of the Application
 - Application Match section: Confirm correct match. If there is a discrepancy with the match listed in the application, please contact NBRC.
 - Investment Locations section: enter the street, city, state and zip code of the location(s) where the project will have investments. There is a validation function associated with investment locations. Enter all locations associated with the investment of project funds and attempt to validate using the Census tool. Leave in all locations, including those determined "invalid" by Census, as we also need to associate locations with key performance indicators in the next section. If the investment location returns an “Invalid” Status, we encourage applicants to enter the latitude/longitude coordinates in the address bar.
 - Key Performance Indicators: edit and enter the Target value for each KPI. If the KPI does not apply to your project, enter 0.
- **Budget Tab** of the Application
 - Budget table – ***budget information will be carried over from preapplication.*** Revise budget categories based on new estimates, more detailed data, or corrections requested in the preapplication.
 - The totals should match the SF-424cbw detailed budget, required as an attached document under the “Forms and Files” tab. The budget categories are not in the same order but do correspond with the high-level categories 1-10 on the 424cbw.
 - NBRC Share column
 - Other Federal column
 - Applicant Match column
 - Other column

- 80% Federal Funding Ceiling – calculated on total project costs. There is a GMS validation process in place to verify that the NBRC Share + Other Federal Share must be less than or equal to 80% of the amount under Total Project Costs.
- Applicant match – calculated on NBRC requested amount. There is a GMS validation process in place to verify that Other Federal Share + Applicant Match + Other is greater than or equal to the required minimum match.
- Because NBRC is a federal source of funds, some projects exceed the 80% ceiling with a 80/20 request without additional non-federal funds.
- See Program Scoring Criteria #2
- Budget Narrative – carried over from preapplication
 - Populate the justification for requested project costs over \$5,000
 - Template available for guidance
 - See Program Scoring Criteria #2
- Funding sources and commitments – carried over from preapplication
 - Do not include the NBRC source in the funding sources and commitments table
 - ARPA *is* considered a federal source
 - CDBG and federal loans *are not* considered a federal source
 - See Program Scoring Criteria #2
- **Proposal Tab** of the Application
 - Technical Proposal. This section includes sections titled: “Approach & Methodology”, “Economic Impacts”, “Project Readiness”, and “Capacity & Qualifications”. Follow the following instructions for each:

- Review the information you put together for the preapplication and build on it here. Do not copy and paste from the project narrative, but rather expound upon the information previously provided with additional detail, where possible.
 - Prep in word document, then copy and paste into GMS. Keep the formatting simple, e.g. bullet points rather than tables and cells to avoid potential errors when saving complicated formatting. Keep the formatting simple, e.g. bullet points rather than tables and cells to avoid potential errors when saving complicated formatting.
 - Save Often!
 - Approach and Methodology: Provide an explanation of the approach and methodology that will be used to meet the project objectives. Identify and explain how the project addresses program objectives and investment priorities. See Program Scoring Criteria #3.
 - Economic Impacts: Explain the anticipated economic outcomes and outputs of the project. See Program Scoring Criteria #4.
 - Project Readiness: Describe if the project is ready for implementation or will require additional planning tasks to begin. Provide a detailed milestone schedule for completion of the project, along with an explanation of the applicant's ability to complete the proposed work within the 3-year period of performance. See Program Scoring Criteria #1
 - Capacity & Qualifications: Provide an explanation of the capacity of the organization to meet the project objectives, including any partnerships with other entities to support project. Provide an explanation of the qualifications of the personnel as they relate to project objectives. See Program Scoring Criteria #5.
- **Forms and Files Tab** of the Application
 - Supporting Documents Checklist. Mandatory documents for all applicants must be completed and uploaded or attached to the application system. They include:

- **SF-424 Application for Federal Assistance**
*embedded in GMS
 - **SF-424B** (non-construction) **or SF-424D** (construction) *embedded in GMS
 - **SF-LLL Disclosure of Lobbying Activities**
*embedded in GMS
 - **SF-424cbw** (details tab only) *download, completed and upload in GMS
 - **NEPA Intake Form** *download, completed and upload in GMS
 - **Form 1001 Debarment Suspension Certification**
*download, completed and upload in GMS
 - **Authorized Official Resolution** *template available on NBRC resources webpage, upload to GMS
 - **Waiver approval documentation.** Applicants who received approval for a 75% Expenditure Waiver, Significant Benefits Waiver, and/or LDD Waiver need to confirm the waiver approval file is attached. *attached to Invitation to Apply letter, upload to GMS
 - **Project Map** *FEMA flood map **and/or** map of project location of your choice, upload to GMS
- Non-profit applicants have additional mandatory documents which must be completed and uploaded or attached to that application system
 - **Certificate of Good Standing** *upload to GMS
 - **IRS Determination Letter** *upload to GMS
 - Indirect Cost Rate documentation. Applicants who use an indirect rate other than the diminimis rate of 10%, are required to upload or attach the **Negotiated Indirect Rate Cost Agreement** with a cognizant agency. Otherwise, the diminimis rate will be applied. *upload to GMS
 - **Revolving Loan Fund documentation.** Applicants apply for a Revolving Loan Fund project are required to upload or

attach the completed Revolving Loan Fund documentation form. *download, completed and upload in GMS



APPENDIX A – STATE PROGRAM MANAGER CONTACT INFORMATION

Maine

Charlotte Mace
DECD – Office of Business Development
(207) 624-7448
charlotte.mace@maine.gov

New Hampshire

Steve Fortier
Department of Business and Economic Affairs
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steven.j.fortier@livefree.nh.gov

New York

Kyle Wilber
Department of State, Division of Local Government Services
(518) 473-3355
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Vermont

Kristie Farnham
Agency of Commerce & Community Development
(802) 392-5268
kristie.farnham@vermont.gov



APPENDIX B – 2024 CATALYST PROGRAM SPRING TIMELINE

Program Milestones and Key Dates

Timeline and Program Overview on Website	December 22, 2023
Program Manual (additional program related materials)	January 2024
Program Information Sessions (Virtual)	February 2024
Grants Management System (GMS) Training	March 2024

Spring Round Key Dates*

Online Grants Management System open	March 11, 2024
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Preapplications due (Required) March 22, 2024, by 5:00 pm EST

Waivers: March 22, 2024, by 5:00 pm EST

- Local Development District (LDD) (if applicable)
- Significant Benefit (if applicable)
- and 75% Prior NBRC Investment (if applicable)

Online Grants Management System open	April 15, 2024
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Application Information Sessions (Virtual)	April 2024
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Spring Round Applications due (By invitation only) May 3, 2024, by 5:00 pm EST

NBRC Commission Meeting	June 20-21, 2024
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NBRC notification of awards & notice to unsuccessful applicants	June 28, 2024
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*if applicable, will include EDA and USDA Partnership announcements



APPENDIX B – 2024 CATALYST PROGRAM FALL TIMELINE

Fall Round Key Dates

Online Grants Management System open

July-August 2024

Preapplications due (Required)

September 6, 2024, by 5:00 pm EST

Waivers:

September 6, 2024, by 5:00 pm EST

Local Development District (LDD) (if applicable)
Significant Benefit (if applicable)
and 75% Prior NBRC Investment (if applicable)

Online Application system open

September 15, 2024

Application Information Sessions

September 2024

Fall Round Applications due (By invitation only) October 18, 2024, by 5:00 pm EST

NBRC Commission Meeting (Virtual)

Week of December 2, 2024

NBRC notification of awards & notice to unsuccessful applicants

December 20, 2024



APPENDIX C – NBRC NEPA INTAKE FORM

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requires that federal agencies consider potential environmental impacts of their actions before implementation or spending funds on the proposed action. You must complete this initial NEPA Intake Form as part of your NBRC application to provide NBRC Staff with project information relevant to the NEPA process. NBRC will use this information to determine the appropriate level of NEPA analysis that will be required if your proposed project is funded.

Note: Completion of this form does not satisfy NEPA, but it does help NBRC to determine what NEPA analysis will be required. If your project is funded, the NEPA process must be complete before NBRC will issue a Notice to Proceed.

Please complete the NBRC NEPA intake form in PDF format and provide attachments to support the information provided on this form, as needed. The NEPA intake form and supporting documentation should be combined and submitted as one PDF and labeled NEPA INTAKE.

[Click here for NEPA INTAKE FORM in fillable PDF Format](#)



APPENDIX D - 75% NBRC PRIOR INVESTMENT EXPENDITURE POLICY & WAIVER

If an applicant and/or co-applicant has an outstanding NBRC investment (under any NBRC program), they are not eligible to be considered for additional NBRC funding until their current project has both: submitted reimbursement requests totaling 75% or more of the project and demonstrated that 75% of the cost share **has been expended by March 1, 2024 (Spring Round) or September 1, 2024 (Fall Round)**. If the 75% expenditure cannot be met, the entity can apply for a waiver.

The waiver request will not be considered complete if it does not contain a fully executed Affidavit and supporting documentation. The waiver must be approved by the State(s) where the prior award(s) were made and NBRC for the applicant to be eligible to seek 2024 NBRC program funding.

If the 75% expenditure requirement cannot be met by the deadline, a request for a waiver of this requirement, **together with documentation to support the waiver**, including the current status of the project, delays encountered (if applicable), projected completion date of the prior NBRC award(s), capacity to both complete prior award(s) and take on new projects. Information to support the waiver should also include the economic impacts of the proposed project, and how a delay in applying for funding will be a detriment. Economic impact support documentation should include specific and not speculative information.

NOTE: If an applicant needs to submit a 75% expenditure waiver, the executed Affidavit together with documentation supporting the waiver request must be submitted in addition to the required Preapplication documentation and must be received no later than 5:00 p.m. March 22, 2024 (Spring Round) or September 6, 2024 (Fall Round).

The waiver must be approved by NBRC for the applicant to be eligible for invitation to the application phase of the process. If an applicant or co-applicant is required to submit a 75% Expenditure Waiver and does not, the Pre-application will be considered ineligible for further consideration.

[Click here for 75% NBRC Prior Investment Expenditure Waiver in fillable PDF format](#)



APPENDIX E – SIGNIFICANT BENEFIT WAIVER AFFIDAVIT

Requesting a significant benefit waiver for consideration. There are two exceptions that require a Significant Benefits Waiver to allow those projects or applicants/co-applicants that fall outside of the designated distressed counties, transitional counties and Areas of Isolated Distress within an Attainment county to apply for NBRC funds. Those exceptions are:

1. An exception exists for projects located within an Attainment County but outside of one of the identified “Areas of Isolated Distress” that will bring significant economic benefits to NBRC Distressed or Transitional counties.
2. An exception exists for applicants or co-applicants located outside of the NBRC service area in a member state with projects that will bring significant economic benefits to NBRC Distressed or Transitional counties.

Process: If a Significant Benefit waiver is being requested, the documentation supporting the waiver request, which includes an executed Significant Benefit Waiver **together with documentation to support the waiver**, including clear and convincing evidence of a project’s economic impact to NBRC Distressed or Transitional counties, must be submitted in addition to the Preapplication required documentation and **must be received no later than 5:00 p.m. March 22, 2024 (Spring Round) or September 6, 2024 (Fall Round)**. A Significant Benefit Waiver request requires approval by the Federal Co-Chair and the Governor’s Alternates of the four NBRC States. The significant benefit waiver must be approved for the entity to be considered eligible to be issued an invitation to submit an application for funding.

If an applicant or co-applicant is required to submit a Significant Benefit Waiver and does not submit the waiver form in addition to the documentation referenced above, in addition to the required Preapplication documentation, the Preapplication will be considered ineligible for further consideration.

[Click here for Significant Benefit Waiver Affidavit in fillable PDF format](#)



APPENDIX F – LDD POLICY AND WAIVER

The NBRC Federal-State partnership is aided by a group of regional organizations called **Local Development Districts (LDDs)** that assist the NBRC in its outreach activities and administer NBRC investments for grantees.

LDDs are either an already existing federally designated Economic Development District, as certified by the US Economic Development Administration, or an organization similar in nature to a regional planning commission.

Each CATALYST PROGRAM NBRC award is required to utilize an LDD for grant administration assistance unless they are an agency of State government, are an LDD themselves, or have requested and received LDD waiver approval from NBRC prior to the submission of the CATALYST PROGRAM application. The LDD contract executed with the grantee should specify the type of scope of services/grant administration activity that will be provided. A grantee is required to provide a copy of the executed LDD contract as part of the documentation necessary to receive a Partial or Full Notice to Proceed.

LDDs are compensated for their administrative work, through a reimbursement process with the grantee, based on the formula of 2% of the NBRC award. LDD grant administration costs are an eligible NBRC cost for an amount not to exceed the formula. If grant administration assistance beyond the total available under the formula, those must be paid for with matching funds. LDD grant administration costs must be reflected as a line item within the project budget submitted in support of a CATALYST PROGRAM application for funding.

See [Role of the LDD](#) or visit www.nbrc.gov/content/administration for more information.

If a LDD waiver is being requested, the request must be submitted in addition to the preapplication required documentation and must be received no later than 5:00 p.m. EST, March 22, 2024 (Spring Round) or September 6, 2024 (Fall Round)

[Click here for LDD Waiver in fillable PDF format](#)



APPENDIX G - OUTCOMES AND OUTPUTS

Examples of Outcomes

Businesses Created: Businesses created and/or retained, jobs created and/or retained, private investment leveraged, specific community improvements, non-export (tourism) revenues as a result of an NBRC project.

Communities Improved: The number of communities with a measurable improvement as a result of an NBRC project, including projects that improve planning, civic participation, infrastructure, and educational opportunities. This measure should also be used for consolidated technical assistance grants. The “communities improved” number will generally be the same as, or a subset of, the “communities served” output measure.

Costs Reduced: Costs reduced as a result of project activities, within one year of project implementation. For example, small business technical assistance may help a business streamline and cut costs, or an energy-efficiency program may help to reduce energy costs, through a renegotiated flat fee for energy use or through a reduction in kilowatt hours used. See the output measure “energy capacity.”

Households Improved: The number of households with measurable improvement as a result of an NBRC project. For each project, this number is generally the same as, or a subset of, the “households served” output measure.

Jobs Created: The projected number of jobs (direct hires, excluding construction jobs) that will result from an NBRC project, measured during the project period and up to three years after the project end date. Part-time and seasonal jobs should be converted to full-time equivalents and rounded up to whole numbers. Note: for infrastructure projects, employers should provide letters stating their intention to create a specific number of new jobs; for non-infrastructure jobs, applicants should estimate the number of jobs that will be created by the organizations expected to benefit from the project.

Jobs Retained: The number of jobs that would be lost or relocated without the NBRC project, measured during the project period and up to three years after the project end date. Note: for infrastructure projects, employers must provide letters explicitly stating the number of jobs at risk, due to loss of competitiveness or relocation, without the project. For

non-infrastructure projects, applicants should estimate the number of existing jobs that would be at risk, due to loss of competitiveness or relocation, without the NBRC-funded project.

Leveraged Private Investment (LPI): The dollar amount of private-sector financial commitments, outside of project costs, that result from a project, measured during the project period and up to three years after the project end date. Note: for infrastructure projects, businesses should provide letters stating their intention to make a specific level of investment if the project is funded; for non-infrastructure jobs, applicants should estimate the dollar value of investments that will be made by the company or companies that will benefit from the project.

Organizations Improved: The number of organizations with a measurable improvement as a result of an NBRC project. This number is generally the same as, or a subset of, the “organizations served” output measure.

Participants Improved: The number of participants with a measurable improvement as a result of the project (use when patients, students, or worker/trainee measures do not apply). A plan and a method for measuring the degree of improvement must be provided. This number is generally the same as, or a subset of, the “participants served” output measure.

Programs Implemented: The number of new programs, or the number of ongoing activities related to a defined goal, that are implemented as a result of an NBRC project. If possible, use with other measures that indicate the results of the project, such as students, workers, participants, etc.

Revenues Increased: Export Sales: The increase in revenue in export sales that a business or businesses realize as a result of an NBRC project, within three years of the project end date.

Revenues Increased: Non-Export Sales: The increase in revenue in domestic (non-export) sales that a business or businesses realize as a result of an NBRC project, within three years of the project end date.

Students Improved: The number of students who obtain a job in the field for which they were specifically trained; the number that receive a diploma, certificate, or other career credential; or the number of students who successfully complete a course or unit of study and/or graduate to the next grade or level necessary to continue their education. When outcomes occur after the project period, the number of students improved may be counted up to three years beyond the project end date. For programs where final outcomes are achieved after three or more years, the number of students improved may be counted by an

alternative benchmark, such as the number of students completing a skill, grade, or level, or continued enrollment for the project period. This number is generally the same as, or a subset of, the “students served” output measure.

Telecom Sites: The number of new telecom services installed as a result of an NBRC project. This diverse measure includes, but is not limited to, new telemedicine sites, new Wi-fi hotspots, a new wireless router or computer lab, new fiber run to an industrial site, a new antenna used to provide broadband service, etc.

Workers/Trainees Improved: The number of workers/trainees with improved skills that enable them to obtain employment or to enhance their current employment. For example, the number of workers or trainees obtaining a new job; getting higher pay or a better position; or receiving a certification, measured during the project period when possible. When outcomes occur after the project period, the number of workers or trainees improved may be counted up to three years beyond the project end date. For programs where outcomes are achieved after three or more years, the number of students improved may be counted by an alternative benchmark, such as completion of a skill, level/course, or continued enrollment for the project period. This number is generally the same as, or a subset of, the “workers/trainees served” output measure.

Examples of Outputs

Access Road Miles: The length of the access roads constructed as part of the project, in miles or decimals of miles (not linear feet).

Acreage: The number of acres impacted by an NBRC site-development or reclamation project, such as the number of acres graded and prepared for development at an emerging industrial park, the number of acres open to future development, the number of acres permanently preserved for farmland, or other preservation efforts that improve the local economy, or the number of acres remediated in a reclamation project.

Businesses Served: The number of businesses served by an NBRC project, including entrepreneurship projects, business technical assistance, and infrastructure projects.

Communities Served: The number of communities served by an NBRC project, including projects that improve planning, civic participation, infrastructure, and educational opportunities. For consolidated technical assistance grants, the number of communities served is the number of projects submitted by state NBRC program offices.

Energy Capacity (KWh/KW): The number of kilowatt hours saved by energy efficiency projects, or kilowatts produced by renewable energy projects within one year of project implementation.

Housing Units Constructed/Rehabbed: The number of housing units constructed or rehabilitated as a part of an NBRC housing or community development project.

Linear Feet: The number of linear feet of pipe, wire, cable, trails, etc., to be constructed or installed.

New Visitors: Days: The number of new daytime visitors to a tourism destination times the number of days they visit, within one year of project implementation.

New Visitors: Overnights: The number of new overnight visitors to a tourism destination times the number of their overnight stays, within one year of project implementation.

Organizations Served: The number of organizations served by an NBRC project, including hospitals, schools, churches, non-profits, non-governmental organizations.

Patients Served: The number of unique patients receiving clinical services one or more times as a result of an NBRC health project. For equipment projects, report the number of patients served during the project period and one year after the equipment is deployed. For health projects that do not provide clinical services (such as health promotion activities), use the measure "participants served."

Participants Served: The number of individual participants that can be served or are targeted by an NBRC project (use when patients, students, or worker/trainee measures do not apply). This can include the number of attendees at a meeting, workshop, or conference. For example, the number of individuals participating in a planning process; or the number of individuals attending health promotion activities.

Plans/Reports: The number of plans or reports developed as a result of an NBRC project. This could include strategic plans, master plans, concept plans, or plans for infrastructure improvements or new programs, as well as research reports, feasibility studies, etc. This measure is often paired with the outcome "Programs Implemented," since a program or specific activity is often implemented as a result of a planning process.

Square Feet: The number of square feet constructed or improved by an NBRC project, such as the square footage of a renovated community

center, a newly constructed parking lot, a reconfigured interior space, etc.

Students Served: The number of students that an NBRC education project will be able to serve, measured during the project period, when possible (e.g., the number of students served by a science and technology program in a given semester or year). For projects that are not fully operational during the project period, the measurement time period may be extended up to three years after the project end date. Projects that expand existing programs count only the additional number of students served.

System Capacity (MGD/MG): The capacity of a water or sewer system, in millions of gallons per day; or the capacity of a water tank, in millions of gallons. This includes the capacity of a new water or sewage treatment plant or water tank, or the increase in capacity of a plant due to renovation, new equipment, or other improvements. This measure may be expressed in decimals.

Workers/Trainees Served: The number of workers/trainees that an NBRC training project will be able to serve, measured during the project period when possible. For example, the number of worker/trainees the project will be able to enroll in a new workforce education program. For projects that are not fully operational during the project period, the measurement time period may be extended up to three years after the project end date. Projects that expand existing programs count only the additional number of workers/trainees that the project will be able to serve.



APPENDIX H – APPLICATION RESOURCES

Census data and Community Demographics data from public sources:

- **The American Community Survey (ACS)** releases new data every year through a variety of data tables that you can access with different data tools. Data Profiles contain the most popular social, economic, housing, and demographic data for a single geographic area. The Data Profiles summarize the data, providing both estimates and percentages, to cover the most basic data on all ACS topics. These profiles are available at data.census.gov.
- **EJScreen** is the EPA's environmental justice mapping and screening tool that provides a nationally consistent dataset and approach for combining environmental and demographic socioeconomic indicators. EJScreen users choose a geographic area by type the name of a town, county or state into the “find address or place” search box. The tool then provides demographic socioeconomic and environmental information for that area. The most relevant data for the NBRC application can be found under the “Additional Demographics” map layer. A popup box with Additional Demographics will appear and the user can select “People of Color Population” then “Add to Map”, and “American Indian Population” then “Add to Map”. When the user clicks on an area of the map, a popup box allows you to “Generate Report” which will give you all of the demographics for that area. The user can print or save the report for future reference or inclusion with the application as supporting data. All of the EJScreen indicators are publicly available data.

EJScreen was designed as a web-based tool to provide easy access to reports and maps without the need to install software. To help beginners get started using EJScreen, a basic step-by-step walk-through is provided here. The User Guide is available for download at: [User Guide for EJScreen \(pdf\)](#),

- **Bureau of Indian Affairs US Domestic Sovereign Nations:** Land Areas of Federally Recognized Tribes. The [U.S. Domestic Sovereign Nations: Land Areas of Federally-recognized Tribes map](#) (commonly referred to as Indian lands) gives the user the ability to zoom, change base maps, and identify tribal lands with the BIA Land Area Representation (LAR). The LAR depicts the external extent of Federal Indian reservations, land held in “trust” by the United States, “restricted fee” or “mixed ownership” tracts for Federally recognized tribes and individual Indians.



APPENDIX I - REVOLVING LOAN FUND PROGRAM

Definitions

- “RLF” is an acronym for Revolving Loan Fund
- Indian tribe—The term "Indian tribe" has the meaning given the term in section 4 of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (25 U.S.C. 45 (b)).
- Nonprofit organization—The term "nonprofit organization" means any organization described in section 501(c) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 and exempt from taxation under 501(a) of that Code that has been formed for the purpose of economic development.

Overview

It is NBRC’s policy not to provide RLF grant funding only to entities whose primary business is lending. A revolving loan fund is a pool of money used by an eligible applicant for the purpose of making loans to create and/or save jobs. As loans are repaid by the borrowers, the money is returned to the RLF to make other loans. In that manner, the RLF fund becomes an ongoing or "revolving" financial tool.

The major difference between the Northern Border Regional Commission’s RLF program and conventional lending is the lending goal. For conventional lending institutions, the goal is profit. For an NBRC RLF, the goal is saving and creating private-sector jobs. Revolving loan funds are not a substitute for conventional lending sources. Given the small size of the RLF program and the limited resources of each project, revolving loan funds are not intended to match or replace the capacity of banks or other lending organizations. RLFs are designed to fill gaps in existing local financial markets and to provide or attract capital which otherwise would not be available for economic development. As part of the grant agreement, NBRC requires that RLF projects be administered in accordance with a revolving loan fund plan developed by the grant applicant and approved by the NBRC.

An applicant's RLF plan defines specific objectives and operating procedures, including standards and selection criteria for loans in the portfolio. NBRC does not review or approve individual loans made by the RLF. Instead, NBRC monitors RLF project activities for conformance with the NBRC’s statute (40 USC, Subtitle V), these guidelines, the RLF plan, and other conditions of the grant agreement.

Objectives and Strategies

One of the major problems in local business development, and a significant contributing factor to local economic distress, is credit availability. Even when credit may be available, the cost and terms of the credit may prevent firms from expanding, continuing operations, or starting up. The result may be a community's loss of jobs, tax revenues, and private investment. The primary objective of the NBRC RLF program is saving and creating private-sector jobs. Projects are expected to support specific types of economic activities planned or underway in the area. These may include, depending on local needs and conditions, one or more of the following:

- Small business development, including the start-up or expansion of locally owned businesses as measured by job creation.
- Existing business and saving jobs.
- Redevelopment of blighted land and vacant facilities for productive use.
- Modernization and rehabilitation of existing industrial or manufacturing facilities; and/or
- Support for the use of new technologies, growth industries, high-tech firms.

The effectiveness of a revolving loan fund project as a development tool will depend on its lending policies and financing techniques. These may include, but are not limited to:

- Modifications in repayment terms, such as deferral of initial principal or interest payments.
- Taking greater risks than banks are traditionally prepared to take when substantial economic development benefits will result if the borrower succeeds.
- Providing below market interest rates.
- Short turn-around time in processing applications; and/or
- Reducing the risk of commercial lenders by providing subordinate financing.

RLF Grantees

- Applicants must have robust staff capacity in any of the following areas of expertise: finance, law, credit analysis, loan packaging, loan processing and servicing. Applicants must have enough resources to cover the administrative costs of RLF operations.
- Applicants must have a strong and established loan review committee.
- As lending organizations, RLF grantees must recognize their obligations to federal and state law including but not limited to the Equal Credit Opportunity Act (ECOA), 15 U.S.C. 1691-1691f, as implemented by Federal Reserve Board Regulation B and the Internal

Revenue Code requirements for lender cancellation of debt (Form 1099C, Cancellation of Debt).

Application Requirements:

A written work plan that demonstrates the need and capacity for a NBRC RLF grant. A work plan should include:

- A complete listing of all staff and loan review committee members responsible for administering the RLF along with a statement of their qualifications and experience.
- Demonstrate a need for loan funds. As a minimum, applicants should identify a sufficient number of proposed and known ultimate recipients it has on hand to justify NBRC funding of its RLF grant request or include well developed targeting criteria for borrowers consistent with the applicant's mission.
- Include a list of proposed fees and other charges it will assess borrowers.
- Include the applicant's plan for loaning the grant funds. The plan, which may be in the form of an existing RLF policy, must be of sufficient detail to provide the NBRC with a complete understanding of what the applicant will accomplish by lending the funds and the complete mechanics of how the funds will get from the applicant to the borrower. The service area, eligibility criteria, loan purposes, fees, rates, terms, collateral requirements, limits, priorities, application process, method of disposition of the funds to the borrower, monitoring of the borrower's accomplishments, reporting requirements by the borrowers, and the actions that an applicant plans to take to deal with a delinquency are some of the items that should be addressed by the applicant's RLF plan.
- Provide a set of goals, strategies, and anticipated outcomes for the applicant's program.

RLF Loan Program Policies

- NBRC RLF grantees must adhere to NBRC RLF Loan Program policies recorded in this publication. Grantees must affirm that they understand and do agree to operate RLFs in accordance with the NBRC RLF policies contained in these guidelines. NBRC relies on the affirmation of each grantee's chief executive officer, on this plan, as a basis for releasing loan funds to the grantee.
- Grantees may request changes to their RLF operating plan that improve RLF administration and/or enhance the ability of the grantee

to meet the original objectives of the RLF project. All revisions to a grantee's RLF operating plan must be approved by NBRC, in advance.

- NBRC RLF grantees must adhere to NBRC RLF Loan Program policies recorded in this publication. Grantees must affirm that they understand and do agree to operate RLFs in accordance with the NBRC RLF policies contained in these guidelines. NBRC relies on the affirmation of each grantee's chief executive officer, on this plan, as a basis for releasing loan funds to the grantee.

Borrowers and Loans

- Private, for-profit firms that do business within the NBRC Service Area are the primary eligible target market for RLF loans. Firms must include majority US citizens or legal resident ownership. The borrower may be located outside the Service Area, but the activity financed, and its benefits must be within the NBRC's Service Area.
- The borrowing firm or any of its owners cannot have a delinquent debt to the federal government.
- Private, for-profit developers, whose development projects create jobs within the Region: The eligibility conditions for lending to private, for-profit firms apply equally to developers. Developers must hold binding commitments for development occupancy from private business tenants.

Eligible Borrowers

- A borrower is eligible for RLF financing only when credit is not otherwise available on terms and conditions that would permit accomplishment of the borrower's project. RLF participation in a project must not displace local commercial lenders. The grantee is responsible for determining that a borrower meets this requirement and for maintaining documentation in the loan file describing, in each case, the basis for the determination. A borrower eligibility determination must be supported by either:
 - A loan commitment letter from the commercial lender participating in the project.
 - A commercial lender letter declining participation.
 - A memorandum documenting discussion with commercial lenders about the limits of their participation in a borrower's project.

Eligible Loans

- RLF grants may be used for debt financing through direct loans for:

- Machinery, equipment, and other fixed asset acquisition including transportation/delivery and installation costs.
- New construction, alteration, modification, repair, and renovation of existing facilities, demolition, and site preparation.
- Land acquisition that is an integral part of a project where the dominant funding requirement is for building acquisition or construction.
- Working capital, which can include but is not limited to loans for the interest obligation of interim construction loans, not to exceed a term of three years, and for reasonable fees of loan packaging, environmental data collection, consultants, and fees of licensed professionals (engineers, architects, lawyers, accountants, and appraisers); and
- Refinancing existing debt only when the Grantee can document that the project is viable and necessary and that jobs will be lost or not created.

Loan Projects Not Eligible for NBRC Funds

- Grantees may not make loans to themselves or to a subsidiary (Where *subsidiaries* are organizations under common control through common officers, directors, members, or employees).
- Loans only for land acquisition are not permitted.
- Loans which assist the relocation of businesses are prohibited under 40 USC §15501(f).
- Loans to any nonprofit.
- Loans to acquire an equity position for the RLF in private businesses.
- Loans to subsidize interest payments on existing loans except for interim construction financing.
- Loans that provide the mandatory equity contribution required of borrowers for other federal loan programs.
- Loans that refinance existing debt solely for the purpose of reducing the risk to existing lenders.
- Loans that establish revolving lines of credit for borrowers.
- Loans that create a potential conflict-of-interest or the appearance of a conflict-of-interest for any officer or employee of a grantee, any current member of a grantee's loan review committee, administrative board or staff that reviews, approves, or otherwise participates in decisions on RLF loans, and people related to them by blood, marriage, or law are prohibited. Former members of the board, former members of the staff and former members of the loan review committee are barred from receiving NBRC RLF loan assistance for one year from the date of termination of their

service. Loan activities that directly benefit these individuals or people related to them by blood, marriage, or law are prohibited for a period of one year from the date of termination of service of such related person.

- All borrower loan activities and economic benefits resulting from loan activities must be located within the NBRC Service Area. NBRC RLF loan assistance must be withdrawn if for any reason the activity financed, or the economic benefit is moved from the NBRC Service Area.
- A Grantee's operating plan must articulate that the maximum percentage of costs of any loan project that may be financed from Federal sources, including NBRC originated RLF funds, is 80%.

NBRC RLF Lending Policies

General

- The responsibility for approving loans and setting terms and conditions consistent with these guidelines resides fully with the Grantee.
- Grantees may make loans and guarantees to eligible borrowers at interest rates and under conditions determined by the grantee to be most appropriate in achieving the goals of the RLF.
- Financing should be designed to assist firms with special credit problems, and therefore may involve greater risks and more lenient terms than commercial lenders may provide. To encourage the participation of commercial lenders in a loan project, the RLF loan may be for a longer period than that of other project lenders or may involve a period of interest-only payments by the borrower.
- A formal written loan application is required for each potential borrower. As a minimum the application should include General information identifying the borrower, management and business history, the project description, a schedule of proposed financing, number of employees, and proposed job impact of the project.
- Grantees must offer loan assistance by formal commitment letter which shall include a clear identification of the collateral and other loan terms offered, the conditions of the loan and other loan documentation required. A borrower must sign an acceptance of the loan commitment offered.
- A loan agreement between the grantee and borrower is required.

Collateral

- When determining collateral requirements, the grantee must consider the merits and potential economic benefits of each

request. When appropriate and practical, RLF financing may be secured by liens or assignments of rights in assets as follows:

- The purpose of a loan is for working capital, a Grantee will normally obtain collateral such as liens on inventories, accounts receivable, fixed assets and/or other available assets of the borrower. Such liens shall be properly recorded as prescribed by applicable state and local Uniform Commercial Code laws. The lien position of the RLF may be subordinate and made inferior to lien(s) securing other loans made in this project.
- In addition to these types of security, grantees may also require security in the form of the assignment of patents and licenses, the acquisition of hazard, liability and other forms of insurance including flood insurance as appropriate, performance bonds and such other additional security as a grantee determines is necessary to mitigate the RLF's exposure. The RLF must be shown as a lender loss payee by endorsement on insurance.
- RLF loans to closely held corporations, partnerships, or proprietorships dependent for their continuing success on certain individuals ordinarily will be required to provide, and assign to the RLF, life insurance on these key persons.
- Personal guarantees from a borrower's principal owners (partnerships and proprietorships) and their spouses to the extent permitted by law (see the Equal Credit Opportunity Act), making them jointly and severally liable for the loan, should be required. In case of a corporate borrower, in addition to the pledging of corporate assets, members of the Board of Directors holding 20 percent or more of the corporation's outstanding common stock or 20 percent or more of the corporation's voting stock and their spouses (if jointly held), should guarantee loans.
- Should a grantee determine that it is necessary or desirable to take actions to protect or further the interests of the RLF, the grantee should act to sell, collect, liquidate, or otherwise recover on loans or guarantees extended by the RLF in accordance with the legal rights of the grantee, other lenders and the RLF borrower.
- A Grantee may modify the terms under which RLF financing has been extended to enhance the ability of the RLF to achieve program objectives.

RLF Administration/Grant Funds

- RLF grant principal may be used only to fund loans. It is the grantee's responsibility to provide for the administrative costs of

- staffing and operating the RLF. These costs may not be charged against grant principal unless specifically authorized in the grant.
- All repayments of RLF grant principal must be returned to the RLF for subsequent lending. Proceeds from the sale, collection or liquidation of loan collateral must also be returned to the RLF for lending. The reasonable costs of collection or action to recover a loan are treated as administrative expenses. Any proceeds from the sales of collateral assets above the original unpaid amount of the loan are treated as program income.
 - Selling NBRC RLF loans on a secondary market is not permitted.

Program Income

- Program income is the income received by the grantee earned as a result of lending authorized by the grant agreement. Program income typically includes but is not limited to the following, however described by the grantee.
 - Loan interest.
 - Fees for processing loan applications.
 - Loan closing fees.
 - Periodic fees for servicing loans.
 - Penalties and interest caused by the borrower's late payment.
 - Proceeds from the sale of collateral in excess of the unpaid balance of the original loan.
 - Interest earned on loan repayment balances while awaiting re-lending.
- Program income will be added to the loan fund to expand RLF lending or used to cover reasonable and necessary administrative costs of the RLF.
- Grantees must keep complete records (e.g., timecards, logs, invoices, vouchers) to document those administrative costs. Administrative costs include direct costs that are specifically identifiable to an RLF cost and indirect costs which are incurred for common objectives.

Funds Management

- Grantees may request advance payments only at the time and in the amount immediately needed to close loans.
- All grant payments (drawdown) made by NBRC to grantees are advance payments and are made based on a Grantee invoice as well as supporting documents such as either a letter of commitment to the borrower or a proposal to extend credit approved by the grantee's loan review committee. All payments

are made by automated clearing house (ACH) procedures. Grantees are provided with an ACH enrollment form with their initial grant contract.

- Grant advances should not be requested earlier than 30 days prior to the anticipated loan closing date. Should the forecast loan closing date be delayed by more than 60 days beyond the forecasted date, Grantee should be prepared to return the advance to the NBRC.
- Grantees must place funds advanced from NBRC or returned to the RLF from lending activities in accounts pending the closing of new loans. Interest earning accounts may be federally insured deposits or short-term certificates of deposit that are covered by deposit insurance.
- Excess Un-loaned Funds
- If RLF grantees are not using NBRC grant funds for lending activities, grants may be revoked and grant funds recovered, as follows:
 - If an RLF grantee does not require an initial advance payment from an RLF grant (either capitalization or recapitalization) within 12 months following the date of a Notice to Proceed document, NBRC may revoke its approval of such RLF grant.
 - If an RLF grantee does not require the full amount of a previously approved RLF grant (either capitalization or recapitalization) within 36 months of grant notice to proceed, the unused grant balance may be de-obligated by NBRC.
 - Nothing in this section shall cause a grantee to be automatically ineligible for additional RLF grant recapitalizations.

Reporting

Quarterly Progress Reports: Using the Performance Progress Report (SF-PPR), each Recipient is required to provide quarterly progress reports beginning October 1, 2024. Quarterly reports will be required until all NBRC funds are disbursed by the grantee for loans. Reports are due as follows:

Reporting Period:	October 1 - December 31	Report Due by
	January 31	
Reporting Period:	January 1 - March 31	Report Due by
	April 30	
Reporting Period:	April 1 - June 30	Report Due by
	July 31	
Reporting Period:	July 1 - September 30	Report Due by
	October 30	

Annual Financial, Loan Portfolio, and Audit Reports: Following full disbursement of funds to the grantee, reports for RLF activities for any Federal fiscal year (October 1 through September 30) will be due on October 30. Reports will extend beyond project closeout until all resulting principal from loans has been paid in full back to the grantee or seven years after a Notice to Proceed has been issued, whichever is sooner.

Project Monitoring

- NBRC monitors RLF grant performance through required reports submitted by the grantee, audit findings, grantee site visits and other necessary contact with the grantee.
- Grantees are responsible for operating NBRC funded RLF's in accordance with the terms of the NBRC's statutory provisions (40 USC, Subtitle V), NBRC RLF Guidelines, the grant agreement and the grantee's RLF operating plan. RLF grants are held by the grantee as trustee for the benefit of borrowers and potential borrowers.
- Grantees may be required to repay NBRC the amount of NBRC RLF funds used in violation of the code, these guidelines, the grant agreement, or the grantee's operating plan.
- A grantee's failure to comply with these guidelines or the terms of the grant, including reporting requirements, may be cause for terminating the grant. When grants are terminated for cause, NBRC has the right to recover grant funds and/or the assets of the RLF project, in accordance with the legal rights of the grantee and the Commission.



APPENDIX J – GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Administrative Requirements: The general practices that are common to the administration of grants, such as financial accountability, reporting, equipment management, and retention of records.

Allocable Cost: A cost that is allocable to a particular cost objective (i.e., a specific function, grant project, service, department, or other activity) in accordance with the relative benefits received. A cost is allocable to a federal award where it is treated consistently with other costs incurred for the same purpose in like circumstances and (1) is incurred specifically for the award, (2) benefits both the award and other work and can be distributed in reasonable proportion to the benefits received, or (3) is necessary for the overall operation of the organization.

Allowable Cost: A cost incurred by a recipient that is: (1) reasonable for the performance of the award; (2) allocable; (3) in conformance with any limitations or exclusions set forth in the Federal cost principles applicable to the organization incurring the cost as to the type or amount of cost; (4) consistent with regulations, policies, and procedures of the recipient that are applied uniformly to both federally supported and other activities of the organization; (5) accorded consistent treatment as a direct or indirect cost; (6) determined in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles; and (7) not included as a cost in any other federally supported award (unless specifically authorized by statute).

Approved Budget: The financial expenditure plan for a grant-supported project, program, or activity, including revisions approved by the NBRC and permissible revisions made by the recipient. The approved budget consists of Federal (grant) funds. The approved project consists of an SF424cbw, Budget Narrative and a SF424a and SF424c for non-infrastructure projects or a SF424cbw, Budget Narrative and a SF424c and SF424d for construction projects. The approved budget is a contractual obligation that can only be changed by NBRC in writing through a Grant Agreement Amendment.

Build America, Buy America Act (BABAA): BABAA was enacted on November 15, 2021, and sets forth a domestic content procurement preference (“Buy American Preference” referred to as “BAP”) for iron and steel, manufactured products, and construction materials used for

infrastructure projects. infrastructure programs funded with Federal dollars, IIJA §70914(a) of Pub. L. 117-58, instructs Federal agencies to ensure that “none of the funds made available for a Federal financial assistance program for infrastructure, including each deficient program, may be obligated for a project unless all of the iron, steel, manufactured product, and construction materials used in the project are produced in the United States. As the NBRC routinely funds infrastructure projects BABAA governs future Northern Border Regional Commission (NBRC) infrastructure investments. See NBRC’s website for additional BABAA guidance.

Closeout: The process by which NBRC determines whether all applicable administrative actions and all work required under the award have been completed by the recipient and the awarding office.

Construction: “Construction” means construction in support of infrastructure, alteration, or repair (including dredging, excavating, and painting) of buildings, structures, or other real property. For purposes of this definition, the terms “buildings, structures, or other real property” include, but are not limited to, improvements of all types, such as bridges, dams, plants, highways, parkways, streets, subways, tunnels, sewers, mains, power lines, cemeteries, pumping stations, railways, airport facilities, terminals, docks, piers, wharves, ways, lighthouses, buoys, jetties, breakwaters, levees, canals, and channels. A project that includes planning and engineering when part of a larger construction implementation will be considered ‘construction’; a project solely made up of planning and/or engineering will not be considered ‘construction’.

Cooperative Agreement: A financial assistance support mechanism used when there will be substantial Federal programmatic involvement. Substantial involvement means that NBRC program staff will collaborate or participate in project or program activities as specified in the Notice of Award.

Cost Share: All other funds (other than NBRC award) that are necessary to complete the project.

Direct Costs: Costs that can be identified specifically with a particular project, an instructional activity, or any other institutional activity, or that can be directly assigned to such activities relatively easily with a high degree of accuracy.

Ecotourism: Focused on environmental protection, ecological conservation, poverty alleviation and educating on local environments and natural surroundings, creating minimal impact on people and the environment.

Entity Identification Number (EIN): A three-part coding scheme of 12 characters used to identify organizations and individuals. The first character identifies the recipient as an organization or an individual. The next 9 characters are the Internal Revenue Service tax number identification (TIN) for organizations or the social security number (SSN) for individuals. The last 2 characters are a suffix to provide distinction between organizational entities that are assigned a single EIN and those that have more than one EIN. The entities could be subsidiaries, divisions, branches, subdivisions, or other organizational groupings of a major organizational entity.

Equipment: An article of tangible nonexpendable personal property that has a useful life of more than 1 year and an acquisition cost of \$5,000 or more per unit or the capitalization threshold established by the recipient, whichever is less.

Federal Funds Authorized: The total amount of Federal funds obligated by the NBRC for use by the recipient.

Federal Share: The amount, generally expressed as a percentage of total project costs, of financial, property, and other direct assistance provided by the NBRC.

Funding Opportunity Announcement: NBRC's formally issued announcement of the availability of funding through its website and outreach efforts.

Indirect Costs: Costs that are incurred by a recipient for common or joint objectives and cannot be identified specifically with a particular project or program. These costs also are known as "facilities and administrative costs." The federally approved indirect cost rate, in place at time of application, will be the indirect cost rate for the entirety of the project. A range of indirect cost rates is not allowed, nor will the indirect cost rate be adjusted, up or down, during the lifecycle of the project.

Local Development District (LDDs): LDDs are either an already existing federally designated Economic Development District, as certified by the U.S. Economic Development Administration, or an established regional development organization, often established as a not-for-profit 501(c)(3)

entity that is organized and operated in a manner that ensures broad-based community participation to contribute to the development and implementation of programs in the region. LDDs are utilized in the administration of NBRC investments for grantees.

Match: The minimum amount of funds or contributions that needs to come from other sources to complete the NBRC funded project.

Multi-Jurisdictional Projects: Projects that both clearly identify multiple locations (i.e., municipalities, counties, states) together with budgets that demonstrate the activities and investments that will occur in each location. If the project documentation submitted does not clearly identify locations within the narrative and corresponding categories and amounts within the budget, the project will not be considered multi-jurisdictional.

Non Federal Share: The portion of allowable project costs not borne by the NBRC.

Obligations: The amounts of orders placed, contracts and subawards, goods and services received, and similar transactions by a recipient during a budget period that will require payment during the same or a future budget period.

Outlays or Expenditures: The charges made to the federally sponsored project or program.

Program Income: Gross income earned by a recipient that is directly generated by the grant-supported project, program, or activity or earned as a result of the award **and must be authorized by the grant agreement. Grantees must keep complete records to document program income.**

Project Period: The total time for which support of a project has been programmatically approved. The total project period comprises the initial competitive segment, any subsequent competitive segments resulting from a competing continuation award, and any non-competing extensions.

Real Property: Land, including land improvements, structures, and appurtenances, but not movable machinery and equipment.

Reasonable Cost: A cost whose nature or amount does not exceed that which would be incurred by a prudent person under the circumstances prevailing when the decision was made to incur the cost.

Recipient: The organization or individual that receives a grant or cooperative agreement award from NBRC and is responsible and accountable for the use of the funds provided and for the performance of the grant-supported project or activity. The recipient is the entire legal entity even if a particular component is designated in the Grant Agreement. The term includes "**grantee.**"

Significant Rebudgeting: A threshold that is reached when expenditures in a single direct cost budget category deviate (increase or decrease) from the approved budget amount for that budget category for that budget period by a specified amount. Significant rebudgeting is one indicator of change in scope.

Subaward: Financial assistance in the form of money or property in lieu of money provided under an award by a recipient to an eligible subrecipient (or by an eligible subrecipient to a lower tier subrecipient). The term includes financial assistance when provided by any legal agreement, even if the agreement is called a contract, but does not include either procurement of goods or services or, for purposes of this policy statement, any form of assistance other than grants and cooperative agreements. The term includes consortium agreements.

Subrecipient: An entity that receives a subaward from a recipient or another subrecipient under an award of financial assistance and is accountable to the recipient or other subrecipient for the use of the Federal funds provided by the subaward.

Supplies: Personal property other than equipment, intangible property, and debt instruments. The category of "supplies" includes items that could be considered equipment, but do not meet the threshold definition.

Sustainable Tourism: The aim of sustainable tourism is to increase the benefits while also minimizing negative impacts on the environmental and local communities caused by tourism for destinations. This can be achieved by: Protecting natural environments, wildlife and natural resources when developing and managing tourism activities.

Terms and Conditions: All legal requirements imposed on a grant by the NBRC, whether based on statute, regulation, policy, or other document referenced. In addition to general terms and conditions, the grant agreement may include other conditions that are considered necessary to

attain the award's objectives, facilitate post-award administration, conserve grant funds, or otherwise protect the Federal government's interests.

Underserved Communities: A community who suffers from a combination of economic, health and environmental burdens, including high unemployment and poverty, basic resources or conditions, such as standard housing, medical and educational facilities, and civil rights and vulnerable populations, including minority, low income, rural, tribal, indigenous, homeless, and limited English-speaking populations. See Appendix H for additional resources on identifying underserved communities in the NBRC region.

Unique Entity ID (UEI) number: The UEI is a 12-character alphanumeric ID assigned to an entity by SAM.gov. Entity registration, searching, and data entry in [SAM.gov](https://sam.gov) now require use of the new Unique Entity ID. Effective April 4, 2022, the identifier for the federal awards processes changed from the Data Universal Number System (DUNS) number to UEI.

Unallowable Cost: A cost specified by law or regulation, Federal cost principles, or term and condition of award that may not be reimbursed under a grant and may not be counted as cost share.

APPENDIX K – NBRC and STATE SCORING CRITERIA

NBRC CATALYST PROGRAM SCORING CRITERIA 50 POINTS MAXIMUM

NBRC SCORING CRITERIA #1: PROJECT READINESS	MAXIMUM POINTS
<p>This category reflects an applicant's ability to perform the proposed work within the 3-year award period and begin to draw down NBRC funds within 12 months of award. The applicant clearly demonstrates how far along the project is in the necessary planning, design, engineering, and state and local permitting processes including the completion of NEPA. Applicant accounts for feasible timelines for completion and includes a short summary of processes in progress or completed. The applicant shows attention to detail and provides a complete application. Applications with a detailed milestone schedule for completion of award outcomes will have a higher score than those that do not. Applicants describe the project need and the opportunity gained by funding this project now and/or lost by not funding it now. Projects of greater immediacy are given a higher score.</p>	10
POINTS ALLOCATION	
Planning and Design	0-2 points
Partnerships	0-2 points
Timeline and Milestone Schedule	0-2 points
Project need and opportunity	0-2 points
Immediacy and relevance	0-2 points
NBRC SCORING CRITERIA #2: PROJECT COSTS & MATCH	MAXIMUM POINTS
<p>Budgets and costs, including contingency for construction projects, are clear and reasonable. Project costs and match are clearly outlined. Project costs should include a detailed project budget that aligns with the project description. Project budget shows detailed costs and relevant cost estimates. Project timeline is feasible and supports timely project completion. Applicants must identify sources of match in the budget and detailed budget narrative. Applicants may provide or be asked to provide letters of commitment/support to confirm stated match contributions. Leveraged funds in addition to required match should also be described if applicable. Budget narrative should be aligned with the project description, provide brief justification for expenses over \$5,000, and if requesting the higher maximum for an infrastructure project, describe how the requested funds will be allocated across infrastructure categories.</p>	10
POINTS ALLOCATION	
Budget Narrative	0-4 points

Detailed Project Budget	0-2 points
Relevant Cost Estimates	0-2 points
Match/cost share to complete project clearly identified	0-2 points
NBRC SCORING CRITERIA #3: ALIGNMENT WITH AGENCY INVESTMENT PRIORITIES	
<p>This category reviews how projects fit within the NBRC strategic investment goals and program priorities. The applicant describes how the project meets NBRC investment priorities in the project summary. Projects will receive a higher score based on completeness of addressing relevant investment priorities outlined in the program materials. Points are awarded based on details provided in the project summary and provided documentation.</p> <p>1. Projects that provide direct benefits to communities that have been underrepresented in past NBRC investments. Priority will be given to projects that demonstrate direct benefits to rural communities with populations of less than 5,000 and underserved communities. NBRC identifies an underserved community as those who suffer from a combination of economic, health and environmental burdens, including high unemployment and poverty, basic resources or conditions, such as standard housing, medical and educational facilities, and civil rights and vulnerable populations, including minority, low income, rural, tribal, indigenous, homeless and limited English-speaking populations.</p> <p>2. Projects that address multiple needs across eligible infrastructure and non-infrastructure categories. Priority will be given to projects that demonstrate efficiencies gained from including multiple categories in one project. .</p> <p>3. Projects that adapt to changing climate conditions and extreme weather events. Priority will be given to projects that demonstrate how they help communities prevent, reduce, withstand, and/or improve recovery from climate related impacts and disasters.</p>	15
POINTS ALLOCATION	
Projects that support related regional, state, or local planning efforts will be awarded 1 point. Example plans include hazard mitigation plan, climate plan, equity action plan, or comprehensive plan.	0-1 points
Applicants who have not received a past NBRC award will be awarded 1 point.	0-1 points
<p>1. Agency Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Investment Priorities Project demonstrates benefits to underrepresented communities, including rural communities (population less than 5,000) and underserved communities.</p>	Up to 5 points total
NBRC will award points for qualitative description of how the project provides benefits to underrepresented communities in the region (1-2 points). Projects that back up their description with data or address community diversity, equity and inclusion strategies will receive the highest point value (3-4 points).	0-4 points
Points will be awarded for including letters of support that directly cites benefits to underrepresented communities. (0-1 points)	0-1 points
<p>2. Multiple Needs Investment Priority: Projects that address multiple needs across eligible infrastructure and non-infrastructure categories. Priority will be given to projects that demonstrate efficiencies gained from including multiple categories in one project. See NBRC Program Funding Categories for infrastructure and non-infrastructure</p>	Up to 5 points total

definitions.	
Infrastructure categories only. Project describes how multiple needs are met with the infrastructure project. Non-infrastructure categories only. Project describes how multiple needs are met with the non-infrastructure project.	0-2 points
Infrastructure categories only. Project demonstrates how efficiencies are gained from including multiple infrastructure categories or pairing infrastructure and non-infrastructure categories. Non-infrastructure categories only. Project demonstrates how efficiencies are gained from including multiple non-infrastructure categories or pairing non-infrastructure with infrastructure categories.	0-3 points
3. Community Resilience Investment Priority:	Up to 3 points total
Applicant demonstrates how project helps communities prevent, reduce, withstand, and/or improve recovery from climate related impacts and disasters.	0-1 points
Project is not located within a FEMA Flood Hazard Zone, or, if project is in a FEMA Flood Hazard Zone, project has described mitigation measures to protect from 1-percent-annual-chance flood.	0-1 points
Project clearly describes how identified actions measurably contribute to reducing carbon emissions. Examples for infrastructure projects may be use of materials and construction techniques, improving efficiency of water treatment plants, incorporation of alternative energy sources, or human powered transportation and recreation. Examples for non-infrastructure projects in support of existing workforces or increasing employment, could include workforce development and training in the fields of efficient, renewable, or clean energy, such as solar installation, green technologies for heating and cooling, and construction management.	0-1 points
NBRC SCORING CRITERIA #4: ECONOMIC IMPACTS	MAXIMUM POINTS
Projects will be reviewed for anticipated economic impact. Economic impacts should be consistent and, where possible, supported by feasibility studies, and/or local, state, or regional data. The project demonstrates it will have impacts such as job retention, job creation and/or wage growth within an identified timeframe. Applicants are encouraged to include narratives from local businesses, leaders, and government officials regarding anticipated economic impacts and the importance to larger economic development strategies.	10
POINTS ALLOCATION	
Jobs and employment impacts are described	0-3 points
Describes scale of impact for community, county, or region	0-3 points
Documentation provided to support expected impacts	0-4 points
NBRC SCORING CRITERIA #5: ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY	MAXIMUM POINTS
Applicants will be evaluated based on past performance for timely completion, collaboration, staff qualifications, and ability to meet program requirements.	5

<p>Applicant can identify specific grant-awarded projects they have completed or can demonstrate collaboration and relationships with other entities to ensure the project can meet program requirements and be completed in a timely manner. New applicants or applicants with no prior Federal award history will not be reviewed negatively. Describe roles and qualifications of staff and partners. Describe the partnerships to in place.</p>	
POINTS ALLOCATION	
<p>Describes organizational capacity including any partnerships with other entities to fill out expertise</p>	0-2 points
<p>Provides assessment of past performance</p>	0-1 points
<p>Provides description of roles and qualifications of project staff and partners</p>	0-1 points
<p>Early outreach to LDD</p>	0-1 points

MAINE CATALYST PROGRAM SCORING CRITERIA
50 POINTS MAXIMUM

CRITERIA		MAX POINTS	SCALE		
Project Impact on Maine's NBRC Priorities and Regional Relevance	Project's significance in meeting Maine NBRC Priorities: Infrastructure to support Economic Development (Water, Wastewater, Transportation, Broadband), Tourism, Workforce Development/Attraction, Innovation/Entrepreneurship, and Renewable Energy/Climate Resiliency. Overall, the project is regionally relevant with substantial economic development impacts as compared to other projects.	15	0-15 Points. Review considerations include: impact on Maine NBRC funding priority area, synergy with current regional and statewide initiatives, geographic distribution of grants, and regional relevance as compared with other projects.		
Alignment with Maine's 10-Year Economic Development Strategy: www.maine.gov/decd/strategic-plan	Project clearly aligns with one of the strategies of Maine's Economic Development Strategy. Please note that a project may align with one of Action(s) within these Strategies. A project that aligns with more than one Action (or more than one Strategy) will receive higher points.	5	Weak: 0-1 points Project does not indicate impact/ or has limited alignment with Action(s) from Maine's 10-Year Economic Development Strategy.	Fair: 2-3 points Project moderately aligns with Action(s) from Maine's 10-Year Economic Development Strategy.	Strong: 4-5 points Project greatly aligns with multiple Actions from Maine's 10-Year Economic Development Strategy.
Economic Development	Project supports the economic development of a municipality or region; project will help existing businesses thrive or help to attract new industry to	5	Weak: 0-1 points Project does not support the economic	Fair: 2-3 points Project has moderate impact on the	Strong: 4-5 points Project has significant

	the area. Projects that are specific about the economic impact of the project will receive more points. Projects that leverage private investment or show collaboration with businesses with receive more points.		development of a municipality or region; application does not address this criteria	economic development of a municipality or region; application addresses this criteria	or strong economic development impacts and/or, project will result in new businesses /new industries coming to the area. 5 points awarded if private industry investment is supplied as project match.
Workforce. Project will support the creation, retention, or attraction of quality jobs; or project will attract talent/workforce to areas of Maine that need it	Project clearly demonstrates commitment to job creation with evidence that jobs will be created or retained as a direct result of the investment; or project will attract new workers to areas of Maine and industries that need more workers (with evidence of this need).	10	Weak: 0-3 points Project does not indicate impact/or has little impact on Maine's workforce.	Fair: 4-7 points Project moderately strengthens the workforce.	Strong: 8-10 points Project greatly strengthens the workforce.
Project Quality and Collaboration. Project readiness/Budget/Commitment of matching funds/Sustainable project/Capacity of organization to execute work plan/collaboration with other groups and efforts	Project can begin immediately, budget is clearly developed with matching funds identified; project is sustainable with clearly identified measurable results/goals, applicant and partners demonstrate capacity to execute project and achieve milestones; project aligns/collaborate with other efforts and partners.	15	Weak: 0-4 points Applicant does not indicate or has made little progress towards project readiness, collaboration, and capacity.	Fair: 5-10 points Applicant has made some progress towards project readiness, collaboration, and capacity.	Strong: 11-15 points Applicant has fully prepared or made significant progress towards project readiness, collaboration

					on, and capacity.
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**NEW HAMPSHIRE CATALYST PROGRAM SCORING CRITERIA
50 POINTS MAXIMUM**

CRITERIA	DESCRIPTION	MAXIMUM POINTS
Alignment with local, regional and/or state strategic plans	The project advances objectives within NH’s Economy Recovery and Expansion Strategy (ERES), your region’s Comprehensive Economy Development Strategy (CEDS), comparable regional strategy or plan, and/or your town’s Master Plan or other local plan.	10
Project aligns with one or more of NH’s NBRC priorities	Project addresses one or more of NH’s NBRC priorities: Economic Development, Public Infrastructure, Tourism, Outdoor Recreation (outdoor infrastructure and general business retention/recruitment), Workforce Development/Attraction, Innovation and Entrepreneurship, and Renewable Energy/Climate Resiliency that supports economic development.	10
Project will directly or indirectly support the creation, retention, or expansion of quality jobs in key industry clusters or emerging industry clusters in your region; or in any industry in a community or region with high unemployment	Project clearly demonstrates a commitment to contributing to a workforce development ecosystem that creates or retains jobs and/or how the project will attract new workers to areas of NH and industries that need more workers.	10
Leverages existing local and regional resources and assets to promote economic growth	Project utilizes its region’s human, natural, cultural, educational and/or economic assets to strengthen the local economy.	5
Funding need	Applicant can demonstrate that NBRC funding is necessary to move the project forward.	5
Project Readiness	Project is ready to begin immediately; planning activities are complete, and all match funding is secured.	5
Demonstrates organizational capacity to implement and sustain project	Applicant presents an actionable workplan, a realistic budget, and demonstrates organizational capacity for project management and sustainability.	5

**NEW YORK CATALYST PROGRAM SCORING CRITERIA
50 POINTS MAXIMUM**

CRITERIA	5 POINTS	3 POINTS	1 POINT	0 POINTS
Financial Need	NBRC funds are critical to project completion and make up a significant share of project cost.	NBRC funds are critical to project completion or make up a significant share of project cost.	NBRC funds will have minimal impact on the ability to complete the project.	Project will be completed without NBRC funding.
Project Need and Significance of Community Impact	Project need and community impact is significant	Project need or community impact is significant	Project need and/or community impact is limited	Applicant did not answer, or information cannot be found
Support of applicable Regional Economic Development Council	Project has received a letter of support from REDC	Project supports a specific REDC strategy	Project generally supports REDC plan	Project is inconsistent with an REDC plan
Project Link to Downtowns, Existing Community Centers, or Identified Growth Areas	Project is located in a downtown or community center and is identified as a key objective in a local government's comprehensive plan	Project is located in a downtown or community center and is generally consistent with a local government's comprehensive plan	Project is located outside of a downtown or community center, but creates a linkage to a downtown or connects it to a nearby amenity/asset	Project has no effective on a downtown or community center
Project Sustainability	Application provides clear evidence that the project is sustainable, with clear and long-term measurable goals	Project sustainability is evident, but the goals are unclear or not measurable	Application is unclear about the project's long-term sustainability	Applicant did not answer, or information cannot be found
Regional Impact	Project will have an impact across multiple counties	Project will have an impact across multiple municipalities within a county	Project will impact a single municipality	Applicant did not answer, or information cannot be found

Support for Workforce Development, Entrepreneurship and Emerging Economic Opportunities	Project is a creative, new approach to support workforce and business development in STEM related fields or other emerging opportunities	Project is a creative or new approach to support workforce and business development	Project generally supports workforce training or business development.	Applicant did not answer, or information cannot be found
Development of Community Infrastructure or Assets Critical for Sustainable Development	Project will develop new community infrastructure or assets.	Project is a new effort to leverage existing community infrastructure or assets.	Project enhances existing efforts to leverage community infrastructure or assets.	Applicant did not answer, or information cannot be found
0-10 Points				
Project Significance in meeting New York State priorities?	Review considerations include: the geographic distribution of grants; the uniqueness of the project as reviewed against project applications; the ability of the project to serve as a model for future projects; and the impact on current regional and statewide initiatives.			

VERMONT CATALYST PROGRAM SCORING CRITERIA
50 POINTS MAXIMUM

SCORING CRITERIA	MAX POINTS	SCALE		
<p>1. Project expands/ supports/ retains Vermont's skilled workforce. <i>(Note: question will not be evaluated solely on quantity of jobs, etc., rather score will be relative to the impact of project size.)</i></p> <p><i>Applicant may use a variety of indicators to demonstrate workforce impact. Indicators may include:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - training of existing employees/ workforce development - adding jobs/ job opportunities - offering business development - wage growth 	0-10	<p>Weak: 0-3 points Project does not indicate impact/ or has little impact on how it will strengthen the workforce in Vermont.</p>	<p>Fair: 4-7 points Project moderately strengthens the workforce in Vermont.</p>	<p>Strong: 8-10 points Project greatly strengthens the workforce in Vermont.</p>
<p>2. Project invests in infrastructure that provides long-term community and economic impacts. <i>Applicant should demonstrate how the project may positively affect the State of Vermont infrastructure. Eligible NBRC infrastructure costs may include:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - transportation infrastructure - basic public infrastructure - telecommunication infrastructure - renewable and alternative energy investments 	0-10	<p>Weak: 0-3 points Project does not indicate impact/ or has little impact on infrastructure in Vermont.</p>	<p>Fair: 4-7 points Project moderately strengthens/ positively impacts on infrastructure in Vermont.</p>	<p>Strong: 8-10 points Project greatly strengthens/ positively impacts on infrastructure in Vermont.</p>
<p>3. Project is ready to begin/ Applicant indicates sufficient readiness. <i>Applicant may use a variety of indicators to indicate project readiness and the ability to begin the project. Indicators may include:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - project implementation 	0-5	<p>Weak: 0-1 points Applicant does not indicate or has made little progress towards project readiness.</p>	<p>Fair: 2-3 points Applicant has made some progress towards project readiness.</p>	<p>Strong: 4-5 points Applicant has completed or made significant progress on towards</p>

<p><i>strategy/ plan</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - clear articulation of a project’s goals and objectives for the funding - progress towards securing match funding - applicant has clear support from community/ has collaborated with community members, development corporations, ACCD/NBRC/DED staff - Vermont-specific permits (including environmental approvals) 				<p>project readiness.</p>
<p>4. Is the project located within or directly benefiting an opportunity zone, state designated downtown, or village center?</p> <p><i>For additional information, please visit:</i> https://accd.vermont.gov/OpportunityZones https://accd.vermont.gov/community-development/designation-programs</p>	<p>0-5</p>	<p>Weak: 0-1 points The project is not located within or does not directly benefit an opportunity zone, state designated downtown, or village center. OR The project has no or little positive impact on an opportunity zone, state designated downtown, or village center.</p>	<p>Fair: 2-3 points The project is located outside but directly benefits an opportunity zone, state designated downtown, or village center. OR The project has a positive impact on an opportunity zone, state designated downtown, or village center.</p>	<p>Strong: 4-5 points The project is located within or directly benefits an opportunity zone, state designated downtown, or village center. OR The project has a strong positive impact on an opportunity zone, state designated downtown, or village center.</p>
<p>5. Project is a priority of the region as identified with the input of ACCD, RDC, and RPC partners though the "Regional Project Prioritization Lists".</p> <p><i>The Applicant project is listed and aligned with the Regional Project Prioritization Lists (https://accd.vermont.gov/econ</i></p>	<p>0-10</p>	<p>Assign the following based on ranking on the Regional Project Prioritization Lists:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Priority 1 = 10 points Priority 2 = 9 points Priority 3 = 8 points Priority 4 = 7 points Priority 5 = 6 points Priority 6 = 5 points Priority 7 = 4 points Priority 8 = 3 points 		

<p><i>omic-development/funding-incentives/Northern-Border-Regional-Commission).</i></p>		<p>Priority 9 = 2 points Priority 10 = 1 point</p> <p>Statewide/ multiple region project on the priority list = 2 points</p> <p>Note: The Spring funding round will use the December RPP list, and the Fall funding round will use the May RPP list.</p>		
<p>6. Project supports and contributes to the priority that projects be transformational, attract new businesses or retain existing businesses, be geographically distributed across the state, and encourage capital investment and economic growth.</p> <p><i>Applicants may use a variety of indicators to indicate transformational impacts. Indicators may include:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - regional impacts on workforce development - supply chain improvements - adding stability to local areas with fragile economic conditions - a sector-wide impact that other businesses will be able to benefit from 	<p>0-10</p>	<p>Weak: 0-3 points Project does not indicate/ or has little impact beyond immediate economic impacts of job and wage growth (little transformational impact).</p>	<p>Fair: 4-7 points The project has moderate impacts beyond immediate economic impacts of job and wage growth (moderate transformational impact).</p>	<p>Strong: 8-10 points The project has significant or strong impacts beyond immediate economic impacts of job and wage growth (significant transformational impact).</p>