



Northern Border
Regional Commission

NBRC GRANT PROGRAMS OVERVIEW 7-PART SERIES

Updated January 2026



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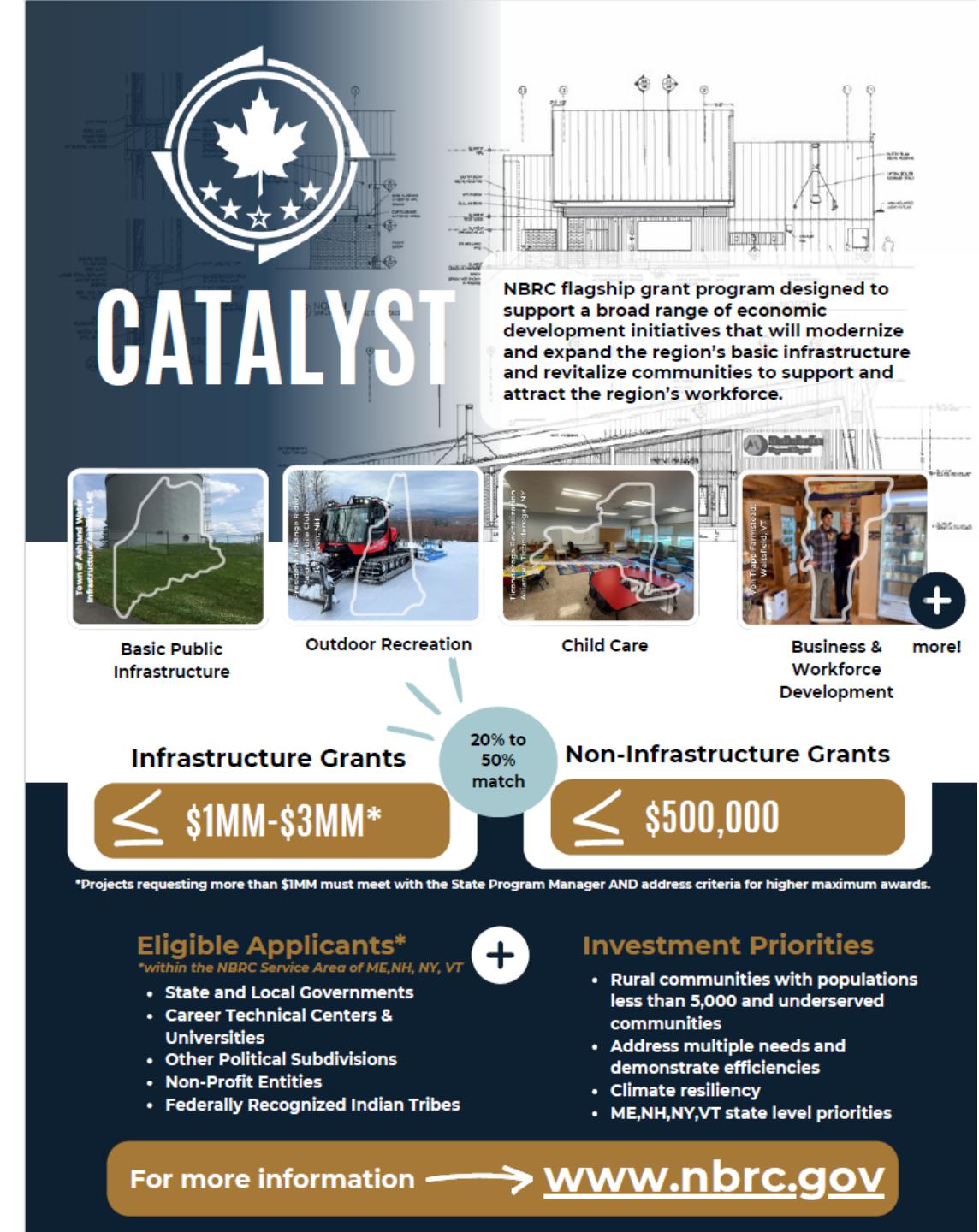
NBRC PROGRAMS OVERVIEW: PART 5

Catalyst Grant Program

Updated January 2026

Catalyst Grant Program

- **Purpose**
- **Funds Available**
- **Program Eligible Purposes & Priorities**
- **Pre-Application Process & Evaluation**
- **Catalyst Program Information Session**



The image is a screenshot of the NBRC Catalyst Grant Program landing page. At the top, there is a circular logo featuring a white maple leaf and five stars, set against a background of architectural blueprints. Below the logo, the word "CATALYST" is written in large, bold, white letters. To the right of the logo, a text box describes the program as a "NBRC flagship grant program designed to support a broad range of economic development initiatives that will modernize and expand the region's basic infrastructure and revitalize communities to support and attract the region's workforce." Below this, there are four categories with corresponding images: "Basic Public Infrastructure" (a water tower), "Outdoor Recreation" (a snowmobile), "Child Care" (a classroom), and "Business & Workforce Development" (two people in a office). A "more!" button with a plus sign is located to the right of the Business & Workforce Development image. In the center, there are two large orange buttons: one for "Infrastructure Grants" (≤ \$1MM-\$3MM*) and one for "Non-Infrastructure Grants" (≤ \$500,000). A callout bubble indicates a "20 to 50% match" for Infrastructure Grants. At the bottom, there is a section for "Eligible Applicants" (State and Local Governments, Career Technical Centers & Universities, Other Political Subdivisions, Non-Profit Entities, Federally Recognized Indian Tribes) and "Investment Priorities" (Rural communities with populations less than 5,000 and underserved communities, Address multiple needs and demonstrate efficiencies, Climate resiliency, ME,NH,NY,VT state level priorities). A footer at the bottom right provides a link to "www.nbrc.gov".

CATALYST

Basic Public Infrastructure

Outdoor Recreation

Child Care

Business & Workforce Development

20 to 50% match

≤ \$1MM-\$3MM*

≤ \$500,000

*Projects requesting more than \$1MM must meet with the State Program Manager AND address criteria for higher maximum awards.

Eligible Applicants*

*within the NBRC Service Area of ME,NH,NY,VT

- State and Local Governments
- Career Technical Centers & Universities
- Other Political Subdivisions
- Non-Profit Entities
- Federally Recognized Indian Tribes

Investment Priorities

- Rural communities with populations less than 5,000 and underserved communities
- Address multiple needs and demonstrate efficiencies
- Climate resiliency
- ME,NH,NY,VT state level priorities

For more information → www.nbrc.gov



Catalyst Grant Program Purpose

The purpose of this program is ***to stimulate economic growth and inspire partnerships that improve rural economic vitality*** across the four-state NBRC region.



Grant Funding Available

NBRC anticipates making a minimum of \$30MM available

- Funds will be available in both spring and fall rounds
- Funds are distributed equally across 4 states
- All awards are subject to availability of funds
- Upon completion of the Fiscal Year 2026 appropriations process, additional funds may be made available through a revised Catalyst Program announcement.



Program Eligible Purposes

Proposed projects must focus on one of six project categories:

- Basic Public Infrastructure
- Transportation Infrastructure
- Telecommunications Infrastructure
- Business and Workforce Development
- Basic Healthcare
- Resource Conservation, Tourism and Recreation

Proposed projects that do not align with an eligible purpose may be reclassified or deemed ineligible during pre-application review.



Catalyst Project Classification

1. Identify Eligible Purpose
2. Classify by Grant Type based on definitions and requirements
 - Implementation Grant
 - Feasibility Grant
3. Determine Maximum Award Size based on combination of Eligible Purpose and Grant Type
 - Implementation Maximum: \$500,000-\$3,000,000
 - Feasibility Maximum: \$100,000

*For additional information and examples of eligible activities that fit under each of the program eligible purposes, see the **Program User Manual Part 2A** and **Appendix X. Project Classification Details – Definitions, Criteria and Examples***

Eligible Purpose Category	Implementation Grant	Maximum Request	Feasibility Grant	Maximum Request
Transportation Infrastructure	Requires 50%+ of project costs in construction category.	\$1,000,000	Early stage planning activities and technical assistance in support of infrastructure.	\$100,000
Basic Public Infrastructure	Requires 50%+ of project costs in construction category. Includes Basic Healthcare and Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure	\$1,000,000	Early stage planning activities and technical assistance in support of infrastructure.	\$100,000
Telecommunications Infrastructure	Requires 50%+ of project costs in construction category.	\$1,000,000	Early stage planning activities and technical assistance in support of infrastructure.	\$100,000
Multi-Jurisdiction Infrastructure	Requires construction of infrastructure in multiple jurisdictions. Requires 50%+ of project costs in construction category. Requires approval from State Program	\$3,000,000	Early stage planning activities and technical assistance in support of infrastructure.	\$100,000

Eligible Purpose Category	Implementation Grant	Maximum Request	Feasibility Grant	Maximum Request
Multi-Category Infrastructure	<p>Requires construction of 2 or more infrastructure categories.</p> <p>Requires 50%+ of project costs in construction category.</p> <p>Requires approval from State Program.</p>	\$3,000,000	Early stage planning activities and technical assistance in support of infrastructure.	\$100,000
Business and Workforce Development	Construction or non-construction activities.	\$5000,000	Not applicable	-
Basic Healthcare	<p>Construction or non-construction activities.</p> <p>Construction of Basic Healthcare facilities eligible as infrastructure.</p>	\$500,000	Not applicable	-
Resource Conservation, Tourism and Recreation	<p>Construction or non-construction activities.</p> <p>Construction of Outdoor Recreation trails and facilities eligible as infrastructure.</p>	\$500,000	Not applicable	-



Program Priorities

All projects must be consistent with the economic development goals of the region and advance a combination of NBRC and member state investment priorities.

Understanding State Program Priorities:

- Review State Scoring Criteria in the Catalyst Program User Manual
- Self-evaluate proposed project against state scoring criteria
- Discuss project with State Program Manager



Program Priorities

Understanding NBRC Agency Investment Priorities:

- Review NBRC Scoring Criteria in the Catalyst Program User Manual
- Identify opportunities to address NBRC Agency Investment Priorities in proposed project

1. Demonstrate direct impacts on the local, state or region's economy and communities including job creation, retention or leveraged private funds.
2. Directly benefit rural communities with populations of less than 5,000 people and/or directly benefit underserved communities.
3. Contribute to community resilience.



Pre-Application Process & Evaluation

Pre-applications

- Required to apply
- Due before 5:00pm on due date. Program Timeline can be found [here](#)
- Must be submitted using NBRC's online Grants Management System (GMS)
- All waiver requests must be submitted with pre-applications

Evaluation

- Reviewed by NBRC for eligibility
- Reviewed by state programs for alignment with state priorities
- Invitations to apply are issued by the state programs

All pre-application details will be covered in the program session!



Catalyst Program Information Sessions

Program Information Sessions:

- See [NBRC Events page](#) for available Program Information Session dates and recordings
- Live Sessions will be recorded and made available on the [Pre-Application Support page](#).



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Thank you