



Department of Economic Development – Economic Recovery Division
Community Information Session – FAQ

REVISED 10/20/2023

v.8

On August 29, 2023, the Department of Economic Development (“DED”) held a Community Information Session regarding the North and South Omaha Recovery Grant Program (“NSORG”). Below are the written responses to the various questions DED received regarding NSORG. NSORG is divided into 8 sub-programs:

- Small Business Support Grants
 - RAPID Grants
 - Recovery Housing Grants
 - Sports and Tourism Grants
 - Arts, Culture, and Social Assistance Grants
 - Entrepreneur and Innovation Grants
 - Youth, Talent, and Workforce Development Grants
 - Placemaking Infrastructure Grants Applicants
1. DED states that it will contact small businesses. How long should the small businesses wait before contacting DED directly?
 - a. DED will directly contact small businesses eligible for the NSORG – Small Business Support Program. DED intends to make initial contact with these businesses no later than close of business, Thursday, August 31, 2023.
 2. Who are the eligible small businesses for the NSORG – Small Business Support Program?
 - a. Eligible small businesses include those organizations listed in the Coordination Plan (including Appendices) issued by the Economic Recovery Special Committee of the Legislature on January 10, 2023. These businesses must also meet the definition of a small business as defined by the U.S. Small Business Association. (<https://www.sba.gov/blog/does-your-small-business-qualify>)
 3. Can DED explain the bullet referencing \$30M for Placemaking Infrastructure grants?
 - a. To qualify for Placemaking Infrastructure grants the applicant’s project must address the creation and revitalization of public spaces. The project must promote at least one of the following: improved health outcomes and safety, increased access to healthy food, beautification, food deserts, multipronged development, OR be a project that is listed in the Coordination Plan that has requested more than \$30M.
 4. When will applications go live?

- a. Application go live dates will be posted on the website and will be accompanied by a Press Release. The first round of applications is expected to go live within the week. Remaining applications will go live on a rolling basis. DED recommends that the community sign up for notices of DED’s Press Releases to get the latest information.
(<https://nebraska.us6.listmanage.com/subscribe?u=a27da2a66c6ea0c3e288a8400&id=9d180b460f>)
 - b. It is the intent of DED to have all applications open for 30 days, and the application questions will mirror Olsson’s application. However, DED will have additional questions that the applicant will need to complete.
5. The community is aware that DED has been having conversations with individuals and businesses throughout the community regarding the distribution of grant funding. It is also the understanding that DED has allocated some of the grant funds to those individuals and businesses and has not disclosed those commitments. Who are those individuals and businesses that DED has met with?
 - a. No money has been allocated or distributed to any individual or business. DED has had constant contact with individuals and businesses in both North and South Omaha about how the funds would be utilized and benefit the community. DED does not maintain a list of the individuals and businesses spoken to. Applications will be scored and vetted in a standardized, transparent process. DED maintains that its integrity and responsibility to the community is of the utmost importance, any known actions to commit fraud, waste, or abuse related to this program and/or operations administered by DED should be reported immediate. Such reports will remain anonymous and can be submitted here, <https://opportunity.nebraska.gov/programs/recovery/arpa-form/>.
6. What does catalyst mean?
 - a. The Coordination Plan defined a Catalyst Project as, “During the evaluation, the Project Team reviewed and considered each proposal individually. They used a secondary spatial evaluation to gain additional insights on complementary or potentially collaborative proposals within specific geographies to help create mutually supportive and sustainable outcomes. For each of these focus areas, the team identified specific projects that may catalyze secondary or ongoing investments. These catalyst projects scored exceptionally high in the defined metrics regarding economic impact and/or overall dynamic index. They also exhibited transformational qualities due to scope or breadth of impact. They stood out as most likely to attract secondary actions or projects to enhance the total outcome of the initial investment.”
7. How did DED determine the various categories of the NSORG Program, and how much is designated for each of the categories?
 - a. DED reviewed the proposals in the Coordination Plan to create the NSORG Program. DED designed multiple categories to maximize the impact to the community. The rationale for each category is described in the NSORG Program Manual Section 3.3.2. DED has not yet designated the amount of funding for each of the categories.

8. The proposals in the Coordination Plan were scored. Does that score impact DED's decision to award an applicant grant funding?
 - a. Although the Coordination Plan scored/weighted proposals, DED's grant program is entirely an independent process. DED will take into consideration applicant's economic impact score only. DED has developed standardized, transparent scoring criteria that will be applied to all applications.

9. If a project spans across more than one sub-program, can applicant apply to each?
 - a. No. Applicants cannot submit the same project in multiple categories. However, Applicants can apply in multiple categories so long as the projects differ from one another. Applicants may submit each project to only one of the eight funding categories. Applicants must choose which funding category best suits its project and apply accordingly.

10. The community is unaware how the scoring in the Coordination Plan was done. There are questions as to why proposals received the score indicated. Can DED provide the statutory law that aligns with the scoring process.
 - a. The development, review, scoring of proposals, and finalization of the Coordination Plan was completed solely by the Economic Recovery Special Committee of the Legislature. DED was not involved in any process involving the Coordination Plan and cannot speak to any statutory law, if at all, that may apply to how the scoring process was handled. The Coordination Plan outlines the methodology for proposal applications and evaluation starting on pg. 11. Any questions regarding the development of the Coordination Plan should be directed to the Economic Recovery Special Committee of the Legislature.

11. DED's application process for the NSORG Program is completely different than the application process for grants involving CARES Act funds. Can DED explain why the process has changed?
 - a. The grants involving CARES Act funds involved federal statutory, rules, and regulations. As a result, these grants funds were administered according to the rules and regulations of the CARES Act. The funding provided for the NSORG Program is from State of Nebraska Cash Funds. Therefore, DED has designed this application process to ensure that the State Funding is being used in accordance with the State Law, and the vision for increased economic development of Nebraska Communities.

12. If a project was not recommended in the Coordination Plan, can it apply for funding under the NSORG Program?
 - a. Yes, all projects listed in the Coordination Plan and its appendixes may apply.

13. Olsson used the Harvey Ball Scoring System. Can DED explain the Harvey Ball Scoring System and the considerations taken to score the proposals accordingly? Will a low score within the Olsson plan have an impact on the DED's application?
 - a. Please see the answer to Questions 8 and 10.

14. Can DED provide a contact for the City of Omaha?

- a. Yes. Keith Station, Deputy Chief of Staff for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, at 402-444-5054. Mr. Station is listed as a contact only. Letters of support will need to be approved by the Mayor and her Chief Staff. Mr. Station will direct calls as necessary.
15. I am unable to attend the community informational session about the grant opportunities for North and South Omaha. Is there any way you can send a recap of the meeting? If unable to attend the informational meeting today, will there be information or transcript of the discussions?
- a. The slides from the Community Informational Session held on Tuesday, August 29, 2023 have been made available on the NSORG website in the [Program Resources](#) section. Additionally, all questions and answers provided during the informational session have been summarized in this FAQ document. The informational session provided an overview of the NSORG application process. Comprehensive information about the NSORG application process can be found in the NSORG Program Manual, which is likewise available in the Program Resources section of the NSORG website.
16. Will there be a rubric provided to identify how scores will be calculated? This will provide opportunity for people to emphasize in areas of high importance. Is that possible?
- a. Scoring criteria, including weighted areas of emphasis, can be found in section 5 of the NSORG Program Manual. Applications will be evaluated to determine if they meet eligibility criteria and minimum qualifications. Applications that do not pass this threshold review will be disqualified from further consideration. Applications that pass threshold review will be scored by a committee based on the scoring criteria in the NSORG Program Manual. Awards will be determined by the review committee.

Grant applications for the following funding categories will not be competitively scored.

- i. RAPID Grants: RAPID Grants will be awarded to all applicants that meet the crosscutting grant funding restrictions in Section 3.3.1 and specific funding category restrictions outlined in Section 3.3.2 of the Program Manual.
- ii. Small Business Support Grants: To ensure transparency and a fair evaluation process, Small Business Support Grants (SBSG) operate with and unique approach. Unlike other programs, SBSG will not be scored in the traditional manner. Instead, all eligible applicants included in the Coordination Plan and Appendices will have an opportunity to participate. Applications submitted under Small Business Support Program will undergo an Economic Impact Analysis, which will be conducted to determine the appropriate funding amount for each business.
- iii. Arts, Culture, & Social Assistance Grants: Arts, Culture, & Social Assistance Grants will be awarded to all Applicants that meet the crosscutting grant funding restrictions in Section 3.3.1 and specific funding category restrictions outlined in Section 3.3.2 of the Program Manual.

17. Is the application only open to organizations that submitted a previous application, through the Olsson process last year?

- a. The North & South Omaha Recovery Grant Program grant application will be open to public and private entities. In addition, to be eligible for a grant under the NSORG, a project must be listed in the Coordination Plan or Appendices by the Economic Recovery Special Committee of the Legislature dated January 10, 2023. A copy of the plan can be found here: <https://www.nebraskalegislature.gov/reports/econrec.php>

All proposals submitted to the Economic Recovery Special Committee of the Legislature through Olsson are listed in either the Coordination Plan or the Appendices.

18. Do you know when funds will become available?

- a. Awards will be made on a rolling basis starting in late September and continuing through the end of 2023. After an Award is made, DED issues an electronic copy of the North & South Omaha Recovery Grant Program Award Agreement via DocuSign. The North & South Omaha Recovery Grant Program Award Agreement is entered into between DED and the Recipient. Upon execution of the Award Agreement, funds will be disbursed to recipients as outlined in Section 6.3 of the NSORG Program Manual.

19. What will be the end date for project expenditures? Previously we understood that projects needed to be completed in 2026. Will that be extended into 2027?

- a. LB 531 amended provisions of LB 1024 regarding the expenditure of funds under the NSORG Program. Previously, Nebraska statute required funds to be expended by December 31, 2026, in accordance with federal funding requirements. Now, under LB 531, grant funds must be expended by December 31, 2027.

20. Will any priority or additional points be awarded for proposals that commit matching funds?

- a. No priority or additional points will be awarded for proposals that commit matching funds. However, feasibility and financial sustainability will be taken into consideration when reviewing projects, as outlined in Section 5 of the NSORG Program Manual.

21. For a RAPID applicant, do applicants have an opportunity to modify their application?

- a. To be eligible for a grant under the NSORG, a project must be listed in the Coordination Plan or Appendices by the Economic Recovery Special Committee of the Legislature dated January 10, 2023. A copy of the Plan can be found here: <https://www.nebraskalegislature.gov/reports/econrec.php>

DED understands that some details may have changed between an Applicant's submission of project details to the Economic Recovery Special Committee of the Legislature and today. As such, Applicants are encouraged to update their proposals to reflect current project realities. The DED application will allow Applicants an opportunity to provide updated responses to application questions.

22. Do Applicants have the option of increasing their request amount from their original application to the Special Committee of the Legislature?

- a. Applications for NSORG funds may not exceed the amount requested for each respective project listed in the Coordination Plan (or Appendices) of the Economic Recovery Special Committee of the Legislature dated January 10, 2023.

This restriction does not apply to projects that originally requested less than \$250,000. Such projects may request up to a maximum of \$250,000.

23. Can applicants that have received Shovel Ready funding utilize potential NSORG funding for the same project?

- a. Yes. Please review the Shovel Ready Program Manual, Section 3.3.1 Shovel-Ready Capital Investments Program Grant Recipients: Any Awardee of the Shovel-Ready program may receive no more than \$2,000,000.00 in NSORG grant funds cumulatively across all NSORG awards.

24. Can DED advise or set a meeting with applicants to advise them on which program to apply under?

- a. DED cannot advise applicants on which program category to apply. Please carefully review the NSORG Program Manual to determine which program is the best fit for your project.

25. I am unable to attend the North Omaha Community Meeting and Summit on September 9, 2023. Will DED provide a summary of the information shared?

- a. The North Omaha Community Meeting and Summit scheduled for September 9, 2023 is not an event sponsored or approved by DED. All DED sponsored events will be communicated directly from the agency. DED plans to provide the community with additional information about the NSORG Program, and will release information via social media, email, and DED's website.

26. Can you apply in more than one category?

- a. Applicants cannot submit the same project in multiple categories. However, applicants can apply in multiple categories so long as the projects differ from one another. Only the first application submitted for a single project will be considered. Each organization will be awarded up to a maximum of 2 NSORG Grants.

27. Who is eligible to apply?

- a. Proposals that were listed in the Coordination Plan (including Appendices) issued by the Economic Recovery Special Committee of the Legislature on January 10, 2023

28. So, if I did not apply last year, and I am not in the Olsson Plan, then I can't participate in this?

- a. If a project is not listed in the Coordination Plan or Appendices (the "Olsson Plan"), it will not be considered for funding in the NSORG program.

29. Can you explain the difference between a small business grant and entrepreneurship and innovation category?
- a. Please refer to the NSORG Program Manual, section 3.3.2 for a comprehensive description of the funding categories. In summary, Small Business Support Grants directly benefit for-profit enterprises by providing grant funds to help small businesses grow their business. Entrepreneurship & Innovation (E&I) grants, on the other hand, benefit organizations that provide support to small businesses and entrepreneurs, such as CDFIs, incubators, and technical assistance providers. E&I grants will not be directly granted to a small business, but instead enable organizations to provide support to small businesses.
30. Doesn't "a letter from the mayor's office" under sports and tourism become rather political?
- a. DED recognizes that the success, sustainability, and impact of projects involving a sports park, recreation area, or athletic facility depend on local support and community-wide buy-in. As a result, DED is requiring that any project considered a sports park, recreation area, or athletic facility must come from the City of Omaha or obtain a letter of support for the specific grant proposal from the Mayor's office.
31. Isn't Omaha a city of the Metropolitan class?
- a. Yes. Omaha is a city of the Metropolitan class.
32. Does your new project application have to be the same project that you previously applied for, or can it be a different project but the same amount?
- a. Per Legislative Bill 531, only projects that were in the Coordination Plan and Appendices ("Olsson Plan") may be considered for NSORG grant funds. Applicants may not change the project, although DED recognizes that the details of some projects may have changed. **See FAQ #21.**
33. Why can you not increase the amount of your project? The cost of construction and parts have increased due to inflation and other contributors.
- a. The Economic Recovery Special Committee of the Legislature received over \$3 billion of requests in the Coordination Plan and Appendices. Due to the limited amount of funding available, DED is requiring applicants to limit their requests to be less than or equal to the original proposal in the Coordination Plan and Appendices.
34. Will my project be disqualified if I increase the amount requested?
- a. DED will only award a project up to the maximum allowable grant request. If an applicant requests more than the amount that was originally requested, as listed in the Coordination Plan and Appendices, DED will be unable to meet the full grant request amount. As a result, DED may consider the project financially unfeasible or unsustainable, which could negatively impact the scoring review of a project.
35. Can we submit a new application as a different entity, or do we have to apply as the original entity even though it is the same project?
- a. LB 531 limits eligibility for NSORG grants to proposals that are listed in the Coordination Plan and Appendices. If a proposal is submitted by a different entity

than the entity listed in the Coordination Plan and Appendices, DED will still consider the application. However, if multiple entities apply for the same project, DED will give preference to the entity listed in the Coordination Plan and Appendices as the lead applicant for that project.

36. Would projects spanning multiple categories apply under placemaking?
 - a. Placemaking Infrastructure projects can include multipronged developments. Multipronged development means the project combines elements spanning multiple other NSORG categories (e.g., housing, small businesses, and workforce development).
37. Will you be disqualified for being a small business and receiving small, quick wins? Are businesses eligible for RAPID Grants?
 - a. Eligible applicants for RAPID grants are nonprofit organizations. For-profit entities, such as small businesses, will not qualify for a RAPID grant, even if they were classified as a “quick win” in the Coordination Plan. Small businesses classified as “quick win” projects are encouraged to pursue funding under other NSORG categories.
38. Are Habitat for Humanity and Holy Name eliminated from applying for funds under Recovery Housing?
 - a. No organization is singled out or barred from applying for funds under any NSORG category. However, all applicants are encouraged to review section 3.3.2 of the Program Manual to determine if their project meets the criteria outlined for each funding category.
 - b. Recovery Housing Grants may be awarded to public or private entities undertaking an innovative housing project. Applicants must demonstrate that the project could not be served by existing federal housing programs administered by the Housing Division of DED or the Nebraska Affordable Housing Trust Fund. Additionally, **projects** already receiving ARPA funds under the Qualified Census Tract Affordable Housing Program are **not** eligible for NSORG funding.
39. Is DED defining the 10-year period as the date of the sentence or the date the sentence is completed?
 - a. The 10-year period begins on the date the final adjudication/judgment was entered. However, DED encourages Applicants to pursue full transparency when disclosing whether the Applicant/partner entity, its principles, or its employees have been the subject of legal proceedings (civil or criminal) involving fraud, waste, or misappropriation of funds or any bankruptcy/administrative proceedings. If an Applicant is unsure whether to include information related to legal proceedings, DED advises Applicants not to withhold any pertinent details.
40. Will my previous conviction prevent me from receiving funds?
 - a. A history of legal proceedings will not automatically disqualify an Applicant from receiving NSORG funds. DED will review all information provided and determine whether a previous conviction should bar the Applicant from receiving grant funds on a case-by-case basis. DED may require high-risk Applicants with an adverse

legal history to be subjected to additional monitoring requirements in order to protect public funds from waste, fraud, and abuse.

41. Is qualification based on Olsson recommendation or the original application?
 - a. Scoring criteria are outlined in sections 5.1 and 5.3 of the NSORG Program Manual. In accordance with LB 531, DED is required to prioritize proposals from the Coordination Plan, followed by the Appendices (“Olsson Plan”). Such prioritizations are reflected in the scoring criteria.

42. Won't the Financial and Administrative Readiness requirements knock a lot of people out because they never received grant funding?
 - a. DED recognizes that for many organizations applying for NSORG grants, this is their first time participating in a state-level grant program. At the same time, DED is required to protect the public interest by evaluating all Applicants’ financial and administrative readiness and organizational capacity. As such, DED has developed scoring criteria to evaluate organizational ability to manage grant funds, but weighted these evaluation categories at 6.67% of the total score for each. This will ensure that the funds are accessible even to organizations that have never received state grants while allowing DED to identify appropriate monitoring and technical assistance procedures to ensure compliance.

43. Some categories will not be competitively scored, so does the determination requirements mean you can apply or not apply?
 - a. For the funding categories that will not be competitively scored, all Applicants that meet the crosscutting grant funding restrictions in Section 3.3.1 and specific funding category restrictions outlined in Section 3.3.2 will be awarded grants. Entities that do not meet the aforementioned funding restrictions may still apply, but they will not be awarded.

44. Are there any resources to assist small nonprofit organizations throughout this process?
 - a. Applicants seeking assistance are encouraged to visit DED’s North or South Omaha offices at the times listed below:
 - i. North Omaha Office: 5319 N 30th St., Suite B, Omaha, NE 68111
 1. Tuesdays from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.
 2. Thursdays from 12:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.
 - ii. South Omaha Office: 2909 Edward Babe Gomez Ave., Omaha, NE 68107
 1. Mondays from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.
 2. Wednesdays from 12:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.
 - b. In addition, Applicants can review resources on the NSORG program webpage, including the Program Manual, FAQs, and recorded application workshops.
 - c. Applicants with specific questions may reach out to the assigned Program Manager or contact DED.EconomicRecovery@nebraska.gov.

45. How do I receive an economic score greater than or equal to 2.00?
 - a. The economic score is based on Appendix F of the Coordination Plan and Appendices. This score is also reported in Appendix G for each proposal. The economic impact score was determined during the review and evaluation phase conducted by Olsson. The economic impact score was set to ensure the maximum

return on investment for every dollar invested in North & South Omaha. There is no current method in place to change the score.

46. What weight is being given to recommended projects? What weight is being given to the original scoring, if all projects under evaluation were not recommended projects?
Please review section 5.1 of the Program Manual for information on weighting factors for application review and scoring. In accordance with LB 531, DED will prioritize applications listed in the Coordination Plan followed by applications listed in the Appendices. The economic impact score, as reported in Appendix F, will factor into the Community & Economic Impact scoring criteria. Additional points will be awarded to projects in the Coordination Plan, as set forth in the scoring criteria under Legislative Priorities.
47. How much leeway will there be with regards to modifying any project originally submitted?
- a. The scope of the project may not change otherwise it no longer aligns with the original proposal in the Coordination Plan. DED understands that partner organizations may disperse, and new organizations may combine to fulfill the overall project. Please review section 3.3.1 in the Program Manual in regard to changing the funds amount for the proposal. However, if the details of a proposal have changed, DED encourages applicants to submit plans that reflect the current project realities.
48. If an organization is connected to multiple applications, but with some only as the Developer or in a partnership, as opposed to the stand-alone owner, will those all count against the limitation on total projects a party can be awarded on?
- a. Only the projects listed in the Coordination Plan may apply for grant funding. Applicants may not submit the same project in multiple categories. DED will review all applications and reserves the right not to fund projects.
49. Are there preemptive dollar amounts set aside for each category (placemaking, small business, etc.)?
- a. No specific amount has been set aside for any of the eight categories in the NSORG program. DED will determine total award amounts in each category based on applications received.
50. If we want to keep certain aspects of an updated application confidential, due to an outside third parties we may be engaged with through an LOI or term sheet, is there a way to shield those aspects from FOIA requests?
- a. Applicants can mark documents that they are concerned, if released, would cause an advantage to competitors as proprietary and/or confidential. Applicants should review the Public Records Act and mark any documents it believes falls within the listed exceptions accordingly.
51. In the Q&A, you stated, "DED cannot advise applicants on which program category to apply. Please carefully review the NSORG Program Manual to determine which program is the best fit for your project." Yet, under the for profit or small businesses interviews you

have met with, they were advised what categories they fit into, is this true? Why is there a difference?

- a. DED identified businesses that could potentially fit into the Small Business Support Grants category. These businesses were contacted, and if the business chose to participate, DED conducted interviews to learn more about each small business to determine if the business fit into the Small Business Support Grants category. DED did not advise any business that it was qualified to receive funding under the Small Business Support Grants category or any other category of the NSORG Program. DED will complete an economic impact analysis to determine which small businesses will maximize economic growth in the community. Once those small businesses are identified, DED will notify these businesses that they are eligible to apply for the Small Business Support Grant Program. It will be the decision of the applicant whether or not to apply. The Small Business Support Grant category is the only category that will operate under this unique approach. This approach is also outlined in the NSORG Program Manual.

52. Do any employees of DED have any conflicts or appearance of conflicts with any applicants in the Olsson report?

- a. Many DED staff responsible for the NSORG Program live within the Omaha metropolitan area. As such, they may know applicants within the North Omaha and South Omaha communities in other contexts. All DED grant reviewers must complete a Conflict of Interest and Confidentiality Statement before reviewing any grant application. In the event there is a conflict, that particular reviewer is removed from the review team.

53. In the program manual, you state that universities and colleges can only submit one (1) application total across all categories. However, Creighton submitted multiple applications and was recommended for one. The law says the Olsson report will be a priority when awarding applications, but you eliminated two of Creighton's applications in the Olsson report by the language in your program manual. This is contrary to the law. How can the Olsson report be a priority, but the project be eliminated at the same time?

- a. Neb. Rev. Stat. Sec. 81-12,241.01 states that DED “shall create and administer the North and South Omaha Recovery Grant Program, [...and eligible projects shall be those] listed in the coordination plan or appendices by the Economic Recovery Special Committee of the Legislature.” Statute provides DED to the authority to create and design the North and South Omaha Recovery Grant Program (“NSORG.”) The NSORG Program was created to bring about the maximum economic impact to the community, and limits applications to those programs listed in the coordination plan and/or appendices as directed by statute. Creighton University’s programs have not been excluded from the NSORG Grant Program and the University may apply for grant funds should it choose to do so.

54. Also, you stated in the manual that to be eligible, your organization has to be listed in the Olsson report. However, the law says project has to be listed in the Olsson report, no place in the law does it say only the same organization can apply. Where in the law is this requirement?

- a. Section 3.2 of the Program Manual states that, “to be eligible for a grant under the NSORG, a project must be listed in the coordination plan or appendices by the

Economic Recovery Special Committee of the Legislature dated January 10, 2023.” The projects listed in the coordination plan and/or appendices were developed and submitted by specific organizations. Those organizations and the projects for which they submitted to the coordination plan are eligible to apply for the NSORG Program.

55. In the budget, do applicants need to show the additional funding sources for your total project?
- a. Yes. The application includes a Duplication of Funds Table where applicants must list the funding sources received for the project.
56. How is the City of Omaha allowed to apply for a new project under placemaking?
- a. All Applicants/projects that were listed in the Coordination Plan and its appendices are able to apply to the NSORG program. It is up to the Applicant to decide which NSORG grant program to apply to.
57. Can the site change in the application?
- a. Yes. DED understands that some details may have changed between an Applicant’s submission of project details to the Economic Recovery Special Committee of the Legislature and today. As such, Applicants are encouraged to update their proposals to reflect current project realities. The DED application will allow Applicants an opportunity to provide additional details about its project, and any changes that may have occurred.
58. Can a project that has received QCT funds apply under placemaking if the project is not just housing but has a significant economic component?
- a. Recovery Housing Grants may be awarded to public or private entities undertaking an innovative housing project. Applicants must demonstrate that the project could not be served by existing federal housing programs administered by the Housing Division of DED or the Nebraska Affordable Housing Trust Fund.
 - b. Additionally, projects already receiving ARPA funds under the Qualified Census Tract Affordable Housing Program are not eligible for NSORG funding. This applies across all NSORG categories.
59. If a project is under \$30,000,000, can applicants still apply under the Placemaking grant?
- a. Yes. There is no minimum amount to request for the Placemaking grant.
60. What is the process for obtaining a letter of support from the Mayor’s office of the City of Omaha? Is there a deadline?
- a. To request a letter of support from the Mayor’s office of the City of Omaha, eligible applicants must include the following:
 - i. An executive summary of the proposed project, including the dollar amount requested,
 - ii. Indicate who is the point-of-contact (with contact information) for the project submission and include contact information for organization if not the same person,
 - iii. Explain how the proposed project aligns with either of the following Mayor’s priorities:

1. Improved Public Safety
2. Job Growth & Economic Development
- iv. Identify which category you intend to apply for (Placemaking Infrastructure or Sports & Tourism)
 - v. Email letter requests to keith.station@cityofomaha.org
- b. Yes, there is a deadline. For Placemaking Infrastructure letter requests, please send to keith.station@cityofomaha.org by **end-of-business on Friday, September 22nd**. For Sports & Tourism letter requests, please send to keith.station@cityofomaha.org by **end-of-business on Friday, October 13th**.

61. How do I find my economic score for JOBS and STATE TAXES under appendix F?
- a. The question is referring to this column as shown in the screenshot below.

Operational Phase Rankings			
Output	Jobs	Payroll	State Taxes
20%	20%	20%	5%

If your project is not in a chart with this column, you will need to multiply your ranking by the percentages above. Take your *Jobs Creation Ranking* and multiply that number by 20% and that will be your score for JOBS.

Example: $5 \times 0.20 = 1.00$

- b. You will follow a similar method for the next question. Take your *State Tax Ranking* and multiply that number by 5% and that will be your score for STATE TAXES.

Example: $3 \times 0.05 = 0.15$

62. Is there a limit to the amount of administration dollars that can be requested in NSORG?
- a. While there is no hard limit, DED encourages Applicants to request what they need and make a strong justification for how they arrived at that number / percentage in the narrative section of the budget.

63. Will there be a formal application to submit after the Small Business interview process? I have been told both ways on whether the only application step here is an interview with a NE DED member.

- a. After the interview process for Small Business Support Grants, DED determines whether the business meets the eligibility requirements and then conducts an Economic Impact Analysis. Based on the results of the Economic Impact Analysis, an offer letter is sent to the business. Acceptance of the offer is completed by the business on AmpliFund, which resembles an application, but at that point is really just an acceptance of the offer. Please contact Deisy Coyle if you have further small-business related questions.

64. If there is the potential for a project that was recommended to continue as is, but with new leadership, how should a party go about validating this change in leadership? Is it sufficient

to provide a letter from the original applicant noting they no longer wish to continue the application and are supportive of [x] continuing forward?

- a. Applicants should clearly reference the project they are applying for in the coordination plan or appendices in order to meet basic eligibility requirements. DED cannot advise Applicants on any supplemental / supporting documentation to provide in the application beyond required documentation however recommends that Applicants provide any information necessary to allow reviewers a complete understanding of the project.

65. A requirement of this application includes a copy of our 2022 990. We received a filing extension from the IRS. We have filed in this manner regularly to ensure complete and accurate filings. As the grant is due October 2, would a placeholder explaining this extension be acceptable? We would then be able to send a filed copy as NE DED would like.

- a. Please be sure to submit the most recent 3 years of 990s that you have in addition to the explanation of the extension.

66. Is there any way to not have the profit and loss statements of my private company published in the new appendix H when it comes out? Appendix H currently publishes the application, including attachments. I have no problem giving it to you. I have no problem with you using it. I would just rather not have it published for anyone not NE DED to see.

- a. Please review the FAQs, specifically **FAQ #50**.
- b. Further, please note that DED will not be publishing any proposals in Appendix H or any of the other appendices or coordination plan. That plan and those appendices are final and were created by the Special Committee of the Legislature. DED was not involved in the process of creating the plan or appendices and cannot update them. However, as stated in the FAQs, please review the Public Records Act to make sure you understand its provisions.

67. I took note of the rule below on page 7 of the NSORG Program Manual, under 3.3.1 Crosscutting Grant Funding Restrictions:

“Shovel-Ready Capital Investments Program Grant Recipients: Any Awardee of the Shovel-Ready program may receive no more than \$2,000,000.00 in NSORG grant funds cumulatively across all NSORG awards.”

Our organization has previously received a Shovel-Ready grant. We plan to submit an NSORG Placemaking Infrastructure grant for an entirely different project at a different location. Does the \$2 million limit above apply to the project or to the organization? In other words, must we limit the NSORG request to \$2 million?

- a. Yes, even if it is a completely different project, the organization is *still* limited by the \$2,000,000 maximum.

68. There seems to be confusion regarding the maximum amount of funds that can be requested. The Response to Question #22 in the FAQ provided by DED states:

Applications for NSORG funds may not exceed the amount requested for each respective project listed in the Coordination Plan (or Appendices) of the Economic Recovery Special Committee of the Legislature dated January 10, 2023.

Interestingly, some of our partners are saying that prior to the application being open, personnel with DED told them not to apply for more than the amount recommended in the Coordination Plan of January 10, 2023. Could you please clarify this item for us?

- a. FAQ #22 is correct — NSORG applications may not exceed the amount requested in the coordination plan or appendices. This applies to all NSORG application rounds. The only exception is that requests of less than \$250,000 in the coordination plan or appendices may request up to \$250,000 in NSORG funds.
 - b. Recommended funds are another matter. In order to receive priority status as a Catalyst or Quick Win, NSORG applications must not exceed the amount recommended in the coordination plan or appendices.
 - i. Example: A project requested \$30 million in the coordination plan and was recommended for \$25 million. In no case can the NSORG application exceed the original request of \$30 million. If the Applicant wishes to receive bonus points as a recommended project in the scoring criteria, they should request no more than \$25 million, or the amount that was recommended. If the Applicant chooses to request the full \$30 million, that would be allowed, but no bonus points would be awarded in scoring.
 - c. This principle also applies to the exemption of Catalysts and Quick Wins from the minimum economic impact score requirements. The minimum economic score is waived only for recommended projects that request less than or equal to the recommended amount. Such projects may exceed the recommended amount in their requests, but they then would lose the exemption for minimum economic impact score and would need to meet that requirement in order to be eligible.
69. If an organization is no longer operational, are the partner organizations/programs within still eligible to apply?
- a. Projects that were listed in the Coordination Plan (including Appendices) issued by the Economic Recovery Special Committee of the Legislature on January 10, 2023, are eligible to apply for an NSORG grant. An entity that was a partner on a project listed in the Coordination Plan / Appendices may submit an NSORG application, provided that (A) The original lead applicant does not include the partner in a separate NSORG application; and (B) The NSORG applicant can clearly reference their project in the coordination plan/appendices.
70. Where does one apply for the Small Business Support Grant?
- a. Eligible Small Businesses will be contacted directly for an interview. If you have not yet received an interview but think you should have been contacted, please reach out to Deisy Coyle as soon as possible.
71. What is the difference between Small Business Support Grant and Entrepreneurship & Innovation Grant?
- a. Small Business Support Grants directly benefit for-profit enterprises by providing grant funds to help small businesses grow their business. Entrepreneurship & Innovation (E&I) grants, on the other hand, benefit organizations that provide support to small businesses and entrepreneurs, such as CDFIs, incubators, and technical assistance providers. E&I grants will not be directly granted to a small business but instead enable organizations to support small businesses.

72. Is there a more than \$2 Million limit to apply for the RAPID category grant?
- a. Please refer to the NSORG Program Manual, section 3.3.2, for a comprehensive description of the funding categories. In summary, all projects submitted under the RAPID category are limited to funding in the amount of \$2 million or less.
73. Where do we place additional clarification/work regarding to scholarship exemption?
- a. Applicants who believe they meet the criteria to receive an exemption from the Economic Impact Score minimum requirement as a scholarship program should clearly document that in the application to DED. This information can be placed throughout the application under any relevant questions or uploads section.
74. Where can I see any updates or status for the RAPID Grant application?
- a. The Program Manager reviews all applications submitted for eligibility. Once project eligibility has been confirmed, it will be moved directly to the award stage. For any additional information needed, DED will contact the Applicant directly. DED will notify all Applicants with a Notice of Award or Notice of Non-Selection following review.
75. Can an application be disqualified from consideration if a partner organization refuses to submit three years of financial documentation and attestation, even if they are not the direct recipients of funds?
- a. All partner entities must complete all the mandatory fields on the application on AmpliFund to be officially considered partners in the application process. It is the responsibility of the lead applicant to determine which entities qualify as partner organizations. Including a partner entity can strengthen an applicant's demonstration of capacity. It is important to note that the specific requirements and benefits related to partner entities can vary depending on the funding category. For more detailed information, please refer to section 3.3 of the Program Manual.
76. Is there a specific target date established for the completion of the interview process in the Small Business Support category?
- a. All eligible applicants are encouraged to contact the Program Manager for an interview under the Small Business Support Program category by the end of September 2023.
77. Is there a target date for sending the offer letters under the Small Business Support Grant Category?
- a. DED is actively working towards finalizing the offer letter under the Small Business Support Grant category and anticipates that this process will be complete soon.
78. When sending the offer letters, will DED provide them via regular mail and email?
- a. All offer letters will be sent exclusively via email. If an applicant requires a physical copy of the offer letter for documentation purposes, they may request one through the program manager.
79. What are the criteria and scoring guidelines for the economic impact analysis within the Small Business Support Grant category?

- a. Economic Impact Analysis reports are generated through a combination of factors, including the number of new full-time employees, the average new employee wage, the total amount of capital investment in buildings and equipment, the types of activities this capital investment contributes to, and the industry that the businesses' activities most often fall under (provided through their NAICS code). The resulting output is an estimate of the number of jobs (Direct, Indirect, and Induced) from Operations and Construction activities, as well as the expected additional value that these operations have on the local community.
80. What is the procedure for arranging an interview?
- a. After reviewing the Program Manual and carefully considering all the requirements detailed in section 3.3.2 for each category, if the applicant determines their eligibility for an interview in the Small Business Support Grants category, they should reach out to the Program Manager Deisy Coyle to initiate the interview process.
81. Is it permissible to establish a new single asset entity solely for this project, and if so, what is the procedure for handling this within the application portal, considering that the projects' name and scope will remain unchanged?
- a. Eligible projects include those listed in the Coordination Plan (including Appendices) issued by the Economic Recovery Special Committee of the Legislature on January 10, 2023.
82. Are these grants available for both for-profit and nonprofit businesses in the Small Business Support Grant category?
- a. Please refer to the NSORG Program Manual, section 3.3.2, for a comprehensive description of the funding categories and requirements. The Small Business Support Grant category is exclusively for for-profit businesses.
83. How can an applicant update information in their proposal for an interview in the Small Business Support Grants category, especially if the updates have a direct impact on the analysis process?
- a. The interview process will allow Applicants to provide up-to-date information about their project. Applicants have the options to update information in their interview under the following circumstances:
 - i. If the interview has not taken place yet, please ensure that all relevant information is prepared and provided during the interview.
 - ii. If the interview has already occurred and the applicant wishes to submit additional information related to the interview, please forward the supplementary details to the interviewer or program manager.
84. How do you identify potential Small Business Support Grant recipients who have not submitted a grant application?
- a. If your project was listed in the coordination plan or appendices, a team member should have already initiated contact with you. If you believe you meet the criteria for an interview and have not been contacted, we encourage you to promptly reach out to the Program Manager of the Small Business Support Grant category for further assistance.
85. Is there any assistance available to help identify the grant category that aligns best with a business?

- a. DED does not provide specific directions on which category to apply for. DED encourages applicants to thoroughly review the Program Manual and available resources on the NSORG website. DED is conducting open office hours in the North Omaha DED office and the South Omaha DED office.
86. It is permissible to submit the RAPID application without the 990s forms?
- a. DED encourages all applicants to submit all required documentation. If, for any compelling reason, the application is unable to provide the necessary document, DED recommends uploading an official document or letterhead containing a statement explaining the situation.
87. I did not receive a letter of support from the Mayor's Office for Placemaking. What can I do?
- a. If you are interested in applying under a different NSORG category, DED would encourage you to first thoroughly review all requirements for each category in the program manual, which is posted on our website (<https://opportunity.nebraska.gov/programs/recovery/nsorg/>). If you have specific questions about a particular category, please feel free to reach out to the assigned program manager. Contact information for each program manager is listed on the website.
 - b. You may also wish to stop by DED's office hours to discuss further. Office hours are as follows:
 - i. North Omaha Office: 5319 N 30th St., Suite B, Omaha, NE 68111
 - 1. Tuesdays from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.
 - 2. Thursdays from 12:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.
 - ii. South Omaha Office: 2909 Edward Babe Gomez Ave., Omaha, NE 68107
 - 1. Mondays from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.
 - 2. Wednesdays from 12:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.
88. We are preparing to apply in the Arts, Culture and Social Assistance category. Our grant writer needs clarity after reading this- "Projects in the Arts, Culture, and Social Assistance application round may request up to the amount that was recommended for funding in the coordination plan. If your project was not recommended for funding in the coordination plan, you may not request an Arts, Culture, and Social Assistance grant."
- a. All projects listed in the coordination plan or appendices are eligible to apply for a North & South Omaha Recovery Grant, but it is up to each individual Applicant to determine which funding category they would like to apply under based on the eligibility requirements outlined in the Program Manual.
 - b. For projects applying under Arts, Culture, and Social Assistance, the maximum grant request must be less than or equal to the **recommended** amount in the Coordination Plan. This is a funding category-specific requirement that applies to Arts, Culture, and Social Assistance grants as well as RAPID grants. This requirement does not apply to any of the other 6 funding categories, so projects that were not recommended are still eligible to apply for NSORG under a different category and are encouraged to review the program manual for additional information.
89. Is a Brick and Mortar building in one of the QCTs a requirement to meet eligibility for the Small Business Grant?
- a. Per Section 3.1 of the Program Manual:

https://opportunity.nebraska.gov/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/Program-Manual_Omaha-Recovery-Grants_1.2_final.pdf

94. I received a Small Business Support Grant Offer Letter. How was this amount decided on (Breakdown please)
- a. Applications submitted under Small Business Support Program will undergo an Economic Impact Analysis, which will be conducted to determine the appropriate funding amount for each business.
 - b. Economic Impact Analysis reports are generated through a combination of factors, including the number of new full-time employees, the average new employee wage, the total amount of capital investment in buildings and equipment, the types of activities this capital investment contributes to, and the industry that the businesses' activities most often fall under (provided through their NAICS code). The resulting output is an estimate of the number of jobs (Direct, Indirect, and Induced) from Operations and Construction activities, as well as the expected additional value that these operations have on the local community.
95. I do have until 2027 to spend the funds correct?
- a. DED will issue final payment to each Recipient on or before December 31, 2027, less any funds that have not been used for the authorized purpose of the grant program. If a Recipient does not use the grant funds already paid for the authorized purpose of the program, DED may require such Recipient to return such unused grant funds upon a documented finding that such funds have not been used.
96. Do you have additional details about what will be expected in terms of compliance for these awarded funds?
- a. For more information about the term of compliance, please see the Program Manual section 7 Post-Award Management and Implementation. See a copy of the Program Manual here: https://opportunity.nebraska.gov/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/Program-Manual_Omaha-Recovery-Grants_1.2_final.pdf
97. I received a Small Business Support Grant Offer Letter. I am interested in if I need to submit anything to re-scope my proposal based upon the amount in this letter (I'll have to change up my approach here to leverage this smaller amount effectively).
- a. The scope of the project may not change otherwise it no longer aligns with the original proposal in the Coordination Plan. DED understands that partner organizations may disperse, and new organizations may combine to fulfill the overall project. Please review section 3.3.1 in the Program Manual in regard to changing the funds amount for the proposal. However, if the details of a proposal have changed, DED encourages applicants to submit plans that reflect the current project realities.
98. I received a Small Business Support Grant Offer Letter. Are we eligible to request more for our project if not awarded the requested amount?
- a. No, this is a one-time offer for the project.
99. Can we submit again next year? Do I need to show this is a multi-year "ask"?

- a. The NSORG program is one-time funding. There is no guarantee that there will be another round of funding next year (or at any time).
 - b. You can show that it is a multi-year “ask” in multiple ways. For one, you could upload a project timeline and choose a start/end date that reflects when the grant activities will be performed. You could also use the grant budget module on AmpliFund to create separate line items for each grant year, although this is not a requirement.
 - c. Clearly demonstrating how you intend to use grant funds in an application is recommended. That may include *when* you will be spending down the funds, for example.
100. Can you please confirm if we are eligible under the E&I category?
- a. DED does not provide specific directions on which category to apply for. DED encourages applicants to thoroughly review the Program Manual and available resources on the NSORG website. DED is conducting open office hours in the North Omaha DED office and the South Omaha DED office for an in-person meeting.
101. The sentence in the answer says that E&I grants will not be directly granted to small businesses. I am assuming this means they will not be granted to a small business that has not partnered with a CDFI and I hub.
- a. **Small Business:** Refers to an entity that meets the definition of a small business as defined by the Small Business Administration (SBA). Small businesses may not directly apply to DED for an Entrepreneurship & Innovation Grant.
 - b. **Support Organizations:** Refers to businesses, nonprofits, government agencies, or other formal entities that carry out eligible project activities by assisting small businesses
102. Our understanding is that we are eligible as a for profit business that has partnered with a CDFI and I Hub that we would be eligible for an Entrepreneurship & Innovation grant. Can you please confirm this for us.
- a. Entrepreneurship & Innovation Applicants must meet each of the following criteria in order to be considered for grant funding:
 - i. Project must have received an economic score of greater than or equal to 2.00 in the coordination plan.
 - 1. Projects that were designated as catalyst projects or quick wins in the coordination plan dated January 10, 2023, are exempt from this minimum economic impact score requirement.
 - ii. Applicants must be a support organization that assists small businesses located within a QCT and/or ERA in a city of the metropolitan class.
103. When it comes to the partnership portion do we submit a Letter of Support there?
- a. If you have a Letter of Support, it can be attached in the additional uploads section of the application.
104. When will awards be announced for Placemaking Infrastructure?
- a. Due to the number of applications received, DED anticipates announcing awards for Placemaking Infrastructure in late November.

105. When will awards be announced for Youth, Talent & Workforce Development (YTWD)?
- a. Due to the number of applications received, DED anticipates announcing awards for YTWD in late November.
106. When will awards be announced for RAPID grants?
- a. DED anticipates announcing awards for RAPID grants in late October.