Developing Youth Talent Initiative – GEER II Grant Program Guidelines

The Nebraska Developing Youth Talent Initiative (DYTI) creates collaboration between Nebraska businesses and public schools, connecting young Nebraskans to learning opportunities in the workforce that can play an important role in their decision to build their careers in our state.

The Governor's Emergency Education Relief (GEER) Fund (GEER II Funds) provides support to any institution of higher education, local educational agency, or education-related entity within the State of Nebraska that the Governor deems essential for carrying out emergency educational services to students for authorized activities described in section 313(d)(1) of the CRRSA, the provision of childcare and early childhood education, social and emotional support, or the protection of education related jobs.

DYTI – GEER II is a one-time application for funds from the GEER II Funds created by the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act (CRRSA). The intent is to support an industry-defined approach to develop a youth talent pipeline for our state's emerging STEM workforce, especially in Manufacturing, IT, Healthcare and Engineering occupations. Grant recipients will partner with public schools to engage middle and/or high school students in participation of hands-on career exploration and relevant workplace-learning opportunities. Exposing this next generation of leaders to the advanced skills and knowledge required for STEM occupations encourages an expanding workforce to help Grow Nebraska.

The Nebraska Department of Economic Development (DED) administers the DYTI using the following guidelines.

For questions, please contact: Rose Baker | DYTI Grant Coordinator | rose.baker@nebraska.gov 402-471-1559

A: Eligible Applicants

Eligible applicants are for-profit Nebraska businesses or consortiums of businesses in any industry. Non-profit hospitals are also eligible. Non-profit businesses can be part of a business consortium or may be invited to apply independently. Consortiums must identify the lead business applicant who will serve as the primary contact for the application and grant recipient. State and federal government entities, governmental subdivisions (including counties, cities, villages, school districts, metropolitan utilities districts, or any other subdivision of the state, which receive revenue raised by taxation), and public and private colleges and universities are not eligible to receive a DYTI grant. The business must be registered with the Nebraska Secretary of State.

Eligible businesses, or consortium of businesses, must partner with local public schools to create a sustainable project plan. Businesses may not partner with an existing career academy. Letters of support from all entities participating in the application and identification of all in-kind match is also requested within the application.

Each Eligible award recipient of DYTI – GEER II funds must comply with:

- All applicable and relevant laws, regulations, executive orders, policies, and requirements applicable to the use of GEER II funds;
- The following rules and regulations which apply to use of GEER II Funds:
  - (1) 2 CFR Part 200: Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards;
  - (2) 2 CFR Part 3474: Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Award; *and*
  - (3) 2 CFR Part 3485: Non-procurement Debarment and Suspension
- All applicable reporting and record retention requirements

- The use of award funds for purposes authorized under federal law, including but not limited to, the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriation Act 2021 ("CRRSA")

B: Eligible Projects

Projects must provide students in middle school (6th to 8th grade) or high school (9th to 12th grade) with hands-on STEM career exploration and exposure to STEM skills in order to increase interest and awareness of STEM occupations among area students.

Priority may be given to projects:
- With a focus on IT, manufacturing, healthcare and engineering skills.
- Serving students in the 7th and 8th grade.
- Serving rural schools that are seeking to create a career academy or create career pathways.

Eligible projects may be structured in a variety of ways, including (but not limited to) activities such as:

- Developing new classroom curriculum
- Purchasing equipment for a classroom or lab
- Implementing a mobile trailer
- Mentoring
- Planning new events

- Training teachers and company staff
- Creating virtual engagement opportunities
- Conducting industry tours
- Creating a makerspace
- Providing project competitions and awards

Please note: DYTI GEER II funds may not be used for research for development type projects.

C: Grant Amounts

DED has $1,500,000 from the GEER II Fund to award for DYTI projects. The Department will award up to $500,000 per DYTI project, minimum award amount of $250,000.

D: Matching Funds

DYTI – GEER II encourages matching funds be identified and leveraged in all projects. Matching funds can come from businesses, local nonprofit organizations, foundations, or Federal, state, city or county funding. If matching funds will be provided by entities other than the lead applicant, a commitment letter should be submitted with the application.

E: Application and Contract Schedule

Grant Schedule	
Application Open Date	May 25, 2023
Application Deadline	June 22, 2023, by 4:00pm CT
Anticipated Award Date	June 2023
Period of Performance	June 30, 2023 – June 29, 2025

F: Application Review Criteria

The applications for DYTI – GEER II are competitive and will be weighed against the other applications. One of the ways the application is evaluated is based on the **strength of the stated need and how well the application proposes to address that need**. Applications are evaluated based on the information provided in the application plus information obtained by DED staff.

DED and the review committee may preference applications and projects that also provide:
- Substantial impact on businesses, community and students
- Evidence of regional workforce needs and relationship of the proposed project to the need

- Clear goals and projected outcomes
- Provide a diverse learning experience
- Detailed budget and project timeline
- Strategic evaluation plan by a 3rd party evaluator with a pre and post assessment of student interest in and knowledge of occupations within the industry
- Well-planned program sustainability

Applications are reviewed and selected by a committee of leaders from DED and the Nebraska Department(s) of Education (NDE) and Labor (DOL). The committee will recommend projects to the DED Director for final approval.

Please note the Department added a supplemental application located on [DYTI GEER II's webpage](#), under the Program Resources Section.

G: Reporting Requirements

All projects are required to count the students impacted and assess the change in student interest in and knowledge of occupations related to the project's occupations/skills of focus and submit four reports throughout the two-year contract period.

DED will provide required, standard pre and post assessment questions that should be given to students before and after project engagement (i.e. intervention) each academic year. Pre assessments should be given to students in the school(s) or district(s) in August/September 2023 and 2024; post assessments should be given in May 2024 and 2025.

Projects are required to be evaluated by a 3rd party evaluator. Applicants may select the evaluator. The 3rd party evaluator should administer the assessments, analyze the responses of the assessment and report on the project through AmpliFund, as described below.

Additional evaluation and reporting details are available in the separate Reporting Guidelines document. Reporting will be provided to DED through DED's grant management software, AmpliFund.

H: Reimbursable Expenses

DYTI grant funds may reimburse a variety of project-related expenses including equipment and supplies, training, marketing, evaluation and other costs. Not all proposed expenses are necessarily approved if they do not address the stated need addressed by the proposed project.

Grant funds may *not* be used for:
- Indirect costs
- Wages or salaries that are already paid by the business or school (note: wages paid to compensate additional hours necessary to the project may be a reimbursable expense at the discretion of DED)
- Alcohol, tobacco and entertainment
- Politically related activities (ex. lobbying services etc.)
- Individual donations or fundraising activities
- Costs incurred outside of the contract period of the grant
- Other costs deemed unallowable by DED

I: Reimbursement Requirements

Once the contract and ACH Enrollment Form are completed with signatures, reimbursement may be requested through DED's grant management software, AmpliFund, in amounts no less than $1,000. All final requests for reimbursement must be submitted by June 30, 2024.

Expenses must be tracked by the grant recipient in AmpliFund. Each request for reimbursement must include expense documentation such as invoices and signed receipts of payment (for verification of expenditures). The requested amount is typically deposited within 15 to 20 business days after approval for the first reimbursement processed and within 10 business days after approval for subsequent requests.

J: Process

1. **Submit Application**
    Submit the application and supporting documents online by June 22, 2023 at 4:00pm. Application: https://ne.amplifund.com/Public/Opportunities/Details/ee625cba-a39a-4f3d-9975-d42ee4d6ee55. The Department has added Supplemental Applications Questions. The supplemental application is located on DYTI GEER II's webpage.

2. **Application Review**
    A committee of leaders from DED and the Nebraska Department(s) of Education (NDE) and Labor (NDOL) review the complete applications competitively and recommend to the DED Director for final approval.

3. **Application Approval – Receive Notice of Award/Denial**
    Applicants will receive a notice of award/denial via email. If awarded, the notice will include information such as grant amount, contract length and required documentation.

4. **Award Creation in AmpliFund**
    DED will create approved project awards in DED's grant management software, AmpliFund. DED will provide AmpliFund training guides and user support.

5. **Execute Contract**
    A contract will be created and funds will be reserved until June 30, 2023. The contract and ACH Form will be sent out via DocuSign. The contract will contain the following:
    a) Business' obligations for the project
    b) State funding approved and requirements for use of those funds
    c) Time of performance
    d) Reimbursement schedule
    e) Business reporting requirements
    f) Any special terms and conditions to the project established by DED
    g) Accounting, auditing, conflict of interest, political activity and civil rights requirements
    h) Non-compliance definitions and penalties
    i) DED monitoring provision
    j) Non-performance

6. **Receive Reimbursement Deposit**
    Once the contract and ACH Enrollment Form are completed with signatures, reimbursement may be requested.

7. **Performance Monitoring and Final Reporting**
    DED will review progress on the project as needed; monitoring may be desktop or in person. Reports will be submitted through AmpliFund. Additional evaluation and reporting details are available in the Reporting Guidelines.

K: Department of Economic Development Monitoring and Reporting

As a Recipient for Federal award funds, DED is entrusted with financial resources and responsibilities for the management, disbursement, and accountability of the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act (CRRSA). By extension, this responsibility extends to managing risks associated with the grants management process to facilitate efficient operation and compliance with regulatory and programmatic requirements. Monitoring

and reporting is critical for the Federal awarding agency and DED to have up-to-date information on awards and subawards, and invaluable for Subrecipients in regard to meeting performance goals and ensuring compliance with applicable rules and regulations.

Subrecipients will:
- Be responsible for oversight of the operations of Federal award-supported activities;
- Monitor its activities performed under Federal awards to ensure compliance with applicable Federal requirements and performance expectations are being achieved. Monitoring will cover each program, function and activity;
- Submit quarterly financial and performance reports (Quarterly Report) for each open project to DED within 15 days of the reporting period end date, which will include the following:
    - Comparison of actual accomplishments to the objectives of the Federal award established for the period. Where the accomplishments of the Federal awards can be quantified, a computation of the cost.
    - The reason for not meeting established goals, if appropriate; and
    - Additional pertinent information including, when appropriate, analysis and explanation of cost overruns or high cost units;
- Inform DED if the following occur between performance reporting dates:
    - Problems, delays, or adverse conditions which will materially impair the ability to meet the objective of the Federal award. This disclosure must include a statement of the action taken, or contemplated, and assistance needed to resolve the situation and;
    - Favorable developments which enable meeting time schedules and objectives sooner or at less cost than anticipated or producing more or different beneficial results than originally planned; and
    - Submit annual reports to DED on the status of real property in which the Federal Government retains an interest.

L: Technical Assistance for Using the Grants Management System

To administer this program, DED uses its GMS known as AmpliFund. Applications will be submitted and awards will be managed through the GMS.

DED Help Portal
User guides about DED's specific business processes for accessing and using the GMS to apply and facilitate the grant are available on DED's website, http://opportunity.nebraska.gov/amplifund/. The help portal is organized by topic. You can enter key words into the search bar to find specific articles.
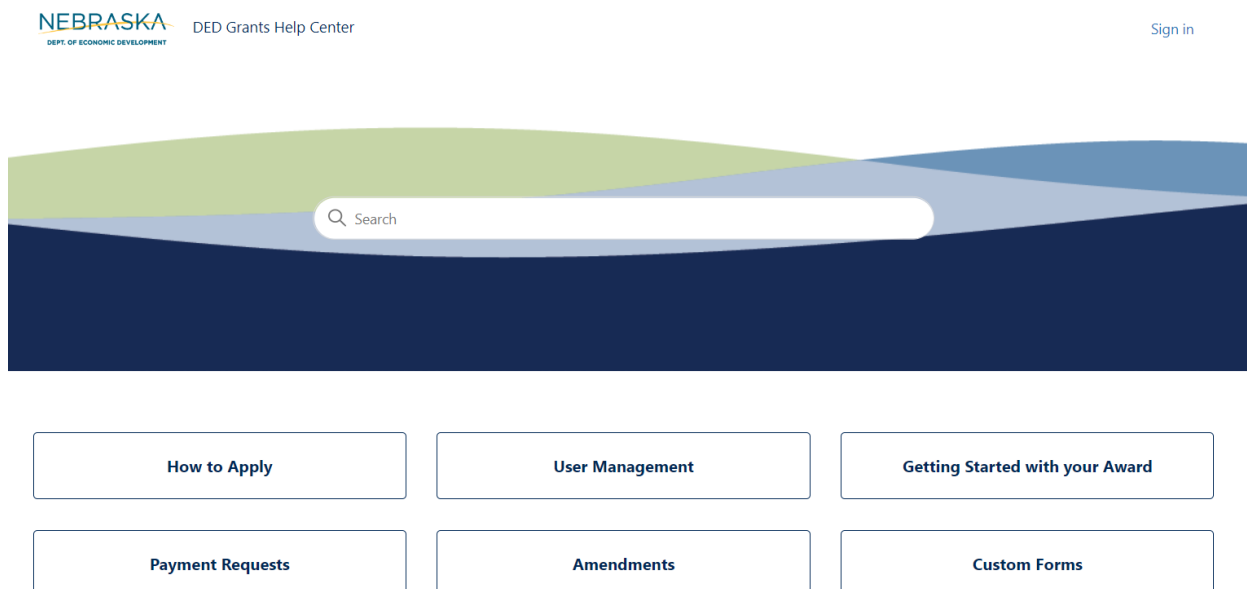
GMS Help Portal

For user guides about using AmpliFund, please visit https://ne-amplifund.zendesk.com. This help portal will help you learn how to use the system, navigate the system, and more.

Record of Change

Find the Version identifier on the cover page of this document. Summary of Changes includes a brief description of the revisions.

Version	Date	Summary of Changes
1.1	6/12/2022	1. Added Supplemental Application Questions 2. Added verbiage to Eligible Projects 3. Edited verbiage in Reporting Requirements
1.2	mm/yyy	1. Note 2. Note 3. Note