



Local Government Innovation Fund

Q: What if my organization has a question about the Local Government Innovation Fund (LGIF) program?

A: The most recent and up-to-date information can be found on the LGIF website at <http://www.development.ohio.gov/urban/LGIF.htm>. For specific program questions, please contact the office at LGIF@development.ohio.gov.

Q: How can my organization get on the interested parties list?

A: If you would like to be included on the LGIF program's interested parties list, please contact the office at LGIF@development.ohio.gov.

Q: What if my organization applies for a loan but is unable to achieve the expected savings? Will my organization be required to repay the loan?

A: Yes. All loan applicants must qualify for an LGIF loan award using standard underwriting criteria. Political subdivisions applying for loan funds will be expected to repay the full loan amount over a specified time period, not to exceed a total of 11 years.

Q: Can consultants or other private entities apply on behalf of local governments?

A: While consultants and private entities can assist local governments with the application process, applicants and signatories must be political subdivisions.

Q: What if two similar projects come in for review in the same area but are not related?

A: Two identical projects coming in from the same area will be returned to both applicants and asked to collaborate on the project. If two projects are similar but not related, each project will be reviewed independently.

Q: How does an applicant calculate the probability of a proposal's success?

A: Applicants are expected to demonstrate a proposal's probability of success by documenting both a need for the project and by clearly explaining how the need will be fulfilled using the LGIF award. Applicants are encouraged to review the application guidance and the project selection methodology prior to applying for a loan or grant award.

Q: Are the integrating committees still in the evaluation process?

A: No, House Bill 371, which passed on December 7, 2011, removed the integrating committees from the evaluation process.

Q: What is a scalable project?

A: Projects that can be scaled up for inclusion of other communities later. For example, if two entities are applying together but there are other communities that could come in at a later time, that project would be considered scalable.

Q: What is the maximum amount for each project?

A: The maximum for a grant award is \$100,000 per project. The maximum for a loan award is \$100,000 per entity up to \$500,000.

Q: If you already have a project, can you apply for reimbursement?

A: No, project the project must new.

Q: Is the study determination a part of the application? Is it required for every loan?

A: Yes. The study determination is required for every loan application.

Q: When applying for a grant, how are consultants selected?

A: It is up to the applicant. We only oversee performance-based items.

Q: Clarification on the population requirements.

A: Applicants or collaborative partners that are counties with populations over 235,001 will receive three points. Applicants or collaborative partners that are counties with populations under 235,000 will receive five points. Applicants or collaborative partners that are non-counties with populations under 20,000 will receive five points. Applicants or collaborative partners that are non-counties with populations greater than 20,001 will receive three points. Scoring is set to provide preference to applicants (or applicants with collaborative partners) from smaller populations.

Q: What financial documentation is required?

A: Operating budgets from the past three years and projections for the three year period following project completion as related to the scope of the project. This financial information will be used as a cost basis to determine the expected return (or savings) that occurs as a result of your project.

Q: Do smaller applicants get less preference?

A: No, they receive two additional preference points.

Q: Is population number cumulative?

A: No, we look at all numbers provided but will score your project based on the smallest population.

Q: Is \$45million a one-time fund or reoccurring? How is it revolving?

A: At present, it is a one-time fund. If it proves to be successful, it may be considered in the next biennium budget.

Q: Would a project be eligible for a grant if it starts prior to award being made?

A: Only in-hand funds can be counted but we will not reimburse for items we are paying for.

Q: How do rounds work?

A: The Council is seeking to fund quality projects. There is no set threshold for how much money will be allocated to each round.

Q: Are the awards competitive?

A: Yes.

Q: How does cure work?

A: Applications are cured for completeness. If an application is missing items that are necessary to score the project, we will allow applicants 10 days to send the information to us. We will not cure items that increase the quality of the application for competitiveness.

Q: The application seems to makes sense from the loan perspective, but some components are not applicable for grants.

A: The application has requirements that are only applicable to loans. This information is spelled out in the guidelines and checklist.

Q: Will grant and loans be scored separately?

A: Yes. Applications will be separated.

Q: If you are declined for an award will we be given more info about how application scored and if we should apply later?

A: Yes.

Q: What do you mean by projects that promote community attraction?

A: Community attraction, provide effective services while not increasing the cost of service.

Q: How do I find a collaborative partner?

A: Work with neighboring communities to find partners with similar service needs.

Q: When is Round two?

A: The deadline for round two is September 4, 2012.

Q: Does there have to be a formal performance audit of cost savings?

A: Preference points are given for performance audits conducted by the Auditor of State however, if you have an independent audit, please include it.

Q: Is there a two-year look-back with cash?

A: We will not fund completed projects or projects that have been stalled. Future expenses are eligible.

Q: What are loan deadlines?

A: There are four opportunities for loans. Please refer to the program calendar.

Q: Will the lead agency be responsible for loan repayments or will it be all collaborative partners?

A: The legal agreement will be between Development and the lead applicant. We would like to see how the agencies plan to handle repayments in their partnership agreement.

Q: Is there a preference for certain types of projects? Are there any priority projects?

A: No, the Council is looking for a diverse portfolio.

Q: How does in-kind contribution work with the private sector?

A: An example is a real estate company providing imaging services for a local government. Another example from Efficient Government Now is a regional chamber or business providing support or space/equipment at a discount (could be using a common space and be charged \$1 for it).

Q: Is marketing a soft or hard cost?

A: Marketing is technically a soft cost. An example of how a marketing cost could possibly fit within the guidelines would be using a communication plan for citizens. While we recognize the importance of marketing plan but intend to fund feasibility type studies.

Q: Does prevailing wage apply?

A: Yes.

Q: Can you be part of more than one grant/loan application?

A: Yes, as long as they are separate projects.

Q: The financial information refers to a three year financial history. If it is new project what are you looking for?

A: Cost associated with items that will now be saved.

Q: Can you put equipment purchases into a grant?

A: No, hard costs must be financed with loan funds.

Q: Are there any resources to show successful projects?

A: The Auditor of State's website <http://www.auditor.state.oh.us>.

Q: How firm is the March 1, 2012 deadline?

A: All deadlines are firm.

Q: If there are multiple partners, who is the financing agent?

A: The fiduciary agent is the named applicant.

Q: Is there a per-round cap?

A: Over fiscal year 2013, the scoring threshold will be set by quality but there are no caps on the rounds. The intention of the Council is to make funds last and fund quality projects.

Q: If a good high scoring application doesn't get funded, will it be kept on file for updated? If not funded in one round can you apply again?

A: You would have the opportunity to resubmit.

Q: Is there a maximum number of awards an entity can get?

A: No.

Q: Can you utilize funds for labor costs?

A: As long as they are in-kind contributions.

Q: Will funding be released after July 1, 2012?

A: Yes.

Q: How are you notified?

A: First at the council meeting. If you are (or are not) approved you will be notified in writing.

Q: Who can apply?

A: Political subdivisions smaller than that of the State. Please refer to section 2744.01 of the Ohio Revised Code for a complete list of eligible applicants.

Q: Can a state entity be used as a contractor?

A: Yes.

Q: Can a grant and loan application be submitted at the same time for a project?

A: Yes, as long as they are for separate projects.

Q: Are capital utilities eligible projects?

A: The intention of this program is to fund service oriented projects. There are other funding sources for capital utility projects.

Q: For a merger project, would a build of a cash reserve be considered a form of savings?

A: Yes.

Q. Is there an extension on the deadlines for resolutions of support and executed partnership agreements?

A. Yes. For round one **only**, applicants have until April 30, 2012 to submit executed resolutions of support and executed partnership agreements. We do ask that applicants include some type of documentation in their proposals outlining the resolution and/or partnership and when it is expected to be executed.