TechWerx BUILT Nonprofits Webinar Transcript
10/9/2024

Shane Hamstra, TechWerx

Good afternoon. Good morning, everyone depending on where you're joining from today. Thank you so much for being here for this webinar. Just a few quick announcements before we begin.

If you need any assistance today throughout today's event, please use the chat. I'll be happy to address any technical needs you might have or need in there.

The Q&A is the best place to place questions you have for our presenters today and our panelists we will try to get to as many questions as possible, and as you see, questions submitted, you are able to upload those questions, and that will help us understand which of those questions are most interesting to all of you.

Today's webinar is being recorded and will be posted for archival viewing. And you'll get an email about that when it's ready.

So lastly, if you would like to use the caption function on your screen for today's webinar click on the CC button on the toolbar, you see, and click on show subtitles. Each of you can individually manage that for your own screen. So, without further ado, I'd love to hand things over to our panelists and presenters to get us going.

Adam Klich, TechWerx

00:02:39

Alright. Thank you, Shane. Good afternoon, everyone. We're very excited to host this informational webinar for the Building Upgrades Inspiring Local Transformation opportunity or BUILT Nonprofits.

And this is being funded by the Office of State and Community Energy programs at the Department of Energy.

So, a very brief intro into TechWerx. We're a new innovation hub managed by RTI International in support of the Department of Energy.

Our goal is to facilitate connections among Federal, academia, nonprofits and small businesses across the US.

To hear about any new opportunities that come up, or, you know, updates on BUILT, we recommend following our page on Linkedin, as well as signing up for our newsletter via a link on our website.

Today we're here for BUILT Nonprofits.

Just you know, looking at the dates, the informational webinar is today. This is going to be recorded and posted to our website within 2 to 3 business days or so. And there will be another office hours, Q&A session currently scheduled for October 30th at 2 PM Eastern.

The submission deadline for this opportunity is November 12th at 11:59PM.

We suggest aiming for an earlier submission so you avoid being pressured or if you have last minute changes, and you have enough time to deal with any technical issues that may arise.

If you do have any questions between today and the Q&A session on October 30th, we suggest you either contact us via the Contact Us form on our website or send an email to info@techwerx.org. All of this information is on our website, on the opportunity page, including the dates and everything. So that's the best place to go for the latest.

A couple of housekeeping items. Questions will be handled towards the end of the session. We're going to be using the Q&A function of Zoom, and we'll be addressing the questions that get the most votes. So please go ahead and vote for the questions that you want to make sure they get answered.

We may not be able to get through all of the questions that we get today. We had almost a thousand people register for the webinar, so there's a lot of interest. But we'll try to get through as many as we can. For those that we can't get through today, all of the questions will be passed over to Department of Energy, and they'll work on getting them answered. All of the answers for both the questions that are addressed during the webinar, and the questions that we can't get to now, but will be addressed later, will be posted on that FAQ, on the opportunity page of our website. And we're going to be updating that periodically.

As we get more questions between now and the Q&A session on the 30th, we'll be addressing those and updating the FAQ. So, keep checking our website for the latest information.

And just a couple of other things. Per DOE guidance, we do not allow any AI bots on the webinar, such as Otter AI or other note-taking AI bots. You shouldn't need them, because this is being recorded, and the transcript will also be available on the website. But just so you know, if we see them, they'll be kicked off of the session.

I think that's it. So next slide, Shane, please.

Just for a quick introduction. My name is Adam Klich. I lead the TechWerx hub here at RTI, and we have joining us today from Department of Energy, Gretchen Gigley, who is the Nonprofits Lead for the DOE Renew America's Nonprofits Team. Isaac Sloan, the Communications Fellow, and Annabelle Swift, the Program Fellow for that team.

With that, I'm going to pass it over to Gretchen to cover the more interesting part of the webinar, which is what you're all here for. Gretchen.

Gretchen Gigley, DOE SCEP

00:06:42

Thank you so much, Adam. I appreciate the kickoff here. And hey everyone, so excited to be here. You have no idea we've been really anticipating this for quite some time.

So happy to hop into the details. I 1st wanted to let you all know that BUILT is made possible by the Bipartisan Infrastructure law, and it comes to you from SCEP, as Adam mentioned, which is Department of Energy State Community Energy Programs.

SCEP really focuses on technical assistance, place-based funding, in-place-based funding to state and local communities. So, schools, nonprofits, tribal governments and more. And we really aim our assistance towards reducing energy costs and carbon emissions, creating jobs and generating local economic development. Next slide.

So, this is the the second funding opportunity released by SCEP through Renew America's Nonprofits. And it's really based on what we know. (Which is) the incredible need in this sector. So, this slide is probably pointing out the obvious to all the folks on the call here. You all are aware of the need and and constraints on a daily basis both within your organization and also within your community.

And, when you look at the breadth of nonprofits, 1.5 million nonprofits across the country and the critical role they play in the lives of Americans, y'all are providing food, shelter, childcare, medical care, access to arts and cultural events, and so much more.

You're doing all of this while operating on a really limited budget. And most of that budget is poured into your mission. Meanwhile, we know energy consumption is the second highest operational expense for nonprofits.

So, we look at this as a tremendous opportunity to support efficiency in nonprofits. We're really looking to to reduce your energy use, but but really lower your operational costs, too, so that you can do more with your mission.

We know that strong communities need strong nonprofits. So, this grant is really geared towards lowering energy use so that you can have more money for your mission.

Next slide.

So, what is BUILT (nonprofits)? Adam beautifully spelled out the Acronym: Building Upgrades Inspiring Local Transformation (BUILT Nonprofits.) It's a new funding opportunity, and it's a little bit different than renew America's. The Renew America's Nonprofits Grant, which we'll talk about a little bit later, but it's aimed towards supporting building improvements in nonprofits. It's a 2-million-dollar funding opportunity to provide individual grants of up to 100 k to nonprofits.

Next slide.

So, how is it different than the 2023. Renew America's Nonprofits. Grant. It was about a year ago, actually, that we announced the selections for that grant. The the picture of the Secretary earlier actually was taken that day at a food bank. This is different, because that grant was an aggregator model meaning we were funding larger, regional, state-based national organizations to then facilitate the implementation of projects. We're passing the funding through to smaller community-based nonprofits. BUILT is different in that we're directly funding community-based nonprofits so that it isn't an aggregator model. It's providing, direct funding.

It can fund equipment and installation costs. And, like I said earlier, grants of up to 100 K are eligible. It's a reimbursable grant, just like Renew America's Nonprofits Grant , and does require a 20% cost share. We'll talk a little bit more about that later.

Adam mentioned, you'll keep hearing this because we want to make sure everybody knows that the application deadline is November 12th. It's a very streamlined application. You can hop on that website and and take a look at the application and what's required, but we will go through it later in this presentation, too. Next slide.

So, who should apply? 501(c)(3) nonprofits. So, you're going to hear me talk about that a couple times, are eligible for this grant. 501(c)(3). You have to have that designation.

You also need to own and operate your building and then have a need for an energy upgrade. The other part of this is, there are some reporting requirements that are more like quantitative, qualitative. How much energy are you saving as a result of this upgrade?

How is this benefiting your organization in your in your community. So, you do need to have the capacity to measure and meet the energy efficiency goals that you propose in your application. There are a couple Federal requirements, and we'll talk about those in a second.

The cost share is another another requirement. Again, in kind or monetary, and then reporting, what are your energy savings? How is this impacting your community? Because ultimately, that's what we're hoping these savings will do. Okay, next slide.

Let's see. Okay, so what is fundable through BUILT? This is the list of projects that we'd like to see proposed, and that are eligible through this grant opportunity.

These are all tied directly to reducing energy use in your building and lowering operational costs. So, this is the list. The the important thing to note here is that renewables are not fundable through this grant, so no solar, geothermal, electric vehicles.

It is an energy efficiency first grant. So, we are focused on lowering your energy bills so that when you, down the road, pursue solar, you're able to right size that solar and avoid oversizing and avoid added expense. So, it's an energy efficiency first, grant, and this is the project list we are looking for applications for.

Okay, next slide.

Alright. Cost share. There's a couple of slides on this that I'll just move quickly through so we can get to the application and some of the examples. But it can be in-kind or monetary, or a combination of those two as well.

It can be provided by the nonprofit applying for this grant. It can be provided by a funder. It perhaps, is. Perhaps there's an opportunity to leverage this funding to bring in an additional funder and cover that match, but we will require a cost share commitment letter in the application that just shows us or tells us how you're going to bring the cost share. Who is going to provide cost share and that is something that you'll need in the application.

Okay, I'm gonna just jump to the next slide so we can.

So, I want to note here that cost share is calculate is not calculated like match. It's calculated a little bit different. So, we've done the calculation for you here. If you're applying for the 100 K.

If you're applying for the 100 k for this grant, your cost share will be $25,000. If you're not, you need to to revisit this slide and take a look at how to calculate the cost share appropriately.

If you're coming in at $80,000 or something like that. So, take a look at this slide. We have three different examples. It's pretty straightforward math, but three different examples of how you can calculate the cost share correctly.

Okay, next slide.

And then a bit more about the Federal requirements. The first isn't really a federal requirement, but I did want to note that that we anticipate projects being completed within twelve months. There is the opportunity for a six-month, no cost, time extension, but the projects really are meant to be completed within a twelve-month period.

The 1st Federal requirement is the Davis, Bacon Wage requirement, and your contractors will have to adhere to that.

The good news is this isn't new, you know. This is something most contractors are very familiar with. It's to ensure that workers are prioritized, communities are protected by upholding local wage and labor standards. So, we'll work with you and your contractor to help, you know, meet this requirement. But I did want to point it out here today, that, projects will also have to comply with the National Environmental Protection Act. (NEPA) standards.

So, in these environmental and related social and economic effects of your projects. So.

But I will say the list of projects that we have that I mentioned earlier, those are meant to help streamline this process. So that's why the list is what it is. That's one of the reasons.

To help streamline this process. So, reducing potential for ground disturbance and things like that, and to allow you to be able to accomplish these projects within twelve months, they really should be doable within that timeframe.

But I'll note here that historic buildings may require additional review, and that's a very common thing to have happen, and something that we will work with the Awardees to get handled correctly.

Okay. Next slide.

And then just quickly, the eligibility criteria

501(c)(3) nonprofit, own and operate your building. And so, at the application level, you will have to show documentation that shows that you are a 501(c)(3), and that you own and operate. So, a deed or a title, something like that. Applications must provide the required cost share. We talked a bit about that, and you must qualify as a domestic entity. That's another eligibility require requirement.

You're not eligible if you have a different nonprofit designation. It must be a 501(c)(3). If you have a lease, even if it's a long-term lease, unfortunately, this isn't an opportunity that you're eligible for. You're not eligible if you're an international entity, and we must receive the applications. By 11:59 PM. Eastern time on November 12th or they're late and will not be reviewed. But none of that's gonna happen, because we're starting early and hope the application process is like I said, very straightforward and streamlined. And so, we're hopeful that will make the process easy on on y'all

to apply. All right. I think we're going to move into some examples here. So, you get a good idea of what we're thinking we might see in the applications. Isaac's gonna take you through a few of those, so I'll pass it off to Isaac now.

Isaac Sloan, DOE SCEP

00:19:21

Thanks, Gretchen. I'll just be running through some examples of applicant and project scenarios to kind of paint a picture of how organizations might use funding through BUILT nonprofits.

I do want to point out that these are all fake examples, and by no means an exhaustive list of the eligible projects or applicants, and we definitely encourage you to see the opportunity page for more details about eligibility.

But with this 1st example, project, what we have is a 501(c)(3) Nonprofit that is a foodbank serving disadvantaged communities and facing really high energy bills due to inefficient facility equipment.

Now they decide that they want to use BUILT nonprofits, funding to upgrade refrigeration systems, and something kind of unique here is that they provide an in-kind cost share through donated installation services from a community partner rather than a monetary cost share. Now, as a result of this project, they see reduced energy bills drop by 25% and decide to reinvest those savings, to expand mobile food distribution services and serve even more meals.

Next slide, please.

Now, this next example is a little bit more unique. So, we have a church that's serving a disadvantaged community and has a historic building that needs renovation because their HVAC is failing every summer. Now the unique part of this is that the church is co-owned by two separate 501(c)(3). nonprofits, and so they decide to invest the $100,000 as a part of a much larger HVAC upgrade investing in high-efficiency equipment.

Now, the important thing to note here is that although there are two 501(c)(3) nonprofits who own the building, there is still only one church building, so they would only be submitting one application despite the fact that there are two separate nonprofits. So, as a result of this project, they do see that the extreme heat is no longer a health concern for the congregation, and the indoor air quality is vastly improved. And then, with those savings from this improved HVAC system, the church is actually able to enhance their after-school programs and thus better serve the community.

Next slide.

So in this 3rd project example, we have an unhoused shelter, 501(c)(3) nonprofit that's located in a colder climate with really poor insulation, making it really expensive to keep occupants warm, and as a result, they have high utility bills that are, of course, crippling the operational budget and really limiting the ability to serve the community. So, they decide to use funding through, BUILT to go ahead and make insulation upgrades throughout their facility and provide a cash cost share, and a Funder in this case steps in and pledges to match the DOE investment, to make the project go that

much farther, and as a result of this they see lower utility costs which lead to operational savings, and then those savings can then be redirected towards expanding shelter capacity so that they can better serve their community.

Next slide.

So, in this project. We have a 501(c)(3) private school that is seeking solar. Now I do want to flag, as Gretchen pointed out, unfortunately, that BUILT nonprofits cannot fund solar or renewable energy upgrades, nor can it fund electric vehicles or EV charging infrastructure. But it is important to note that the first step in any of these longer-term projects is to ensure that your facility has strong energy efficiency.

So, this School Board is interested in solar and using elective pay in the long run. And so, they decide to target some energy efficiency upgrades first by applying for $100,000 to replace windows and doors. So, using BUILT funding, they do replace these windows and doors, making the building more energy efficient and lowering costs, and in the process providing a cash cost share.

As is mandated by BUILT nonprofits. As a result, they see that the building is more efficient as a whole, making it more prepared for having solar in the long run, and the savings that they see by having these newly retrofitted buildings and windows can actually be invested into a fundraising account for this longer-term solar project.

Next slide.

Now, the last example I want to show you guys is for a 501(c)(3) camp for kids which is interested in improving its lighting. So, the camp itself spans some pretty large areas, including two primary facilities. Now, the land itself is leased from the State Park. However, these two buildings are owned by the 501(c)(3) nonprofit. So, they're eligible to apply for BUILT nonprofits.

So, they go ahead and decide to use the funding for the lighting upgrades and realize that they can actually use the $100,000 to cover lighting upgrades in both of these facilities. And even though the project is spanning these 2 facilities, it's really important to note that they only submitted one application, and we encourage all nonprofits who are interested in BUILT nonprofits to submit only their best proposal just because of the expected demand that we're going to have for this opportunity.

Now, in this example the lighting has a really quick payback for savings, and the camp is able to reinvest those savings to start a scholarship fund for kids from a nearby, disadvantaged community to attend, just to better serve the community that they're located nearby.

So those are just some of the examples to give you a better idea of what we're expecting to see, and some of the ways that the built funding can be used. And now I'm just going to go ahead and pass it over to Annabelle to talk about some more details surrounding the application.

Annabelle Swift, DOE SCEP

00:25:07

Thanks, Isaac.

Alright. Next slide

Great. These are the 4 sections of the application, and I think someone asked in the chat, you can see the application. Once you click, apply, it should all be on that same page, but we will walk you through it here as well. And, as a note you do not apply on grants.gov. You apply on the TechWerx Opportunity Page, which will be linked throughout this presentation.

Next slide.

The first section of the application asks some questions about your contact information, your organization, as well as a couple eligibility verification questions. Next. And then you get more into the details of the project. So, we will ask in the application about the energy improvement. There is a list of eligible improvements you will be able to select from, as well as the estimated energy impacts. We ask for a plan for measuring and verifying those energy impacts. We recommend Energy Star Portfolio Manager, but that is not required.

In addition, this is the section where you can add information about your budget, such as how much funding you're requesting, what cost share you are bringing, as well as a justification of that funding request.

Next slide.

Great. Now, the meat of the application is really in the Project Narrative, we will ask for a project overview again to detail your energy improvement as well as the objectives.

This is where you can include a work plan, a timeline, and the team of who will be working on this project.

In addition, the section has a statement of need. So, you can detail information about the impact this funding will have on your building as well as the building's occupants and the community you serve.

And this gets elaborated specifically in the Community Benefits Plan, which is the next section which asks how energy savings will be translated as shown in some of the examples, and whether you anticipate leveraging this grant to secure additional funding.

Next slide.

Finally, many of the questions in the application do sort of get referenced with supporting documentation. So, earlier in the application, you'll be asked if you're a 501(c)(3), and that you own your building. This is where you can supply that documentation to prove the 501(c)(3) status proof of building ownership, as well as to provide a building assessment and documentation to support cost or energy estimates. And I do want to flag that the building assessment can be an energy audit of any level, or there is a DOE tool called the Better Report you can generate, or an equivalent, other building assessment.

And in addition, the final documentation to provide is cost share, documentation in the form of a cost share letter of commitment, which specifies who is providing cost share as well as the amount you are applying for with the cost share.

Next slide.

That is everything in the application. Now we'd love to introduce you to the review criteria. So, what will applications be reviewed based on? The first review criteria are the energy related impacts of the upgrade, and that is weighted at 40%.

The next review criteria is the organizational capacity and need. So, understanding the team composition, the timeline and the statement of need.

Finally, the third criteria is the community related impacts, including the Justice 40 community benefits and the reinvestment to the mission of the nonprofit.

Next slide.

I think we're going to have a lot of time for questions, but before we do that, do want to emphasize the key dates. Applications opened on October first, last week. This is now the first webinar. We will also hold office hours on October 30th, I believe you can start registering for that. Now, if you know, you might have questions as the application deadline gets closer.

And of course, that important deadline is November 12th is when applications will be due. DOE and TechWerx anticipate the selection notification will go out mid-December around December 17th.

And, as Gretchen mentioned at the beginning, as you're planning your project timelines, please note that projects should be estimated to be completed within about twelve months of the award being signed.

All right. Next slide. I will now open it up and pass it over to Adam, or sorry, to Shane for some questions, and thank you all for being here once again. This is also the QR code to scan. There's a lot of information on the opportunity page as well as that is where you can click to start your application.

Shane Hamstra, TechWerx

00:29:36

Thank you all so much. Yeah, we definitely have a lot of questions to go through. So, I can confidently say that we will not really get through all of them, we'll do a good majority here.

Okay, as we stated, we'll try to go by the questions that have received the most up-votes so far. So, the first question comes in. Pardon me.

Are energy audits required pre-application? If we are not in possession of documents at the time of application, what other building assessment documents can support and help demonstrate justification?

Gretchen Gigley, DOE SCEP

00:30:15

Yeah, that's a great question,

You know what we're really looking for here is that these are planned projects that you know based on a plan for your building that you're prioritizing, you know, energy efficiency equipment, and that maybe you've had a technical expert look and help you plan out and prioritize what projects would best lend itself to energy efficiency and lowering operational costs. So, an audit does that it provides a roadmap. But we're not requiring you to have a formal audit before this application. There is a tool called "Better" that DOE has developed. That is a self audit tool, essentially.

So, you can walk through and do that audit. And it'll give you recommendations for projects that will really be impactful for your building based on the the data that you put in really user friendly. So that's 1 that I would recommend checking out.

It could be a walkthrough and recommendations and some documentation from a contractor that is helping you with your overall building upgrade. So, it's not a required formal audit. But we do want some kind of evidence of there being technical expertise in the decision for why you came to this specific upgrade and how it's gonna lend itself to efficiency and operational impact that helped.

Shane Hamstra, TechWerx

00:32:01

Thank you, Gretchen.

I just wanna make a quick announcement. I've seen it in the chat a couple of times. Just so you know, the webinar is being recorded, and the slides from today will be provided via PDF on the TechWerx website. So, you'll get an email as a registrant from today's event when that archive recording and the associated file for this Pdf of the slides becomes available. So just let you know.

Next question: The application references bids. Should we have quotes/estimates at the time of application?

And are there any special procurement rules outside of uniform guidance?

Gretchen Gigley, DOE SCEP

00:32:43

You will need to know estimated costs. We're not pinning you down to a bid. But there is a requirement for a bid. But that is an optional document to add on to your application.

And so, you will need to have a good idea of your project costs. But the concern there was: You get a bid, and then perhaps, that bid expires by the time you are ready to do your project. But if you do have bid documents, we recommend you attaching those to your application.

There is the requirement; I'm trying to go back and remember the pieces of this question because it was multi-layered here. But we require the cost share commitment letter. So, we want to know where the cost shares happening when you invoice. And again, this is a reimbursable grant.

You have to have evidence of the cost share at the time of invoicing.

So that's another requirement in terms of procurement requirements because of the size of these grants.

We want you to have a competitive bidding process meaning, you get a couple bids for these projects. (Two to three bids.) That's not required. What we want to know, what we want to see, though, is that you're following your own internal procurement processes. And there are procurement processes. So that's something that we'll work with all the awardees on.

But no, no requirement of three bids, for instance, because we do know that it's hard to get multiple contractors to come out to your building, depending on where you are and the size of the project, and so forth. So hopefully, that helps answer your question.

Shane Hamstra, TechWerx

00:35:02

Thank you. Again, next question is:

What resources are available to help us gather the data for the "Energy Impact Section?" (i.e., anticipated energy savings estimated annual greenhouse gas emissions, reductions set for annual energy cost savings.)

Gretchen Gigley, DOE SCEP

00:35:19

I mean, this comes back to probably the audit question, depending on the path that you use for the audit. A lot of that information may be in your audit document. You can always also use the "Better" tool. Some of these, your contractor might help with. We also have some organizations working with local colleges and universities to help with these calculations. So that's bringing in a partner to help you with that.

I guess it sort of aligns with what kind of documentation you're bringing in to support why you're suggesting an HVAC unit of this type, so I would lean on those technical experts to help you calculate those numbers. And these are estimates. So, we're looking for reasonable estimates here in the application.

Shane Hamstra, TechWerx

00:36:29

Thank you very much.

Next question: If an applicant has three separate properties owned at three different addresses, can we submit multiple applications? Or is this limited to one proposal per nonprofit?

Example: One of our properties is in the Justice 40 area while the others serve other communities.

Gretchen Gigley, DOE SCEP

00:36:58

Yeah, I mean, our recommendation is to bring your best project forward here. This is going to be highly competitive. And so, which one of those is is best positioned for a grant like this. And meeting those parameters of the twelve-month implementation.

Individual buildings are eligible for projects up to $100 k. But organizationally, we do recommend you bringing your strongest project forward for this particular grant opportunity.

Shane Hamstra, TechWerx

00:37:48

Thank you. Our next question is: Are projects that are already underway eligible for this Grant program?

Gretchen Gigley, DOE SCEP

00:38:00

That is a good one. I don't know that we've that we've had that question quite yet. So that's one I would love to run through our team and provide the answer through the Q&A. And I'm sorry to have to pause on that. But just want to be able to give you the best answer, and not make a mistake here. So, if you could, if we could pause on that, and we'll add that to our list to post on the on the Q&A. But thank you for that question. That's a really good one, and I'm sure we're going to be asked it again down the line.

Shane Hamstra, TechWerx

00:38:45

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Thank you, Gretchen. Next question is: can you please provide more information about the "Better" report mentioned as an alternative to an energy audit?

Gretchen Gigley, DOE SCEP

00:38:56

Yeah, I'm wondering if one of my colleagues has the link to "Better," and maybe we can put it in the chat. But it's essentially a self-audit of your building. So, you're going to have to put in things like your-, and maybe Annabelle might have a little more detail here because she spent a little bit more time in that tool than than me. But you'll put in your building square footage and some information about your current energy use, current building systems. So, you will have to gather that information about your building and then it will generate a list of (energy efficiency) projects that would be appropriate and be impactful to your building.

Annabelle Swift

00:39:48

The only thing I would add to that, and we do have the link in the chat. Thank you for everyone who's adding it as well. There's also a tutorial available on our website of how to use that tool easily. And once you have the report, if that is the option to submit, you just make sure to "Control +P" and "print to PDF" the page.

That's normally the best way to make sure all the information is being captured. So, you don't have to screenshot lots of things. And then as we mentioned, that can be submitted in addition, or instead of an energy audit or something similar.

Gretchen Gigley, DOE SCEP

00:40:24

Thanks, Annabel.

Shane Hamstra, TechWerx

00:40:30

Thank you.

Our next question is: Is this expected to be a one-time funding opportunity? Or are there any plans to offer this next year. In future years.

Gretchen Gigley, DOE SCEP

00:40:45

The answer is that we hope to to be able to offer that this again, but at this time we do not have additional funding for this this program. But our hope is that we will be able to offer this opportunity again.

Shane Hamstra, TechWerx

00:41:07

Appreciate that.

Gretchen Gigley, DOE SCEP

00:41:09

Yeah, thank, you.

Shane Hamstra, TechWerx

00:41:11

Next question is: Is being in a Justice 40 community a requirement, and are faith-based nonprofits equally eligible to apply?

Gretchen Gigley, DOE SCEP

00:41:22

Faith-based organizations that are 501(c)(3) and have that designation are absolutely eligible to apply. You just have to be a 501(c)(3) and that's the main requirement there. Justice 40 communities, are not required. We're not requiring that for this opportunity. But it is something that we look for in the application. So, we're looking at not only where the organization is located, but also the community they're impacting. So, it's one of those two data points that I would add to your application if that's relevant to the projects. You are eligible if you're not located in a Justice, 40 community. But again, it's about where you're located and who you're impacting for this particular grant opportunity. So, think about those two data points as you're applying.

Shane Hamstra, TechWerx

00:42:38

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Next question: Can the 20% match be Federal funding?

Gretchen Gigley, DOE SCEP

00:42:45

We were just discussing this yesterday. So, I'll give an example, and that's probably the easiest way to explain it. If BUILT is funding an HVAC unit, another Federal Grant can't also fund that same HVAC unit.

The other thing is, you can't use another Federal grant for your match for this grant, or for your cost share for this grant. So those are the two kind of barriers there, but you can stack Federal funding if perhaps you're doing a full building renovation, and you want to do HVAC, windows and lighting, BUILT is going to cover your HVAC. But then you have another Federal grant doing lighting and windows. That is an appropriate use of stacking two Federal grants. So hopefully, those examples helped.

Great.

Shane Hamstra, TechWerx

00:43:51

Appreciate that example, Gretchen.

Just a reminder. If you joined recently, today's webinar is being recorded and will be provided via Archive on the TechWerx website, along with a PDF version of today's slides as well.

Next question coming in: What is the anticipated project award period? Example? Is it approximately calendar year 2025, or something different.

Gretchen Gigley, DOE SCEP

00:44:18

Yeah. And I think we must have taken out the timeline slide. We would anticipate letting selectees know somewhere in mid-December. Projects would begin in 2025, though they would hit the ground in 2025, and then you would have a twelve-month period to implement those projects.

Shane Hamstra, TechWerx

00:44:53

Appreciate it.

Next question: Many school districts are nonprofits, but not technically 501(c)(3) organizations, so would they be ineligible to apply. If a school has a 501(c)(3) Associated Foundation, can they apply that way?

What about charter schools? Thank you very much.

Gretchen Gigley, DOE SCEP

00:45:14

Most charter schools in my experience are 501(c)(3) is not all for sure. So again, that charter schools, you may have your 501(c)(3).

It just has to be a 501(c)(3) the rep here is the owner and operator. So does that 501(c)(3) support organization own and operate the school.

That's the question that you're gonna have to answer to to be able to determine eligibility, because that is a requirement. So, we will ask for proof of that.

So, if the answer is yes, then then yes, you are eligible. If no, then, unfortunately, you're not able to apply for this.

We do have another program within our department called Renew America Schools. And I would look, look at that and check that program out and see if that might be a better fit for a school that doesn't have their 501(c)(3).

Shane Hamstra, TechWerx

00:46:22

Appreciate that information.

The next question is asking: Could you provide more information about Justice 40? What it is and provide more information about that.

Gretchen Gigley, DOE SCEP

00:46:35

I think probably the best thing to do. If I could call on my colleagues again to put the link to the J-40, page on DOE's website. That's probably the best place to go to find out the information and details. There are mapping tools also that will help you identify what the Justice 40 communities are, how they're identified. So, I'm going to refer you to that site. And that might be something we can share also through the Q&A for folks.

Shane Hamstra, TechWerx

00:47:13

Great. And yeah, I see the link in the chat. So, appreciate posting that.

Alright. Next question is: Do we have to fund the complete project before receiving the Grant funds? Or will they be available at the beginning of the project?

Gretchen Gigley, DOE SCEP

00:47:27

Yeah, so this is a reimbursable grant. So, you can invoice, though, more than once. If you buy the equipment you can invoice, and then, if you pay for the installation, you can invoice after that. So, you can invoice more than once within this Grant period. You can invoice multiple times, but but it has to be for costs already covered, and you have to have that 20% match of that invoice amount in hand, or evidence of that.

So those are the requirements. And this is a milestone-based program, too. So when you do enter into this grant, you will have set milestones that you have to meet and those are typically, then the time, the time periods that you would provide the invoice and based on the milestones met, and it is things like buying the equipment, installation, measurement and verification, things like that.

I hope that was clear.

Shane Hamstra, TechWerx

00:48:55

Question is, I believe, solar was referenced in information. But our question specifically: Is solar panel purchase or installation eligible, under this grant opportunity?

Gretchen Gigley, DOE SCEP

00:49:08

Unfortunately, it is not. We're not able to support any renewables through this provision and through this grant.

But again, like Isaac, mentioned, the hope here is that you're you know you're looking at energy efficiency. First, you're reducing your energy bills so that you can appropriately size. solar panels, to get more out of your renewables, and also not oversize things. So, by lowering your energy bills. If you're looking at solar, you're essentially what I would consider solar ready then. And so no, no renewables. Unfortunately for this, but an important step towards renewables, and I think it really does set y'all on a path to renewables as well.

Shane Hamstra, TechWerx

00:50:10

Thank you. Gretchen.

Next question is: It sounds like HVAC upgrades to existing systems are allowed. What about New HVAC systems, such as the installation of an energy, efficient air conditioning system?

Gretchen Gigley, DOE SCEP

00:50:24

Yeah, absolutely.

Yeah. That's an easy one. Thank you. Yeah. The the answer is, yes to that. And you'll see that on the list of projects to just when you, when you pull up this slide deck, take a really close look at that list of projects, and that'll hopefully clarify a lot of the "What is fundable?" Questions.

Shane Hamstra, TechWerx

00:50:52

Thank you.

I see a couple of questions submitted. And the same topic area about the availability of the application before actually filling it out. Is there a way to get that? To review/Understand before actually filling that out.

Gretchen Gigley, DOE SCEP

00:51:09

Yeah, I wanted to punt this one to the TechWerx team, if possible, because at this point, I'm not sure of the capabilities of the site.

Adam Klich

00:51:22

Yeah, I'll say we'll see if we can just do a printout of the application and post it to the opportunity page. But I'd recommend just signing up like creating an account. It's a very simple, you know, like, maybe 10 questions around just your name, email organization and kind of address. So, it's very

simple. So, if you can do it, but we'll we'll try to pull a printout of the application and have that listed on the opportunity page so you don't have to create an account to see it.

Gretchen Gigley, DOE SCEP

00:51:55

Yeah, it's I mean, essentially, it's a tell us about you. Tell us about your building. Tell us about your project, and then some verification documents so overall. But it's helpful that's such a great question. So, thank you for that. It's helpful, I know sometimes to see it ahead of time.

Shane Hamstra, TechWerx

00:52:18

Thank you.

Question is: Are you targeting funding for small nonprofits with budgets of greater than $500,000?

Gretchen Gigley, DOE SCEP

00:52:31

Hey there are no size limits, you know, on either side. Here it's really about what you're proposing and the level of need. Can you get it done in this 12-month period and potential impact? Who/what communities you're impacting. So, it's those kinds of things, so operational. Budget size is not (a factor). There is no minimum or maximum there for this grant. So, we encourage all 501(c)(3)'s that own and operate their building, and are in need of upgrades, to apply for this. That's not a data point that we're that we're really looking at.

Shane Hamstra, TechWerx

00:53:23

Thank you.

Gretchen Gigley, DOE SCEP

00:53:24

Yep.

Shane Hamstra, TechWerx

00:53:24

Looks like we got about six, seven minutes remaining, so we should be able to get through a few more questions.

Next question is: Does salary for internal labor, for example, are people selling new furnaces count towards the 20% cost share match.

Gretchen Gigley, DOE SCEP

00:53:40

So, this covers equipment and installation, so the the time associated with the installation would be covered under that invoice. So, the costs associated with that contractor. But in terms of organizational facilitation of that? There isn't overhead available for that (in this award). So, this is equipment and installation.

Shane Hamstra, TechWerx

00:54:12

Thank you.

Does the energy audit need to be an ASHRAE Audit? If so, what level?

Gretchen Gigley, DOE SCEP

00:54:24

So, I know Annabelle spoke about this a bit, too. The the audit level is not dictated here. We want to see some evidence, again of some technical expertise helping identify what your upgrade specifics are. So again, "Better" tool, you know, could be a level one, could be a level three audit. It could be that you have a university engineer in his class come through and do kind of a walkthrough and prioritization. That could be. Somebody did an energy model for you. And you have that data point.

And it could be based on some other technical expertise that you have within your staff or your board. But we do want to see evidence of that. So that's the only thing. The level of audit is not dictated.

Yep.

Shane Hamstra, TechWerx

00:55:36

Do the "Buy American Build American" requirements apply?

Gretchen Gigley, DOE SCEP

00:55:40

Yeah, that's a good question. They do not apply to this this this grant.

So, that's not something that is on our list of Federal requirements. It's only Davis, Bacon, and NEPA for this particular grant opportunity.

Shane Hamstra, TechWerx

00:56:14

Next question is: What are the restrictions for recipients without a historic preservation? Programmatic agreement? Could you dive into this requirement.

Gretchen Gigley, DOE SCEP

00:56:26

Sorry. The first part is your state or organization without a historic preservation programmatic agreement. I'm not sure, Shane, what the 1st part of your question? Sorry.

Shane Hamstra, TechWerx

00:56:42

Yeah, that's that's where that's where it. Let me reread it, maybe. My audio. Got a little bit messed up there.

What are the restrictions for recipients without a historic preservation? Programmatic agreement.

Gretchen Gigley, DOE SCEP

00:57:00

So that applies to that. That's a historic building thing. So, you know what we're gonna recommend in terms of NEPA is if you do have a historic building? You would need to. Re, you would need to contact your local SHPO office and take a really close look at the programmatic agreement that they have on their website and then get a good idea of what their requirements are. So, our requirement is that you may meet the requirements of your local ship office. If you're a historic building.

If they don't have a programmatic agreement, then we would pull in our NEPA specialists at DOE to help support that specific project? I do think that most of them do at the state level, but that that's something. We have a great amount of support for within DOE to to really dig into specific projects and help us be able to facilitate that with our selectees. So, we would work with our NEPA office to get that handled.

Shane Hamstra, TechWerx

00:58:24

Thank you. Could you please define "reimbursable?" Does this mean repay upfront? And then the cost is reimbursed?

Gretchen Gigley, DOE SCEP

00:58:32

Yeah, that's exactly right. So, you would. You would cover the costs upfront, and then they're reimbursed. And I do. I do think this particular funding mechanism is really efficient at that. At this process. And the reimbursable grant kind of mechanism. But it is. Yeah, it is reimbursable. So, you will have to have the funds upfront.

Carrie Mcintosh

00:59:00

Yeah. And I would just like to jump in and say as well that your payments you invoice for hitting certain milestones.

So, you will meet with the team and develop some milestones to hit over the course of your award. And when you reach those milestones or achieve those milestones. Then you will get paid back for hitting those milestones.

Shane Hamstra, TechWerx

00:59:36

It looks like we have time for one last question.

Can you provide more information about the requirements for a SHPO consultation on buildings older than forty-five years.

Gretchen Gigley, DOE SCEP

00:59:50

Yeah. So that that's what we were talking about before, under NEPA. So, you would need to get in contact with your local SHPO office and all of their requirements. You know they're different per state. So that's why we recommend, and our NEPA specialists recommend, getting in touch with your local ship office, getting familiar with their requirements and then working with them directly on requirements associated with historic buildings. Our only requirement is that you contact your SHPO office and make sure that you're adhering to their requirements.

Shane Hamstra, TechWerx

01:00:36

Okay, thank you so much. There's a lot of open questions, a lot of great chat, a lot of great engagement today. To be respectful of everyone's time, I think we will conclude. And just a reminder that the recording and associated presentation from today will be provided on the tech Works website, and you'll get an email message notifying you when that is available. Thank you all very much for today and have a wonderful afternoon and take care.

Adam Klich, TechWerx

01:01:04

Thank you. Everyone.

Gretchen Gigley, DOE SCEP

01:01:05

Thanks, everybody.