85 7th Place East, Suite 280
St. Paul, Minnesota 55101
mn.gov/commerce/energy
energy.contracts@state.mn.us

MINNESOTA DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

DIVISION OF ENERGY RESOURCES

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

COMM-ENF01-20251020

Continuing Education for Real Estate Licensing

Date Issued: October 20, 2025

Date Due: November 10, 2025

Minnesota's Commitment to Diversity and Inclusion

The State of Minnesota is committed to diversity and inclusion in its public procurement process. The goal is to ensure that those providing goods and services to the State are representative of our Minnesota communities and include businesses owned by minorities, women, veterans, and those with substantial physical disabilities. Creating broader opportunities for historically under-represented groups provides for additional options and greater competition in the marketplace, creates stronger relationships and engagement within our communities, and fosters economic development and equality.

To further this commitment, the Department of Administration operates a program for Minnesota-based small businesses owned by minorities, women, veterans, and those with substantial physical disabilities. For additional information on this program, or to determine eligibility, please call 651-296-2600 or go to www.mmd.admin.state.mn.us/mn02001.htm.

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I. Grant Overview

The Minnesota Department of Commerce (Department) is seeking applications from education providers to provide continuing education courses for real estate licensees, or those pursuing their real estate license. The purpose of this program is to provide funding to qualified continuing education providers to offer approved courses, free of charge, to real estate licensees who are pursuing or maintain their license. This grant opportunity is provided under the Real Estate Education, Research and Recovery Fund (REERF) (Minn. Stat. 82.86).

Funding Availability Funding of up to $300,000.00 will be allocated through an eligibility-based application process. Selected grantees cannot incur expenses until the grant contract agreement is fully executed.

II. Eligibility

Applicants must meet the minimum requirements to be considered for this grant opportunity. Applicants must:

- Be qualified continuing education providers (Minn. Stat. 45.30, subd. 6 (a) (1), (2), and (3)? who have received approval according to Minn. Stat. 45.30, subd 6, (a) to offer or provide approved education courses.
- Provide continuing education courses appropriate and related to the knowledge (Minn. Stat. 45.25, subd. 2) of obtaining or maintaining a real estate license and courses must be approved the Department (Minn. Stat. 45.22)
- Qualified continuing education courses must be approved by the Department (Minn. State. 45.30, subd. 6)
- Provide course and course materials free of charge.

III. Grant Application: List of Questions

The review committee will be reviewing each applicant on a 100-point scale.

A. Experience

   a. Describe your qualification(s) as a continuing education provider, according to Minn. Stat. 45.30, subd. 6 (a) (1), (2), and (3), to offer approved education courses.

   b. How long have you been a qualified continuing education provider for real estate licensing?

B. Course Offering

   a. Are course offerings approved by the Department, according to Minn. Stat. 45.22?

   b. Briefly describe the qualifications and experience of instructors related to real estate continuing education.

   c. Describe your course delivery, duration. Please attached a syllabus.

   d. How are courses delivered (in-person, virtual)? What is the typical class size?

C. Marketing Plan / Outreach

   a. Do you have a target audience? For example, rural areas, communities of color, etc.

   b. Describe your marketing plan or outreach efforts.

D. Budget

   a. Provide a budget for conducting continuing education courses. Allowable costs include instructor, course materials, targeted outreach (please describe), information technology related to providing virtual courses or other (please describe).

IV. Application Review

All responses received by the deadline will be evaluated by representatives identified by the Division of Energy Resources at the Department of Commerce.

Applications will first be reviewed for responsiveness to determine if the following minimum requirements have been met:

- Applicant is not suspended or debarred by the State of Minnesota or the federal government
- Application was received by the submission deadline
- Application was submitted according to Section XX (Submission Instructions)
- Application is not submitted by fax or US mail

Applications that fail to meet the minimum requirements will not be reviewed for funding consideration.

Applications will be evaluated on the quality and complete answer of the questions above. A 100-point scale will be weighted for each question.

Weighted Criteria	Total Points
Experience	20
Course Offering	50
Marketing Plan / Outreach	15
Budget	15
TOTAL POSSIBLE	100

V. Questions

Interested applicants may submit questions regarding this RFP by email to Energy.Contracts@state.mn.us. Questions must be submitted by e-mail; Commerce personnel are NOT authorized to discuss this RFP with applications. Contact regarding this RFP with any Commerce personnel could result in disqualification. All inquiries about this RFP must be done through Energy.Contracts@state.mn.us.

Responses to questions, referred to as a Q&A, will be posted along with the RFP materials Request for Proposals (RFP) / Minnesota Department of Commerce - Business. Responses will not be provided to questions individually. Interested parties who download the RFP from this website will receive a notice when a Q&A is posted.

VI. Application Submission Instructions

Applications must be received no later than 5:00pm Central Time, on November 10, 2025.

An application ***must*** be submitted online using the Department's RFP submission portal, *Attachment 1* ***Step-by-Step Application Guide***. Tips to submitting a successful application include:

1. **Create an Account on the submission portal.** GrantVantage (gvgrantcloud.com) is the link to the application submission portal. To submit a response to this RFP, you must first create an account on the submission portal, unless you have previously created an account. ***Please create only one account and register one user*** per applicant. All submissions need to go through that one user account and person. *An application must be submitted for each course offered.* Please create an "Applicant" user profile when registering in the system. A Step-by-Step Applicant Guide, Attachment 1, is available on the Department's Request for Proposals (RFP) / Minnesota Department of Commerce - Business (mn.gov) webpage.

2. **Applicant Name.** When applying to this announcement, you will be asked for names and contact information for people, or roles, pertaining to your application. These people, and the roles they have in your application, are the following:

    - *Organization Name*
    - *Project Name*
    - *Applicant*
    - *Delegate*

3. **Applicant address.** Please provide the address of the applicant organization

4. **Complete the application in the submission portal.** Log into your account with the user credentials you created in Step 1. View the application form and respond to all applicable questions under each of the sections in the form.

4. As you finish your application, and verify it is 100% complete, you will be asked to identify key personnel and provide their contact information. Please complete this as follows:

    - Authorized Certifying Official

      This is the person authorized to sign the attestations and contracts.

    - Project Director/Manager

      This is the person who is overseeing this application and in charge of complying with the program requirements. This will be the person the Department will contact for any questions related to this application for which there may be a deadline to respond. (This may be the same as the Project Director/Manager.)

    - Project Manager/Coordinator

      This is the person who is assembling this application and would be managing the project. (This may be the same as Project Director/Manager.)

      Compliance/Fiscal Officer

      This is the person who will create a Supplier ID in the State's Supplier Portal: Overview for Vendors / Minnesota Office of State Procurement (mn.gov). This is the State's vendor system through which you would receive your incentive payment. This person will also know if you currently have a Vendor ID.

5. **Application Due Date**: This Real Estate Continuing Education application must be submitted in the submission portal by *November 10, 2025, at 5:00 p.m. CT.* Please take note of the following recommendations:

    - **Prepare**. Read the step-by-step applicant user guide which will instruct Applicants how to begin, complete, and apply. Familiarize yourself with the submission portal before it is due to make sure you are well-prepared and familiar with the form and the system.

    - **Allow adequate time to complete the online application**. A recommended approach is for Responders to draft a Word document with the responses to each question. The questions are in *Section IV. Grant Application List of Questions* above, including any preferred formatting. When ready, copy and paste your responses into the online application form in the submission portal. Responders may save an in-process application in the submission portal as often as desired and come back to it later to revise or add to it. However, once the application has been submitted in the submission portal, it may not be revised or updated. If the initial submittal is prior to the submittal deadline, Responders may resubmit the entire application with the correction(s) or addition(s). In that case, the Responder should email energy.contracts@state.mn.us to inform the Department that the initially submitted application has been resubmitted and to disregard the initial submittal.

- **Submit the application at least two hours ahead of deadline**. It is ***strongly*** recommended that you allow plenty of time to submit your application. Since the submission portal is a cloud-based application, multiple Applicants attempting to simultaneously apply on the submission portal at the same time may slow the process for each Applicant. In addition, due to varying applicant internet speeds, applications may take time to process. If you submit your application minutes before the deadline, the announcement may close in the middle of processing your application (i.e., while the "Processing" indicator is still active). If this occurs, the Department will not receive your application.

- Responders who encounter what they believe are technical system errors must report to the GrantVantage Support desk (ApplicantSupport@grantvantage.com) allowing for ***at least two hours*** for the technical assistance team to respond to any technical system errors reported with the actual submission.

By submitting an application, each applicant warrants that the information provided is true, correct, and reliable for purposes of evaluation for potential grant award. The submission of inaccurate or misleading information may be grounds for disqualification from the award, as well as subject the applicant to suspension or debarment proceedings and other remedies available by law.

All costs incurred in responding to this RFP will be borne by Applicant. The State reserves the right to accept or reject any and all proposals.

VII. Exhibits and Attachments

(Exhibits are technical requirements; Attachments are for reference or programmatic requirement.)

You must submit the following for your application to be considered complete:

Exhibit A: State of Minnesota Sample Grant Contract Agreement Template

Exhibit B: Exceptions Form

Exhibit C: Conflict of Interest

Exhibit D: Certification that the applicant is not suspended or debarred by the State of Minnesota or the federal government

- Exhibit A & B: **Exhibit A** is the sample State of Minnesota Grant Contract Agreement Template upon which the final grant contract with selected responder(s) will be based. If applicants have any exceptions to the terms and conditions in this grant contract template, complete **Exhibit B**: Exceptions Form, and submit with your application. Commerce is not obligated to consider exceptions to the grant contract template if this completed form is not submitted with the application.
- **Exhibit C:** Conflict of Interest is required.
- **Exhibit D:** Suspended/Barred Certification

Attachment 1: Step-by-Step Application Guide

VIII. Notification and Next Steps

Commerce anticipates notifying respondents of the recommendation for the award of this funding opportunity by December 19, 2025. Following notification, the selected responder(s) will negotiate a grant agreement with Commerce that is consistent with this RFP. Work on this project cannot begin until the grant contract is fully executed.

For responder(s) selected for an award of $50,000.00 and higher, a Pre-Award Risk Assessment must be completed according to Minn. Stat. 16B.981. Commerce will send selected responder(s) the Pre-Award Risk Assessment packet to complete and return based on their type of organization. See Section XXXX for a complete list of required documents.

IX. Application Review Process

Funding will be allocated through an eligibility-based application based on priorities, the application questions, and weighted score from the table found in IV. Application Review. All responses received by the deadline will be evaluated by representatives identified by the Division of Energy Resources at the Department of Commerce. The review committee will use the point scale provided above to evaluate all eligible and complete applications received by the deadline.

X. Timeline

All times given in this RFP are Central Prevailing Time.

RFP Issued	Monday, October 20, 2025
Q & A Period Begins	Tuesday, October 21, 2025
Q & A Period Ends	Monday, November 3, 2025, 5:00 PM
Last Q & A Posted	Friday, November 7, 2025, 5:00 PM
Applications Due	Monday, November 10, 2025, 5:00 PM
Anticipated Notification	Monday, December 19, 2025
Anticipated Full Execution & Work Begins*	Monday, January 9, 2026
Trainings Must be Completed	December 31, 2026

*Work on the individual grant agreement cannot begin prior to the execution

XI. Award Requirements & Grant Management Responsibilities

A. Pre-Award Risk Assessment and Financial Review

Prior to a grant award of $50,000 and higher, **all selected applicants,** as defined in Minn. Stat. §16B.981 Subd. 1 (c) applying for grants in the state of Minnesota must undergo a financial and capacity review. Minn. Stat. §16B.981 Subd. 1 (c) includes non-profit organizations, political subdivisions, and for-profit business.

In accordance with Minnesota Statute §16B.981 and OGM Policy 08-06: Pre-Award Risk Assessment of Potential Grantees, Commerce is required to consider a grant applicant's past performance, financial and operational capacity before awarding grants of $50,000 or more. If applicable, our grant staff will contact you about the Pre-Award Risk Assessment packet to complete and return. This packet may consist of the following, depending on the type of applicant organization

1. **Capacity Response:**

   History and/or ability of grantee to perform duties required of the grant, required of all responders. (Minn. Stat. 16B.981 Subd. 2 (1))

2. **Felony Financial Certification:**

   No current principals have been convicted of a felony financial crime in the last ten years, required of all responders. (Minn. Stat. 16B.981 Subd. 2 (6))

3. **Evidence of good standing:**

   Filed and up-to-date with the Secretary of State. Required of nonprofit and for-profit successful applicants. R (Minn. Stat. 16B.981 Subd. 2 (4))

4. **Nonprofit grantees as applicable**

   - Most recent Form 990 or Form 990-EZ
   - Most recent audited financial statement of a charitable organization which has received total revenue in excess of $750,000 for the 12 months of operations covered by the statement per Minn. Stat. §309.53
   - Most recent board-reviewed (or managing group if applicable) financial statements, description of internal controls over business expenditures and outcomes of grant funds, if awarded, and evidence of exemption.

   (Minn. Stat. 16B.981 Subd. 2 (2))

5. **For-profit Certification Disclosure and required documents**

   - Most recent federal and state tax returns:
     - If not in business long enough to have a tax return, description of internal controls over business expenditures and outcomes of grant funds, if awarded
   - Current financial statements
   - Certification that business is not under bankruptcy proceedings
   - Disclosure of any liens on assets

   (Minn. Stat. 16B.981 Subd. 2 (3))

The submission of inaccurate or misleading information may be grounds for disqualification from the grant contract agreement award and may subject an organization to suspension or debarment proceedings, as well as other remedies available to the State, by law.

Based on Minn. Stat. §16B.981 Subd. 3 and Subd. 4 Commerce has the authority to:

- Provide or require enhanced grant oversight
- Request additional information from a potential grantee to determine whether there is a substantial risk that the potential grantee cannot or would not perform the required duties of the grant agreement.
  - The potential grantee has 30 business days to respond
- Develop a plan to address the risk or concerns identified
- Not award the grant.
  - The granting agency must provide notice of this determination to not award the grant to the grantee and the Commissioner of Administration.
  - The notice must include the following:
    - The reason for postponing/not awarding the grant
    - The timeline for the process for contesting the agency's decision

B. Conflicts of Interest

State grant policy requires that steps and procedures are in place to prevent individual and organizational conflicts of interest, both in reference to applicants and reviewers per Minnesota Statutes § 16B.98 Subd. 2-3 and OGM Policy 08-01 Conflict of Interest in State Grant-Making Policy.

Organizational conflicts of interest occur when:

- a grantee or applicant is unable or potentially unable to render impartial assistance or advice to the Department due to competing duties or loyalties

- a grantee's or applicant's objectivity in carrying out the grant is or might be otherwise impaired due to competing duties or loyalties

In cases where a conflict of interest is in question or disclosed, the applicants or grantees will be notified and actions may be pursued, including but not limited to, revising the grant work plan or grantee duties to mitigate the risk, requesting the grant applicant to submit an organizational conflict of interest mitigation plan, disqualification from eligibility for the grant award, amending the grant, or termination of the grant contract agreement.

C. Public Data

Per Minnesota Statutes § 13.599

- Names and addresses of grant applicants and amount requested will be public data once proposal responses are opened.
- All remaining data in proposal responses (except trade secret data as defined and classified in §13.37) will be public data after the evaluation process is completed. For the purposes of this grant, data will be considered public when all the grant contract agreements have been fully executed.
- All data created or maintained by [State agency] as part of the evaluation process (except trade secret data as defined and classified in §13.37) will be public data after the evaluation process is completed. For the purposes of this grant, Data will be considered public when all the grant contract agreements have been fully executed.

D. Grant Contract Agreements

As part of submitting this application the applicant agrees to the Terms and Conditions of State of Minnesota Grant Contract Agreements. Applicants are encouraged to print and review these documents with the appropriate staff prior to submitting the application. These documents become part of the formal grant contract agreement. Much of the language reflected in the sample grant contract agreement is required by statute. If an applicant wants to negotiate any of the terms, conditions or language in the sample grant contract agreement, the applicant must indicate those requests in writing, in their application in response to this RFP. Certain exceptions may not be possible based on statutory or other requirements. Only those requests indicated in an application will be available for discussion or negotiation. The funded applicant will be legally responsible for assuring implementation of the work plan and compliance with all applicable state requirements including worker's compensation insurance, nondiscrimination, data privacy, budget compliance, and reporting.

XII. Accountability and Reporting Requirements

It is the policy of the State of Minnesota to monitor progress on state grants by requiring grantees to submit written progress reports until all grant funds have been expended and all of the terms in the grant contract agreement have been met.

A. Grant Monitoring

Minn. Stat. §16B.97 and Policy 08-10 Grant Monitoring require the following:

- One monitoring visit during the grant period on all state grants of $50,000 and higher
- Annual monitoring visits during the grant period on all grants of $250,000 and higher
- Conducting a financial reconciliation of grantee's expenditures at least once during the grant period on grants of $50,000 and higher. For this purpose, the grantee must make expense receipts, employee timesheets, invoices, and any other supporting documents available upon request by the State.

B. Grant Payments

Per State Policy on Grant Payments, reimbursement is the method for making grant payments. All grantee requests for reimbursement must correspond to the approved grant contract agreement budget. The State shall review each request for allowable cost reimbursement against the approved grant budget, grant expenditures to-date and the latest grant progress report before approving payment. Grant payments shall not be made on grants with past due progress reports unless Commerce has given the grantee a written extension.

Authorized Representatives

Pursuant to Minnesota Statutes §16B.98, subd. 5 (d), grantees must clearly post on the grantee's website the names of, and contact information for, the grantee's leadership and the employee or other person who directly manages and oversees a grant contract agreement on behalf of the grantee.

C. Contracting and Bidding Requirements

Municipalities

Grantees that are political subdivisions or municipalities must use these guidelines:

A. Municipalities are required to comply with Minnesota Statutes §471.345, Uniform Municipal Contracting Law.

B. The Grantee and any subrecipients must comply with prevailing wage rules per Minnesota Statutes §§ 177.41 through 177.50, as applicable.

C. Municipalities and any subrecipients must not contract with vendors who are suspended or debarred by the State of Minnesota or the federal government: Suspended and Debarred Vendors, Minnesota Office of State Procurement

D. The Grantee must maintain written standards of conduct covering conflicts of interest and governing the actions of its employees engaged in the selection, award, and administration of contracts.

Nongovernmental entities

Grantees that are nongovernmental entities must use these guidelines:

A. Any services and/or materials that are expected to cost $100,000 or more must undergo a formal notice and bidding process.

B. Services and/or materials that are expected to cost between $25,000 and $99,999 must be competitively awarded based on a minimum of three (3) verbal quotes or bids or awarded to a targeted vendor.

C. Services and/or materials that are expected to cost between $10,000 and $24,999 must be competitively awarded based on a minimum of two (2) verbal quotes or bids or awarded to a targeted vendor.

D. The grantee must take all necessary affirmative steps to assure that targeted vendors from businesses with active certifications through these entities are used when possible:

   a. State Department of Administration's Certified Targeted Group, Economically Disadvantaged and Veteran-Owned Vendor List

   b. Metropolitan Council Underutilized Business Program

   c. Small Business Certification Program through Hennepin County, Ramsey County, and City of St. Paul: Central Certification Directory

E. The grantee must maintain written standards of conduct covering conflicts of interest and governing the actions of its employees engaged in the selection, award and administration of contracts.

F. The grantee must maintain support documentation of the purchasing or bidding process used to contract services in their financial records, including support documentation justifying a single source bid, if applicable.

G. Notwithstanding the above, the State may waive bidding process requirements when:

   a. Vendors included in response to competitive grant request for proposal process were approved and incorporated as an approved work plan for the grant; or

   b. It is determined there is only one reasonably able and available source for such materials or services and that grantee has established a fair and reasonable price.

H. The Grantee and any subrecipients must comply with prevailing wage rules per Minnesota Statutes §§177.41 through 177.50, as applicable.

I. The grantee and any subrecipients must not contract with vendors who are suspended or debarred by the State of Minnesota or the federal government: Suspended and Debarred Vendors, Minnesota Office of State Procurement

D. Audits

Per Minnesota Statutes § 16B.98 Subdivision 8, the grantee's books, records, documents, and accounting procedures and practices of the grantee or other party that are relevant to the grant or transaction are subject to examination by the Commissioner of Administration, the State granting agency, the State Auditor, the Attorney General, and the Legislative Auditor as appropriate. This requirement will last for a minimum of six years from the grant contract agreement end date, receipt, and approval of all final reports, or the required period of time to satisfy all state and program retention requirements, whichever is later.

E. Affirmative Action and Nondiscrimination

The grantee agrees not to discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment because of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, marital status, status in regard to public assistance, membership or activity in a local commission, disability, sexual orientation, or age in regard to any position for which the employee or applicant for employment is qualified per Minnesota Statutes § 363A.02. The grantee agrees to take affirmative steps to employ, advance in employment, upgrade, train, and recruit minority persons, women, and persons with disabilities.

The grantee must not discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment because of physical or mental disability in regard to any position for which the employee or applicant for employment is qualified. The grantee agrees to take affirmative action to employ, advance in employment, and otherwise treat qualified disabled persons without discrimination based upon their physical or mental disability in all employment practices such as the following: employment, upgrading, demotion or transfer, recruitment, advertising, layoff or termination, rates of pay or other forms of compensation, and selection for training, including apprenticeship. Minnesota Rules, Part 5000.3500.

The grantee agrees to comply with the rules and relevant orders of the Minnesota Department of Human Rights issued pursuant to the Minnesota Human Rights Act.

F. Voter Registration

The grantee will comply with Minnesota Statutes §201.162 by providing voter registration services for its employees and for the public served by the grantee.

G. Right of Cancellation

The State reserves the right to cancel this solicitation if it is considered to be in its best interest. The State reserves the right to negotiate modifications to the application or to reject any and all applications received as a result of this Request for Proposals. The State does not intend to award a grant contract agreement solely on the basis of any response made to this request or pay for information solicited or obtained.