

Small Business Assistance Partnerships Program

Fiscal Year 2026-2027

Request for Proposals

Application Information & Materials

August 11, 2025

Please read through this entire application package BEFORE you begin to respond to the application questions and before you complete the checklist.

Purpose of this funding opportunity: It is the policy of the State of Minnesota to ensure fairness, precision, equity and consistency in competitive grant awards. This includes implementing diversity and inclusion in grant-making. [Office of Grants Management \(OGM\) Policy 08-02: Rating Criteria for Competitive Grant Review](#) establishes the expectation that grant programs intentionally identify how the grant serves diverse populations, especially populations experiencing inequities or disparities.

This program will make competitively awarded grants to organizations and/or regional coalitions of entrepreneur support organizations (ESOs) to provide no cost small business development and technical assistance services to entrepreneurs and small business owners, with a particular focus on underserved populations and geographies including individuals who are Black, Indigenous, people of color, veterans, people with disabilities, LGBTQ+ individuals, low-income individuals, and includes people from rural Minnesota. In addition, 10% of available grant funds will be available for 1 to 3 awards to statewide providers that provide specialized capabilities and services to clients across all regional service areas.

Service areas will be defined by the Minnesota Compass regions (<https://www.mncompass.org/profiles/region>). See [Exhibit A](#) for a list of regions and counties.

Eligible Recipients: the applicant and/or coalition partners can include nonprofit organizations or public entities, including higher education institutions, engaged in business development or economic development; community development financial institutions; or community development corporations.

Eligible Uses: Direct cost associated with delivering services including personnel, fringe benefits, travel, contractual, supplies, and equipment costs directly associated with delivering services under this grant funding. No more than 15% of grant funds can be used for administrative cost.

Grant Cycle: Grant applications will be received only once during the two-year grant cycle which is expected to begin November 2025 and end October 2027.



Office of Small Business and Innovation

Available Funds: \$2,588,750 for state fiscal year 2026 and \$2,588,750 for state fiscal year 2027 is available for two-year grant awards. A minimum of 90% of funds will be available for region-based projects. As much as 10% of funds will be available to projects that seek to provide services across all 7 regional service areas.

Regional funding targets will range from \$100,000 to \$400,000 per year for a 24-month performance period. The program is expected to award 10-28 awards.

Deadline to Submit Proposals: The deadline to submit proposals **September 19th, 2025**, by 5:00 p.m. (CST).

Request for Proposals

Important Dates

RFP Release: August 11, 2025 by 2:00 PM (CST)

Informational Webinar or Meeting Information:

1:00 pm – 2:00 PM, August 19, 2025. To join the meeting from your smartphone, tablet or computer click the Microsoft Teams meeting link [here](#) or use the audio only call in number 651-395-7448 (Conference ID 583 596 212#)

All webinars will be recorded, and content will be made available online at <https://mn.gov/deed/about/contracts/open-rfp.jsp>.

Proposals Due: September 19, 2025 by 5:00 PM (CST)

[Link to SBAP Application Form](#)

Grant Decision Made: October 2025

Grant Decision Communicated: October 2025

Contract Start Date: November 1, 2025

Contract End Date: October 31, 2027

Disclaimer: All costs incurred in responding to the Request for Proposal (RFP) will be borne by applicant. This RFP does not obligate the State to award a contract or complete the project. The State also receives the right to cancel the solicitation if it is considered to be in its best interests.

Alternative Format: Upon request, these materials will be made available in alternative formats.

Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION	5
Funds Available	6
Technical Assistance	7
SCOPE OF WORK	8
Overview	8
Tasks/Deliverables	9
Target Population & Equity	10
PROPOSALS	10
Submission and Due Date	10
PROPOSAL EVALUATION AND SELECTION	11
Overview of Evaluation Methodology	11
Performance Measurement.....	11
EVALUATION CRITERIA.....	12
ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS	16
POST-SELECTION REQUIREMENTS	18
Exhibit A: Sample Client Tracking Form	22
Exhibit B: Reporting Definitions	25
Outputs:	25
Outcomes	25

Small Business Assistance Partnerships Grant Request for Proposal

INTRODUCTION

The Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED) is the state's principal economic development agency. DEED programs promote business recruitment, expansion, and retention; international trade; workforce development; and community development. DEED is committed to empowering the growth of the Minnesota economy for everyone.

Through its Office of Small Business and Innovation, DEED is seeking proposals from individual organizations, regional coalitions, and state-wide entrepreneurial support services providers to provide no-cost small business development and technical assistance services to entrepreneurs and small business owners, with a particular focus on underserved populations and geographies including individuals who are Black, Indigenous, people of color, veterans, people with disabilities, LGBTQ+ individuals, low-income individuals, and includes people from rural Minnesota.

The delivery of these services will support the start-up, growth, and success of Minnesota's entrepreneurs and small business owners and facilitate an economic environment that produces job growth and supports the economic success of Minnesota individuals, businesses, and communities.

The Small Business Assistance Partnerships program is seeking to award proposals that provides services along the following themes:

- **Equity:** The Office of Small Business and Innovation seeks to empower an inclusive economy in which entrepreneurship and business ownership is a path towards equitable prosperity and community wealth building. Strategies might include:
 - Culturally specific, community-based entrepreneurship training and technical assistance.
 - Supplier diversity initiatives that seek to recruit and promote diverse entrepreneurs into the supply chain larger businesses and institutions.
 - Community-wealth building initiatives that utilize community-ownership or community development models as path towards equitable prosperity for Minnesota's diverse communities.
- **Innovation:** The Office of Small Business and Innovation recognizes that new technologies and new business models are the foundation for future productivity gains and growth for Minnesota's economy.
 - Lean startup education, entrepreneurship training and technical assistance.
 - Start-up Incubator/accelerator services including workspace, mentorship opportunities and on-site training and education.
 - Tech commercialization services that aim to bring technological innovation to market. Services might include technology validation and testing.
 - Sector/Industry specific subject matter expertise.
- **Vibrancy:** The Office of Small Business and Innovation believes that promoting the success of small business is more than just jobs and wages; small businesses are centers of community and culture building that bring people together and help make environments where people want to live, work, play and invest. Strategies might include:
 - Local community revitalization initiatives that seek to empower new businesses, fill empty store fronts and attract customers and workers to the community.

- Place-making initiatives that promote the unique attributes of the community and its businesses.
- Providing business consulting on starting, growing and expanding businesses.

Applicants are encouraged to submit a proposal to address one or more of these themes under one of the following project models:

- **Regional coalition:** A project implemented by a coalition of organizations hosted by a high-capacity backbone organization for a regional, multi-partner approach to deliver comprehensive services to individual entrepreneurs and small businesses.
- **Regional provider:** A project led by a single organization that provides a specialized set of services to all potential clients in the regional service area.
- **Statewide service provider:** A project led by a single organization that provides a specialized set of services available to all potential clients in all regions of the state.

Regional service areas are defined by the Minnesota Compass Regions found here (<https://www.mncompass.org/profiles/region>). For a list of regions and counties see Exhibit A.

Proposals are encouraged to utilize evidence-based practices and/or community-based practices to meet the objectives of their project.

Funds Available

As authorized in the 2025 Laws of Minnesota 1st Special Session, Chapter 6, Article 1, Sec. 2 Subd. 2 (d), \$2,725,000 per year (\$5,450,000 total) has been appropriated to the Small Business Assistance Partnerships Program under 2025 Minnesota Statutes 116J.682 for the State Fiscal Years 2026-2027. DEED will set aside 5 percent of appropriated funds to administer and monitor the program. A total of \$2,588,750 per year will be available for competitively awarded grants.

To meet the geographic and community equity objectives of this funding DEED expects to award between 10-20 awards in alignment with the following regional and statewide funding targets.

Region/Service Area	Regional Funding Target	Expected Number of Awards
Central	\$100,000 - \$400,000 per year	1-3
Northeast	\$100,000 - \$400,000 per year	1-3
Northwest	\$100,000 - \$400,000 per year	1-3
Southern	\$100,000 - \$400,000 per year	1-3
West Central	\$100,000 - \$400,000 per year	1-3
Twin Cities Metro	\$1,000,000 - \$1,200,000 per year	3-7
Statewide Providers	\$100,000 - \$300,000 per year	1-3
Total	\$2,588,750 per year total	10-28 grant awards

Grant applications will be received only once for the 24-month period beginning in November 2025 and ending October 2027.

Interested parties may request up to \$400,000 per year for a total of \$800,000 over a 24-month performance period.

Proposal budgets must include the amount and source of matching funds. Proposals that leverage a higher percentage of non-state matching funds to state funds will be prioritized for funding in the proposal evaluation. The first-year request must equal the amount of the second-year request.

Based on past funding rounds DEED expects award sizes to range between \$50,000 per year to \$400,000 per year with average award size of \$175,000 per year or \$350,000 total for the two-year period.

To the extent possible DEED will avoid offering partial awards. However, to meet the geographic and community equity objectives of this funding, DEED may offer partial awards to ensure more areas and communities of the state can benefit from these services. If your proposal is offered a partial award, you will have the opportunity to revise your workplan based on that final award amount. No award will be less than 50% of the request amount.

Funding will be allocated through a competitive process with a review by a committee of DEED staff and managers and external reviewers. The Commissioner of DEED reserves the right to change the amount awarded to any selected project. Award decisions are final and not subject to appeal. If selected, you may only incur eligible expenses when the grant contract agreement is fully executed by the awardee and DEED, and the grant has reached its start date.

Technical Assistance

Technical assistance is available for interpreting instructions or preparing applications. Contact: MNSBP.DEED@state.mn.us. Please review all available materials and responses to frequently asked questions before emailing your inquiry.

Each week, DEED staff will post responses to frequently asked questions on DEED's website by way of the Competitive Grants and Contracts page: <https://mn.gov/deed/about/contracts/open-rfp.jsp>.

Additional questions may be submitted by email to MNSBP.DEED@state.mn.us. Each week, DEED staff will post responses to pre-proposal questions on DEED's website by way of the Grant Opportunities page: <https://mn.gov/deed/about/contracts/open-rfp.jsp>. The deadline to submit questions is September 5th at 5:00 P.M.

SCOPE OF WORK

Overview

Minimum Requirements & Eligibility

Applicants must meet the minimum requirements in order to be fully considered for this grant opportunity. Applicants must be 501(c)3 nonprofit organizations or public entities, including higher education institutions, engaged in business development or economic development; community development financial institutions; or community development corporations that provides business development and assistance services to entrepreneurs and small businesses in Minnesota.

Proposals are actively encouraged from organizations that focus on serving underserved populations and geographies including individuals who are Black, Indigenous, people of color, veterans, people with disabilities, LGBTQ+ individuals, low-income individuals, and includes people from rural Minnesota.

Programmatic partnerships and collaborations between organizations are eligible and encouraged to apply. The proposal must identify a lead fiscal agent who is responsible for the administration of the grant.

Allowable Expenses

Grant funds must be used to support the start-up, growth, and success of Minnesota's entrepreneurs and small business owners through the delivery of high quality free or low-cost professional business development and technical assistance services.

Expenses directly related to delivering grant objectives can include personnel, fringe benefits, travel, equipment, supplies, and contractual. These items should be included in the budget as specific budget line items.

Expenses not directly related to delivering grant objectives but necessary to support this grant funded program can include administrative cost. Administrative cost may include a portion of the following expenses: accounting, human resources, IT support, general office expenses, executive or supervisory salaries and fringe, rent, facilities maintenance costs, utilities, Fleet vehicles, etc.

Pursuant to Minnesota Statutes §16B.98, Subd. 1, the Grantee agrees to include necessary and reasonable administrative costs as a condition of this grant. In order to comply with Minnesota Statutes 16B.98, Subd. 1 no more than 15% of the total grant funds can be dedicated to administrative cost for individual grantees or regional coalition partners.

Ineligible expenses, both direct and administrative, include but are not limited to:

- Fundraising
- Taxes, except sales tax on goods and services
- Lobbyists, political contributions
- Bad debts, late payment fees, finance charges, or contingency funds
- Parking or traffic violations
- Out of state transportation and travel expenses (Minnesota will be considered the home state for determining whether travel is out of state.)

No more than 15% of an award may be used for administrative costs. DEED reserves the right to offset overpayments and disallowances by reducing a subsequent cash payment or requiring repayment of costs.

Matching

Applicants are asked to propose a project total budget that includes and identifies the sources of any project matching dollars. Proposals must also identify the dollar amount and percentage of state funds from all sources involved in the total project cost. Any additional state funds your organization receives beyond this proposed funding will be taken into consideration when determining awards and award amounts.

In scoring proposals, the review committee will prioritize proposals that demonstrate committed matching funds equivalent to 50% of the funding request. State funds from other sources cannot towards the match. Non-state funds that are already committed as match towards other state funded projects cannot also be counted as match toward these funds. Resources spent on one project should only be counted as match for a single grant.

Evidence-based and Community-based Practices

Applicants are asked how their proposed project demonstrates the use of evidence based and/or community-based practices. The definitions for these practices are offered below:

Evidence-based practices are activities/programs/services that, based on findings from experimental or quasi-experimental designs (i.e., an impact evaluation), have been demonstrated to favorably change an outcome of interest. An intervention is considered an “evidence-based practice” if it is:

- Rated as “proven effective” or “promising” on the [Minnesota Inventory](#).
- Rated as evidence-based by another reputable clearinghouse, AND/OR
- Has high-quality research that meets standards of evidence for “proven effective” or “promising”

Community-based best practices are activities/programs/services developed by or in close partnership with a community group and:

- Underwent a rigorous community-led assessment process and has a demonstrated a positive effect on targeted groups. The learnings from the assessment can be in any sharable form (report, video, website, etc.),
- Were developed over time through practice and experience, are embedded in the culture, and are accepted as effective by local communities, AND/OR
- Includes all core elements of an evidence-based program (described above), except those that have been modified specifically to allow for a culturally based implementation of the intervention.

Tasks/Deliverables

Grant recipients will be responsible for using grant funds to provide business development assistance and technical assistance services to entrepreneurs and small businesses. Tasks and deliverables include:

- Identify a service area, client base, and target market for your organization’s services.

- Implement a community engagement and communications plan to raise awareness about the availability of services your organization provides and recruit and retain participants.
- Provide culturally and linguistic relevant high-quality no-cost business development and technical assistance services including but not limited to in-person and virtual classroom-based entrepreneurial training; one-on-one business counseling; accelerator cohort models; and technical assistance services.
- Collect relevant client and service information including but not limited to the demographic information of the business owners/entrepreneurs served, and the type and hours of services provided.
- Collect relevant performance outcome information including but not limited to the number of unique clients served; the amount of capital accessed by clients receiving services; the number of jobs created; the number of jobs retained; the revenue and profit stabilization and growth of businesses served; and the number of new start-up businesses established.
- Submit quarterly program reports and an end of year report.
- Submit monthly or quarterly reimbursement requests along with a summary of expenses and supporting documentation.
- Actively participate in evaluation and data collection efforts that assess the impact of this initiative.

Target Population & Equity

Proposals are actively encouraged from organizations that focus on serving underserved populations and geographies including individuals who are Black, Indigenous, people of color, veterans, people with disabilities, LGBTQ+ individuals, low-income individuals, and includes people from rural Minnesota.

The most competitive proposal will present a robust culturally and linguistic relevant community engagement and communication plan that will raise awareness about the availability of services your organization provides and result in the successful recruitment and retention of participants.

PROPOSALS

Proposals must conform to all instructions, conditions, and requirements included in the RFP. All items listed on the attached checklist must be submitted for the application to be considered complete.

Applicants are expected to read and comply with all documentation and other requirements. Failure to observe the terms and conditions in completion of the Proposal are at the applicant's risk and may, at the discretion of the State, result in disqualification of the Proposal. Acceptable proposals must offer all services identified in the work plan and agree to the contract conditions specified throughout the RFP.

IMPORTANT: Applicants may be required to supplement their proposals at the request of the Commissioner of DEED and/or the Governor's Office.

Submission and Due Date

All proposals must be received no later than 5:00 PM (CST), on September 19th, 2025. Late proposals will not be considered. All costs incurred in responding to the RFP will be borne by the applicant.

Proposals should be submitted by email to MNSBP.DEED@state.mn.us in a single PDF file not to exceed 25mb in file size. Please avoid using a large number of images files, photos, and scanned documents in the proposal document as that greatly increases the file size.

The subject of the email line should be “SBAP – *[Insert Organization Name]*”

PROPOSAL EVALUATION AND SELECTION

Overview of Evaluation Methodology

Proposal will be reviewed, scored, and ranked by a panel of subject matter experts who will provide a recommendation to the Commissioner for final review and awards decisions.

Scoring will be on a 100-point scale with points available in the following sections

1. Experience, Capacity, and Record of Success (25 points)
2. Program Design, Service Delivery, and Workplan (25 points)
3. Community Engagement and Inclusiveness (10 points)
4. Partnerships and Collaboration (15 points)
5. Performance, Reporting, and Evaluation (15 points)
6. Budget and Matching (10 points)

The review panel will evaluate all eligible and complete applications received by the deadline. The Commissioner of DEED will review all panel recommendations and is responsible for award decisions. The award decisions of DEED are final and not subject to appeal. The Commissioner of DEED reserves the right to change the amount awarded to any selected project.

Performance Measurement

Performance measurement is a **critical element of accountability for public resources**. During the funding period, DEED will enhance its review and evaluation of program performance by examining the multiple performance data reported to DEED.

Some key performance measurements will be:

- The number of unique clients served
- The number of hours of service
- The number of new business starts
- The amount of capital accessed by clients served
- The number of jobs created and retained
- The demographics of individuals benefiting from these efforts with specific reference to diverse populations including individuals who are Black, Indigenous, people of color, veterans, people with disabilities, LGBTQ+ individuals, low-income individuals, and includes people from rural Minnesota.

DEED believes that these critical performance indicators, along with quality demographic data, will highlight the comprehensive work our partners perform, and it will provide reliable data on the

effectiveness and efficiency of the funded programs, and thereafter help with making future program and funding decisions.

In accordance with Minnesota Department of Administration, Office of Grants Management (OGM) [Operating Policy and Procedure Number 08-13](#), past performance on awarded and closed grants will be considered when evaluating proposals for future grants.

EVALUATION CRITERIA

If you are submitting a proposal on behalf of a **regional or statewide provider**, address the following sections based on your organization and, where applicable, your partners.

If you are submitting a proposal on behalf of a **regional coalition**, address the following sections on behalf of the entire coalition with specific reference to organizations as needed.

1. Experience, Capacity, and Record of Success (25 points)

The proposal must provide a profile of the applicant organization and, if applicable, its coalition partners.

- Describe your organization's past experience and performance in providing quality business development services and operating business development or entrepreneur development programs. Address the following performance measures: number of entrepreneurs and small businesses served, number of hours of business assistance services provided, number of new businesses started, number of full-time equivalent jobs created and retained, and demographic and geographic details of the individuals being served.
- Of the services your organization provides what percentage is directed towards business development, technical assistance, and/or business lending?
- Describe the capacity of your organization to provide the quantity and quality of services in this proposal.
- Describe the capacity and experience of your organization in providing culturally and linguistically relevant services to your organization's client base and target market(s).
- Describe the capacity of your organization to effectively manage and administer grants from public and private sources.
- What is the staffing plan for this project? Include a synopsis of each staff position, the responsibilities associated with that position and explain how this project fits within the overarching structure of the organization.
- Identify any pertinent professional credentials of staff and/or consultants.
- Is the proposed project and the funding request consistent with the size and capacity of your organization?

2. Program Design, Service Delivery, and Workplan (25 points)

Describe the need for the project, the design of the project, the services that will be provided, and who will be served by this project and a workplan describing how those services will be delivered. See the Grant Measures in Application Information form in the system to complete performance measures.

- Address which of the three themes, equity, innovation or vibrancy, your project will focus on. Applicants are welcome to address more than one theme.
- What type of businesses will this project serve? What is the geographic scope of the project? How many individuals and businesses do you plan to serve?
- What services will be provided to individuals and businesses? How will those services be delivered? How will individuals and businesses benefit from receiving these services?
- Address how this project seeks to address the specific needs, challenges, and opportunities of any or all of the following: including individuals who are Black, Indigenous, people of color, veterans, people with disabilities, LGBTQ+ individuals, low-income individuals, and includes people from rural Minnesota.
- How does the project demonstrate the use of evidence based and/or community-based practices?
- Provide performance measures under the Grant Measures section in the Application Information form that summarizes the following:
 - o The major objectives and the key activities to be funded through this project
 - o Who is responsible for completing those activities
 - o The timetable for completion of major project goals and activities

3. Community Engagement and Inclusiveness (10 points)

Provide a community engagement and communication plan that includes:

- Timeline to begin outreach efforts to the project's targeted groups and provide services to the client base.
- The process through which clients request, sign-up, and receive services from your organization.
- Client base: clearly define the applicant's target market, which could include types/size of business, geographic region, gender, race/ethnicity of business owners, people with disabilities, veterans, and other characteristics, as applicable.
- An information session describing the Grantee's services for potential clients of your services within two months of the execution of a grant contract agreement.
- Plan for providing culturally and linguistically relevant services, including program promotion channels such as the use of ethnic media and visits to heavily concentrated Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC) business areas, as appropriate to the Grantee's service area.
- Indicate which outreach mechanism the organization plans to use to reach the project's targeted groups including but not limited to open office hours, presentations to community groups, traditional media (radio, print, TV), social media, mailings, other (specify).

4. Partnerships, Collaboration, and Community Support (15 points)

Financial and programmatic partnerships that support this proposed project must be listed under **Form 2: Partnership Table**. Indicate those that have issued a letter of support and provide a description for each listed project partnership.

- Who are the key collaborators and partners? What are the roles, responsibilities, and

commitments of each collaborator/partner?

- Who are the key supporters that endorse your organization and the quality of its services?
- List any additional funders (public or private) who are supporting this project or to whom you have applied for support.
- Letters of commitment and professional references from programmatic partners and collaborators are required. Each letter of commitment must clearly state what they are committing to the project and to the overall partnership.

5. Performance, Evaluation, and Reporting (15 points)

Grant recipients must report to DEED on the outputs and outcomes of the grant program including, but not limited to, the number of technical assistance hours provided, the number of unique businesses assisted, the demographic information of the businesses assisted, the number of jobs created/retained by businesses, the average wage of the jobs created/retained, and the number of new business formations.

The proposal should clearly explain how the data on the quantity and quality of services provided and the measurable outcomes of those services will be collected, evaluated, and reported on.

- What outputs and outcomes will be measured and how will they be measured?
 - o Output measures must include but are not limited to the number and demographic information of the businesses/entrepreneurs served and the quantity of service hours provided.
 - o Outcome measures must include, but are not limited to, the total number jobs created, number of jobs retained, average wage of jobs created/retained, the amount of capital accessed by the business, revenue/profit growth of businesses services, number of start-ups launched.
- Identify who is responsible for data collection and reporting and what methods will be used to track and report data. Grant recipients are encouraged to utilize a Customer Relationship Management (CRM) software or Case Management Software (CMS) with the ability to create customizable reports that conform to the minimum requirements of this program. See [Exhibit A](#) Sample Client Tracking Form for examples of the data that will be collected.

Use **Form 3: Performance Measures** to identify the specific measures your project will track and to report the expected quantity of outputs and outcomes during the performance period.

6. Budget and Matching (10 points)

Applicants must complete a detailed two-year project budget which lists sources and uses of all program-related funds during the performance period. Anticipate a project start date no sooner than November 1, 2025, with the performance period ending October 31, 2027. Matching is not required, however the highest scoring proposals under this section will match the state's portion of funding at or above 50%.

Based on past funding rounds services are expected to cost \$60 to \$200 per hour of services delivered to individuals with an average of approximately \$100 per hour of service. This cost includes the states proportion of grant funds, any matching funds, and includes administrative cost to run a grant funded project. For the state's portion of cost, these services are expected to range from \$40 to \$140 with an

average cost to the state of approximately \$70 per hour of service (assuming the proposal matching state funding at 50% of the requested funds).

For example, a project requesting \$175,000 in state funds per year with 50% matching funds of \$87,500 would have a total project budget of \$262,000 per year. The amount of funding would result in approximately 2600 hours in direct client services. If the average amount of services per client is 10 hours, then this project would be expected to serve 260 individuals per year. This is an example only and represents an approximate baseline consistent with past funding rounds. Applicants are encouraged to propose and justify a budget and cost model that maximizes the cost-effectiveness of their proposed project.

- Attach a concise budget and narrative that describes additional leveraged funds and/or resources that are dedicated from other public or private sources.
- Identify any other State of Minnesota funds that your organization receives or will receive during this grant period to support same or similar activities as this proposed project. Any additional state funds your organization receives will be taken into consideration when determining awards and award amounts.
- All non-match grant activities must fall under the following budget line items: Personnel, Fringe Benefit, Travel (Direct Only), Equipment, Supplies, Contractual, Administration.
- Source and uses budget form can be found under Section 2.6 of the **SBAP Application**.

ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS

Grant Contract Agreements

Each grantee must formally enter into a grant contract agreement. The grant contract agreement will address the conditions of the award, including implementation for the project. Grantees should read the grant contract agreement, sign, and once signed, comply with all conditions of the grant contract agreement. No work on grant activities can begin until a fully executed grant contract agreement is in place and the State's Authorized Representative has notified the Grantee that work may start. 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.

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.

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.

Selection and Notification of Successful Applicant(s)

Organizations that submit proposals selected to receive an award will be notified via email with a copy of an official award letter. Additional instructions on the contracting process will be included. At that time, your organization will be assigned a grant administrator who will be your single point of contact at DEED throughout your project.

POST-SELECTION REQUIREMENTS

Tax Identification and UEI Numbers

DEED grantees are required to have both state and federal tax identification numbers and a valid Unique Entity ID (UEI) number issued by SAM.gov. A UEI number is a unique, twelve-digit identification number for each physical location of your business. UEI numbers are free for all state vendors and can be obtained via the SAM.gov website, linked [here](#).

Vendor Registration

Grant recipients new to DEED-funded grants must complete a grant agreement before DEED will disburse any funds. The State of Minnesota's accounting and procurement system is called State-Wide Integrated Financial Tools (SWIFT). Every organization or sub-grantee doing business with the state is considered a vendor. Vendors must be registered with the State of Minnesota. Vendors can interact with the state through the [Supplier Portal](#), which is part of SWIFT. The Supplier Portal allows vendors to login and view payment detail as well as maintain address and contact information related to their vendor record. For new prospective grantees (vendors), if you are awarded a grant, it will be necessary to register as vendor via the [Vendor Registration link](#).

Other State and Federal Requirements

DEED grantees must also comply with all state and federal requirements including, but not limited to:

- Worker's compensation;
- Affirmative action;
- Data privacy;
- Equal Employment Opportunity;
- The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA);
- Voter Registration;

Preaward Risk Assessment and Financial Review

In accordance with [Minnesota Statute §16B.981](#) and [OGM Policy 08-06: Preaward Risk Assessment of Potential Grantees](#), it is required to consider a grant applicant's past performance and financial and operational capacity before awarding grants of \$50,000 or more. Granting agencies will request, review, and analyze information, including Exhibits C-H, as referenced in this RFP, as applicable.

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.

Contracting and Bidding Requirements

A. 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.

B. 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](#)

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.

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.

Accountability and Reporting

Accountability and reporting information will be used to monitor grantee service delivery, confirm grant reimbursement requests, and measure performance. Grantees are required to submit quarterly reports on the number of clients served, the hours of service delivered, and the types of services provided.

Grant Monitoring

Minnesota Statutes §[16B.97](#) and State Policy on Grant Monitoring 08-10 require the following:

- One monitoring visit before final payment 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 before final payment 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.

The monitoring schedule will be conducted once a year.

Audits

Per [Minn. Stat. §16B.98](#), Subd. 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 granting agency and either the legislative auditor or the state auditor, as appropriate. This requirement will last for a minimum of six years from the grant 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.

Exhibit A: Sample Client Tracking Form

Description: The following is an example of a client tracking form for tracking the activities services and outcomes for individuals receiving services from this program. This example is presented as a static electronic form. Organization receiving a grant from this program are encouraged to utilize a case management system (CMS) and or customer relationship management (CRM) system that can incorporate these fields and export custom summary reports in excel or CSV format.

This data should be collected from all clients receiving direct services or ongoing classroom or cohort-based training and education. This data is not required to be collected for event attendees or any individuals receiving less than one hour of service total from your organization. The fields marked with an asterisk (*) are required fields. All other fields are optional. Information related to outcomes should be inputted only when those milestones have been achieved.

Service Provider	
Organization Providing Services*	
Client Unique ID*	
Service History*	<input type="checkbox"/> New Case <input type="checkbox"/> Follow-up
Business Information <p>Tennessen warning Notice: DEED is requesting information from you so DEED can measure the effectiveness of our business assistance programs. You are not legally required to provide this information, and there will be no consequences to you if you choose not to provide the information. If you do provide information, the information will be used by individuals within DEED whose job assignments reasonably require access to the information to assess DEED programs. By providing this information, you consent to this use. Certain information you provide to us is classified as private or nonpublic data and cannot be shared except as specified by statute or court order.</p>	
Business Legal Name*	
Business Operating Name (if different)	
Street Address*	
City*	
Zip Code*	
County*	
Business Legal Structure*	<input type="checkbox"/> LLC <input type="checkbox"/> S-Corp <input type="checkbox"/> Sole Proprietorship with Assumed Name <input type="checkbox"/> Sole Proprietorship no Assumed Name <input type="checkbox"/> Non-Profit Corp. <input type="checkbox"/> LP
Date Business Started	
NAISC Industry Sector	<input type="checkbox"/> 11 Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting <input type="checkbox"/> 21 Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction <input type="checkbox"/> 22 Utilities <input type="checkbox"/> 23 Construction <input type="checkbox"/> 31-33 Manufacturing <input type="checkbox"/> 42 Wholesale Trade <input type="checkbox"/> 44-45 Retail Trade <input type="checkbox"/> 48-49 Transportation and Warehousing <input type="checkbox"/> 51 Information

	<input type="checkbox"/> 52 Finance and Insurance <input type="checkbox"/> 53 Real Estate and Rental and Leasing <input type="checkbox"/> 54 Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services <input type="checkbox"/> 55 Management of Companies and Enterprises <input type="checkbox"/> 56 Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services <input type="checkbox"/> 61 Educational Services <input type="checkbox"/> 62 Health Care and Social Assistance <input type="checkbox"/> 71 Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation <input type="checkbox"/> 72 Accommodation and Food Services <input type="checkbox"/> 81 Other Services (except Public Administration) <input type="checkbox"/> 92 Public Administration
Most Recent Full Business Year Revenue	
Total No. of Employees	
Business Email*	
Business Owner Information	
First Name*	
Last Name*	
Title	
Optional Demographic Details	
51% Owner(s) Demographic Status The share of 51% or more may be met individually or be combined across owners. *Veteran is defined as a U.S. citizen or a permanent resident who has served in any branch of the U.S. armed forces, and who was discharged or released under conditions other than dishonorable **BIPOC (Black, Indigenous or Person of Color) is defined as a U.S. citizen or permanent resident who identifies as Black or African-American; Asian; American Indian or Alaska Native; or Hispanic, Spanish or Latin origin)	<input type="checkbox"/> Veterans* <input type="checkbox"/> Women <input type="checkbox"/> BIPOC** <input type="checkbox"/> None of the above <input type="checkbox"/> Do not wish to answer
Does the business have natural person owner that owns at least 20% of the business?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Owner Racial and/or Ethnic Group The answer should reflect the owner who owns at least 20% and who owns the greatest share of the business:	<input type="checkbox"/> Black/African-American <input type="checkbox"/> Asian-Pacific American <input type="checkbox"/> Subcontinent Asian American <input type="checkbox"/> American Indian, Alaska Native <input type="checkbox"/> Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander <input type="checkbox"/> Hispanic or Latinx <input type="checkbox"/> Middle Eastern or North African <input type="checkbox"/> Other racial and/or ethnic group <input type="checkbox"/> I do not wish to answer
Gender The answer should reflect the owner who owns at least 20% and who owns the greatest share of the business:	<input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female <input type="checkbox"/> Non-binary

	<input type="checkbox"/> A gender identity not listed <input type="checkbox"/> I do not wish to answer
Disability Status The answer should reflect the owner who owns at least 20% and who owns the greatest share of the business:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> I do not wish to answer
LGBTQA+ Status The answer should reflect the owner who owns at least 20% and who owns the greatest share of the business:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> I do not wish to answer
Military Status The answer should reflect the owner who owns at least 20% and who owns the greatest share of the business: *Veteran is defined as a U.S. citizen or a permanent resident who has served in any branch of the U.S. armed forces, and who was discharged or released under conditions other than dishonorable	<input type="checkbox"/> Veteran* <input type="checkbox"/> In Active Service <input type="checkbox"/> No former military service <input type="checkbox"/> I do not wish to answer
Services Provided	
Date of Service*	
Service Provided*	<input type="checkbox"/> Group-based Training/Education <input type="checkbox"/> One-on-One Counseling/Technical Assistance <input type="checkbox"/> Referral for Services <input type="checkbox"/> Event Attendance <input type="checkbox"/> Other
Hours of Service*	
Outcomes	
New business start?	
Capital Accessed	
Full-time equivalent Jobs Retained	
Full-time equivalent Jobs Created	
Average Wages (\$/hr) of Jobs Created/Retained	
Other_____	

Exhibit B: Reporting Definitions

Outputs:

Clients: Defined as a single individual or business entity that has received consulting or training services **at least once** during the project period. Each client is counted only once as a **unique client**, regardless of the number of times services were provided. If multiple individuals are affiliated with the same business, they are collectively counted as **one client**.

Customer contacts, service request or inquiries: These are **pre and post service interactions** with potential or current clients that may or may not lead to client engagement. Examples include:

- Applications to participate in a program
- Emails or phone calls requesting services
- Intake form submissions

Each inquiry counts once, even if the same individual/business makes multiple contacts within the same request process. These interactions alone do not count as “clients served”.

Number of hours of direct client services: The total number of hours spent providing direct services (such as consulting) to clients including preparation. This includes services delivered **one-on-one or in group settings**, whether in person, virtual, or by phone.

- A one-hour individual consultation = 1 hour of direct service.
- A one-hour class delivered to 20 participants = 1 hour of direct service (not 20 hours).
- Includes reasonable preparation time for the service delivery.

Training/Education Course: A course refers to a formal structured training on related subjects conducted over a number of sessions

- For example, one course could be composed of 10 individuals participating in a weekly education series over 6 weeks. That would be measured as one training cohort with 10 unique participants, with 6 sessions per course.

Events: A one-time or occasional gathering to inform or engage entrepreneurs on one or more topics. Attendees at the same event can be counted once. Attendees should not be counted as a client unless they receive direct services.

Service Referral: A service referral is a type of “service interaction” that results in a customer being referred by one organization to another organization for direct client services.

Outcomes

New Business Starts: A business that has started producing and/or selling goods or services as a direct result of services received through the project.

Capital Accessed: The total monetary value of funding that businesses have successfully obtained from all sources, including owner equity, as a direct result of participation in the technical assistance program.

Number of Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) Jobs Created:

The number of new full-time positions created by businesses as a **direct result of services received through the project**. An FTE is defined as 1.0 full-time equivalent (e.g., one person working 40 hours/week or two people each working 20 hours/week).

- Only count new positions that did not exist before project assistance.
- This number may be reported quarterly and cumulatively (with cumulative count reflecting the total FTEs created to date, not ongoing employment status).

Number of Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) Jobs Retained:

The number of existing FTE positions that were **at risk of being eliminated** but were retained as a direct result of project services.

- This includes positions saved due to restructuring, funding, technical assistance, etc.
- Quarterly figures reflect FTEs retained within the current quarter (i.e., “maintained” employment).
- Cumulative figures should only reflect unduplicated retained jobs (e.g., if the same 5 FTEs were retained each quarter, they should only count once in the cumulative total).