

Frequently Asked Questions About the 2021 Build to Scale (B2S) Program

Updated February 26, 2021

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1. ELIGIBILITY

a. Who is eligible to apply for funding?

The following entities are eligible B2S Program grant recipients:

1. a State;
2. an Indian tribe;
3. a city or other political subdivision of a State;
4. an entity that—
 - a. is
 - i. a nonprofit organization,
 - ii. an institution of higher education,
 - iii. a public-private partnership,
 - iv. a science or research park,
 - v. a Federal laboratory,
 - vi. a venture development organization, **or**
 - vii. an economic development organization or similar entity; **and**
 - b. has an application that is supported by a State or a political subdivision of a State; or
5. a consortium of any of the entities described in subparagraphs (1) through (4).

EDA has promulgated [regulations](#) that provide additional guidance on eligibility.¹

For-profit entities that are demonstrably institutions of higher education, parties to public-private partnerships, science or research parks, Federal laboratories, or economic development organizations or similar entities are eligible for funding; however, EDA strongly encourages for-profit entities to read these FAQs and the NOFO carefully, and to contact their EDA Economic Development Representative (EDR) early in the application process. See question 9(a) of this document or section G of the [NOFO](#). Note that EDA is **NOT** authorized to provide grants to individuals under this Program.

b. Are there other statutes and policy requirements that I need to know and that will impact these awards?

Yes; as indicated in the [NOFO](#), EDA award recipients must comply with the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards at 2 CFR part 200 (“Uniform Guidance”), the Department of Commerce Financial Assistance Standard Terms and Conditions, and the Pre-Award Notification Requirements for Grants and Cooperative Agreements. In addition, recipients must comply with applicable requirements of all other Federal laws, executive orders, regulations and policies governing this program. These include but are not limited to laws prohibiting discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, disability, age, religion, or sex.

c. In order to apply as a nonprofit organization must I be legally organized as a 501(c)(3)?

No; however, because EDA has adopted the definition of nonprofit organization as set forth in the Uniform Guidance, any entity applying as a nonprofit must provide information that the organization is: (1) operated primarily for scientific, educational, service, charitable, or similar purposes in the public interest; (2) not

¹ 13 CFR §§ 312.3 and 312.6.

organized primarily for profit; and (3) uses its net proceeds to maintain, improve, or expand the operations of the organization.²

d. What is a public-private partnership and what documents should I submit to EDA to demonstrate my eligibility?

EDA defines a public-private partnership as a relationship formalized by contractual agreement between a public agency and a private-sector entity that reasonably defines the terms of collaboration in the delivery and financing of a public project.³ EDA will typically review agreements for items such as the purpose and objectives of the partnership, the binding/contractual nature of the relationship, the duties and responsibilities of each party, and the duration of the agreement. The scope of the relationship documented in the agreement may be limited to the proposal set forth in a given partnership's grant application or may encompass a broader program, initiative, or other set of activities or goals. In most cases, a letter of support from a public entity alone, without additional documentation demonstrating a formal, binding relationship between the parties, will be found insufficient to establish eligibility under this entity category. EDA reserves the right to request additional information from applicants to establish eligibility, as necessary. Applicants that have further questions concerning these documentation requirements should contact their EDA EDR listed in question 9(a) of this document or section G of the [NOFO](#).

e. How should organizations apply under a public-private partnership?

Organizations that plan to apply to as a public-private partnership (PPP) may submit their applications in one of four ways:

1. The private entity that is party to the PPP applies on behalf of the PPP that includes the contractual agreement establishing the PPP, and that clearly documents the roles and responsibilities of each member of the PPP.
2. The public entity that is party to the PPP applies on behalf of the PPP that includes the contractual agreement establishing the PPP, and that clearly documents the roles and responsibilities of each member of the PPP.
3. The PPP applies as a single entity if:
 - a. the PPP is an established entity, independent of the parties to the PPP and with its own organizational structure and clearly defined management team; and
 - b. the application includes the contractual agreement establishing the PPP, and clearly documents the roles and responsibilities of each member of the PPP.
4. If the public and private partners are equally involved in the management and/or carrying out of the grant, then the entities of the PPP should submit as co-applicants. The application should include the contractual agreement establishing the PPP, and clearly document the roles and responsibilities of each member of the PPP.

See question 1(d) of this document for additional guidance on establishing a PPP through a formalized contractual agreement.

Note that regardless of the approach taken to submitting an application, each party to the PPP will be considered jointly and severally liable for fulfilling the terms of the award, including post-award grant reporting and all documentation requirements.

² 13 CFR § 312.3.

³ 13 CFR § 312.3.

f. What is an economic development organization (EDO) and what documents should I submit to EDA to demonstrate my eligibility?

EDA defines an EDO as an organization focused primarily on improving science, technology, innovation, or entrepreneurship with a primary purpose to support the economic development of a community or region.⁴ In order to demonstrate eligibility status under this category, EDA will look to the organization's Articles of Incorporation, Charter, Resolutions, Bylaws, and/or other documents that may be relevant to establish the primary purpose of the organization. Applicants are encouraged to submit all relevant documentation to EDA for evaluation. EDA reserves the right to request additional information from applicants to establish eligibility, as necessary. If applicants have further questions concerning these documentation requirements, they should contact their EDA EDR listed in question 9(a) of this document or section G of the [NOFO](#).

g. What is a venture development organization (VDO) and what documents should I submit to EDA to demonstrate my eligibility?

A VDO is a State or nonprofit organization that contributes to regional or sector-based economic prosperity by providing services for the purposes of accelerating the commercialization of research.⁵

h. My organization has not yet formed, or we have formed, but the organization is not yet registered in the System for Award Management (SAM.gov) or on Grants.gov. May the organization still apply for a grant under this NOFO?

In order to be considered for funding, applicants must submit a complete application by **11:59 p.m. Eastern Time on April 29, 2021** (which includes demonstrating SAM registration and applicant eligibility and which requires Grants.gov registration). EDA strongly encourages applicants who are in the process of forming or have formed but are not yet registered on Grants.gov to do so **as soon as possible**. Full application registration requirements include obtaining a unique entity identifier and an active registration in SAM.gov, a process that can take weeks. For further details, see section D.8 of the [NOFO](#).

i. Are previous B2S or Regional Innovation Strategies (RIS) Program grantees with active grants eligible for the Build to Scale program?

Organizations that are or plan to be operating *within* the period of performance of a previously-awarded grant for the Venture Challenge, Industry Challenge, or i6 Challenge (the predecessor to the Venture Challenge) are not eligible for a 2021 Venture Challenge grant. Correspondingly, organizations that are or plan to be operating *within* the period of performance of a previously-awarded grant for the Capital Challenge or Seed Fund Support (the predecessor to the Capital Challenge) are not eligible for a 2021 Capital Challenge grant.

Notwithstanding the above, B2S or RIS grantees operating within the period of performance of a B2S or RIS Program award under a prior year's competition may apply for a grant under the corresponding challenge if the organization applies as part of a separate and distinct entity or group of entities, such as a public-private partnership or a consortium, so long as that separate and distinct entity or group of entities is not itself operating within the period of performance of an active B2S or RIS program award under the corresponding challenge.

For example, Alpha University is a 2019 i6 Challenge grantee, and Beta Nonprofit has never been awarded a B2S or RIS Program grant. Alpha University is not eligible alone for a grant under the 2021 Venture

⁴ 13 CFR § 312.3.

⁵ 15 U.S.C. § 3722(a)(4).

Challenge. However, if Alpha University and Beta Nonprofit apply as a consortium (i.e., apply as co-applicants), the consortium of Alpha University and Beta Nonprofit would be eligible for a grant under the 2021 Venture Challenge.

j. What distress criteria must be met in order to be eligible to receive EDA funding?

Unlike most of EDA's other programs which are authorized under the Public Works and Economic Development Act of 1965,⁶ the B2S Program is authorized under section 27 of the Stevenson-Wydler Technology Innovation Act of 1980 (Section 27).⁷ Section 27 does not require applicants to meet specific regional distress criteria to be eligible for award under the B2S Program.

k. Will any previous grants that EDA awarded my organization affect my organization's competitiveness for under the B2S Program?

No, unless your organization has an active B2S or RIS grant at the time of awards (see question 1(i) of this document). However, the Grants Officer may take into consideration past performance on previous awards when selecting applications for award.

l. For the purposes of the B2S Program, what is a consortium?

A consortium is two or more eligible entities jointly applying for an award as co-applicants.

2. CO-APPLICANTS, CONTRACTORS, AND SUB-AWARDEES

a. How do you determine whether an entity is a co-applicant? What forms are co-applicants required to submit?

If another entity will be partnered with the lead applicant in managing and implementing the scope of work of an award, then that entity may be considered a co-applicant. For assistance identifying co-applicants, please reach out to your EDA EDR listed in question 9(a) of this document or section G of the [NOFO](#). Co-applicants are generally required to submit the same forms that the primary applicant must submit. See section D.2 and Appendix C of the [NOFO](#) for specific application requirements and a comprehensive checklist of the documents required for all co-applicants. All co-applicants must meet the eligibility requirements described above.

b. What differentiates a contractor from a co-applicant?

Co-applicants jointly manage and implement the scope of work of an award. In contrast, contractors provide goods and services for the applicant's or co-applicants' use in performing the scope of work of an award. For more information on determining whether a third-party is a contractor, see 2 CFR § 200.331 (Subrecipient and contractor determinations).

Contracts must be procured in accordance with the procurement standards at 2 CFR §§ 200.317-327 of the Uniform Guidance (discussed above in question 1(b)).

c. What differentiates a sub-awardee from a co-applicant?

Co-applicants jointly manage and implement the scope of work of an award. In contrast, sub-awardees carry out a portion of project activities on behalf of the applicant or co-applicant(s). For more information on

⁶ 42 U.S.C. § 3121, et seq.

⁷ 15 U.S.C. § 3722.

determining whether a third-party is a sub-awardee, see 2 CFR § 200.331 (Subrecipient and contractor determinations).

3. APPLICATION MATERIALS AND SUBMISSION PROCESS

a. Are applicants required to submit a separate application for the Venture Challenge and Capital Challenge?

Applicants may apply to either or both challenges under the B2S Program. If your organization wishes to apply to more than one challenge under the NOFO, you must submit a separate application for each challenge.

b. Are applicants limited to submitting one application per challenge?

Yes, applicants are generally limited to submitting one application per challenge. However, an entity may also submit an application to the same challenge as part of a separate and distinct entity or group of entities, such as a public-private partnership or a consortium, although that separate and distinct entity or group of entities may not itself submit more than one application per challenge.

4. FUNDING AND BUDGET

a. The NOFO discusses a maximum amount for an EDA grant, but can applicants apply for less than that amount?

Yes, an applicant can apply for less than the maximum amount stated in the [NOFO](#). EDA encourages applicants to develop compelling proposals that efficiently use federal dollars.

b. Are grant amounts allotted by year or for the entire project period?

The total federal grant awarded (up to \$1,500,000 for Venture Challenge at the Scale level, up to \$750,000 for Venture Challenge at the Build level, and up to \$400,000 for the Capital Challenge) is based on the entire project period, not per year.

c. The NOFO indicates that applicants must include a budget narrative, but the required SF-424A Budget Information Non-Construction Programs form seems to cover that information. Are those the same?

No, the Budget Narrative and the SF-424A (Budget Information Non-Construction Programs) are separate and distinct required documents. The SF-424A identifies the totals per budget line item. The budget narrative identifies and justifies how the funds in each budget line item will be used to support the proposed project and links each line item to its relevant commitment letter or funding source. Budget narrative line items and whole budget totals should mathematically match the total project costs listed in the appropriate totals fields of the SF-424A and question 18, line g (“TOTAL”) of the SF-424. Applicants are strongly encouraged to review the “Application and Submission Information” (section D) in the [NOFO](#) for further information.

d. What can be considered in-kind contributions?

In-kind contributions provided by the applicant may be used to meet the required non-Federal share of the total project costs. In-kind contributions are non-cash contributions directly related to the proposed project, and typically include items such as space, equipment, or services. Itemized valuations for all in-kind contributions must be included in the Budget Narrative. All in-kind contributions must be eligible project costs and be valued in accordance with the Federal cost principles at [2 CFR 200, subpart E](#).

e. Can the B2S Program fund construction projects?

There is no funding available for construction projects under this program, including projects related to the design or renovation of buildings. However, certain equipment-related modifications or renovations may be eligible in some circumstances.⁸

f. How do you determine allowable expenses that can be charged to the award?

Allowable costs incurred are subject to [2 CFR 200, subpart E](#). If applicants have questions concerning whether a particular cost is allowable, they should contact their State's respective Economic Development Representative (EDR) listed at question 9(a) of this document or section G of the [NOFO](#).

g. Is there a limitation on the amount of indirect costs I may claim?

In general, indirect costs are allowed based on the rate approved by an organizations cognizant federal agency. EDA requires copies of applicants' currently approved indirect cost rate agreement, if any, at the time of application. However, indirect cost rate requirements vary by type of organization and whether an entity has a current approved indirect cost rate agreement. Applicants that are new to the Federal grant process or do not have a current indirect cost rate are encouraged to discuss indirect cost rates with their designated EDA EDR well before the end of the application window. See question 9(a) of this document or section G of the [NOFO](#).

h. What is the minimum matching share required?

Applicants must provide a minimum of one-to-one (i.e. 50 percent of the total project) in matching share under both challenges. Applicants must demonstrate that this matching share (cash, in-kind, or a combination of cash and in-kind contributions) is **available**, **unencumbered**, and **committed** to the project. Applicants should also consider the nature and source of the matching share, as funds from Federal sources often cannot be considered as matching funds for other Federal projects. The budget narrative, SF-424A, and commitment letters should clearly and consistently document the total project budget and should delineate and substantiate matching share, both cash and in-kind, including appropriate valuations.

i. What is required for a Commitment Letter?

A Commitment Letter must demonstrate that matching share (whether cash or in-kind) referenced in the SF-424, SF-424A, Project and Budget Narratives, and elsewhere in the application will be available, unencumbered, and committed at the time of the award. Commitment Letters must be signed by an authorized representative of the organization providing the matching share (e.g., the applicant, co-applicant, or third-party organization). Where an application relies on multiple organizations for matching share, multiple Commitment Letters—one from each organization providing matching share—are required. Commitment Letters do not count toward the Budget Narrative's 4-page limit; these letters can be uploaded as attachments in Grants.gov.

j. Does EDA allow program income to be considered matching share or an addition to the award?

Because EDA requires that matching share must be available, unencumbered, and committed at the time of award, EDA does **not allow** program income to be considered as matching share (i.e., matching share cannot consist of funds that may be collected at a future date).

⁸ See 13 CFR § 312.7(a)(9) and (b)(3).

k. May providers of matching share serve as contractors under an award?

A provider of matching share, including an entity providing cash or in-kind contributions, may not serve as a contractor under an award for which it provides matching share. Thus, an entity providing matching share may not be paid with award funds to provide goods or services to the award recipient.

l. May unrecovered indirect costs count towards the required matching share?

In accordance with 2 CFR 200.306(c), unrecovered indirect costs may only be applied toward the matching share with EDA's prior approval, and therefore applicants seeking to apply unrecovered indirect costs to the matching share should seek EDA's guidance early in the application process.

m. Are matching funds subject to grant usage restrictions?

Non-Federal matching funds are governed by the same requirements as Federal/EDA funds, including the requirements outlined in question 1(b).⁹

n. Is a budget template available and am I required to use it?

An optional budget template is provided in Appendix A to the NOFO. Applicants are not required to use the budget template.

5. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON USE OF AWARD FUNDS

a. Can a B2S Program grant capitalize a lending program or a seed fund?

EDA funds awarded under either B2S Program challenge cannot be used to capitalize a lending program or a seed fund (i.e., EDA funds and matching funds cannot be used to invest in startups or any other companies). The technical assistance and operational costs funded by EDA can jumpstart the creation or expansion of a seed fund by funding operations to raise capital for a fund, to market the fund to potential startups and investors, and to educate potential seed fund investors.

b. May award funds be transferred to companies served under an award?

Awards made under either challenge may only fund operational and programmatic costs related to developing and supporting regional innovation initiatives. Award funds may not be transferred directly to companies (i.e., startups and individuals) being served by the applicant organization, and award funds may not be used to subsidize such companies' expenses that are unrelated to program activities, including general operating expenses.

6. APPLICATIONS

a. How are applications reviewed?

Applications will be reviewed based on the process and evaluation criteria outlined in section E of the [NOFO](#).

b. When is the deadline for submission and where do I submit the application?

Applications should be submitted electronically via www.grants.gov (Grants.gov) and must be received by **11:59 p.m. Eastern Time on Thursday, April 29, 2021**. EDA will not accept paper, facsimile or email transmissions of applications for this program except as provided in the [NOFO](#). Applications received after the applicable closing date and time will not be considered for funding.

⁹ See Subpart E of the Uniform Guidance.

c. Where can I access the most up-to-date State Single Point-of-Contact (SPOC) list related to Executive Order 12372, “Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs”?

The most recent list is available at <https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/SPOC-4-13-20.pdf>. Note that “States that are not listed on [the Intergovernmental Review (SPOC List)] page have chosen not to participate in the intergovernmental review process, and therefore do not have a SPOC. If you are located within a State that does not have a SPOC, you may send application materials directly to a Federal awarding agency.”

e. How many letters of support from State or a political subdivision of a State are necessary if I’m applying as part of a consortium?

Generally, only one letter will be necessary so long as the letter demonstrates that the applicant’s or co-applicant’s application is supported by a State or a political subdivision of a State (e.g., a county or a municipality) that encompasses all or a substantial portion of the region served by the project.

7. AWARD NOTIFICATION

a. When and how will applicants be notified of application results?

All applicants should expect to receive grant award notification approximately 60-90 days from the application close date set forth in the [NOFO](#). OIE will notify applicants via email using the email addresses provided for the authorized representative and application point-of-contact on the SF-424 form.

8. INFORMATIONAL WEBINAR

a. Will EDA conduct an informational webinar?

EDA has conducted an informational webinar for prospective applicants. A recording of this webinar is now available via OIE’s [B2S Program website](#).

9. CONTACT US

a. What is the easiest way to contact EDA with questions during the application process?

Please note, to support a fair, national competition, EDA cannot provide strategic advice, or partnership development support during the competition, and must limit support efforts to administrative and technical concerns about the competition and application process.

EDA encourages communities to start with their respective EDR listed below, but during the competition phase immediate responses may be challenging to provide due to the higher volume of inquiries. If you require immediate support, or have unique technical questions, please contact the program office by email at oiie@eda.gov.

HEADQUARTER CONTACT			
Headquarters	Office of Innovation and Entrepreneurship	oiie@eda.gov	(202) 482-8001
ATLANTA REGION CONTACTS			
State(s)	Point of Contact	Email	Phone
Alabama	Michael Mills	mmills@eda.gov	(404) 730-3020
Florida	Greg Vaday	gvaday@eda.gov	(404) 730-3009
Georgia	Jonathan Corso	jcorso@eda.gov	(404) 730-3023

Kentucky	Bertha Partin	bpartin@eda.gov	(404) 730-3026
Mississippi	Gilbert (Gil) Patterson	gpatterson2@eda.gov	(404) 730-3032
North Carolina	Hillary Sherman	hsherman@eda.gov	(404) 730-3013
South Carolina	Robin Cooley	rcooley@eda.gov	(803) 253-3640
Tennessee	Lucas Z. Blankenship	lblankenship@eda.gov	(404) 730-3010
AUSTIN REGION CONTACTS			
State(s)	Point of Contact	Email	Phone
Arkansas	April Campbell	acampbell@eda.gov	(512) 667-0496
Louisiana	Jason Wilson	jwilson1@eda.gov	(512) 516-1878
New Mexico, Texas (West)	Trisha Korbas	tkorbas@eda.gov	(720) 626-1499
Oklahoma, Texas (North)	Stacey Webb	swebb@eda.gov	(737) 704-4707
Texas (South)	Robert Peche	rpeche1@eda.gov	(512) 568-7732
CHICAGO REGION CONTACTS			
State(s)	Point of Contact	Email	Phone
Illinois, Minnesota	Darrin Fleener	dfleener@eda.gov	(312) 789-9753
Indiana	James Winters	jwinters@eda.gov	(312) 789-9771
Ohio	Ellen Heinz	eh Heinz@eda.gov	(312) 505-4953
Wisconsin	Tom Baron	tbaron@eda.gov	(312) 789-9773
Michigan	Lee J. Shirey	lshirey@eda.gov	(312) 789-9751
DENVER REGION CONTACTS			
State(s)	Point of Contact	Email	Phone
Colorado, Utah	Trent Thompson	tthompson@eda.gov	(303) 844-5452
Iowa (Eastern), Missouri (Eastern and Central)	Steve Castaner	scastaner@eda.gov	(573) 590-1194
Iowa (Western), North Dakota, South Dakota	Alex Smith	asmith1@eda.gov	(720) 402-7686
Kansas, Nebraska, Missouri (Western)	Mark Werthmann	mwerthmann@eda.gov	(913) 894-1586
Montana, Wyoming	Kirk Keysor	kkeysor@eda.gov	(406) 599-9795
PHILADELPHIA REGION CONTACTS			
State(s)	Point of Contact	Email	Phone
Delaware	Kevin Quinn	kquinn@eda.gov	(267) 687-4317
Maine, New Hampshire	Alan Brigham	abrigham@eda.gov	(215) 316-2965
Maryland, Washington DC	Alma R. Plummer	aplummer@eda.gov	(215) 597-7538
Connecticut, Massachusetts, Rhode Island	Debra Beavin	dbeavin@eda.gov	(215) 597-8719
New Jersey, New York	Edward Hummel	ehummel@eda.gov	(215) 316-2124
Pennsylvania	Christopher Casper	ccasper1@eda.gov	(215) 597-1074
Puerto Rico, US Virgin Islands	Juan Bauza	jbauza@eda.gov	(215) 435-2212
Vermont	Matt Suchodolski	msuchodolski@eda.gov	(215) 597-1242
Virginia	Lauren Stuhldreher	lstuhldreher@eda.gov	(215) 764-0427
West Virginia	Tracey Rowan	trowan@eda.gov	(304) 533-4497
SEATTLE REGION CONTACTS			
State(s)	Point of Contact	Email	Phone
Alaska	Shirley Kelly	skelly2@eda.gov	(907) 271-2272

Arizona	Cynthia Ptak	cptak@eda.gov	(206) 888-3386
Washington	Christopher LoBosco (Interim Contact)	clobosco@eda.gov	(206) 327-2076
Hawaii, Guam, American Samoa, Marshall Islands, Micronesia, Northern Mariana Islands, Republic of Palau	Herbert Thweatt	hthweatt@eda.gov	(808) 541-3391
Idaho, Nevada (Rural)	Carleen Herring	cherring@eda.gov	(206) 798-7814
Oregon	J. Wesley Cochran	jcochran@eda.gov	(206) 561-6646
Central California	Asia King	aking2@eda.gov	(206) 247-0991
Southern California	Wilfred Marshall	wmarshall@eda.gov	(310) 348-5386
California (Northern and Coastal)	Malinda Matson	mmatson1@eda.gov	(916) 235-0088
Clark County, Nevada	John Edmond	jedmond@eda.gov	(206) 888-3390