



Homeland Security
and Emergency Services

How to Write an Effective Grant Application

February 25, 2021

Agenda

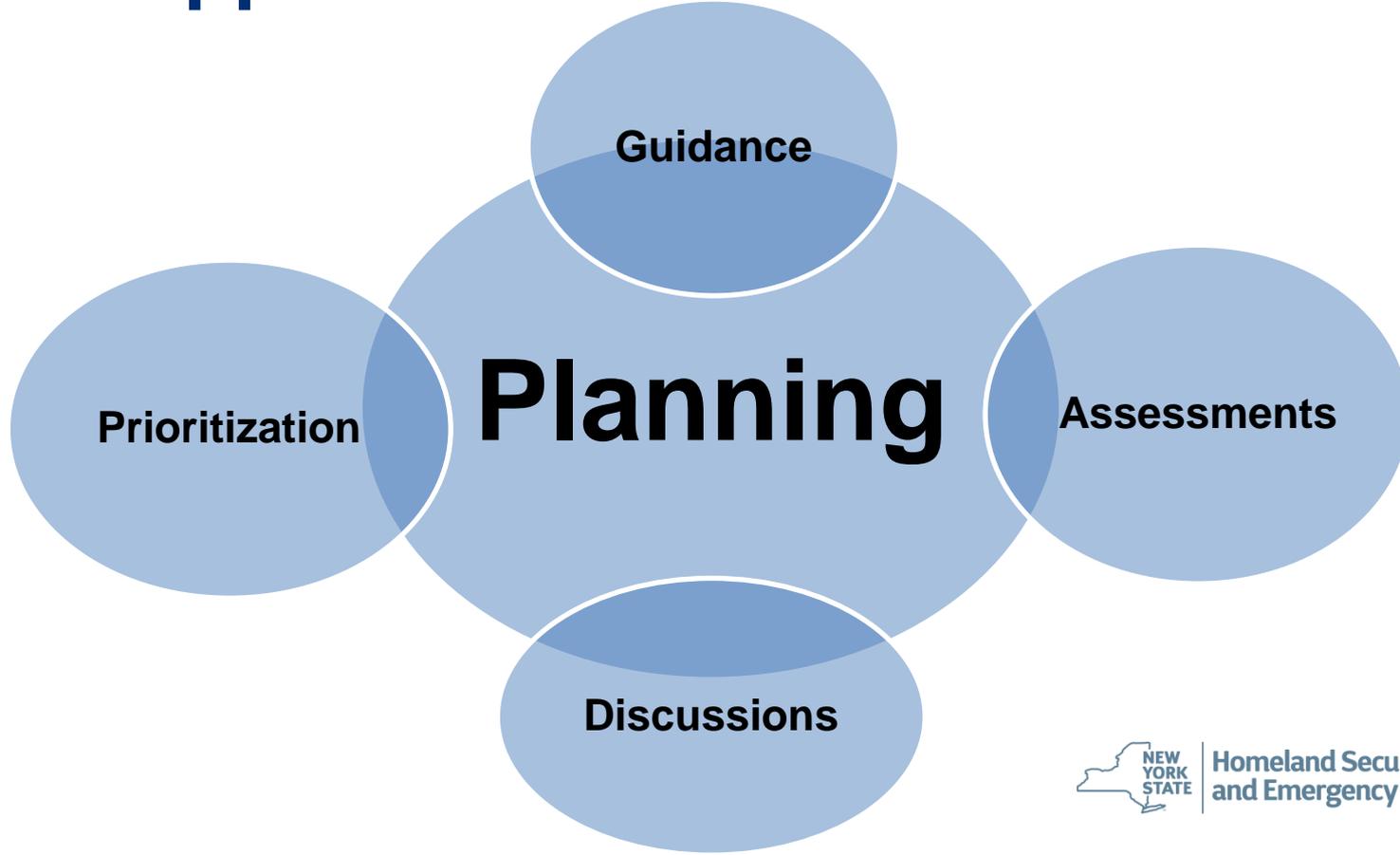
- **General Overview**
 - Program Funding
 - Grant Application Foundation
 - Steps to the Application Process
- **FY2020 SHSP/UASI**
 - Changes to the Guidance
 - Examples
 - Guiding Your Projects
- **Competitive Funding Streams**
 - Targeted Grants
 - Application Evaluation Criteria
 - Tips and Tricks From Reviewers
- **Best Practices**
 - Strong vs. Weak Applications
 - Do's and Don't's



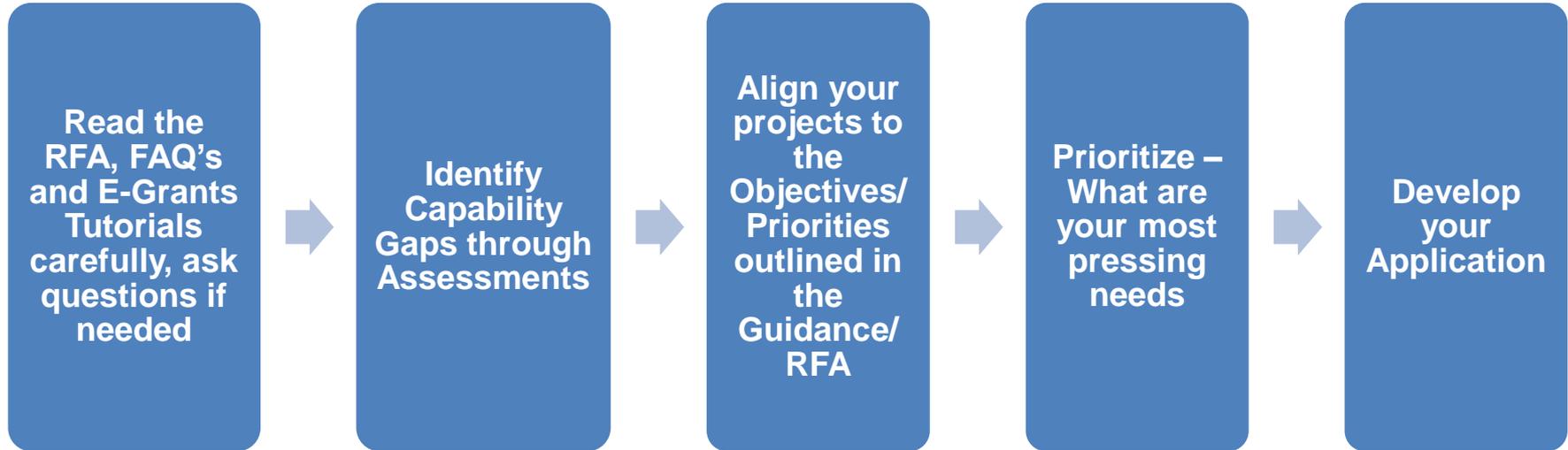
Overview of Program Funding

Federal Funding	State Funding
State Homeland Security Grant Program (SHSP)	State Interoperable Communications Grant Program (SICG-Formula and SICG Targeted)
Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI)	Public Safety Answering Points Grant Program (PSAP)
Operation Stonegarden Grant Program (OPSG)	Recruitment and Retention (R&R) Grant Program
Emergency Management Performance Grant Program (EMPG)	Securing Communities Against Hate Crimes Grant Program (SCAHC)
Nonprofit Security Grant Program (NSGP)	
Hazardous Materials Emergency Preparedness (HMEP) Program	
SHSP Targeted Grants (Bomb Squad Initiative, HazMat, Cyber Security, Tactical Teams, Technical Rescue/USAR, Critical Infrastructure, Explosive Detection Canine Teams)	

Grant Application Foundation



Steps to Application Process



FY2020 SHSP/UASI

FY2020 SHSP/UASI Guidance

- **FY2020 Resulted in Significant Changes to Grant Guidance**
- **Introduction of the National Priority Requirements (NPR) and 5% Spending Requirements in each NPR of:**
 - Intelligence and Information Sharing – 5%
 - Cyber Security – 5%
 - Soft Targets/Crowded Places – 5%
 - Emerging Threats – 5%
- **Required Grant Effectiveness Review of the Priority Projects**
 - Essentially more details were required that supported those funding requests
- ***Important Note: The priorities and process for FY2021 HSGP still remain unclear based on DHS/FEMA, however we wanted to be prepared***



Grant Effectiveness Evaluation Questions

- **Grant Effectiveness Evaluation Questions for the National Priority Requirements (NPR) included the following:**
 - **Budget Cost Effectiveness (10%):** Essentially requesting how you are going to ensure that the projects you are requesting will maximize your jurisdiction's capabilities through the sharing of resources and funded projects

Project Description/Budget Plan (10%)

PROJECT DESCRIPTION - Please provide a description of your project, clearly highlighting what capabilities will be sustained or developed and the impacts on your jurisdiction.

Description:

Project Budget Plan

DIRECTIONS: Applicants must provide clear budget descriptions, with a justification for each budget item identified in the budget plan. Please use the " Budget Item Description and Justification" column to provide this information. When completing this worksheet, please fill out each column for every row you complete. Incomplete columns will result in the "Totals" not being calculated correctly.

Item #	Budget Item Description	Budget Item Justification	Federal Spending Category	NYS Budget Category	Total Cost	Authorized Equipment List (AEL) Number	Discipline
1							
2							
3							
4							
5							
6							
7							
8							
9							
10							
11							
12							
13							
14							
15							
16							
17							
18							
19							
20							
					Equipment Subtotal	\$0	#DIV/0!
					Exercise Subtotal	\$0	#DIV/0!
					M&A Subtotal	\$0	#DIV/0!
					Organization Subtotal	\$0	#DIV/0!
					Planning Subtotal	\$0	#DIV/0!
					Training Subtotal	\$0	#DIV/0!
					PROJECT TOTAL	\$0	
					IJ MIN TOTAL MET		#DIV/0!

Cost Effectiveness -In addition to the budget items depicted above, please explain how you will maximize the cost effectiveness of this grant expenditure. This can include information such as "This project will be regional in nature and benefit multiple disciplines and jurisdictional boundaries in an effort to close XYZ gap identified through XYZ capability assessment within the county."

Description:



Example

Your jurisdiction requires annual HazMat training to support your county's HazMat Team and to ensure CBRNE capabilities are maintained (as identified in your CEPA). This project supports your Emerging Threats spending requirement of 5%.

Sample Response to Cost Effectiveness:

Empire County will utilize grant funding to support HazMat training for all county HazMat Team members, which spans over 13 fire districts within the county and includes the Regional Partners from neighboring counties that make up the county's Regional HazMat Team. This training opportunity would be regional in nature and will advance our county's HazMat capabilities as it relates to CBRNE incident response.



Grant Effectiveness Evaluation Questions

- **Implementation Plan (30%):** Please explain in detail how your project under this National Priority area will support the program objectives of preventing, preparing for, protecting against and responding to acts of terrorism and otherwise reduce the overall identified risk to your jurisdiction.
- **What is this asking for?**
 - Requiring subrecipients to align their project to the overall objectives and focus of the HSGP program
 - Aligns to the NYS Homeland Security Strategy

Implementation Plan (30%)



Please explain in detail how your project under this National Priority area will support the program objectives of preventing, preparing for, protecting against and responding to acts of terrorism and otherwise reduce the overall identified risk to your jurisdiction.

Description:



Example

Your jurisdiction has identified that Intelligence and Information Sharing was a key capability gap identified in CEPA and you are looking to conduct an exercise to evaluate your county's intelligence and information sharing capabilities. This project would support your Intelligence and Information Sharing spending requirement of 5%.

Sample Response to Implementation Plan:

Empire County will utilize grant funding to conduct a table-top exercise to measure and evaluate the information and intelligence sharing capabilities within the jurisdictions in terms of suspicious activity reporting and terrorism-prevention activities. This project will support our efforts in preventing, protecting and responding to acts of terrorism as it will allow the county to test the capabilities of its staff who are normally tasked with providing sensitive counterterrorism information either within or to external local/State/federal agencies. Through this exercise, gaps or deficiencies within this capability will be identified and an after-action review will be conducted to aid in closing those gaps and developing a plan to improve our intelligence and information sharing capabilities and mitigate risk.



Grant Effectiveness Evaluation Questions

- **Impacts and Outcomes (30%):** Please explain how this investment will help your jurisdiction close capability gaps identified in your County Emergency Preparedness Assessment (CEPA) and what your estimated improvement will be to this National Priority area and how you will measure and/or evaluate results.
- **What is this asking for?**
 - Requiring subrecipients to provide details as to what tangible impacts and outcomes will be achieved by funding this specific project and how you will measure and/or evaluate results.



Impacts and Outcomes (30%)



Please explain how this investment will help your jurisdiction close capability gaps identified in your County Emergency Preparedness Assessment (CEPA) and what your estimated improvement will be to this National Priority area and how you will measure and/or evaluate results.

Description:

Example

Your jurisdiction identified Cyber Security as a major concern as you experienced a data breach in your network systems recently within your county. This gap was identified in your most recent CEPA and is in direct support of the National Priority Requirement (NPR) for Cyber Security

Sample Response to Impacts and Outcomes:

Empire County will utilize grant funding to enhance their cyber security within their network infrastructure. A recent data breach identified significant vulnerabilities in the current system to detect and interdict cyber attacks. Aging infrastructure and outdated software was determined to be the cause. Grant funding will be utilized to upgrade current infrastructure to a more secured network and for consultant costs associated with monitoring networks and routine testing. This will contribute significantly to securing the 14 departments within our jurisdiction that share this network.



Grant Effectiveness Evaluation Questions

- **Collaboration (30%):** Collaboration is a key component to implementing successful projects. Please articulate how your jurisdiction collaborated and coordinated this specific project (e.g., who was involved, etc.) and how this investment will be used to overcome any existing impediments to fostering a culture of national preparedness with federal, State, and local government under this National Priority area.
- **What is this asking for?**
 - This is asking for you to articulate how your jurisdiction came to support this specific project (e.g., multi-disciplines, jurisdictions) and how this project aligns and contributes to the federal, State and local partnership required to achieve national preparedness.

Collaboration (30%)

Collaboration is a key component to implementing successful projects. Please articulate how your jurisdiction collaborated and coordinated this specific project (e.g. who was involved, etc.) and how this investment will be used to overcome any existing impediments to fostering a culture of national preparedness with federal, state, and local government under this National Priority area.

Description:

Example

Your jurisdiction has identified that target hardening measures were required at a critical infrastructure site within your jurisdiction that serves as a mass gathering venue throughout the summer (e.g., festivals, etc.) This was based on your most recent CEPA and supports the Soft Target-Crowded Places National Priority Requirement (NPR)

Sample Response to Coordination:

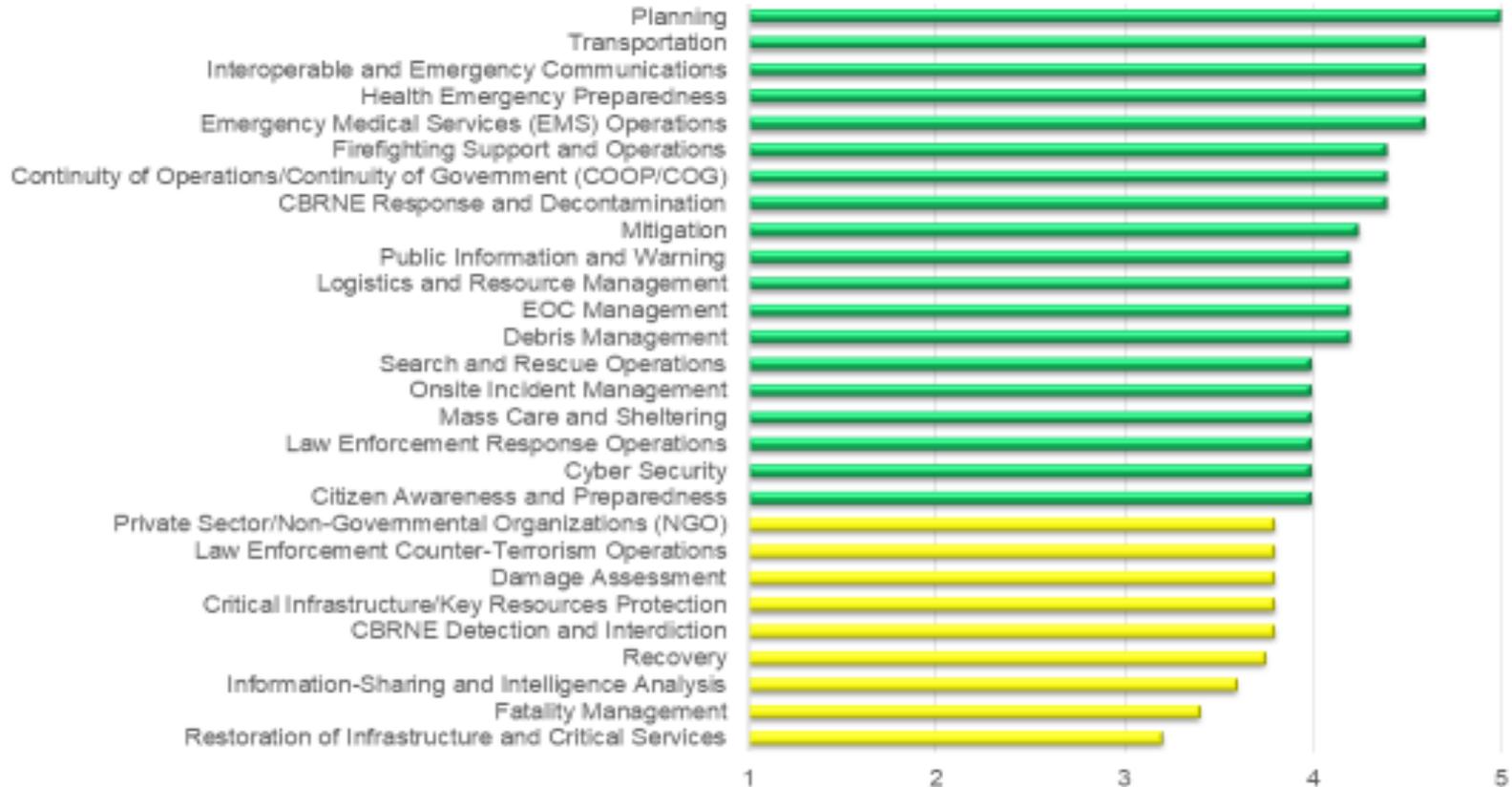
Empire County will utilize grant funding to conduct a risk and vulnerability assessment on critical infrastructure/key resource site to ensure the facility remains secure during seasonal mass gathering events. Efforts will be coordinated with local, State, and federal law enforcement as well as our fire and local emergency management. The physical security vulnerabilities will be shared, and a collective security plan developed based on those identified needs.



Guiding your Projects

Capability Assessment

19



Guiding your Projects

AutoSave Off | FY2020 Project Linkages Standardization Form - FINAL - Read-Only - Excel | Search | Tristan YT | Share | Comments

D6: Foster greater information sharing through the development of formalized plans and protocols, including support to the development of intelligence products (e.g. collection, analysis, dissemination capabilities).

Standardized Linkage Guide for NYS Homeland Security Projects

This Standardized Linkage Guide is designed to assist NYS Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Services (DHSES) staff and DHSES sub-recipients with the identification of PRIMARY linkages between their projects and the various federal categories used within our homeland security application to FEMA and the back-end reporting requirements we must complete through the Biannual Strategy Implementation Report (BSIR). Due to FEMA's increased reliance on project-level detail in our homeland security application and the associated reporting requirements required for each of these projects, this Guide has been created to help harmonize the use, collection and reporting of Federal reporting metrics. While we recognize that many projects implemented with homeland security grant funds often support multiple linkages within a category, we have attempted to identify a standardized link that will allow us to make the most appropriate data selection when completing our HSGP application or complying with Federal reporting requirements. This Guide will be a "living document", with additions and changes made as necessary based on feedback from end-users or changes in reporting requirements. Please do not hesitate to contact DHSES if you have any questions on completing the required linkages for your projects.

Strengthen Intelligence and Information-Sharing Capabilities

	Project	Project Title	Project Description	Project Type (G&T)	IJ	Core Capability	NYS Critical Capability (Target Capability)	National Priority	NIMS Typed?	NIMS Type Name	NIMS ID	Goal	Objective 1	Objective 2
Investment Justification 1	Planning (Info-Sharing & Intel Analysis)	Support Information-Sharing and Intelligence Analysis Planning Activities	Foster greater information sharing through the development of formalized plans and protocols, including support to the development of intelligence products (e.g. collection, analysis, dissemination capabilities).	Establish/enhance a terrorism intelligence/early warning system, center, or task force (1)	Intel/Info Sharing	Intelligence and Information Sharing	Information Sharing and Intelligence Analysis	Strengthen Information Sharing and Collaboration Capabilities				1	1.6	1.3
	Intelligence Analysis Technology	Intelligence Analysis Technology Support	Utilize technological systems to empower widespread information sharing and intelligence analysis.	Establish/enhance a terrorism intelligence/early warning system, center, or task force (1)	Intel/Info Sharing	Intelligence and Information Sharing	Information Sharing and Intelligence Analysis	Strengthen Information Sharing and Collaboration Capabilities				1	1.7	
	Training (Info-Sharing & Intel Analysis)	Training Program Support (Info-Sharing and Intel Analysis)	The development and implementation of a training program, in order to test capabilities and evaluate gaps.	Establish/enhance sustainable homeland security training program (6)	Intel/Info Sharing	Planning	Planning	Strengthen Information Sharing and Collaboration Capabilities				1	1.9	
	Exercises (Info-Sharing & Intel Analysis)	Exercise Program Support (Info-Sharing and Intel Analysis)	The development and implementation of an exercise program, in order to test capabilities and evaluate gaps.	Establish/enhance sustainable homeland security exercise program (20)	Intel/Info Sharing	Planning	Planning	Strengthen Information Sharing and Collaboration Capabilities				1	1.9	
	LE Technology (e.g. LPRs, MDTs, Surveillance)	Law Enforcement Information Technology Support	Adopt and implement law enforcement information technology systems that build law enforcement counter-terrorism capabilities and increase intelligence and information sharing among various local, state, and federal partners.	Establish/enhance a terrorism intelligence/early warning system, center, or task force (1)	Counter Terrorism	Interdiction and Disruption	Law Enforcement Counter-Terrorism Operations	Implement NIMS and NRP				2	2.5	

Ready | IJ's and HS Strategy Goals | Intel and Information Sharing | Cyber Security | Soft Targets - Crowded Places | Emerging Threats | Counter Terrorism | Emergency Management | Interop Communications | Citizen ... | 82%

Questions

Competitive Funding Streams

SHSP Targeted Grants – Competitive Programs

Application Evaluation Criteria - Tier 1 Review*

BASICS

- Was the application submitted on time?
- Is the application complete?
 - Required RFA Worksheet
 - Submitted in E-Grants
- Is the applicant eligible?
 - Do they meet the minimum eligibility requirements?
 - Did they include any additional eligibility documents, if required? (Assessments, Typing Sheets, etc.)



*ANY “No”, and the application is disqualified.



SHSP Targeted Grants – Competitive Programs

Application Evaluation Criteria - Tier 2 Review

EACH competitive program has its own unique criteria against which your application is evaluated – with a scoring range attached to it.



PAY specific attention to those details and the values – in general the categories are typically in the areas of:

- Risk Profile and Assessment
- Budget
- Capability Advancement/Enhancement
- Multi-Year Planning (Sustainment/Implementation)



SHSP Targeted Grants – Competitive Programs

- **Risk Profile**
 - Answer all questions in this section
 - Provide any details related to identified vulnerabilities through response operations, incidents, etc. Track all your calls/incidents
- **Project Budget**
 - Provide not only the equipment/training item but details on its purpose and any linkage to assessment (e.g., “In my risk assessment, XYZ was identified as a capability gap, therefore we are requesting funding to support XYZ”)
 - Avoid vendor naming – however, make sure to develop a budget based on reasonableness of costs
- **Capability Advancement/Enhancement**
 - Articulate how your project will assist your jurisdiction in advancing your capabilities aligning to the specific program you are applying for. Make linkages to each of your projects in the narrative and discuss how your proposed projects will build those capabilities. (e.g., “Our Technical Rescue team specializing in Rope Rescue has identified XYZ based on completing the accreditation review and this allowable equipment/training will help to advance our capabilities and move our team closer towards the accreditation standards outlined”)



SHSP Targeted Grants – Competitive Programs

- **Multi-Year Planning/Sustainment**
 - How are you going to implement this project? What is your plan in terms of ensuring this project will be completed within the period of performance of the grant?
 - How are you going to sustain the capability after the grant? Program funding is never a guarantee. Be sure you are appropriately covering post award details and what resources you will utilize to sustain those capabilities moving forward.

- **Bonus Points**
 - Each program may have its own unique Bonus Points structure – that said, some programs have additional requirements to qualify for Bonus Points include providing details (e.g., Regional Projects). Be sure that you read the requirements carefully to ensure you are eligible for the full Bonus Points.

- **Grants Performance History**
 - Late reporting, turning back funding, not adhering to the requirements outlined in your contract, and frequent scope changes in projects may have a negative impact on your application score.



Tips and Tricks from Reviewers

- Ensure that you provide adequate details of your projects – this includes covering down on certain items that you think are implied.
- Do not make reviewers hunt for answers elsewhere in your application
- Answer all the questions appropriately – do not duplicate responses. The questions do have a purpose to help aid the reviewer
- Reviewers are looking not only at your budget but what your plan is moving forward
- Provide all relevant details about the risks in your jurisdictions, this includes identifying any real-life incidents that demonstrate a capability gap
 - Remember: You know your risks – but reviewers will NOT!
- Do not leave BLANKS! This can affect your overall score and can jeopardize your chances of receiving funding

Questions

Best Practices

What Makes a Strong Application

- **Providing Sufficient Details**
 - Present information in a concise and clear manner
 - This includes paying attention to details and answering all parts of all the questions – every point counts!
- **Alignment to the Program Objectives**
 - Ensure your projects support what is set to be accomplished by the Program to which you are applying
- **Reasonable Budgets**
 - Do your homework on all your budget items
 - Pay attention to Spending Caps and Allowability



What Makes a Weak Application

- Assuming the reviewers will know the complexity of risks in your jurisdiction without clearly stating them
- Developing your application based on wants vs. filling identified capability gaps (e.g., certification, assessments, typing, etc.)
- Providing a budget that exceeds the cap, with no local matching funds or some reference to how you would meet the costs of the project
- No details on implementation of the project – how will this help you to build your capabilities moving forward and post award?
- Relying solely on grant funding to support sustained costs
- Being vague in your answers and cutting and pasting information to fill sections versus answering the questions asked



The DO's and DON'T's

DO:	DON'T:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Start early/Submit early! 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cut and paste projects from year to year or utilize old Application Worksheets as these change each cycle.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participate in requirements that can be completed NOW! 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wait until the Guidance/RFA is out – planning should happen continually throughout the year!
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have a list of viable projects and their potential funding sources (PLAN!) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Depend on funding for sustainment of existing capabilities – grant funding is not a guarantee
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use any assessment (e.g., CEPA, Accreditation documents, Capability Assessments) to help inform projects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expect that programs will remain the same from year to year – we are continually evaluating and updating the grant programs to ensure they are meeting the needs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Track your activities and calls – many applications require call reporting as part of their application 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meet regularly as a jurisdiction to discuss potential projects 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leverage all available funding to support your capability gaps 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If denied for an application, ask for feedback as soon as you receive a regret letter. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ask questions – we are here to support you in this process! 	

Questions

THANK YOU!

DHSES Grants Program Administration (GPA)

Grants Hotline: 866-837-9133

E-Mail: Grant.Info@dhses.ny.gov