



City of St. Louis

FAQs #1 – 2016 CDBG Request For Proposals

Questions & Answers Received as of July 13, 2015

Posted on July 14, 2015

Contact: CDBG@stlouis-mo.gov

General Questions

1. Where can we find the presentations from the trainings and workshops held in June?

Copies of the presentations can be found in the "2016 CDBG Funding" tab on the CDA website: www.stlouis-mo.gov/cda.

2. Do you have a list of average award amounts or award maximums? Do you have a list of the types of projects that were funded in the past?

If you would like information on the types of projects funded in the past, please visit the CDA website to review 2014 and 2015 Funding Cycles (under "CDBG Funding" tab). There is not a maximum application amount. However, all requests must be reasonable.

3. If a question is not applicable to my organization, may we leave it blank?

If applying using EGrAMS, you may leave a question blank if it is not applicable to your organization. If you are submitting a hardcopy of the application, you must denote all questions that are not applicable by typing "N/A" or "Not Applicable".

4. In prior years, CDA issued FAQs. Will this also occur this year?

Yes, CDA will make Frequently Asked Questions available on the CDA website.

5. I just want to confirm, as in the past, we don't have to provide a business license on the application as a CDC.

As long as an organization is exempt, it will not need to provide a business license.

6. If we submit our application prior to August 7, will someone review the submission and let us know what needs to be changed?

No. As detailed in the RFP, all proposals and supporting documentation must be complete upon initial submission.

7. How do we handle construction budgets?

Organizations proposing a construction activity should use the activity budget form provided in the application. As in prior years, we have provided additional lines to accommodate expenses not listed specifically in the budget.

8. The RFP asks for specific address(es) where the proposed activity will occur. What if we don't know the specific addresses where the activity will occur, for example with a beautification program?

Proposals should include locations where the activity will likely occur. In some instances, the location may be an area (e.g. neighborhoods or census tracts).

9. In reference to the geographic target area, do we get more points if we serve multiple target areas? Also, where in the proposal should we denote the target area(s) served?

Organizations serving at least one target area are eligible to receive additional points during the rating process (you will not receive more points if serving multiple target areas). Please include the proposed target areas in Section VI of the proposal.

Eligibility Questions

10. Can an organization utilize CDBG funds to purchase a building?

No. Acquisition is not an eligible activity under the 2016 CDBG Request for Proposals.

11. Is there a special set aside for food access?

There is no special set aside for food access this year, but it is an eligible activity.

12. We plan to apply for a youth crime prevention activity and we would like to be considered for the special set aside. How do we go about including that in our proposal?

You should state it in the activity section of your proposal, either when describing the proposed activity or in the comments section. Please also refer to the Mayor’s Youth Violence Prevention Task Force Community Plan for additional information to assist in the proposal process (<https://www.stlouis-mo.gov/government/departments/mayor/news/Youth-Violence-Task-Force.cfm>).

13. Does CDA have a specific purpose in mind for the \$500,000 set aside for public improvements in the target commercial corridors?

No.

14. If our organization is proposing an activity that addresses more than one eligible activity, should we discuss them all in our proposal?

No, you should select the one that best fits the proposed activity.

15. Are there any training activities that you will not cover?

As long as the training falls under an eligible activity, it can be proposed.

Partnerships/Collaborations

16. If partnering with another organization, do we just name the organization or do we explain why we want to partner?

Your proposal should demonstrate the need for collaborators/partners and identify the value that those organizations bring to the proposed activity. If an organization plans to use CDBG dollars to fund a “named” partner organization, it should sufficiently demonstrate why the collaboration is (1) necessary, (2) reasonable, and (3) competitive. In this instance, we also encourage you to follow adequate procurement procedures prior to submitting your CDBG proposal. This includes identifying and clearly specifying standards for the services to be obtained and seeking competitive offers to obtain the best possible quality at the best possible price.

In addition, please keep in mind the following:

- Because only one organization can be funded per proposal, there must be a lead agency. If your proposal is approved, the lead organization will enter into a contract with CDA. Please note the following additional information on collaborations:
 - The lead organization for the activity will be ultimately responsible for the successful completion of the proposed objectives and any CDBG compliance requirements.
 - CDA will only approve collaborations that will result in a fixed rate per unit completed/accomplished (for example, \$10 per unit based on a budget for operations and administration of \$10,000 and a volume of 1,000 units). CDA will require a cost allocation

plan for all contracts with per unit costs, to ensure that the reimbursement is tied to the actual cost of services.

- If applicable, CDA will require that the lead organization submit, for CDA approval, a contract with its partner that spells out its responsibilities and funding to be received. All CDA and CDBG requirements must be incorporated into this agreement.

Please also keep in mind that with any collaborative effort, CDA will assess the capacity of all organizations participating in the proposed collaboration. Because of this, one organization's capacity strengths or deficiencies (e.g. fiscal and programmatic compliance) may adversely affect the outcome of the rating.

17. We are thinking about submitting a proposal to facilitate (or refer) clients to another public service organization. Is this eligible?

Facilitating (or referring) in itself is not CDBG-eligible. We are looking to fund organizations that directly serve LMI individuals.

Per Unit Questions

18. Is the "unit of service" formula based on total organization budget or just the activity that we are requesting funding for?

The answer to this question depends on the organization and its activities. Please refer to the PowerPoint presentation on per unit costs located on the CDA website under the "2016 CDBG Funding" tab.

19. Can we include more than one "per unit" or "units of service" for one activity?

Yes.

20. We are a City Department / Governmental Entity. Do we still need to provide a "unit of service"

Yes, in order to assist us in determining the reasonableness of your funding request. However, with City departments and other governmental entities, CDA may elect to reimburse for actual costs.

21. How do the "unit of service", outcome measurements, and activity goals and outputs tie together?

Your activity goals and outputs detailed in the proposal will most likely be your “unit of service” used in determining a fixed price. Your outcome measurements will incorporate the outputs and the steps needed to accomplish the goal.

CDA Online Application and Grants Management System (EGrAMS)

22. How do we access EGrAMS?

EGrAMS is accessible through the CDA website under the “CDA Grants Management System” tab or directly via www.cdagrants.com.

23. If we successfully submit our application(s) online through EGrAMS, do we still need to submit a paper copy by the due date?

No.

24. In order to add a contact person for my organization, do I need to register my organization first?

Yes.

25. In order to add a user for my organization does that person need to be registered in EGrAMS first?

Yes.

26. I am the main user for my organization. Can I set permissions for additional user to handle, for instance, the finance portion of the application?

Yes. Please feel free to contact EGrAMSSupport@stlouis-mo.gov if you have any difficulty setting up permissions.

27. Can we start our applications in EGrAMS and finish later?

Yes. Please note that the deadline for submission is August 7, 2015 at 4:00 p.m., and you must allow sufficient time to correct any validation errors.

28. When will the info and link to the EGrAMS workshop be available?

The PowerPoint from the webinar is available on the CDA website: <https://www.stlouis-mo.gov/government/departments/community-development/egramps/cda-egramps-overview-and-applications.cfm>.

29. I don't see a request in EGrAMS for Letters of Support. Are they required? If so, where are they attached?

Organizations that currently receive funding from CDA are not required to submit a letter of recommendation. For those who are required to submit a letter, you can upload the letter in EGrAMS in the narrative tab under "Grant Administration History".

30. I noticed that there is an Acknowledgment and Certification Form included in the User Documents in EGrAMS. Do we need to upload the signed form to our application?

Yes.

31. I recall organizations being asked to submit 2014 and 2015 operating budgets last year. This year's application is labeled in EGrAMS this way too. Should we be submitting 2015 and 2016 this year?

Thank you for bringing this to our attention. Yes, you should submit 2015 and 2016 operating budgets. EGrAMS has been updated to reflect the requirement.

32. The website notes that questions can be submitted to CDBG@stlouis-mo.gov until July 24, 2015. What's the deadline for technical questions pertaining to EGrAMS?

Applicants may submit EGrAMS technical questions to EGrAMSSupport@stlouis-mo.gov until 12:00 p.m. on August 7, 2015.

33. We are a City Department/Governmental entity and we plan to apply for CDBG funding. In EGrAMS, it asks for attachments that we are not required to provide (e.g. 501(c)3, business license and certificate of good standing). Will we be able to submit our application if we do not include attachments?

We have updated EGrAMS to include "Governmental" as an applicant type. Governmental applicants will not be required to submit information on 501(c)3 status, certificate of good standing, business license, IRS 990 or letter of recommendation.

34. Under the Grant History section, we are not able to do a range in years for the program. How should we handle this?

EGrAMS has been updated to accommodate a range of years for grant history.