**Green Building Fund Grant**

**Net-Zero Energy Project Design Assistance  
RFA #2019-1912-USA**

**Q&A 4/11/2019**

**Updated 4/30/2019**

**Meeting Location: DOEE Offices and Conference Call**

**Attendees & Contact Information**:

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| **Name** | **Organization** | **Email** |
| Casey Studhalter | DOEE | Casey.studhalter@dc.gov |
| Pamela Weinberg | DOEE | Pamela.Weinberg@dc.gov |
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| |  | | --- | | Andrea Foss | | Steven Winter Associates | [afoss@swinter.com](mailto:afoss@swinter.com) |
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**Main Points/Discussion**:

**Introductions (All)**

Attendance and contact list is included above.

**Grants Overview (Casey Studhalter – DOEE)**

A brief overview of the grant program included in this RFA was reviewed, including the outcomes and deliverables. Greater detail is provided in the RFA available on the DOEE website, <https://doee.dc.gov/node/1394781>

**Questions and Answers:**

1. **Q:** When do final reports need to be submitted**?  
   A:** All work supported by the grant and associated reporting must be completed and submitted to DOEE by September 30, 2019. All funds must be spent by September 30, 2019 as well, however final invoices may be accepted during the first week of October. DOEE does not provide advance payment, except in limited circumstances upon application.
2. **Q:** Have these grants been issued in prior years? **A:** No, DOEE has not previously awarded any grants of this nature. The Green Building Fund Grant Program, which this grant is a part of, has been in existence since 2013 providing funding for various projects. Details for each of those are available at <https://doee.dc.gov/publication/green-light-grant-program>.
3. **Q:** Is there a definition for net-zero energy (NZE) or an Energy Use Intensity (EUI) target that applicants need to adhere to?  
   **A:** No, there is no set definition for net-zero energy or EUI target that needs to be utilized for the purposes of this grant. For projects looking for a working NZE definition, the draft 2018 DC Energy Conservation Code contains Appendix Z, which will be DC’s net-zero energy voluntary code. Appendix Z provides a clear definition for net-zero energy performance and is included as an attachment on the RFA webpage at <https://doee.dc.gov/node/1394781>.
4. **Q:** Does Appendix Z allow onsite combustion of natural gas?  
   **A:** No, Appendix Z does not allow onsite combustion of fossil fuels except as specified by the code official. That definition, however, does not have to be used by projects for the purposes of this RFA.
5. **Q:** Are the deliverables listed in Section 7 of the RFA for the District or the applicant?  
   **A:** All of the five listed deliverables will be completed by successful project teams while the overall impact to the District will be amplified by having multiple grantees. For the first deliverable, each team is only tasked with generating one more NZE building in the District but the overall benefit will be to generate multiple new successful projects.
6. **Q:** What is the timeline for completion of deliverables?  
   **A:** All work supported by this grant must be completed by September 30, 2019. The project itself does not need to be complete by then, but all grant supported activities need to be completed and documented. It could be possible to complete all preparations for a future charrette or other work that will take place after the close of the grant performance period but requires advance preparations that can be completed ahead of time. DOEE is open to project teams’ proposals for how to best support the unique needs of each project.
7. **Q:** Is it possible to use the grant award to support future tenant engagement and education?  
   **A:** The goal of this RFA is to support a project to achieve NZE performance. If the engagement and education is focused on helping the project perform as designed in support of achieving that NZE target that would be an appropriate use. If the education and engagement is more broadly about the design and construction of NZE buildings, that would be outside of the scope of the RFA and not likely to score as well during the application review.
8. **Q:** Is it possible to use the grant award to develop a toolkit on how to do NZE design?  
   **A:** The goal of this RFA is to support a specific project to achieve NZE performance. In keeping with that intent, developing a general resource for NZE design and construction is outside of the scope of the RFA and not an appropriate application for these funds.
9. **Q:** How should a project demonstrate their commitment to NZE performance?  
   **A:** Applicants are welcome to provide whatever demonstration of commitment is appropriate to their project. For example, this could take the form of a letter of commitment, codified project goals, examples of previous projects demonstrating the capacity to deliver NZE performance, or other forms.
10. **Q:** What is the distinction between Partnering Organizations and Property Owners made in Section 3.2.d.4 on page 13 of the RFP?  
    **A:** This is standardized language included in all DOEE RFPs and is not specific to this particular application. DOEE expects that in many instances property owners may also be partners in the grant application but it is not required. This section of the RFP does need to be addressed regardless of the makeup of the project team.
11. **Q:** Is there a separate scoring methodology for rehabilitation projects compared to new construction?  
    **A:** No, all projects are held to the same evaluation criteria. Both rehabilitation projects and new construction are welcome to apply.
12. **Q:** Can a project team member submit multiple applications?  
    **A:** Yes, both individuals and organizations can be included in multiple awards however the same development project can only receive one award.
13. **Q:** What project team members should be included in the application?

**A:** Applicants are welcome to include any partnering organizations in their application that they deem appropriate. In many cases, partners can help to demonstrate previous experience which helps to provide assurances of the project team’s capacity to meet the stated goals. Financial declarations are only required from the lead applicant. Depending on the expertise of partner organizations, resumes can be provided to demonstrate prior experience.

1. **Q:** Is any preference given to Certified Business Enterprises (CBEs)?  
   **A:** No, applicants do not need to be CBEs, SBEs or other designations and no preference is provided. The projects do need to be located within the District of Columbia, but project team members can be located anywhere.
2. **Q:** Where should applicants submit their application?  
   **A:** The deadline for application submissions is May 1, 2019, at 4:30 p.m. Five hard copies must be submitted to the address below and a complete electronic copy must be e-mailed to greenbuildingrfa.grants@dc.gov.  
    District of Columbia Department of Energy and Environment  
    RFA - Grants   
    1200 First Street NE, 5th Floor  
    Washington, DC 20002  
    Attn: 2019-1912-USA
3. **Q:** When will recipients be selected?  
   **A:** The RFA stipulates that applicants will be notified within six to twelve weeks after the application due date, however DOEE will endeavor to expedite this process in recognition of the September 30th deadline for completion. If applicants have not previously conducted business with the District of Columbia government, they are advised to register in the vendor portal at [https://vendorportal.dc.gov](https://vendorportal.dc.gov/).
4. **Q**: Do applicants need to have an up-to-date Certificate of Good Standing?  
   **A:** Yes, as detailed in section 3.4.a of the RFA, each applicant must submit a current Certificate of Good standing.
5. **Q**: Is it possible to waive the cost of obtaining a Certificate of Good Standing?  
   **A:** The Certificate of Good Standing is provided by the Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs (DCRA) and therefore that is out of DOEE’s purview.
6. **Q**: What is the total amount one applicant can request?  
   A: Applicants can request up to $20,000.

**Project Specific Guidance**

DOEE is unable to provide project specific guidance during the application process. Please refer to the RFA and associated appendices as well as this Q&A document, all available at <https://doee.dc.gov/node/1394781>.

**Appendices and Application Guidelines**

* Cover sheet – Required for all applications
* Budget Template –
  + General categories remain as they are. (Contractors, personnel)
  + Adjust other categories for the budget needs
* PCA – Promises Certifications and Assurances
  + The PCA contains the terms that apply to the Applicant if awarded to the grantee, and should be reviewed carefully.
  + If an advance payment is anticipated, it must be planned and requested in the Application and will be considered after the award.
  + Reimbursements go to Accounts Payable and DOEE
* Email is encouraged for all questions, [GreenbuildingRFA.Grants@dc.gov](mailto:GreenbuildingRFA.Grants@dc.gov). Questions may be submitted for response until COB April 24, 2019. Questions and Answers will be posted to the DOEE website regularly.
* **Applications are due by 4:30 on May 1, 2019.**