

NC Department of Environmental Quality State Energy Office

40101(d) RFP Questions and Answers

Updated 5/28/2026

Please refer to the dates (left column of the table) to see the latest posted questions and answers. Submit questions to seo.team@deq.nc.gov. NC State Energy Office staff cannot answer RFP-related questions via calls or meetings.

USE OF OTHER FUNDING/PART OF LARGER PROJECT		
5/18/2026	Question: Is it permitted to pursue other State and Federal grid resiliency grants simultaneously with the POWER Up opportunity?	Answer: In most cases, yes. Projects must have separate scopes that address different resilience measures.
5/18/2026	Question: If project is part of a broader project, how do Applicants account for federal portion of the funds and separate out the scope?	<p>Answer: 40101(d) projects should provide standalone benefits to the grid and not be contingent on the successful execution of other projects being funded through other sources.</p> <p>When a proposal is part of a larger project, Applicants should distinguish between (a) the 40101(d) funded portion of the scope and (b) the broader project in the subaward/project notification template. For example, a request for 40101(d) funding to underground 5 miles of power lines as part of a 30-mile undergrounding effort should distinguish between the 40101(d) scope (5 miles) and the broader project (25 miles). The proposal should explain how the project will benefit targeted communities on its own and as part of the broader project and should distinguish how the 40101(d) award and required cost match will be used for this segment of the project.</p>

5/20/2026	Question: How should applicants treat projects already partially funded (stacking funds)?	<p>Answer: There are several possible scenarios and further information is needed. For example, your entity may be able to use these funds as part of the cost match. Please review page pages 5 -6 of the RFP related to Cost Match Requirements, and the Federal Uniform Guidance related to cost sharing including (but not limited to) section 200.306 Cost sharing for further information.</p> <p>Federally funded projects – including 40101(d) should provide standalone benefits to the grid. Awards under this program should not be contingent on the successful execution of other projects being funded through other sources or be a phase of a larger project – without specific outcomes that will achieve 40101(d) objectives.</p> <p>If the proposed 40101(d) project is part of a larger project, Applicants should distinguish between (a) the 40101(d) funded portion of the scope and (b) the broader project. For example, a request for 40101(d) funding to underground 5 miles of power lines as part of a 30-mile undergrounding effort should distinguish between the 40101(d) scope (5 miles) and the broader project (25 miles). The proposal should explain how the project will benefit targeted communities on its own and as part of the broader project and should distinguish how the 40101(d) award and required cost match will be used for this segment of the project.</p>
RFP CORRECTIONS, MODIFICATIONS, ADDENDA		
5/21/2026	Question: Can you clarify the due date of the proposal?	Answer: There was an error in the initial RFP that was uploaded to the RFP website listing, in one section of the

		RFP, the due date was incorrectly listed as July 1, 2026. THIS IS AN ERROR. The correct due date for the application is Friday June 26, 2026 at 12 noon. The corrected version is now posted on the webpage.
ELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES & GRID TECHNOLOGIES		
5/18/2026	Question: Can funding be used for the acquisition of land?	Answer: No – the acquisition of land or easements is not allowed with 40101(d).
5/18/2026	Question: Can grant funds be used for routine generator maintenance and/or weatherization?	Answer: DOE encourages grant recipients to focus on projects that would result in grid resilience benefits that would not be realized absent the grant funding. Projects focused on routine maintenance are discouraged.
5/18/2026	Question: Are AMI Meters and/or SCADA systems eligible?	Answer: Yes, AMI Meters and/or SCADA systems are eligible for funding.
5/18/2026	Question: Are pole inspections and engineering/design costs eligible if they are directly tied to implementation of pole replacement or feeder hardening?	Answer: Yes, these costs are eligible if they are directly tied to the funded project.
5/18/2026	Question: Can AMI, outage detection, or monitoring/control components be included if they are ancillary to a broader grid resilience project rather than the primary project?	Answer: If AMI, fault detection, and advanced monitoring/control equipment can be shown to improve resilience to the grid, they can be included as ancillary or primary components of an eligible project.
5/18/2026	Question: Does replacement of aged underground cable qualify when the resilience benefit is reduced outage risk and improved restoration performance, even if the cable was not damaged by a specific disaster event?	Answer: Yes - replacement of aged underground cable does qualify when the resilience benefit is reduced outage risk and improved restoration performance, even if the cable was not damaged by a specific disaster event.
NUMBER OF APPLICATIONS		
5/18/2026	Question: How many projects an Applicant can apply for?	Answer: There is no limit to the number of projects an applicant can apply for. However, an Applicant will only be eligible to receive one award.
SMALL UTILITIES		

5/18/2026	Question: What is the definition of a Small Utility?	Answer: The definition is found on Page 11 of the RFP. A "Small Utility" does not sell more than 4,000,000 megawatt hours of electricity per year. Check the following site to confirm if your entity is a small utility - 2024 Utility Bundled Retail Sales- Total
5/18/2026	Question: As a qualifying small utility, do you require at this stage of the process a copy of our most recent USDOE Energy Information Administration Form EIA-861?	Answer: No – this is not required, but this information will be confirmed during the review process.
DEADLINE EXTENSIONS		
5/18/2026	Question: Is it possible to extend the deadline of the submission by 10 days?	Answer: See information related to extensions on page 12 of the RFP. In general, no extensions are allowed. Under certain circumstances, NCSEO will allow an extension of the application deadline for adversely affected applicants listed in Emergency Declarations and/or Major Disaster Declarations. This will be announced on the NCSEO 40101(d) RFP webpage.
FUNDING		
5/18/2026	Question: Is there a minimum and a maximum funding award during this round of funding? What do you anticipate the average funding amount will be?	Answer: NCSEO expects to award three to five projects in this round of funding, totaling approximately \$8.64 million, with \$4.3 million – or 50% – set aside for small utilities. We expect awards will be in the range of \$500,000 - \$3,000,000. More – or fewer – awards may be chosen, however, and we do not have a designated minimum or maximum amount.
5/20/2026	Question: Are there any restrictions on co-ops that have already received prior rounds of DEQ resilience funding?	Answer: Current 40101(d) awardees are not eligible for funding during this round. But entities that received other funding from DEQ are eligible to apply.

APPLICATION GUIDANCE INCLUDING SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS & ATTACHMENTS		
5/18/2026	Question: Can we include visuals including engineered drawings of the infrastructure proposal as well as recent photos of the hazardous conditions that currently exist? If so, should that be included in the narrative or may we submit as a PDF addendum?	<p>Answer: Yes - up to three Optional Supporting Documents that supplement the proposal are permitted. These can include visuals such as engineered drawings of the infrastructure proposal as well as recent images of hazardous conditions. These are considered separate from the Narrative (and the Narrative page count) and will be uploaded as PDF's. Please see pages 10-11 of the RFP for more details of the kinds of supporting documents that are acceptable, and how to name and upload these documents.</p> <p>To amplify the impact of your Supporting Documents to proposal reviewers, when possible, please refer to specific information, sections or page numbers in the Supporting Document while writing your Narrative.</p>
5/18/2026	Question: Can we provide Letters of Support for the project from local, state and federal entities?	Answer: Yes, you can provide Letters of Support for the project from local, state and federal entities as Optional Supporting Documents. These will be uploaded separately as individual PDF's. If you have multiple letters of support, you can annotate and summaries these into one Supporting Document that is uploaded as a PDF. Please refer to the supporting document in the project narrative. See pages 10-11 of the RFP for more details on Optional Supporting Documents.
5/23/2026	Questions: Are there examples of subawardee packages?	Answer: Not at this time.

5/23/2026	Question: Is this application similar to the application for the GRIP Grant?	Answer: While there may be some similarities, this application was developed specifically for the 40101(d) program.
ELIGIBLE ENTITIES		
5/19/2026	Question: Is there a restriction for previously awarded entities?	Answer: Entities previously awarded a 40101(d) grant are not eligible for funding in this round.
5/20/2026	Question: Would DOE fund a project proposal that includes land acquisition costs only? The eventual goal would be to build a new substation in future years to serve an industrial site.	Answer: Land acquisitions costs are not eligible for this funding. Further the project will need to impact grid reliability and resilience at its conclusion. As such, funding cannot be used to partially fund a future substation.
NEPA REVIEW PROCESS		
5/19/2026	Question: How detailed must the project locations be for NEPA review if a project includes multiple poles, circuits, or underground cable segments?	<p>Answer: Projects that are awarded funding are required to complete and submit this NEPA Questionnaire with project specifics so the NETL Federal Project Officer can request a NEPA Categorical Exclusion (CX) determination.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Note 1: Adequate map(s) need to be provided along with the EQ; Google Earth is recommended in order to provide sufficient detail for project location(s). • Note 2: The DOE NEPA compliance team may require a permission letter from an appropriate agency overseeing proposed work on any national/state park or historic district lands. Access letters may be requested from the US Forest Service, State Parks Department, State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO), Tribe's THPO, etc.

		For more information on these requirements, please refer to the National Energy Technology Laboratory website
5/23/2026	Question: For the Environmental Review, will there be an onerous environmental review process if we are not disturbing the ground and just changing overhead infrastructure?	Answer: NCSEO does not make those determinations.
QUESTIONS ABOUT THE BUDGET & COST MATCH		
5/20/2026	Question: Are indirect expenses allowed to be added to the budget requests?	Answer: Yes – indirect expenses are allowed to be added to the budget request.
5/25/2026	Question: Can we use our own internal labor for the project, or do we have to bid out to contractors? If we use our own labor – can that be used towards the cost match?	Answer: Yes – you can use your own internal labor for this project. Yes – this can be applied to the cost match.
5/18/2026	Question: Is it required to verify the cost match for submission of the Full Application? Can a resolution adopted by Applicant's City Council showing a cost match commitment for the project suffice?	<p>Answer: A Cost Match Commitment Letter is required from your organization, or any other organization that will provide all or part of the cost match requirement. Please see page 10 of the RFP for details about what to include in the Cost Match Commitment Letter.</p> <p>All sources of cost share are considered part of the total project cost, and the cost match will be scrutinized under the same Federal regulations as the project's Federal dollars. See page 5 of the RFP for additional information on the cost match.</p>
5/22/2026	Question: Are we required to spend the cost match before we can start spending the Federal award?	Answer: No – that is not required. NCSEO anticipates that the cost match will be spent throughout the project according to the approved budget.
BABA COMPLIANCE		

5/23/2026	Question: Are BABA waivers taking a lot of time for first round projects.	<p>Answer: There are several types of BABA waivers. The Small Parts and De Minimus waivers are being approved, at this point in time, within 1-2 weeks. Other waivers – such as Non-Availability Waivers – are taking longer.</p> <p>The role of NCSEO is to support subawardees in submitting the waivers. DOE will approve them.</p> <p>Please review information on BABA waivers on the DOE website. Here, you can also review PDF's of the waiver submissions and waivers that have been approved.</p>
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