

State of New Hampshire Department of Energy



**State Energy Program
CFDA 81.041
FAIN: DEEE0010041**

Grants for the School Energy Efficiency Development (SEED) Program

NOTICE OF FUNDING AVAILABILITY (NOFA)

NOFA #2022-001

**Release Date: May 18, 2022
Applications Due: 4:00 p.m. EST on July 20, 2022**

Executive Summary

[The New Hampshire Department of Energy](#) (NHDOE) issues this Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) seeking applications for its School Energy Efficiency Development (SEED) Grant Program. This program provides support and technical assistance for a school in a small community to implement energy efficiency projects and make necessary upgrades to the building(s).

One grant in the amount of \$150,000 will be awarded with a 10% match requirement. Previous SEED Grant Program applicants and awardees are eligible to reapply for this funding. Projects awarded this funding must be completed no later than June 30, 2023.

An electronic application must be submitted to NHDOE no later than 4:00 p.m. EST on Wednesday, July 20, 2022. If NHDOE decides to award a contract as a result of this NOFA, any award is contingent upon approval of the contract by the NHDOE and the Governor and Executive Council of the State of New Hampshire.

Pertinent Dates and Information

1. Schedule of Events

EVENT	DATE/DEADLINE	TIME
NOFA Issued	May 18, 2022	
Close of Question Period and Responses to Questions Posted	July 13, 2022	4:00 PM
Application Due Date and Time	July 20, 2022	4:00 PM

2. Written Inquiries

All inquiries concerning this NOFA must be submitted by e-mail to the following NOFA Point of Contact:

Joshua W. Elliott, Director, Division of Policy and Programs
New Hampshire Department of Energy
21 South Fruit Street, Suite 10
Concord, NH 03301-2429
Joshua.W.Elliott@energy.nh.gov

Inquiries must be received no later than the Close of Question Period as specified in the Schedule of Events. The subject of the email should state the following: *NOFA #2022-001 SEED Grant Program Question Period*. **No phone calls please.** It is highly recommended that prospective applicants review the NOFA as soon as possible and submit any questions

promptly. Please note that responses to questions are carefully considered and may require several days. Responses to questions will be posted as received and can be found here: <https://www.energy.nh.gov/rules-and-regulatory/requests-proposals>.

3. Application Submission Instructions

Electronic applications submitted in response to this NOFA must be received by the NHDOE no later than the time and date specified in the Schedule of Events, herein.

The application package consists of the NHDOE application and required attachments in a PDF format:

- Most recent financial audit.
- Proposed budget outline.
- Proof of active registration in the Federal Systems Award Management (SAM) website.
- Completed energy assessment or audit, if available.
- Resume and relevant project history of qualified project manager, if one is used.
- Letter(s) of support, if available.

Applications must be in the form specified by NHDOE.

To guard against applications being overlooked due to being quarantined by the agency's spam protection software, it is strongly recommended that an e-mail with no attachment be sent to the contact person initially stating that e-mail(s) containing an application are to follow. The subject of the email should state the following: *NOFA# 2022-001 SEED Grant Program Intention to File – (name of school)*.

Electronic applications and any attachments must be in PDF format.

Applications must be submitted electronically to: Joshua.W.Elliott@energy.nh.gov. The file will be considered received based on the timestamp in the receiver's email. The NHDOE can accept electronic files no larger than 25 MB. Electronic applications may consist of multiple PDF attachments or one PDF with all attachments combined. The subject of the email should state the following: *NOFA #2022-001 SEED Grant Program Application – (name of school)*.

Late submissions will not be accepted, nor will extension be given. Delivery of the application and attachments shall be the applicant's responsibility. The NHDOE accepts no responsibility for damaged, mislabeled, or undeliverable emailed applications. Applications that are incomplete or unsigned will not be considered. Faxed applications will not be accepted. **Physical applications will not be accepted.**

4. Restriction on Contact with State Employees:

From the date of the release of this NOFA until awards are made and announced regarding the selection, all communications with personnel employed by or under contract with the

State regarding this NOFA are forbidden, unless approved by the NOFA point of contact, Joshua W. Elliott, Director, Division of Policy and Programs, or as otherwise outlined in Section 6 below. NHDOE employees have been, and Evaluation Team members will be, directed not to hold conferences and/or discussions concerning this NOFA with any potential grantee during the selection process, unless otherwise authorized by the NOFA point of contact.

I. OVERVIEW

A. Background and Purpose

The United States Department of Energy's (USDOE) [State Energy Program](#) (SEP) (CFDA 81.041) provides funding and technical assistance to states, territories, and the District of Columbia to enhance energy security, advance state-led energy initiatives, and increase energy affordability. States have a robust role in administering program activities that can be tailored to their unique resources, deliver capacity, and energy goals.

NHDOE, a state executive branch agency, provides guidance, information, and data on energy usage. As part of its mission to build partnerships and serve New Hampshire communities, NHDOE has received SEP grant funds and created the SEED Grant Program to encourage schools to holistically review their energy usage and offer funding to implement energy efficiency projects. Created in 2018, the SEED Grant Program has offered funding to schools in Hill, Lempster, New Boston, and Litchfield to advance energy efficiency efforts. These energy efficiency projects have created a safer, healthier learning environment for students and teachers, as well as reduced a school's energy usage and operating costs to provide a financial benefit to school district budgets and property taxpayers.

Per President Biden's [Executive Order 14008](#) dated January 27, 2021, the [Justice40 Initiative](#) is a government effort to direct at least 40% of the overall benefits from certain federal investments to disadvantaged communities. The SEED Grant Program has been revised this year to meet this directive with consideration made toward a public school or chartered public school's free and reduced school eligibility amongst its 2021-2022 school year student enrollment.

B. Basic Project Eligibility Requirements

Applicants must meet the following minimum requirements to be eligible for the SEED Grant Program:

1. Public school(s) and/or chartered public school(s) in a New Hampshire municipality with a total population of 10,000 or fewer residents based on [2020 Census Totals for NH Cities and Towns](#) or authorized entity applying on behalf of an educational institution that is publicly funded;
2. Building(s) subject to an applicant's SEED Grant Program application must be owned by the applicant;

3. Consistent with the governing structure of the town;
4. Ability to meet the 10% “cash” and/or “in-kind” match requirement with firmly committed matching funds and fully documented in-kind dedicated staff hours;
 - a. “In-Kind” is defined as the value of non-cash contributions, such as property or services that: benefit a federally-assisted project or program; and are contributed by non-Federal third parties, without charge, to a non-Federal entity under a Federal Award.
 - b. Exclude the following costs:
 - i. Revenues or royalties from the prospective operation of an activity beyond the time considered in the award;
 - ii. Proceeds from the prospective sale of an asset of an activity; or
 - iii. Other appropriated Federal funds.
 - iv. Repayment of the Federal share of a cost-shared activity under *Section 988 of the Energy Policy Act of 2005* shall not be a condition of the award.
5. “Match” is subject to United States Department of Energy (USDOE) Financial Assistance Rules (2 CFR Part 200 as amended by 2 CFR Part 910 and 10 CFR Part 420);
6. The total project cost including matched amount must be necessary and reasonable for the proper and efficient accomplishment of the project;
7. Ability to complete projects by June 30, 2023;
8. Ability to manage Federal funds;
9. Ability to meet reporting requirements;
10. Proof of active registration in the Federal Systems Award Management (SAM) website and have a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) number (entities that are actively registered in SAM will automatically be given a UEI); and
11. Not be debarred from working on projects funded with Federal funds.

Upon award the Applicant should be prepared to sign certain assurances including: Drug Free Workplace; Lobbying; Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance; Environmental Tobacco Smoke; Federal Funding and Accountability Act (FFATA) compliance; Buy American compliance; National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) compliance.

C. Possible Projects

The scoring measure *Scope of Work* incentivizes applications with three or more projects. Projects will be considered from any of the measures below. Multiple projects of the same measure will be considered one project.

Examples of possible energy saving measures include, but are not limited to:

Daylighting: Installation of blinds, overhangs, lightshades, etc. to maximize the amount of daylight that comes into the classroom. By installing daylight responsive lighting controls, lighting will increase as it gets darker, and decrease as more daylight comes into the room.

Lighting: Replace or retrofit existing lighting systems throughout the school that improve energy efficiency and promote long-term savings.

Building Automated Control Systems (BAS): A computerized control system that can be installed to regulate lighting, HVAC, and other sources of energy in schools to make the building more energy efficient. With the installation of a BAS system, facility operators overseeing the system will be trained to use it ensuring long term energy saving.

Building Envelope: This improvement would consist of adding insulating material to the ceiling or roof areas of buildings that presently have little or no ceiling/roof insulation. Windows should also be considered if cost effective.

Domestic Hot Water (DHW) Systems: Adding high efficiency water heaters and controls added to existing equipment. With the installation of a DHW system, facility operators overseeing the system will be trained to use it ensuring long term energy saving.

Equipment: Some buildings contain specialty equipment which may benefit from energy improvements.

Additional Measures: Applicants are encouraged to include additional energy conservation measures in their applications above and beyond the ones specifically listed in this NOFA if they contribute to the overall goals of energy efficiency. These measures should be listed in a way such that they can be easily included or excluded from the remainder of the application.

II. EVALUATION PROCEDURES AND SELECTION CRITERIA

A. Procedure for Application Evaluation

Applications will be reviewed and evaluated in a two-step review process, followed by a contracting phase. The evaluation will be based solely on the application. Therefore, insufficient or unclear information may result in a low score.

The procedure for application evaluation and school selection will be as follows:

Step 1: Application Screening: The NHDOE shall assess compliance with the submission requirements set forth in this NOFA. The NHDOE SEED Grant Program Application must

be filled out completely unless otherwise noted. The NHDOE may waive or offer a limited opportunity to cure immaterial deviations from NOFA requirements;

Step 2: Evaluation: An Evaluation Team for the State will review the applications and information submitted by each applicant based upon the criteria established in this NOFA.

If numerous acceptable and potentially acceptable applications have been submitted, the Evaluation Team will rank the applications and create a “ranked list” based on the Scoring Criteria and Weight. The highest scoring application will be awarded funding.

If determined to be appropriate by the Evaluation Team, applicants may be invited to interviews. The Evaluation Team retains the sole discretion to determine whether to conduct interviews, with which applicants, and the number of interviews. Applicants are advised that interviews may be conducted with fewer than all applicants. Interviews may be conducted in person or via remote access.

The purpose of the interviews is to clarify and expound upon information provided in an applicant’s application. Applicants are prohibited from altering the basic substance of their application or submitting new information during the interviews. Information gained from interviews will be used to refine scores assigned during the evaluation process. (See Attachment B, Scoring Criteria Summary Sheet for an example of the scoring sheet);

Step 3: Contract Negotiation and Execution: A letter of intent will be sent to the selected schools’ authorized submitter. The NHDOE shall negotiate, if necessary, and develop grant agreements and related contract documents with selected applicants; and

Step 4: Contract Approval: The NHDOE shall submit completed grant agreements to the Governor and Executive Council for approval. After Governor and Executive Council approval, work can begin on the proposed project.

Notwithstanding any other provision of this NOFA, this NOFA does not commit the NHDOE to make an award. The NHDOE reserves the right, at its sole discretion, to reject any or all applications, or any portions thereof, for any reason, at any time, including, but not limited to, canceling the NOFA, and to solicit new applications under a new application process. If, for any reason, negotiations with the top scorer(s) do not result in a contract(s), despite reasonable efforts made in good faith, the NHDOE may go to the next highest scorer(s) and seek to negotiate with that applicant(s).

The NHDOE will consider the following criteria and assign a corresponding point score; a maximum score for all criteria would be 100 points:

B. Selection Criteria and Weight

Applications will be evaluated out of 100 points based on the criteria described in the following section.

Quality and Clarity of Application: The application is concise, well-organized, and easy to understand. (Maximum Point Score: 10)

Confidence in Applicant's Ability to Meet General Requirements and Conditions: Public disclosure requirements, compliance with reserved NHDOE/USDOE rights, etc. NHDOE can retract funding if out of compliance. (Maximum Point Score: 15)

Proposed Project Budget: Shows fiscal responsibility and understanding of available project funds, proof of match, expects financial audits, and other scrutiny. (Maximum Point Score: 20)

Ability to Disperse Funds Expeditiously: Through a proposed timeline, applicant demonstrates that all funds can be expended by June 30, 2023. Governor and Executive Council process takes approximately 4 weeks. (Maximum Point Score: 15)

Qualified Project Manager: Applicant intends to use a qualified project manager to complete their project. If the applicant uses a qualified project manager, the manager must submit a resume with relevant project history. (Maximum Point Score: 10)

Scope of Work: Application with three or more projects to be completed using SEED Grant funding will receive maximum point score of 15. Application with two projects to be completed using SEED Grant funding will be awarded 10 points. Application with one project to be completed using SEED Grant funding will receive 5 points. (Maximum Point Score: 15)

Free and Reduced Lunch Eligibility: The public school(s) or chartered public school(s) subject to a SEED Grant Program application has 20% or more of their total 2021-2022 enrollment eligible for free/reduced school lunch based on [the New Hampshire Department of Education's Free/Reduced School Lunch Eligibility for 2021-2022](#). (Maximum Point Score: 10)

Letters of Community Support: Applications include letters of support for the applicant's proposed project from the local selectboard, school board, and state elected officials (State Representatives and/or State Senator). Letters from all three parties will result in full points. Letters from two parties will result in 3 points. A letter from one party will result in 1 point. (Maximum Point Score: 5)

BONUS – Energy Assessment or Audit: Applicant has submitted a finalized energy assessment or audit that outlines potential energy efficiency improvements that the applicant is seeking SEED Grant Program funding to complete. The energy assessment or audit includes estimated savings for projects in a concise report. (Maximum Point Score: 5)

III. GENERAL CONDITIONS

1. By submitting an application, the applicant acknowledges that the NHDOE is subject to the Right-to-Know Law, RSA Chapter 91-A. Accordingly, information submitted as part

of an application packet in response to this NOFA may be subject to public disclosure unless otherwise exempt. *See* RSA 91-A and RSA 21-G:37, VII. In addition, in accordance with RSA 9-F:1, any contract entered into as a result of this NOFA may be made accessible to the public online through the website Transparent NH: <http://www.nh.gov/transparentnh/>.

Notwithstanding RSA 91-A:4, information relating to grant applications shall remain confidential until the grant contract is approved by the Governor and Executive Council, or, if the grant contract does not require approval from the Governor and Executive Council, until the effective date of the grant contract as determined by the issuing agency. RSA 21-G:37. Business financial information, confidential information, such as personally identifiable information, proprietary information such as trade secrets, financial models and forecasts, and proprietary formulas, are categories of information that may be exempt from public disclosure. RSA 91-A:5, IV.

If any part of its application packet contains information that an applicant asserts is exempt from public disclosure, **the applicant must specifically identify all relevant text in a letter to the NHDOE and must mark or stamp each page of the materials claimed to be exempt from disclosure as “confidential,”** and provide support for such assertion(s) as part of applicant’s response to this NOFA. The applicant shall explain, in writing, what measures it has taken to keep such information confidential, and the personal privacy or competitive business interests that would be harmed if such information were to be publicly disclosed. The explanation shall also identify by page number and application section number the specific information the applicant claims to be exempt from public disclosure pursuant to RSA 91-A:5. It is helpful if the text claimed to be confidential is also highlighted, underlined, or otherwise identified in the actual application packet itself. Marking the entire application packet or entire sections of the application (e.g., costs) as “confidential” will neither be accepted nor honored.

2. The NHDOE and the USDOE reserve the right to inspect all project/program sites and interview workers.
3. The NHDOE and the USDOE reserve the right to inspect and monitor financial and payroll records and transactions.
4. Reasonable access must be provided to the NHDOE and the USDOE to all administrators, vendors, facilities, work sites, employees of the contractor(s), financial or other records, and assistance to ensure the safety and convenience for the performance of site visits and evaluations.
5. The NHDOE reserves the right to approve RFPs for sub-recipients and provide input on programs.

6. The NHDOE reserves the right to hire a technical monitor to oversee project progress for the duration of the proposed project. In the event a technical monitor is hired, the NHDOE will use funding separate from the SEED Grant Program.
7. Upon award of funding, the selected applicant is consenting to the use of a technical monitor for the duration of the proposed project.
8. The NHDOE reserves the right to issue periodic notices, memos, and updated reporting forms and information.
9. The NHDOE requests notification about media inquiries, responses, and copies of published clippings.
10. The NHDOE reserves the right to participate in meetings and publicize progress of this program.
11. The NHDOE reserves the right to pull back funds if appropriate.
12. From the time this NOFA is published until a grant is awarded, no applicant shall offer or give, directly or indirectly, any gift, expense reimbursement, or honorarium, as defined by RSA 15-B, to any elected official, public official, public employee, constitutional official, or family member of any such official or employee who will or has selected, evaluated, or awarded a grant pursuant to a NOFA, or contract pursuant to a similar submission. RSA 21-G:38. Any applicant that violates RSA 21-G:38 shall be subject to prosecution for an offense under RSA 640:2. Any applicant, or member of an applicant's board or senior management, who has been convicted of an offense based on conduct in violation of this section, which has not been annulled, or who is subject to a pending criminal charge for such an offense, shall be disqualified from applying for the NOFA, or similar requests for submission, and every such applicant shall be disqualified from bidding on any RFP or similar request for submission issued by any state agency. An applicant that was disqualified under this section because of a pending criminal charge which is subsequently dismissed, results in an acquittal, or is annulled, may notify the Department of Administrative Services, which shall note that information on the list maintained on the State's internal intranet system, except that, in the case of annulment, the information shall be deleted from the list.
13. All contracted activities resulting from this NOFA are subject to the availability of Federal funds.
14. The NHDOE has allocated no more than \$150,000 for this contract.
15. The NHDOE reserves the right to consider awarding any unused award amounts to the next highest scoring application(s).
16. The NHDOE reserves the right to amend, extend or cancel this NOFA at any time at its sole discretion. Any changes to this NOFA will be made in writing and made available to

the public on NHDOE's website. No oral modifications will be binding. Applicants should check the NHDOE website at [Requests for Proposals | NH Department of Energy](#) for any addenda to this NOFA before submitting their applications, and for answers to questions other applicants may have submitted, if any.

17. The NHDOE reserves the right: to reject any or all applications, or any part thereof; to determine what constitutes a conforming application, to waive irregularities that it considers non-material to the application; to make funding decisions, including partial awards, solely as it deems to be in the best interests of the State; and to negotiate with any party in any manner deemed necessary to best serve the interests of the State. This NOFA and all information relating to this NOFA (including, but not limited to, fees, contracts, agreements, and prices), are subject to the laws of the State of New Hampshire regarding public information and state procurement of goods and services.
18. The NHDOE reserves the right to request additional information from any or all parties submitting applications to assist in the evaluation process.
19. This NOFA does not commit the NHDOE to make any award.
20. The NHDOE or any other entity is not obligated to pay for any costs incurred in the preparation and submission of the applications, negotiations, or meetings subsequent to the application date, or in anticipation of an award from this NOFA.
21. All parties submitting applications shall be Equal Opportunity Employers. Funding recipients will be expected to comply with all federal, state, and local laws respecting non-discrimination in employment.
22. Recipients of funds will be required to register as a vendor with the State of New Hampshire.
23. The terms and conditions set forth in the State's "General Provisions" for grant agreements, attached hereto as Attachment C, will apply to the grant award and funding agreement that the NHDOE will enter into with grant recipients. In addition, each agreement will be supplemented by exhibits: Exhibit A will include any special provisions, including any modifications to the General Provisions regarding insurance coverage and other matters; Exhibit B will set forth the scope of services and reporting requirements in detail; and Exhibit C will set forth the amount of the grant, any required milestones, preconditions to reimbursement, the amount of grant holdback or retainage, and the documentation requirements for, and conditions of, grant payments. In addition, a number of exhibits shall consist of federally required certifications by grantees of federal funds.
24. Once a grant agreement becomes effective, any subsequent material changes or modifications to the project or agreement terms, including, but not limited to, changes in project site plan, design, equipment, or other major components, overall project budget, key project personnel, project funding or financing model, project administration, management, or communications, or proposed technical details, must be submitted for

review and evaluation by the NHDOE. Amendments to the grant agreement are subject to approval by the NHDOE and the Governor and Executive Council.

25. Payment to grantees under this program will be made only after written documentation of cash need is submitted to the NHDOE. Disbursement shall be made in accordance with the procedures established by the State and 2 CFR 200.305(b) on an advance basis, limited to minimum amounts needed and be timed to be in accordance with the actual, immediate case requirements of the applicant in carrying out the purpose of the program. is on a cost-reimbursable basis, unless approved otherwise. Costs incurred prior to final grant agreement approval by the Governor and Executive Council are not eligible for reimbursement. Reimbursement may be contingent on the occurrence of specified milestone events and the satisfaction of other conditions as set forth in the approved grant agreement. In accordance with the terms of the grant agreement, a grantee is required to submit requests for reimbursement together with supporting documentation of the paid expenditures.
26. This NOFA is not an offer. Neither the NHDOE nor this NOFA shall create any commitment on the part of the State or confer any rights on the part of the applicant unless and until a written grant award agreement is executed between the NHDOE and the applicant and is approved by the Governor and Executive Council. No award executed as a result of this NOFA will be considered legally binding until duly authorized and approved by the Governor and Executive Council of the State of New Hampshire.
27. Any challenge regarding the validity or legality of the form and procedures of this NOFA, including, but not limited to, the evaluation and scoring of applications, shall be brought to the attention of the NHDOE at least 10 business days prior to the deadline for submission of applications, by sending written notice to the NOFA point of contact, Joshua W. Elliott, the Director of Policy and Programs. By submitting an application, the applicant is deemed to have waived any challenges to the NHDOE's authority to conduct this award and the form and procedures of this NOFA.

IV. GRANT AGREEMENT AND CERTIFICATES

A successful applicant will be expected to enter into a grant agreement with the State of New Hampshire. A copy of the General Provisions of the grant agreement to be signed by the parties is included as Attachment C to this NOFA. In addition, project-specific terms and conditions will be negotiated with the applicant and included as exhibits in the grant agreement, and a number of exhibits shall consist of federally required certifications by grantees of federal funds.

Applicants will be required to fill in this form ONLY upon the NHDOE's approval of the application for SEED grant funding.

Successful applicants will also be required to provide the following certificates prior to entering into a grant agreement with the NHDOE:

Certificate of Vote /Authority (“CVA”)	Individuals contracting in their own names do not need a CVA. Business entities and trade names need a CVA.
Certificate of Insurance	Certificate of Insurance form attached with insurance coverage required under the grant agreement. Modifications of insurance coverage required will be specified in Exhibit A to the agreement.
Workers’ Compensation	Grantee must demonstrate compliance with or exemption from RSA 281-A (and, if applicable, RSA 228:4-b and RSA 21-I:80, and any other applicable laws or rules).

Applicants will be required to provide these certificates ONLY upon selection of the application to receive SEED grant funding by the NHDOE.

Attachment A. SEED GRANT PROGRAM APPLICATION

The required SEED Grant Program application is posted on the NHDOE's website at:
<https://www.energy.nh.gov/rules-and-regulatory/requests-proposals>.

Attachment B. SCORING CRITERIA SUMMARY SHEET

Applicant:

Grant Amount Requested:

Factor	Maximum Score	Score	Comments
Quality and Clarity of Application	10		
Confidence in Applicant's Ability to Meet General Requirements and Conditions	15		
Proposed Project Budget	20		
Ability to Disperse Funds Expeditiously	15		
Qualified Project Manager	10		
Scope of Work	15		
Free and Reduced Lunch Eligibility	10		
Letters of Community Support	5		
BONUS – Energy Assessment or Audit	5		
Total	100-105		

Comments:

Attachment C. GENERAL PROVISIONS

A copy of the State of New Hampshire's General Provisions to be executed by the parties can be found substantially in the form posted at

<https://sunspot.nh.gov/StateContracting/documents/G-1%20Grant%20Agreement.pdf>

Applicant will be required to fill in this form ONLY if and when its application is selected by the NHDOE to receive SEED grant funding.