

Rural Idaho Economic Development Professional Grant Program

Application Guide



Rural Idaho Economic Development Professional Grant Program Application Guide 2018-2019

The intent of the Rural Idaho Economic Development Professional Grant Program is to build economic development capacity in rural Idaho. To accomplish this, state funds are appropriated to help rural areas employ full-time Economic Development Professionals who, with a board of directors, manage locally-directed economic development programs.

The ED Professional will work on business attraction, retention, expansion, and diversification projects in partnership with the Department to achieve the economic development goals of both the rural area and the Department. The Department recognizes that a minimum wage and benefit package in the range of \$45,000 to \$50,000 is necessary to hire and retain qualified ED professionals.

IMPORTANT DATES AND DEADLINES

Application Webinar: [April 18 2018, 2:30 p.m. \(Mountain Time\)](#)
[April 19 2018, 10:00 a.m. \(Mountain Time\)](#)

Note: Webinars will be recorded and available [here](#).

Application Due Date: May 15, 2018
4:30 p.m. (Mountain Time)

Award Period: July 1, 2018 to June 30, 2019 subject to the terms, conditions and satisfactory performance as stipulated in the Memorandum of Understanding.

Definitions

Department – Idaho Department of Commerce

Economic Development Organization (EDO) – The county committee, governmental joint powers committee, or non-profit corporation incorporated in the State of Idaho, designated by the Eligible Applicant to manage the ED Professional and activities funded through the auspices of the Program.

Economic Development Project – Any project that develops new or expands existing businesses, helps a business enhance its productivity, creates new jobs, saves existing jobs, adds value to the state and local tax base, or positions a community to create any of the above.

ED Professional or Professional – The person hired with Program funds to facilitate Economic Development Projects and to carry out core economic development activities e.g. business attraction, business retention and expansion, business startups etc.

Fiscal Agent – The city, county, or entity designated by the Eligible Applicant to be responsible for requesting, disbursing, tracking and assuring compliance with all Program requirements.

Full-time – Full-time is defined as *at least 30 hours/week*, including the option of job sharing, provided the minimum number of hours have been met.

Private Sector Representative – A person who does not hold elective office but owns, manages or is employed by a business that is not under the direct day to day supervision of a governmental entity.

Program – The Rural Idaho Economic Development Professional Program

Submission

All applications must be submitted through the Department’s online [portal](#). New for this year, applications will need to be submitted with a login and password belonging to the Eligible Applicant. To obtain a login and password or to check to see if your existing login and password will work for this application please contact the Department’s grants team grants@commerce.idaho.gov.

Match Requirements

Cash participation is needed to maximize the effectiveness of state funds and to develop a financially self-sustainable program. *A minimum of \$18,000 dedicated to operations is required for cash match.* In the long term, as economic gain is achieved, it is expected that additional local funds will reduce the reliance on state funds. Grantees will enter into a grant agreement with Commerce committing to a locally funded cash match. Local matching funds shall be used to provide for the remainder of the ED Professional’s salary and benefit package, training and professional development, office space, telephone, computer, internet access, necessary office equipment, clerical support, travel for marketing opportunities, and for the development of marketing materials

Eligible Applicants

An applicant must be an Idaho county or a group of Idaho counties and cities joining together to submit a single application. Idaho counties with populations in excess of 50,000 may apply, provided that the population of the area being served by Program funds does not exceed 50,000 and does not include any cities with a population exceeding 10,000. Under the auspices of a joint powers arrangement with an eligible County a city may serve as the lead applicant.

Program Specifications

Eligible Applicants are required to form an Economic Development Organization (EDO) to manage the activities of the ED Professional funded through the auspices of the Program. A representative from the Department shall be provided advanced notice of all EDO meetings and provided with board or committee member ex-officio status. One-third of the EDO voting board or committee membership must be held by Private Sector Representatives. The board or Committee shall meet at least six (6) times per year and develop a specific plan of work for the ED Professional along with a plan for oversight and evaluation. A Department

representative shall be invited to participate in any activities related to the hiring and performance evaluation of the ED Professional.

Application Evaluation

Applications be evaluated and scored on four (4) general areas:

Need (500 Points)

Points will be awarded on a quartile basis. For example, if there are 16 applications (the top four will receive maximum points, the next four 75% of the available points, the next four 50% of the available points and the bottom four 25% of the available points.

- Annual Unemployment (100 Points) – Highest to lowest.
- Median Household Income (100 Points) – Lowest to highest
- Per Capita Income (100 Points) – Lowest to highest
- Poverty Rate (100 Points) Highest to Lowest
- Assessed Valuation (100 Points) – Lowest to Highest

Work Plan (1000 Points)

Points will be awarded based on the applicant's approach towards completing core economic development activities.

- Need for Funding Statement (500 Points)
- Business Retention and Expansion (100 Points)
- Business Creation (100 Points)
- Business Attraction (100 Points)
- Potentials & Opportunities (100 Points)
- Other (100 Points)

Capacity (500 Points)

- Tenure (100 Points) – Applicants will receive points for having a tenured Professional (10 points for every year their Professional has worked for the EDO for up to 10 years).
- Certifications (100 Points) – Applicants will receive 100 points if their ED Professional holds a certification through the American Planning Association, the International Economic Development Council, Community Development Council or the National Main Street Center.
- Training (100 points) – Applicants will receive points if their Professional, with in calendar year 2016, attended a conference or trainings offered by the Association of Idaho Cities, Idaho Planning Association, Idaho Economic Development Association, Inland Northwest Partners, International Economic Development Council, American Planning Association, Northwest Community Development Institute or National Main Street Center.
- Memberships (100 Points) – Applicants will receive points if their EDO or Professional is a member in good standing of the Idaho Economic Development

Association, Idaho Planning Association, American Planning Association, International Economic Development Council, Inland Northwest Partners or the National Main Street Center.

- Fringe Benefits (100 Points) – Applicants will earn points if they offer their Professional paid vacation, health insurance or paid retirement benefits (pension or matching 401(k) plan).

Sustainability (500 Points)

- Operating Structure (150 Points) – Applicants will receive 150 points if they can document that their EDO is formally organized as a committee under the auspices of a County government, a committee under the auspices of a joint powers agreement between two or more counties and cities or a non-profit incorporated through the State of Idaho.
- By-Laws (150 Points) – Applicants will receive 150 points for documenting that their by-laws have been revised within the last two calendar years.
- Regionalization (200 Points) – Applicants will receive 200 points if their EDO serves communities located in more than one county.

Award Criteria

The scores assigned to each application is for the purpose of selecting counties for participation in the program only and will not necessarily correlate with the amounts awarded. To maximize the reach and effectiveness of the Program each grant award amount will be made on a case by case basis. Factors influencing the award amount will include, the area and number of communities covered by the applicant, past performance in carrying out economic development activities and the strategic alignment with Department initiatives. Applicants should not presume that if accepted into the program, they will receive the amount requested nor an award consistent with past grants. Furthermore, the Department may impose unique special conditions on those applicants whose application responses or past performance history generate concerns regarding their ability to fully execute the Program. Only one grant will be awarded per covered county.

Questions

Please feel free to contact any member of the Business Expansion team with questions regarding the application.

Randy Shroll	randy.shroll@commerce.idaho.gov	208.287.3168
Jenny Hemly	jenny.hemly@commerce.idaho.gov	208.287.3169
Kim Glineski	kimberly.glineski@commerce.idaho.gov	208.287.0771
Jerry Miller	jerry.miller@commerce.idaho.gov	208.287.0780

A frequently asked questions document may be found [here](#).