

DELTA REGIONAL AUTHORITY
FEDERAL GRANT PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY CLARIFICATION NOTES

PREAMBLE

The Delta Regional Authority (DRA) follows a concise set of guidelines when determining the eligibility of projects submitted for grant funding. This document provides DRA staff with the necessary means to make those determinations. DRA's role in this process is to ultimately provide the governor of your state with a list of eligible projects for his or her selection.

Potential applicants for DRA funding should familiarize themselves with this document and provide conclusive evidence, within the pre-application package, which clearly describes the eligible nature of the project. This determination must be consistent with the definitions found below and supported with proper documentation.

SUSTAINABILITY

Applicants must demonstrate through a sound, comprehensive business plan based on hard data, proven methodology and reasonable forecasts acceptable to the DRA that the applicant is capable of maintaining the project after DRA funding to assure the sustainability of the project and achievement of the level of service outlined in the project description.

Sustainability, by definition, includes all costs associated with management, operation and maintenance necessary to maintain an acceptable level of service. A project will NOT be deemed sustainable if it is dependent on future grants to meet its normal operating expenses.

Feasibility/marketing type studies will be considered non-sustainable and speculative, therefore they will NOT be considered eligible.

Projects deemed "speculative" in any of the four funding areas will NOT be eligible.

ENTITIES

ELIGIBLE

The DRA federal grant program is ONLY available to participating member states, local governments (city and county) and non-profit entities, for projects within the DRA member states' counties and parishes.

INELIGIBLE

The DRA federal grant program is NOT available to private/for-profit entities and those entities normally deemed eligible but due to prior grant history have been identified as ineligible for future grants.

Delta Regional Authority reserves the right to withdraw grants for projects not under contract within 18 months of approval.

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PURPOSES

ELIGIBLE

The following four funding categories as found in the Delta Regional Authority Act of 2000, as Amended in the 2002 Farm Bill, represent the continued focus for all DRA grant dollars. This document has been organized under each one of these categories.

1. Basic public infrastructure in distressed counties and isolated areas of distress.
2. Transportation infrastructure for the purpose of facilitating economic development in the region.
3. Business development, with emphasis on entrepreneurship.
4. Job training or employment-related education, with emphasis on use of existing public educational institutions located in the region.

INELIGIBLE

Eligible entities may NOT be conduits for private-sector entities.

NO financial assistance will be authorized to assist any relocation from one area (of the region) to another, except as authorized, to attract businesses from outside the DRA region to the DRA region.

DRA federal grant funds CAN NOT be used to “supplant” existing funding streams.

FUNDING CATEGORY SPECIFICS

BASIC PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE

For the purposes of the Delta Regional Authority’s Federal Grant Program the term “Basic Public Infrastructure” shall mean Water and Wastewater Facilities, Electric and Gas Utilities, Broadband Delivery, and Solid Waste Landfills, all of which are fundamental services necessary to promote growth and attract business, which have a useful life of 20 years or more.

1. To be deemed eligible, projects shall document job-creation or job- retention, however, basic residential infrastructure projects for communities in distressed counties/parishes, or isolated areas designated distressed in non-distressed counties/parishes may be considered provided they meet the program requirements set out in other applicable clarification notes. “Isolated Areas of Distress” shall mean areas of distress identifiable by census track (distressed county criteria) within a non-distressed county.
2. DRA federal grant funds will NOT be used for projects deemed to be “Maintenance” or “Deferred Maintenance”. Maintenance shall mean the work of keeping something in proper condition or upkeep. Deferred Maintenance shall mean to put off, postpone, or procrastinate the act of maintenance.

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3. Geographic Information System (GIS) and Broadband projects (not to include speculative or feasibility-type studies – rather, complete and sustainable projects) will be considered technological infrastructure, a subpart of “basic public infrastructure”, and will be deemed eligible for State, County/Parish, or Municipal government entities, if they do not directly subsidize for-profit entities.
 4. Government-facility construction and/or improvements (including but not limited to, local/state government offices, libraries, fire stations, multi-purpose buildings and public education buildings/schools) will NOT be eligible.
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TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE

5. Transportation Infrastructure shall mean basic physical structures needed to support and/or create a transportation system, which shall include roadways, bridges, rail, port facilities, airports, and other structures deemed to be central to an overall transportation system. To be deemed eligible, projects shall document job-creation or job- retention impact.
 6. Local, state and/or federal road, highway and/or bridge maintenance projects will NOT be eligible for DRA funding.
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BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT (with an emphasis on entrepreneurship)

7. Business Development shall mean those areas of business development which include entrepreneurship, the creation of new businesses or the retention or expansion of existing businesses in the local communities and to be deemed eligible, projects shall document job-creation or job-retention.
8. Allow expansion of existing business incubators and industrial parks; only allow funding start-up facilities if a committed economic development project or committed business incubator tenants.
9. Applicants must document that a need exists per standards of research described by National Business Incubation Association. A plan should also be developed to coincide with standards and operation as set forth in the National Business Incubation Association.

“Business incubation shall mean a business support process that accelerates the successful development of start-up and fledgling companies by providing entrepreneurs with any array of targeted resources and services.

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WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

10. Workforce Development shall mean job training or employment-related education for a specific employer to fill immediate job openings or retain current jobs, which are documented as such by that specific employer. Delivery of such training shall be through the use of existing public educational facilities (EPEFs) located in the Region. However, if the pre-applicant demonstrates (1) sufficient documentation demonstrating an EPEF's inability (as examples, insufficient capacity, curriculum, and/or accessibility) to satisfy the defined need, and the pre-applicant (2) demonstrates a compelling need to use a non-EPEF for such training, then the Federal Co-Chairman can waive this requirement and deem a project eligible. To be deemed eligible, projects shall document job-creation or job-retention.

11. Other than for "Workforce Development" projects as described above, start-up or ongoing operating costs (including but not limited to, salaries, vehicles, equipment and maintenance) will NOT be deemed eligible.

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