

## Regional Investment Initiative – Implementation Phase FAQ #2

Posted on April 11, 2025

- **For regional coalitions that are selected for funding, will any funding be available for the Lead Entity?**

The Lead Entity is responsible for submitting the Pre-Application Questionnaire and if the project cluster is invited to move to a full application, each individual project is responsible for submitting individually. The Lead Entity could consider applying under the Ecosystem Support project type to continue supporting the industry growth and coalition coordination. See our Implementation Phase Webinar for more information: <https://youtu.be/>.

- **How do you define a "regional coalition"? The public and private membership make-up of our industry cluster spans the 6-county region. Could each of the clusters be considered a regional coalition separate from the parent coalition?**

A regional coalition is a group formed by interested applicants, in coordination with private sector and other partners, that shares a common vision for how Implementation funds could begin to scale growth of an identified tradable sector (as identified in the “Accelerate” or “Bet” categories within the State Economic Blueprint) in one or more regions.

- **Please provide more details on the information that should be included in the Notice of Intent, such as the members of the regional coalition. It may be difficult to list all members within the one-page limit. For the list of aligned projects, how much detail do you wish to see? Should rough estimates of budget be stated?**

Note that the NOI filing period for Round One has closed, and the Round Two filing period will close on March 20, 2026. The Notice of Intent must include: (a) the organization name, (b) the primary point of contact (POC), (c) the POC’s email address, (d) the POC’s phone number (optional), (e) the Coalition/Cluster name, (f) the economic region(s) where the cluster is located, (g) a **single** tradable sector (as identified in the “Accelerate” or “Bet” categories within the State Economic Blueprint) for which the cluster is designed to scale growth. See our Implementation Phase Webinar for more information: <https://youtu.be/>.

- **Will there be a webinar to ask questions about the RFP? An FAQ?**

We have published two public FAQ documents (here: <https://business.ca.gov/about/publications/>). You can also see our Implementation Phase Webinar here: <https://youtu.be/>

- **Are projects designed for sectors in the "Strengthen" or "Anchor" category, or "Workforce Development" eligible for RII Implementation Phase grant funding?**

No – only project clusters that identify a single tradable sector as identified in the "Accelerate" or "Bet" categories within the State Economic Blueprint will be eligible for grant funding.

- **Since projects often contribute to growth of more than one sector, how should we proceed to propose them in the Notice of Intent?**

Project clusters must be designed to scale growth around a **single** tradable sector as identified in the "Accelerate" or "Bet" categories within the State Economic Blueprint. An NOI must identify only one tradable sector for which the project cluster is designed to scale growth.

- **Can the "lead entity" that completes and submits the Pre-Application Questionnaire be a different organization than the lead entity that submits the notice of intent on behalf of the regional coalition?**

The only applicants eligible to submit Pre-Application Questionnaires are those identified on the published Notice of Intent List for Round 1 (here: <https://business.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/2025/03/Public-Notice-RII-Implementation-Phase-R1-NOI.pdf>). While clusters may merge, one of the previously identified Lead Entities will need to submit the final Pre-Application Questionnaire.

- **On page 6 the RFP states, "each entity representing a project within the regional coalition finalists will be invited to submit an application." Since this is "entity" and not "lead entity", should we interpret this to mean that the individual organization within the coalition that will control the project will submit the application?**

Yes - the role of the Lead Entity shifts as the process moves from Notice of Intent to Pre-Application to Full Application. In the Full Application stage, each project within a cluster has its own project lead (contract signatory) and that project lead is responsible for submitting the Full Application *for their project only*. See our Implementation Phase Webinar for more information: <https://youtu.be/>.

- **Eligible projects must have relevant permits. Do the permits have to be in place by the March 26 deadline for notice of intent or by the pre-application deadline of April 23?**

Detailed eligibility criteria, including the requirement for relevant permits for ready-to-go projects, will be assessed at the full application stage.

- **Is the applicant considered the single “awardee” for the bundled projects and by default the fiscal agent if awarded?**

No – the role of the Lead Entity (or applicant) shifts as the process moves from Notice of Intent to Pre-Application to Full Application and may or may not be directly responsible for signing the final contract, receiving grant money, or serving as a fiscal agent for an individual project. See our Implementation Phase Webinar for more information: <https://youtu.be/>.

- **Is there an allowable administrative budget for the lead agency, or the agency acting as awardee or fiscal agent? Is there an overhead expense cap for this funding?**

Administrative costs are limited to 10% of the total award.

- **We would like to gain a clearer understanding of the regional/cross-regional coalition requirements. Are we required to use this grant period to conduct an RFP process to establish a coalition, or can we engage organizations with which we already have established networks?**

Lead entities can use existing networks or form new ones to be identified as the regional coalition. GO-Biz does not have any criteria for how that coalition is formed.

- **Is there a publicly available list of lead applicants who submitted a Notice of Intent?**

Yes - <https://business.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/2025/03/Public-Notice-RII-Implementation-Phase-R1-NOI.pdf>

- **Are you looking for three to eight projects within one specific tradable sector within the “Accelerate” or “Bet” categories, or three to eight projects across multiple tradable sectors within the “Accelerate” or “Bet” categories, or is either acceptable?**

Lead applicants must identify a **single** tradable sector (as identified in the “Accelerate” or “Bet” categories within the State Economic Blueprint) as the focus for their project cluster.

- **May project clusters center around relevant subsectors not named in the Blueprint? For example, could a project focus on Clean Economy but not on one of the named subsectors?**

No. The only tradable sectors eligible for this grant are those identified as a Sector or sub-sector within the State Economic Blueprint.

- **Can a proposed project cluster address several of the sector or sub-sectors identified in the Economic Blueprint, if it can clearly demonstrate why those sectors are more effectively addressed together?**

A project cluster must identify a **single** tradable sector (as identified in the “Accelerate” or “Bet” categories within the State Economic Blueprint) as the focus for their project cluster. However, individual projects within that cluster can address several sub-sectors as long as it is clearly demonstrated how those projects work together to effectively address the cluster’s single identified tradable sector.

- **Where the RFP says "Project clusters are defined as between three and eight aligned and interconnected projects (construction and/or non-construction) organized under a singular vision to grow one tradable sector (as identified in the “Accelerate” or “Bet” categories within the State Economic Blueprint)" is the "Tradable Sector" at the "Clean Economy" level of the graphic, or at the sub-category level, i.e. "ZEVs"?**

The tradable sector is at the “Clean Economy” level of the graphic. At the Notice of Intent and Pre-Application stages, lead applicants must identify one of the following tradable sectors under which the project cluster is aligned. However, for those sectors that also cross into the “Strengthen” bucket, only the subsectors in Accelerate and Bet are eligible for this grant program.

- **Regarding the FAQ: Question - "*Will each project have its own fiscal agent or does one entity have to serve as the fiscal agent for the entire cluster?*" Answer - "*Each project will be awarded to distinct fiscal agents.*" Does this mean that the state will directly award 3-8 contracts under the umbrella of each industry cluster? If so, what functions is the Lead Entity expected to play for the industry cluster? What is the lead entity’s role?**

Yes - in the Full Application stage, the state directly awards contracts to individual projects under the umbrella of a regional coalition. The role of the Lead Entity shifts as the process moves from Notice of Intent to Pre-Application to Full Application. While the Lead Entity is responsible for moving the project cluster through the NOI and Pre-Application stages, following the approval of a project cluster’s Pre-Application, the responsibility for each project within the cluster shifts to individual project leads (who will also be the contract signatories). At that time the role of the former Lead Entity will shift depending on individual needs. They might shift to a communication’s focused role, become a project lead of an

individual project, or support in other ways. There are no official requirements for the Lead Entity after the Pre-Application has been approved. See our Implementation Phase Webinar for more information: <https://youtu.be/>

- **Regarding the FAQ: “Administrative costs are limited to 10% of the total award.” Does this include all administrative functions performed by the Lead Entity for each project within a cluster? Is the time that Lead Entity staff spends on coordinating and convening the cluster considered an administrative task?**

Lead entities will not receive any compensation for coordinating and convening the regional cluster. In order to fund coordination and convening after, an entity would need to apply for funding as a project under the Ecosystem Support project type.

- **Please clarify the minimum requirements for coalition documentation at each stage (NOI, Pre-Application, and Full Application) - will emailed intent-to-collaborate notes suffice, or must they be formal letters?**

NOI: no documentation is required.

Pre-Application: The lead entity must include a letter from the associated regional Convenor(s) that confirms that the target sector aligns with their Jobs First Regional Plans. This letter can be emailed to [regionalinvestment@gobiz.ca.gov](mailto:regionalinvestment@gobiz.ca.gov).

Full Application: Pre-application finalists will be invited to apply for the Full Application, and additional details will be provided at that time.

- **Please clarify eligibility - can a coalition include partners who’ve verbally committed but haven’t yet signed agreements?**

Yes

- **Is there a process to supplement partnership details after submission?**

There is no formal process to supplement partnership details after submission, but it is not prohibited.

- **Our program would support multiple regions that have healthcare (behavioral health) as a priority sector. May we apply to support residents in multiple regions?**

Multiple regions can be targeted in the project cluster, but behavioral health is not a tradable sector as identified in the “Accelerate” or “Bet” categories within the State Economic Blueprint and would not be eligible as the focus for a project cluster.

- **Can the funding be used to support tuition funds and wrap around support for students requiring clinical hours? The High Road program we are currently in supports 200 low income paraeducators pursuing their teaching credential with tuition free bachelor's degrees and payment for missed work while completing demonstration teaching.**

Yes, if it was (a) included within a project cluster whose focus was a tradable sector as identified in the "Accelerate" or "Bet" categories within the State Economic Blueprint (Advanced and Precision Manufacturing, Aerospace and Defense, Life Sciences, High Tech, Clean Economy, Working Lands and Water); and (b) it was clearly demonstrated that this project directly contributed to the overall goals of the project cluster.

- **Can new applicants or not current RII grantees be included in this implementation stage?**

Yes.

- **Will there be funding opportunities coming out for projects that fall within the "Strengthen" category?**

No.

- **How can I stay up to date on future opportunities?**

You can follow GO-Biz:

- On X: <https://x.com/CAGoBiz>
- And LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/company/cagobiz>
- And sign up for our newsletter by visiting our website and scrolling to the bottom: <https://business.ca.gov/>

You can follow California Jobs First:

- On X: <https://x.com/CAJobsFirst>
- And LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/company/california-jobs-first>

- **Does the term "eligible NOIs" mean that these are the applicants that are allowed to submit the "pre-application"?**

Yes

- **Are we able to be a lead on one application in a region, and partner on additional applications in another region?**

Yes

- **We submitted our letter of intent (which was approved) and the focus in our letter of intent was Accelerate - Clean Economy - Battery. We are interested in expanding our scope of work to include Accelerate - Clean Economy – ZEV. In addition, we are in the process of partnering/collaborating with additional applicants who submitted their Notices of Intent for Clean Economy, and our scope and deliverables are expanding with each partnership. Are we allowed to expand the scope of our work as the lead entity, as long as we do not change the identified tradable sector (Clean Economy)?**

Yes, but keep in mind that if your Pre-Application is approved, each individual project will then be required to submit a Full Application, and will then be judged on its own merits.

- **Will clusters of Strengthen projects be eligible for Round 2 RII Implementation funds?**

No, only project clusters that identify a single tradable sector as identified in the “Accelerate” or “Bet” categories within the State Economic Blueprint are qualified for funding.

- **Can private businesses own the title of real property purchased in whole or in part with these funds, if they are willing to meet other performance requirements of the program?**

Prior to the execution of a grant agreement, the awardee must provide documentation that they either hold ownership rights to the land on which an implementation project is to occur or has land tenure permission from the landowner(s) to implement the approved project(s).

If the awardee does not own the property on which the project is to be implemented, the property owners(s) must sign a document or enter into an agreement with the awardee acknowledging landownership, access rights and the period of time for access for project implementation. If there is an existing agreement that provides land tenure for the time periods required, it may be used.

Each site acquired or improved upon with the funding related to this RFP must be maintained in a state of good repair and remain permanently dedicated to the described use for its full useful life.

- **Given that each project lead will be responsible for its own fiscal agent, would it be possible for three project leads in various sectors from one region to use the same fiscal agent?**

Yes

- **If an entity submitted a Notice of Intent (NOI) but the NOI was denied because that entity targeted more than one tradable sector, can that entity then join another Regional Convenor as one of the project partners focused on supporting their tradable sector?**

Yes – see our Public Notice of approved NOIs for Implementation Phase Round One here: [Regional Investment Initiative - Implementation Phase Round One - Notice of Intent - Public Notice](#)

- **Can a lead applicant add additional project partners to support their tradable sector who did not submit a letter of intent? Or can we only work with entities that had approved letters of intent?**

A lead applicant can add additional project partners to support their tradable sector, even if those partners did not submit a Notice of Intent.

- **For question 6 in the questionnaire - is it a 300-word maximum for a - d, or 300-word maximum for each sub-bullet of a - d?**

300–word maximum for the entire question and all sub-bullets, a – d.

- **Can the Regional Investment Initiative team please confirm that the letters of support from the regional conveners are to be submitted with the pre-application due April 23? Or can the letters be submitted with the full application deadline of May 28th?**

Letters of confirmation for the regional conveners must be submitted with the pre-application due on April 23, 2025 (Round One).

- **Our team would also like to know if there was supposed to be additional guidance on the pre-application (aside from application information in the February 2025 RFP) that was sent to entities that submitted a Letter of Interest?**

On April 11, 2025 an Errata for the RII Implementation Phase RFP was published (here: <https://business.ca.gov/about/publications>). This Errata makes changes to how the pre-application questionnaire is received. Instead of emailing answers to GO-Biz, we have created an online form for qualified applicants to fill out. If you submitted a successful Notice of Intent (see our Public Notice here: [Regional Investment Initiative - Implementation Phase Round One - Notice of Intent - Public Notice](#)), you should have received an email with a link to the pre-application questionnaire online form, which includes some additional guidance on the process.



- **Can co-conveners provide support letters for multiple proposals?**

The regional conveners may provide confirmation letters for multiple proposals that align with the regional strategy.

- **Can new regions be added to a pre-application that were not listed on the NOI submission? If a NOI indicates one region, but now finds another region also support the chosen sector, can the NOI combine with the additional region it will cover in the Pre-Application?**

Yes

- **Is furniture an allowable infrastructure expense?**

Furniture would likely be considered equipment rather than infrastructure. Whether furniture would be allowed as an expense would depend on it meeting the criteria for eligible equipment expenditures:

- The furniture must be a direct cost of the Implementation Phase.
- The awardee or subcontractor must be the sole owner of the furniture.
- The furniture must be dedicated to the described use in support of the sector-specific activities outlined in the project proposal and the grant agreement.

Note that all costs must meet the tests of reasonableness, allowability, and allocability in accordance with the grant agreement terms. Even if considered equipment, the purchase of furniture would need to be justified as reasonable and directly related to the project's objectives.

- **May a NOI on the approved list now combine with another NOI/applicant to submit a joint Pre-Application?**

Yes

- **Can a NOI who identified “Clean Energy” as their chosen sector and referenced critical minerals and batteries as a subsector include a project from an additional subsector under Clean Energy in the Pre-Application?**

Yes, as long as the additional subsectors are also in the Accelerate or Bet categories.

- **For the financing plan, is it per project or per cluster?**

The total and upfront capital investment needed per project.

- **Can I save the online pre-application form and come back to it later to complete?**

There is no “save” feature for the form. While you should be able to leave the form open and complete it over time, it is recommended that you save your work on a different program (Microsoft Word, for example).