

## Implementation Full Application FAQ

### **Budget, Funding, and Financial Structure**

- To what extent can funding requests and budget allocations submitted in the pre-application be adjusted in the full application? Specifically, are applicants allowed to request more funding than originally indicated, and can budgets be revised to reflect refined project scopes, updated partner roles, or clarified deliverables that have emerged through further stakeholder engagement and technical planning?

Yes - applicants can revise budgets in the full application based on updated understanding, refined scopes, or stakeholder engagement. REMINDER: budgets are deliverables-based.

- Are there any percentage-based restrictions or funding caps on specific budget categories, similar to those outlined in the Accelerate CA Hub program?

No - applicants are required to provide a deliverables-based budget justification outlining general costs and assuring that each deliverable expense is reasonable.

- Are grants or cash awards to companies an allowable use of RII funds?

Yes, provided these costs are justified, reasonable, and tied to the awardee's project deliverables and goals.

- Can these funds be disbursed by regional partners, or must they be distributed by the lead applicant?

No – funds can only be distributed by the lead applicant.

- Can awardees use the grant money to provide potential sub-recipients with funds to complete the purchase of land they do not currently own, but on which a project would take place?

Yes - as long as the project can be completed in the 24-month period of performance.

- Is there guidance or specific limitations to the ways awardees can distribute dollars to sub-recipients besides grants and vendor contracts? For example, could awardees distribute dollars to sub-recipients as investments or loans?

There is some flexibility in allowing awardees to distribute funds to other entities, including for-profit companies indirectly, through investments or loans, provided the awardee maintains significant involvement and oversight, and the activities align with the approved, deliverables-based project goals.

- Are our partner organizations, who will receive subawards, also eligible to request up to 10% indirect costs on their portion of the project costs?

Yes – as long as the sub awardee is able to deliver the project within the deliverables-based budget proposed.

- Should the lead organization receiving the grant funding apply a Modified Total Direct Cost (MTDC) calculation to the costs associated with these subawards when determining our own indirect costs?

No – this is a reimbursable, deliverables-based grant and does not follow MTDC because it is not federally funded. Instead, both the lead applicant and subrecipients may include up to a 10% indirect rate, applied to the full cost of each deliverable—including subawards—with that amount incorporated directly into the deliverable budgets.

- Is there a projected amount we should budget to pay for the travel to/from the June 23 pitch contest? Or will those expenses be covered by another source?

No - while the pitch event is a mandatory step for selected projects, the responsibility for budgeting and covering the travel costs to attend falls to the applicant.

- Should the travel cost be included in the deliverable-based budget?

Yes, all expenses should be built into the project budget.

- For the budget, if we have other sources of funding, do we base the budget on the total cost of the project, or just the portion of the project we are asking you for?

Use the Exhibit E template to show the specific RII grant funds requested for each deliverable and the total request. Use the Project Financing section within your narrative (Exhibit B) to clearly outline the entire financial picture of the project, showing the total cost and how it will be covered by both the RII funds and all other sources of funding.

- How should we handle contingencies for changes in the price of goods in the deliverable budget and budget narrative? Since this is a deliverable-based budget, not reimbursement for time/materials, should we just assume that prices will go up? If prices increase to a level that the project cannot support, is there an opportunity to renegotiate the deliverables?

You should include contingency in your original budget submission for specific deliverables to account for potential price increases. This should be detailed in your budget justification. Understand that once the budget for a deliverable is agreed upon, the

awardee is responsible for completing that deliverable at the budgeted cost, even if actual expenses exceed the budgeted amount.

- For projects that are fiscally sponsored, does the fiscal sponsor fee/rate count in the 10% max of indirect expenses?

Yes.

- Is the 10% overhead limit on costs related to the entire program cost or to each individual cost item?

The 10% limit is on the entire program cost.

### **Grant Structure, Reimbursement, and Invoicing**

- What does the "reimbursable" part of this "reimbursable, deliverables-based" grant mean? Will grantees invoice upon completion of the deliverable for a fixed fee that they set for that deliverable, or can they only invoice for actual costs incurred to accomplish a deliverable, such that they would need to keep track of personnel time by deliverable?

"Reimbursable" means you spend your funds first and get reimbursed back by the state.

"Deliverables-based" means that the basis for that reimbursement is the completion of predefined work packages (deliverables) for a predefined, budgeted cost, rather than a detailed accounting of the actual time and materials spent on each task within that deliverable.

- If a grantee estimates that a deliverable will cost a certain amount, but they are able to achieve the deliverable for less (because staff was more efficient than expected and took less time, or they were able to secure materials for less, or they spent less on meeting costs, etc.) would they bill for the amount estimated in the budget, or the actual amount expended?

You will invoice upon completion of the deliverable for the fixed amount that you budgeted and was agreed upon for that specific deliverable, regardless of whether the amount expended was greater or less than the agreed upon budget.

- Will grantees be allowed to invoice for partially completed deliverables (e.g., 50% completion)?

No, however, you can structure your budget to define interim stages or components of a larger project as distinct, completed deliverables.

- How does this grant differ from a fixed fee contract?

This grant structure is a hybrid: it's reimbursable (meaning you spend first, then get paid back), but the basis for that reimbursement is the completion of defined deliverables for a fixed, predetermined amount per deliverable, similar to a fixed-fee approach for those specific outcomes. It differs from a standard fixed-fee contract primarily in the explicit requirement to incur costs before invoicing for reimbursement and the need to maintain detailed cost records for monitoring and audit purposes.

- If we have partners who do not have working capital to front project expenses, will GO-Biz allow some advanced payments prior to completion of deliverables?

No.

- Can a project be awarded upfront startup funds (20%-25%) in relation to the value of the project if we are awarded a grant?

No.

- Can a project be awarded upfront startup funds (20%-25%) in relation to the value of the project with a "clawback feature" if we are awarded a grant and the deliverables are not completed or approved to cover startup costs?

No.

### **Timeline, Period of Performance, and Grant Duration**

- Please clarify if the grant period is for 2 years? The RFP says the PoP is 24 months, but then says Oct 2025–Apr 2028. Can you explain the discrepancy?

While the standard expectation and guideline are for a 24-month grant period starting with the execution of grant agreements targeted for October 2025, the budget template provides dates spanning 31 months. We are aware of this and advise applicants to plan and budget for approximately 24 months where possible, while acknowledging that flexibility may be available if necessary.

- Our organization believes it can obligate requested grant dollars and conclude requested grant scope items within the 24-month performance period. However, we are not confident that the full scope of the project, with matching funds included, can be fully completed within 24 months. I'm reaching out to see if the project will still be eligible/competitive for RII funding in the case that "Phase 1" funding was

fully grant funded by the end of the grant performance period, but the overall final project wasn't yet completed.

If your organization can clearly define a "Phase 1" of your overall project that:

- Can be fully funded by the requested grant dollars.
- Results in a distinct, functional, and usable outcome.
- Can be completed and all grant-funded scope items concluded within the 24-month Period of Performance.

Then yes, your project should still be eligible and competitive for RII funding, even if the overall final project, incorporating matching funds and subsequent phases, extends beyond that 24-month period. You would need to articulate this phased approach and the functional outcome of the grant-funded phase clearly in your application, particularly in your Project Narrative (Exhibit B), Project Work Plan (Exhibit D), and Deliverables-Based Budget (Exhibit E).

- To confirm, there is no "pitch" or interview required prior to submitting the full application. But those that are selected to present a pitch must do this in order to be eligible for an award, correct? And this pitch must occur in person in San Francisco on June 23rd. Will a virtual presentation be allowed?

No – there is no pitch or interview required prior to submitting the full application. Yes – for those that are selected, the pitch is mandatory. Yes - the pitch must occur in person in San Francisco on June 23<sup>rd</sup>. No – virtual presentations will not be allowed.

- Can you share a full timeline of all grant-related activities? Including due dates, the pitch dates, etc.?

### **Application Phase**

- **Office Hours:** May 23, 2025 – 10:00 AM PT
- **Full Application Due:** May 28, 2025 – 5:00 PM PT

### **Selection and Award Phase**

- **Mandatory Pitch (for invited applicants):** June 23, 2025, in San Francisco
- **Award Announcements:** By mid-August 2025
- **Grant Agreements Executed: October 2025**  
(Funds cannot be obligated before execution)

### **Implementation Phase (Period of Performance - POP)**

- **Start Date:** Targeting **October 1, 2025**
- **First Deliverable (Project Implementation Plan):** Due **30 days after start (~Nov 1, 2025)**
- **POP Duration: 24 months** (through ~**September/October 2027**)
  - *End date shown in budget template is April 30, 2028 (approx. 31 months), but 24 months is the planning standard*
  - *GO-Biz reserves the right to extend or reduce POP*
- What is projected for Phase II? We realize and respect that Phase II is changing in real time. Our CoP has ready-to-go projects that we held back from Round I because they fit better in Round II. If there is a chance that Round II will not go forward, what are your recommendations? Could there be an opportunity to pitch investors?

Round II will begin as Round I grant agreements are awarded and executed. Notice of Intent will be due in March 2026. If your project(s) were not included in any of the project clusters advancing to submit a full application for Round I, then Round II should be your target. Only selected projects in Round I will be eligible for investor pitches. A Round II Investment Summit may be scheduled.

### **Eligibility and Entity Type**

- Can you please verify the eligibility of California Community College Districts to apply under the entity type, "Institutions of higher education or a consortium of institutions of higher education"? What source do you use to determine if an entity meets this eligibility criteria?

Yes - California Community College Districts are eligible to apply under the entity type "Institutions of higher education or a consortium of institutions of higher education." The source used to determine this eligibility is the Request for Proposal (RFP) document itself, specifically the section titled "Eligible Applicants" which explicitly lists this category.

- We are organized as a Nonprofit Public Benefit Corporation (see attached). However, since we may need to add a fiscal agent that is a current 501(c)(3) organization, would the fiscal agent also be required to complete the required application forms?

If you proceed with using a fiscal agent as the eligible applicant to contract with the state, that fiscal agent would be required to complete and submit the required application forms

(specifically the Appendix forms listed in the Full Application), and your organization would not need to submit those specific forms. You should clearly explain this arrangement in your project narrative.

- Can we change the structure of our cluster and turn a partner's contribution to a project into a stand-alone project (rather than grouping him as a subcontractor, as previously indicated in our Pre-Application), even though he didn't submit an intention to be a lead partner?

No. New or separated projects will not be allowed to submit an application. Consolidation of like-projects is allowed.

### **Application Submission, Format, and Materials**

- Did you create a website specifically for the RII Implementation Phase Full Application?

No – the full application was sent directly to qualified applicants via the cluster lead entity.

- When using the provided templates, do you want applicants to include the templates exactly and “type” over the provided lines? Or are the lines a placeholder and we can re-create the templates for submission?

Please re-create the templates for submission.

- Do you have a preference on if we submit one combined PDF or individual PDFs for each section of the application?

We have no preference.

- Are projects limited to one project type, or can we list multiple types on the Cover Sheet?

Yes - you can select and list more than one project type on the Cover Sheet if you can clearly justify why your specific project aligns with multiple types.

- How should citations be handled in the narrative – can the citation list be included as an additional page beyond the 10-page narrative limit?

Yes – the citation list can be an additional page.

- Will you be publishing the list of organizations that were approved to go to the full application round based on the pre-application questionnaire? Or are you able to

share that information with individual organizations even if it isn't going to be posted on your website?

No - we will not be publishing the list of organizations that were approved to go to the full application round, nor are we sharing that information publicly.

- Regarding developing the narrative as if it is a pitch deck, does that mean we do not have to follow the format that was provided in terms of the specific narrative questions?

No - while you are encouraged to make your narrative compelling and engaging like a pitch deck, you should still ensure that you address and include all the specific questions, information, and sections that are listed as requirements. The pitch deck concept is about the style and purpose of the narrative, not a waiver of the required content elements.

### **Partners, Sub-Awards, and Project Leads**

- Can you provide more guidance on what should be included/excluded in the Exhibit C Partnership Agreement Letters? Are these Letters intended to be a legally binding contract between the Lead Applicant and any associated partners/sub-consultants/subrecipients? Or are these letters more like an MOU to confirm the support of our partners throughout the proposed project and to outline their specific roles therein?

Partnership Agreement Letters (Exhibit C) are not intended to be legally binding contracts, but they must go beyond general letters of support or vague MOUs. These letters should outline specific, concrete ways in which each partner will support the project—such as financial contributions, indirect staff time, or system alignment. GO-Biz expects them to demonstrate meaningful, actionable commitments from partners to help ensure project success. While not contracts, they serve as formal declarations of collaboration and shared responsibility.

- Do you expect Partnership Agreement Letters from every single intended partner/sub-consultants/subrecipients in the project, or will the required 3 Letters be sufficient?

The required three letters are sufficient for the application submission, and you should focus on securing strong letters that clearly detail the support from at least three key partners, particularly from those located in the region(s) where the project will take place.



- There are several items the applicants need to ensure. Can we, as a project cluster, combine those assurances into an assurance statement, included in each of our applications?

No - you cannot combine assurances into a single assurance statement for the project cluster and include it in each individual project's application. Every document in your proposal needs to be separated and unique to the specific project.

- Will each individual project lead organization be the ones with the contract with the State, and therefore be fiscal agents for their project partners? Or will each partner organization also get their own contract with the State (if awarded)?

The State will enter into a contract with each individual project lead entity, and that entity will serve as the fiscal agent for their project partners.

- Can sub-awardees have their own sub-contractors to complete the work required for the project?

Yes.

- We have to change one of the project leads from what we submitted in the pre-application. However, I might not be able to confirm the new applicant entity before the Contact Form you requested is due. We can fill out the form with the entity that we believe will be in that role going forward, but is it possible to change the entity before submitting the full application?

You can fill out the Contact Form with the entity you currently anticipate will be the lead, and you have the flexibility to change that lead entity prior to submitting the Full Application, as long as the final lead organization is an eligible applicant type.

- Would letters from partners within the project cluster be acceptable/encouraged?

A letter from a partner within your cluster is acceptable for Exhibit C if it details specific support they are providing for your individual project, not just general support for the cluster's vision. However, the primary place to demonstrate the interconnectedness and alignment between projects in the cluster is the Project Narrative. You need a minimum of three letters for Exhibit C from partners outlining specific support for your project, and you should focus on securing solid letters from key collaborators, ensuring at least one is located in the project region(s).

- Is there a page limit for partner agreement letters, as long as we only submit 3 letters?

No.

## Technical Attachments and Compliance

- Can you provide more guidance on what should be included/excluded in Appendix 1? Is the list included on Page 14 under "Infrastructure" comprehensive of what is required?

Appendix 1 is designated for Permit & Site Information and is required for projects involving physical infrastructure or construction. It should include documentation on environmental compliance (such as permits, surveys, or reports), and proof of site access or land tenure agreements. While the list on page 14 under "Infrastructure" outlines important land ownership and lease requirements, it is not comprehensive of everything needed for Appendix 1. Additional materials related to permitting and environmental compliance should also be included.

- Do you have a preference on where in the application we verify/certify that our project has met/intends to meet the procurement requirements?

No, but the Budget Justification (Exhibit E) is the most relevant section for demonstrating how you will meet the "reasonable cost" requirement tied to procurement procedures.

- For equipment purchased or built with grant funds that have a useful life beyond the 24-month grant period, how will it be determined if the equipment must be returned to the State or the fair market value be refunded?

GO-Biz anticipates not requiring the return or refund of equipment once the 24-month performance period is completed. The official determination process at the end of the grant involves the State deciding between requiring return or authorizing continued use, considering the equipment's useful life and whether it is still needed for project implementation.

- As the primary grant recipient, we utilize high school districts as sub-contractors and hosting the equipment on their campuses. We understand the grant guidelines require the awardee to retain ownership of any purchased equipment. Is it allowable for the high school districts, as sub-contractors, to retain ownership of the lab equipment purchased or developed through this grant funding?

Yes, however, the primary awardee retains key responsibilities for managing the subcontractor, record-keeping, and ensuring the equipment's use aligns with the project during the grant period.

- Are there any additional measures we should take to ensure the arrangement remains fully compliant with grant requirements, including establishing MOUs or other formal agreements to outline equipment use, responsibilities, and accountability?

Yes, additional measures are strongly recommended to ensure compliance when subcontractors, such as high school districts, retain ownership of grant-funded equipment. While the specific format might have some flexibility—such as subcontracts or MOUs—the lead awardee should establish formal written agreements that outline equipment use, responsibilities, and compliance obligations.

- Are infrastructure and improvements eligible costs if the awardee has land tenure through a long-term (30+ year) lease agreement with an affiliated land-holding company? The affiliated land holding company is NOT the applicant/awardee, but it has given permission to the applicant/awardee to make grant-funded improvements on site.

If an affiliated entity holds the primary lease, the awardee can utilize grant funds for infrastructure on that land provided that the awardee secures a formal land tenure agreement (which can be documented by a letter) with the affiliated lease-holding company. This agreement must grant the awardee specific rights to use the land for the project for a defined period, aligning with the project duration and the expectation of the improvements' useful life. This arrangement, including the detailed terms of land use and the affiliated company's permission, should be clearly spelled out in the application and documented for the grant agreement process

- Are there any guidelines around how a project is defined? If similar work is being done but in multiple geographic areas, can this still be a single project?

There is flexibility to define a single "project" in your application as encompassing similar work across multiple locations, provided you can strongly demonstrate their interconnectedness and singular purpose in your narrative.

### **Program Strategy, Impact, and Sector Questions**

- Regarding the question, "Explain how the applicant and regional coalition will use this project as a means of growing the identified tradable sector."  
For Anchor strategies, is this a reasonable way to approach this question? "How will the increased availability of licensed childcare (for example) enable parents to join the workforce necessary for the tradable sector?"

Yes - framing your answer around how increased childcare availability enables parents to join the workforce necessary for the tradable sector is directly aligned with the purpose of Anchor strategies within this program. You would need to clearly articulate this connection and potentially provide evidence or examples of how employers in the target sector identify childcare as a barrier or how the project will specifically benefit individuals who would then be available to work in that sector.

- Can you share more about the difference between "pushing" and "pulling" industry growth, and perhaps provide some examples? Can a project both "push" and "pull"?

"Pushing" industry growth means directly funding foundational elements of a sector—like infrastructure, workforce training, or supportive services—regardless of commercial certainty. "Pulling" industry growth means incentivizing outcomes through mechanisms like milestone-based awards or loan programs that reward successful business performance. While a project may contain elements of both, applicants should identify the primary strategy—either "push" or "pull"—and explain how the project advances industry development through that lens.

- For Ag-Tech statewide network projects, in which each "project" is comprised of multiple subprojects, can the subproject leads submit a letter of support to outline the ways in which that subproject lead will support the project?

"Subproject leads" can and should submit Partnership Agreement Letters if they are key collaborators on the broader project. However, these letters must be specific in outlining their commitments and contributions to the success of the entire project, not just their individual component, as general letters of support are not sufficient.

- How will we know/when will it be determined what the reporting requirements are, and frequency is? This could potentially have a significant impact on the budget required to fulfill these obligations.

Reporting requirements and frequency will be finalized during the grant agreement negotiation with GO-Biz. In your application, you must propose metrics and budget for reporting activities within your deliverables. While the final schedule is subject to negotiation, quarterly reporting is expected, and you should plan accordingly.

- What are the guidelines for changing the Project Lead and/or the Project Name for the full application?

You may freely change the Project Name for the full application. However, changing the Project Lead is only allowed between the pre-application and full application—and only if the new lead is an eligible applicant (e.g., nonprofit, local government, tribal entity, or

higher education institution). Once the full application is submitted, the Project Lead is locked in and cannot be changed.