

New Jersey Library Construction Bond Act
Solicitation for Grant Application
Winter 2020 Cycle
Question and Answer Documentation

The answers below are in response to questions the State Librarian received regarding the application process.

49. **Construction Schedule**

The template for the Anticipated Construction Schedule requests a design start date and a construction start date. It also shows a maximum of 24 months. Section 1.6.6 indicates that the time limit should be measured from the date of the Execution of the Grant Agreement (per webinar July -August 2020). Does this mean that the design, permitting, bidding, and construction is limited to 24 months from July or August 2020?

A49. No. Length of time to construction completion will vary by project. Rows can be added to the Anticipated Construction Schedule or they can be left blank as appropriate for each project.

If and when an applicant enters into a grant agreement, the grant agreement will incorporate a time limit for completion of construction based on the anticipated construction schedule submitted in the application. As stated in section 1.6.7 of the solicitation, if the construction period exceeds the timeline by more than 12 months an extension may be requested.

See response A6 for timing.

50. **Item 2.4.6: please clarify if the certifications of utility repairs (HVAC, and others) is intended and required only for projects that are primarily for such repair work.**

For example, a library that only wants to replace existing mechanical units or one that wants to bring in a gas service where none existed before for energy efficiency? It is not clear that such specific information (drawings, estimate, descriptions) and the related expense to provide such information is required when these systems are secondary and simply part of a larger renovation project. When these system upgrades are in fact part of a larger renovation, their scope of work is included in the conceptual design and their costs would be captured by the Square Foot calculations on the estimate forms.

A50. Projects that are repair only projects must submit one of the Certifications listed as items 17 and 18 on page 41 of the Solicitation Checklist. For building repairs of mechanical systems, such as repairing the HVAC system, Checklist item 17 is required. For building repairs, other than mechanical system repairs, Checklist item 18 is required.

If the Project includes repairs as part of a renovation project, you are correct that the repair costs would be captured in the cost estimate section, 6.5.1, as part of the construction cost of rehabilitation and renovation.

51. Item 2.4.8: is this entire section required for repair projects focused solely on mechanical and other systems? Is it required for general interior renovations where no new area is being added to the building?

A51. Section 2.4.8 describes additional criteria that apply to rehabilitation projects and projects where a building is purchased to be used as a public library. It is not required solely for ‘repair only’ projects.

Renovation is included in the definition of rehabilitation. If you are renovating a building, you must complete Section 2.4.8.i Required Community Analysis, Building Program and Schematics and Section 2.4.8.ii Certification of Life Expectancy.

52. Item 2.4.8.i: the community analysis is noted as required to be prepared by a licensed architect or building consultant. The community analysis data as described in Part V.A. clearly does not require either professional. Can you clarify that a grant writer, librarian, or other qualified person is the appropriate responsible for such data gathering of demographics?

A52. The building program as a whole must be prepared by a building consultant or an architect whose firm prepares building programs. The community analysis is a required section of the building program. Building consultants and architects may collaborate with Applicants, other professionals, or whoever they choose to complete the community analysis.

53. Item 2.4.8.ii: please clarify if the Life Expectancy evaluation is required only for rehabilitated structures as noted in the first line of the first paragraph or, for every project as implied in the following sentence.

A53. Section 2.4.8.ii Certification of Life Expectancy applies to rehabilitation projects and projects where a building is purchased to be used as a public library. It does not apply to all projects. For federal tax purposes, life expectancy applies to all projects (rehabilitation, new construction). However, if you are doing something like rehabilitation and adding carpets, etc., the entire rehabilitation is factored into the life expectancy of the project. For instance, if carpets have a life expectancy of 10 years, but taken all together, the total rehabilitation gives the project a life expectancy of 20, you would go with 20.

54. Item Part V.B.I: should the “parking lot configuration” graphic be included in Part V.C instead?

A54. Part V.B.1 should include an assessment on the adequacy of parking and/or if additional parking is necessary. The parking lot configuration can be included in Part V, Part C.

55. Item Part V.C.a: the sentence reads...” Site plan including elevations and locations of existing adjacent buildings.” Does the word “elevations” mean the ‘topography of the ground’ or the building ‘facades’? Also, does “existing adjacent buildings” require us to show buildings on other properties or just what is on the library property? If a survey does not exist, can the applicant provide an aerial photo available on google earth as a reference?

A55. Yes, the word “elevations” refers to the topography of the ground and how the library is situated. “Existing adjacent buildings” requires applicants to show adjacent buildings on the library property. An aerial photo would suffice only for the purpose of showing adjacent buildings, but for no other purpose.

56. Item Part V.C.b: this item requires schematic floor plans. Will building facades/elevations or perspective renderings be required for new additions or new buildings? Checklist item #9 states this but the cross reference of 2.4.8i and Part V.C.b do not. Also, if such elevations are required, please confirm that elevations are not required for interior renovations whereas no new exterior area is being added.

A56. Schematic plans for the project (which include a site plan, elevations, and a floor plan with furniture layouts) are required for new additions and new buildings. Elevations are not required for interior renovations.

57. I am the president of a library Board of Trustees. We are a small-town library in Southern NJ. We would like to apply for this grant because we are in need of handicapped doors and other improvements to make our library handicapped accessible. Our patrons are ageing, and we are concerned for their safety. We know that there are strict time constraints and we do not want to miss them we would like to find a grant writer to help us with this. Are you able to steer us in the direction of someone who might help us write the grant?

A57. We cannot directly recommend particular resources for hiring a grant writer. However, a library’s reference department, including the State Library’s, would be able to assist people with finding sources for information such as this.

58. Would a library that is not eligible for any State Aid because the position of director has been eliminated be disqualified from receiving any funding from the NJ Construction Bond Grant?

A58. No. Lack of eligibility for State Aid does not disqualify a library from grant eligibility under the program. Section 6.7 of the Solicitation asks Applicants to explain how any deficiencies in the public library building impact the library's ability to meet the minimum criteria for receipt of State Library Aid.

59. I just want to verify when the timing of the capital ordinance needs to happen. The Capital ordinance needs to happen by the Township after the state notifies of award and the Township has 3 months to execute the ordinance correct? It is not the other way around, that the Township needs to do the ordinance along with the application itself.

A59. In accordance with Checklist item 6 in the Solicitation, the Applicant must provide a bond ordinance (or resolution of intent to provide funding) at the time the application is submitted.

Within three months of notification of eligibility of a grant award, the Applicant must submit evidence that funds have been appropriated or bonds or debt have been authorized for financing of the project.

60. If the question on the application does not apply to our situation, do we leave the line unchecked/blank or write NA?

A60. Write NA.

61. Regarding Template 6.2.1 - If the current library facility is in a rented space should the check box be checked for b. No library facility existed prior to the proposed project?

A61. Yes. If the current library facility is rented space, the response for current facility should be a check in the box for "No library facility existed prior to the proposed project."

62. Regarding eligible costs - On construction of a new building does the cost of the parking lot come under "site improvements"?

A62. Yes. A parking lot for a new building is an eligible cost as a site improvement.

63. Regarding eligible costs - Community volunteer non-profits will be using our program room for ad hoc meetings. We normally consider these meetings as falling under providing library services as a community meeting center, but should we break this use apart from strictly library arranged programs?

A63. As stated in TA Session webinar, use of the library facilities on a short-term ad hoc basis is not considered private use and therefore does not need to have cost broken out.

64. I understand that the Winter cycle of this grant has a submission deadline of April 6, 2020, however, I'd like to know if there will be a Spring or Summer submission deadline, as well, and have those dates been established as yet?

A64. See response A1. A second round of funding is anticipated. Details on a potential second round of funding are not currently available.

65. Will an application that consists of multiple requests be considered weaker than one with just one request? We have several projects that meet the requirements, some big ticket, some much smaller. Should we only submit an application for the larger items?

A65. Please note that Section 1.4.5 of the Solicitation states that separate applications should be submitted for each project. Projects will be evaluated using the criteria identified in the Solicitation. If an Applicant chooses to submit multiple applications, the Applicant should rank each project in order of priority. Section 1.4.6 of the Solicitation indicates that the Applicant's ranking of a project's priority, need and importance will be considered in evaluating the projects.

66. What section dividers/descriptors are needed within the seven-page narrative?

A66. In the 7-page narrative it is required for Applicants to include subsection headings that correspond to each selection and evaluation criteria.

For example, when responding to the evaluation criterion "Current Need," a subsection title should be added "3.2.3" or "Evaluation Criteria 3.2.3." Also see response A14.