

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.

- 129. If there is no project architect (see 4 above), will the contractor’s certification be sufficient to receive payment? (Part I 1.6.3)**

A129. Yes, if there is no project architect, the contractor certification is sufficient to receive payment.

- 130. If our project does not include any structural changes to our building but appears to fall under the definition of “rehabilitation,” and does not require an architect, who would provide a certification of life expectancy? (Part II 2.4.8.ii)**

A130. Rehabilitation projects require an architect, however, if your project is a repair project that does not require an architect, then the certification of life expectancy requirement may be met by submitting an appraisal of an independent engineer or accounting firm.

- 131. The library wants to take a “dead” space (i.e. no public access to power), provide power and tables and seating more conducive to small meetings. There will be no structural changes to the building. Assuming this falls under the definition of rehabilitation as opposed to repair would a certification of life expectancy (Part II 2.4.8.ii), a site plan, schematics of the building (as opposed to just the space in question), and a space relationship diagram (Part V.C) be required?**

A131. This project would be considered a repair project since there is no access to power. See section 2.4.6 of the Solicitation for requirements for repair projects. A Life Expectancy Certification (or appraisal by an independent engineer or accounting firm) will be required, but no site plan, building schematics, or space relationship diagram are required.

- 132. In the scenario where there is a Board of Trustees for the Library, but a municipal governing body will be providing the match for the grant, who should “apply” for the grant, sign the certifications, pass resolutions, etc.?**

A132. The Board of Trustees is the Applicant and should sign the certifications and Resolution I. The town should sign a resolution that they are providing matching funds for the project.

- 133. Section 4.5.6 – What do you mean by utility? Types of equipment are delineated, please do not include physical “catalogs”!**

A133. The word “utilities” appears in Section 4.5.6 to explain that “costs relating to the acquisition and installation” of building “utilities” are eligible costs. In this instance, utilities refers to lights, power, water, etc.

134. Is a breakdown of construction costs necessary?

A134. Yes. A breakdown of construction costs is required information in the Solicitation. See Section 6.5 of the Solicitation.

135. Should the schematics be submitted in PDF or DWG format?

A135. See responses A12 and A89.

136. Other than the appendices in the solicitation, are there preferred templates for documents like the Cert. of Life Expectancy, Cert. of Need for Mechanical Systems, etc.?

A136. No.

137. Can you confirm that all work on our projects must be at prevailing wage?

A137. Yes, all work must be performed at prevailing wage. It is the Applicant’s responsibility to demonstrate that their application meets the criteria in Section 2.4.1 of the Solicitation, which addresses New Jersey prevailing wage and labor laws, among others.

138. During the webinar you mentioned that “operating a café on the premises and engaging a for-profit manager to operate it” as an example of a disqualifying project/element.

A library cafe can be an important part of making the library more appealing and accessible in some communities. A cafe is not recommended for every library but in those communities with enough foot traffic is it a popular feature.

Under no circumstances would I recommend that a library run a cafe with its own staff. A cost-sharing partnership with a local vendor makes the most sense and would bring a library with a sound business plan for a cafe with much needed additional revenue.

FYI, during the last construction bond in 2000 a cafe was part of the plan for the Princeton Public Library and there was no exclusion from state funding. That cafe remains open and one of the most popular features of the library and has since 2004 generated more \$300,000 in revenue/profit for the library.

Please explain why you recommend not funding this portion of a library's grant application.

A138. Because this is a limited bond offering and there is a high demand, the State wishes to prioritize library spaces rather than cafes and other auxiliary spaces.

- 139. Do you have any qualifications to apply for 2nd round funding, i.e. if we've been rejected in phase I, can we reapply w/ the same project? if we have other phases of the project or if we have another project?**

A139. See response A18.

- 140. Will submissions which include interior renovations including removal and relocation of walls, building and furnishing new areas within the library? Look at email**

A140. We are unable to provide a response as the question as phrased is unclear.

- 141. Will there be training--a webinar or demo available to address questions with the application process?**

A141. An overview of the application process was included in the TA Session webinar. The webinar can be viewed on the State Library website.

- 142. Is a roof replacement considered a rehabilitation or a repair?**

A142. Roof replacement is considered a repair project. See response A208.

- 143. Does the below statement mean that a project has to cost at least \$100,00 (\$50,000 from the grant and a \$50,000 match)? Or does it mean that the total project should cost more than \$50,000, let's say \$75,00 with a grant award of \$37,500 and the match being \$37,500? "4.3.2 The minimum amount of a Grant is \$50,000"**

Along the same line of questioning, if you apply for more than one grant can the total of both grants equal \$100,000 to bring you up to the minimum amount?

A143. Section 4.3.2 states "The minimum amount of a Grant is \$50,000" and that means the total project cost needs to be at least \$100,000 in order to receive the minimum \$50,000 grant amount. See also response A46 - which discusses exceptions to the minimum amount.

The second part of the question incorrectly implies that the minimum amount of a grant is \$100,000, however, that is not accurate (see above). But to answer your question, no the Applicant may not combine multiple applications to total the minimum grant amount of \$50,000.

- 144. Is a Building Program/Community Analysis required if the applicant is ONLY completing ADA upgrades to the Library, as the Building Program/Community Analysis is included under heading 2.4.8, which is attachments needed for Rehabilitation projects?**

A144. No, a Building Program and Community Analysis is not required if the project is for barrier-free improvements only.

- 145. If a municipality has met the minimum criteria for the receipt of State Library Aid but has not utilized it in the past year, how should it answer #6.7 as well as the section in the Certification Statements about State Library Aid and the State Aid Certification explanation/justification? Are there attachments required if the applicant selects “yes”?**

A145. If the municipality has met the standards for State Library Aid but has not applied, the State Library would have no record of whether they have met the minimum criteria. Please answer “no” to question 6.7.1. in the Solicitation. Also attach a document that states that the Applicant has met the minimum requirements but has not applied.

- 146. Can you please define joint application? Is this only applicable for applicants that are municipal owned buildings and County operated library systems, or can a joint application be a library and a municipality?**

A146. Joint applications refer to the case when a municipality owns the building which is stocked and/or staffed by the county library system. If a municipality constructs a building and contracts for library services with another public library system, the application is also in the name of the municipality. An officer of the board of trustees of the contracted library system or an officer of the association library that is providing services would co-sign the application. See Section 2.1.2 of the Solicitation.

- 147. Can you please better define the applicant? As written in the guidance, it seems that an applicant can only be a library (whether that be municipal, county, or joint), or a municipality under certain conditions (i.e. only in the case in which the library building is constructed by that municipality, and supported by a County/public library system.); however, there are sections which require a match by the “appropriate local governing entity,” which implies the municipality.**

A147. The “appropriate governing entity” refers to the Applicant. The Applicant can be a library’s Board of Trustees, the municipality in certain cases, or a County Library Commission or Board of Freeholders.

- 148. Can you define what you mean in section 1.1 when it states “the remaining fifty percent (50%) must be supported by the appropriate local governing entity in**

the area served by the public library.” Does this mean the local governing body (i.e. a municipal Council and Mayor) has to pass a Resolution supporting the match? Is this true even if the municipal government is not planning on offering up any funds?

A148. The point of this statement is to emphasize the local responsibility for this portion of the funding. For example, when a public library is the Applicant the ‘local governing entity’ is the Library Board of Trustees who are responsible for gathering the local match, perhaps from the municipality, county, or grant funding, fund raising, etc.

149. Are backup generators an eligible expense?

A149. It depends on the type of generator. See response A67.

150. If the municipality owns the Library building, but is not contributing any funds towards the project, do they still have to pass a resolution as well?

A150. No, the Applicant, which is the Board of Trustees in this situation, is responsible for all Resolution(s).

151. Does the word "repair" include the replacement of a mechanical system (e.g., an HVAC system)?

A151. Yes, the replacement of a mechanical system is a repair.

152. Is the installation of a new emergency generator (among other things, to back up an HVAC system) an eligible project cost? Is it a repair or does it fall under another category?

A152. It depends on the type of generator. See response A67.

153. Would replacement HVAC systems in four different buildings be four different Projects with four different Applications?

A153. Yes. Replacement of four HVAC units in four separate buildings would be four separate projects. See response A65.

154. Can a proposal consisting of a replacement HVAC system and an emergency generator be submitted as one Project on one Application?

A154. Yes, if the replacement HVAC and the generator are for the same building.

155. What is the maximum number of Applications one Applicant may file?

A155. There is no maximum number of applications an Applicant may file, but if filing more than one, the applications must be prioritized. See response A65.

156. Is the cost of designing a mechanical system (e.g., HVAC) an eligible project cost?

A156. Yes.

157. How many years after the receipt of a grant must a building remain a library?

A157. Twenty years. See Section 2.4.7 iii of the Solicitation and Item #7 on the Checklist to be submitted with the Grant Application.

158. How does one create the estimated construction schedule when submitting four Applications? Since it is likely that we would use one contractor for as many of the jobs as are funded, which will be unknown at the time the Application is submitted, and unless the contractor is very large, the jobs would proceed sequentially rather than simultaneously, what assumptions shall we use to fill out that portion of the Application?

A158. Creation of the estimated construction schedule is up to the Applicant. Since the Applicant is submitting four separate projects, a schedule must be created for each project. The Applicant should plan accordingly.

159. Is there a reasonable probability that Projects to which only a few of the four State Funding Priorities and fourteen Project Evaluation Criteria apply will be favorably considered?

A159. All State priorities and evaluation criteria may not apply to each project. Therefore, the Applicant should fully address each of the funding priorities and the project evaluation criteria that apply to their specific project.

160. If we are requesting to replace the current HVAC units that are past shelf life, would an architect still be necessary or would a certification from a licensed contractor be acceptable? It is not really a mechanical repair. It is actually a replacement of the equipment.

Please explain the steps we need to take and who would we need to have come to inspect the equipment so we can prepare our grant.

A160. It is necessary to have a certified statement of the need for the repair, which in this case, involves an upgrade or replacement. See Section 2.4.6 of the

Solicitation. An architect is necessary and should come and examine your equipment and certify.

- 161. Regarding 4.4.1 and 4.4.2 Square Footage Costs: Does the maximum square foot cost include FFE and soft costs (architectural, engineering, and construction management)?**

A161. Yes. See response A44.

- 162. Regarding 2.4.3 Technology Certification. Is it sufficient for our Library's Technology Manager to certify with the building architect that the Project will provide equitable public access to current technology and that the public library building will be adaptable to future uses of technology for all public library customers? If no, please inform who would be considered eligible to provide the Technology Certification.**

A162. Yes. See response A28.

- 163. The County Library Commission and Freeholders are options under 2.1.1. pg 14 and exhibit C pg 14, however, Exhibit A pg 43 suggests that the library is the applicant**

In our other construction projects, monies were approved by the Freeholders. They were also responsible for the construction.

I must get approval from the Freeholders to apply for grants with matching money.

Which body should be signing off on these forms?

A163. If the county library is funding the project, the county library commission would be the Applicant. If the County Board of Freeholders is the governing body of the county library, then the Board of Freeholders would be the Applicant. See response A37.

- 164. When an award is being granted will it be based on the priorities as established by the library that is applying, or, will the award monies be tied to one or more aspects of the project?**

A164. The project will be evaluated as a whole. The Applicant's priority ranking will be considered if the Applicant is submitting multiple projects. Each application will be evaluated by reviewing the total application.

165. For proposals submitted in response to the Winter 2020 Cycle solicitation, will partial funding of requests be granted, or will support only be awarded for 100% of an applicant's request?

A165. N.J.A.C. 15:24-2.1(b) describes the allocation of funds for this program. No decision on the allocation of funds has been decided at this time.

166. Will the application accommodate (or require) submission of letters of support from partner organizations?

A166. Letters of support will not be accepted. See response A98.

167. Regarding the Application Documents checklist, page 41, item 20: Is a *Barrier-free Certification* required for projects that are not solely or primarily "barrier-free projects" per section 2.4.5, but which include access improvements as a part of their overall scope of work?

A167. It depends on the project. Barrier-free certifications are required for all new construction and renovation projects.

168. The link at <http://bond.njstatelib.org> is not yet functional. Will any time-sensitive registration procedures (e.g., DUNS number submission, charitable registration confirmation, access designations, etc.) be required in order to access the application site when it is available on March 9?

A168. No.

169. Are Library applicants that partner with municipal bodies viewed more favorably than those that submit independently of municipal support?

A169. No.

170. How much weight will be given to socioeconomic factors in the evaluation process? (I.e., is it likely that libraries will be excluded from consideration for first-round funding due to socioeconomic factors, even if their projects otherwise meet the State's priorities and requirements?)

A170. Socioeconomic factors constitutes, one of 14 evaluative criteria. Projects will be evaluated on how well they address the funding priorities and the evaluative criteria that apply to their project.

171. Apart from the executive summary (125 words) and narrative (7 pages), are there any length, formatting, upload file-type or file size restrictions that applicants should be aware of?

A171. See responses A12 and A14 which apply to formatting and uploading files.

- 172. If, as part of an expansion and rehabilitation program, a room is to be turned into a computer lab and technology training classroom (State Funding Priority 3.1.3) by refurbishing (carpet, paint, furnishings) and installation of increased and upgraded data cabling, please confirm the square footage of the room can be included in Template 6.2.1 Floor Area of Project as rehabilitation or renovation to existing building?**

A172. Yes, the square footage of the room should be included as a rehabilitation or a renovation to an existing building.

- 173. Can you please clarify how square footage should be reported on Template 6.2.1 Floor Area of Project for a mechanical system repair or upgrade, such as rooftop HVAC units, HVAC control systems and ductwork? The applicant should report the square footage of the area being served by the units or system?**

A173. The area that is impacted by the repair or upgrade should be used in the reporting of the square footage.

- 174. If an area of existing carpeting is rippling and bubbling, creating potential hazards and hindering accessibility, does replacement of that flawed area qualify as a repair?**

Per the article “*12 Basic Requirements for ADA Compliance at the Library*” provided as an Americans With Disabilities Act resource on the NJSL Construction Bond Act website https://www.njstatelib.org/services_for_libraries/new-jersey-library-construction-bond-act/ the following guidance is given:

5. Floors

Floors should not be bumpy and have no debris or obstacles in the way. They should be flat and smooth and also no have loud colors that could disrupt the balance of someone navigating through the library.

A174. In this particular instance since the carpeting has created a safety hazard, the replacement can be considered a repair.

- 175. On Template 6.2.1 Floor Area of Project the formula in cell D22 calculating the *Total size of library facility upon Project completion* is adding together the existing square footage, any new square footage and also any renovated, rehabilitated or repaired square footage. Renovation and repair to an existing building (lines c. and d.) should not be included as an increase to the size of the library facility in this formula. This may or may not be true for lines h. and i.**

A175. Template 6.2.1 has been updated so that the total size of library facility upon Project completion cell is not a formula but instead will be entered by hand by the applicant. See response A110.

176. Regarding 2.4.3 Technology Certification, what are the standards this certification will be judged by and what certification body is acceptable?

A176. The Technology Certification is not judged by any standards but is an element of completeness of the Application. See response A28.

177. For libraries/municipalities considering longer term new construction projects (for example building a new municipal building in 4/5 years) - will consideration be given to technology upgrades in current place (to bridge digital divide) that can be moved into a future location? Should this be submitted as one project or separate projects in ranked order?

A177. For libraries and municipalities considering longer term new construction projects see response A76. Upgrades to your current facility may be eligible for grant funding in this cycle. All projects must be submitted as separate projects.

178. Is there a timeline under consideration for a second round of applications after completion of the first winter cycle?

A178. There is no information available at this time on a second cycle of grant funding.

179. The solicitation document says: “4.3.2 The minimum amount of a Grant is \$50,000...” Does that refer to the cost of the project or the amount the state would pay? In other words, what if I have a project that costs \$70,000? Is it eligible? Will the state provide 50% of the funding or is the smallest check you will write \$50,000?

A179. See response A143.

180. Will the state accept a single quote from someone not on state contract or must we supply multiple quotes? If the project is approved and we are not using a contractor on state contract, would we then need to go out to bid?

A180. The State Local Public Contracts Law must be consulted for bidding requirements. You may also consult with your municipality's or county's procurement officer.

181. If the library has a report from a licensed building inspector indicating the need for a repair, is that sufficient to satisfy Part II 2.4.6.ii?

A181. Yes, the licensed building inspector can determine the need for the repair.

182. For a rehabilitation project like lighting replacement, which would not normally require a building consultant or architect, must one be hired anyway?

A182. If the Applicant is repairing/upgrading the lighting, this is considered a repair project and an architect or building consultant is not required. See Section 2.4.6 ii of the Solicitation.

183. For lighting replacement, will the following be necessary:

- i. Building plans (Part II 2.4.2)**
- ii. Site Plan**

A183. No. This project is considered a repair. See Section 2.4.6. ii of the Solicitation for requirements.

184. For a repair project like roof replacement, will the following be necessary:

- i. Building plans (Part II 2.4.2)
- ii. Site Plan

A184. No. See Section 2.4.6. ii of the Solicitation for requirements.