



SC DEPARTMENT *of*
**ENVIRONMENTAL
SERVICES**

Dam Repair Assistance Grant Funding Cycle 2

February 11, 2026





Outline

- Application Timeline
 - Grant Overview
 - Selection Criteria
 - Program Eligibilities
 - Application Requirements
 - Award Disbursement Requirements
 - Cost Share
 - Period of Performance
 - Procurements
 - Payments
 - Recordkeeping and Monitoring
 - Appeals and Non-Compliance
 - Amendments
 - Tips for Applying
-

Application Timeline



Notice of Funding Opportunity

- The Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) for this grant program will be released no later than Monday, March 2, 2026.
- Application Period Opens: March 2, 2026
- Application Period Closes: May 4, 2026
- Awards announced 2-4 weeks after the application period closes.

Grant Program Overview



Dam Repair Assistance Grant Program

- The grant was first authorized in the FY25 State Budget Proviso 55.24, which appropriated \$1.5 million in state funds for SCDES to establish a Dam Repair Assistance Grant Program.
- The budget for the grant fund was authorized again with the approval of the FY26 State Budget as Budget Proviso 55.21 for another \$1.5 million.
- The \$1.5 million is recurring funding, so SCDES expects (but not guaranteed) it to be reauthorized for FY27



Funding Cycle 2

- Funds Awarded in Funding Cycle 1: \$818,955.53
- Funds Available in Funding Cycle 2: \$2,181,044.47



Program Objectives

The Dam Repair Assistance Grant Program aims to:

1. Reduce or eliminate risk associated with dams;
2. Improve accessibility of financial assistance to dam owners who may not be eligible to apply for other dam safety grants; and,
3. Provide financial assistance for the rehabilitation or removal of HIGH and SIGNIFICANT hazard dams that fail to meet minimum dam safety standards and pose an unacceptable risk to life and property.



Selection Criteria



Selection Process

- Two-Part Selection Process:
 - Eligibility Screening
 - Technical Ranking



Eligibility Screening

The initial screening aims to identify and advance applications that:

- Meet all dam, applicant, and activity eligibility criteria
- Meet all grant application requirements
 - Incomplete applications will be marked ineligible
- Correct deficiencies for the entire dam
 - If multiple owners, cannot address issues on only one owner's portion – must be a "whole-dam solution"



Ranking Applications

- Applications that pass screening will be reviewed by the Dam Safety Program and evaluated on technical merits of dam and proposed project using a points-based system.
- The score will be based primarily on risk and risk reduction as a result of project implementation
- If the award total for all eligible applications is less than the total funds available to award, applications will not be ranked, and selection will be based solely on eligibility.



Ranking Tool

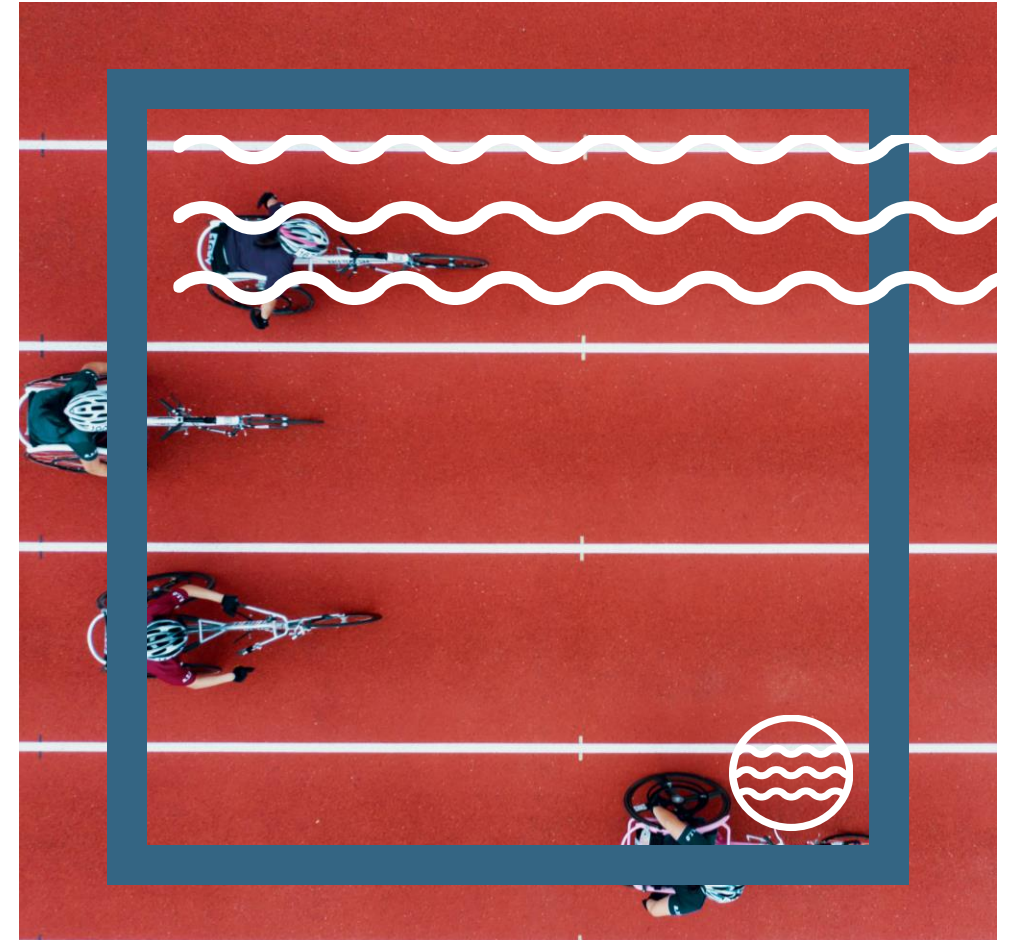
- The ranking tool will be published to the SCDES Dam Safety Program website as an attachment to the NOFO once the application period has opened.
- Using this tool, you will be able to view the questions that will be used to rank applications, as well as the point values for each answer, as you develop your grant application.
 - Ranking tool provides points to incentivize certain risk reduction measures. Although not required, applicants should consider incorporating these into their scope of work to improve ranking



Ranking Criteria

Some examples of criteria that will be used to rank applications include:

- What is the Hazard Classification of the dam?
- What is the condition rating of the dam?
- What impacts would there be in the event of a dam failure?
- Does the project decrease the dam's hazard potential?
- Will the project provide a spillway capacity that meets or exceeds regulations?
- Is the dam currently under a State-issued Emergency or Inspection and Repair Order?
- Is there a HIGH or SIGNIFICANT hazard dam downstream that could potentially be impacted from a dam breach?



Ranking Criteria – Incentive Points

- Conducting a tabletop exercise
- Instrumentation for real-time dam monitoring, such as water level sensors
- Perform a full hydrologic and hydraulic (H&H) analysis of the dam to determine the Probable Maximum Precipitation and Probable Maximum Flood and a dam breach analysis to result in an improved Emergency Action Plan
- Perform a full geotechnical investigation and dam stability analysis
- Add or restore the ability to fully control reservoir water level, such as a low-level lake drain or permanent siphon system

Program Eligibilities



Hazard Potential Classification and Condition Rating

- Hazard Potential Classification – The system used by SCDES that categorizes dams according to the degree of adverse incremental consequences of a failure or misoperation of a dam. The Hazard Classification does not reflect in any way the current condition of the dam. The three classifications used by SCDES are High Hazard, Significant Hazard, and Low Hazard.
- Condition Assessment Rating - An assessment of the dam's current condition based on preliminary inspection by SCDES, comprised of five ratings: Satisfactory, Fair, Poor, Unsatisfactory, and Not Rated.

Eligibility Cutoff

- Applicants must meet the eligibility requirements by the date their application is submitted.
 - This is a change from Funding Cycle 1. Previously, the cutoff date for dam condition rating was December 31. Now it's the grant application date.



Dam Eligibility

To be considered eligible for funding, a dam must:

- Be regulated by the SC Dam Safety Program;
- Have a hazard classification of HIGH or SIGNIFICANT; and
- Have a condition assessment rating of POOR or UNSATISFACTORY as identified by SCDES, or a dam safety deficiency that has been identified by an engineer.



Ineligible Dams

The following types of dams are not eligible for funding:

- Dams that are not regulated by the Dam Safety Program
- Low Hazard Dams



Applicant Eligibility

- All owners of High and Significant Hazard Potential Dams may apply



Applicant Eligibility (cont'd)

All applicants must be able to:

- Demonstrate clear ownership of dam
- In addition to deeds and plats, community associations (such as HOAs), must provide covenants and/or by-laws with their grant application
- Demonstrate not delinquent on any state or federal taxes
 - Not applicable to tax-exempt non-profit organizations
- Local governments must demonstrate that they are not listed as delinquent on any audits
- Business entities must be in good standing with the SC Secretary of State's Office



Applicant Eligibility – Multiple Owners

- Multiple Owner Dams
 - Grant can only be awarded to one owner of multiple owner dams
 - Multiple owners must either form a legally recognized partnership, such as a Limited Partnership or General Partnership, or decide who will be applicant/recipient
 - All dam owners must demonstrate support for the project, even if only one or some are funding the project
 - Multiple applications for the same dam will be taken as a sign that all owners are not in agreement and result in rejection of all applications for said dam
 - Grants will not be awarded if only a part of dam is addressed – must correct deficiencies of entire dam (e.g., dam erosion repairs on ½ of dam will not be approved if erosion covers entire dam)



Eligible Activities

Eligible activities under this grant fall into the following categories:

- Preparedness Planning (non-construction)
- Project Planning (non-construction)
- Preliminary Engineering (non-construction)
- Engineering Design (non-construction)
- Outreach and Risk Communication (non-construction)
- Instrumentation (non-construction, potentially construction)
- Repair or Alteration (construction)
- Removal (construction)



Main Category	Sub-Category	Activity
Non-Construction	Preparedness Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of Emergency Action Plans (EAP), evacuation plans, plans for fighting floods, or community response plans for the floodplain management plan. • Coordination of EAP and Emergency Operations Plans (EOP) for different release conditions.
	Project Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activities and studies that determine risks associated with eligible dams (for future construction project). • Development of Operation and Maintenance plans.
	Preliminary Engineering	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dam risk and consequence assessments. • Feasibility studies. • Preliminary engineering studies. • Alternatives analysis. • Mapping, engineering survey, and inundation modeling.
	Engineering Design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final design. • Development of drawings and specifications. • Permitting.
	Outreach and Risk Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public education and awareness of flood risks associated with the eligible dam project.
	Instrumentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equipment, sensors, hardware, software, etc. • Installation where a SCDES Dam Safety permit is not required.
Construction	Repair or Alteration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bid services. • Repair or rehabilitation of the dam (including tree removal*). • Construction oversight and monitoring. • Project Management (capped at 5%).
	Removal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bid services. • Demolition and decommissioning of the dam. • Construction oversight and monitoring. • Project Management (capped at 5%).

Ineligible Activities

The following activities are considered ineligible under this grant:

- Activities that do not reduce risk posed by the dam;
- Activities and elements of activities that do not serve a public benefit or hold a purely aesthetic function (e.g., driveway paving, private docks, boat ramps, etc.);
- Routine Operation and Maintenance (O&M)
 - Routine O&M Activities include, but are not limited to: mowing, vegetation removal (excludes tree removal that requires a permit), addressing superficial or shallow erosion, and servicing gates and valves;
- Purchasing equipment that is not an integral part of the funded project;
- Establishment of a reserve fund;
- Payment of principal or interest on existing debt, or any interest payments associated with project financing;



Ineligible Activities (cont'd)

- Any activity that increases the dam's Hazard Potential.
 - Includes proposals to increase dam height and/or storage capacity;
- Work that would result in unnecessary or duplicative data.
 - For example, data that are freely available from the Department or other source and remain valid (e.g., geotechnical investigation where past geotechnical investigation already exists);
- Costs associated with bid protests, litigation, and/or appeals of SCDES decisions
- Activities that have not been approved in advance by the Department's Dam Safety Program; and
- Construction of New Dams



Application Requirements



Application Requirements

- Applications for Construction activities must be prepared with the assistance of a Professional Engineer licensed in the state of SC and must contain a cost estimate prepared by the engineer
- However, applications for Planning, Engineering, and Design only are not required to be prepared with the assistance of a licensed PE.

Application Requirements

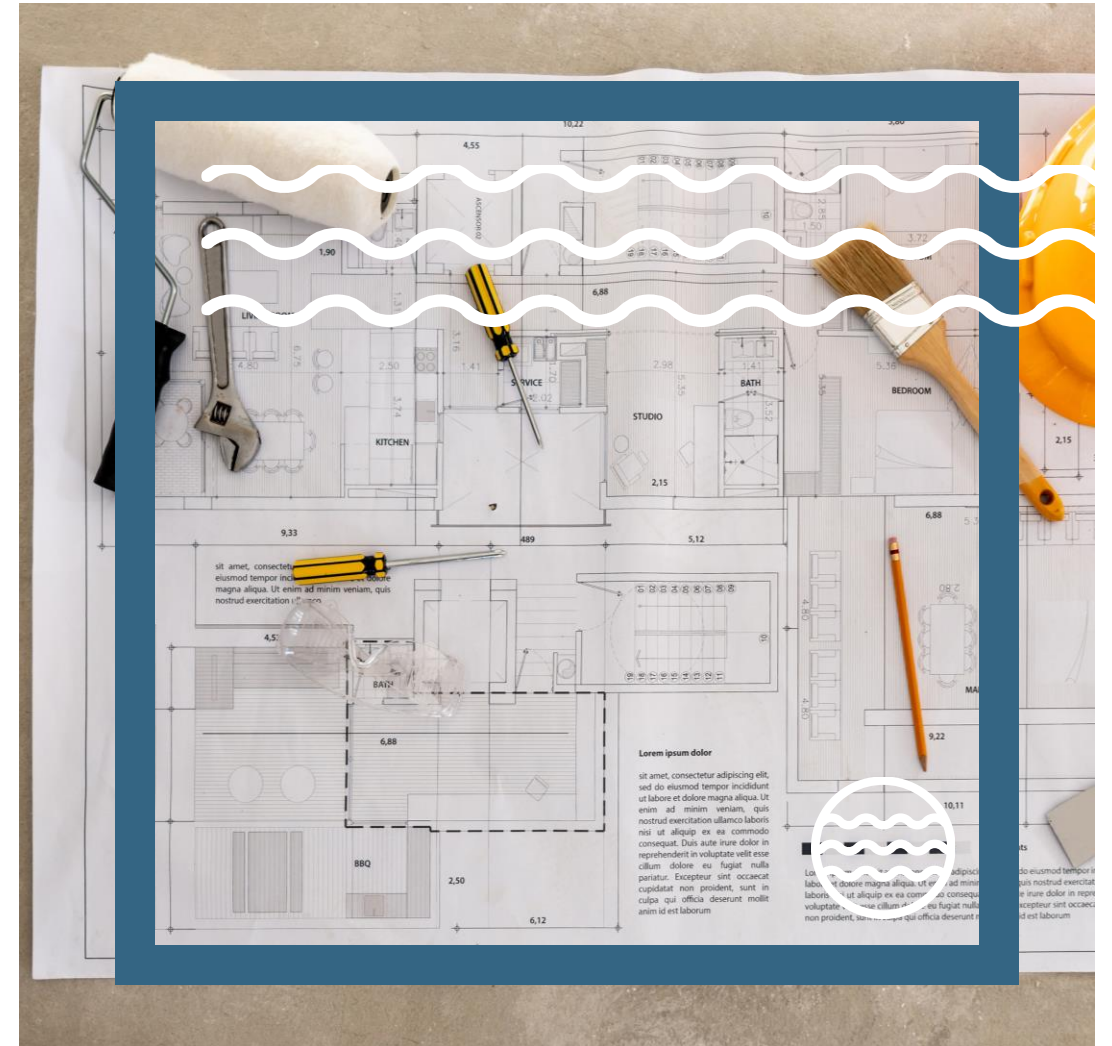
- Completed Application Form
- Project Milestones for Proposed Scope of Work
 - Milestones Worksheet template will be made available as an attachment to the NOFO
- Detailed Budget for the Proposed SOW
 - This should include the project's cost estimate and provide a breakdown of project costs by major category. A detailed description of the owner's in-kind contributions and estimated value thereof should also be included in the budget.
- Copy of Property Deed(s) or Alternative Proof of Ownership



Application Form

The following documents were previously required in FC1 and have been integrated into the application form for FC2:

- Eligibility Narrative
- Project Narrative
- Dam Deficiency Narrative
 - Replaces previously required Engineer's Report outlining deficiencies of the dam for dams without a Poor or Unsatisfactory Condition rating
 - An Engineer's Report is still required for Construction Applications
- Description of Match
- Engineer's Statements



Application Requirements (as applicable)

- Covenants, easements, and any other encumbrances to title
- Current By-Laws (For HOAs or other community associations)
- A letter stating that all dam owners are in support of the project, cosigned by all dam owners (applicable only to multiple owner situations; not required for dam removal projects)

Additional Requirements for Construction

- Construction Cost Estimate prepared by a licensed Professional Engineer registered in SC, signed by the Engineer
- Preliminary Engineering Report, signed by a Professional Engineer



Award Disbursement Requirements

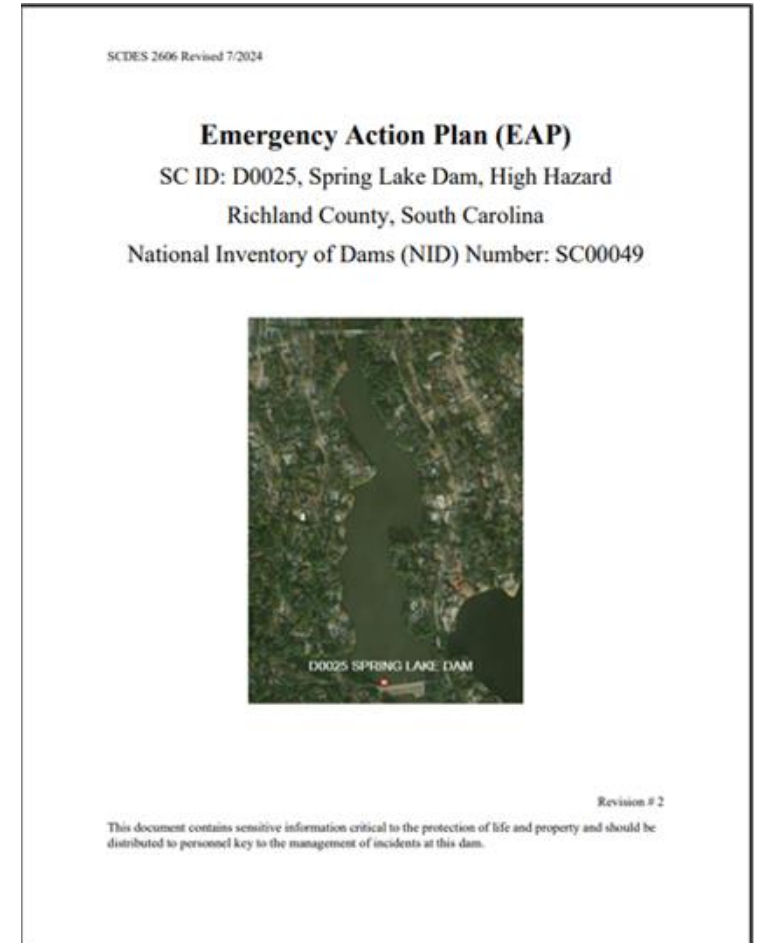


SCEIS Vendor Number

- Grant recipients are required to register for a state Vendor Number through the South Carolina Enterprise Information System (SCEIS). This Vendor Number is the sole mechanism available for grant recipients to receive payments under this grant.
- Please note that while this registration is not required as part of your application, if your application is selected for funding, you will be required to register and provide your Vendor Number prior to receiving the award. Without the SCEIS Vendor Number, the grant award cannot be fully executed, and the recipient will be unable to receive grant payments.

EAP Requirements

- While not required at the time of application, Recipients must develop an EAP that is both current with all information and in the Department's current format
- SCDES must approve all EAPs prior to disbursing any grant funds (not applicable to dam removal projects or projects that result in the exemption of a dam)

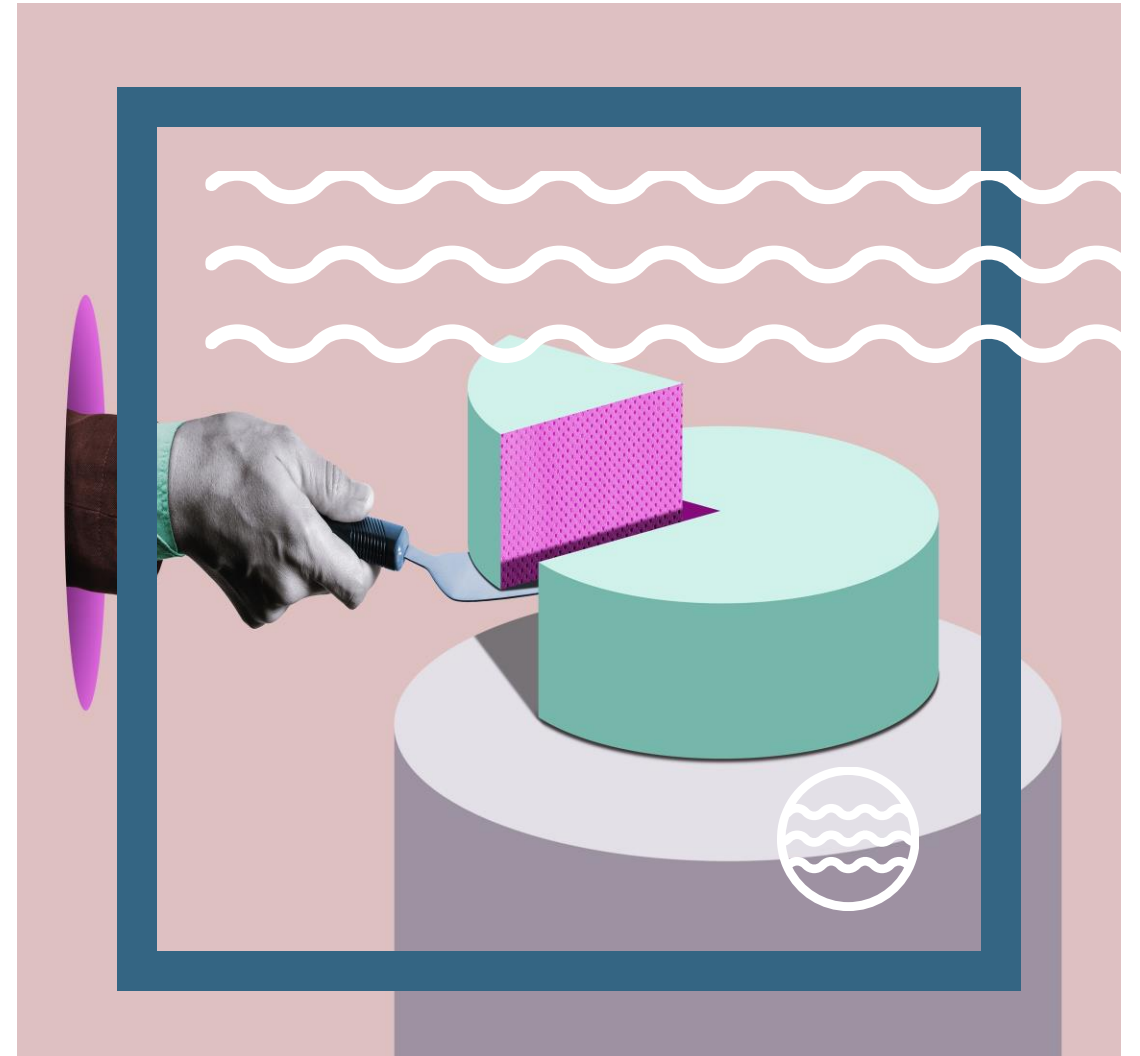


Cost Share



Cost Share

- Default for grants: 50% State Funds, 50% Recipient Match
- 50% match requirement may be met in the form of cash (i.e., your own funds) and/or in-kind contributions
- State match can increase based on demonstration of financial need
- Activities to address dam deficiencies that are the result of deferred maintenance are eligible for maximum 50% cost share (e.g., tree removal)



Financial Hardship

- If applicants have requested a financial hardship determination in their application, upon SCDES verification, the recipient match requirement will be reduced from 50% to 25% (75% state match).
- Financial Hardship review by SCDES. Test for hardship – does the dam owner possess assets to afford the required 50% cost share?



Financial Hardship: How to Qualify

The following documentation must be submitted along with your application packet in order for SCDES to process your request for financial hardship determination:

- Statement of Financial Hardship
- Tax returns from the past three years to verify income
 - Tax-exempt non-profit organizations may submit their IRS Form 990 from the past three years in lieu of individual or business tax returns
- Financial Account Statements
 - Assets and Savings Statements
 - Latest 3 months of bank statements
 - Investment account statements and other assets
 - Business Financial Information (if applicable)
 - Balance sheets from the past three years
 - Income Statements from the past three years

In-Kind Match

- Pre-Award costs are not eligible for reimbursement or co-funded payment under this grant program. However, pre-award in-kind contributions may be used to meet the Recipient's match requirement if these costs were incurred within one year prior to the execution of the award.
- In-Kind Match may include:
 - Previously Acquired Goods and Materials
 - Donated Goods and Materials
 - Previously Acquired/Performed Professional Services
 - Donated Services
 - Force Account Labor



Period of Performance



Period of Performance (POP)

- 1 Year for Planning and Engineering Projects
- 3 Years for Construction Projects



POP Extensions

- Extensions to the POP are allowable but cannot be guaranteed.
- POP extension requests should be submitted in writing to SCDES at least 90 days prior to the Period of Performance end date.



Procurement



Procurement Overview

- Political subdivisions (i.e., local governments) are required to follow their own procurement rules.
- Non-governmental entities must follow program-specific State procurement requirements.
- Additional training on procurement requirements under this grant program will occur at a later date.



Procurement Thresholds for Goods and Services

State Share	Procurement
Less than \$10,000	No competition required (SCDES must determine costs are fair and reasonable)
Between \$10,000 and \$25,000	A minimum of three written quotes or three documented attempts at solicitation for quotes. Solicitation for quotes must be reviewed and pre-approved by SCDES, and the quotes received must be in identical format. Quotes must be reviewed and pre-approved by SCDES. Please note that the Recipient may select any of these quotes, but SCDES will pay only the lowest quoted price.
Greater than or equal to \$25,000	Must be advertised at least once. The dam owner may select any of these quotes, but SCDES will pay only the lowest quoted price.

Procurement Thresholds for Professional Services (Engineering, Surveying, etc.)

State Share	Procurement
Less than \$50,000	Requires only a single quote/proposal (SCDES must determine costs are fair and reasonable).
Greater than or equal to \$50,000	Qualifications based procurement required in accordance with SC Code 11-35-3220.

Procurement Thresholds for Construction Projects

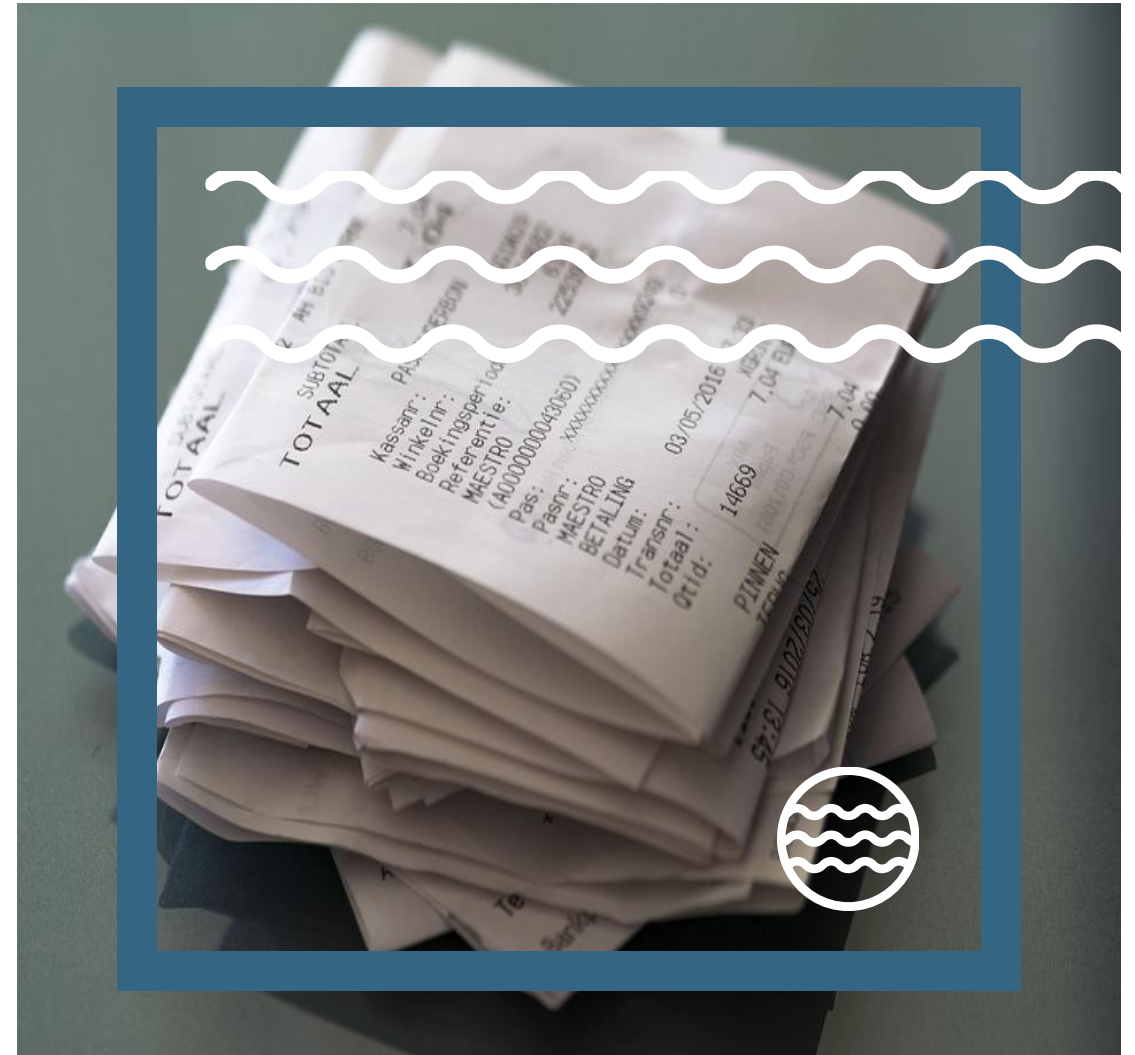
State Share	Procurement
Less than \$10,000	Requires only a single quote from a single vendor. (SCDES must determine costs are fair and reasonable).
Between \$10,000 and \$100,000	A minimum of three written quotes or three documented attempts at solicitation for quotes from three different qualified sources. Solicitation for quotes must be reviewed and pre-approved by SCDES, and the quotes received must be in identical format. The Recipient may select any of the quotes, but SCDES will pay only the lowest quoted price.
Greater than or equal to \$100,000	Requires the use of a formal competitive sealed bidding process in accordance with SC Code 11-35-1520

Payments



Payments

- There are two types of payments under this grant:
 - Reimbursement
 - Simultaneous Co-Funded Payment



Payment via Reimbursement

- To receive funds, recipients must prepare and submit a Request for Reimbursement (RFR) to SCDES for review and processing
- No more than 80% of the grant funds will be paid before the Final RFR for construction projects, and no more than 85% for all other projects.



Simultaneous Co-Funded Payment

- The Simultaneous Co-Funded Payment option is available only to Recipients with a financial hardship determination from SCDES.
- After the Recipient submits documentation of approved, eligible, incurred costs and proof of payment of the non-state share, SCDES will pay the state's share to the contractor/vendor directly.

Recordkeeping and Monitoring



Recordkeeping and Monitoring

- The recipient must retain grant records, including documentation of costs and supporting documents, for a period of 3 years
- Office visits, site visits, and/or document requests by SCDES for the purpose of monitoring compliance may occur at any time during the Period of Performance
- SCDES will perform construction monitoring visits at set intervals



Reporting

- Recipients will be required to submit Quarterly Progress Report summarizing activities that occurred during the quarter that advanced the project toward completion.
- Late reports will result in a pause in grant payments/reimbursements. Quarterly reporting must be kept up to date in order for recipients to receive grant payments.



Appeals and Non-Compliance



Appeals Process

- Process for recipients to appeal any staff-made decisions regarding this grant
- Dispute procedures have been made available to any applicant that objects to any requirement as outlined in the NOFO, amendment to the NOFO, or does not receive a distribution of funding as a recipient
- Please see the NOFO Attachment – Procedures for Dispute Resolution



Remedies for Non-Compliance

- Recipients that are found to be out of compliance with grant program policies and procedures will be given an opportunity to return to compliance
- If that cannot be accomplished remedies may include: immediate termination of grant agreement, cost recovery, disqualification from future grant consideration



Amendments



Amendments

- The Grant Award Agreement will be considered a legal contract, and as such, an Amendment Process is required for budget, scope of work, and period of performance changes.
- Recipient must formally request amendment to award agreement at least 90 days prior to the end of the POP
- SCDES approves or denies request



Tips for Applying



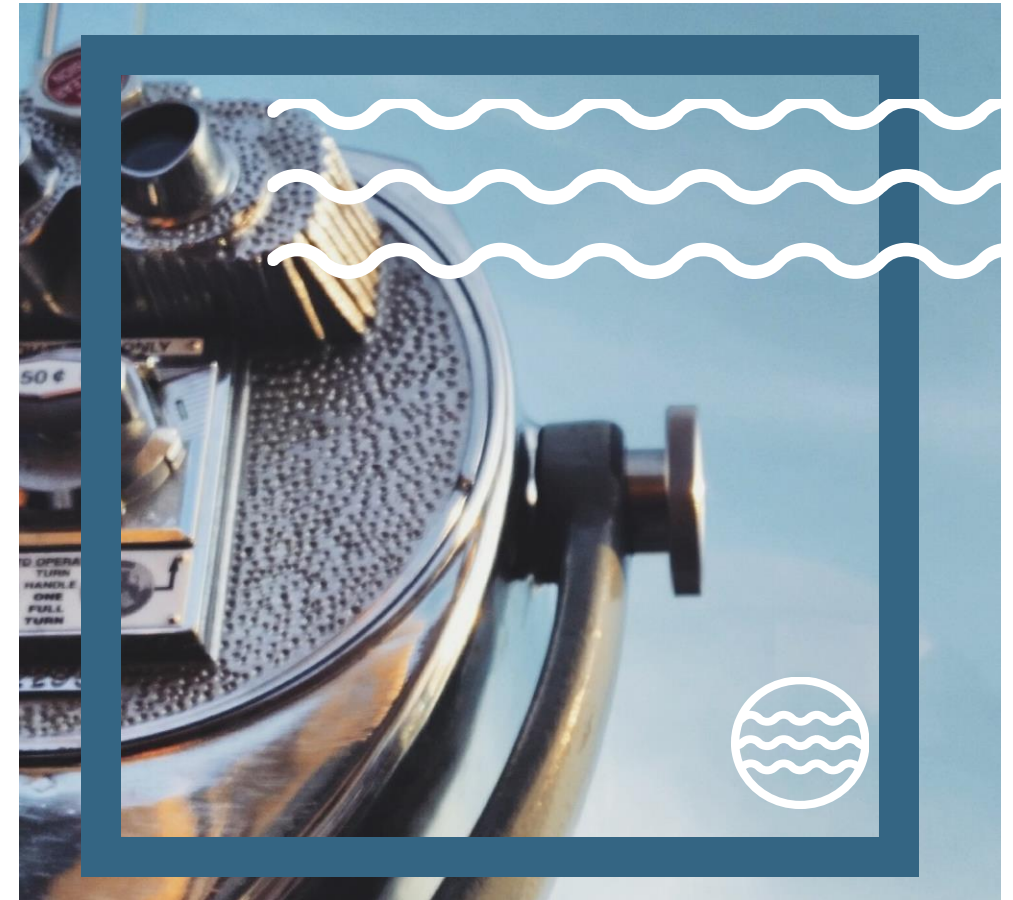
Tips for Applying

- **Read the NOFO in its entirety**
- Application checklist should be filled out in its entirety and submitted along with required forms and documentation.
- Get questions answered as soon as possible
 - SCDES staff cannot answer application-specific questions once the application period opens
 - Use the **two-week window** between this webinar and the open application date (March 2nd) to ask questions to SCDES



Establish the Scope and Scale of Your Project As Soon as Possible

- Get Started Now
- Consider What You Can Manage
- Preliminary Investigation Can Save Money In Future Projects
 - Hazard Class
 - Alteration vs. Repair vs. Removal
- Practice for Future Cycles
- Only One Application Per Dam!
(remember, more than one app for a given dam means all are denied)



Establish the Scope and Scale of Your Project As Soon as Possible

- Will this project involve activities that require an engineer's involvement (and the associated up-front expense?) Or not?
- What timeframes will be involved?
- Will you be managing the application and award yourself? Or with others?
 - Potential for personnel turnover (HOAs, etc.)



Establish the Scope and Scale of Your Project As Soon as Possible

- What additional funding or in-kind services need to be secured?
- Should the project be spread across multiple funding cycles based on needs and period of performance?
 - Please note, that receiving a grant for one cycle does not guarantee awards for future cycles or other activities



Establish the Scope and Scale of Your Project As Soon as Possible

- Keep in Mind:
 - Awards will likely be split across many projects. Large-scale applications may not be able to be fully funded at 50-50 (or 75-25) through this grant. Partial funding (less than 50%) may be offered if state funds severely limited in a given cycle
 - Grants can be amended once an award is made as circumstances change (e.g. budget increase), but recipients should not rely on them and they are not guaranteed.
 - Separate deadlines for your dam may still be binding. Intent to apply for a grant application does not automatically mean those will be extended as awards are not guaranteed
 - Prior SCDES enforcement action
 - Prior issued Permit expiration dates

Provide Yourself Enough Time

Start as Early as Possible! Things that may lead to unexpected delays in putting together an application:

- Complex ownership situations
 - For example, if the dam is owned by an HOA then bylaws may require a meeting/vote may be required to authorize an application be submitted or to hire an engineer. Allow enough time for this
- Requesting Documentation from Other Sources-SCDOR, IRS
- Securing cost match or in-kind contributions
- Securing an Engineer to assist with the application (construction only)
- Getting project quotes



Determine your Dam's Eligibility and Potential for Receiving an Award

- Dam owners should assess their dam's current eligibility status and relative likelihood of receiving an award before deciding to apply
- SCDES can assist in:
 - Verifying the current classification of dam
 - Verifying the dam's Condition Rating and whether an additional Engineer's Report will be required
 - Verifying the currently listed owner of a dam
 - Providing SCDES inspection reports and their findings
 - Providing other records and plans on file for the dam (if available)
 - Providing SCDES inundation maps and assessment of downstream hazards
 - Providing answers to questions about your proposed project (**prior to March 2nd ONLY**)

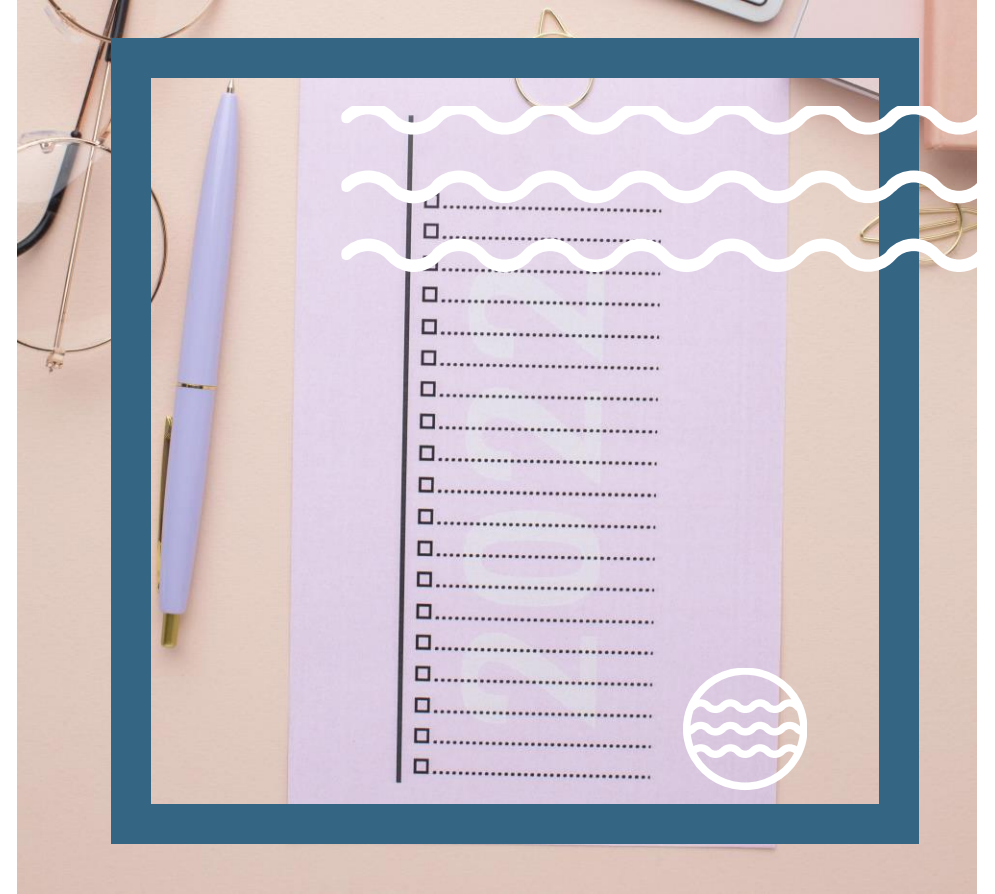
Determine your Dam's Eligibility and Potential for Receiving an Award

Any proposed project may be eligible for funding, however certain projects are more likely to be funded. Dam owners should keep in mind:

- Dams with more potentially at-risk structures and roads downstream score higher. Dams with POOR or UNSATISFACTORY Condition Ratings are eligible without a separate Engineer's Report (and associated expense)
- Projects that ask for more money or are more complex (ex. investigation+design+construction) are more likely to run into documentation issues or not be able to be funded in full
- So, a dam with a FAIR rating and minimal downstream impacts might not be worth investing into application preparation
 - Only you can determine this!

Make Applications As Clear as Possible

- Be sure that everything the NOFO asks for is clearly covered in the application
- Fill out applicable forms **COMPLETELY**
- Be **CLEAR** in application narratives and cost estimates. Provide details!



Make Applications As Clear as Possible

- Ensure numbers and project details match throughout the application. Conflicting application requests and cost estimates can lead to a rejected application
- Make everything you plan to do and the funding you are asking for as clear as possible, even if that involves repeating it multiple times. DO NOT leave it up to SCDES staff to try and figure out what you meant as this may lead to rejected applications or award agreements less than what the applicant intended



Q&A

Please submit questions to DESresponse@des.sc.gov





SC DEPARTMENT of
**ENVIRONMENTAL
SERVICES**

SCDES Dam Repair Assistance
Grant dedicated webpage

<https://des.sc.gov/programs/bureau-water/dams-reservoirs/dam-repair-assistance-grant>



Please submit questions to DESresponse@des.sc.gov

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Thank you!

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