



**Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation
Program Guidelines for Fiscal Year 2024**

Program Name: Capacity Building Grant
Program Inception: WEDC FY13
Lead Division: Business and Community Development
 New **Revised**
 Aid **Pass-thru Aid** **Technical Assistance**

Program Goal:

The goal of the Capacity Building Program is to support local and regional economic development efforts in the state of Wisconsin.

Program Description:

The program provides funds to assist local, regional, tribal and state-wide nonprofit organizations, and educational institutions to further the goals of WEDC in its efforts to foster an advanced economic development network within the state of Wisconsin. Additionally, the program provides funds to assist for-profit and nonprofit entities looking to create or expand a cooperative in the State of Wisconsin.

Eligibility Requirements:

Eligible projects include, but are not limited to:

- Planning initiatives or assessments of the economic competitiveness of the area (e.g. workforce, infrastructure, sustainability, export capacity)
- Initiatives that will assist or enhance an organization's ability to develop or deliver economic development programming that helps to identify or address issues or challenges of an area or the state
- Implementation of pilot programs or economic development best practices
- Marketing by regional economic development organizations. Regional economic development organizations may receive grants not to exceed \$100,000 or the amount of matching funds the organization obtains from sources other than WEDC or the state, whichever is less, to fund marketing activities.¹
- Cooperative feasibility studies. For-profit or non-profit entities looking to create or expand a cooperative are eligible to use grants for Co-op feasibility studies or for professional services to create or expand current cooperative businesses.

Capacity Building funding may not be used for past costs, nor may past costs incurred prior to application be considered for matching funds, if applicable.

¹ Wis. Stat. §238.135.

WISCONSIN

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

WEDC may take the following into account when evaluating Capacity Building applications:

- The likelihood the proposed effort will result in long-term benefits to the organization, its members, the region or state, or its clients
- The degree to which the organization can influence state or regional economic conditions (e.g. number of localities served, geography, membership size)
- The extent to which the problem has been approached through regional collaboration with other economic development groups and other local jurisdictions
- The extent to which the project will provide an impact to economically distressed communities or rural areas of Wisconsin
- The financial need demonstrated by the applicant
- The extent to which the proposed effort can be replicated throughout Wisconsin

WEDC may require matching funds depending on the project's attributes.

Thrive Rural Wisconsin Pilot

Thrive Rural Wisconsin Pilot funds grants made to local economic development organizations, units of government and/or tribal communities to access financial support that increases their capacity to develop community facilities, community economic development initiatives, and housing projects that will enhance the community as a thriving place to live. Thrive Rural Wisconsin Pilot funds are only available to communities approved in concept prior to submittal of an application.

Eligible expenses include: Professional services for predevelopment of projects including engineering services, design and architectural renderings, project management, legal fees, and environmental impact assessments. Professional services that increase the capacity of a community to apply for state and federal funding including financial management technical assistance and grant writing support.

Ineligible costs for grant assistance include, but are not limited to:

- Past costs,
- In-kind contributions (I.e. staff time and benefits),
- Construction costs.

Incentives and Available Funding (FY24): \$1,000,000

The amount of funding per project will generally be up to \$50,000. Projects that demonstrate significant regional or statewide impact may receive additional funding.

Capacity Building: \$750,000

Thrive Rural: \$250,000

Activities and Expected Outcomes:



Capacity Building: Assist 14-18 organizations

Thrive Rural: Assist up to 10 organizations

Performance Reporting:

Recipients will be required to periodically submit a performance report documenting specific project activities, as well as any other contract deliverables.

WEDC annually selects awards on a sample basis for an audit. All backup to the performance report and financial records are required to be maintained by the Recipient for a period of at least Three (3) years after the last performance report is due.

WEDC may impose additional reporting requirements to evaluate project performance and to ensure compliance with contract deliverables.

Application and Awards Process:

The Capacity Building program has a continuous application process. Applicants for a Capacity Building Grant should complete an application through an Account Manager. The completed application will be assigned to an underwriter and go through the award review process.

The Thrive Rural Wisconsin Pilot has a continuous application process. Applicants for Thrive Rural Wisconsin should complete an application through an Account Manager, after the applicant's concept has been approved by the Office of Rural Prosperity. The completed application will be assigned to an underwriter and go through the award review process.

For more information on application review, internal process, and award distribution, please refer to WEDC's award administration policies and procedures.

Revision History:

Effective Date	Description of Change
7/1/2017	Eliminated pilot status for Entrepreneurship Support track
7/1/2019	Clarified performance reporting requirements; standardized application and awards process
7/1/2020	Expanded eligibility and funding for COVID-19 recovery initiatives
7/1/2021	Transferred Entrepreneurship Support track to the ETA program; eliminated temporary CARES Act provisions

PROGRAM REVIEW:

This document has been reviewed by the following parties (Check all that apply):

- Chief Operating Officer
- Chief Legal Officer
- Chief Financial Officer
- Other _____

Senior VP Strategic Investment and Policy:  Date 11/09/2023

Division Vice President: Michael Ward Date 11/09/2023

AUTHORIZED APPROVAL:

CEO or Designee:  Date 11/09/2023