



States' Economic Development Assistance Program

Delta Regional Authority

The Delta Regional Authority (DRA) works to support and improve regional economic development opportunities by helping to create jobs, build communities, and improve the lives of the 10 million people who reside in the 252 counties and parishes of the eight-state DRA region. Led by the Delta Regional Authority Board - comprised of the Federal Co-Chairperson and Alternate Federal Co-Chairperson, who both are appointed by the President of the United States with the Federal Co-Chairperson confirmed by the U.S. Senate, and the governors of the eight states - DRA fosters local and regional partnerships that address economic challenges to ultimately strengthen the region's economy and the quality of life for DRA residents.

Established by Congress in 2000, DRA makes strategic investments with its federal appropriations into the physical, digital and workforce assets of DRA communities. Through the States' Economic Development Assistance Program, referred to as SEDAP, these investments help to improve:

The Four Funding Categories:

Through the States' Economic Development Assistance Program, referred to as SEDAP, these investments help to improve:

- 1 Basic Public Infrastructure**
- 2 Transportation Infrastructure**
- 3 Business Development with an Emphasis on Entrepreneurship**
- 4 Workforce Development**

Funding Pathways

Eligible applicants should work with Local Development District (LDD) offices (Acadiana Planning Commission) to prepare and submit applications to the Authority. Subsequently, a review and recommendation of project eligibility is made by DRA staff, and projects are then divided into tiers of eligible projects or are considered ineligible to receive funding. DRA staff will work with LDDs and applicants to address weaknesses found in lower tier and ineligible applications until the DRA staff work is complete.

- Tier 1a** Includes: Participation Agreement for jobs, has a regional impact, leverages other funds
- Tier 1b** Meets the health or safety threshold and is properly documented as such by a state or federal agency
- Tier 2** Other eligible project applications

Typical Awards

A typical SEDAP Award will range from \$50,000 to \$250,000, and is expected to increase. Award amounts vary depending on the funding priority evaluation by DRA once the applications are submitted.

Eligible Entities

- Participating Member States
- Local Governments (Parishes, Cities, Towns, Villages)
- Non-Profit Entities
- Public Institutions of Higher Learning
- Federally Recognized Tribal Organizations

Eligibility Priorities

Federal Priority Criteria

- Innovation and Small Business (to include a Participation Agreement)
- Regional Impact
- Multiple Funding Partners
- Emergency Funding Needs
- Registered Apprenticeships
- Infrastructure
- Merging and Consolidating Public Utilities
- Broadband Infrastructure
- Water or Wastewater Rate Study
- Made in America

DRA's Regional Development Plan Goals

Goal 1

IMPROVED WORKFORCE COMPETITIVENESS - Advance the productivity and economic competitiveness of the Delta workforce.

Goal 2

STRENGTHENED INFRASTRUCTURE - Strengthen the Delta's physical, digital, and capital connections to the global economy.

Goal 3

INCREASED COMMUNITY COMPETITIVENESS - Facilitate local capacity building within Delta communities, organizations, businesses, and individuals.

States' Priorities - Specific for Each State (please see www.dra.gov for state plans)

Priority Projects

It is important to clearly demonstrate how the project would meet at least one of the goals and priorities from each of these additional areas of investment focus, in order to achieve "priority status". Priority projects will be considered a more competitive application for DRA funding as compared to other projects.

In order to elevate any eligible project to "Tier 1a" status, applicants must also clearly demonstrate how the project would meet the following three Federal Priority criteria: 1) job creation/retention utilizing a Participation Agreement, 2) having a regional impact, and 3) including other funding partners; in addition to having already met at least one of the DRA Regional Development Plan goals and at least one of the State's DRA Strategic Plan priorities, summarized below. Each application will be reviewed on its own merit.



ELIGIBLE USES

- Agencies or entities
- Economic Development
- Category 1: Basic Public Infrastructure
- Category 2: Transportation Infrastructure
- Category 3: Business Development, with an emphasis on entrepreneurship
- Category 4: Workforce Development projects
- Registered Apprenticeship (RA)
- Preliminary site development
- Land purchase
- Equipment or other property purchased for use by a private entity
- Health improvements
- Operating costs
- Business incubation
- New Business/entrepreneurial incubator
- Employability skills
- Basic residential infrastructure
- Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and broadband
- Fire or police stations
- Phased projects
- Opportunity Zone (OZ) planning activities
- Architectural and engineering fees

What Components Make a Quality Application?

An application that meets Tier 1 requirements but lacks in other specific details will only delay the review and approval process. A good portion of applications reviewed by DRA staff for eligibility, inevitably will require additional work to further elaborate on the project narrative. Applicants are encouraged to work closely with and heed the recommendations of the LDD assigned to the project. LDDs are contractually obligated to ensure a thorough review of the application is conducted and a complete application is submitted to DRA. By focusing on the following details, higher quality applications should result (these areas of focus are not intended to be a complete and comprehensive list):

INELIGIBLE USES

- Youth-oriented activities with no direct connection to entrepreneurship or workforce development
- Sub-grants of any type
- Entities involved in ongoing litigation
- Pass-through efforts to support or enhance private property or property owners
- Activities which would constitute a conflict of interest or be considered less than an arm's length transaction
- Projects which do not conform to the project state's bid, procurement or contract laws
- Private university-led projects or programs
- For-profit entities or individuals
- Residential developments
- Unsustainable projects
- Financial support of philanthropic and non-profit foundations
- Uncommitted other project funds
- Spec-buildings/pads/industrial sites
- Marketing or feasibility studies or plans
- Community initiatives
- Saving or preserving landmarks (historic or otherwise)
- Emergency vehicles, equipment or accessories
- Local government facilities or equipment
- Water meters, as a stand-alone project
- Maintenance and/or deferred maintenance projects
- Work performed on private property
- Establishing or supporting educational curriculum
- Leadership programs
- Seasonal or part-time jobs
- Indirect cost rate in excess of 10%
- Operating costs, as a stand-alone project
- Project administration fees
- Eligible entity exceptions
- Conferences, symposiums, or meetings
- Backup generators, as a stand-alone project
- Stipends paid to program participants
- Office equipment or furnishings
- Purchasing food items
- Fringe benefits
- Documentation of water/sewer rates

APPLICATION CONSIDERATIONS

1. How will the DRA funds be spent/what will the DRA funds purchase?
2. How will the activities described - for DRA funding - fit within the overall project?
3. Was the budget prepared using preliminary engineering/architecture plans or completed plans?
4. Are all other funds committed; if not, what is the status of each identified funding stream?

DRA Investment Application Timeline

MARCH	JUNE	JULY	AUGUST
March 1: SEDAP funding opportunity announcement	June 20: LDDs complete technical assistance work with applicants and submit final applications to DRA	July 11th: DRA staff work complete	August 1: Designees have met with Governors
March 1 - June 6: Deadline to submit applications to Local Development Districts (LDDs)		July 18: Federal member determines eligibility	August 8: Project determination calls held
			August 22: Certification letters received, and project votes closed

What Role Do The LDDs Play?

All projects are developed in coordination with the appropriate LDD such as Acadiana Planning Commission. Project applications are submitted electronically either by or through the LDD whose territory includes the home county/parish of the applicant and/or the county/parish being served.

LDD staff will review and certify that each project is legitimate and meets the parameters of the DRA program. Ultimately, the DRA makes the final determination of eligibility. However, LDDs will also acknowledge their role and responsibility as project managers for each project and ensure each project is implemented and regulations adhered to in a timely manner. In the event an application is deemed ineligible by the DRA, the LDD also serves as the local economic development agency that should also be knowledgeable of other state and federal funding sources. Applicants are encouraged to work closely with the LDD in identifying the best available resources for the project.

View the Full SEDAP Manual

To view the full SEDAP Manual, visit planacadiana.org/dra-sedap-grant/ or [CLICK HERE](#) if viewing electronically.

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