## Navigating Federal Grant Applications A Guide for Small and Medium Utilities

# Identify Funding Opportunities



Grid Resilience and Innovation Partnership (GRIP) Grant

- Topic Area 1: Grid Resilience and Utility Industry Grant
- Matched existing grid modernization projects

**Project Details** 

- Line capacity upgrades
- Replace aging underground cables
- Enhance protection settings
- Modernize construction standards



Small Project Option: Congressional Direct Spending (CDS)

- EPA State and Tribal Assistance Grants (STA)
- Earmarked funding from Congressional Representatives

# **Application Process**

### **GRIP** Requirements



**Community Benefits Plan** 

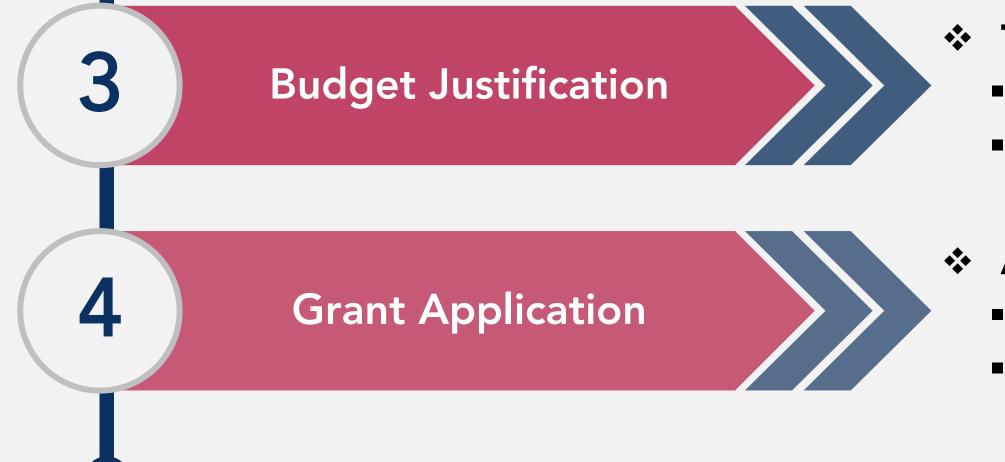
#### Project Info

- Impacts from Project
- Detailed Workplan
- Project Objectives
- Innovation Impacts

### Sob Quality & Equity

- Community & labor engagement
- Investment in Workforce
- DEIA & Justice40

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### Total Project Cost = \$75.8M

- Cost-Match: \$35.0M
- Grant Funding: \$40.8M
- Minimum 33% Cost Match
- Contract, Staff, Admin
- Current & Pending Investments

### Administrative Writing

- Navigating grant process
- Interpret FOA
- Project management
- Interpret

# Once submitted... Don't expect a quick response





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## **Application Results**

### Declined

- Clear and logical project tasks
- Strong project management team
- Letters of support from community stakeholders
- Plans for DEIA engagement, training, and maintaining union support for labor needs
- Clear commitment to hiring best-

- Didn't describe innovative qualities
- Didn't adequately address the risks or mitigation plans
- Didn't justify how federal funds benefited or accelerated planned activities
- Didn't explain how the goals align with the state



## Lessons Learned

#### Involve stakeholders early Ask questions

Build relationships in your community now

#### • Grant administrators are responsive

### Set SMART Goals

• Set clear and realistic expectations • Can you really do the work? Use AI, but know its limitations

• Helps stay concise with multiple writers • Don't rely on it to do everything



### Pay attention to details

• Read the fine print in the application • Watch for FOA updates

### Be flexible and patient

• It takes a long time to get an answer once submitted

#### Find the Right People Make sure funds on hand

• Grant writers are helpful, but not required • Check in and meet frequently

• Be prepared to pay up front • Some grants require cost match

# Don't Forget to **Celebrate Your Wins!**

**Questions?** 



Kamryn Hutson | khutson@cityofredding.org



Dan Kay | dkay@wahkiakumpud.org