



PIER Program - FAQ

Eligible Entities

Q. Can any nonprofit apply to be a project lead?

A. OHCS will be issuing revised program guidelines that will clarify that any nonprofit may apply as a project lead for economic revitalization or mitigation projects. Use of a nonprofit subgrantee or private sector contractors (when procured in compliance with federal procurement rules) is an acceptable method to execute any PIER project.

Public Hearing/Citizen Participation

Q. How must the public be notified of a public hearing?

A. See the policy guidelines (Section 2.1.3): *“Notification of all hearings shall be given a minimum of five full days (actually, seven days, as the day of the notice and the day of the hearing cannot be counted as one of the five full days) in advance to allow citizens the opportunity to schedule their attendance. Notification shall be in the form of display advertisements in the local newspaper with the greatest distribution, and/or by posting letters, flyers, and any other forms that are clearly documented with wide circulation.”*

Q. When can the public hearing happen? Who can hold the public hearing?

A. The public hearing could be held by a project lead prior to or subsequent to submission to the selection committee. Alternatively, a public hearing (appropriately noticed and including all required components) held by a member organization of the selection committee at the time of project selection can fulfill the requirement. In any case, the record of the public hearing must be submitted to OHCS with the Project Description Form.

Selection Committee

Q. If representatives of a Tribe opt out of being on the selection committee, is that OK?

A. Yes. OHCS requires that impacted Tribes are given the option to participate on the committee.

Q. If an Economic Development District (EDD) has a county commissioner on its board, can that commissioner serve as the representative of the EDD?

A. No. The logic behind the selection committee is to have multiple voices and perspectives represented.

Q. What types of organizations could serve as substitutes for the EDD?

A. Part of the intent of the requirement is that the selection committee includes someone with economic development experience/expertise who can provide input on any economic revitalization proposals even if they haven't been heavily involved in wildfire recovery. Most

local economic development entity with experienced staff or board members, could serve on the selection committee in place of the formally recognized EDD.

Q. What are “general-purpose” local governments? Would that not include special districts like fire and/or water districts?

A. General purpose governments are any city or county directed impacted by the fire and does NOT include special districts.

Project Description Forms

Q. Can the selection committee customize the project description form?

A. Yes, the selection committee can include additional questions that you wish to require to address any selection criteria the committee may adopt. Please append the additional questions as a separate form.

Q. Must project leads complete all elements of the Project Description Form prior to submitting to the selection committee?

A. The Project Selection questions can only be completed after the selection committee has evaluated and selected projects. Therefore, it cannot be completed by the project lead prior to the selection committee review. The public hearing/citizen participation documentation could be completed prior to submitting to the selection committee, but the selection committee could receive and consider the application without that documentation.

Compliance

Q. As a public entity, will we need to adhere to both state rules and guidelines (such as BOLI-established prevailing wages) on top of the federal guidelines (like Davis Bacon prevailing wage requirements)?

A. The grant agreement will spell out explicitly which federal rules and statutes apply. Generally speaking, complying with federal requirements will NOT eliminate the need for subrecipients to comply with applicable state laws. (You can expect the federal Davis Bacon requirements to be something like: Labor Standards Clause, where subrecipient shall comply with the in labor standards in Section 110 of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974, as amended, and ensure that all laborers and mechanics employed by contractors or subcontractors in the performance of construction work financed in whole or in part with assistance received under the Agreement shall be paid wages at rates not less than those prevailing on similar construction in the locality as determined by the Secretary of Labor in accordance with the Davis Bacon Act, as amended (40 U.S.C. 3141 et seq.), and 29 C.F.R. Parts 1, 3, 5, 6, and 7, provided that this requirement shall apply to the rehabilitation of residential property only if such property contains not less than eight (8) units.)

Timeline

Q. Is there a deadline date that funds must be expended by?

A: The project description form requires the attachment of a project schedule. The termination date of the grant agreement will be based on the schedule provided. Generally speaking, applicants should expect to complete projects no later than mid-2028. (The overall CDBG-DR program must be closed out no more than six years from grant agreement, i.e., February 2029.)