

IEDC Stimulus Alert: Funding Opportunities, News and Resources

Below are funding opportunities and other news regarding the following programs or agencies:

- National Endowment for the Arts
- Department of Energy
- Economic Development Administration
- Rural Business Opportunity Grants
- EPA Brownfields Job Training Grants
- Changes at SBA
- Other Resources

The windows of opportunity to apply for competitive grants through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) open and close quickly. Please note that this is not intended to be comprehensive summary of opportunities, and cannot take the place of a point person in your EDO or community who is identifying potential projects, strategies and partners.

Current funding opportunities

- **Your local arts agencies may want to know that the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA)** has released grant guidelines for applying for economic stimulus and job recovery arts funds. The deadline for applying for the direct grants is April 2, with grants being awarded as early as July 1. Direct grants will be available to arts organizations as non-matching one-time grants of \$25,000 or \$50,000. Local, state or regional arts agencies are provided \$100,000 or \$250,000 for re-granting activities.

Access the guidelines including application dates, eligibility criteria and potential project outlines from the [NEA's Recovery Programs web page](#).

- **The Department of Energy** recently announced that it will invest nearly \$8 billion in state and local weatherization and energy efficiency efforts as part of ARRA – approximately \$5 billion through the Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP) and about \$3 billion for the State Energy Program. DOE is initially releasing \$780 million and will release more as the states demonstrate that they are using the funding effectively.

WAP funding is designed to improve the energy efficiency of the homes of low-income families. The State Energy Program funding will provide rebates to consumers for home

energy audits or other energy saving improvements; to develop renewable energy and alternative fuel projects; to promote Energy Star products; to upgrade the energy efficiency of state and local government buildings; and other innovative state efforts to help families save money on their energy bills.

The administration estimates that the funding will put 87,000 Americans to work and save low-income families hundreds of dollars a year on their energy bills. The initial application due date for WAP formula grants (states and territories only) is March 23; the comprehensive application due date is **May 12**. [The funding opportunity announcement is available here](#) (PDF). DOE also announced specific funding levels for each state.

- **EDA:** In case you missed IEDC's last stimulus alert, on March 10, the Economic Development Administration announced the availability of stimulus funds through its Public Works and Economic Adjustment Assistance programs. Applications are accepted on a continuing basis and processed as received. [A full announcement, revised on March 13](#) (PDF), is available at EDA's website.

- **Rural Business Opportunity Grants:** The deadline for the receipt of applications in the Rural Development State Office is **March 31**. (RBOG funding is available under FY09 appropriation, not ARRA.) Assistance provided to rural areas under this program may include technical assistance for business development and economic development planning. No grant will exceed \$50,000, unless it is a multi-state project; these limits do not apply to specified funding for Native American, Empowerment Zones, Enterprise Communities, and Rural Economic Area Partnerships.

Rural public bodies, nonprofit corporations, Indian tribes, and cooperatives are eligible to apply. The [application announcement at grants.gov](#) is available here. More information on the program is available at the [RBOG home page](#).

Upcoming funding opportunities

EPA Brownfields Job Training Grants: EPA plans to issue a request for applications (RFA) for job training grants by March 19. The closing date is expected to be April 20.

This notice announces the availability of ARRA funds and solicits applications from eligible governmental entities and non-profit organizations to provide environmental job training projects that will promote job creation and economic development by facilitating the assessment, remediation or preparation of brownfields sites.

If you have questions regarding eligibility for the job training grants, contact Christine Lombard at 617-918-1305. [Information about brownfields job training grants](#) is currently available online. Check [EPA's recovery webpage](#) or [Grants.gov](#) for grant guidelines.

Changes at SBA

Beginning Monday, March 16, the SBA implements the following changes:

- Temporarily raises guarantees to up to 90 percent on SBA's 7(a) loan program, through calendar year 2009, or until the funds are exhausted. This increase in guarantee levels will help provide banks with the greater confidence they need to extend credit during the current recession, will mean more capital available to small business owners around the country.
- Temporarily eliminates fees for borrowers on SBA 7(a) loans and for both borrowers and lenders on 504 Certified Development Company loans, through calendar year 2009, or until the funds are exhausted. This will mean more capital available to small businesses at a lower cost. The fee elimination is retroactive to February 17, the day the Recovery Act was signed. SBA is developing a mechanism for refunding fees paid on loans since then.

Additionally, the President announced that the Treasury Department will commit up to \$15 billion to help unlock the frozen credit markets by purchasing small business loan securities currently frozen on the secondary market, freeing up more capital to jumpstart lending for small business owners.

For more information on these programs, visit the [SBA's Recovery page](#). For more information on the administration's other actions to unlock credit for small businesses – including IRS guidance for a provision in the Recovery Act that allows businesses with gross receipts of up to \$15 million to “carry back” their losses for up to five years – see this [fact sheet](#) (PDF) or this article in the March 17 L.A. Times, [“Obama Acts to Boost Small Business Lending”](#).

Other Resources

[Grants.gov](#) has a dedicated section for recovery grants only.

[U.S. Conference of Mayors' “Main Street Economic Recovery” site](#) provides tracking and implementation assistance for ARRA – contains links under the categories Funding and Deadlines; New from Cities and Best Practices; and Obstacles for Cities.

Bringing Home the Green Recovery: This guide analyzes many of the programs that can be utilized to create large numbers of green jobs, train those who are being left behind, and build greener, more equitable communities. (Green for All/Policy Link, 2009)

Spending the Stimulus: How States Can Put Thousands Back to Work by Jump-Starting a 21st Century Transportation System (PDF): This report provides a 20-item menu, broken into five categories, that illustrates the breadth of investments that a state may make with Surface Transportation Program funding through ARRA – ready-to-go projects that will address long-neglected transportation priorities while providing speedy and robust job creation and economic recovery. (Smart Growth America, March 2009)

Why am I receiving this email?

As implementation of the ARRA unfolds, IEDC will distribute stimulus alerts and updates designed to help our members access federal resources.

If you have feedback on this alert or request for particular information in future alerts, please email Louise Anderson, landerson@iedconline.org.

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