



**Scholarships for Opportunity and Results (SOAR) Act
Facilities Grant Competition**
Fiscal Year 2023 (FY23)

Frequently Asked Questions

(Released June 23, 2023)

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Competition Timeline

Q1: Our organization did not attend the pre-application webinars. Are we still eligible to apply?

A1: As stated in the [Request for Applications \(RFA\)](#), each interested organization that intends to apply must have at least one representative attend one of the two pre-application webinars. This year, these webinars were held on June 8 and 9, 2023. Webinar attendance was tracked electronically via GoToWebinar. If a representative from your organization did not attend one of the mandatory pre-application webinars, your organization is not eligible to apply under this grant competition.

Q2: Will applicants receive confirmation of receipt after submitting the Intent to Apply form?

A2: Yes. The required Intent to Apply form was due on Friday, June 9, 2023. Applicants should have received a confirmation email from the Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE). If you did not receive a confirmation email, please forward the original email with the Intent to Apply form to Marie Hutchins at Marie.Hutchins@dc.gov.

Q3: When will awarded applicants be able to begin conducting program activities and expending grant funds?

A3: OSSE anticipates making awards no later than Aug. 30, 2023. The award period will be two years from the date the awards are announced. Awarded applicants may begin to obligate grant funds as early as the award date but are not required to begin program activities immediately.

Resources

Q1: Where can I find more information about eligibility, the scoring rubric and other competition details?

A1: Please carefully review the [NOFA](#) and [RFA](#) on OSSE's website prior to beginning an application for funding under this competition.

Eligibility

Q1: Our organization is a former SOAR Facilities grantee. Are we eligible to apply?

A1: Yes. Former grantees of the SOAR Facilities grant or other SOAR Act grantees are eligible to apply.

Q2: If a local education agency (LEA) has already occupied a building for a number of years, may those years count toward the 50 years for the 50-year lease requirement?

A2: Yes. As stated in the RFA Section 1.6 (Eligibility), an eligible applicant must own the facility being supported by the proposed project or have a lease of at least 50 years. This requirement applies to the total length of the lease, including prior years that the applicant has occupied the facility. Awarded applicants will be required to provide site control evidence of the facility (e.g., lease agreement) within 180 days of the award.

Q3: Can option years stated in the lease agreement count toward the 50-year lease requirement?

A3: Yes, the 50-year lease requirement may include option years. Awarded applicants will be required to provide site control evidence of the facility (e.g., lease agreement) within 180 days of the award.

Q4: If two LEAs share a facility, can they apply for a SOAR Facilities grant? If so, does one of the LEAs need to apply on behalf of both LEAs?

A4: An LEA that is co-located in a facility with another LEA may apply for a SOAR Facilities grant that will benefit both LEAs (e.g., remodeling shared outdoor spaces). Only one LEA will be the applicant and the applicant must meet all eligibility requirements outlined in the RFA. The award amount may not exceed \$750,000.

Q5: Can an LEA apply for more than one project under the same application (i.e., renovations at two different campuses)?

A5: Yes, an LEA may request funds for multiple projects under one application. Both projects must be fully described in the narrative. The total award amount may not exceed \$750,000.

Q6: Are adult charter schools able to apply for the FY23 SOAR Act Facilities Grant?

A6: Yes. An adult charter school may apply for the FY23 SOAR Act Facilities Grant provided it meets the stated eligibility requirements in the [Request for Applications](#) (RFA) (see Section 1.6).

Q7: We received the FY21 Public Charter School (PCS) Re-opening Facilities grant with continuation in FY22. Are we still eligible to apply for the SOAR Act Facilities grant competition?

A7: Yes, grantees of the PCS Re-opening Facilities grant are eligible to apply.

Q8: Is it possible to request a grant for two to three smaller projects, but only receive funding for one? Will OSSE award all or nothing?

A8: OSSE may award an applicant less than the total requested in the application. In this case, an application and budget amendment would be required, and the applicant could choose which smaller projects to include in the final budget. Applicants may also choose to turn down the grant if awarded less than the total requested.

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Grant Application and Priorities

Q1: Are there funding priorities for the FY23 SOAR Facility Competition?

A1: Yes. Funding priority may be given to LEAs that have never received a SOAR-funded competitive facilities grant ([see RFA section 4.2](#)). However, projects may still be considered for funding even if they do not meet the funding priority.

Enterprise Grants Management System (EGMS)

Q1: Where should I go if I have questions about EGMS or have a technical issue?

A1: Potential applicants may contact the EGMS help desk by calling (202) 719-6500 or emailing osse.callcenter@dc.gov.

Q2: Does the 2023 Central Data application need to be fully approved prior to submitting an application under this competition?

A2: No. Applicants must complete all sections of the Certifications and Assurances tab within the Central Data application for 2023 in EGMS; however, the full Central Data application is not required to be submitted or approved prior to submission of an application for the SOAR Facility grant.

Budgeting and Allowable Costs

Q1: Are creating outdoor classroom space and handicap ramps considered permissible uses of funds?

A1: Yes, creating outdoor classroom space and handicap ramps are permissible under the SOAR Facilities grant.

Q2: Are any grant funds awarded upfront? Or is the entire award based on approved reimbursements?

A2: All OSSE grant funds are provided on a reimbursement basis. Grantees must submit a reimbursement request to OSSE in EGMS after expenditures have been incurred and paid by the LEA.

Q3: Can funding be used to cover equipment costs and/or related expenses for renovated facilities?

A3: Equipment (defined as having a per-unit cost of \$5,000 or greater) is allowable under the grant if it meets the purpose of the grant program as stated in the RFA (section 1.2).

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Q4: If we are planning construction for summer 2024 and we have not done the Request for Proposals, how do we handle the budget since we don't have specifics, proposals or a contractor who can provide that information yet? Should we make an educated estimation?

A4: The LEA should conduct market research to provide an estimate in the budget. If awarded, the LEA will have opportunities to make budget amendment(s).