



Scholarships for Opportunity and Results (SOAR) Act Facilities Grant Competition Fiscal Year 2026 (FY26)

Frequently Asked Questions

(Released Friday, April 24, 2026)

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Competition Timeline

Q1: Will applicants receive confirmation of receipt after submitting the Intent to Apply form?

A1: Yes. The optional Intent to Apply form is requested by Friday, May 1. Applicants will receive a confirmation email from the Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE). If you do not receive a confirmation email, reach out to Safa Babikir at Safa.Babikir@dc.gov.

Q2: When will awarded applicants be able to begin conducting program activities and expending grant funds?

A2: OSSE anticipates making awards by Wednesday, July 1. 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

Q3: Where can I find more information about eligibility, the scoring rubric, and other competition details?

A3: Please carefully review the [Notice of Funding Availability \(NOFA\)](#) and [Request for Applications \(RFA\)](#) on OSSE's [SOAR Facilities webpage](#) prior to beginning an application for funding under this competition.

Q4: Are a recording of the webinar and the materials presented available to applicants?

A4: Yes, the webinar recording and slide deck are posted on OSSE's [SOAR Facilities webpage](#) under the Fiscal Year 2026 Resources section.

Eligibility

Q5: Our organization did not attend the pre-application webinars. Are we still eligible to apply?

A5: Yes. The pre-application webinars are optional and highly recommended, but not mandatory. This year's webinars were held on April 7 and April 9.

Q6: Our organization is a former SOAR Facilities grantee. Are we eligible to apply?

A6: Yes. Former grantees of the SOAR Facilities grant or other SOAR Act grants are eligible to apply.

Q7: If a local education agency (LEA) has already occupied a building for a number of years, may those years count toward the 25 years for the 25-year lease requirement?

A7: No, the 25-year requirement (or "counting") period starts when the construction project is completed. The regulation requires grantees to have interest in the site, such as a lease, that ensures right of access to the site and undisturbed use and possession of the facilities for at least 25 years after completion of the project. See 34 CFR § 75.610. 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 25 years after completion of the project or the useful life of

the construction, whichever is longer. This requirement applies to the length of the lease after the construction project is completed. Awarded applicants will be required to provide site control evidence of the facility (e.g., lease agreement) within 180 days of the award.

Q8: Can option years stated in the lease agreement count toward the 25-year lease requirement?

A8: Yes, the 25-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.

Q9: 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?

A9: 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 both the applicant and the partner LEA must meet all eligibility requirements outlined in the RFA. The award amount may not exceed \$750,000.

Q10: Can an LEA apply for more than one project under the same application (i.e., renovations at two different campuses)?

A10: 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.

Q11: Are adult charter schools eligible for a FY26 SOAR Facilities grant?

A11: Yes. An adult charter school may apply for the FY26 SOAR Facilities grant, provided it meets the stated eligibility requirements in the [RFA](#) (see section 1.6).

Q12: 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?

A12: 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.

Q13: If two schools are co-located, and only one of the schools has been designated by OSSE for one of the school improvement categories, does that mean the other school is ineligible for the grant?

A13: If the requested funding is limited to areas of the facility not used by the school designated for one of the school improvement categories, then that project is eligible for the grant program. Grant projects pertaining to shared building-wide systems or common spaces, such as HVAC units, elevators, or playgrounds, would not be eligible. You can find a list of designated schools [here](#).

Grant Application and Priorities

Q14: Are there funding priorities for the FY26 SOAR Facilities competition?

A14: Yes. Funding priority may be given to LEAs that have never received a SOAR-funded competitive facilities grant ([see RFA section 4.3](#)). However, projects may still be considered for funding even if they do not meet the funding priority.

Enterprise Grants Management System (EGMS)

Q15: Where should I go if I have questions about EGMS or have a technical issue?

A15: Applicants may submit a support ticket directly within [EGMS](#) itself for technical support. The link to create a ticket is at the top left of every screen in [EGMS](#) after logging in. You may also review the [EGMS user manual](#) (updated 2024) to learn how to use the system.

Q16: Does the 2026 Central Data application need to be fully approved prior to submitting an application under this competition?

A16: No. Applicants must complete all sections of the Certifications and Assurances tab within the 2026 Central Data application in [EGMS](#); however, the full Central Data application is not required to be submitted or approved prior to submitting the SOAR Facilities grant application.

If you choose to submit a grant application prior to submitting the Central Data application, please be sure to submit the full Central Data application shortly afterward, as it must be submitted and approved in order to receive the grant award notification (see the Central Data section on p. 15 of the [EGMS user manual](#)).

Budgeting and Allowable Costs

Q17: Are creating outdoor classroom spaces and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)-compliant ramps considered permissible uses of funds?

A17: Yes, creating outdoor classroom spaces and ADA-compliant ramps are permissible under the SOAR Facilities grant.

Q18: Are any grant funds awarded up front? Or is the entire award based on approved reimbursements?

A18: 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 for.

Q19: Can funding be used to cover equipment costs and/or related expenses for renovated facilities?

A19: Equipment (defined as having a per-unit cost of \$10,000 or greater) is allowable under the grant if it meets the purpose of the grant program as stated in the [RFA](#) (section 1.2).

Q20: If we are planning construction for summer 2026 and have not completed a 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 estimate?

A20: Your LEA should conduct market research to provide an estimate in the budget. If awarded, you will have opportunities to amend the budget.

Q21: Are architectural expenses incurred before the grant award date eligible for reimbursement?

A21: Expenses incurred prior to the grant award are not allowable on the award. Only expenses incurred during the award period are allowable.

Q22: If work pertaining to the grant project was completed prior to the award date in EGMS, but we pay the vendor after the award period begins, is the expenditure eligible for reimbursement?

A22: No. Both the work and the payment must fall within the award period.

Q23: We are developing a renovation budget and have hired a contractor. Can we pay general conditions fees incurred after the grant is awarded?

A23: Yes. Fees incurred on or after the date the grant is awarded in EGMS may be included, as long as the work and associated costs occur within the award period.

- Examples of allowable costs include:
 - General conditions fees incurred during the award period; and
 - Labor or materials provided during the award period.
- Examples of unallowable costs include:
 - General conditions fees for work performed before the start of the award period; and
 - Design or planning work completed prior to the start of the award period.

Q24: If I sign a contract with a vendor before the award period begins, what costs may I include in my grant budget?

A24: If the costs are for a contract signed prior to the start of the award period, these are allowable if they are incurred during the award period.

- Examples of allowable costs include:
 - Work performed during the award period; and
 - Materials purchased during the award period.
- Examples of unallowable costs include:
 - Work, materials, or services completed prior to the start of the award period; and
 - Architectural or design fees incurred prior to the start of the award period.

Q25: The deadline to obligate FY26 funds is Sept. 30. Does this mean we may request funds for an existing project that is already in progress?

A25: Yes. Existing projects are eligible as long as the costs you are seeking to cover are incurred within the award period.