



**FISCAL YEAR (FY) 2022
CDBG REQUEST FOR
PROPOSALS (RFP)
REVIEW PANEL HANDBOOK**

**Economic Development Department
Community Development Division**

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CITY OF SAN DIEGO – COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIVISION

The City of San Diego's Community Development Division (within the Economic Development Department) oversees federally funded entitlement grant programs including the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), the Emergency Solutions Grants (ESG), and the HOME Investment Partnerships Program (HOME).

THE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT PROGRAM

The Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) provides funds to local jurisdictions on an annual basis through the Community Development Block Grant Program (CDBG) for local community development, housing activities, and public services. The primary objective of the CDBG Program is the development of viable communities through the provision of decent housing, a suitable living environment, and expanded economic opportunities. In accordance with CDBG standards, these resources are intended to primarily benefit low- and moderate-income persons and neighborhoods.

CITY OF SAN DIEGO – CONSOLIDATED PLAN ADVISORY BOARD

The Consolidated Plan Advisory Board (CPAB) was established by the City Council via Ordinance No. O-19963 (Sections 26.2101–26.2113 of the Municipal Code) to provide advice and recommendations on certain policy issues related to the City of San Diego HUD grant entitlements inclusive of the CDBG program. Specifically, per [§26.2113](#), the CPAB is charged with performing an open and impartial evaluation of the applications for CDBG funds and provide funding recommendations to the City Council.

PURPOSE OF THE CPAB REVIEW PANEL HANDBOOK

This *CPAB Review Panel Handbook* outlines the process and procedures the CPAB will follow in reviewing and scoring applications submitted for the Fiscal Year (FY 2022) Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Request for Proposals (RFP) funding cycle.

The Handbook identifies:

- The roles and responsibilities of the CPAB (reviewers);
- Procedures to follow in conducting the review;
- Reference materials that may be used in scoring the applications;
- Guidance for using the Economic Development Grants Management System (EDGrants); and
- Conflict of interest guidelines for panel members.

Appendices of this handbook include the following:

1. RFP applicant organizations names, project names, and board of directors.
2. Sub-Recipient Past Performance: No deductions will be made to applications, but the CPAB may review applicants past performance in their overall evaluation of the proposal.
3. EDGrants Registration and User Guides for Reviewers: Step-by-step guides to navigate through EDGrants.
4. Scoring Criteria for all categories
5. Tentative Budgets for each category
6. FY 2020-2024 Consolidated Plan Goals

The review of CDBG applications, as outlined in [Council Policy 700-02](#), is a competitive process to ensure funds are invested in the highest scoring projects

I. REVIEW PANEL: RESPONSIBILITIES AND CONDUCT

Reviewers are responsible for conducting an independent and objective review of the CDBG applications and must be able to fulfill the following responsibilities:

1. Read and become familiar with supplementary materials provided (inclusive of this Handbook) prior to the commencement of their review;
2. Attend and participate fully in the Ad Hoc Committee meetings (if established),
3. Recuse themselves from the review of applications where an actual or apparent conflict of interest may be present;
4. Consider, review, and score each application in relation to the applicable FY 2022 Scoring Criteria;

5. Refer all applicant contact to the Community Development Division staff; and
6. Complete their review in EDGrants on or before the **March 01, 2021** deadline.

Reviewers must be able to dedicate a significant amount of time to this process within a very limited timeframe. If they find they are unable to fulfill their obligations, they are asked to contact City staff immediately.

II. CITY STAFF: RESPONSIBILITIES

The City of San Diego Community Development Division staff (City staff), charged with the responsibility of ensuring the CDBG allocation process is impartial and consistent with all applicable standards, will:

1. Ensure reviewers are comfortable navigating through ED Grants. If necessary, deliver hard copies of requested and necessary information to reviewers in a timely manner;
2. Respond to all inquiries from the reviewers promptly;
3. Provide staff and facilitate the Ad-Hoc Committee meetings;
4. Create a ranking of the applications by project-type based on their average scores in descending order and present the scoring recommendation to the CPAB for its ratification at the **March 10, 2021** CPAB meeting; and
5. Present CPAB's recommendation to the City Council for review and approval in April 2021 (time and date to be determined) in conjunction with the Fiscal Year (FY) 2022 Annual Action Plan.

III. CONFLICT OF INTEREST GUIDELINES

In order to ensure compliance with applicable HUD requirements and other applicable standards, as well as to ensure a fair and transparent scoring process, CPAB reviewers are required to follow these conflict of interest guidelines. A conflict of interest generally describes a situation in which financial or other

personal considerations may compromise or bias professional judgment and objectivity.

The CDBG conflict of interest provisions at the federal level are based on the regulations found at 24 CFR 570.611, which can be summarized as follows:

No person who is an employee, agent, consultant, officer, or elected or appointed official of the recipient (City of San Diego in this instance), or any designated public agencies, or any sub-recipient which is receiving CDBG funds and who exercises or has exercised any functions or responsibilities with respect to CDBG activities or who is in a position to participate in a decision-making process or gain inside information with regard to such activities, may obtain a financial interest or benefit from the activity, or have an interest in any contract, subcontract or agreement with respect thereto, or in any of its proceeds, either for themselves or those with whom they have family or business ties, during their tenure and for one year thereafter.

The CDBG RFP review process is also subject to a variety of federal conflict of interest regulations and standards. Said standards prohibit City employees, as well as its officers and agents, from participating in the selection, award, or administration of a contract supported by federal funds if a conflict of interest, real or apparent, is involved. Note that even *apparent* conflicts of interest are prohibited.

The City of San Diego Municipal Code also governs the actions of the CPAB in relation to conflicts of interests and requires CPAB members to recuse themselves from participating “in any decision in which she or he has any personal or financial interest” (see [§ 26.2109](#)).

The City Council has also adopted [Policy No. 000-04](#), which is the Code of Ethics for all city employees and board/commission members.

Within the general context of the conflict of interest guidelines, a *financial interest* includes:

- Receipt of gifts of \$250 or more in value in the previous twelve months from an applicant organization;

- Receipt or promise of income (e.g., salary) from an applicant organization in the previous 12 months;
- Having an investment of \$2,000 or more in an applicant organization;
- Holding a position of management or serving on the board of an applicant organization, whether in a paid or unpaid position, within the previous twelve months; and,
- Ownership of real estate with a value of \$2,000 or more with an applicant organization.

As noted, federal standards also prohibit apparent conflicts of interests. An apparent conflict of interest is generally considered to occur when the circumstances are such that a reasonable person with knowledge of the relevant facts would question the impartiality of the reviewer in his/her evaluation of an application.

Review panel members are obligated to report any conflicts of interest to City staff immediately. Reviewers can declare the presence of such conflicts via ED Grants at the time of registration, via email or via a phone call. Declaring such conflicts does not mean the reviewer is unable to serve; it simply means the reviewer may not review those applications or participate in the Ad-Hoc Committee meeting discussions regarding those applications where the conflict exists. It is important to note that a conflict of interest exists whether or not decisions are affected by a personal interest—conflicts of interest only imply the potential for bias is present.

Reviewers must keep in mind the conflict of interest provisions during the process as potential conflicts may exist in relation to the applicant organization, its board members, its staff, the proposed project itself, its intended beneficiaries, and/or other parties that may be affected by the proposed project.

If at any point during the process, a reviewer determines the potential presence of an actual or apparent conflict of interest, that reviewer must declare the presence of such conflict to City staff and recuse herself/himself from reviewing the application and participating in related discussions. When in doubt, a reviewer may contact City staff for guidance.

This responsibility is strictly imposed upon reviewers and reviewers are required to digitally acknowledge the Conflict of Interest Statement during the ED Grants registration process. If the reviewer identifies the presence of a conflict of interest at any point during the review process, the reviewer is also obligated to report such conflict immediately to City staff.

IV. CONFIDENTIALITY

CPAB reviewers are also asked to respect the confidentiality of the RFP applications and supporting materials. The contents on the website system are only for the CPAB reviewers and should not be shown or distributed to other parties.

Furthermore, reviewers may only discuss the applications, their contents, and their own assessments of the applications or similar related matters during the Ad-Hoc Committee meetings and/or with City staff as part of related inquiries.

Completion of a Confidentiality Agreement is required of all reviewers prior to their registration in EDGrants (as described below).

V. REVIEWER REFERENCE MATERIALS

Each Board member participating in the review of the FY 2022 CDBG applications will have access to relevant reference materials on or before January 25, 2021. Some materials will be made available only after successful registration in EDGrants.

Information available to the reviewers includes the following:

7. Applicant Organization Submittals: This material includes the portion of the applications subject to CPAB review, including supporting documents.
8. Board of Directors Rosters: To assist with identifying potential conflicts of interest, the Board Roster for applicant organizations is included as Appendix A.
9. List of Applicants and Projects: A listing of all applications submitted, sorted by RFP category (NCIP, MFHR, CED, PS, and PS CARES ACT).

Although the CPAB will not be reviewing the Cares Act applications, the CPAB will have access to the names of the organizations that submitted in the Cares Act category). The information provided will include the name of the applicant organization and the name of the proposed project, as identified by the applicant in the application.

10. Scoring Criteria Templates: Scores will be entered directly into the EDGrants scoring review form for each individual applicant organization submittal.

Sub recipient Performance:

The CPAB will be able to view applicant's performance over the last fiscal year on two components:

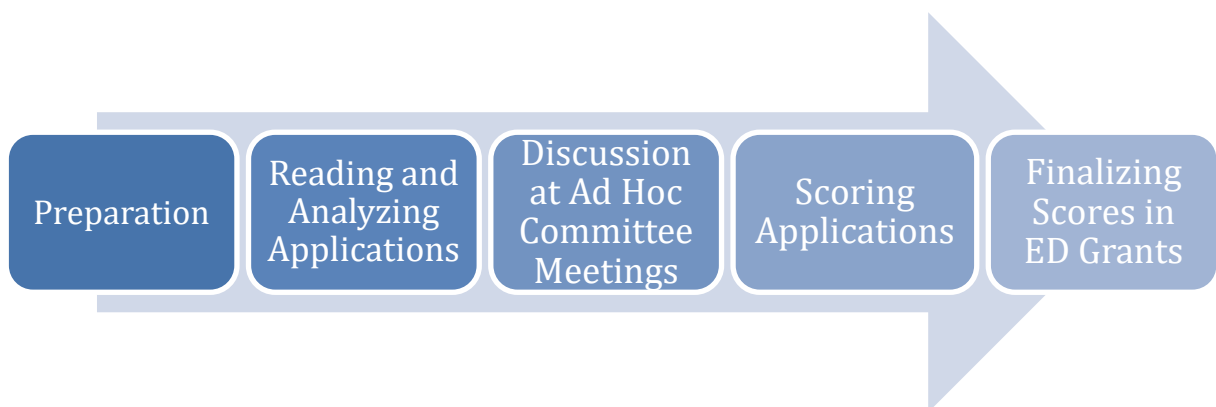
- Whether the outcome goals were met
- How much of their award was expended;

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the CPAB understands the potential impact to subrecipient performance. Any evaluation of past performance in general is to ensure the organization has the capacity to perform on a future contract, if awarded.

11. Additional resources are available via the EDGrants portal at: www.edgrants.force.com (under the "Resources" tab).

VI. REVIEWING & SCORING APPLICATIONS

The following sections provide details regarding the six primary elements of the review process for the CPAB members:



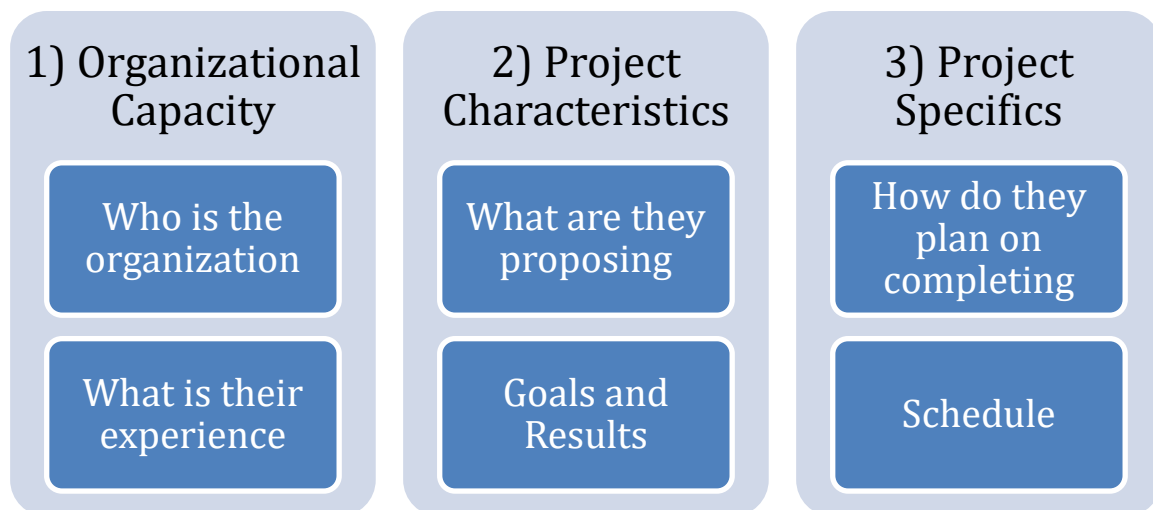
Preparation: Prior to the Review

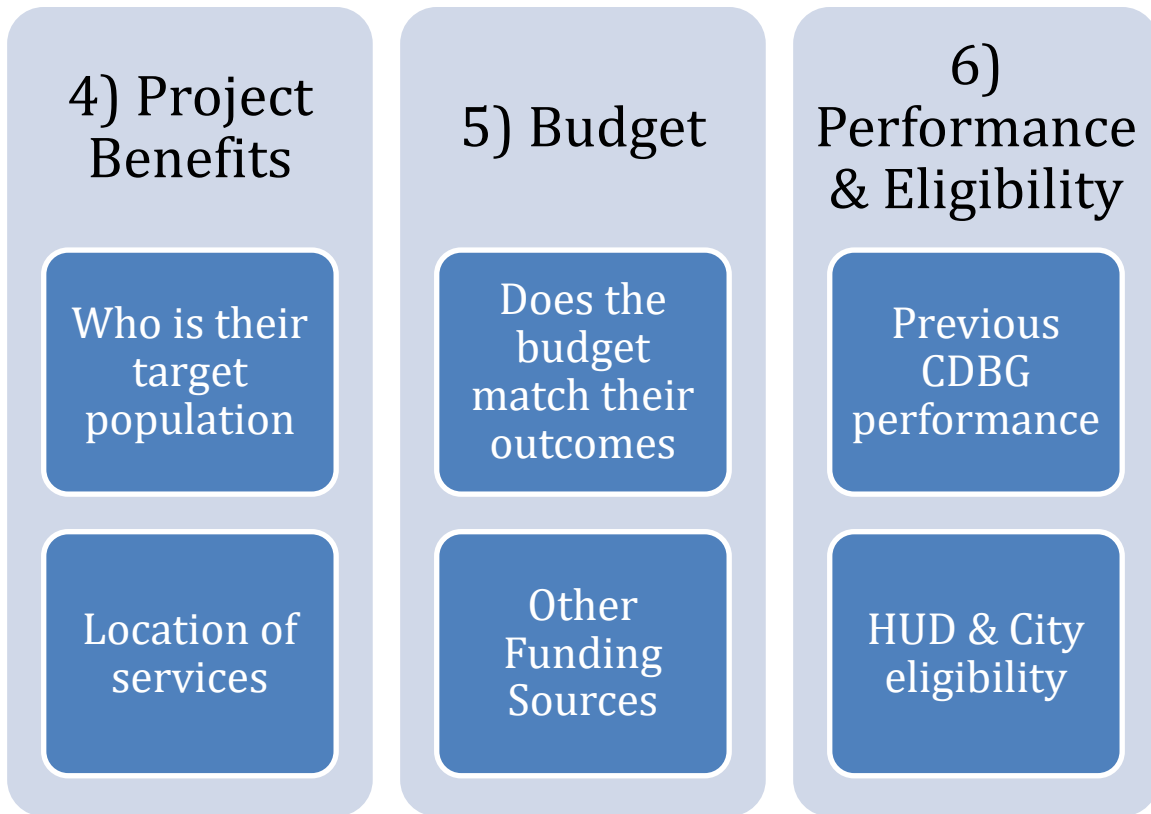
To reiterate, prior to the release of the relevant information as described above, reviewers are required to complete the following for registration purposes:

1. Register as a Subject Matter Expert (SME) in the EDGrants system at: www.edgrants.force.com.
2. Examine the **Board Member Rosters** (Appendix A) and **List of Applicants and Projects** (Appendix B) and identify any proposal and/or applicant organization where a conflict of interest may exist and inform City staff of any such conflict.

READING AND ANALYZING APPLICATIONS

Reviewers are instructed to evaluate applications based on the FY 2022 CDBG RFP Scoring Criteria. Reviewers should consider how well the applicant fully describes the proposed project in relation to the questions asked. The graphic below describes how City staff recommended applicants approach writing their application.





Each section in the Scoring Criteria will be accompanied by an annotation icon to assist reviewers in evaluating the applicants' responses in ED Grants.

Given that **each** reviewer must read and score **each** application within a limited timeframe, reviewers are encouraged to consider the number of applications that must be reviewed and allot an appropriate amount of time for each.

1. CPAB approved the establishment of a tiebreaker as part of the FY 2020 Scoring Criteria at the [September 12, 2018 CPAB meeting](#). The tiebreaker will require CPAB members to indicate whether the overall project is of high, medium, or low priority to fund in the event of a tie within the Comment Box field on the scoring form within ED Grants. If a tie is remaining after the CPAB ranking of priorities, City staff will use the highest score in the Organizational Capacity section.
2. Council Policy 700-02, Item 13: In December of 2016, City Staff updated Council Policy 700-02 to ensure agencies applying for capital improvement

projects do not have an open capital improvement project at the same location.

New to Fiscal Year 2022 Scoring Criteria

At the [October 01, 2020 Virtual CPAB meeting](#), the CPAB unanimously approved the updates to the FY 2022 Scoring Criteria. An addition to the Scoring Criteria was made to question 4.a.: Project Benefits. Organizations have the opportunity to provide proof of positive impact through client success stories, photos, annual reports, and/or other collateral materials the organization may have highlighting their program. Some examples are below and the CPAB may review these to assist in evaluating this question.

Client Story

Same House, Different Decade

What are the chances that we help two generations from the same family, with a twenty year span in between? In 1998, _____ delivered meals to Ruth Romero at her home in Barrio Logan which allowed her to age in her home where she raised her family for 60 years. Today, twenty years later, her son Adolfo is receiving meals as part of the new Promise Zone Initiative.

After a terrible fall, outside his home, Adolfo laid for hours until his daughter-in-law found him. He was rushed to the hospital for care. His son Juan, who lives in Hemet, suggested the service Ruth received. Knowing that we deliver every day, Adolfo would have people checking in on him, giving him some companionship and allowing Juan and his brother, Isaac, peace of mind. Adolfo was happy to open his home to us, a home he wants to be able to continue living in. Adolfo quipped "I never was much of a cook, so this is wonderful knowing I have a meal each day and delivered to my door. I remember my mom receiving meals and what a difference it made to her."

Adolfo has many fond memories of his life and is proud that he has lived in this very house for 80 years! At 94 years young, it is hard to keep up with all the stories he has to tell about the changes in his neighborhood and San Diego over the decades. He feels fortunate to have grown up in this home, raised his children here and where he definitely plans to stay with our help.

The photos of his family cover the walls, creating a kaleidoscopic wallpaper of a life well lived. His pride shows through as he shares the care his two sons, Juan and Isaac provide, and the achievements of his grandchildren and great grandchildren. Adolfo reminisces about the changes he has seen from his front porch. Growing up in Barrio Logan was a friendly and neighborly experience. After the war, Adolfo headed back to his hometown of San Diego, where he married his high school sweetheart and started a family in his family home.

At 94, his mind is sharp, but the years have made him less steady on his feet. He would be lost without his walker that gives him the security to freely move about the house. Adolfo is a perfect candidate for community programs in the Promise Zone and other services _____ provides through our various partnerships. Our Service Saturday volunteer team will also access his property to make it safer for him to walk.



"Things Are Better And Brighter"—Meet Ruth

FEBRUARY 10, 2020



"I can't go back..."

Ruth takes a second to gaze out the window before continuing.

"I've been through a hell and a half, and I just can't go back to it. I've worked too hard, and the only choice for me is to keep going."

Ruth says she's still new to building a client base for her accounting work, but she carries herself with incredible compassion and strength. Her new full-time business, South Coast Accounting Solutions, is growing, and she has the privilege of helping with that growth.

"I needed help, ya know? One person can only do so much on their own before they need others, and the grant from you guys helped me really improve my life."

We spend a lot of time talking to people in the community, and we love sharing those stories with you. Some stories are really hard-earned—we're grateful when you hear into that and really listen to the hardship—that Ruth's story is no exception.



"You don't have to spend much time with her to see how hopeful, hard working, and optimistic she is. In a recent meeting, she said, 'Things are brighter and better than they've been in awhile. 2020 was so hard, but I've heard about one client has done what to help me get my business off the ground. I'm feeling really hopeful!'"

It is why we have staff dedicated to serving people building a business. It helps the economy, it enables people to stay in their homes and avoid displacement, and it offers people hope.

"If my story can help people stay out and take a risk on their business and become their own person, I'll be so thrilled. It's possible."

Wish to help more entrepreneurs and new business owners like Ruth? Take a minute to share her story or donate via the button below. Your giving makes a huge difference!

AD HOC COMMITTEE MEETINGS

CPAB is scheduled to have the opportunity to convene virtual Ad Hoc Committee meetings in the month of February to discuss applications, exchange considerations, and ask technical questions of staff.

Each reviewer is responsible for scoring **each** application independently and not sharing scores with other CPAB reviewers.

SCORING APPLICATIONS

Reviewers must identify the most significant strengths and weaknesses of the application when assigning scores. Reviewers must use **whole** numbers in assigning scores to the individual sections within ED Grants. The CPAB will score only those applications deemed eligible by City staff.

FINALIZED SCORES

Upon completion of the review and scoring process, the review panel members will submit their scores via ED Grants *no later than* **March 01, 2021**. Reviewers have not completed the review process until their scores have been submitted in the system.

The scores and comments will be made available to the applicants (upon their request) following the ratification of the FY 2022 Annual Action Plan by the City Council and submittal to HUD. The names of the individual reviewers will be redacted from the information prior to its distribution to the applicant organizations.

VII. REVIEWERS' WRITTEN COMMENTS

A thorough evaluation of applications is critical in the CDBG funding allocation process. Reviewers provide applicants key insights into the evaluative process with comments on the scoring form that identify the strengths and weaknesses of proposals. This insight allows organizations the opportunity to incorporate feedback into future applications and improve their ability to secure funding. There is one comment box in the review form to provide a general comment on the application. Comments are not required.

Reviewers should not:

- Use prior or outside knowledge of an applicant organization. Comments and scores are based only on the information at hand.
- Impose their own evaluation standards. Applications should be reviewed in relation to the Scoring Criteria.
- Make sarcastic or derogatory remarks in the comments section of the scoring template or in public meetings.

The comment text box(es) in EDGrants serve as the mechanism to provide feedback to the applicant organizations regarding the strengths and/or weaknesses of their applications. Therefore, comments should be as specific as possible, both positive and negative.

VIII. CPAB RATIFICATION OF SCORES

EDGrants will tabulate and average the scores of all reviewers. The applications are then ranked based on their average scores—in descending order—according to the RFP categories below:

1. Nonprofit Capital Improvement Projects
2. Multi-Family Housing Rehabilitation
3. Community/Economic Development
4. Public Service – Regular Organizations

Once compiled, average scores and resulting rankings are posted on the City's CDBG Program website, and notification of their availability is given to all applicants and subscribers to the City's email distribution list. Average scores and resulting rankings will subsequently be presented to the CPAB for their ratification during the March CPAB meeting.

IX. NEXT STEPS

Following the CPAB March meeting, the CDBG funding recommendations will be incorporated into the FY 2022 Annual Action Plan and will be released for a 30-day public review in April 2021. The FY 2022 CDBG allocations and the Annual Action Plan, will be presented to City Council for review and approval in April or May of 2021. The Annual Action Plan describes how CDBG resources will be allocated and, in fact, constitutes the application to HUD for receipt of the City's

FY 2022 CDBG entitlement. The Annual Action Plan must be submitted to HUD on or before May 15, 2021.

X. APPENDICES

Appendix A: FY 2022 Applicant Organization Board Rosters

Appendix B: FY 2022 Applicant Organizations and Project Names

Appendix C: Past Performance

Appendix D: EDGrants User Guides for Reviewers

Appendix E: Scoring Criteria

Appendix F: Categories with Budget

Appendix G: FY 2020 – 2024 Consolidated Plan Goals

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