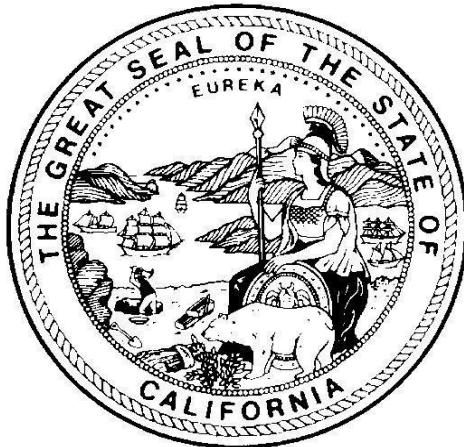


NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS

by the Employment Training Panel

***Social Entrepreneurs for Economic Development
(SEED)***

SOLICITATION FOR PROPOSALS (SFP)



January 2026

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Section I – Overview

A. Introduction

In June 2020, the California Legislature approved Assembly Bill 82 (Chapter 14, Stats. 2020), which established the Social Entrepreneurs for Economic Development (SEED) Initiative (See California Unemployment Insurance Code, sections 14106 to 14110). The Employment Training Panel (ETP), within the Labor and Workforce Development Agency (Agency), is administering this round of SEED funding on behalf of the California Governor's Office of Business and Economic Development (GO-Biz).

The purpose of the SEED Initiative is to support the entrepreneurship of immigrants and limited English proficient (LEP) individuals who face significant employment barriers, which will also increase the state's economic diversity and help spur business innovation. The SEED Initiative will provide micro-grants, entrepreneurial training, and technical assistance to SEED target populations to support them in starting or maintaining a small business in California aimed at addressing a social problem or meeting a community need.

SEED target populations are individuals who face significant barriers to employment, specifically: (1) individuals with limited English proficiency, regardless of immigration or citizenship status; or (2) individuals who are neither U.S. citizens nor lawful permanent residents. This includes individuals who may not be lawfully present in the United States, and individuals who have been granted Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) or Temporary Protected Status (TPS). In addition, SEED is open to all individuals in the target populations, including other immigrants, refugees and asylees, and United States citizens.

Section 14108 of the California Unemployment Insurance Code authorizes the administration of the SEED Initiative through nonprofit community-based organizations (CBOs) that will develop and implement SEED program components.

The Agency, GO-Biz and ETP are pleased to announce the availability of approximately \$6,750,000 for CBOs to provide micro-grants, community outreach, training, and technical assistance to immigrant and limited English proficient entrepreneurs who face significant barriers to employment.

It is anticipated that the lessons learned and best practices achieved through this grant can be replicated and shared with stakeholders throughout the state to boost social entrepreneurship, innovation, and economic mobility for Californians who experience employment obstacles.

B. SEED Initiative Goals and Approach

The goals and approach of the SEED Initiative are premised upon the following:

- **Public Policy Goals:** The SEED Initiative is rooted in two fundamental public policy goals. First, its objective is to serve vulnerable communities facing significant barriers to employment by providing them with entrepreneurial opportunities. Second, by promoting entrepreneurship of individuals who may be precluded (because of legal impediments or otherwise) from obtaining gainful employment, SEED supports pathways to economic self-sufficiency and increased economic contributions to the state and local economies.
- **Nonprofit CBOs with Expertise in Serving SEED Target Populations:** Implementation of the SEED Initiative will be strengthened through partnering with and providing grants to nonprofit CBOs that have expertise and track records of serving SEED target populations in culturally and linguistically effective ways. The role of CBO grantees will be to provide micro-grants, entrepreneurial training, and technical assistance to SEED target populations, and to conduct community outreach on SEED.
- **Supplement and Align with Broader Workforce System:** The intent of the SEED Initiative is to supplement and be aligned with the broader workforce and education system in California. The SEED Initiative is not intended to duplicate or replicate existing programs, but rather to provide supplemental funding, services, and support to ensure entrepreneurial success and economic self-sufficiency and mobility of SEED target populations with a framework that promotes equity and inclusion.
- **Equity, Inclusion, and Social Responsibility:** In advancing the economic mobility of SEED target populations through entrepreneurial opportunities implemented by nonprofit CBOs with cultural and linguistic competency, the SEED Initiative seeks to promote equity and inclusion, including racial, gender, and geographic equity. The SEED Initiative will also support business innovation that is socially responsible, effective, and sustainable, and that creates pathways to economic mobility and self-sufficiency, including high road employment and non-traditional business models or enterprises such as worker-owned cooperatives.

C. SEED Program Framework

To achieve its public policy goals and meet statutory requirements, the SEED Initiative is structured to prioritize the distribution of micro-grants to SEED target populations. Additional grant activities, such as developing a tailored training curriculum and conducting community outreach, are designed to support and expand the reach of these micro-grants.

CBOs may apply for a grant under two different programs:

- **SEED Entrepreneurship Program** (approximately \$5,250,000 in funds available)
- **SEED Worker Cooperative and Employee Ownership Program** (approximately \$1,500,000 in funds available)

SEED Entrepreneurship Program

A proposal for SEED Entrepreneurship Program funding must include all five of the following SEED program components:

- 1) Entrepreneurial training development and implementation
- 2) Community outreach
- 3) Selection of micro-grant awardees
- 4) Disbursement of micro-grants
- 5) Provision of technical assistance

All program components must be appropriately coordinated and implemented to create one integrated program.

A single CBO may submit a proposal for SEED Entrepreneurship Program funding if it includes all these components. However, ETP encourages joint proposals involving more than one CBO, in which each CBO will utilize its expertise to collaborate on implementation of these components – particularly if collaboration would enhance the capacity to serve more participants and reach diverse SEED target populations. (See also *Section II.A., Eligible Applicants*)

1. Entrepreneurial Training Development and Implementation:

A CBO that is awarded a SEED Entrepreneurship Program grant will develop an entrepreneurial training curriculum to address the needs of the SEED target population(s) they intend to serve and will provide the SEED trainings for their intended target population(s).

The entrepreneurial training curriculum should, at minimum:

- Present the nuts and bolts of how to start, build, or maintain a small business in California;
- Fill knowledge gaps around business ownership and entrepreneurship faced by SEED target populations;
- Identify barriers and challenges to business ownership and entrepreneurship of SEED target populations, and provide information and approaches that would enable individuals in SEED target populations to address those barriers; and
- Incorporate information on socially responsible business approaches and high road employment practices.

To develop the training curriculum and provide the training, the CBO must at minimum:

- **Utilize linguistically and culturally appropriate training materials and methods.** This training program component requires linguistically and culturally appropriate strategies and materials necessary to provide the training and make it accessible for the intended SEED target population(s).
- **Document training completion.** This program component requires the CBO to implement and maintain a documentation method, to be proposed by the CBO, which would indicate when an individual in the SEED target population has successfully completed the SEED training.

2. *Community Outreach:*

A CBO that is awarded a SEED Entrepreneurial Program grant will also perform the following community outreach component of SEED:

- **Develop linguistically and culturally appropriate outreach plan.** This outreach plan must identify the most effective methods of disseminating information in a linguistically and culturally appropriate manner to the intended SEED target population(s), including use of written materials, social media, ethnic media, other media, and other forms of community engagement, as appropriate, and set forth how the CBO will implement these methods of outreach.
- **Create outreach materials.** In accord with its outreach plan, the CBO will develop culturally and linguistically appropriate community outreach materials to be used in disseminating information about the SEED Initiative to target populations, as described above.
- **Conduct outreach.** The CBO will take the steps it has outlined to launch and implement its outreach plan.

3. *Selection of Micro-grant Awardees:*

Micro-grants to start or maintain small businesses aimed at addressing a social problem or meeting a community need are the heart of the SEED program. Individuals who complete SEED entrepreneurial training would be eligible to apply for SEED micro-grants that would provide a quick infusion of capital to help launch or sustain a small business. For example, this could include (but would not be limited to) helping to defray the costs of business or professional licenses; business registration and incorporation fees; new equipment or repairs to existing equipment; marketing; business-related travel; down payments to rent business space; security deposits; insurance; or legal fees.

Micro-grants are limited to one micro-grant per individual and one per business entity (for example, for any given business, this means only one individual may utilize a micro-grant toward launching or sustaining that business).

A CBO that is awarded a SEED Entrepreneurial Program grant will establish and implement selection procedures for SEED micro-grant awardees, through the following three subcomponents, all of which must be satisfied.

- **Micro-grant application.** Information shall be provided to SEED community members who are enrolled in SEED entrepreneurial training about their eligibility to apply for micro-grants once they have completed the SEED training. A uniform micro-grant application form will be developed and utilized by the CBO, which should assist eligible SEED community members to complete the micro-grant application form. This information and assistance must be provided in a linguistically and culturally accessible manner. Where appropriate, the CBO should also translate the micro-grant application into the language(s) of the SEED population(s) intended to be served.

The micro-grant application should include at a minimum:

- **Eligibility:** Verification of SEED entrepreneurial training completion.
- **Business Description:** Details of the existing or proposed small business, including purpose, activities, structure, owner(s), formation and operation years, tax ID, sales, revenues, and number of employees (where applicable).
- **Use of Funds:** Explanation of how the micro-grant will support the business's success and sustainability in addressing a social problem or meeting a community need, including a brief narrative and proposed budget.
- **Certification:** Signed statement by the micro-grant applicant confirming the accuracy and truthfulness of the submitted information.
- **Application review and selection.** Micro-grant applications shall be reviewed and micro-grant awardees selected based on uniform selection criteria that will be developed by the CBO. Such selection criteria should align with the public policies underlying the SEED Initiative of supporting the entrepreneurial success and economic self-sufficiency and mobility of SEED target populations who face barriers to employment, including promoting social responsibility, equity, and inclusion, and meeting community needs.
- **Micro-grant disbursement procedures.** The CBO shall institute procedures for seamless disbursement of micro-grants to the selected awardees. For a joint proposal where the CBO selecting the micro-grant awardees is not the CBO disbursing the micro-grants, this will require proper coordination between the CBOs; the respective roles and responsibilities of each CBO must be designated in the proposal. (See also Section II.A., *Eligible Applicants*)

4. ***Disbursement of Micro-grants:***

A CBO that is awarded a SEED Entrepreneurial Program grant will develop and implement the process and methods by which the CBO will disburse micro-grants to the SEED community members who have completed the SEED entrepreneurial training and have been selected to receive micro-grants. At minimum, the CBO must:

- Coordinate the micro-grant selection process with the disbursement process, so that SEED micro-grant awardees receive their micro-grants in a timely manner.
- Develop and implement a micro-grant disbursement process that is linguistically and culturally accessible.
- Establish protocols to ensure that micro-grants are disbursed to one per individual and one per business entity.
- Maintain fiscal and program integrity, including development and implementation of a documentation protocol to verify that the micro-grants are used for their intended purpose. This protocol must at minimum include a signed attestation by the micro-grant awardees that the micro-grants will be used as intended, and should include additional requirements such as, for example, subsequent submission of receipts demonstrating the appropriate use of micro-grant funds.

In the case of a joint proposal where the CBO selecting the micro-grant awardees is not the CBO disbursing the micro-grants, the CBOs must closely coordinate with each other to institute the foregoing; the respective roles and responsibilities of each CBO must be designated in the proposal. (See also Section II.A., *Eligible Applicants*)

5. Provision of Technical Assistance:

To advance SEED's intent of promoting the entrepreneurial success and economic mobility of SEED target populations, the provision of technical assistance to SEED micro-grant awardees is an integral facet of the SEED program design. This could include, as appropriate:

- legal assistance
- accounting and tax assistance
- assistance with business planning and development
- assistance with marketing tools and strategies
- assistance in developing high road employment practices

A CBO that is awarded a SEED Entrepreneurial Program grant will assess and determine the technical assistance needs of SEED micro-grant awardees and will provide such technical assistance by utilizing in-house expertise or coordinating and engaging with another entity or entities that have the appropriate expertise.

SEED Worker Cooperative and Employee Ownership Program

To foster business innovation and equity, inclusion, and social responsibility, the SEED Initiative will include a Worker Cooperative and Employee Ownership Program to support

SEED target populations in the creation and sustainability of worker-owned businesses and cooperatives, which could include support for the conversion of small businesses to employee ownership. The focus will be on low-wage industries with the intention of utilizing worker cooperative development as a strategy for promoting high road practices, worker voice, and economic equity in such industries. Examples of low-wage industries include (but are not limited to): homecare and domestic work, car wash, janitorial, street vending, and restaurant.

A proposal for the SEED Worker Cooperative and Employee Ownership Program must include all four of the following SEED program components:

- 1) Support Low-Wage Industries**
- 2) Development and Implementation of Training Curriculum**
- 3) Disbursement of Micro-grants**
- 4) Provision of Technical Assistance**

All program components must be appropriately coordinated and implemented to create one integrated program.

A single CBO may submit a proposal for SEED Worker Cooperative and Employee Ownership Program funding if it includes all these components. However, ETP encourages joint proposals involving more than one CBO, in which each CBO will utilize its expertise to collaborate on implementation of these components – particularly if collaboration would enhance the capacity to serve more participants and reach diverse SEED target populations. (See also Section II.A., *Eligible Applicants*)

1. *Support Low-Wage Industries:*

CBOs awarded a SEED Worker Cooperative and Employee Ownership Program grant will help SEED target populations to form, incubate and/or build the capacity of a select number of worker cooperatives, which could include conversions of a select number of small businesses to employee ownership, in a low-wage industry or industries. CBO grantees will develop an action plan and timetable for the foregoing.

2. *Development and Implementation of Training Curriculum:*

CBOs awarded this grant will develop a worker training curriculum that is designed to help support the formation, incubation, and/or capacity building of the worker cooperative(s) or employee-owned small business(es) in the low-wage industry or industries that are the subject of the proposal. The CBO grantee will also provide the training and make it accessible for workers by utilizing linguistically and culturally appropriate strategies and materials.

3. *Disbursement of Micro-grants:*

CBOs awarded this grant will disburse micro-grants to help launch or sustain the worker cooperative(s) or employee-owned small business(es). The CBO grantee will develop a process to assess the needs of the cooperative or business for micro-grants and the most effective use of any such micro-grants and will make a final determination of the appropriate utilization, amount, and number of micro-grants. The CBO grantee will also develop and implement a final plan and timetable for distribution of the micro-grant(s).

Due to the collective nature of worker cooperatives and employee-owned businesses, micro-grants will not be restricted to one micro-grant per worker cooperative or business entity and may be provided to multiple workers who are investing in the same cooperative or employee-owned business. The CBO grantee must ensure fiscal and program integrity, including by developing and implementing a documentation protocol to verify that the micro-grants are used for their intended purpose.

4. Provision of Technical Assistance:

A CBO awarded this grant will assess and determine the technical assistance needs of the worker cooperative or employee-owned small business, as well as the workers who are members of the worker cooperative or employee-owned business. The CBO will provide such technical assistance by utilizing in-house expertise or coordinating and engaging with another entity or entities that have the appropriate expertise.

Section II - Eligibility and Grantee Requirements

A. Eligible Applicants

- **Only Nonprofit CBOs May Apply for SEED:** As authorized by the California Legislature and reflected in Section 14108 of the California Unemployment Insurance Code, the SEED Initiative will be administered through nonprofit CBOs that will develop and implement SEED program components. To be eligible to apply for a SEED grant, a CBO must be a 501(c)(3) or a fiscally sponsored program of a 501(c)(3).
- **Single CBO Proposal:** For either grant program (Entrepreneurship Program; Worker Cooperatives and Employee Ownership Program), a single CBO may submit a proposal if it proposes implementing all the components of that grant program.
- **Joint CBO Proposal:** Joint proposals involving more than one nonprofit CBO will also be accepted. This is in recognition that the SEED Initiative program framework is composed of multiple components that may require and could be enhanced by collaborative efforts of several CBOs that bring diverse strengths and expertise, and that enable geographic and linguistic diversity in the SEED target populations that would be served by the CBOs.

For joint proposals involving two or more CBOs, there must be one lead CBO applicant that shall act as the contracting and fiscal agent with the State; the lead CBO shall enter into all appropriate subcontracts with the other CBOs participating in the joint proposal to implement the SEED grant. The lead CBO is ultimately responsible for **all** grant award performance and deliverables, implementation activities, and reporting obligations. The lead CBO will also be responsible for requesting disbursement of grant funds (see *Section III, Funding*), and for releasing and distributing funds to the subcontracted CBOs after the grant is awarded.

The lead CBO is the entity that must apply for the grant and submit the joint proposal. The lead CBO must fill out and sign the required forms and provide information for each participating CBO in the Project Proposal Narrative (see *Section V, Proposal Requirements, Evaluation, and Award*). This includes identifying each participating CBO and explaining its respective role(s) and responsibilities under the grant. An overall budget for the entire proposal should be submitted by the lead CBO, in addition to clearly and separately outlining the budget of each participating CBO (which should also be incorporated in the overall budget).

B. Target Populations

SEED target populations are individuals who face significant impediments to employment, specifically:

- Individuals with limited English proficiency, regardless of immigration or citizenship status.
- Individuals who are neither U.S. citizens nor lawful permanent residents.
- Individuals who may not be lawfully present in the United States.
- Individuals who have been granted Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) or Temporary Protected Status (TPS).

In addition, SEED is open to all individuals in the target populations, including other immigrants, refugees and asylees, and United States citizens.

CBOs must describe in their proposals which specific SEED target population(s) they will serve. To help advance equity and inclusion, CBO applicants should set forth in detail the demographic, linguistic, and geographic characteristics of their intended SEED target population(s), and any additional barriers to employment that they plan to address. CBO applicants must also describe the culturally and linguistically effective strategies that they will utilize in implementing the grant.

C. Performance Measures, Data Collection, and Reporting Requirements

As part of their proposals, CBO applicants are required to include program activities, deliverables, and performance metrics of successful grant implementation, outlined on a quarterly basis, to capture progress towards meeting outcomes and to satisfy the reporting requirements below.

CBO grantees will have the responsibility of providing ETP timely and adequate documentation and reports on their progress in implementing SEED grants. The information that CBO grantees will be required to provide in periodic reports will include, but not be limited to, the following:

- **Information on SEED entrepreneurial training --**
 - The number of individuals enrolled in SEED entrepreneurship training.
 - The number of individuals who completed the SEED entrepreneurship training.
- **Information on SEED community outreach --**
 - The methods of outreach utilized including the language(s) utilized in the outreach.
 - The numbers of individuals reached.
- **Information on SEED micro-grants --**
 - The number of individuals who applied for micro-grants.
 - The number of individuals selected to receive micro-grants.
 - The number of micro-grants disbursed.
 - The grant amount for each micro-grant disbursed.
 - The uses of the micro-grants disbursed, such as the type of small business that the micro-grant supported, and the type of business expense that the micro-grant helped to defray.
- **Information on Worker Cooperative and Employee Ownership Program --**
 - Number of worker cooperatives that are created and/or sustained and the low-wage industries in which they operate.
 - Number of micro-grants disbursed.
 - Grant amount for each micro-grant disbursed, and the average grant amount.
 - Use(s) of the micro-grants disbursed.
- **Information on SEED demographics --**
 - Demographic information including race, ethnicity, gender, primary language spoken, age group, and income level.
- **Copies of SEED materials --**
 - Provide copies of all the training, outreach, and other materials developed during SEED implementation.
- **Additional performance metrics**

CBO grantees are required to provide quarterly progress reports and a final report will be due near the end of the grant term. Submission dates and the form and content of reports (including the reporting elements above, as applicable) will be determined by ETP. CBO grantees will be required to maintain project and fiscal records sufficient to satisfy their reporting requirements and to enable evaluation of project effectiveness and proper use of funds. This includes thorough, complete, and accurate accounting ledgers to support all program expenses and expenditures of grant funds. CBO grantees must retain all records pertinent to their grant for a period of at least four years after the date of final payment of the grant award.

In circumstances where a grant is awarded for a joint proposal of two or more CBOs, the lead CBO that serves as the fiscal and contracting agent on the grant shall have the responsibility for ensuring that all program data and documentation for all the CBOs participating in the joint proposal are captured in a timely, complete, and accurate manner and are reported in accordance with the specified reporting requirements.

D. Community of Learning and Practice

A Community of Learning and Practice will be established and coordinated by ETP.

All CBO grantees will be expected to participate in the CLP where they will share program models and strategies, engage in peer learning and support, and facilitate access to technical assistance and best practices. CLPs will be virtual and involve webinars, conference calls, and other learning and technical assistance activities, as determined by ETP.

In addition, all CBO grantees should plan to attend the equivalent of one or more full-day in-person or virtual convenings throughout the grant period, on date(s) to be determined by ETP.

E. Evaluation

The effectiveness of SEED training, outreach, and materials may be evaluated. The evaluation will examine qualitative and quantitative data to analyze the impact and lessons learned during implementation of the SEED Initiative. This will entail the collection and reporting of relevant data by the CBO grantees under guidelines determined by ETP. (See Section II.C., *Performance Measures, Data Collection, and Reporting Requirements.*)

An independent evaluator may be selected by ETP to conduct the evaluation. ETP will work with the evaluator to develop the scope, metrics, and form and content of the evaluation. CBO grantees will be required to work with the selected independent evaluator as requested and to the extent determined by ETP.

Section III – Funding

Funding under this SFP will be provided through the SEED Initiative. All awards are subject to the availability of appropriated funds and to any modifications or additional requirements that may be imposed by law. ETP reserves the right to adjust the total number, duration, and amount of each grant award based upon the availability of funds. Funding is available for proposals that address the needs of SEED target populations and implement the grant programs outlined in this SFP.

Please note: If, for any reason, the funds either do not become available or are reduced due to budgeting/fiscal/administrative reasons, the State shall have no liability to pay any funds or to furnish any other considerations under this SFP, and no awardee will be obligated to perform any provisions of this SFP.

A. Funding Availability

Of the \$6,750,000 available for SEED Initiative implementation, the distribution per grant program will be as follows (in approximate figures):

- **\$5,250,000 for the SEED Entrepreneurship Program**
- **\$1,500,000 for the SEED Worker Cooperative and Employee Ownership Program**

ETP reserves the right to adjust or modify the grant distribution amounts for each grant program outlined above.

CBOs may submit proposals for funding in **either or both** SEED Entrepreneurship Program and/or SEED Worker Cooperative and Employee Ownership Program.

B. Grant Amounts and Disbursement

SEED Entrepreneurship Program (\$5,250,000)

- **Cap on Grant Amount:**

There is no individual cap on grant awards. However, total funding for the SEED Entrepreneurship Program is limited to \$5,250,000. ETP also reserves the right to adjust the grant award amount.

- **Micro-grant Allocation (\$3,937,500):**

Of the total of \$5,250,000 available for SEED Entrepreneurship Program grants, 75% of these funds, approximately **\$3,937,500**, will be allocated for micro-grants to be disbursed to individuals in SEED target populations who complete the SEED entrepreneurial training and are awarded micro-grants through an application process.

The average micro-grant amount should range from approximately \$2,500 to \$5,000.

A CBO applicant must include the projected number of micro-grants and approximate range of micro-grant award amounts that it proposes to disburse (see Section V, *Proposal Requirements, Evaluation, and Award*).

The entire amount of \$3,937,500 allocated for micro-grants may only be used for that purpose. Staffing and any other costs (direct or indirect) of a CBO relating to disbursement of micro-grants cannot be drawn from the micro-grant allocation of \$3,937,500 and must be covered instead by the program implementation allocation.

- **Program Implementation Allocation (\$1,312,500):**

Of the total of \$5,250,000 available for SEED Entrepreneurship Program grants, 25% of these funds, approximately **\$1,312,500**, will be allocated for CBO grantees to implement all the program components supporting the micro-grants: SEED entrepreneurial training development and implementation, community outreach, selection of micro-grant awardees, disbursement of micro-grants (e.g., staffing to implement disbursement), and provision of technical assistance to micro-grant awardees.

- **Allowable Use of Grant Funds:**

Micro-grants may only be awarded to individuals who have completed the SEED entrepreneurial training and must be used to help the individual start or maintain a small business that addresses a social problem or meets a community need, as determined by the CBO as part of its micro-grant selection criteria. Micro-grants may not be used for any other purpose.

Allowable program expenses are those relating to the implementation of the program components supporting the micro-grants. Each CBO applicant must describe the staffing and other costs, direct and indirect, associated with implementing these program components, subject to the following:

- Seventy-five percent (75%) of the CBO applicant's total grant award request must be allocated toward micro-grants. No program expenses (direct or indirect) can be included as part of the 75% grant allocation for micro-grants, which must be a separate budget line item.
- Twenty-five percent (25%) of the CBO applicant's total grant award request must be sufficient to cover all costs (direct and indirect) of program implementation

(SEED entrepreneurial training development and implementation, community outreach, selection of micro-grant awardees, disbursement of micro-grants (e.g., staffing to implement disbursement), and provision of technical assistance to micro-grant awardees).

- The maximum percentage of indirect costs allowed will be six percent (6%) of the CBO applicant's total grant award request.

Illustration #1 provides an example of the required budget allocations for a **single CBO proposal** for a SEED Entrepreneurship Program grant award.

ILLUSTRATION #1: Single CBO Proposal

*One CBO applies for a **total grant award of \$500,000** for the SEED Entrepreneurship Program.*

- *\$375,000 (75% of the total grant award request of \$500,000) must be allocated in full toward micro-grants. No program expenses (direct or indirect) of the CBO can be taken from this allocation.*
- *The remaining \$125,000 (25% of the total grant award request of \$500,000) must cover all the costs (direct and indirect) of the CBO to implement this grant program.*
 - *Of this \$125,000, the maximum amount allowed for **indirect costs** \$30,000 (6% of the total grant award request of \$500,000).*
 - *If \$30,000 is allocated for indirect costs, a total of \$95,000 is allocated for **direct costs**.*

Illustration #2 provides an example of the required budget allocations for a **joint CBO proposal** for a SEED Entrepreneurship Program grant award.

ILLUSTRATION #2: Joint CBO Proposal

*One lead CBO plus two additional CBOs (for a total of three CBOs) participate in a joint proposal for the SEED Entrepreneurship Program grant. The lead CBO submits the joint proposal for a **total grant award of \$500,000** (the total amount for all three CBOs to implement all program components of the SEED Entrepreneurship Program grant).*

- *\$375,000 (75% of the total grant award request of \$500,000) must be allocated in full toward micro-grants. No program expenses (direct or indirect) of the lead CBO or participating CBOs can be taken from this allocation.*
- *The remaining \$125,000 (25% of the total grant award request of \$500,000) must cover all the lead CBO's and participating CBOs' costs (direct and indirect) to implement this grant program.*
 - *Of this \$125,000, the maximum amount allowed for **indirect costs** is \$30,000 (6% of the total grant award request of \$500,000).*
 - *The maximum amount of \$30,000 in indirect costs can be allocated in any manner among the CBOs, including dividing it up among all or a subset of the CBOs, or allocating the entire amount to one CBO.*
 - *If \$30,000 is allocated for indirect costs, that means a total of \$95,000 is allocated for **direct costs**.*
- *In the joint proposal, the lead CBO must submit the overall budget and separately outline the budgets of each participating CBO. The lead CBO and participating CBOs have the flexibility to work together to determine their separate budgets within the parameters above – so that total program costs of all CBOs (direct and indirect) do not exceed \$125,000, and within that total, the amount of indirect costs does not exceed \$30,000 (however this amount is allocated among the CBOs).*

- **Disbursement of SEED Entrepreneurship Program Grant Payments:**

Disbursement of the SEED Entrepreneurship Program grant award to the CBO grantee is based on performance benchmarks and will be made as follows:

- 25% of the CBO grantee's total grant award will be disbursed to the CBO at the beginning of their grant term.
- Once the CBO grantee has selected 25% of its total projected number of micro-grant awardees, the second 25% of the CBO's total grant award will be disbursed.

- Once the CBO grantee has selected 50% of its total projected number of micro-grant awardees, the third 25% of the CBO's total grant award will be disbursed.
- Once the CBO grantee has selected 75% of its total projected number of micro-grant awardees, the final 25% of the CBO's total grant award will be disbursed.

Any disbursement payment otherwise due shall be withheld by ETP if a quarterly or other required report from the CBO grantee (see Section II.C., *Performance Measures, Data Collection, and Reporting Requirements*) is past due or was submitted with incomplete information. Payment will be made after all such outstanding reports have been submitted in full by the CBO and deemed complete by ETP.

To request payment, the CBO grantee will submit an invoice request through ETP's Cal-E-Grants online system. The CBO grantee will be required to submit documentation (in a form to be determined by ETP) indicating that the CBO has selected individual graduates of the SEED entrepreneurial training to receive micro-grants, including data on the number of individuals selected to receive micro-grants to date relative to the total number of individuals projected to receive micro-grants, the micro-grant amount for each individual selected, and the requested use of the micro-grant funds.

Note: This disbursement schedule may be adjusted or modified, if determined to be appropriate by ETP after consultation with the CBO grantee.

- **Recuperation of Funds:**

At the end of the first six months of the grant term, ETP will assess if the CBO is meeting its projected estimates of the number of micro-grant awardees and whether the grant amount should be adjusted or "right-sized."

- If the assessment shows that the CBO has selected fewer than 25% of its total projected number of micro-grant awardees, ETP may reduce the remaining funds originally awarded to the CBO grantee. The new amount would match the same level of progress the CBO achieved during the first six months of the grant, applied to the rest of the grant term.
- If the grant award is reduced, new performance benchmarks (set in 25% portions of remaining total projected micro-grant awardees) will be set, which then must be met in order to request additional fund disbursements (also in 25% portions of remaining allocated funds), in order to continue following the fund disbursement schedule and its requirements as outlined above.
- The balance remaining between the original grant award and the adjusted amount shall be returned to ETP and may be reallocated to other CBO grantees if appropriate, as determined by ETP.

At the end of the grant term, any grant funds not expended by the CBO during the grant agreement period shall be returned to ETP, including any previously disbursed funds allocated toward micro-grants that have not been used. CBO grantees must demonstrate through sufficient documentation (to be determined by ETP in consultation with the CBO grantee) that all micro-grant funds have been expended by the CBO for that purpose; any previously disbursed micro-grant funds for which there is insufficient documentation that the funds were utilized for micro-grants must be returned. Please note that administrative costs (that are part of the CBO's grant funds) will also be recaptured, as appropriate, based upon expenditure rates.

SEED Worker Cooperative and Employee Ownership Program (\$1,500,000)

A total of **\$1,500,000** in funds are available for the SEED Worker Cooperative and Employee Ownership Program.

- **Cap on Grant Amount:**

There is no individual cap on grant awards. However, total funding for the SEED Worker Cooperative and Employee Ownership Program to \$1,500,000. ETP also reserves the right to adjust the grant award amount.

- **Allowable Use of Grant Funds:**

Allowable program expenses are those relating to the CBO's implementation of the program components of launching and/or supporting the development, incubation, or building of worker cooperatives or conversions of small businesses to employee ownership; development and implementation of a worker training curriculum; micro-grants; and technical assistance.

Each CBO applicant must describe the staffing and other costs, direct and indirect, associated with implementing these program components, subject to the following:

- Fifteen percent (15%) of the CBO's total grant award request must be allocated for micro-grants. No program expenses (direct or indirect) can be included as part of the 15% grant allocation for micro-grants.
- Fifteen percent (15%) of the CBO's total grant award must be sufficient to cover indirect costs.

- **Disbursement of SEED Worker Cooperative and Employee Ownership Program Grant Payments:**

Disbursement of the SEED Worker Cooperative and Employee Ownership Program grant award to the CBO grantee is based on performance benchmarks and will be made as follows:

- 30% of the CBO grantee's total grant award will be disbursed upon the submission to ETP of a master action plan and timetable on the CBO's formation, incubation, support, and/or capacity building of the proposed worker cooperative(s) or employee-owned business(es) that are the subject of the proposal.
- 35% of the CBO grantee's total grant award will be disbursed upon the submission to ETP of the following: (1) the developed linguistically and culturally appropriate training curriculum and materials and (2) the implementation plan for providing training to workers.
- 35% of the CBO grantee's total grant award will be disbursed upon the submission to ETP a final plan and timetable for distribution of the micro-grant(s) that includes a final analysis and determination of the amount and number of micro-grant(s), and how they will be used to support the worker cooperative or employee-owned business. The final plan must set forth disbursement of micro-grants of at least 15% of the CBO's total grant award.

Each disbursement payment shall only be made upon ETP's determination that the deliverable is complete. Payments based on the performance benchmarks do not need to be made in any particular sequence.

Any disbursement payment otherwise due shall be withheld by ETP if a quarterly or other required report from the CBO grantee (see Section II.C., *Performance Measures, Data Collection and Reporting Requirements*) is past due or was submitted with incomplete information. Payment will only be made after all such outstanding reports have been submitted in full by the CBO and deemed complete by ETP.

To request payment, the CBO grantee will submit an invoice request through ETP's Cal-E-Grants online system.

Note: This disbursement schedule may be adjusted or modified, if determined to be appropriate by ETP after consultation with the CBO grantee.

- **Recuperation of funds:**

At the end of the first six months of the grant term, ETP will assess if the CBO has met any two of the three performance benchmarks above and whether the grant amount should be adjusted or "right-sized".

- If the assessment shows that two performance benchmarks have not been met, at ETP's discretion, the remaining grant award may be reduced.

- The balance remaining between the original grant award and the “right-sized” amount shall be returned to ETP and may be reallocated to other CBO grantees if appropriate, as determined by ETP.

At the end of the grant term, any grant funds not expended by the CBO during the grant agreement period shall be returned to ETP, including any previously disbursed funds allocated toward micro-grants that have not been used. CBO grantees must demonstrate through sufficient documentation (to be determined by ETP in consultation with the CBO grantee) that all micro-grant funds have been expended by the CBO for that purpose; any previously disbursed micro-grant funds for which there is insufficient documentation that the funds were utilized for micro-grants must be returned. Please note that administrative costs (that are part of the CBO’s grant funds) will also be recaptured, as appropriate, based upon expenditure rates.

C. Additional Information

Funding requests should align with the CBO applicant’s proposed scope of work, activities, and goals. Funding amount requests should be clearly justified and outlined in the Project Proposal Narrative and proposed budget that must be submitted (see Section V, *Proposal Requirements, Evaluation, and Award*) including a breakdown of all costs within a line item. If this level of detail is not provided, the proposal may be disqualified due to unclear budget and use of grant funds. If additional information is needed from the CBO to justify funding requests, ETP reserves the right to request additional information.

ETP also reserves the right to adjust the grant award amount, based on a final determination of the appropriate scope of work, activities, outcomes, and deliverables of the CBO grantee. In determining final grant award amounts, factors will be considered such as the number of SEED community members proposed to be served and the scale of proposed activities, in conjunction with other factors such as geographic distribution of funds and the specific SEED target populations to be served.

Final grant award amounts shall also be considered in the context of how each CBO grantee’s proposed scope of work, activities, outcomes, and deliverables fit together collectively with respect to the total amount of available funding and the intended grant distribution amounts for each grant program (see Section III.A., *Funding Availability*).

D. Significant Dates

Event	Date
Release of Solicitation for Proposals (SFP)	January 26, 2026
Webinar (RSVP available on ETP website)	January 28, 2026 2:00PM Pacific Standard Time

All Proposals Due	February 26, 2026 5:00PM Pacific Standard Time
Award Announcement*	April 2026
Program Start Date*	September 2026

**All dates after the final proposal submission deadline are approximate and may be adjusted as conditions dictate, without an addendum to this SFP.*

The anticipated grant term is for two years (September 1, 2026 through August 31, 2028). The SEED Initiative is subject to any additional conditions that may be established by the Legislature which may affect whether the grant term may be extended.

E. SFP Webinar

A webinar will be held by ETP on January 28, 2026 (2:00PM Pacific Standard Time) for prospective applicants. The purpose of the webinar is to present an overview of the SEED grant program, answer questions from prospective applicants, and provide clarity regarding the SFP instructions. Although participation is not required, prospective applicants are strongly encouraged to attend as a second webinar or separate written Q&A option will not be provided.

Questions will be taken during the webinar via the chat feature and will be posted on the ETP website. Any verbal communication with ETP concerning this SFP is not binding on the State and shall in no way alter a specification, term, or condition of the SFP. Webinar details and RSVP are available on the ETP website.

To adhere to legal and transparency requirements of the solicitation process, individual staff at ETP will not respond directly to inquiries or engage with potential applicants outside of the webinar.

Section IV - Proposal Submission Instructions

This SFP contains the requirements that applicants must meet to submit a responsive proposal. The SFP provides information regarding the format in which proposals must be submitted, the documents to be included, the requirements that must be met to be eligible for consideration, and the applicant's responsibilities.

The following are incorporated by reference as part of this SFP:

- GTC - 02/2025 – General Terms and Conditions for all contracts except Interagency Agreements. This document can be found on the [California Department of General Services](#) website.

A. Proposal Deadline

The deadline for receipt of proposals is **February 26, 2026 (5:00PM Pacific Standard Time)**. Documents required in the proposal submission are listed in *Section V.B., Required Forms*.

If you are applying for both grant programs, two separate applications must be submitted. Combined applications will not pass technical review and will not be scored or considered for funding.

All proposals must be submitted through the Cal-E-Grants system or before this deadline. **Late proposals will not be accepted. Exceptions will not be allowed and there is no appeal for not meeting the proposal deadline.**

Section V - Proposal Requirements, Evaluation, and Award

A. Proposal Requirements

In addition to full compliance with the proposal submission instructions (see *Section IV, Proposal Submission Instructions*), all proposals must meet the proposal requirements indicated in this Section to be competitive and must include all the requested information and completed required forms and documents (see *following subsection, Required Forms*). **Proposals that do not adhere to these requirements will not pass technical review and will not be scored or considered for funding.**

B. Required Forms

The following table lists the required forms that must be completed and uploaded into the Cal-E-Grants system:

REQUIRED FORM / DOCUMENT AND DESCRIPTION	Form / Document Provided on ETP website?	Applicant Must Provide Own Form / Document?

<input type="checkbox"/> Proof of Non-Profit Status*	NO	YES
<input type="checkbox"/> STD 204 Form (<i>Department of Finance standardized form</i>)	YES	NO
<input type="checkbox"/> STD 205 form (<i>Department of Finance standardized form</i>)	YES	NO

*Under both SEED grant programs, proof of the CBO applicant's non-profit status is required. **When a joint proposal is submitted the lead CBO must submit proof of non-profit status for itself and for each of the CBOs participating in the joint proposal.**

To apply for SEED grants, all applicants are required to upload the forms indicated in the tables above when completing an application in the Cal-E-Grants system, and to adhere to the specific instructions for each form. Forms that are provided as part of this SFP can be downloaded from ETP's website.

C. Proposal Evaluation and Scoring

Proposals will go through a two-part review process: (1) technical review; and (2) scoring. The initial technical review ensures that applications adhere to the proposal submission requirements outlined in this Section and Section IV. To pass the initial technical review:

- Proposals must be submitted by February 26, 2026 - 5:00PM Pacific Standard Time (see Section IV.A.)
- Proposals must include all required forms/documents indicated in the tables above and be complete (see Section V.B.)
- Submit two separate and complete proposals if applying for both the SEED Entrepreneurship Program grant and the SEED Worker Cooperative and Employee Ownership Program grant.

ETP reserves the right to waive any immaterial defect in an applicant's proposal; however, any such waiver shall in no way modify the document or excuse the successful applicant from full compliance with the proposal requirements after the grant is awarded.

Only those proposals that pass the initial technical review will continue to the next step to be scored.

Proposals will be scored and ranked based on the criteria and total point values set forth in the tables below.

SEED Entrepreneurship Program:

There is a total of ten (10) Sections that must be addressed by the applicant to submit a complete application for this grant. For a joint proposal involving two or more CBO's the lead CBO is the applicant that should complete each Section.

Character Limitations in Cal-E-Grants

- Sections one (1) through nine (9) have a character limitation of 3,000 per narrative question. Each question must be answered within the appropriate text box per narrative question. Uploads with additional narrative information will not be accepted or scored.
- Section ten (10) Job & Responsibilities field has a character limitation of 1,500. All other fields within Section ten (10) have a character limitation of 500.

Evaluation Criteria	Maximum Points
<p>Section 1: Statement of Need - SEED Target Population(s) to be Served</p> <p>Describe the specific SEED target population(s) that you propose to serve, including detail about their demographic, linguistic, and geographic characteristics and any additional barriers to employment that they face. This may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Geographic location• Industry• Race• Ethnicity• Gender• Language(s) spoken• Age group/range• Additional barriers to employment (explain)	10
<p>Section 2: Entrepreneurial Training Development and Implementation</p> <p>Describe your goals, outcomes, strategies, activities, performance metrics, deliverables, and timeline for implementation of this component of the grant, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• In general, the main components and subject areas of the uniform entrepreneurial training curriculum that you will develop, including the types of training materials that will be developed as part of this curriculum.• Based on the training curriculum that you develop, the method(s) you will use to provide training for the intended SEED target population(s).• The strategies you will employ to ensure that the entrepreneurship training curriculum is linguistically and culturally accessible for the intended SEED target population(s) of your proposal, including the language(s) into which you will	10

<p>translate the training curriculum and the language(s) that will be utilized to provide the trainings.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The documentation method you will utilize to indicate when an individual has successfully completed the SEED training, and how it will be administered and tracked. • Quarterly program activities, including the training materials and/or other deliverables that will be developed, and the timeline for development and implementation of this component. • Quarterly performance metrics that correlate with the progress of your proposed grant deliverables, including at minimum, the projected number of individuals from SEED target population(s) who will participate in the entrepreneurial training, and how such metrics will be captured and tracked. • The anticipated successful outcomes of implementing this program component. • If your application is a joint proposal of two or more CBOs: Identify which CBO(s) will be implementing this program component and, if appropriate, which CBO will be taking primary responsibility. 	
<p>Section 3: Community Outreach</p> <p>Describe your goals, outcomes, strategies, activities, performance metrics, deliverables, and timeline for implementation of this component of the grant, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The linguistically and culturally appropriate strategies you will utilize to conduct outreach to the intended SEED target population(s) about the SEED Initiative, including to foster awareness of SEED entrepreneurial training opportunities and SEED micro-grants, to generate interest in SEED target populations to participate in SEED, and to communicate success stories. • The language(s) in which the outreach will be conducted. • The outreach methods you will utilize and why, such as any use of written materials, social media, ethnic media, other media, or other forms of community engagement. • Strategies and methods you will employ to connect individuals who are reached through your outreach activities to SEED entrepreneurial training. • Quarterly program activities, including the types of materials and/or other deliverables that will be developed, and the timeline for development and implementation of this component. • Quarterly performance metrics that correlate with the progress of your proposed grant deliverables, including at minimum, the projected number of individuals from SEED target population(s) who will be reached through your community outreach efforts, and how such metrics will be captured and tracked. 	5

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The anticipated successful outcomes of implementing this program component. • If your application is a joint proposal of two or more CBOs: Identify which CBO(s) will be implementing this program component and, if appropriate, which CBO will be taking primary responsibility. 	
<p>Section 4: Selection of Micro-grant Awardees</p> <p>Describe your goals, outcomes, strategies, activities, performance metrics, deliverables, and timeline for implementation of this component of the grant, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The linguistically and culturally appropriate methods you will utilize to inform individuals who are enrolled in SEED entrepreneurial training about their eligibility to apply for micro-grants once they have completed the training, and to assist them in applying. • The methods and procedures you will utilize to develop and implement a uniform micro-grant application, including identifying the categories of information that should be included and the language(s) into which the application will be translated. • The methods and procedures you will utilize to review the micro-grant applications. • The methods and procedures you will utilize to develop and implement uniform selection criteria for awarding micro-grants that align with the public policies underlying the SEED Initiative. • The methods and procedures you will utilize to coordinate disbursement of micro-grants after selection of micro-grant awardees. • Quarterly program activities, including the types of materials and/or other deliverables that will be developed, and the timeline for development and implementation of this component. • Quarterly performance metrics that correlate with the progress of your proposed grant deliverables, including at minimum, the projected number of individuals from SEED target population(s) who will be selected to receive micro-grants, and how such metrics will be captured and tracked. • The anticipated successful outcomes of implementing this program component. • If your application is a joint proposal of two or more CBOs: Identify which CBO(s) will be implementing this program component and, if appropriate, which CBO will be taking primary responsibility. 	10
<p>Section 5: Disbursement of Micro-grants</p>	5

<p>Describe your goals, outcomes, strategies, activities, performance metrics, deliverables, and timeline for implementation of this component of the grant, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The methods and procedures you will utilize to coordinate the micro-grant selection process with the disbursement process, so that SEED micro-grant awardees receive their micro-grants in a timely manner. • The strategies you will employ to ensure that the micro-grant disbursement process that you develop and implement is linguistically and culturally accessible for the intended SEED target population(s) of your proposal. • The systems and procedures, including documentation protocols, that you will utilize to maintain overall fiscal and program integrity. • The systems and procedures, including documentation protocols, that you will utilize to ensure that micro-grants are limited to one per individual and one per business entity and for verifying that micro-grants are utilized for their intended purpose. • Quarterly program activities, including the types of materials and/or other deliverables that will be developed, and the timeline for development and implementation of this component. • Quarterly performance metrics that correlate with the progress of your proposed grant deliverables, including at minimum, the projected number of micro-grants to be awarded, and the projected approximate range of micro-grant award amounts, and how such metrics will be captured and tracked. • The anticipated successful outcomes of implementing this program component. • If your application is a joint proposal of two or more CBOs: Identify which CBO(s) will be implementing this program component and, if appropriate, which CBO will be taking primary responsibility. 	
<p>Section 6: Provision of Technical Assistance to Micro-grant Awardees</p> <p>Describe your goals, outcomes, strategies, activities, performance metrics, deliverables, and timeline for implementation of this component of the grant, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The anticipated technical assistance needs of individuals who will receive micro-grant awards. • Your projected plan to provide technical assistance to micro-grant awardees (e.g., either in-house or by engaging with another entity or entities to provide technical assistance). 	5

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The approach and methods you will utilize to assess and determine the forms of technical assistance that will actually be provided to micro-grant awardees. • Quarterly program activities, including the types of materials and/or other deliverables that will be developed, and the timeline for development and implementation of this component. • Quarterly performance metrics that correlate with the progress of your proposed grant deliverables, including at minimum, the projected number of micro-grant awardees who will receive technical assistance, and how such metrics will be captured and tracked. • The anticipated successful outcomes of implementing this program component. • If your application is a joint proposal of two or more CBOs: Identify which CBO(s) will be implementing this program component and, if appropriate, which CBO will be taking primary responsibility. 	
<p>Section 7: Organizational Background and Project Team</p> <p>Describe all of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Your organization's history, vision and mission, and examples of some of the typical work your organization is involved in. You may also include a description of any partnerships or networks that your organization participates in. • Your organization's demonstrated track record of building trust and credibility in immigrant and limited English proficient communities, and expertise in developing and implementing culturally and linguistically effective programs to serve SEED target populations. Include the number of years your organization has served these populations and in what capacity, the numbers of individuals in SEED target populations your organization has served, and the geographical reach of such programs. • Your organization's experience, knowledge, and capacity in developing, operating, and/or managing programs that demonstrate your ability to effectively implement all the program components under Sections 2-6 above for SEED target population(s), including programs to promote immigrant entrepreneurship, to conduct linguistically and culturally appropriate outreach and education, and to award and distribute funds such as micro-grants or stipends. • Your organization's capacity to fulfill and manage the administrative and fiscal responsibilities under this grant. • Your organization's commitment and capacity to promote equity, inclusion, and socially responsible approaches, including high road employment, in implementing this grant. 	25

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff at your organization who will be the key team members to implement this grant, including project lead(s), and their roles and responsibilities with respect to this grant. For each key team member, also summarize their qualifications, experience, capabilities, and credentials. • If your application is a joint proposal of two or more CBOs: For the lead CBO applicant and each participating CBO, provide responses to all of the bullet points above in this Section, and, as appropriate, tailor the response to the specific program component(s) under Sections 2-6 above that each CBO will be implementing. 	
<p>Section 8: Data Collection and Reporting</p> <p>Describe your proposed data collection methods and reporting procedures, including the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The systems and procedures that will be utilized to ensure timely and adequate documentation and tracking of the implementation of each program component, including performance metrics and outcomes, under Sections 2-6 above. • The systems and procedures that will be utilized to ensure timely, complete, and accurate reporting of information as required under this grant. • If this is a joint proposal of two or more CBOs, describe the foregoing with respect to the lead CBO and all participating CBOs. 	5
<p>Section 9: Overall Program Coordination and Integration</p> <p>Describe how all program components will be coordinated, monitored, and evaluated to create one integrated program, in order to achieve effective execution of all program components under this grant, and to maximize your capacity to award micro-grants. If this is a joint proposal of two or more CBOs, describe how such coordination, monitoring, and evaluation will occur between the lead and all participating CBOs.</p>	5
<p>Section 10: Proposed Budget</p> <p>Provide a proposed budget for your grant request which shows that all program components to be implemented under this grant are adequately resourced—and successful outcomes can be achieved. Include a detailed breakdown of all program expenses, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification of position(s) to be funded • Salary rates or ranges • Percentage of time devoted to program implementation • Any fringe benefits • Operating expenses • Travel and per diem expenses 	20

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overhead and indirect costs <p>If your application is a joint proposal of two or more CBOs: The lead CBO must submit an overall budget for the entire proposal, which should incorporate separate line items for the budgets of each CBO participating.</p> <p>Proposed budgets should adhere to the micro-grant allocation framework and requirements regarding the allowable uses of funds under this grant.</p>	
Total Maximum	100

SEED Worker Cooperatives and Employee Ownership Program:

There is a total of eight (8) Sections that must be addressed by the applicant to submit a complete application for this grant. For a joint proposal involving two or more CBO's the lead CBO is the applicant that should complete each Section.

Character Limitations in Cal-E-Grants

- Sections one (1) through seven (7) have a character limitation of 3,000 per narrative question. Each question must be answered within the appropriate text box per narrative question. Uploads with additional narrative information will not be accepted or scored.
- Section eight (8) Job & Responsibilities field has a character limitation of 1,500. All other fields within Section eight (8) have a character limitation of 500.

Evaluation Criteria	Maximum Points
<p>Section 1: Statement of Need – Low Wage Industry & SEED Target Populations</p> <p>Describe the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The low-wage industry or industries, including geographic location, that are the focus of your proposal. The demographic and linguistic characteristics of the workers whom you will be engaging to start or sustain the worker cooperative(s) or employee-owned small business(es), and how these workers are among SEED target populations. This may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Race Ethnicity 	10

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="radio"/> Gender <input type="radio"/> Language(s) spoken <input type="radio"/> Age group/range <input type="radio"/> Additional barriers to employment (explain) 	
Section 2: Summary of Worker Cooperative or Employee-Owned Small Business	25
<p>Describe all of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The worker cooperative(s) or employee-owned small business(es) that you propose to start or sustain in the low-wage industry, including where applicable, the purpose, business model, decision-making process and structure, and employment practices of the cooperative(s) or business(es). ● The strategies you will utilize to ensure that your project incorporates linguistically and culturally appropriate approaches. ● The measurable outcomes in terms of what your proposal seeks to accomplish within the grant period, the timeline to produce these outcomes, and how such outcomes will be captured and tracked. ● The performance metrics you will utilize to determine how your proposal has successfully supported the entrepreneurship and economic mobility of SEED target populations who face significant employment barriers, and how such measures will be captured and tracked. ● How your proposal will promote high road practices, worker voice, and economic equity in the low-wage industry or industries that are the focus of your proposal. ● If your application is a joint proposal of two or more CBOs: For each CBO, identify its roles, responsibilities, and activities in implementing this grant (including with respect to each worker cooperative or employee-owned business that will be launched or sustained under your proposal), and how roles, responsibilities, and activities will be coordinated, monitored, and evaluated to achieve effective grant execution and outcomes. 	
Section 3: Worker Training Curriculum to Support Worker Cooperative or Employee-Owned Small Business	5
<p>Describe your goals, outcomes, strategies, activities, performance metrics, deliverables, and timeline for implementation of this component of the grant, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● In general, the main components and subject areas of the training curriculum you will design to help support the 	

<p>formation, incubation, and/or capacity building of the worker cooperative(s) or employee-owned small business(es) in the low-wage industry or industries that are the subject of your proposal, including the types of training materials that will be developed as part of this curriculum.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Based on the curriculum that you develop, the method(s) you will use to provide the training for worker participants. • The strategies you will employ to ensure that the training curriculum is linguistically and culturally accessible for worker participants, including the language(s) into which you will translate the training curriculum and the language(s) that will be utilized to provide the trainings. • The documentation method you will utilize to indicate when worker participants have successfully completed the training, and how it will be administered and tracked. • Quarterly program activities, including the training materials and/or other deliverables that will be developed, and the timeline for development and implementation of this component. • Quarterly performance metrics that correlate with the progress of your proposed grant deliverables, and how such metrics will be captured and tracked. • The anticipated successful outcomes of implementing this program component. 	
<p>Section 4: Micro-grants to Help Start or Maintain Worker Cooperative or Employee-Owned Small Business</p> <p>Describe your goals, outcomes, strategies, activities, performance metrics, deliverables, and timeline for implementation of this component of the grant, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Your initial estimate of the number of micro-grants, and the approximate range of the micro-grant amount(s), that will help to launch or sustain the worker cooperative(s) or employee-owned small business(es), including an explanation of how the micro-grant(s) will be used. • The approach and methods that will be utilized to assess the needs of the worker cooperative or employee-owned small business for a micro-grant, to evaluate the most effective use of the micro-grant(s), and to make a final determination of the appropriate utilization, amount, and number of micro-grant(s). • The approach and methods you will utilize to develop and implement a plan and timetable for distribution of the micro-grants, after final determination of the need, use, amount, and number of micro-grant(s). • The systems and procedures, including documentation 	5

<p>protocols, that you will use to verify that micro-grants are utilized for their intended purpose, and to ensure overall fiscal and program integrity.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quarterly program activities and deliverables, and the timeline for development and implementation of this component. • Quarterly performance metrics that correlate with the progress of your proposed grant deliverables, and how such metrics will be captured and tracked. • The anticipated successful outcomes of implementing this program component. 	
<p>Section 5: Provision of Technical Assistance to Worker Cooperative or Employee-Owned Small Business</p> <p>Describe your goals, outcomes, strategies, activities, performance metrics, deliverables, and timeline for implementation of this component of the grant, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The anticipated technical assistance needs of the worker cooperative(s) or employee-owned business(es) and its worker members. • Your projected plan to provide technical assistance (e.g., either in-house or by engaging with another entity or entities to provide technical assistance). • The approach and methods you will utilize to assess and determine the forms of technical assistance that will actually be provided to the worker cooperative(s) or employee-owned business(es) and its worker members. • Quarterly program activities, including the types of materials and/or other deliverables that will be developed, and the timeline for development and implementation of this component. • Quarterly performance metrics that correlate with the progress of your proposed grant deliverables, and how such metrics will be captured and tracked. • The anticipated successful outcomes of implementing this program component. 	5
<p>Section 6: Organizational Background and Project Team</p> <p>Describe all of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Your organization's history, vision and mission, and examples of some of the typical work your organization is involved in. You may also include a description of any partnerships or networks that your organization participates in. 	25

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Your organization's demonstrated track record of building trust and credibility in immigrant and limited English proficient communities, and expertise in developing and implementing culturally and linguistically effective programs to serve SEED target populations. Include the number of years your organization has served these populations and in what capacity, the numbers of individuals in SEED target populations your organization has served, and the geographical reach of such programs. • Your organization's experience, knowledge, and capacity in developing, operating, and/or managing programs that promote innovative and socially responsible business models such as worker-owned enterprises and cooperatives. • Your organization's experience working with SEED target populations in low-wage industries such as homecare, domestic work, car wash, janitorial, street vending, restaurant, and other industries. • Your organization's industry knowledge of low-wage industries such as homecare, domestic work, car wash, janitorial, street vending, restaurant, and other industries. • Your organization's capacity to fulfill and manage the administrative and fiscal responsibilities under this grant. • Your organization's commitment and capacity to promote equity, inclusion, and socially responsible approaches, including high road employment, in implementing this grant. • Staff at your organization who will be the key team members to implement this grant, including project lead(s), and their roles and responsibilities with respect to this grant. For each key team member, also summarize their qualifications, experience, capabilities, and credentials. • If your application is a joint proposal of two or more CBOs: For the lead CBO applicant and each participating CBO, provide responses to all of the bullet points above in this Section. 	
<p>Section 7: Data Collection and Reporting</p> <p>Describe your proposed data collection methods and reporting procedures, including the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The systems and procedures that will be utilized to ensure timely and adequate documentation and tracking of the implementation of this proposal, including performance metrics and outcomes. 	5

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The systems and procedures that will be utilized to ensure timely, complete, and accurate reporting of information as required under this grant. • If this is a joint proposal of two or more CBOs, describe the foregoing with respect to the lead CBO and all participating CBOs. 	
<p>Section 8: Proposed Budget</p> <p>Provide a proposed budget for your grant request which shows that all program components to be implemented under this grant are adequately resourced and successful outcomes can be achieved. Include a detailed breakdown of all program expenses such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification of position(s) to be funded • Salary rates or ranges • Percentage of time devoted to program implementation • Any fringe benefits • Operating expenses • Travel and per diem expenses • Overhead and indirect costs <p>If your application is a joint proposal of two or more CBOs: The lead CBO must submit an overall budget for the entire proposal, which should incorporate separate line items for the budgets of each CBO participating.</p> <p>Proposed budgets should adhere to the micro-grant allocation framework and requirements regarding the allowable uses of funds under this grant.</p>	20
Total Maximum	100

D. Recommendation for Funding

The final scores will be ranked highest to lowest and will serve as a key basis for making recommendations for funding, in conjunction with other factors in order to ensure that SEED grants are distributed in an inclusive and equitable manner and to reach diverse SEED target populations throughout the state, especially those that are underserved and the most in need. Final awards will be based on which combination of proposals will achieve the most balance in terms of equity and/or geographic considerations and have the potential to have the most impact consistent with the statutory purpose of SEED.

Only those proposals deemed to be meritorious and in the best interests of the Agency and ETP will be recommended for funding. All awards are subject to the availability of

appropriated funds and to any modifications or additional requirements that may be imposed by law.

ETP reserves the right to adjust the total number of grants, as well as the duration and amount of each grant award. In some cases, ETP may request that the grant award contract incorporate changes to the original grant proposals.

Grant awardees will be announced in **April 2026**. (As noted above, this date is approximate and may be adjusted as conditions dictate, without an addendum to this SFP.)

ETP reserves the right to make additional awards to proposals not initially funded through this SFP, should additional funding become available.

E. Grantee Orientation Process

Following the start of the grant period, ETP will conduct a Grantee Orientation webinar. The purpose of this mandatory orientation is to review the program requirements, invoicing and budget processes, data collection and reporting requirements and forms, as well as other grant management and monitoring activities.

F. Appeal

An appeal by an unsuccessful applicant must be **received** by ETP no later than 5 (five) business days after the posting date of the notice of intent to award. The date or time on a postmark or other mail courier documentation is irrelevant to satisfying the deadline for ETP's receipt of any appeal. **Late appeals shall not be considered.**

ETP will accept appeals by email or regular U.S. mail at the following address:

ATTN: SEED SFP APPEALS
Jana Lazarewicz
Employment Training Panel
1100 J St, 4th Floor
Sacramento, CA 95814
jana.lazarewicz@etp.ca.gov

To be considered for review, a timely appeal must consist of a written statement containing the following information:

- Appealing organization's full name, address, contact name and title, contact's email address, and telephone number.
- A brief statement of the reason(s) for appeal. Only those documents originally submitted by the applicant as part of the SFP may form the basis of an appeal.
- A statement of the relief sought.

- Original signature of the authorized signatory of the organization.

If the applicant has filed a timely appeal, the applicant may submit a supplemental written statement as to the basis of the appeal, which must be **received** by ETP (via email or regular U.S. mail at the address above) within 5 calendar days of filing the appeal. The date or time on a postmark or other mail courier documentation is irrelevant to satisfying this deadline for ETP's receipt of a supplemental written statement. **Any late submission shall not be considered.**

ETP will limit its review to the written statement and any supplemental written statement provided by the appealing applicant. ETP will provide a written decision on the appeal, except in cases where the applicant withdraws or abandons the appeal. As noted in Section IV.A., there is no appeal for the failure to meet the proposal deadline.

G. Disposition of Proposal

All materials submitted in response to this SFP will become the property of ETP, and as such, are subject to the Public Records Act (Gov. Code, § 6250, et seq.). ETP will disregard any language purporting to render all or portions of any application confidential.

After applications are evaluated and the notice of intent to award has been announced, all applications shall be available for public inspection. However, the contents of all proposals, draft SFPs, correspondence, agenda, memoranda, working papers, or any other medium which discloses any aspect of a CBO's application shall be held in the strictest confidence until the award is made. ETP shall hold the content of all working papers and discussions relating to a proposal confidential indefinitely unless the public's interest is best served by disclosure because of pertinence to a decision, agreement, or the evaluation of a proposal.