CFA APPLICATION MANUAL

This manual outlines the process for applying through the CFA and a step-by-step guide to utilize the online application.

Additional CFA related documents can be found on the CFA home page at https://apps.cio.ny.gov/apps/cfa/.

More information on the Regional Councils can be found at www.regionalcouncils.ny.gov.

OVERVIEW

As part of New York's efforts to improve the business climate and expand economic growth, the NYS Consolidated Funding Application (CFA) was created to support the Regional Economic Development Council (REDC) Initiative. The CFA has streamlined and expedited the grant application process marking a fundamental shift in the way state resources are allocated, ensuring less bureaucracy and greater efficiency to fulfill local needs. The CFA allows applicants to access multiple state funding sources through one application, making the process quicker, easier, and more productive.

The CFA is designed to give project applicants expedited and streamlined access to a combined pool of grant funds and tax credits from dozens of existing programs. The CFA is a modern and easy-to-use online application that allows businesses and other entities to apply for multiple agency funding sources through a single, web-based application. As statewide programs and local needs have evolved, so has the CFA which is now host to a multitude of programs and initiatives. These programs change throughout the year so be sure to check back periodically to see what programs are available.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

GETTING STARTED

Registration

Technical Requirements

Starting a New Application

Cloning

Program Selection and Program Wizard

Registration

The Consolidated Funding Application is a web-based application accessible at https://apps.cio.ny.gov/apps/cfa/.

To apply for a grant, you must first register and identify the project for which funds are sought. The CFA allows applicants to be considered for multiple sources of funding for a project by filling out just one application.

On the registration page, enter an e-mail address, organization name, and project name. Prior to selecting "Register New Application," you must answer the security question at the bottom of the page. This is a security function that protects the grant system from spam.

The next screen verifies registration for the project and provides a project-specific token or password. **Take and save a screen shot and/or Print out this page and save it for your records.** You will need the token to revise or update your application.

*Troubleshooting Tip: Applicants seeking funding for **more than one project** must start a new application for each project and obtain an application number for each project. If you have previously registered for a CFA, you may login with your existing e-mail address and token to start a new application(s). To start a new application with existing credentials, select MY APPLICATIONS under the APPLICATION link located towards the top left corner of the screen, then select START NEW APPLICATION at the bottom of the screen.*
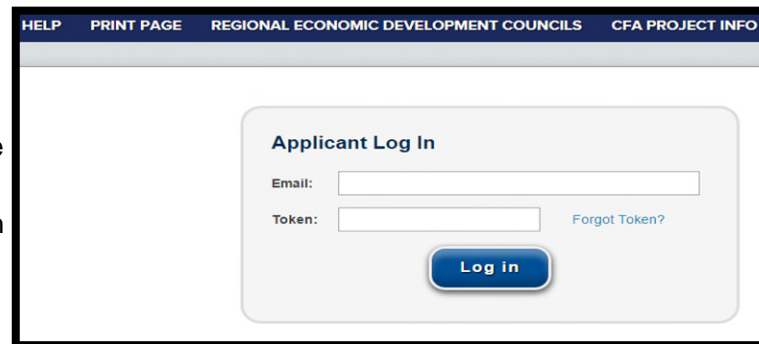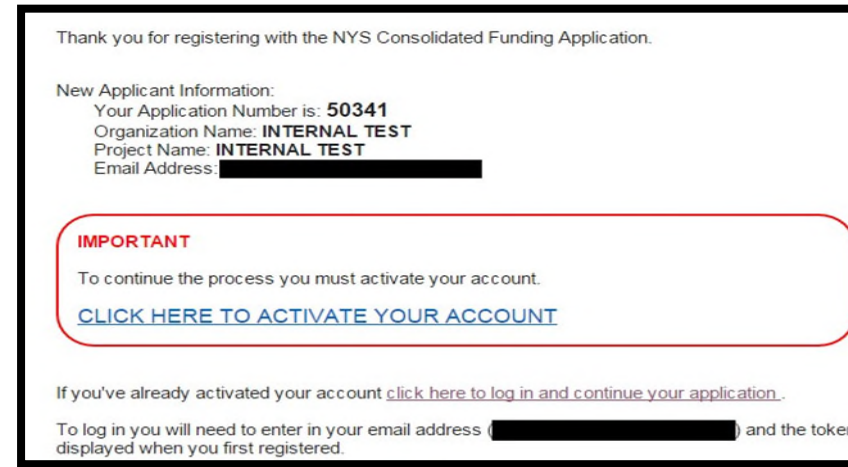
Registration Confirmation

When registering with a new e-mail address, you will receive an e-mail from cfa@ny.gov with information on how to continue the application process. **Please be sure to check your spam filter if you registered and did not receive an email for activating your account.** This e-mail will contain a link that you must follow to activate your account and begin the application. After you select "CLICK HERE TO ACTIVATE YOUR ACCOUNT," a page will open that confirms project registration. Select "Proceed to Log In" and the CFA system will take you right to setting up your first application.

Troubleshooting Tip: Oftentimes applicant register using a company or organization email. If you have checked your spam / junk inbox and the registration email is not there, it is possible it is being blocked by your organization before it reaches your inbox. Please try registering using an outlook.com, yahoo.com, or gmail.com e-mail address.

To sign in, an applicant must use the same email address they used when registering. Type the token provided at registration into the box.

If you have forgotten your token, please click the "Forgot Token?" link. A message will appear instructing you to submit your e-mail address and application number. Once you submit your e- mail address and application number, you will receive an email that contains a link to reset your token. If you require further assistance a phone number is included in the e-mail to call for help with your token. This number can only be used for assistance with a forgotten token.

Thank you for registering with the NYS Consolidated Funding Application.

New Applicant Information:
    Your Application Number is: **50341**
    Organization Name: **INTERNAL TEST**
    Project Name: **INTERNAL TEST**
    Email Address:

IMPORTANT

To continue the process you must activate your account.

CLICK HERE TO ACTIVATE YOUR ACCOUNT

If you've already activated your account click here to log in and continue your application.

To log in you will need to enter in your email address ( ) and the token displayed when you first registered.

HELP   PRINT PAGE   REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COUNCILS   CFA PROJECT INFO

Activation Confirmation

Your account is now active and you may log in.

Proceed to Log In

HELP   PRINT PAGE   REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COUNCILS   CFA PROJECT INFO

Applicant Log In

Email:

Token: Forgot Token?

Log in

Technical Requirements

The Welcome screen explains the technical requirements for using the CFA website, including the type of browser that can be used, the ability to create PDFs, and the ability to select and upload files. Use of the CFA website requires the following:

1. **A modern, standards-compliant browser**

Some functionality may not work in older browsers, such as Internet Explorer 10 (IE10) or earlier. Please use the latest version of Chrome, Firefox, or Edge.

1. **Ability to create PDF and ZIP documents**

PDFs are static documents that can be created using various software. Information is available on how to create PDFs from other documents by following this link.

PDF, JPG (photo) and ZIP (compressed) files are the only formats accepted by this system. Information is also available on how to create ZIP files.

1. **Ability to select and upload files**

You may not be able to upload documents using certain operating systems including iOS (iPhone, iPad), Android (before v2.2), and other mobile operating systems.

Starting a New Application

The CFA allows potential applicants options for beginning an application.

1. Newly Registered Applicants will be taken directly to Program Selection. If you are a newly registered applicant you may skip to the Program Selection page.

2. Returning applicants may log into the portal using their existing credentials and create a new application by clicking "Applications", then "My Applications" from the blue Ribbon. Then you would select START A NEW APPLICATION WITH THIS PROFILE. You will then enter a project name, business name and email then click create.

3. Returning applicants may also clone an existing application. Skip to next page for instructions on how to clone an application.

4. If you are a returning applicant who knows exactly which programs you want to apply for, you can use the "Program List" button to easily choose the programs you want.

5. At times additional initiative options will be available to select through to add to your application if desired.

PROFILE

You are logged in as ████████████████

New Application

To create a new application that is *not* connected to this profile, please log out and register a new application. This new application will have a different token and can have different email addresses.

OR... You have the option to create a new application that will be associated with your current profile. The email address and token you use to log in will remain the same and you will have the option to switch between your applications.

[Start New Application associated with this Profile]

My Applications

Your profile has access to the following 45 applications. You may select the application with which you would like to work.

Application # 126272 - *currently selected*

Project Name
████████████████

Business Name
████████████████

Email
████████████████

Finalization Status
In Progress

[Edit] [Download] [Cancel] [Clone]

[Proceed to Application]

Cloning an Application

If you registered for an application within the last two years, and you would like to apply to one or more programs again this year, you can "clone" last year's application into a new application for this year. This can be a time saver by copying most (**but not all**) of your answers from last year's application to this year's cloned application. You will have the ability to add new programs to your application after the cloning is complete.

If you are **not** looking to clone an application from last year, you may skip down to the "Program Selection" section page. If you are looking to clone last year's application, please use the following steps:

Log into the CFA portal with the email address and token you used to complete last year's application. After you log into the portal, click "Applications", then "My Applications" from the blue Ribbon.

Locate the application you wish to clone from your list of applications and select "Clone".

Enter a new Project Name and (optionally) a new Business name for the cloned application and click "Save". By default, last year's Project and Business names will be displayed

Notes on Cloned Applications:

- *You will still have to answer the Threshold Questions associated with the cloned programs to ensure that you are still eligible to apply for the cloned programs.*

- *Certain answers from your "old" application will **not** be cloned including Location, Attachment, Budget, and Certification questions.*

- *Once you complete the Threshold questions from cloned programs, you can select the "Programs" tab from the blue ribbon to add new programs to your application.*

Program Selection and Program Wizard

The Program Selection page is setup so all programs are visible on one page and multiple programs can be selected to add to the application by simply the check box next to the program name. By hovering over one of the four category cards the card will be highlighted in grey. By selecting that card you will be brought down to the section of the list where those programs are.

By selecting the program wizard you will be brough to another page where you will be guided through program selection with a series of questions and/or data to select which applies to your potential project or organization.

Program Selection Options

Economic Development Programs

For returning applicants and those familiar with the CFA system, choosing the Economic Development Programs will bring applicants directly to the section of the Program List containing a list of all Economic Development programs available.

Workforce Programs

For returning applicants and those familiar with the CFA system, choosing the Workforce Programs will bring applicants directly to the section of the Program List containing a list of all Workforce programs available.

Other NYS Programs

For returning applicants and those familiar with the CFA system, choosing the Other NYS Programs will bring applicants directly to the section of the Program List containing a list of other NYS programs which include funding and other opportunities from various state agencies.

Program Wizard

Select one or more categories from the list that best represents your project.

Once you have selected a Project Category, you must choose your Project Type. Multiple Project Types can be selected.

A list of programs based on your Project Category and Project Type selections will appear. You may remove a program from consideration before proceeding with the application by clicking on the Remove Program button.

Program Selection Threshold Questions

You must answer one or more Threshold Questions to determine if you meet the minimum qualifications for the program(s) you have selected. A "Click Here for Question Requirements" button appears under many of the Threshold Questions. Selecting "Click Here for Question Requirements" will provide a detailed explanation or instructions relating to the question.

Troubleshooting Tip: Threshold questions are to help determine if your project may be eligible for each program you are applying to.

==***Please note***==
If you fail to answer the threshold question(s) correctly, you will not be allowed to apply for that program under the current application. If you believe you answered one of the threshold questions wrong you must start a new application.

Threshold

Excelsior Jobs Program

Q_41

Does this project predominantly involve any of the following activities at the project location, and will it meet the minimum job creation requirements OR the minimum job retention requirements in NYS? Please click on "Scoring Tips" for project activity definitions.

(1) Manufacturing: minimum job creation = 5 net new jobs, OR minimum job retention = 5.

(2) Scientific research and development: minimum job creation = 5 net new jobs, OR minimum job retention = 25.

(3) Software development: minimum job creation = 5 net new jobs, OR minimum job retention = 25.

(4) Agricultural production or support; minimum job creation = 5 net new jobs, OR minimum job retention = 25.

(5) Back office operation: minimum job creation = 25 net new jobs, OR minimum job retention = 25.

(6) Financial Services: minimum job creation = 25 net new jobs, OR minimum job retention = 25.

(7) Distribution center: minimum job creation = 50 net new jobs, OR minimum job retention = 25.

(8) Life Sciences: minimum job creation = 5 net new jobs, OR minimum job retention = 25.

(9) Music production: minimum job creation = 5 net new jobs, OR minimum job retention = 25.

(10) Entertainment company: minimum job creation = 100 net new jobs, OR minimum job retention = 25.

https://esd.ny.gov/sites/default/files/Excelsior-Regs-2818.pdf

Click here for Question Requirements

○ Yes   ○ No

FAILED Threshold Questions

Since applicants are able to apply to multiple programs on one application, often times there may be a program(s) which you are not eligible to apply for as determined by failed threshold questions. Threshold questions are meant to save you the time of applying to a program which you are not eligible for.

When an applicant fails one or more threshold questions and **IS APPLYING FOR ONLY ONE PROGRAM** the following messages appear:

Since only one program was on the application and the applicant was ineligible for that program because of a failed threshold question, the system will tell the applicant they need to add a new program and list 'All Other Programs' for the applicant to select from. ****Please note you CANNOT change your threshold answers once they are submitted. If you believe you are truly eligible for a program you will need to start a new application and redo the threshold questions.****

FAILED Threshold Questions

Since applicants are able to apply to multiple programs on one application, often times there may be a program(s) which you are not eligible to apply for as determined by failed threshold questions. Threshold questions are meant to save you the time of applying to a program which you are not eligible for.

When an applicant fails one or more threshold questions and **IS APPLYING TO MULTIPLE PROGRAMS** the following messages appear:

Since multiple programs were on the application and the applicant was deemed ineligible for some but not all programs due to failed threshold questions, the system will tell the applicant how many programs the applicant may still apply to (may potentially qualify for) and how many programs they are ineligible for. A list of programs that are still on the application to apply to and a list of ineligible programs will be provided. Additionally, the system will show a list 'All Other Programs' for the applicant to select from if the applicant wishes to add more programs to their application. If additional programs are added, the applicant will now need to answer the threshold questions for that program. ****Please note you CANNOT change your threshold answers once they are submitted. If you believe you are truly eligible for a program you will need to start a new application and redo the threshold questions.****

WORKING THROUGH AN APPLICATION

Navigating the Application

Location

Documents

Questionnaire

Jobs

Funding

Reviewing the Application

Finalizing/Submitting the Application

Navigating the Application

Once you answer correctly and submit the threshold questions to at least one program you have selected for your application you can then begin navigating through the application itself and completing the various information needed.

> **Troubleshooting tip:** *if your application is in progress, you are able to add on new programs, but once you fail the threshold questions for a program it cannot be added back on. If you have answered the threshold questions incorrectly you must go back to the MY APPLICATIONS page and start a new application in order to apply to that program.*

You have the ability to navigate forward and backward through the application using the navigator at the top of every screen. To go to a specific section of the application, you hover over a section. The topics associated with the section will appear as well as information on how many questions in that section remain unanswered, but are required. By selecting the blue box that corresponds to the topic of interest, you will be redirected to that section of the application. As you progress through the application, completed sections are indicated by a green check mark.
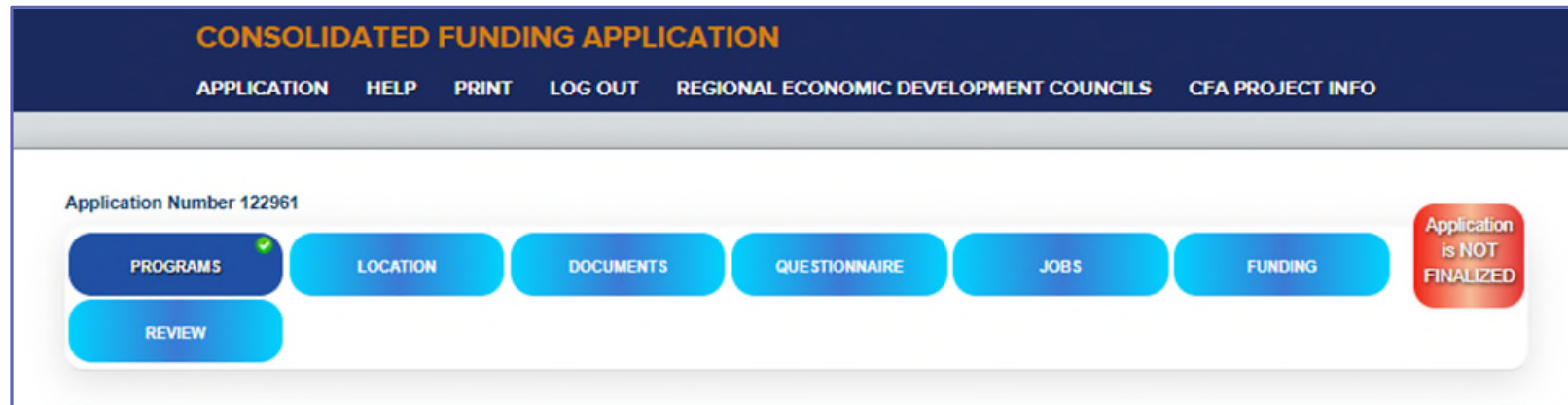
Location

All applicants must select the region within which your project is located. If your project is located within multiple regions, please select the region in which the majority of the project will take place.
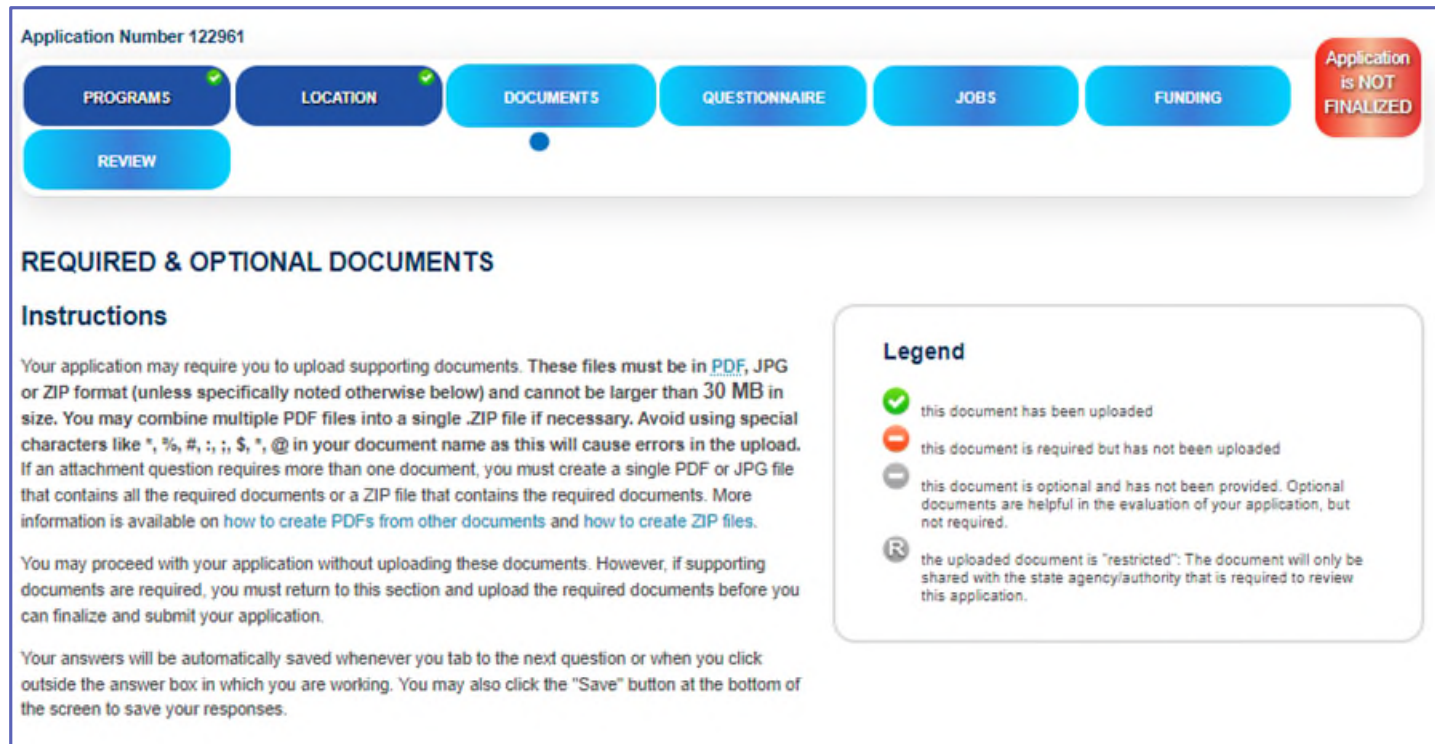
Additionally, this section will gather project location data like address, city, state, and zip code.

Documents

After you select your project's location, a screen will appear that lists the documents you must upload to complete the application (if any). These files must be in PDF, JPG or ZIP format and cannot be larger than 30 MB in size. You may combine multiple PDF files into a single .ZIP file if necessary. Avoid using special characters like *, %, #, :, ;, $, *, @ in your document name as this will cause errors in the upload. If an attachment question requires more than one document, you must create a single PDF or JPG file that contains all the required documents or a ZIP file that contains the required documents More information is available on how to create PDFs from other documents and how to create ZIP files.

You may proceed with your application without uploading the required documents, but you will not be able to finalize your application until all requirements have been completed. All required attachments must be submitted through the CFA, mailed hardcopies of attachments will not be accepted.

Questionnaire

The application will save your answers each time you tab or click out of a question box. The time the answer is saved is listed to the right of the answer box. A red circle is displayed next to the required questions and a grey circle next to optional questions. ***You will not be able to submit your application until all required questions have been answered.***

Questionnaire

The Questionnaire is where applicants will find a majority of the program specific questions. This section is set up so that applicants may roll-up or roll-down the questions within each question category by selecting the '+" next to the question category name. The screenshot below shows an example of how the questions look all rolled up. To expand all questions, simply click on 'Toggle Expansion' in the upper left or bottom left corner. Clicking 'Toggle Expansion' again will roll them all back up.

A reminder that all questions are saved as you enter them in this section. If an applicant wishes to only see questions that are incomplete and required, they may select the option at the top right hand side of the screen labeled 'Show only questions below that are incomplete and required'.

Questionnaire

Conditional Questions: The Consolidated Funding Application allows for the use of conditional questions. This allows for multiple questions (child question) to be shown or hidden based on an applicant's answer selection made on a prior question (parent question). A red circle is displayed next to the required questions and a grey circle next to optional questions.

Certification: The application includes a certification section where you verify your information by entering your name in the box. An example is a commitment to the Minority and Women's Business Enterprise Equal Employment Opportunity requirements. Another is verification that the person filling out the application is authorized to submit the application, and that the information provided is true to the best of their knowledge.

Jobs

The application contains a section where you indicate the net new jobs to be created and/or retained. Depending on your application, you may not be required to answer these questions. Definitions for different job types and other information about job requirements can be found at the top of the page for this tab as well as within the questions or by reviewing the 'Click here for question requirements' option. If there are specific questions related to jobs, please reach out to cfa-programs@ny.gov or reach out to your local regional office in the region for which your project is located. You can find a list of regional offices here: https://esd.ny.gov/regions.

Funding/Budget

Project Funding

If your application(s) requires you to indicate the amount of funding you are requesting, boxes will appear that require you to enter funding amounts and details for each program on your application.

PROJECT FUNDING

Instructions

The following section will collect information regarding your project's cost and funding. Please follow the instructions associated with each section below.

Total Project Cost

The TOTAL cost of the project for which funds are being requested via this CFA. Projects that have multiple phases should be careful to include ONLY the phase covered by this CFA round. Please use only numbers; no commas (,), dollar signs ($), or special characters.

Total project cost: $ [0]

[Save]

Funding Requested from Program

The amount you are requesting from each program on your application. Please use only numbers; no commas (,), dollar signs ($), or special characters.

Program	Amount Requested	
Excelsior Jobs Program	$	[ ]
NYSERDA Energy Efficiency Projects	$	Answer Not Required
Total Amount Requested	$	0

[Save]

Program Funding

A detailed budget breakdown is also required for many CFA programs. Applicants should provide as much detailed information regarding sources and uses of funds and should closely read program guidance documents to make sure the funding they are requesting is going towards an eligible use. Help text is generally available for further information on how to properly fill out the Program Budget section for each resource.

Program Budget

For each program, indicate the sources and uses of funds required to complete the project for which funds are being requested. If you are requesting funds from multiple programs, the sum of all program requests should equal the total CFA funding requested. The Program Budget should be consistent with any program match requirements or funding limits, as detailed in the program's HELP section. Include all non-CFA sources such as private funding, funds from lending institutions, and in-kind, as allowed by the program. If a funding source supports multiple uses, each source should be accompanied by a separate use and amount. Please use only numbers for the amount; no commas (,), dollar signs ($), or special characters.

Excelsior Jobs Program   Show Help

Use [?]	Source [?]	Amount	Indicate Source / Comments	Add / Remove
Use ▼	Source ▼	$		[Remove]
Total - Excelsior Jobs Program:		$ 0		[Add Row]

[Save & Proceed with Application]

Application Review

Once you answer all the questions on your application, select the Save and Proceed button at the bottom of the screen. This will take you to a map to confirm the location of your project. If you did not enter a valid address on the location tab, you will be asked to pin point where your project will take place and confirm the coordinates. If you feel you get that message in error, please go back to the location tab and verify the correct information was entered.

Once the address is confirmed on the map a review screen will be displayed. If you did not answer required questions, a red circle will display next to the questions section.

You must go back and complete the required questions before you can finalize and submit your application.

Finalize and Submit Application

To finalize and submit your application, you need to click the dark blue button labeled "By Clicking here…." at the bottom of the screen. After you finalize and submit your application, it cannot be modified or amended. If you would like to un-finalize you application to edit it, you must e-mail CFA-Tech@ny.gov prior to the closing date. Once your application is un-finalized, it will be marked as in progress as opposed to finalized. In order to be considered for funding your application must be **re-finalized** by the deadline for the program(s) you are applying. **If the application is not re-finalized by the deadline, it will not be reviewed or considered for funding.**

After you submit your application, you will receive a thank you message as well as an e-mail message that acknowledges receipt of your application.

You will still be able to login using your registered e-mail address and token to review your finalized application, print, or start a new application for a new project.

REVIEW PROCESS FOR CONSOLIDATED FUNDING APPLICATIONS

Submission of Applications

CFAs must be submitted/finalized online for programs that are subject to a deadline as outlined in the program's guidelines. For more information on guidelines for programs currently available in the CFA please visit the NYS consolidated funding application home page and navigate to the resources available. Supporting documents must be uploaded before applicants can finalize and submit their applications. It is strongly recommended that applicants submit proposals well in advance of the close date to avoid any submission issues. Applications will not be accepted after program deadlines.

Applicants will answer threshold questions to determine whether their project/application may be eligible for CFA funding programs and from what source(s). Because some funding sources are only available to certain categories of project applicants – such as municipalities, nonprofits, or businesses – these threshold questions will help determine eligibility.

Most projects can apply to multiple programs under one application, as is the case with the REDC initiative programs and this year's CFA round. With the expansion of programs available in the CFA, sometimes there are programs which can only be applied to alone. In that case you may need to apply to another program by starting a new application.

Review of CFAs

Each program will review applications based on a set of standards as outlined in their program guidelines. For programs that are part of the REDC initiative, regional councils will assign a score based on merit, which will account for 20% of the total review. Applicants will be notified of awarded or not awarded by the program to which they applied. Questions about status of applications can be sent to cfa-programs@ny.gov where they will be routed to the appropriate program contact.

CONTACT

CFA-PROGRAMS@NY.GOV

CFA-TECH@NY.GOV