

FAQs
FY 2021 Webinar: Navigating the NSGP Grant Application
January 21, 2021
Prepared By: SCN & JFNA

Q: Can you get funds for security guards as well?

A: Contracted security may be one of several investments requested, so long as all investments are identified and prioritized in the vulnerability/risk assessment. The FY 2021 NSGP Notice of Funding Opportunity will set forth the current requirements for this allowable cost. Based on the FY 2020 NOFO and related guidance:

- Contracted security personnel cannot be a full or part-time employee on the payroll.
- The sub-applicant must demonstrate that they can sustain the cost without an NSGP award.
- NSGP funds cannot be used to purchase equipment for contract security personnel.
- Generally speaking, contracted security costs cannot exceed 50% of a total award without a waiver submitted by the SAA to FEMA. However, FEMA will generally approve personnel waiver requests that are justified based on vulnerability assessment results and how the contracted security personnel will address and mitigate those vulnerabilities.
- Always check in with the SAA before submitting a contracted security personnel request to be clear on their views and expectations with respect to this cost.

Q: Last year max grant was \$100K. With double the program funding, will that ceiling be lifted?

A: The award cap in recent years has been \$100,000.00 for both NSGP-Urban Area and NSGP-State initiatives. Depending on the program's annual appropriation, the cap amount could go up or down. This year (FY 2021), we expect that the cap will remain the same or possibly increase to reflect the increase in the program's annual appropriation by \$90 million over last year.

Q: Is there an explicit list of which urban areas count?

A: There are two funding sources available to nonprofit organizations under NSGP, based on geographic location. If an applicant is located within an urban area that FEMA and DHS have designated as a high-threat location, they would be eligible for the Nonprofit Security Grant Program - Urban Area (NSGP-UA). The list of NSGP-UA jurisdictions is subject to change each year, and the current list will be published in the FY 2021 Notice of Funding Opportunity. Nonprofit organizations in the rest of the country are eligible for the Nonprofit Security Grant Program - State (NSGP-S). An organization's physical address will determine which program option is applicable to them.

Q: How are organizations able to pay vendors a deposit to get their projects started if they don't have that much money available?

A: The NSGP program is based on a reimbursement process. The period of performance is 36 months. Some vendors may agree to accept payment for services based on the reimbursement timeline. Some applicants may space the work out over time, implementing the next stage only after the prior stage is reimbursed. Some applicants may seek short term bridge loans. Others will apply for up to what they are able to afford to lay out.

Q: If we did a risk assessment in February or March 2020, do we need to do one again?

A: For an assessment that occurred 36 months or longer, a best practice would be to update the assessment. Risks and vulnerabilities may have changed in the timeframe, which could impact recommended investments to address them. And if you are seeking investments that are not justified within the vulnerability/risk assessment, an update to the existing assessment might be warranted to address additional categories of investments.

Q: Is the difference between urban and non-urban based upon a zip code of where you are located? We are 1 mile from an urban area. How would we know which grant to apply to?

A: An organization's physical address will determine which program option is applicable to them. Contact the State Administrative Agency (SAA) to confirm which program is applicable. The following is a link to FEMA's SAA contact list for further inquiry: <https://www.fema.gov/grants/preparedness/state-administrative-agency-contacts>.

Q: Can you please include the website where we will find the updated assessment form?

A: FEMA does not prescribe which assessment tool an applicant may utilize as a basis for the grant. A professional assessment conducted by experienced assessors is advisable. An SCN-supported community/regional security directors/advisors and/or Federation-based security director may be available to assist, or state or local law enforcement partners may provide them free of charge.

If these options are not available, there may be privately available vendors available that will conduct assessments at a cost (not reimbursable through the grant). Private sector vendors may vary in cost, quality, and competency, so it would be advisable to vet/conduct due diligence on all prospective candidates and confer with SCN's Duty Desk if there are questions or concerns, at: dutydesk@securecommunitynetwork.org.

SCN has developed a Threat, Vulnerability, and Risk Assessment (TVRA) tool specifically for the NSGP that may be accessed here: <https://securecommunitynetwork.org/resources/dhs-grant-funds-information/nsgp-tvra-tool>.

There are also quality self-assessments available that may be accepted, including:

- <https://www.jcrcny.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/NJ-FacilityAssessmentTool5.25.17.pdf>
- <https://www.cisa.gov/houses-of-worship>

It is best to check with your SAA to ensure acceptance of a self-assessment.

Q: If we already received a grant, are we eligible for another one?

A: There is no prohibition to applying for a second grant, even if a prior grant is still in its period of performance. In the appropriate place in the Investment Justification (application), applicants are required to disclose and describe prior NSGP grant awards. If applying, the applicant should make sure that the investments requested are identified and prioritized in the vulnerability/risk assessment and differ, complement, or add to the existing award project plan, but do not duplicate it.

Q: If we have an assessment done by the SCN regional security advisor, we don't need to do one ourselves, correct?

A: FEMA does not prescribe which assessment tool an applicant may utilize as a basis for the grant. A professional assessment conducted by experienced assessors is advisable. SCN-supported community/regional security directors/advisors provide assessments that will qualify.

Q: Where can we obtain the SCN Self-assessment tool?

A: The SCN Threat, Vulnerability, and Risk Assessment (TVRA) tool can be accessed here: <https://securecommunitynetwork.org/resources/dhs-grant-funds-information/nsgp-tvra-tool>.

Q: Will there be another workshop/webinar prior to the release of the grant?

A: There are two additional webinars scheduled in February: 1) [11 February](#), and; 2) [18 February](#). We plan to schedule additional webinars as the grant rolls out and will update the field on any modifications or additions to the funding opportunity once the Federal Emergency Management Agency releases the FY 2021 Notice of Funding Opportunity.

Q: Where to find urban -vs- non-urban areas in VA?

A: Under the FY 2020 Notice of Funding Opportunity, parts of northern Virginia were located within the National Capital Region urban area (consisting of the District of Columbia and suburban Maryland and Virginia) and the Hampton Roads Area. Generally, there will be about thirty high-risk urban areas that will be eligible to apply for the NSGP Urban Area initiative in FY 2021, which will be listed in the upcoming FEMA Notice of Funding Opportunity.

Q: How recent does the risk assessment need to be? We did one 2 years ago. Do we need a new assessment?

A: Generally speaking, any risk assessment 3 years or older should be redone. Any new investments being sought through the grant must be identified and supported through the risk assessment. If not, an applicant may need to supplement their existing risk assessment to cover new issues or concerns. If an applicant is planning to complete unfinished investments identified in its previous assessment, there should be no problem in relying on the existing assessment.

Q: Where do you put the assessment on the grant application, or do you attach it?

A: Generally speaking, the vulnerability/risk assessment will be emailed or uploaded to the State Administrative Agency, per their directions, along with the Investment Justification, Mission Statement and any other documentation the SAA instructs to be provided.

Q: How do we factor in a building with multiple tenants, some of whom are not Jewish?

A: Only one organization can apply per application. However, for multiple organizations located within the same physical structure, campus, or contiguous physical setting, investments sought could benefit multiple organizations.

Q: How do we allow for changes in use due to COVID (e.g., fewer students and communities using the building)?

A: The impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic could affect the NSGP in a couple of ways. Applicants should plan and allow for extra time that might be necessary to schedule vulnerability/risk assessments, vendor estimates, and meeting project milestones. Investments in contracted security personnel may not be

viewed as a priority during the pandemic and this potentiality should be discussed or clarified with and the State Administrative Agency.

Q: The DHS recommended security improvements. Is the DHS assessment still valid for requesting funding?

A: Yes, a CISA PSA vulnerability/risk assessment would be valid. The DHS Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) has recently updated a self-assessment tool, which can be found at: <https://www.cisa.gov/houses-of-worship>. They have also updated their faith-based resource page that supports efforts to maintain safe and secure houses of worship and related facilities, which can be accessed at: <https://www.cisa.gov/faith-based-organizations-houses-worship>.

Q: If organization B rents space in organization A's building, can each organization apply for the grant separately for different items?

A: Yes. Each would need to be 1 501(c)(3) organization and conduct separate vulnerability/risk assessments.

Q: Have there been any changes to the AEL since last year?

A: Any changes to the AEL list will not be known until after FEMA's Notice of Funding Opportunity is released in late February. JFNA and SCN will update the field to any changes to the NOFO, including changes to the AEL list.

Q: It seems like trainings are often free, but can be hard to come by/schedule.

A: There are various training opportunities, including those offered by state or local law enforcement, DHS/CISA Protective Security Advisors, and Federation/SCN community security directors and regional advisors. Security vendors and consultants also may offer training for a cost. Planning, training and exercise workshops and opportunities are advisable inclusions in the NSGP application, if supported by the vulnerability/risk assessment. To consider your training options, contact SCN at: training@securecommunitynetwork.org.

Q: Is there a list of sources of quality trainings that would be for a cost?

A: To consider your training options, contact SCN at: training@securecommunitynetwork.org.

Q: Are Stop the bleed supplies / kits covered or just the training?

A: Allowable training topics are limited to the protection of critical infrastructure key resources, including physical and cybersecurity, target hardening, and terrorism awareness/employee preparedness such as Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) training, Active Shooter training, and emergency first aid training. Training conducted using NSGP funds must address a specific threat and/or vulnerability, as identified in the nonprofit organization's IJ. Training should provide the opportunity to demonstrate and validate skills learned as well as to identify any gaps in these skills. **Proposed attendance at training courses and all associated costs using the NSGP must be included in the nonprofit organization's IJ.**

Allowable training costs include:

- Employed or volunteer security staff to attend security-related training within the U.S.;
- Employed or volunteer staff to attend security-related training within the United States with the intent of training other employees or members/congregants upon completing the training (i.e., “train-the-trainer” type courses);
- Nonprofit organization’s employees, or members/congregants to receive on-site security training.
- Attendance fees for training and related expenses, such as materials, supplies, and/or equipment. Overtime, backfill, and travel expenses are not allowable costs.

Q: Is this grant available for Massachusetts?

A: Yes. Under the NSGP-Urban Area initiative, as of FY 2020 (last year), the Boston Area (MA) was included. All other communities in Massachusetts would be eligible for the NSGP-State initiative. The FY 2021 FEMA Notice of Funding opportunity will list all eligible Areas under the NSGP-Urban Area initiative and will set forth the minimum funding allocations for each state under the NSGP-State initiative, including for Massachusetts.

Q: Are ballistic windows considered approved equipment?

A: The specifications for AEL approved equipment related to impact resistant improvements can be found at: 14EX-00-BSIR - Systems, Building, Blast/Shock/Impact Resistant Systems (to mitigate damage from blasts, shocks, or impacts, such as column and surface wraps, wall coverings, breakage/shatter resistant glass, window wraps, and deflection shields).

Q: Do you have someone that we can contact in the future for further questions or get specific advice on our specific needs when working on the application?

A: Both JFNA (at: Rob.Goldberg@JFNA.org) and SCN (at: nsgpsupport@securecommunitynetwork.org) are available to assist with application questions.

Q: Can you get funded for maintenance of existing security system ie batteries for panic buttons?

A: Funding is available to replace or expand current security systems if they are obsolete or insufficient, so long as they are identified in the vulnerability/risk assessment as justified and priority investments.

Q: If our nonprofit agency has several affiliates, can I do one application for both affiliates, or do I need to submit two proposals?

A: Currently it is permissible for an organization with locations in two or more states to apply separately in each state for an award. For FY 2021, FEMA is considering a change in the guidelines to allow an organization with multiple locations within the same state to each apply separately for a grant. Currently, it may be permissible for an organization with multiple locations located within the same state to split a single award between more than one location up to the cap. In these circumstances, it is best to confer with the SAA about such plans before applying, as the viability and allowability of a multi-location application may vary between SAAs.

Q: For the AEL list, do we need to literally buy specific items that you are recommended?

A: The Authorized Equipment List (AEL) is a list of approved equipment types allowed under FEMA’s preparedness grant programs, including the Nonprofit Security Grant Program (NSGP). The list consists

of 21 equipment categories divided into categories, sub-categories and then individual equipment items. The NSGP program is limited to two categories (14 and 15), but not all of the sub-categories (these must be checked for eligibility). **There are no commercially available products listed; it only consists of equipment types.**

Q: Are speed bumps covered under the barriers and bollards AEL?

A: 14SW-01-WALL - Barriers: Fences; Jersey Walls provides for the acquisition and installation of obstacles designed to channel or halt pedestrian or vehicle-borne traffic in order to protect a physical asset or facility. Whether a speed bump would be an eligible cost under this category would depend on its purpose – what vulnerability identified in the vulnerability/risk assessment would be addressed and would the investment requested be an efficient and effective practice to address the vulnerability. If the purpose would be to halt or channel vehicle-borne traffic, it might be considered an eligible cost, but it would be advisable to seek guidance from the State Administrative Agency to be sure.

Q: Is funding available for network/cyberattack protection hardware/software/services? How about security monitoring service?

A: System, Information Technology Contingency Operations (14CI-00-COOP) (to include back-up computer hardware, operating systems, data storage, and application software necessary to provide a working environment for contingency operations) is an eligible investment category under the Approved Equipment List. Cybersecurity is also an allowable training topic. However, as a policy, FEMA and the SAAs have generally considered physical security enhancements more of a priority for funding. As cybersecurity has become a more pressing concern during the COVID-19 pandemic (as more people and businesses have moved to remote work settings), we have asked FEMA to address the cybersecurity question more clearly in the upcoming Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO). In the meantime, we advise that if seeking cyber-related investments that they be identified as a top vulnerability in the risk assessment and a recommended priority investment request.

Q: Can you fund reimbursement for target hardening you already purchased, ie key fob system?

A: No. Unallowable costs include: Initiatives that fund risk or vulnerability security assessments or the development of the IJ proof-of-concept initiatives, or generally, any pre-award security expenses.

Q: Can we apply for a security grant for a facility that is being built rather than to harden the security for an existing facility?

A: Possibly. Issues: An applicant may come up against the period of performance (36 months) and satisfactorily articulating milestones and timelines, which could prove difficult in a construction situation; the State Administrative Agency may require that the project be able to commence as soon as all post-award requisites are satisfied and without delay; May run into challenges conducting a vulnerability/risk assessment in the absence of a physical structure; the SAA may choose only to fund projects of existing structures. It would be advisable to check with the SAA about their requirements regarding building under construction.

Q: Would you please clarify a little more about what can be funded for the grant- you mentioned that fencing can be included but not necessarily some of the mitigation needed to install the fence. Is installation included or literally just materials? Thx!

A: Acquisition AND installation of approved equipment are generally permissible costs.

Q: We have applied for similar government grants, both state and Federal, and were not successful. How can we make this application different/better this time around?

A: There are several factors that influence award decisions that make it difficult to provide feedback to a particular applicant, including quantity of applicants (limited resources), quality of the application (competency and impact of the IJ), static factors (rankings of applicants from higher risk to less risk), risk ranking by state (based on risk analysis formula), and related national intelligence analysis (immediate security concerns facing the nation). Consequently, it is not feasible to assess a particular applicant's deficiencies. What is in an applicant's control is the quality of the application. For this reason, SCN and JFNA have developed materials and tools to support sub-applicants to successfully navigate the NSGP application process and are available to answer questions sub-applicants may have along the way. For technical assistance, sub-applicants may contact SCN at: nsgpsupport@securecommunitynetwork.org, and JFNA at: Rob.Goldberg@JFNA.org.

Q: Do 501(c) (3) organizations need to obtain a Duns number?

A: A current Dun & Bradstreet Number (DUNS) is required of all sub-applicants. To register or search for an existing DUNS Number, go to: <http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform/displayHomePage.do>. If one does not exist, it can be created in as soon as one business day, though it is advisable to allow plenty of time.

Q: What is UASI?

A: UASI stands for Urban Area Security Initiative. The Nonprofit Security Grant Program-Urban Area is funded through UASI. FEMA determines eligible areas for inclusion in the NSGP-Urban Area initiative. This may change from year to year. In FY 2020 (this past year), there were 31 designated UASI areas eligible to participate in the NSGP-Urban Area initiative, including:

Phoenix Area (AZ); Anaheim/Santa Ana Area, Bay Area, Los Angeles/Long Beach Area, Riverside Area, Sacramento Area, San Diego Area (CA); Denver Area (CO); National Capital Region (DC, parts of MD and VA); Miami/Fort Lauderdale Area, Orlando Area, Tampa Area (FL); Atlanta Area (GA); Honolulu Area (HI); Chicago Area (IL); New Orleans Area (LA); Baltimore Area (MD); Boston Area (MA); Detroit Area (MI); Twin Cities Area (MN); St. Louis Area (MO); Las Vegas Area (NV); Jersey City/Newark Area (NJ) New York City Area (NY); Portland Area (OR); Philadelphia Area, Pittsburgh Area (PA); Dallas/Fort Worth/Arlington Area, Houston Area, San Antonio Area (TX); Hampton Roads Area (VA); Seattle Area (WA).

Q: How can we find out in the past, and ongoing, what our grades were and possibly how we can improve? If we never know and never get feedback than we'll keep on making the same mistakes.

A: The SAA scores and prioritizes sub-applications, and then submits them to FEMA for review. FEMA further scores and prioritizes the sub-applications and makes recommendations to the Secretary of Homeland Security. The Secretary makes all final award decisions. Historically, about one-third of requests submitted by SAAs were funded in any given year. This past year, with increased funding, closer to 50 percent of applications submitted by SAAs were funded. For this cycle, available funding has doubled over last year's level, which may have a positive impact on results. However, there are several factors that influence award decisions that make it difficult to predict outcomes, including quantity of applicants (limited resources), quality of the application (competency and impact of the IJ), static factors (rankings of applicants from higher risk to less risk), risk ranking by state (based on risk analysis formula),

and related national intelligence analysis (immediate security concerns facing the nation). Additionally, State Administrative Agencies submitted more than 2,000 applications to FEMA last year, and each was reviewed at least three times between the state and local level, involving hundreds if not thousands of reviewers. Logistically, FEMA and most SAAs will not have the means or opportunity to provide specific feedback to individual applicants on their submissions. In some cases, SAAs will furnish sub-applicants upon request with at least the state's scoring sheet, but this would be rare.

Q: Is the single application for assistance a separate application from the 7 sections of the IJ?

A: The Investment Justification (IJ) is the sub-application. Generally speaking, the sub-applicant will be required to submit their mission statement, vulnerability/risk assessment, Investment Justification (IJ), supporting documentation that substantiates threat, if applicable, and any other information the State Administrative Agency may request.

Q: Can we apply for the full cost of the project, or is there some cost sharing required?

A: There is no cost share or match requirement for the NSGP grant opportunity.

Q: How far back should we go for previous/existing threats? If something happened in a former facility over 10 years ago, is it worth mentioning? Or, stick with current or more recent attacks?

A: Rule of thumb when answering questions pertaining to threat incidents (in order of priority):

- Describe **specific terror (or violent homegrown extremist) incidents**, threats, hate crimes, and/or related vandalism, trespass, intimidation, or destruction of property that have targeted its property, membership, or personnel. This may also include a specific event or circumstance that impacted an affiliate or member of the organization's system or network.
- Report on **incidents/threats that have occurred in the community** and/or state where the organization is located.
- Reference the **public record regarding incidents/threats against similar or like institutions** at home or abroad. With respect to referencing the public record, there is limited working space in the IJ, so sub-applicant should be selective in choosing appropriate examples to incorporate into the response: **events that are most recent, geographically proximate, and closely related to their type or circumstance of their organization** or are of such magnitude or breadth that they create a significant existential threat to the Jewish community at large.

Q: Can collaborative applications be submitted? Are they ranked any differently than individual ones?

A: Generally speaking, there is one sub-applicant and one physical address (requiring one mission statement, one DUNS number, one Investment Justification, and one vulnerability/risk assessment). If, however, there are multiple organizations located within the same physical structure, campus, or contiguous physical setting, investments sought by the sub-applicant could benefit multiple organizations.

Q: Do the dialogue boxes contain word/character limits that are visible ahead of time?

A: There are seven parts to the Investment Justification. Some, but not all the sections, have character limitations. For those applicable sections of the IJ, the character limitations will be noted.

Q: Is this grant program only offered to Jewish nonprofit organizations?

A: All places of worship and other faith- and community-based 501(C)(3) organizations are eligible to apply.

Q: Are the milestones stated as calendar dates or as months after award?

A: Milestones are set forth in part 5 of the IJ. There is space to briefly describe each key activity followed by an estimated start date and completion date. Start dates should reflect the start of the associated key activities and the end date should reflect when the milestone event will occur. As reference points, the anticipated period of performance will be 36-months. The period of performance will commence when the awards are noticed by FEMA around September 1, 2021, and no later than September 30th. The projected end-date is August 31, 2024. Regarding the milestone timeline, a project cannot commence until prerequisite requirements of the acceptance agreement are met, including satisfying FEMA's Environmental Planning and Historic Preservation review and the State Administrative Agency gives the go-ahead. This could take several months (i.e., 60-to-90 days or more) to complete. Therefore, the Milestone timeline should reflect this waiting period/delay.

Q: With regard to project management, is it imperative to list one individual or list a few to show that there is an expert team in place that will be managing the project?

A: Part VI of the IJ pertains to project management. The section sets forth senior management roles and responsibilities, governance structure, and expertise required to successfully manage the project. Provide project management details, such as the complete contact information for the project manager and a description of their relevant experience. To the degree known and applicable, a sub-applicant should also identify other persons who will be enlisted to advise, coordinate, or help carry out the project, their expected roles, responsibilities, and relevant experience. Where there are vacant positions or unknowns that are expected to be filled, then include each position to be filled and the expected roles, responsibilities, and qualifications for each position.

Q: Since this is a Federal Grant, how is the funding allocated among the states, and how many awards and for what amounts are offered per State? Or where can we get this information?

A: The award cap in recent years has been \$100,000.00 for both NSGP-Urban Area and NSGP-State initiatives. Depending on the program's annual appropriation, the cap amount could go up or down. This year (FY 2021), we expect that the cap will remain the same or possibly increase to reflect the increase in the program's annual appropriation by \$90 million over last year. Applicants should apply for investments up to the cap (or exceeding the cap, if warranted and additional non-federal resources are available), based on the priorities identified in the vulnerability/risk assessment and which, by industry standards, would be considered most appropriate. Generally speaking, applications funded under NSGP-Urban Area are awarded the amount requested so long as all the investments are eligible costs. However, under NSGP-State, State Administrative Agencies may reduce the cap and partially award applications in order to approve more applications. This year, as the NSGP-State program will receive \$50 million more than last year (for a total of \$90 million), it is possible that fewer states will opt to reduce the cap FEMA established in the NOFO. The NOFO will establish what each state is allocated under the NSGP-State program.

Q: We have a much older demographic age group of our members. It would be hard for them to respond to any emergency. We have inadequate escape exits. We need to break out a wall and install a new exit wide enough for wheelchairs and walkers. Is this situation adequate to receive funding?

A: It is possible. The vulnerability/risk assessment would have to identify this investment as a priority. It would be subject to the construction/renovation requirements and limitations of the FY 2021 Notice of Funding Opportunity and Preparedness Grants Manual, as well as satisfy both state and federal Environmental and Historic Preservation requirements. For a project such as this, it is advisable to speak to your State Administrative Agency as soon as possible to discuss feasibility of the project.

Q: What is maximum \$ granted?

A: Generally speaking, the award cap in recent years has been \$100,000.00 for both NSGP-Urban Area and NSGP-State initiatives. Depending on the program's annual appropriation, the cap amount could go up or down. This year (FY 2021), we expect that the cap will remain the same or possibly increase to reflect the increase in the program's annual appropriation by \$90 million over last year. However, under NSGP-State, State Administrative Agencies may reduce the cap and partially award applications in order to approve more applications.

Q: Do you still list your justified needs if they exceed 100K?

A: In Part I of the Investment Justification, sub-applicants are asked to list the NSGP funding requested and the total project cost.

Q: I thought the 5 points was issued if "never received" a grant or haven't received in the last 5 years?

A: In the Funding History section of the Investment Justification, sub-applicants will set forth any past NSGP funding, the year/s funded, the funding amount/s and the investment types. In the past, the Notice of Funding Opportunity has provided a bonus to scores of sub-applicants that have not previously received NSGP funding, and most recently the NOFO provided 5 such points. We expect the bonus system to continue in FY 2021 and the NOFO will set forth the bonus points that will be provided.

Q: Can you provide us with a sample Mission statement?

A: We do not provide mission statements.

Q: How do I find our state administrator or is everything thru FEMA?

A: The point of contact for sub-applicants is their State Administrative Agency. A number of State Administrative Agencies (SAA) are already taking proactive steps and posting preliminary information and pre-requisites to applying for the FY 2021 NSGP grant opportunity. It is therefore recommended that interested parties check in with their respective State Administrative Agencies (including their websites) to monitor whether any announcements or other preliminary actions have been taken by their SAAs and to request notification when the SAAs plan to initiate guidance on the next grant opportunity. The following is a link to FEMA's SAA contact list:

<https://www.fema.gov/grants/preparedness/state-administrative-agency-contacts>.

Q: If my synagogue has one security guard when we are in the building, will the grant pay to continue this one person (while funds last) or only get funds if we want to have a second security guard?

A: Contracted security personnel are allowed under this program for new investments or an expansion of existing contracted security personnel, but not to supplant existing costs, and would need to be supported as a priority within the vulnerability/risk assessment. The FY 2021 NSGP Notice of Funding Opportunity will set forth the requirements for this allowable cost. Based on the FY 2020 NOFO (and related guidance) requirements include:

- Contracted security personnel cannot be a full or part-time employee on the payroll.
- The sub-applicant must demonstrate that they can sustain the cost without an NSGP award.
- NSGP funds cannot be used to purchase equipment for contract security personnel.
- Generally speaking, contracted security costs cannot exceed 50% of a total award without a waiver submitted by the SAA to FEMA. However, FEMA will generally approve personnel waiver requests that are well justified based on vulnerability assessment results and how the contracted security personnel will address and mitigate those vulnerabilities.
- Always check in with the SAA before submitting a contracted security personnel request to be clear on their views and expectations with respect to this cost.

Q: We are a Jewish Congregation and one of our tenants (separate entity) is a Jewish day school. How should we address this? Can we include them in our application?

A: There are two options. The Congregation can apply for a grant that covers the entire building, including its tenants, or the Congregation and the tenant may apply separately. If they would apply separately, each would be required to have separate vulnerability/risk assessments conducted and each would be required to complete all application requirements as stand-alone entities.

Q: We have received a security grant from the state. Does that mean we HAVE gotten such a grant?

A: The Nonprofit Security Grant Program is part of the Federal Emergency Management Agency's Preparedness Grant Programs. Separately, several states (i.e., CA, CT, FL, IL, MD, MA, MN, NJ, NY, OH and PA) have grant programs related to physical security, training, and contracted security personnel – they may vary greatly in what and how their programs operate. State grant programs (or awards) have no bearing on the federal initiative.

Q: We have moved to a new facility location. Does that mean that we will get a 5-point boost?

A: No, it is based on whether the sub-applicant has previously secured an NSGP award.

Q: Where does the mission statement go? Is that part of Section I?

A: The Mission statement is not part of the Investment Justification. A copy would be submitted as a separate document along with the IJ.

Q: For a JFCS agency that serves all in our community, any suggestions about how to address how we describe our agency with regard to being an ideologically based/spiritual/religious institution?

A: If a sub-applicant's name, mission, signage, social media, or marketing make it easily recognizable as a Jewish institution or otherwise widely known in the community as a Jewish institution, they may want to include this information in the application. If a sub-applicant is a Federation or a beneficiary/affiliated agency of a Federation, they may want to include the following information in the application:

“We belong to a widely recognized national/international system with more than 100 years of service to this country: The Jewish Federations of North America. JFNA includes 146 Jewish Federations and over 300 Network communities across North America. Collectively, we are among the top 10 charities on the continent. Our mission is to protect and enhance the well-being of Jews at home and abroad through social welfare, social services and education. The JFNA system is made up of Jewish Federations, Congregational Schools and higher learning, Jewish Community Centers, Jewish Day Schools, Jewish Family Service Agencies, Jewish Hospitals, Jewish Nursing Homes, and Jewish Vocational Services, among others. The system is the central address of North American Jewry, employing more than 230,000 people and serving approximately one million clients, annually. The Jewish Federations reach more Jews than any other organization in the world.”

Q: We have one synagogue building, but two offsite cemeteries. Do we include these or do separate applications for each property?

A: Currently it is permissible for an organization with locations in two or more states to apply separately in each state for an award. For FY 2021, FEMA is considering a change in the guidelines to allow an organization with multiple locations within the same state to each apply separately for a grant. Currently, it may be permissible for an organization with multiple locations located within the same state to split a single award between more than one location up to the cap. In these circumstances, it is best to confer with the SAA about such plans before applying, as the viability and allowability of a multi-location application may vary between SAAs.

Q: Does the security assessment need to be handed in with the application?

A: Yes. Generally speaking, the vulnerability/risk assessment will be emailed or uploaded to the State Administrative Agency, per their directions, along with the Investment Justification, Mission Statement and any other documentation the SAA instructs to be provided.

Q: Can you go over eligibility for the grant again?

A: All places of worship and other faith- and community-based 501(C)(3) organizations are eligible to apply. To request additional details on application requirements and criteria, contact Rob Goldberg at: Rob.Goldberg@JFNA.org.

Q: Is there reporting that goes with this grant?

A: FEMA will make an awards announcement sometime between mid-August and early September, and no later than September 31st. On a rolling basis, FEMA will inform the SAAs of the specific award results for their jurisdiction. The SAAs will then notify by email (to the points of contact specified in the application) if they have secured an award. The official notification of award received by the sub-applicant will include instructions on a number of post-award prerequisites and instructions that must be met and satisfied before they will be permitted to begin spending on the project. Only eligible costs incurred after the project is officially commenced can be reimbursed. Generally speaking, among the conditions for accepting the grant award will be a number of reporting requirements, including financial, programmatic, and closeout reporting. The awards package will provide instructions on satisfying these requirements and samples or links to necessary documentation/forms. Other post-award requirements include:

- Developing an approved implementation plan, which will address a number of items estimated in the Investment Justification, such as estimated milestones that will reflect the actual award amount and approved investments.
- Satisfying federal and state environmental planning and historic preservation (EHP) compliance.

Q: Last year's NSGP had very limited verbiage limits which made very difficult to complete sections with appropriate emphasis.

A: Minimize extraneous verbiage and focus on relaying the substance as concisely as possible. Just the facts.

Q: Is it recommended to have a professional grant writer complete the application? If so, is the expense covered under the grants?

A: Pre-award costs are generally not allowable for this program, including the funding of the vulnerability/risk assessment or the development of the Investment Justification.

Often, Federation government affairs professionals and JCRC directors provide application assistance or advice, as do Federation community directors, and SCN professionals. Additionally, JFNA provides extensive written guidance and is available to answer application questions at: Rob.Goldberg@jewishfederations.org. This advice comes without a fee. There are grant writers and vendors who may be hired from the private sector whose fees cannot be reimbursed through the grant. We do not provide referrals or vouch for the quality or veracity of their work. There is also no discernable advantage or disadvantage in the grant award results when employing a private sector grant writer. Additionally, the post-award administrative process requires competent grant managers. If an applicant is not equipped to undertake their application, they very well may not be competent to meet their post-award administrative responsibilities under the grant.

Q: Is our Jewish cemetery eligible for funding?

A: So long as the applicant is a 501(c)(3) and owns or operates the cemetery with a fixed address, they would be eligible to apply.

Q: Is the US Virgin Islands included in this program? We are the only Synagogue in St. Thomas.

A: Yes, under the NSGP-State initiative. In FY 2020, FEMA allocated \$300,000.00 to the U.S. Virgin Islands. The upcoming FY 2021 NSGP Notice of Funding Opportunity will set forth all allocations under the NSGP-State initiative for this year, including the U.S. Virgin Islands.

A: We are currently closed because of covid, so we cannot house certain community groups like AA or teachers group...do we apply as if we were pre or post covid?

Q: The COVID-19 pandemic may impact how the State Administrative Agencies prioritize certain investments, such as contracted security personnel or construction/renovation projects (on a subjective level), however, the pandemic should not impact the overarching parameters of the program. A sub-applicant's vulnerability/risk assessment should drive the investments sought through the program.

Q: What is the website for the IJ and Notice of Funding?

A: For all relevant application information. Instructions, and materials, the point of contact for sub-applicants is their State Administrative Agency. A number of State Administrative Agencies (SAA) are already taking proactive steps and posting preliminary information and pre-requisites to applying for the FY 2021 NSGP grant opportunity. It is therefore recommended that interested parties check in with their respective State Administrative Agencies (including their websites) to monitor whether any announcements or other preliminary actions have been taken by their SAAs and to request notification when the SAAs plan to initiate guidance on the next grant opportunity. The following is a link to FEMA's SAA contact list: <https://www.fema.gov/grants/preparedness/state-administrative-agency-contacts>.

Q: This is rather overwhelming to a newbie. Do synagogues in local towns ever share a resource person to help each synagogue complete this? Where can we find a resource person willing to help this process? How much would help typically cost?

A: Often, Federation government affairs professionals and JCRC directors provide application assistance or advice, as do Federation community directors, and SCN professionals. Additionally, JFNA provides extensive written guidance and is available to answer application questions at: Rob.Goldberg@jewishfederations.org. This advice comes without a fee. There are grant writers and vendors who may be hired from the private sector whose fees cannot be reimbursed through the grant. We do not provide referrals or vouch for the quality or veracity of their work. There is also no discernable advantage or disadvantage in the grant award results when employing a private sector grant writer.

Q: What if an organization was allowed a grant about 10 years ago but organization's board was unable to implement due to lack of immediate funds?

A: There would be no prohibition to applying. They would still be required to complete the Funding History section of the Investment Justification, setting forth past NSGP funding, the year/s funded, the funding amount and the investment types. There is also space to add any pertinent, additional explanatory information about past funding history.

Q: Can a Federation apply for a grant and then distribute small amounts to other nonprofits within the geographic region?

A: That would not be allowable.

Q: About how many applications are accepted each year compared to how many are submitted?

A: The number of applications submitted and awarded are a function of availability of funds. In FY 2020, Congress appropriated \$90 million for the NSGP program, 2,175 sub-grants were submitted by State Administrative Agencies for FEMA consideration and 1,137 awards were made. In FY 2019, Congress appropriated \$60 million for the NSGP program, 2,037 sub-grants were submitted by State Administrative Agencies for FEMA consideration and 718 were awarded.

Q: If one is looking for funding for a security guard and, at times, larger events take place in larger outside venues, can security for those outside programs be included in the request?

A: Contracted security personnel would be limited to the physical address set forth in the Investment Justification. They could be used for outside venues.

Q: What about Cybersecurity as part of the training category for staff?

A: Yes. Allowable training topics are limited to the protection of critical infrastructure key resources, including physical and cybersecurity, target hardening, and terrorism awareness/employee preparedness such as Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) training, Active Shooter training, and emergency first aid training. Training conducted using NSGP funds must address a specific threat and/or vulnerability, as identified in the nonprofit organization's Investment Justification (and vulnerability/risk assessment).

Q: We own a building where our synagogue is located. Part of the building is rented to a Charter school. Can we use funds to harden the school or can funds be used to harden the access from one to the other? Access to both portions can be obtained from the other. Is the school responsible for its own hardening?

A: Only one organization can apply per application. However, for multiple organizations located within the same physical structure, campus, or contiguous physical setting, investments sought could benefit multiple organizations. It is also possible for both organizations to apply separately as separate 501(c)(3) organizations.

Q: Who specifically is scoring the applications?

A: Nonprofit organizations are sub-applicants. State Administrative Agencies (SAAs), typically the state homeland security & emergency management agency, administer the program locally, score and prioritize sub-applications, and submit the applications for federal review on behalf of the sub-applicant nonprofit organizations. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) administers the program nationally, reviews and further assesses (based on national threat considerations) the submissions and makes funding recommendations to the Secretary of Homeland Security. The Secretary of Homeland Security makes the final award determinations.

Q: When is the IJ open?

A: Generally speaking, we expect FEMA to release the Notice of Funding Opportunity to the State Administrative Agencies the last week of February. The NOFO will include key dates which the SAAs will use to determine how much time they will provide the nonprofit sub-applicants to apply. Deadlines will differ between states, but generally, we expect about a month's time for sub-applicants to apply. Some SAAs are already putting out preliminary application materials and requirements. It is therefore recommended that interested parties check in with their respective State Administrative Agencies (including their websites) to monitor whether any announcements or other preliminary actions have been taken by their SAAs and to request notification when the SAAs plan to initiate guidance on the next grant opportunity. The following is a link to FEMA's SAA contact list:
<https://www.fema.gov/grants/preparedness/state-administrative-agency-contacts>.

Generally speaking, nonprofits planning to apply should not wait for the NOFO to come out – there is plenty they can and should be doing now to prepare. It would be a strategic mistake to wait for the official guidance – the guidance is mostly static from year to year, so it is advisable to get started based on the FY 2020 guidance. When the NOFO comes out, we will be updating the field on any material changes to the NOFO.

Q: If you get the application submitted earlier are you more likely to get funding or as long as it is in by deadline is that what matters?

A: The State Administrative Agencies will submit all applications they receive, deem eligible, and score to FEMA at the same time.