

FAQs
FY 2021 Webinar: An Introduction to the NSGP
February 11, 2021

Q: Are we required to seek competitive bids?

A: As a best practice, it is recommended to identify potential vendors or sources for products and services. Check with peers or local security advisors for reputable vendors. Obtain two to three quotes for each product or service to estimate costs for the grant application. Ensure quotes include installation, maintenance, or service, as appropriate. Also note, that if a sub-applicant hires a contractor that develops or drafts specifications, requirements, statements of work, or invitations for bids or requests for proposals must be excluded from competing for such procurements. Federal funds cannot be used to pay a contractor to carry out the work if that contractor also worked on the development of those specifications.

Q: Is there a requirement for a cost match, or can we seek the full cost of the proposed project?

A: There is no non-federal cost match.

Q: Is SAM Registration required?

A: Presently, and we expect for the FY 2021 NSGP program, DHS/FEMA does not require nonprofit organizations to register with the System for Award Management (SAM). However, some states do require it to contract with the state. States that require it will include the requirement in their respective Notice of Funding Opportunity instructions. If required, it may take four weeks or more for SAM registration to activate. Typically, states that require SAM registration will do so only for funded sub-applicants (post-award), who will need to complete the registration before projects can commence. In its simplest terms, SAM registration is a verification system that provides assurances to federal and state governments that they know the identities of (the bona fides of) the private sector entities they contract with.

Q: Where can we get those FBI statistics?

A: The 2019 FBI Hate Crimes Statistics, and for prior years, may be found at: <https://ucr.fbi.gov/hate-crime/>.

Q: Can training funds be used for team CCW training by local certified police personnel?

A: Concealed Carry Weapon training would be outside the scope of permissible costs under the NSGP grant. Nonprofit organizations may use NSGP funds for the following training-related costs:

- Employed or volunteer security staff to attend security-related training within the United States;
- 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.

- Allowable training-related costs: Costs are limited to attendance fees for training and related expenses, such as materials, supplies, and/or equipment.
- Allowable training topics: Topics are limited to the protection of critical infrastructure key resources, including physical and cybersecurity, target hardening, and terrorism awareness/employee preparedness including programs 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. Training should provide the opportunity to demonstrate and validate skills learned as well as to identify any gaps in these skills.

Q: Is the IJ form the same for NSGP-Urban Area and NSGP-State?

A: There are two funding sources (grants) available to nonprofit organizations under NSGP, NSGP-Urban Area and NSGP-State. An organization would be eligible for one or the other depending on their physical location (but not both). The Investment Justification (IJ), or application, is the same for both initiatives, as is the eligibility criteria.

Q: How much can each institution apply for this year?

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 may increase to reflect the increase in the program's annual appropriation. FEMA's Notice of Funding Opportunity will establish the program funding cap. 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. In the past, under NSGP-State, State Administrative Agencies have reduced the cap and made partial awards to applicants 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.

Q: When will the IJ form be released for 2021? Will it differ from 2020?

A: The IJ is an Excel file. The FY 2021 version will look like the FY 2020, but it will have the latest software updates. Therefore, it is ok to begin drafting responses to the IJ using the FY 2020 version as a template, but be sure to only fill in and submit the most recent version that is linked to the FY 2021 Notice of Funding Opportunity (as provided by or posted on the State Administrative Agency's website).

Q: Our Jewish Congregation [Etz Chaim] cohabitates a building owned and operated by the United Church of Christ. Will we be eligible for funds?

A: A tenant is eligible to apply relative to its rented space. They may want to coordinate with the landlord, particularly if there are shared or public spaces that are assessed to be vulnerable and require physical security enhancements.

Q: If we are a national organization (North American Imam Federation), so we are not at one state but across the states, will we be able to get some of the grant for training the Imams in the matter?

A: This would not be a permissible cost. Each grant is based on the physical address of the sub-applicant. The investments provided through the grant will be based on a vulnerability/risk assessment of the physical address and the investments approved will address risks and vulnerabilities pertaining to the physical address. Note: Within a given state, FEMA is considering making eligible in FY 2021 a collective or cooperative grant for an applicant with multiple locations. If so, the particulars will be set forth in the FY 2021 Notice of Funding Opportunity.

Q: If our organization received a grant in 2020, does this have any effect on our receiving a grant in 2021?

A: It may. A sub-applicant may apply in consecutive grant cycles. There may be additional investments to be made based upon the vulnerability/risk assessment. However, we do expect that FEMA will continue employing a bonus system that provides additional points to a sub-applicant's final score if they have not previously received an NSGP grant. In the recent past, 5 additional points have been added. There are two places in the Investment Justification where an application is required to disclose and describe receiving any prior NSGP award.

Q: Can funds be used for a leased building?

A: Yes. A sub-applicant is not required to own the building, but it must occupy it or a portion of it.

Q: If our organization received a grant in 2020, is it necessary to re-write the Grant Document or can we use what we submitted in 2020?

A: A de novo application must be submitted based upon the FY 2021 Notice of Funding Opportunity and the instructions and materials provided by the State Administrative Agency.

Q: When will the NOFO come out and what will the Opportunity Number be?

A: We expect that the FY 2021 Notice of Funding Opportunity will come out the week of February 22nd. "The Opportunity Number" is not applicable to the sub-applicant. The sub-applicant will be instructed in how to proceed by the State Administrative Agency. Sub-applicants should not be on Grants.gov unless expressly directed by their State Administrative Agency (SAA). The SAA is the only authorized entity to submit the grant application to FEMA (through Grants.gov).

Q: Do you know what are the allowed categories this year? Any changes from last year?

A: Allowable funding included certain eligible equipment, certain preparedness planning, training and exercises, and contracted security personnel. Eligible NSGP equipment is limited to Categories 14 (physical security enhancement equipment) and 15 (inspection and screening systems). FEMA's Approved Equipment List may be viewed at: <https://www.fema.gov/grants/guidance-tools/authorized-equipment-list>. If FEMA approves any modifications to the AEL, they would be identified in the FY 2021 Notice of Funding Opportunity or accompanying supportive documents.

Q: Do we note in the grant what amount we need? If we did not apply last year, how do we incorporate the increase in funding to ask for compared to last year?

A: FEMA will set the funding caps in the FY 2021 Notice of Funding Opportunity. The current cap is \$100,000.00 for both the Urban Area and State initiatives. We expect that the cap will remain the same or increase this year. All permissible costs to be considered for funding using the NSGP must be included in the sub-applicant's Investment Justification (IJ). Part IV of the IJ pertains to target hardening and training investments. All permissible costs to be considered for funding must be included in the two parts of this section. In the narrative section, a sub-applicant will describe all target hardening activities, as well as costs related to planning, exercises, training, and contracted security personnel. In the equipment identification section, a sub-applicant will input details that identify the specific equipment (from the AEL list) to be acquired, including estimated costs. This part only pertains to equipment (and not the other categories of permissible costs, i.e., not training, planning, or contracted security personnel).

Is the Virgin Islands included?

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.

Q: Why is West Virginia excluded from list?

A: West Virginia has no cities that would be eligible under the NSGP-Urban Area initiative. Instead, all organizations located in West Virginia would apply under the NSGP-State initiative.

Q: What is the deadline for the grant application?

A: FEMA will establish key dates for the State Administrative Agencies (SAAs) and the SAAs will establish key dates for the sub-applicant (nonprofit). We expect that FEMA will provide somewhere between 45 and 50 days for the SAAs to submit applications on behalf of the sub-applicants. We expect that the SAAs will set between 15 and 30 days for the sub-applicants to submit applications to the SAAs. Each SAA will establish its own deadline based upon how much time it determines it will need to process and submit the sub-applications to FEMA. It is, therefore, important that sub-applicants contact their SAA or review the materials the SAA may post on their website regarding the NSGP funding opportunity. The following is a link to the SAA contact list: <https://www.fema.gov/grants/preparedness/state-administrative-agency-contacts>.

Q: Once we complete the project and request reimbursement, how long does it usually take to receive the reimbursement?

A: All post-award administrative functions are carried out by the State Administrative Agency. Each SAA will determine the pace of reimbursements, which may vary from jurisdiction to jurisdiction. Generally speaking, reimbursements may be submitted on a rolling basis as project milestones are achieved.

Q: If we want to get started on our application now, is the new application available now or should we use the previous application?

A: The IJ is an Excel file. The FY 2021 version will look like the FY 2020, but it will have the latest software updates. Therefore, it is ok to begin drafting responses to the IJ using the FY 2020 version as a template, but be sure to only fill in and submit the most recent version that is linked to the FY 2021 Notice of Funding Opportunity (as provided by or post on the State Administrative Agency's website).

Q: Can similar institutions (though independent) make one application? For example, Catholic churches in the same city, town, or county?

A: Generally speaking, no. There must be one applicant which pertains to a single physical address. However, an application can benefit multiple institutions if they are located at the same address. Presently, a single organization with multiple locations in the same state or Urban Area may apply for a single grant, benefiting multiple locations up to the aggregated stated cap. Additionally, FEMA is considering expanding the cap in FY 2021 for a single organization with multiple locations in the same state or urban area.

Q: What is the status of allowing costs associated with cybersecurity, particularly as it relates to being able to continue our operations in case of a terrorist attack?

A: System, Information Technology Contingency Operations (14CI-00-COOP) is an eligible investment category under the Approved Equipment List. This includes: Back-up computer hardware, operating systems, data storage, and application software necessary to provide a working environment for contingency operations. 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.

Q: If we have immediate needs/expenses then this will not help. It appears that any need is required to be in the application, submitted, awards not announced until late in the year and then reimbursed after the fact. This is a huge burden on small groups.

A: NSGP is a competitive Federal grant program. It supports target hardening and other physical security enhancements and activities to nonprofit organizations that are at high risk of terrorist attack. The intent of the program is to integrate nonprofit preparedness activities with broader state and local preparedness efforts. It is also designed to promote coordination and collaboration in emergency preparedness activities among public and private community representatives, as well as state and local government agencies. The application process includes a two-tiered review at the Federal and state/local levels. 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). For successful sub-applicants, there are several post-award administrative requirements, including project planning and reporting. The period of performance is 36 months.

Q: Can you provide a template for us to start preparing?

A: A copy of the webinar recording, and other relevant guidance materials will be made available.

Q: My temple just received a \$50,000 state grant, will that effect eligibility?

A: Not at all. A state grant would have no impact FEMA's Nonprofit Security Grant Program. Conversely, however, some states that have a nonprofit security grant may be impacted by the Federal grant.

Q: Do we have to submit the Vulnerability/Risk Assessment?

A: Yes. A Vulnerability/Risk assessment is a pre-requisite which serves to identify, substantiate, and prioritize allowable investments. FEMA does not prescribe which assessment tool an applicant should utilize as a basis for the grant. Regardless of the source, the SAAs will review the assessments for quality and completeness and prioritize and support the investments requested as efficient and effective impacts to address an applicant's vulnerabilities. There are basically three approaches to obtaining a vulnerability/risk assessment:

- A professional assessment, conducted by state or local law enforcement partners or DHS Protective Security Advisors, who may provide them at no cost.
- A private vendor, whose cost would not be 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.
- A self-assessment, at no cost, such as provided by:
 - The Department of Homeland Security's Cyber Security and Infrastructure Security Agency at: <https://www.cisa.gov/publication/houses-worship-security-self-assessment>.
 - The Secure Community Network at: https://cdn.fedweb.org/fed-91/2/Facility_Assessment_Tool_Final_23Dec2020.pdf.

Q: How recent does the vulnerability assessment need to be?

A: Generally speaking, any vulnerability/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: Our synagogue was a recipient four years ago, and resubmitted two years ago for things like fencing and barriers that we did not do on the first round. We were not funded second go around, and are thinking of submitting again this year... San Diego ... Would you know offhand if the application process is more or less the same that we did two years ago?

A: Generally speaking, the NSGP program opportunity is static with only minor changes from year to year. Once FEMA releases the Notice of Funding Opportunity, they will also release supportive documents, including FAQs and explanations of any substantive changes to the guidance.

Q: Are there any private companies that can help us with estimates for planning and training investments?

A: As a best practice, it is recommended to identify potential vendors or sources for products and services. Check with peers or local security advisors for reputable vendors. Obtain two to three quotes for each product or service to estimate costs for the grant application. Ensure quotes include installation, maintenance, or service, as appropriate. Also note, that if a sub-applicant hires a contractor that develops or drafts specifications, requirements, statements of work, or invitations for bids or requests for proposals must be excluded from competing for such procurements. Federal funds cannot be used to pay a contractor to carry out the work if that contractor also worked on the development of those specifications.

Q: What are the sub-applicant types?

A: The raw score will be weighted by a number of factors that will impact each sub-applicant's ranking. This includes the "type" of nonprofit that is applying and whether the nonprofit has previously received an award. FEMA views organizations according to three categories:

- Places of worship/faith-based organizations.
- Medical and educational institutions.
- All other nonprofit organizations.

FEMA will check each applicant's Employee ID Number (excluding house of worship) to confirm organization type, but applicants should make clear the organization type where designated in the application.

Q: When will AEL be finalized? Interested to know whether mass notification systems will be allowable this time.

A: The AEL list may be viewed at: <https://www.fema.gov/grants/guidance-tools/authorized-equipment-list>. Any updates regarding allowable costs will be set forth in the Notice of Funding Opportunity and corresponding preparedness grants manual, including allowable costs relative to the AEL or other allowable costs. FEMA is considering reinstating emergency communications systems, which, if reinstated, would be announced in the NOFO or other supporting documents identifying changes to the program.

Q: If a nonprofit received an award 11 years ago but was not able to be used at that time, would this disqualify from bonus points?

A: Yes. There are two places in the Investment Justification where an applicant is required to disclose and describe receiving any prior NSGP award.

Q: Where can we get a copy of the 2020 IJ?

A: A: The IJ is an Excel file. The FY 2021 version will look like the FY 2020, but it will have the latest software updates. Therefore, it is ok to begin drafting responses to the IJ using the FY 2020 version as a template, but be sure to only fill in and submit the most recent version that is linked to the FY 2021 Notice of Funding Opportunity (as provided by or post on the State Administrative Agency's website. A "sample" copy of the FY 2020 IJ may be viewed at: <https://cdn.fedweb.org/fed-42/2/ij.pdf>.

Q: Rumor says that DHS will provide local law enforcement with their assessment product. Is this possible or will the DHS PSA still be required to complete the vulnerability and eligibility assessment?

A: The DHS assessment product may be found at: <https://www.cisa.gov/publication/houses-worship-security-self-assessment>. It would be advisable to provide whomever is conducting the vulnerability/risk assessment with a copy of the IJ, so that they are familiar with what will be asked and what will be required from the assessment to complete the IJ.

Q: Is there an advantage to submit applications early? Do they evaluate them on a rolling basis as they come in, or not until after the deadline?

A: There is no advantage to submitting a sub-application early and there is no rolling basis of review. There is a strategic advantage to preparing for the sub-application early to ensure that there is sufficient

time to prepare for, complete, and submit a quality application within the deadline. Some related advice:

- Start to outline responses early so that there is time to refine the submission before the deadline.
- Check the math to make sure costs, numbers, and figures are consistent throughout the IJ.
- Carefully read instructions before entering content into the Investment Justification. Responsiveness and completeness of the application is scored.
- Leave time to test the IJ platform to ensure no last-minute technical glitches occur and that should problems arise, they can be resolved before the submission deadline.
- Submit the IJ ahead of the deadline.

Q: Our Vulnerability/Risk Assessment (prepared by SCN) is 24 pages long. Where and how is it to be submitted?

A: The State Administrative Agency will set forth what documentation will be required and how and in what format it should be submitted. Typical categories of documents requested:

- Mission statement
- Vulnerability Assessment
- Investment Justification (IJ)
- Supporting documentation that substantiates threat, if applicable
- Contracted security personnel sustainability plan, if applicable
- Any other information requested by the SAA

Q: How do I contact the local SAA?

A: The following is a link to the SAA contact list: <https://www.fema.gov/grants/preparedness/state-administrative-agency-contacts>.

Q: You said scores will be multiplied by a factor of 1-3 based on organization type -- what organizations get higher factors?

A: The organization type is a factor when calculating the final score of the sub-application. In the order of priority, the following are the organization types: 1) Ideology-based/Spiritual/Religious; 2) Educational or Medical; or 3) Other. Additionally, history of prior funding under NSGP is a factor; organizations that have not received prior year NSGP funding is a positive factor.

Q: Do you have any advice for an organization that received a grant in 2018 and rejected in recent years?

A: NSGP is a competitive grant. In most years, only about one-third of applications submitted to FEMA are funded. There are several factors that influence award decisions that make it difficult to provide feedback to a particular sub-applicant, including quantity of sub-applicants (limited resources), quality of the application (competency and impact of the IJ), static factors (rankings of sub-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 sub-applicant's deficiencies, and we advise organizations to reapply. This year, we successfully advocated for increased program funding, which may impact the outcomes positively.

Q: Is it better to use a private security firm for the vulnerability assessment (local and state police will not do it) vs. a congregant?

A: Obtaining an assessment is paramount to moving forward with the application. There are basically three approaches to obtaining a vulnerability/risk assessment. Through:

- A professional assessment, conducted by state or local law enforcement partners of DHS Protective Security Advisors, who may provide them at no cost.
- A private vendor, whose cost would not be 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.
- A self-assessment, at no cost, such as provided by:
 - The Department of Homeland Security's Cyber Security and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) at: <https://www.cisa.gov/publication/houses-worship-security-self-assessment>.
 - The Secure Community Network at: https://cdn.fedweb.org/fed-91/2/Facility_Assessment_Tool_Final_23Dec2020.pdf.

FEMA does not prescribe which assessment to use. A professional assessment would be a best practice but is not required. FEMA is in the process of educating the State Administrative Agencies on using the CISA assessment tool, and SCN recently updated its assessment tool, specifically with the NSGP Investment Justification in mind.

Q: Do you have to hire a project manager? Can it be a staff member?

A: Hiring a project manager is not a requisite of the program and staff or volunteer managers are allowed. Whoever will be involved in project planning, management, and implementation, the sub-applicant will need to provide project management details, such as the complete contact information for the project manager and a description of their relevant experience within Part VI of the IJ. 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.

Q: I heard there are additional forms needed even if our application is already in?

A: A number of SAAs are already taking proactive steps and posting preliminary information and prerequisites 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: What if we already spent funds on security in 2020?

A: No pre-award costs are allowable for reimbursed.

Q: Are we eligible in New York if we are located outside of New York City?

A: Yes. If an applicant resides in a designated urban Area, such as New York City, they could apply under NSGP-Urban Area. If an applicant resides in New York State, but not in a designated Urban Area, they could apply under NSGP-State. The same State Administrative Agency, NYS Homeland Security and Emergency Services, administers both facets of the program. Please note that NYS requires pre-qualification registration. Be sure to contact the NY SAA or access its website for additional instructions. The SAA personnel locator may be accessed at: <https://www.fema.gov/grants/preparedness/state-administrative-agency-contacts>.

Q: Did you say Stop the Bleed training is allowed? What about the actual Stop the Bleed kits? Our grant manager in Austin TX says the kits are not allowed for us under the equipment, they are under medical. Does FEMA pay for the training but not the actual kits?

A: The following is an overview of permissible training costs (as of FY 2020 FEMA guidelines):

- 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.
 - Allowable training-related costs: Costs are limited to attendance fees for training and related expenses, such as materials, supplies, and/or equipment.
 - Allowable training topics: Topics are limited to the protection of critical infrastructure key resources, including physical and cybersecurity, target hardening, and terrorism awareness/employee preparedness including programs 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. Training should provide the opportunity to demonstrate and validate skills learned as well as to identify any gaps in these skills.

Q: If you own multiple properties (ie parsonage, cemetery), can you apply for enhancements for them as well?

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: Is it worth applying for funds if you are a small synagogue with a small membership? Is there a minimum number of people who need to belong?

A: All places of worship and other faith- and community-based 501(C)(3) organizations are eligible to apply. The award cap in recent years has been \$100,000.00 for both NSGP-Urban Area and NSGP-State initiatives. FEMA is considering raising the cap in FY 2021, any specifics of which will be included in the upcoming Notice of Funding Opportunity. However, there is no prescribed minimum amount requested.

The sub-applicant's vulnerability/risk assessment will identify weakness and vulnerabilities and serve as a basis to identify and prioritize investments sought through the program. These investments can be modest (below \$10,000) or complex (\$100,000+), depending on the security measures an organization's leadership identify and determine are the most suitable solutions for the organization.

Q: We have to spend the money based on the security assessment before we know if we have a grant?

A: Each sub-applicant must include its vulnerability/risk assessment on which the request(s) in the IJ is based. Unallowable costs: Initiatives that fund risk or vulnerability security assessments or the development of the IJ. Also, unallowable costs: Reimbursement of pre-award security expenses. Sub-applicants may not begin project implementation until their State Administrative Agency authorizes them to begin.

Q: What is e-grants and do you need to apply through that as well? or only the SAA?

A: ONLY follow the instructions from the SAA. While states may utilize various electronic platforms, the only platforms a sub-applicant should use is the one instructed by their respective SAA.

Q: Can we apply for the grant even if we have purchased the equipment on loan?

A: No pre-award costs or costs incurred prior to permission to commence the project will be eligible for reimbursement. (An obligation made pre-award to purchase equipment on loan is unlikely to be an allowable cost. However, it is advisable to speak with the State Administrative Agency for clarification.)

Q: Do you need to upload the actual estimates for enhancements?

A: A sub-applicant should only submit documentation as instructed by the respective State Administrative Agency. Extraneous documentation is not welcome. Typical categories of documents requested:

- Mission statement
- Vulnerability Assessment
- Investment Justification (IJ)
- Supporting documentation that substantiates threat, if applicable
- Contracted security personnel sustainability plan, if applicable
- Any other information requested by the SAA

Q: Does SCN have professional security risk assessors they recommend?

A: There are basically three approaches to obtaining a vulnerability/risk assessment. Through:

- A professional assessment, conducted by state or local law enforcement partners of DHS Protective Security Advisors, who may provide them at no cost.
- A private vendor, whose cost would not be 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.
- A self-assessment, at no cost, such as provided by:
 - The Department of Homeland Security's Cyber Security and Infrastructure Security Agency at: <https://www.cisa.gov/publication/houses-worship-security-self-assessment>.

- The Secure Community Network at: https://cdn.fedweb.org/fed-91/2/Facility_Assessment_Tool_Final_23Dec2020.pdf.