

DCEO East Central Region – Grant Opportunities

Economic Empowerment Center (EEC) Grant – Round 2

Description: Provides funding to help build inclusive business ecosystems in communities that have historically faced barriers to entry and growth, through partnerships, outreach, and tailored programming. Open to nonprofit organizations and career education agencies that serve underserved businesses and entrepreneurs. Award Range: \$250,000-\$500,000.

Application: Apply online and include supporting documents such as a digital photo of the project location, mission statement, articles of incorporation, and an organizational chart.

Deadlines: Rolling until funding is exhausted.

Links: Apply at bit.ly/4tZqbZq

Info: dceo.illinois.gov/aboutdceo/grantopportunities.html

IHDA Strong Communities Grant Program

Description: Provides funding to local governments to address vacant, abandoned, and deteriorated residential properties, with the goal of increasing property values, reducing crime, and encouraging reinvestment. Eligible activities include acquiring, rehabilitating, demolishing, and landscaping vacant residential properties of up to six units. Award: Up to \$750,000.

Application: Eligible applicants include units of local government, land banks, and Regional Planning Commissions. Application and full program information are available through IHDA.

Deadlines: Extended to 3:00 PM on Tuesday, June 30, 2026.

Links: More info: ihda.org

Questions: SCPinfo@ihda.org

CDBG Public Infrastructure and Housing Rehabilitation Program

Description: Community Development Block Grant funding for competitive public infrastructure improvements and housing rehabilitation projects across Illinois.

Application: Recorded Application Workshop and Notice of Funding Opportunity

Deadlines: Due by 5:00 pm, Thursday, August 27, 2026.

Links: Guidebooks:

dceo.illinois.gov/communitydevelopment.html

Application: dceo.illinois.gov/aboutdceo/grantopportunities.html

Questions: ceo.ocd@illinois.gov

CEJA Capacity Grant

Description: Provides grant awards starting at \$100,000 plus building support to 501(c)(3) organizations working on clean energy workforce development and expanding contractor opportunities. Must already be classified as a 501c3 at the time of this application.

Application: Visit program website to review details and complete an interest form to be notified when you can apply. Open to current and prospective DCEO CEJA grantees and sub-grantees.

Deadlines: Launching in 2026 but specific deadline not yet announced.

Links: Website: <https://www.cgs.niu.edu/services/workforce-development/capacity-building-grant-program.shtml>

Contact and Questions: cejacapacity@niu.edu

Zoom Application Information Session Recording: On the Website with Password a=3V=wK4

Federal Grant Support Program – Round 2

Description: Supports projects aligned with Illinois' economic development goals and makes \$16.9 million available to help Illinois-based applicants compete for federal grants by providing matching funds. Award Range: \$10,000 - \$2,000,000, and 30 awards.

Application: Visit the DCEO grant opportunities page for the full Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) and application link. Must be being Illinois-based for eligibility. Application Submission Form and Application Documents both on website.

Deadlines: General announcement open for a period of time with no specific due dates.

Links: Website: <https://dceo.illinois.gov/aboutdceo/grantopportunities/3073-3149.html>

USDA Rural Business Development Grant Program (RBDG)

Description: Provides \$27.7 million in federal funding for business and community initiatives that promote economic growth and job creation in rural areas. Two categories: Business Opportunity Grants (planning) and Business Enterprise Grants (development).

Application: Eligible applicants include rural cooperatives, state agencies, towns, nonprofits, and institutions of higher learning, individuals and for-profit businesses are not eligible. Apply through Grants.gov or by contacting local USDA Rural Development office.

Deadlines: Two different deadlines: June 15, 2026 for Strategic Economic and Community Development (SECD) applications and June 30, 2026 for all other applicants. By 4:30 p.m.

Links: Apply at: grants.gov

More info: rd.usda.gov

Illinois EPA Unsewered Communities Planning Grant

Description: Offers up to \$30,000 to small and disadvantaged communities that currently lack wastewater collection or treatment facilities, helping them develop a project plan to address those needs. Illinois EPA expects to fund up to 50 grants through this \$1 million program.

Application: Applicants must be pre-qualified through the GATA Grantee Portal at grants.illinois.gov/portal. All required forms are available on the IL EPA's UCPGP webpage.

Deadlines: Awarded on a first-come, first-served basis until all funding is exhausted.

Links: UCPGP webpage: illinois.gov/epa

GATA Portal: grants.illinois.gov/portal

Illinois EPA Lead Service Line Inventory Grant

Description: Provides \$6.57 million to help Illinois communities meet the inventory requirements of the Lead Service Line Replacement and Notification Act (LSLRNA), including data collection and compliance activities. Award Range: \$20,000 - \$50,000.

Application: Application, documents, and related materials are all on Illinois EPA website. Requires GATA pre-qualification. Funds may only be used for

inventorying activities; lead service line replacement and staff salaries and wages are not considered eligible costs.

Deadlines: Currently open until funding expires.

Links: Website: <https://epa.illinois.gov/topics/drinking-water/public-water-users/lsl-grant-opportunity.html>

Contacts: jillian.fowler@illinois.gov; rachael.heaton@illinois.gov

Route 66 Grant Program

Description: Supports projects tied to the Route 66 corridor in Illinois, promoting tourism, and economic development. Award Range: \$20,000 - \$500,000. Total grant: \$2,000,000.

Application: Must be pre-qualified for application to be considered. Full details, eligibility, documents, and the application are on Department of Commerce and Economic Opp page.

Deadlines: Due by June 11, 2026.

Links: Website: <https://dceo.illinois.gov/aboutdceo/grantopportunities/2758-4278.html>

Qualify: <https://simpler.grants.gov/opportunity/e407af15-6c31-41de-80ac-3ffcaf61ea88>

International Tourism Grant Program

Description: Supports tourism-related projects and initiatives that promotes Illinois to international visitors. Award Range: \$10,000 - \$200,000. Total grant: \$1,000,000.

Application: Must be pre-qualified for application to be considered. Full details, eligibility, documents, and the application are on Department of Commerce and Economic Opp page.

Deadlines: Due by June 15, 2026.

Links: Website: <https://dceo.illinois.gov/aboutdceo/grantopportunities/1607-4276.html>

Qualify: <https://simpler.grants.gov/opportunity/e407af15-6c31-41de-80ac-3ffcaf61ea88>

SBIR/STTR Match Program

Description: Provides matching funds to Illinois-based small businesses applying for federal Small Business Innovation Research or Technology Transfer grants, increasing their competitiveness for federal funding. Award Range: \$1 - \$250,000. Total grant: \$5,512,500.

Application: Must be pre-qualified for application to be considered. Full details, eligibility, documents, and the application are on Department of Commerce and Economic Opp page.

Deadlines: Due by June 30, 2026.

Links: Website: <https://dceo.illinois.gov/aboutdceo/grantopportunities/2382-2419.html>

Qualify: <https://simpler.grants.gov/opportunity/e407af15-6c31-41de-80ac-3ffcaf61ea88>

Business Attraction Prime Sites

Description: Supports efforts to market development sites in Illinois communities to attract new businesses and investment. Award Range: \$10,000 - \$200,000. Total grant: \$1,000,000.

Application: Must be pre-qualified for application to be considered. Full details, eligibility, documents, and the application are on Department of Commerce and Economic Opp page.

Deadlines: Due by June 30, 2026.

Links: Website: <https://dceo.illinois.gov/aboutdceo/grantopportunities/1632-4274.html>

Qualify: <https://simpler.grants.gov/opportunity/e407af15-6c31-41de-80ac-3ffcaf61ea88>

CDBG Disaster Response Program

Description: Supports disaster relief for communities impacted by emergencies and natural disasters. Federal funding used to help Illinois communities respond, recover, and rebuild after disasters. Award Range: \$0 - \$250,000. Total grant: \$2,120,450.

Application: Must be pre-qualified for application to be considered. Full details, eligibility, documents, and the application are on Department of Commerce and Economic Opp page.

Deadlines: Applications are rolling.

Links: Website: <https://dceo.illinois.gov/aboutdceo/grantopportunities/1637-2010.html>

Qualify: <https://simpler.grants.gov/opportunity/e407af15-6c31-41de-80ac-3ffcaf61ea88>

Community Development Block Grant Economic Development Program

Description: Supports local job creation and business growth through economic development projects. Federal funding used for eligible community

development activities under HUD guidelines Award Range: \$300,000 - \$1,000,000. Total grant: \$1,900,000.

Application: Must be pre-qualified for application to be considered. Full details, eligibility, documents, and the application are on Department of Commerce and Economic Opp page.

Deadlines: Applications are rolling.

Links: Website: <https://dceo.illinois.gov/aboutdceo/grantopportunities/1631-2890.html>

Qualify: <https://simpler.grants.gov/opportunity/e407af15-6c31-41de-80ac-3ffcaf61ea88>

City of Champaign Downtown Refresh Grant

Description: Provides matching funds for renovation projects that improve ground-floor storefront in Downtown Champaign. Existing businesses may qualify for a 50% City match of up to \$50,000, while storefronts vacant over a one year may qualify for a 75% match.

Application: Apply online on the website. Applicants must demonstrate that such work is necessary to either support eligible public-facing or customer-facing improvements.

Deadlines: Due by June 19, 2026.

Links: Apply: bit.ly/4tceBZD

Info session recording: vimeo.com/1190272854/ba65e054ee

Vermilion County Business Broadband Grant

Description: Offers up to \$500 to Vermilion County businesses to support internet upgrades or website hosting, helping small businesses improve their digital infrastructure.

Application: Applicants must have a business address or owner residence in Vermilion County, complete The Trep School's 360° Business Assessment and Growth Plan, and submit a W-9. Applications can be submitted before completing the full assessment.

Deadlines: Until 40 grants run out.

Links: Apply at <https://thetrebschool.com/broadband-grant/>