

# GUIDELINES

## 2015 Regional Performance Incentive (RPI) Program

### INTRODUCTION

Connecticut's Regional Performance Incentive (RPI) program provides financial assistance to regional councils of governments (RCOGs), two or more municipalities acting through an RCOG, regional economic districts, or any combination thereof, for projects or related planning studies designed to provide cost saving service(s) to municipalities on a regional basis, or *for* shared information technology services. Eligible applicants may submit proposals to the Office of Policy and Management (OPM) for funding of projects.

This manual has been prepared to assist in the submission of proposals for regionalized service(s) utilizing funds from the *Regional Planning Incentive Account*.

Please call Sandra Huber, RPI Program Coordinator, at (860) 418-6293 or e-mail at: [sandra.huber@ct.gov](mailto:sandra.huber@ct.gov) with any questions regarding the RPI Grant Program.

### QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS RELATED TO THE REGIONAL PERFORMANCE INCENTIVE PROGRAM

1. **What statute provides for the Regional Performance Incentive Program?** Connecticut General Statutes Section 4-124s, provides for the Regional Performance Incentive (RPI) Program.
2. **What entities may apply for RPI Grant funding?** Any of the RCOGs, two or more municipalities acting through an RCOG, regional economic districts or combinations thereof, may submit proposals for RPI funding.
3. **If an organization submits a proposal, are all member towns required to participate?** No, the member towns have the option of whether to participate or not.
4. **What do towns that elect to participate in the proposed regional service have to do to be included in the proposal?** Each town must obtain a resolution from their legislative body endorsing the proposal.
5. **Is an affirmative vote by the Board of Selectman sufficient to qualify as “a resolution by the legislative body” when a town wishes to participate in the regionalized service?** Yes. For purposes of the RPI Program, “legislative body” includes “board of selectmen, town council, city council, board of alderman, board of directors, board of representatives, or board of the mayor and burgesses of a municipality”.
6. **Is there a limit to the amount of funding that an organization can apply for?** No, but each proposal must be submitted on a separate proposal form.
7. **What is meant by “economies of scale”?** For purposes of the RPI Program, “economies of scale” generally refers to the potential cost savings and other operational efficiencies that can result when certain government services are performed on an inter-municipal or regional basis, as opposed to on an individual municipality basis.

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8. **What is meant by “cost benefit analysis”?** Cost benefit analysis is a discipline used to assess the case for a project or proposal. Such assessments should include costs and benefits that are less easily expressed in monetary terms, (for example, environmental impact), as well as those that can be expressed in monetary terms. The analysis consists of weighing the total expected costs with the total expected benefits in order to choose the best option.
9. **How does a proposal qualify for funding?** The proposed project must:
- Be new (on a regional basis);
  - Demonstrate cost savings;
  - Not result in the loss of any services; and
  - Demonstrate how it will be sustainable on a regional basis, once established.
10. **Can an applicant submit more than one (1) proposal?** Yes. Each proposal should be submitted separately and each will be judged on its merits by OPM.
11. **When should proposals be submitted?** All RPI proposals, must be submitted to OPM by December 31, 2015. OPM will accept municipal resolutions until March 31, 2016.
12. **Where should proposals be submitted?** RPI Project proposals should be addressed to:  
**State of Connecticut**  
**Office of Policy and Management**  
**Intergovernmental Policy Division**  
**450 Capitol Ave., MS#54ORG**  
**Hartford, Ct 06106-1379**  
**Attention: RPI Program**
13. **How are grant awards to be determined?** Grant awards will be based upon the merits of the proposal and availability of funding. OPM must give priority to proposals submitted by a Regional Council of Governments which include participation of all member municipalities and which may increase their purchasing power or provide cost savings. Priority must also be given to proposals submitted by any economic development district.
14. **When will grant awards be announced?** Grant awards will be announced periodically as funds become available.
15. **When will funding be awarded?** Funding will be generated from specific tax revenues and will have to be accumulated. It will be distributed when available and as determined by OPM.
16. **When does the applicant receive funding?** Grant funding will be made available periodically after the execution of the Notice of Grant Award form.
17. **When does a project begin?** A project begins the day that the Notice of Grant Award is fully executed by all parties.
18. **When does a project end?** A project ends on the end date indicated on the executed Notice of Grant Award.
19. **What should a grantee do if they are unable to complete the proposed project by the end date in the Notice of Grant Award?** OPM may grant an

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extension of the end date of the project provided it receives a written request for an extension within sufficient time of the end date, containing an explanation why the deadline cannot be met.

20. **What should a grantee do with surplus grant funds if a project comes in under budget?** The grantee may request a change of scope to enhance the project or to transfer the funds to another approved project that may have experienced cost overruns or could be expanded through the availability of additional funds.

*The change of scope or transfer of funds cannot be implemented without prior approval from OPM. Any unexpended funds remaining after the completion of a project must be returned to OPM in the absence of a change of scope or budget granted by OPM.*

21. **Is there a margin within which increases/decreases in budget line items can be made without a formal request to OPM?** Yes an adjustment of up to 10%, to a maximum of \$500 can be made without pre-approval by OPM. Any such changes must still be reported to OPM as part of the quarterly grant reporting requirements.
22. **If the grantee requires a budget line item adjustment greater than 10% or \$500, what is the procedure?** The grantee must request such changes in writing to OPM with an explanation of why the change is necessary.
23. **Can a town be added to the list of participating municipalities once the**

**Notice of Grant Award has been fully executed?** Yes, if the project can be completed within the budget and time constraints.

24. **Can a town withdraw from a project once the Notice of Grant Award has been fully executed?** Yes, OPM should be notified if and when such a withdrawal occurs; but note that it

could result in the reduction of project funding or nullification of the project contract if its withdrawal renders the project ineligible for the program.

25. **Can the grantee use sole-source bidding to award contracts to sub-grantees?** No, the process should be open and competitive, showing no preferences. Current State bid for equipment or commodities can also be utilized.

26. **How should the ownership of equipment or other assets be handled?** Towns will need to establish an inter-local agreement which delineates roles and responsibilities during the implementation and after the project is completed. Policies regarding ownership of equipment or other assets including maintenance, insurance, liability and succession will have to be developed by the participating towns with guidance from their municipal attorneys.

27. **What project costs are eligible?** Consulting Fees, Design Fees, Engineering Fees, Construction Costs, Equipment Lease and or Purchase, Equipment Rental, Legal Expenses, Operating Expenses, Supplies, and Utilities.

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Meals and refreshments are not eligible project costs. *Note also that supplanting operating expenses with grant funding is prohibited by the General Grant Conditions.*

relate to proposals involving the development of proprietary software.

**28. What kind of documentation is required for substantiation of expenses?** Detailed invoices and cancelled checks are required as substantiation of expenses charged to the project. All costs associated with an eligible project are subject to prior

review and post payment audit by the Office of Policy and Management.

**29. Is this a permanently established program?** Yes, funding is to be generated by a portion of the hotel tax and the rental car tax. Initial funding will have to accrue before any advances of funds can occur.

**30. What is the role of the applicant organization once the project is completed and funds are expended?** After the completion of the project and final reports are submitted, there will be no State oversight of the project.

Any on-going role for the original applicant organization will have to be defined by the organization and its member municipalities and memorialized by executed, written agreements or memoranda of understanding.

**31. Are there any other requirements that applicants should be aware of?** Yes, the proposed project must be consistent with the State Plan of Conservation and Development. See also items 14 and 15 of the Special Grant Conditions which

**32. What types of RPI proposals have received funding to date?**

*Animal Control Facility  
Economic Development Services  
Emergency Operations Center  
GIS Data Services  
Website Development  
IT Development and Sharing  
Major Crime Squad Mobile Lab  
Online Property Survey Index  
Planning Studies  
Planning Collaborative  
Pre-Hospital Emergency Care Study  
Public Works Equipment Sharing  
Traffic Team  
Trail Maintenance Equipment Sharing  
Transfer Station Planning*

Interested applicants may contact OPM to discuss whether a proposal is eligible for consideration of funding.

**33. Can municipalities and Regional Councils of Government apply for funding to connect to the Nutmeg Network in December 2015?** Yes, an individual municipality or RCOG applying for funding for connection to the Nutmeg Network must use the "Notice of Intent - Nutmeg Network Application Form RPI-2NN, specific to that purpose.

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### INSTRUCTIONS

Only a COMPLETE RPI Program Proposal package will be acted upon by the Office of Policy and Management (OPM). A separate complete proposal form is required for each proposal. *Note that there is a separate form specific to proposals submitted for a grant to fund capital costs associated with connection to the Nutmeg Network, under certain conditions.*

**An RPI Proposal Form** prescribed by OPM (see attached) must be completed by the applicant. All information required on the proposal form must accompany the proposal and be received by the Office of Policy and Management **no later than December 31, 2015. Municipal resolutions will be accepted until March 31, 2016.**

The Office of Policy and Management will review all proposals and make grant award determinations based on the merits of each proposal, giving weighted priority to proposals submitted by RPOs which include

participation by all member municipalities or by economic development districts, and which produce measurable economies of scale that will provide participating municipalities with desired or required services and lower the cost and tax burden of providing those services.

Once grant awards have been determined by the Office of Policy and Management, a Notice of Grant Award form will be forwarded to recipients for execution; once completed by the Grantee, the Notice of Grant Award form must be returned to the Office of Policy and Management for execution by the Secretary and a fully executed copy will be returned to the Grantee.

Grant payment will be remitted to the grantee after the Notice of Grant Award process has been finalized.

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### **Legislation providing for the Regional Performance Incentive Program**

**Sec. 4-124s. Regional performance incentive program.** (a) For purposes of this section:

(1) “Regional council of governments” means any such council organized under the provisions of sections 4-124i to 4-124p, inclusive;

(2) “Municipality” means a town, city or consolidated town and borough;

(3) “Legislative body” means the board of selectmen, town council, city council, board of alderman, board of directors, board of representatives or board of the warden and burgesses of a municipality; and

(4) “Secretary” means the Secretary of the Office of Policy and Management or the designee of the secretary.

(b) There is established a regional performance incentive program that shall be administered by the Secretary of the Office of Policy and Management. On or before December 31, 2011, and annually thereafter, any regional council of governments, any two or more municipalities acting through a regional council of governments, any economic development district or any combination thereof may submit a proposal to the secretary for: (1) The joint provision of any service that one or more participating municipalities of such council or agency currently provide but which is not provided on a regional basis, (2) a planning study regarding the joint provision of any service on a regional basis, or (3) shared information technology services. A copy of said proposal shall be sent to the legislators representing said participating municipalities.

(c) (1) A regional council of governments or an economic development district shall submit each proposal in the form and manner the secretary prescribes and shall, at a minimum, provide the following information for each proposal: (A) Service description; (B) the explanation of the need for such service; (C) the method of delivering such service on a regional basis; (D) the organization that would be responsible for regional service delivery; (E) a description of the population that would be served; (F) the manner in which regional service delivery will achieve economies of scale; (G) the amount by which participating municipalities will reduce their mill rates as a result of

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savings realized; (H) a cost benefit analysis for the provision of the service by each participating municipality and by the entity submitting the proposal; (I) a plan of implementation for delivery of the service on a regional basis; (J) a resolution endorsing such proposal approved by the legislative body of each participating municipality; and (K) an explanation of the potential legal obstacles, if any, to the regional provision of the service.

(2) The secretary shall review each proposal and shall award grants for proposals the secretary determines best meet the requirements of this section. In awarding such grants, the secretary shall give priority to a proposal submitted by (A) any entity specified in subsection (a) of this section that includes participation of all of the member municipalities of such entity, and which may increase the purchasing power of participating municipalities or provide a cost savings initiative resulting in a decrease in expenses of such municipalities, allowing such municipalities to lower property taxes, and (B) any economic development district.

(d) On or before December 31, 2013, and annually thereafter, in addition to any proposal submitted pursuant to this section, any municipality or regional council of governments may apply to the secretary for a grant to fund: (1) Operating costs associated with connecting to the state-wide high speed, flexible network developed pursuant to section 4d-80, including the costs to connect at the same rate as other government entities served by such network; and (2) capital cost associated with connecting to such network, including expenses associated with building out the internal fiber network connections required to connect to such network, provided the secretary shall make any such grant available in accordance with the two-year schedule by which the Bureau of Enterprise Systems and Technology recommends connecting each municipality and regional council of governments to such network. Any municipality or regional council of governments shall submit each application in the form and manner the secretary prescribes.

(e) The secretary shall submit to the Governor and the joint standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to finance, revenue and bonding a report on the grants provided pursuant to this section. Each such report shall include information on the amount of each grant, and the potential of each grant for leveraging other public and private investments. The secretary shall submit a report for the fiscal year commencing July 1, 2011, not later than February 1, 2012, and shall submit a report for each subsequent fiscal year not later than the first day of March in such fiscal year.

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Such reports shall include the property tax reductions achieved by means of the program established pursuant to this section.

(P.A. 07-239, S. 8; P.A. 08-182, S. 11; P.A. 11-61, S. 5; P.A. 13-247, S. 253, 254; P.A. 14-122, S. 4, 5.)

History: P.A. 07-239 effective July 1, 2007; P.A. 08-182 amended Subsec. (a) by adding Subdivs. (4) to (6) defining “municipality”, “legislative body” and “secretary”, respectively, amended Subsec. (b) by adding provisions re submission of proposals for joint services or a planning study and deleting prior submittal requirements, replaced former Subsec. (c) with new Subsec. (c) re information to be submitted to secretary and criteria and priority for awarding grants, and amended Subsec. (d) by revising provisions re submittal deadlines and by adding provision requiring report to include information on property tax reductions, effective July 1, 2008; P.A. 11-61 amended Subsec. (b) to add as eligible entities any 2 or more municipalities and economic development districts and to change application dates from December 1, 2007, and December 31, 2008, to December 1, 2011, and December 31, 2011, respectively, amended Subsec. (c)(2) to replace “such member municipalities” with “participating municipalities” and add Subpara. (B) re economic development district, and amended Subsec. (d) to change reporting dates from July 1, 2007, and February 1, 2008, to July 1, 2011, and February 1, 2012, respectively, effective July 1, 2011; P.A. 13-247 amended Subsec. (b) by deleting provision re submission of proposal by specified entities for joint provision of service or services currently provided by municipalities within region of such an entity or contiguous thereto, but not provided on a regional basis, by authorizing specified entities to submit proposal for purposes described in Subdivs. (1) and (2) and by adding Subdiv. (3) re shared information technology services, added new Subsec. (d) re applying for a grant and redesignated existing Subsec. (d) as Subsec. (e), effective June 19, 2013, and amended Subsec. (a) by deleting former Subdivs. (2) and (3) re definitions of “regional council of elected officials” and “regional planning agency” and redesignating existing Subdivs. (4) to (6) as Subdivs. (2) to (4), amended Subsec. (b) by deleting references to regional planning agency and regional council of elected officials and making conforming changes, amended Subsec. (c)(1) by replacing “An entity specified in subsection (a) of this section” with “A regional council of governments or an economic development district” and amended Subsec. (d)(1) by adding provision re including costs to connect at same rate as other government entities, effective January 1, 2015; P.A. 14-122 amended Subsec. (a) to

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redefine “legislative body” by substituting “board of the warden” for “board of the mayor”.

See Sec. 4-66k re regional planning incentive account.