

The following guidelines are designed to assist applicants in submitting complete OneGeorgia Authority Equity Fund applications that meet the intent of the program. For further information about program intent, eligible activities and the rating and selection process, please read the Equity Fund Regulations, the application forms as well as the Equity Fund Completeness Checklist and the Equity Fund Scoring Summary included with this application guide. Note that these guidelines are not meant to duplicate in their entirety the Equity Fund Regulations; rather, these guidelines are designed to highlight important program requirements and emphasize critical steps in the application process.

Guidelines for All Equity Fund Applicants

1. Please follow all application instructions and fill out all forms as completely as possible. The Equity Fund Scoring Summary provided in this guide is not to be filled out by the applicant. While for internal use, it is provided as a guide to the kinds of criteria that may cause projects to be more competitive under the Equity Fund, and applicants should include any information that would enhance their application based on the criteria. Note that the rating and selection system is used only as a guide to the OneGeorgia Authority in making its funding decisions. Other factors unique to a specific application may also be considered.
2. Note that the application form also includes an application Completeness Checklist that should not be filled out nor submitted by the applicant. The Checklist is for internal review purposes, but the information it contains may assist the applicant in preparing as complete an application as possible. For any item requested in the application, supporting documentation will strengthen the application, and, if not provided, may be requested by the reviewer if deemed necessary to arrive at a recommendation. For example, if a public infrastructure project were proposed, a preliminary engineering report would strengthen the application.
3. The Equity Fund is designed to be a flexible community and economic development tool; however, resources for the program are limited. All applicants are urged to consider using Equity Fund monies only when other funding is not available or not sufficient to address project needs. When other public or private funding is available, the other available funding should be used to the maximum extent feasible. All potential applicants should seek the advice of the OneGeorgia Authority prior to submitting an Equity Fund application. If the OneGeorgia Authority has advised a potential applicant to pursue another source of funding, the application may not be competitive, or the OneGeorgia Authority and its agent will not consider an Equity Fund application for the same project.
4. All applicants should carefully read the Equity Fund Regulations and the Statement of General Conditions. In addition to the Statement of General Conditions, an award may be subject to additional special conditions at the discretion of the OneGeorgia Authority. All award recipients are subject to audit by the Department of Audits and to audits or monitoring by the OneGeorgia Authority or their agent. In addition, Equity Fund monies are required to be included in recipient's annual independent financial audit or report of agreed upon procedures.
5. The initiation of project activities prior to an award could endanger Equity Fund funding. While the Equity Fund is flexible, initiation of project activities prior to award may indicate that Equity Fund monies are not needed. Please check with the OneGeorgia Authority as soon as it appears that such a situation may occur.
6. All attached budget forms identify source and use of funds. The specific use of Equity Fund monies should be clearly identified as well as the use of all other funds. All sources of funds should be identified. Sources of funds must equal uses. Prior to drawdown of funds or upon audit or monitoring of the Equity Fund project, documentation will be required showing how Equity Fund and other project funds have been spent.
7. Eligible activities are listed in the Equity Fund Regulations that are part of this guide. Generally, activities are eligible if they are listed in the regulations and if they assist an eligible applicant in carrying out its responsibilities under state law. Nonetheless, if activities other than public infrastructure are being planned, please contact the Equity Fund Coordinator to verify that the

proposed activities are eligible. Note that private ownership of state funded project assets is not eligible under the Equity Fund. (See the Regulations and Statement of Conditions for further information.) Generally, the OneGeorgia Authority will require that leases of project assets to private users be of at least ten years' duration. Copies of lease agreements must be submitted to the OneGeorgia Authority for review prior to an award or drawdown of funds.

8. A) Conflicts of Interest - In general, no person who is an elected or appointed official, employee, agent, consultant, officer or any person serving in a similar capacity with any participating public agency that exercises or has exercised any functions or responsibilities with respect to any Equity Fund activities can benefit from an Equity Fund project. Those persons who are in a position to participate in a decision-making process or gain inside information regarding Equity Fund proposed or related activities, who may obtain a personal, financial interest, or benefit from the project, or have any interest in any contract, subcontract or agreement with respect to any Equity Fund project are also prohibited from benefiting from the project. The prohibitions against benefiting from an Equity Fund project would apply to the covered individuals or those with whom they have family or business ties, for one (1) year following their tenure in the covered position.

B) Exceptions - Upon written request, the agent may grant an exception to the provisions of paragraph A above, on a case-by-case basis, before funds are expended. Exceptions can only be granted when the agent determines that the exception will serve to further the purposes of the Equity Fund Program. To seek an exception, a written request for an exception must be submitted by the applicant to the agent which:

- Fully discloses the conflict or potential conflict of interest, prior to the applicant undertaking any action which results or may result in a conflict of interest, real or apparent; and
 - Describes how the conflict of interest was publicly disclosed; and
 - Includes a written opinion of the applicant's attorney that the interest for which the exception is sought would not violate state or local law.
9. Under certain circumstances and with the advance approval of the Equity Fund manager, other funds may be used on an interim basis to finance a project for which Equity Fund monies are being sought. Equity Fund monies, if approved, may then be used to fund the project on a permanent basis. Nonetheless, all Equity Fund requirements must be met, and the applicant must demonstrate that Equity Fund monies are necessary to the project. In addition, the recipient will be required to document the source and use of all funds used in the project, including interim funds. All Equity Fund applications must include information about any interim financing to allow the OneGeorgia Authority to determine the eligibility of the proposed interim financing arrangements.
 10. Other guidelines or requirements may be established by the OneGeorgia Authority in order to further the purposes of the Equity Fund.