



PA RISE SMALL-SCALE AWARD TRACK (SAT) GUIDANCE FOR APPLICATIONS THAT HAVE PASSED ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW

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RISE PA SAT Application Review Process

Q: How do projects compete for funding?

There are 3 stages of reviews.

- Stage 1 is the Administrative Review process. During this review, PennTAP will confirm that all the documentation has been submitted for a full and complete application. This process is completed within 30 days after the application has been submitted. Applicants will be notified when their application completes administrative review.
- Stage 2 is the Technical and Budget Review process. This review will take place once the application has closed. PennTAP will confirm that the projects are technologically sound and will evaluate the risks in the project timeline and budget. The PennTAP RISE PA team may contact applicants to discuss their application and budget during this stage. Please respond to any inquiries quickly.
- Stage 3 is the Committee Review process. This review will take place after the Technical and Budget Review has been completed. A committee made up of RISE PA partners will review applications to determine which projects will receive an award. Applicants will be notified about whether their application will receive an award following Committee Review.



Q: When will award notifications be sent?

Award notifications will be sent to applicants in November 2026.

Moving Forward with a Project without a Fully Executed Subaward Agreement

Q: Can I move forward with the project while the application is still being reviewed?

Starting a project, including the removal of existing equipment or the purchase and/or installation of new equipment *before* a submitted application has completed Administrative Review and received written approval from the PennTAP RISE PA team will automatically make the project ineligible for an award. Applicants are only permitted to make a down payment for *equipment* to lock in a contract (please ensure that the invoice describes this payment as a down payment).

Applicants may move forward with their project after receiving written approval from the PennTAP RISE PA team after an application has successfully completed Administrative Review. The PennTAP RISE PA team will send written permission notifying applicants about the status of their project following Administrative Review. This written approval does not confirm the receipt of a RISE PA SAT award. Importantly, if a project moves forward after receiving this written permission but is not selected for a RISE PA SAT award, the same project will be ineligible to re-apply in a new funding round.

Applicants that chose to move forward with their project following written approval from the PennTAP RISE PA team must abide by their original project scope and budget and **follow all requirements** outlined in the RISE PA Grant Guidance document (version V3202509) and the grant terms and conditions. It is essential that applicants closely review *Section 7: Grant Awards and Conditions* and confirm that all accounting and financial controls align with the terms of the RISE PA SAT program. Failure to do so will jeopardize reimbursement for those projects are ultimately offered a RISE PA SAT award. Contact the PennTAP RISE PA team immediately if you anticipate any changes to the project scope or budget.

Q: Will making a down payment or signing a financing agreement for new equipment to be installed prior to receiving a subaward make those costs ineligible?

A: No, acquiring a loan or financing your project is not paying for your project. However, if payment for the project is made prior to receiving written approval from the PennTAP RISE PA team, this payment will be ineligible for reimbursement. A down payment for equipment can be paid to lock in a contract. Equipment that is purchased or shipped prior to written approval from the PennTAP RISE PA team is not eligible for reimbursement.



Reimbursement and Accounting and Financial Controls

Q: We want to move forward with our project after receiving written approval from the PennTAP RISE PA team. What costs are eligible for reimbursement if we do receive a RISE PA SAT award?

Labor and capital costs associated with project implementation, including materials, equipment, delivery, software, construction, installation, retrofitting, tools, and contractual work directly related to the project are eligible for reimbursement. Refer to *Section 4.4: Eligible Expenditures* in the RISE PA SAT Grant Guidance document (version V3202509) for more details. All work or delivery of equipment, etc., must occur during the stated period of performance in the grant agreement (or with the date of written approval from the PennTAP RISE PA team). No reimbursement will be made for costs expended prior to this date. Any expenditures made following written approval from the PennTAP RISE PA team must align with the project scope and budget included in the application. Refer to *Section 7.5: Accounting and Financial Controls* in the RISE PA SAT Grant Guidance document (version V3202509) for more context.

Q: What costs are ineligible for reimbursement?

Please review the list of the restricted expenditures found in *Section 4.5: Expenditure Restrictions* of the RISE PA SAT Grant Guidance (version V3202509).

Some expenditures are not eligible for reimbursement but can count towards the total cost-share. These include reasonable costs associated with planning, development, and design of the project, including feasibility and engineering studies. It is essential that any projects that have received written approval from the PennTAP RISE PA team and chose to move forward with the project prior to receiving a notice of a successful award maintain the required accounting and financial controls. Refer to *Section 7.5: Accounting and Financial Controls* in the RISE PA SAT Grant Guidance document (version V3202509) for more context.

Other expenditures are ineligible for reimbursement or cost-share and do not count towards the total project cost of a project within the RISE PA SAT grant program. These ineligible expenditures include costs associated with land acquisition, permitting, or landscaping; advertising or business start-up costs; indirect costs; construction unrelated to the project; plant/facility closures; travel unrelated to the project; legal or financing fees; maintenance contracts; leased equipment; monitoring, measurement, and verification activities; etc. Refer to *Section 4.5: Expenditure Restrictions* of the RISE PA SAT Grant Guidance document (version V3202509) for more detail.

Q: What about reimbursement for costs already incurred?

Applicants should not move forward with their projects without written approval from the PennTAP RISE PA team and/or receiving a subaward agreement. If an applicant moves forward with a project prior to written approval or receiving a subaward agreement, then the project application is no longer eligible for funding. If written approval from the PennTAP RISE PA team has been received, please



refer to the sections above for more information about incurring costs prior to securing a RISE PA SAT award.

Q: If we do move forward with our project after receiving written approval from the PennTAP RISE PA team but prior to learning if we will receive an award, how can we correctly account for any costs incurred?

It is critical that any projects that move forward following written approval from the PennTAP RISE PA team but before securing a RISE PA SAT award carefully review the grant guidance (version V3202509) and the grant terms and conditions and correctly account for any expenditures. Failure correctly account for funds as required by the RISE PA program may jeopardize future reimbursement. Most importantly:

- Any expenditures must align with the original project scope and budget included in the application.
- All invoices must be appropriately detailed to allow for the determination of the eligibility of all costs incurred.
- All physical labor associated with the project is subject to Davis Bacon and Related Acts. All contractors or subcontractors involved in the construction of the project are required to provide evidence demonstrating that the prevailing wage requirement has been met. Please discuss prevailing wage requirements as soon as possible with facility leadership (if performing project construction internally) or with your chosen contractor or subcontractor.

Refer to *Section 7.5: Accounting and Financial Controls* in the RISE PA SAT Grant Guidance document (version V3202509) for more context.

Q: If we receive a RISE PA SAT award, how much funding will we receive if the project cost comes in lower or higher than the total project cost that was submitted in the application?

All grantees will be required to submit zero-balance invoices and other proof of payment (e.g., payroll documentation) prior to receiving reimbursement. These expenditures will be compared to the original project budget. If the total project cost comes in lower than the total project cost stated on the application, the grantee will be reimbursed for 50% of the incurred eligible expenditures. If the total project cost comes in higher than the total project cost stated in the application, the grantee will be reimbursed for 50% of the incurred eligible expenditures up to the original total grant request. Importantly, actual costs incurred and submitted for reimbursement must align with the category amounts included in the original detailed project budget.

Meeting the RISE PA Qualified Apprenticeship Requirement

Q: Do I need to meet the qualified apprenticeship requirement and when do I need to provide this information to the PennTAP RISE PA team?



Yes, all projects are required to meet the apprenticeship requirements outlined in *Section: 4.2 Eligible Projects* of the RISE PA SAT Grant Guidance document (version V3202509). Projects must ensure that no less than 15% of the total labor hours for the construction of the project are performed by qualified apprentices. Additionally, all projects must satisfy the apprentice-to-journeyworker ratio requirement such that each facility, contractor, or subcontractor involved who employs four or more individuals to perform the project's construction must employ one or more qualified apprentices to perform the work. This is in accordance with Commonwealth and federal requirements.

There are several pathways for meeting this requirement, as well as an option for securing an exemption for qualified projects.

1. Facilities or their contractors/subcontractors hired to perform the work can use apprentices from any Registered Apprenticeship Training program.
2. Facilities can create an apprenticeship training program with assistance from the [U.S. Department of Labor Employment and Training Administration Apprenticeship Office](#) and the [Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry's Apprenticeship & Training Office](#).
3. If qualified apprentices or Registered Apprenticeship Training program are not available for the proposed project, the facility may submit documentation that the on-the-job training provided aligns with existing training programs defined by RISE PA.
4. If the training programs described above do not align with the workforce development needs for a project, facilities can develop an alternate training program and include this description for review and approval by the PennTAP RISE PA team. The program must provide a minimum of 1,000 hours of combined on-the-job training and work experience to provide an effective and meaningful training opportunity.

If an applicant can demonstrate that they have pursued these different pathways and are unable to meet the apprenticeship requirement, the PennTAP RISE PA team may work with the applicant to secure a Good Faith Exemption from the Department of Environmental Protection.

For applicants who did not include details about meeting the RISE PA apprenticeship requirement in their original applications, the RISE PA PennTAP team will contact the applicant during the application review process to gather this information. **Please preemptively explore options for meeting this requirement.** For applicants who are hiring a contractor/subcontractor to perform the construction or installation of the new project, please contact them to confirm that they can meet the RISE PA apprenticeship requirements.

Complying with Davis Bacon and Related Acts (Prevailing Wage)

All awarded RISE PA SAT projects must comply with Davis Bacon and Related Acts and the Pennsylvania Prevailing Wage Act. This means that all workers, including those hired by



contractors/subcontractors and all trainees/apprentices, that are involved in the project's construction and installation must be paid the applicable Pennsylvania prevailing wage. The itemized project quote submitted with the application must indicate that prevailing wage rates are included in the labor cost estimations and list the wage determinations and job classifications used. The PennTAP RISE PA team may contact applicants with questions on itemized quotes and the detailed budgets submitted with the application.

Grantees are responsible for ensuring that prevailing wage is paid to all workers involved in the construction of the project and must include in all contractors the following statement: **“By accepting this contract, [the contractor] acknowledges and agrees to the terms provided in the [DBRA Requirements for Contractors and Subcontractors Under EPA Grants](#).”** The grantee and their contractor(s) will be required to show proof that prevailing wage has been paid (e.g., certified payroll records; [form WH-347](#)) prior to reimbursement, among other required records. Facilities that are awarded a RISE PA SAT grant will be provided with training on correctly documenting the prevailing wage requirement and other grant reporting requirements and will have access to the PennTAP RISE PA team for support. The facility will need to work closely with the contractor hired to perform the work to ensure that grant requirements like prevailing wage are met and correctly documented. All grantees may be subject to a site visit or audit to confirm that the project was completed as reported.

Complying with Build America, Buy America Act (BABA)

All awarded RISE PA SAT projects will need to determine whether and how Build America, Buy America Act (BABA) will apply to the project's construction. BABA applies to all federal financial assistance as defined in Section 200.1 of Title 2, Code of Federal Regulations where funds are appropriated or otherwise made available and used for a project for infrastructure, regardless of whether the project is funded through IIJA or not and regardless of whether infrastructure is the primary purpose of the Federal award. Review the *EPA Programs Office of Air and Radiation: Climate Pollution Reduction Grants Program Build America, Buy America Act Frequently Asked Questions [document](#)* to understand the impacts of BABA. In many cases, the RISE PA SAT funded projects will be privately owned and not open to the public and, therefore, will not be subject to BABA. However, if this is not the case for your specific project, the project is likely subject to BABA requirements. There are [BABA waivers](#) listed online and may be a resource to applicable projects.