

# **New Mexico Incubator Certification Support Grant**



## **GRANT MANUAL 2026 Program Year**

Updated 3/3/2026

## **PROGRAM OVERVIEW**

In 2023, the New Mexico Economic Development Department (EDD) was awarded a one-time, three-year, special appropriation to support certified incubators across New Mexico. By strengthening the statewide network of certified incubators, the EDD can support entrepreneurial development, job creation, and the long-term growth and diversification of New Mexico's economy while addressing local small business needs.

An incubator is a business support facility with structured processes that accelerate the successful development of start-ups and early-stage businesses by providing business owners with targeted resources and services. These services are typically developed or coordinated by incubator management and delivered both within the incubator and through its network of partners and contacts.

The primary goal of a business incubator is to produce successful businesses that graduate from the program and are financially viable and independent. These incubator graduates have the potential to create jobs, revitalize neighborhoods, commercialize new technologies, and strengthen state and local economies.

The **New Mexico Incubator Certification Support Grant ("ICS Grant")** is a competitive, non-recurring, state-funded grant designed to support non-certified incubators seeking certification as a NM Certified Business Incubator by helping them prepare to meet all requirements outlined in state statute.

Link to the legislation creating the statute for reference:

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/Sessions/05%20Regular/final/HB0054.pdf>

All grantees are *required* to use these funds to pursue meeting certification requirements through the State's Certified Incubator Program upon completion of the grant period.

### **Statutory Requirements of NM Certified Incubators:**

- Mission statement
- Feasibility study or business plan\*
  - *\*For Incubators established after July 1, 2005 a formal feasibility study indicating an appropriate market and local community support is required, or for incubators established prior to July 1, 2005, a business plan is required.*
- Governing board list
- Staff bios and resumes
- Description of business assistance offerings
- Photos of facility and sample lease agreement
- Screening, selection, and graduation policies
- Program evaluation criteria
- Proof of required licenses, permits, and accounting system
- Proof of current InBIA membership

Link to the certification application for reference: <https://edd.newmexico.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/certification-app.pdf>

### **Program Objectives**

The funding provided through the ICS Grant is intended to provide:

- A. Support and expand the number of high-quality, certified business incubators across the state.
- B. Increase operational capacity of rural incubators to better support small businesses within their communities.
- C. Provide support for incubator operations and infrastructure improvements to support incubator tenants and meet New Mexico Certified Incubator certification requirements described in HB54.
- D. Provide fiscal support for incubators to obtain the required feasibility study to meet New Mexico Certified Incubator certification requirements described in state statute.

### **Program Administration**

The ICS Grant is administered by the New Mexico Economic Development Department (EDD) Technology and Innovation Office (TIO). While this grant is being administered by TIO, proposals are not solely for tech and innovation serving sectors and may fall outside of our prioritized areas.

Eligible incubators will submit applications online.

Applications will be evaluated by TIO staff and the Review Board. Final approvals will be determined by the EDD Office of the Secretary.

### **Funding Opportunity**

The ICS Grant is a competitive grant opportunity. Applicants may request any amount up to \$150,000 **but should only request what is needed to successfully complete the proposed work towards certification requirements.** All work must be completed within 12 months of the execution of the grant agreement (signed by all parties).

### **Applicant Eligibility**

Eligible applicants for this grant funding:

- Must be a current incubator in New Mexico.
- Must have a New Mexico BTIN (formerly CRS) Tax Number
- Must provide a Letter of Good Standing from the New Mexico Taxation and Revenue Department
  - Obtaining a Letter of Good Standing via the New Mexico Taxation and Revenue Taxpayer Access Point (TAP).
    - Go to <https://www.tax.newmexico.gov/request-a-letter-of-good-standing/> and watch the video for instructions on how to request a Letter of Good Standing.

- In order to request the Letter of Good Standing, you must be logged into the New Mexico Taxation and Revenue Taxpayer Access Point (TAP) through an administrator account.
- If you do not have the option to request a Letter of Good Standing through your portal, please contact the Technology and Innovation Office Senior Economic Development Coordinator.
- Must certify they do not have overdue tax debt or are not a party to any claim or lawsuit.
- Must become established in the state's finance system in order to receive grant funds. Applications will require submission of a State of New Mexico W-9.
- Must agree to all reporting and claw-back requirements.

***Current NM Certified Business Incubators are not eligible to apply for this grant opportunity.***

### **Ineligible Funding Use**

No more than 25% of the total funds awarded may be used for payroll expenses, with a cap of \$50,000 regardless of the funding amount awarded.

Funds may not be used for alcohol/drugs/food.

### **Evaluation Criteria and Application**

The application will require a detailed proposal that outlines project overview, organizational experience, implementation plan, and a budget narrative.

These funds are intended to support non-certified incubators seeking to meet certification requirements for the New Mexico Business Incubator Certification Program. Proposals will be evaluated based on allocation of funds that lead to meeting certification requirements. Awards will be made dependent on application evaluation, scoring, and funding availability. Final approvals will be determined by the EDD Office of the Secretary.

Rural incubators will receive a weighted score. "Rural" is defined as any part of the state other than Los Alamos County, Albuquerque, Rio Rancho, Farmington, Las Cruces, Roswell, Santa Fe, and within a 10-mile radius around those cities.

Eligible proposals should address and will be evaluated on the following elements:

### **Incubator Background and Mission Statement**

#### **a) Describe your incubator's mission, current client services and core programs, and discuss your organization's impact.**

- a. Examples include the services offered (consultations, training, workshops, networking, and support), current tenants serviced and total tenant capacity, the industry and types of businesses served, and how you engage external partners to meet client needs.

## **Project Overview and Meeting Certification Requirements**

### **a) Outline proposed project and provide details on how you plan to strengthen your incubator operations and services.**

- a. Describe the primary activities the funding will support (e.g., feasibility study, expanded programming, technical assistance, equipment, or facility upgrades) and how these investments will increase capacity, improve service delivery, and expand the number or quality of businesses served.

### **b) Outline current and proposed progress towards certification.**

- a. Describe your current progress toward meeting the statutory requirements for New Mexico Certified Business Incubators and identify how grant funds will be used to address remaining areas of need.

## **Organizational Experience:**

### **a) Provide a short bio for key team members who will help carry out the proposed project and previous experience providing incubation programming and services.**

- a. Include information about their roles, relevant experience, and qualifications—such as education, work history, certifications, or specific expertise that supports your organization’s ability to deliver the proposed programs or services. Focus on individuals who will lead, manage, or directly contribute to the success of the project. Include specific examples that show how your work helped sustain, grow, or create incubation activities in New Mexico.

## **Implementation Plan:**

### **a) Describe your project’s specific timeline and milestones to ensure full utilization of funding.**

- a. Include information about milestones with specific timelines over a twelve-month period of performance, including contingency plans for delays or funding gaps. Provide details describing readiness to begin work upon award.

## **Budget Summary:**

### **a) Applicants must submit a detailed budget and budget narrative.**

- a. Include clear alignment between proposed costs and project activities, with funding focused on meeting certification requirements and supporting incubator operations and services. If applicable, please include detailed estimates or quotes where possible.
- b. Include clear alignment between certification requirements and proposed costs/project activities. Any payroll categories need to be directly tied to the specific certification requirement that it will support.

## **Award**

- All work must be completed within twelve months of grant agreement execution.
- Awardees will receive full funding amounts upon grant agreement execution.

- Quarterly progress and expense reports will be required.
- Awardees are expected to retain records of all expenses related to grant expenditures and will be required to submit receipts upon TIO request.

**The State of New Mexico will issue a 1099 tax form to all awardees of state grants, including the ICS Grant.**

All applicants will be notified by TIO on the final award decisions. The number of businesses that may receive funding will vary based on funding availability.

**Grant Agreement**

Awardees will receive full funding amounts upon grant agreement execution. Awardees are expected to retain records of all expenses related to grant expenditures and will be required to submit receipts upon TIO request. Violation of the requirement will give the State the right to initiate claw backs of the awarded funds.

Grantees must agree to, when asked by the EDD, provide (non-financial) support and/or testimonials as to the value and impact of the financial support they are awarded.

Grantees must agree to include the EDD logo on their website and marketing materials for funds used to attend conferences, build websites, make presentations, etc.

Past awardees of TIO or other EDD funding must be in good standing with the department to be considered for additional funding.

**Project Reporting**

Grantees will be required to submit quarterly progress and expense reports to elaborate on use of funds and the project status.

Upon completion of the scope of work, grantees must submit a final report to the Technology and Innovation Office – final reports will be due within thirteen months of grant agreement execution. The final report will include final project costs and expenditures, the use of grant funds, measures of project outcomes, and a description of the project's impact on the state.

EDD may request informal interim progress reports and check ins. Grantees are required to respond within the deadline indicated in the request.

**Key Dates**

TIO will be accepting applications for the New Mexico Incubator Certification Support Grant from **March 5, 2026, through April 2, 2026, at 5 PM MST**. Awards will be made dependent on application evaluation and funding availability.

**An informational webinar will be held on March 18, 2026, at 1 PM MST.**

**\*Awarded projects must be completed within twelve months, and final reports submitted within thirteen months, of grant agreement execution. \***

For more information on the New Mexico Incubator Certification Support Grant please contact Tina Memarian, Entrepreneurship Senior Economic Development Coordinator, at [tina.memarian@edd.nm.gov](mailto:tina.memarian@edd.nm.gov) or (505) 469-1772.