



**Illinois**  
**Department of Commerce**  
& Economic Opportunity  
OFFICE OF ECONOMIC EQUITY & EMPOWERMENT

**2025 Office of Economic Equity & Empowerment (OE3)**

**Small Business Capital and Infrastructure Grant Program Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO)**

**Pre-Qualification Information**

**PRE-QUALIFICATION**

To apply for this NOFO (Notice of Funding Opportunity) or any other State of Illinois grant, your organization must first be pre-qualified.

- For more information on that process, please watch [this short video](#).
- Click here to read the GATA guide in [English](#) and [Spanish](#).

Pre-qualification means that all of the registration steps have been met and that the status for the grantee is “Good” relative to an active SAM.gov registration, the Federal Excluded Parties List, Stop Payment List, the Secretary of State registration (if required) and the DHFS Sanctions List (also known as the Illinois Medicaid Sanctions List). Once the pre-qualification steps are met, the grantee is in “Qualified” status.

- [Frequently Asked Questions by new grantees can be found here.](#)

**STEPS TO GET PRE-QUALIFIED**

**Please note this process can take 2+ weeks to complete, please ensure time to complete the steps in order not to miss the grant deadline.**



- **Step 1 (Free):** Obtain a Federal Employee Identification Number (FEIN) or Individual Taxpayer Identification Number (ITIN).
  - **If you already have a business, you may already have this completed.** Please check your records to confirm. If your entity doesn't already have one, you can obtain one at [IRS.gov](#).

- **Step 2 (cost):** Register Your Business with the State of Illinois
  - **This depends on the legal structure of the business. If you already have a business, you may already have this completed.** Please check your records to confirm. You can also check on the [Illinois Secretary of State's website](#). Note, that your entity must be in Good Standing with the Secretary of State (Status – Active).
- **Step 3 (Free):** Register your Business with [SAM.Gov](#) (System Award Management)
  - **You need two items from SAM.gov (SBDCs can help with this at no cost)**
    - 1. You need a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI), a 12-character alphanumeric ID
    - 2. You need a number from SAM (cage code) (this is different from your UEI ID)
  - **RESOURCE: DCEO's Office of Accountability did a training on SAM.gov**, you can review the [recording](#) to assist you with this process.
- **Step 4 (Free):** Register with the Grant Accountability and Transparency Act ([GATA](#))
  - **GATA Guides**
    - GATA Guide in English, click [HERE](#) and GATA Guide in Spanish, click [HERE](#).
- **Step 5:** Once you completed the prequalification process, please log into GATA and ensure all items are in good standing. Your entity must be in good standing in GATA in order to be prequalified.

#### TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

[Illinois Small Business Development Centers \(SBDCs\)](#) are located throughout the state and provide information, confidential business guidance, training, and other resources for start-ups and existing small businesses. **Services are at no cost.** SBDCs can assist you with the prequalification process.

[Find SBDC's in your area](#)

[Sign-up as a new client at a center near you](#)

[DCEO's Office of Accountability](#) – For questions with prequalification status please contact [ceo.granthelp@illinois.gov](mailto:ceo.granthelp@illinois.gov).

#### GRANTS LEARNING CENTER

[Sign up here for the Upcoming Grant Trainings by DCEO's Office of Accountability](#)

- Virtual Office Hour Q&A – every Tuesday at 2 pm
- Pre-Qualification Training – 1st Wednesday of the month at 9 am
- Various topics Training – 3rd Wednesday of the month at 9 am

## **GATA LEARNING MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (LMS) – Optional trainings at this time.**

Each year, the State partners with and provides millions of dollars to organizations throughout Illinois to provide services and programs to its residents. GOMB-GATU in partnership with the [University of Illinois Springfield](#), is pleased to offer comprehensive training courses for grantees, potential grantees and state agency personnel. This training series provides guidance and support to navigate the administrative requirements for grants. The goal of this self-paced, internet-based training is to empower participants to be more successful grant administrators.

The training series consists of five courses designed to break down the grantmaking and management lifecycle process to help individuals understand grant requirements and the GATA frameworks Illinois uses to administer public funds. The courses contain accessible reference materials, detailed instruction, and practical support to help users apply the requirements.

These training courses are available through the GATA learning management system. Participants start by creating a login and username via [continuingeducation.uis.edu](https://continuingeducation.uis.edu).

Please follow the instructions [Accessing the Training](#) to set up your account to access the courses:

1. [GOMB: GATA Foundations](#)
2. [GOMB: Pre-Award](#)
3. [GOMB: Post-Award](#)
4. [GOMB: Audits](#)
5. [GOMB: Indirect Cost](#)

**All courses are LIVE AND OPTIONAL AT THIS TIME. ONLY THE PREQUALIFICATION IS REQUIRED.**