

Higher Blends Infrastructure Incentive Program Fueling Stations and Fleet Facilities Questions and Answers

Question 1	Answer 1
Will a bank loan qualify as an applicant's matching funds?	Yes, loan proceeds for the purpose of HBIIP implementation activities are eligible matching funds. A promisory note or bank statement attesting to the amount of the loan is sufficient validation/certification.
Who are some of the third party partners you discussed?	Third party partners are independent entities that provide various types of support, services, expertise, equipment/technology and are necessary to a successful HBIIP application.
if your locations are in different states do you use the SPOC from the state where your HQ is?	You must use the SPOC for both the location of the site and the SPOC for where the HQ is located, if they are in different States.
For SPOC review, what if your project covers more than one state, and your main office is in a state without an SPOC? But one project location does fall in a state with an SPOC. Does the secondary location count as a requirement for SPOC notification?	The SPOC list is posted on the HBIIP web page. Please refer to this list to locate your State's Single Point of Contact (SPOC) for understanding and complying with required state and local laws related to your project site. The SPOC is applicable to the physical location of your project site.
Please provide link for a download of these webinars	The webinar and Q & As are being posted at https://www.rd.usda.gov/hbiip
Is distribution facility project for E85 related work eligible?	No, the terminal/depot or distribution application type is available to biodiesel applicants only.
Is there any possibility this program will fund renewable CNG stations?	No, this program is designed to assist with infrastructure related to ethanol and biodiesel distribution.
Will applicants be able to add additional users to our online application access after the initial access is granted?	Yes, but only by special request to HigherBlendsGrants-access@grants.gov . This presents a special burden on our already stressed Access Request/operations staff. It is far better to include all Authorized Users on the initial request.
I applied for a Sam #/ Cage 10 days ago. I understand it is taking longer that anticipated. Can I get started on the application process while I am waiting on the Sam #?	<p>No, a SAM account/CAGE Code is a required field on the HBIIP Access Request. You must complete all fields and have at least one Authorized User identified to submit a request. It can take up to ten business days to process a CAGE Code request with a new SAM entity registration. You can use the SAM Status Tracker available from the Check Status tab at the top of each page on SAM.gov for a quick check on your registration's status. A Check Status link is also located at the bottom of each page. If you have additional questions specific to your CAGE Code processing, please contact the DLA Customer Interaction Center at dlacontactcenter@dla.mil or call Commercial 1-877-352-2255 or DSN 661-7766.</p> <p>If you notice your registration has had a status of "Submitted" for 15 business days or longer, and you have not otherwise been contacted by the IRS or the DLA to correct or update the necessary information, please contact the Federal Service Desk.</p>
Will browsers other than Chrome work?	No, you must use a Chrome browser.
If a construction project has started and estimated to open July 2020 will this station be eligible. Or is eligibility on only future slated projects starting after May 15th 2020?	No, unless construction is to occur after the application is awarded an HBIIP grant. Eligible Project Costs are only those costs incurred during the grant period and that are directly related to the use and purposes of the infrastructure installation(s).

What about above ground storage tanks?	Yes , retrofits and upgrades are eligible and the above ground eligible costs are awarded at a rate of 50 percent of the cost, with each applicant (not stations, but applicant combined) capped at receiving a maximum of \$5 million. An aboveground storage tank is eligible to be cost shared at 25 percent. In addition, there is no allowance for using HBIIP funds on tanks at any NEW construction sites. BUT, HBIIP funds for tanks can be used on an existing fueling stations that requires upgraded, and/or retrofitted and/or additional underground storage tanks may request assistance of up to 25 percent of total eligible project costs or up to \$1,250,000, whichever is the lesser. They are eligible for any required equipment including, but not limited to, the tank, piping, piping containment sumps, underground pumping equipment, including the submersible pump or suction pump, release detection equipment, spill equipment (spill buckets), overfill equipment, fuel dispensers/pumps, or other equipment.
Congressional District related to the station location or company HQ?	You must record the Congressional District for both the location of the site and for where the HQ is located, if they are in different.
Are biodiesel and ethanol stations eligible for the targeted assistance goal?	Yes, the HBIIP established a Targeted Assistance Goal for applicants (owners) owning the fewest number of transportation fueling stations/locations (and owning at least one). Approximately 40 percent of funds will be made available for activities/ investments related to upgrading or installing equipment to make a transportation fueling facilities fully compatible to dispense/sell higher blends of fuel ethanol and/or biodiesel. USDA Rural Development expects this Targeted Assistance to be exhausted by applicants owning 10 fueling stations/locations or fewer.
Can you go back to show who Missouri's SPOC is please?	The SPOC list is posted on the HBIIP web page. Please refer to this list to locate your State's Single Point of Contact (SPOC) for understanding and complying with required state and local laws related to your project site.
Can a company that currently has zero stations, but wants to develop a new station, apply for this grant?	Yes, provided ownership of the to-be constructed station can be evidenced in the application. In addition, the HBIIP established a Targeted Assistance Goal for applicants (owners) owning the fewest number of transportation fueling stations/locations (and owning at least one). Approximately 40 percent of funds will be made available for activities/investments related to upgrading or installing equipment to make a transportation fueling facilities fully compatible to dispense/sell higher blends of fuel ethanol and/or biodiesel. USDA Rural Development expects this Targeted Assistance to be exhausted by applicants owning 10 fueling stations/locations or fewer. Please keep in mind, new construction is not eligible for cost share on any storage tanks and related equipment.
On the HBIIP Access Request form, it asks for the request type. Do we need to select 'yes' for Company account or for Company and User account? We are a retail chain of 600+ locations.	Please select company and user account, naming the users that would be responsible for preparing and submitting the application. Please note that there is a \$5 million cap per applicant in the HBIIP, this it is unlikely that 600+ locations would be receiving HBIIP funding.
Will this webinar address fleet fueling facilities?	Yes, the fleet fueling facilities are an application type that may be selected for submission. Please keep in mind that only one application is allowable per applicant. Thus, a truck stop would be a fleet fueling facility and the applicant would not be able to also submit a 10 or fewer or 10 or less fueling station application type.
It would be very helpful if this excellent webinar was available online in the next week.	Thank you for your suggestion and interest. We will work diligently to have this webinar and last week's webinar posted as soon as possible on the HBIIP website. We will also post the Q & As and related transcripts as available.
Would the extension request be at application time or after award?	Successful applicants will enter into a grant agreement with USDA to outline the terms of the grant. The grant recipient will be given 18 month from the date of grant agreement acceptance and full execution. Full financial close out of the grant is expected to conclude 90 days following the completion of construction. Any future agreement modifications would be considered and reviewed for legal sufficiency and administrative authorization. The intent of the program is to have 100 percent performance and RBCS will work with participants to help achieve that program intent.
What if we are waiting on our CAGE code. Do we still have time to submit the application?	Likely yes, as the application submission period runs through August 13th, 11:59 pm EDT. SAM CAGE Code confirmation would likely not exceed the entire application submission period if the application submission process is begun in a timely manner. If issues arise with receiving the CAGE Code in a timely manner, please contact the RBCS or SAM directly to receive further assistance.

<p>We are waiting on Sam account/CAGE Code can we submit request for application without this CAGE number at this time?</p>	<p>No, a SAM account/CAGE Code will be required before the application can be submitted, as the access to the HBIP application portal will not be granted without one being obtained. You can review answers to frequently asked questions about the CAGE Code assignment process here.</p> <p>It can take up to ten business days to process a CAGE Code request with a new SAM entity registration. You can use the SAM Status Tracker available from the Check Status tab at the top of each page on SAM.gov for a quick check on your registration's status. A Check Status link is also located at the bottom of each page. If you have additional questions specific to your CAGE Code processing, please contact the DLA Customer Interaction Center at dlacontactcenter@dla.mil or call Commercial 1-877-352-2255 or DSN 661-7766.</p> <p>If you notice your registration has had a status of "Submitted" for 15 business days or longer, and you have not otherwise been contacted by the IRS or the DLA to correct or update the necessary information, please contact the Federal Service Desk.</p>
<p>GLS level 2 comment: the system will prompt them when they try to access level 2 authority areas on GLS. Local offices have LRA authorized personnel they can contact for instructions on what's needed to obtain access. just my experience info.</p>	<p>Thank you for the input. To obtain a USDA E-Authentication account, https://www.eauth.usda.gov/eauth/b/usda/registration and select customer and follow the directions given. A level 2 access is no longer required for HBIP, due to the Covid-19 related circumstances.</p>
<p>How does one establish Administrator Priorities</p>	<p>Applicants may receive up to 3 percent of their 3 year average fuel sales volume in Administrator priorities contribution toward their overall priority score for each Geographic Diversity criteria selected and as applicable based on the fueling station's physical location.</p>
<p>Are biodiesel fueling stations included in this grant?</p>	<p>Yes, fueling stations that offer a higher blend of biodiesel are eligible. Approximately \$14 million will be made available to transportation fueling facilities and fuel distribution facilities (including terminal operations, depots, and midstream partners, and home heating oil distribution facilities), for eligible implementation activities related to higher blends of biodiesel greater than 5 percent biodiesel, such as B20 or higher. And \$86 million will be made available to transportation fueling facilities (including fueling stations, convenience stores, hypermarket fueling stations, fleet facilities, and similar entities with capital investments) for eligible implementation activities related to higher blends of fuel ethanol greater than 10 percent ethanol, such as E15 or higher. But please be mindful that only one type of applicant option can be selected: Owner of 10 or Fewer Fueling Stations; Owner of 10 or More Fueling Stations; Fleet Fueling Station Facility; or Fuel Distribution Facility (Terminal Operation).</p>
<p>Can we apply for both higher level blends of ethanol and biodiesel?</p>	<p>Yes, fueling stations that offer a higher blend of biodiesel are eligible. Approximately \$14 million will be made available to transportation fueling facilities and fuel distribution facilities (including terminal operations, depots, and midstream partners, and home heating oil distribution facilities), for eligible implementation activities related to higher blends of biodiesel greater than 5 percent biodiesel, such as B20 or higher. And \$86 million will be made available to transportation fueling facilities (including fueling stations, convenience stores, hypermarket fueling stations, fleet facilities, and similar entities with capital investments) for eligible implementation activities related to higher blends of fuel ethanol greater than 10 percent ethanol, such as E15 or higher. But please be mindful that only one type of applicant option can be selected: Owner of 10 or Fewer Fueling Stations; Owner of 10 or More Fueling Stations; Fleet Fueling Station Facility; or Fuel Distribution Facility (Terminal Operation).</p>
<p>What is the calculation to determine the priority score?</p>	<p>Applicants may receive up to 3 percent of their 3 year average fuel sales volume in Administrator priorities contribution toward their overall priority score for each Geographic Diversity criteria selected and as applicable based on the fueling station's physical location.</p>
<p>Can you define "interstate corridor"? Is there a distance limit?</p>	<p>1 mile from the interstate with easy access to and from the highway.</p>
<p>How extensive should applicants be when completing the feasibility study?</p>	<p>Sufficiently extensive to support/justify the fuel distribution facility project activities in the eyes of the industry recognized expert evaluation panel and should address all 5 areas/questions of feasibility: Technical, Economic, Legal, Operational and Scheduling.</p>

<p>What if I am a company that is submitting on behalf of many smaller stations? I don't own the stations, but am the grant applicant. These smaller companies would not submit without being part of my larger application.</p>	<p>Eligible applicants to HBIIIP are owners of fueling stations, fleet facilities, and fuel distribution facilities. If you are not an owner, you may not apply for a Higher Blends Grant.</p>
<p>Is there a minimum # of dispensers a station must have to be eligible to be retro fitted and receive the federal cost share? . There are many rural locations that need to be retrofitted that only have 1 -2 islands with 2-4 dispensers...</p>	<p>There is no minimum amount for a grant application. In addition, applicants may receive up to 3 percent of their 3 year average fuel sales volume in Administrator priorities contribution toward their overall priority score for each Geographic Diversity criteria selected and as applicable based on the fueling station's physical location. The opportunity to achieve a higher priority score is directly available to All applicants and is a function of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The activities selected in the fueling station worksheet -The amount of requested funds. -The basis on which HBIIIP applications will compete is, "gallons of Higher Blend fuels contributed to the fuel stream per dollar of requested funds."
<p>We are looking to set up a trans loading and fueling station. We are looking to bring fuel in via rail. Would a rail extension be an eligible cost?</p>	<p>You must choose whether to apply as an owner of fueling stations or as fuel distribution facility. You may submit one and only one application. A rail spur/extension may be considered as part of a fuel distribution facility however, you must demonstrate how the extension contributes significantly to throughput volume of Higher Blends of biodiesel, greater than 5 percent such as B20 or higher. Otherwise, such an application is unlikely to score very highly on a throughput gallon per dollar of requested funds basis.</p>
<p>Are the other line items on the budget form applicable, for example demolition, or site work? Or is everything to be combined under the two items you showed, with all other items blank?</p>	<p>The budget form is interactive and will indicate the amount allowed by the government for each respective item.</p>
<p>If the project is worked by a Joint venture company, who should apply for the grant - the joint venture, or one of the parent companies?</p>	<p>The owner of the stite where the infrastructure is to be installed is the applicant. Only one application per applicant will be accepted. Owners of more than one station who wish to include some or all of their stations will use one application that complies with the single applicant cap of \$5 million.</p>
<p>Are we able to include labor costs for the application?</p>	<p>Yes. In addition, eligible costs in relation to tanks may include any required equipment including, but not limited to, the tank, piping, piping containment sumps, underground pumping equipment, including the submersible pump or suction pump, release detection equipment, spill equipment (spill buckets), overfill equipment, fuel dispensers/pumps, or other equipment. It is also important to note that expenses associated with reporting results and/or outcomes during the disbursement, performance, and servicing portions of this program" are considered ineligible project costs. If labor costs are to be a part of the matching fund, please remember that matching funds plus grant funds must equal total eligible project cost. Matching funds may be in the form of cash or eligible in-kind contributions. Matching funds/contributions and grant funds may be used only for eligible project purposes, including any contributions exceeding the minimum amount required. Eligible costs for HBIIIP are to be incurred during the grant period. Any work performed before the grant period occurs will be ineligible costs.</p>
<p>Are we able to include tank costs for the application?</p>	<p>There is no allowance for using HBIIIP funds on tanks at any NEW construction sites. BUT, HBIIIP funds for tanks can be used on an existing fueling stations that requires upgraded, and/or retrofitted and/or additional underground storage tanks may request assistance of up to 25 percent of total eligible project costs or up to \$1,250,000, whichever is the lesser. They are eligible for any required equipment including, but not limited to, the tank, piping, piping containment sumps, underground pumping equipment, including the submersible pump or suction pump, release detection equipment, spill equipment (spill buckets), overfill equipment, fuel dispensers/pumps, or other equipment.</p>
<p>What is a good priority score - higher is better compared to what?</p>	<p>Applicants may receive up to 3 percent of their 3 year average fuel sales volume in Administrator priorities contribution toward their overall priority score for each Geographic Diversity criteria selected and as applicable based on the fueling station's physical location. A good priority score will depend upon overall variables for the applicant's infrastructure at the selected locations in the application.</p>

<p>If we are building a new site, should we have projected numbers for the historical data on gallonage or just leave it at 0?</p>	<p>Yes, even a new construction site must complete the project annual sales volumes. The application requires the inclusion of annual sales volume for the past 3 years (2017–19) or projected sales for fueling stations constructed during the grant period, for all fuels including E10 and/or B5.</p>
<p>Dispenser is above ground .. how are costs of under cement piping and sump costs go?</p>	<p>The 25 percent cap will apply to all UST costs, including the below ground infrastructure. If additional above ground infrastructure related to making the higher blend pumps and tank operational are required, these are eligible costs and can be funded at the 50 percent cost cap with the HBIP cost share but must comply at the same time with the 25 percent cost share for USTs not exceeding \$1.25 million.</p>
<p>If we are a truck stop and are only requesting grant money for the gas side should we be including our truck diesel side dispenser sales in our total gallons and existing dispensers?</p>	<p>All applicable fuel sales volumes should be included in the application worksheets.</p>
<p>Is there a good phone number to call for help with the login.gov/sam.gov website?</p>	<p>It can take up to ten business days to process a CAGE Code request with a new SAM entity registration. You can use the SAM Status Tracker available from the Check Status tab at the top of each page on SAM.gov for a quick check on your registration’s status. A Check Status link is also located at the bottom of each page. If you have additional questions specific to your CAGE Code processing, please contact the DLA Customer Interaction Center at dlacontactcenter@dla.mil or call Commercial 1-877-352-2255 or DSN 661-7766.</p> <p>If you notice your registration has had a status of “Submitted” for 15 business days or longer, and you have not otherwise been contacted by the IRS or the DLA to correct or update the necessary information, please contact the Federal Service Desk.</p>
<p>We have fewer than 10 fueling stations, and we also service fleets. Can we apply for portable units we can place at our stations and at our customers' locations?</p>	
<p>What is the difference between targeted assistance and administrative priorities?</p>	<p>Administrator priorities and Targeted Assistance are designed to give a “nudge” not a “push” to an applicant’s priority score.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The opportunity to achieve a higher priority score is directly available to All applicants and is a function of: - The activities selected in the fueling station worksheet -The amount of requested funds. -The basis on which HBIP applications will compete is, “gallons of Higher Blend fuels contributed to the fuel stream per dollar of requested funds.”
<p>Will a multiple store application be accepted/reject as a whole or will you reject a single store if the score is too low with the rest of the application being approved?</p>	<p>Applications submitted prior to the deadline will be reviewed and competed in whole, not in part.</p>
<p>Our company is not a retailer, but we our application will include many retailers that are small (less than 10 stations). Our application will be for more than 10 stations; but includes small companies. What category to we apply in?</p>	<p>If you are not an owner of fueling station/s, fleet facility/ies, or fuel distribution facility/ies, you are not an eligible applicant to HBIP. You may assist owners with completing their applications, by the owners includ</p>
<p>We have a large retail business where we deliver to farm. In order to grow that on farm business with higher blends of ethanol we need to increase our storage tanks for ethanol to blend for those loads. Since its at a retail fueling station would putting large storage tanks for ethanol and gas along with blender to help us grow the e-market on farm.</p>	<p>On its face, this appears to be more of a fuel distribution business and not fueling station and therefore, not an eligible purpose for fuel ethanol. Please call me 202-205-9322 and let's discuss the details of your project.</p>
<p>What document provides guidance on eAuth/level 2 access? I've signed up for an</p>	<p>Level 2 access is now recommended and not a requirement for access to the HBIP online application system. Please see the instructions provided here, https://www.rd.usda.gov/sites/default/files/HBIPeAuthenticationGuide.pdf</p>

account and nowhere does it show steps for level 2 access.	
will you be discussing fleet applications?	Fleet applications were discussed during the May 19th Webinar. See the Events tab.
I think you had mentioned a \$38,000 max for the pumps. I didn't fully catch that, can you say that again? Or did I hear you wrong?	A capped cost, the federal maximum contribution, is established for each type of dispenser. See the tooltip provided in the fueling station proposed activities worksheet.
Are electrical infrastructure costs matched for the tank install and or new dispensers?	Yes, provided it's equipment for the underground storage tank and system on an existing fueling station, or it's directly related fuel dispenser equipment. If by electrical infrastructure, you mean equipment considered integral to the point of sale reporting system, then No, that is not considered an eligible cost.
How do we determine the amount of higher blend fuels will be contributed to the fuel stream? Is this a projection or is it based on actual gallons of fuel the station sells prior to adding higher ethanol blends?	The proposed activities worksheet will guide you through the information required to calculate the Higher Blends contribution. These calculations are based on total fuel volumes for existing stations and projected fuel volumes for stations constructed during the grant period.
What is the time commitment to sell E85/E15/biodiesel for if funds are awarded for infrastructure?	The project execution period of the grant is for up to 18 months, with an allowed extension for an additional 12 months upon request and allowed by the Agency. The reporting requirement for successful applicants is for 5 years, reported once a year, using point of sale data.
The application direction mention Grants.gov. Is grants.gov used (in any way) for this application process?	Grants.gov provides information for how to get to the HBIIIP online application system. All applications must be submitted electronically through the HBIIIP online application system.
Can you go over more Fleet application information on the next webinar?	Fleet applications were discussed during the May 19th Webinar. See the Events tab.
How do we know if there is a state application submittal?	A state application submittal is available to download/sign/submit to state authority when the Federal application is downloaded/signed/submitted. As to whether your state requires a submittal, check first to see if your state has a single point of contact. If so contact the individual directly to determine HBIIIP program opportunities and requirements. Follow the instructions provided by your state SPOC.
What is the link for that technical report outline that is in this presentation?	https://www.rd.usda.gov/sites/default/files/HBIIIP_Project_Technical_Report_Guide.pdf