Environmental Protection Agency

Ohio Environmental Education Fund Grant Application Instructions



Office of Environmental Education
July 2026

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Ohio Environmental Education Fund Grant Application Instructions

The General Assembly created the Ohio Environmental Education Fund (OEEF) in 1990 to enhance Ohio citizens' awareness and understanding of environmental issues. It is administered by the Director of the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency (Ohio EPA) and provides approximately $700,000 annually in grants to support environmental education efforts within the state of Ohio.

The OEEF derives its monies from one—half of the civil penalties collected from violations of Ohio's air and water pollution control regulations. The OEEF funds education projects targeting three audiences:

1. the general public
2. the regulated community
3. pre-school through university students and teachers

OEEF supports innovative projects that increase public awareness and knowledge about environmental issues and provide the skills to make informed decisions and take responsible actions. Environmental education is based on objective and scientifically sound information and does not advocate a particular viewpoint or course of action. It teaches individuals how to weigh various sides of an issue through critical thinking, and it enhances their problem-solving and decision-making skills.

The Ohio Environmental Education Fund (OEEF) has made several improvements to streamline the 2026 grant application process and make it more accessible for applicants.

- General Grants, previously funded at $5,001 to $50,000, are now available for up to $25,000
- Letter of Intent requirement has been removed
- Application has been streamlined with shorter, clearer prompts and fewer required fields
- Applicants now provide up to two concise objectives with character limits
- Interim/progress reports are no longer required for General Grants
- Guidance documents, including the Grant Administration Reference Document (GARD), have been updated for clarity and ease of use

These updates improve process efficiency and make it easier for applicants to focus on designing impactful environmental education projects.

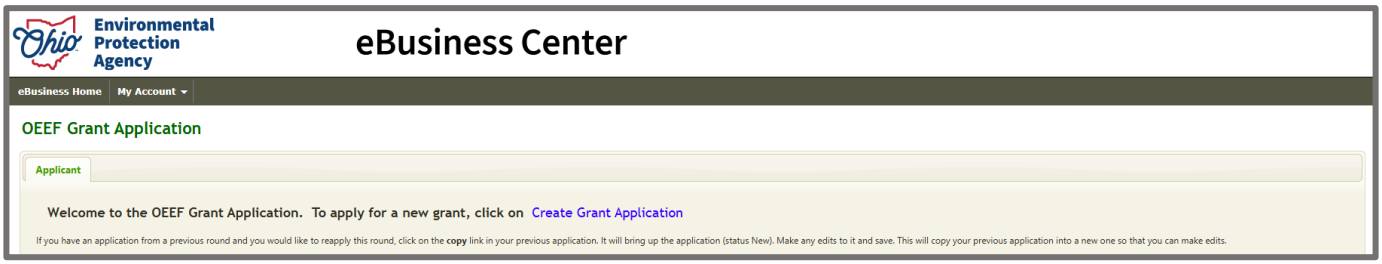
Visit epa.ohio.gov/oee for a list of past grant recipients that illustrate the variety of projects funded. Descriptions of OEEF Outstanding Project Award Winners showcase successful environmental education projects.

Getting Started

Step 1: Access the Grant Application Home Page

If you have started or previously submitted an application, it will appear in a table with the following details when you log in.

- Application Number
- Type (Mini or General Grant)
- Organization Name
- Project Title
- Status (Submitted, Under Development, Withdrawn, etc.)
- Actions (edit, copy, withdraw)
- Links to download uploaded documents or PDFs



Step 2: Create the Grant Application

Click ***Create Grant Application*** at the top of the page to open the first section of the application form.

- Continue working on an existing application — Click ***Edit*** next to any application listed as Application Under Development
- Copy a previous application into a new one — Click ***Copy*** next to a previous application. This loads the information into a new application so you can update it for the current funding round
- To withdraw an application — Click ***Withdraw*** if you do not want to submit an application you have already started

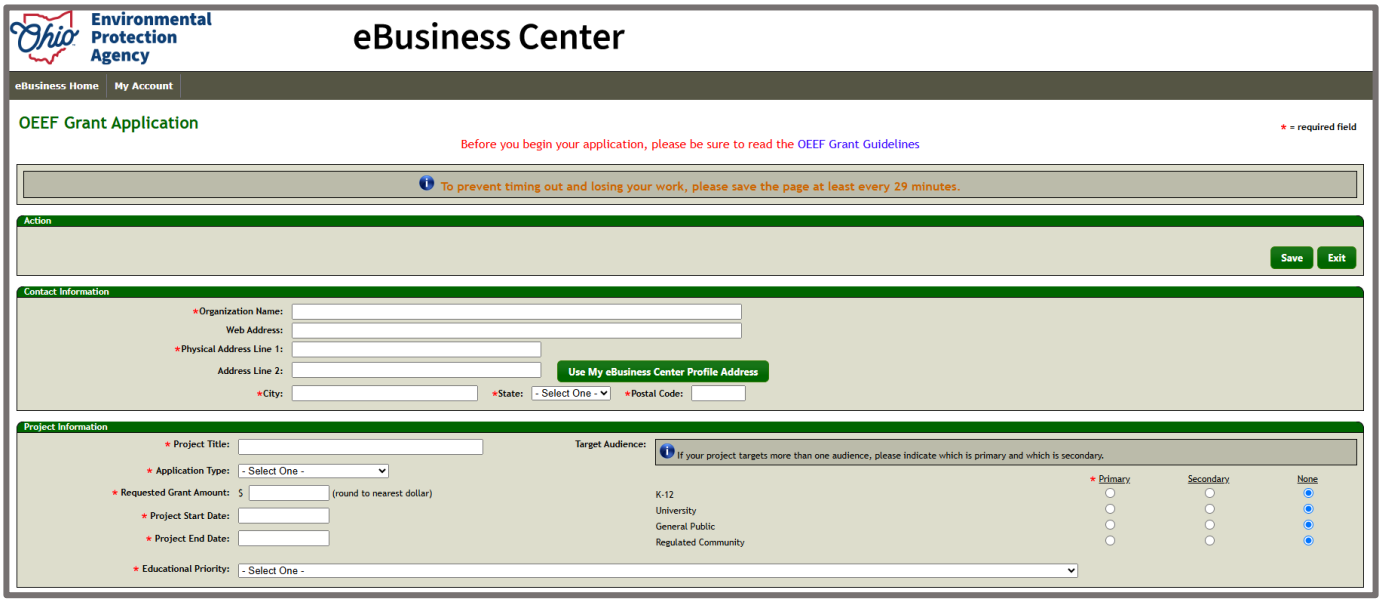
Contact Information & Project Information

This page collects your organization's basic information and the core details about your project. All fields marked with a red asterisk (*) are required.

Step 1: Complete or verify contact information

Enter information about the organization applying for the grant.

- Organization Name* — Use your official legal name
- Web Address — Your organization's website (optional)
- Physical Address* — List the physical address where the program or project is based
- City/State/Postal Code* — Complete all required location fields
- Use ***My eBusiness Center Profile Address*** — Click this if you want the system to auto fill the address from your account profile



Step 2: Enter project information

- Project Title — Provide a short, clear title
- Application Type — Select Mini Grant or General Grant from the drop-down
- Requested Grant Amount — Enter the amount you are requesting (rounded to the nearest dollar)
- Project Start Date — Choose a date after the award date

- Project End Date — Choose an end date within the funding cycle
- Educational Priority — From the drop-down, select the main OEEF priority area that fits your project

Step 3: Identify target audience(s)

Select your project audience. Indicate primary, secondary, or none for each as appropriate.

- K 12
- University
- General Public
- Regulated Community

Step 4: Save the application to the system

- Use the Save button at the bottom of the page to avoid timing out
- Use Exit to return to the home screen without submitting

When you click Save on the "Contact Information/Project Information" page, the system will return you to the main OEEF Grant Application page. This is normal.

Step 5: Access and complete application

1. This confirms the system saved your new application — look for the row with:
    - The Application Number (the most recently created)
    - Your Organization Name
    - Your Project Title
    - The status Application Under Development
2. In the Action column, click ***Edit*** for that application. This will reopen your application and take you to the Application Summary page, where you can access all remaining sections.

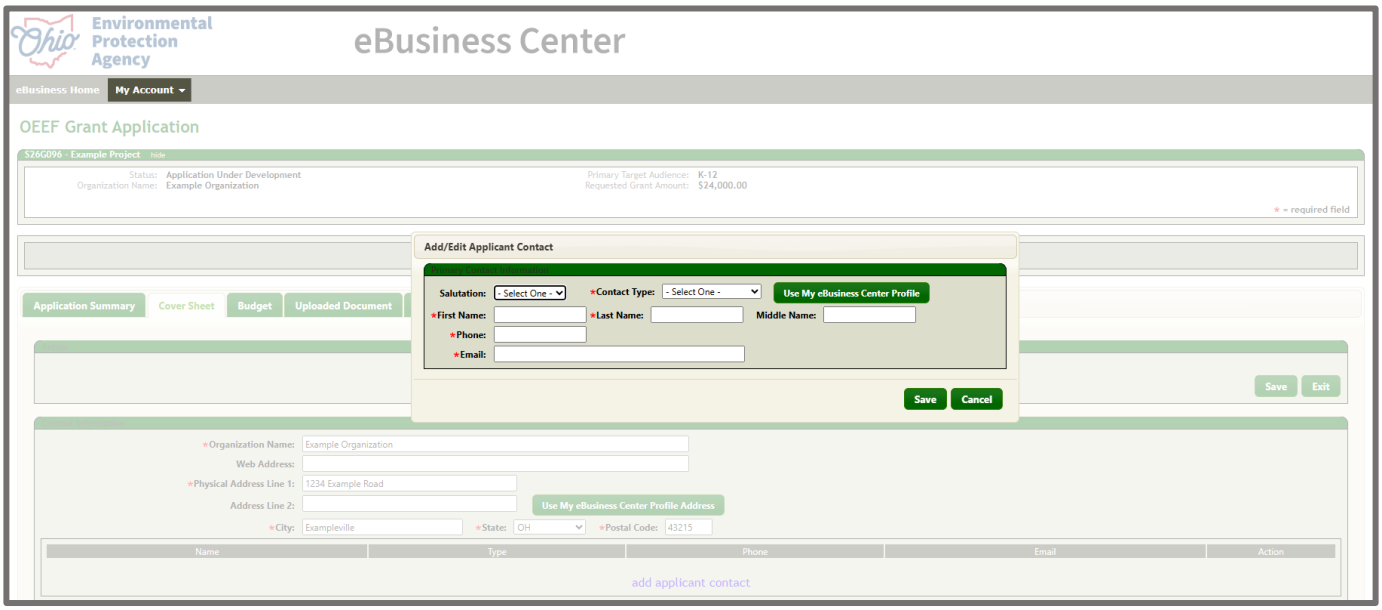
Application Summary

The Application Summary page is the main hub where you will complete all remaining parts of your OEEF application.

Step 1: Complete the cover sheet

Click the ***Cover Sheet*** tab to open the full form. Follow the steps below to enter your project details.

1. Review and update your organization's contact information. If available, click ***Use My eBusiness Center Profile Address*** to autofill your data.



2. Click ***Add Applicant Contact*** — A small window will open for you to enter each required contact. Each application must include the following four contact types:

   - Authorizing Agent
   - Fiscal Agent
   - Project Director
   - Primary Collaborator

What to Do

- Choose ***Contact Type*** from the dropdown — Enter the person's name, phone, and email (all required)
- Click ***Save***

- Repeat the process until all four required contacts have been added
- Use the Other category to add additional contacts as needed

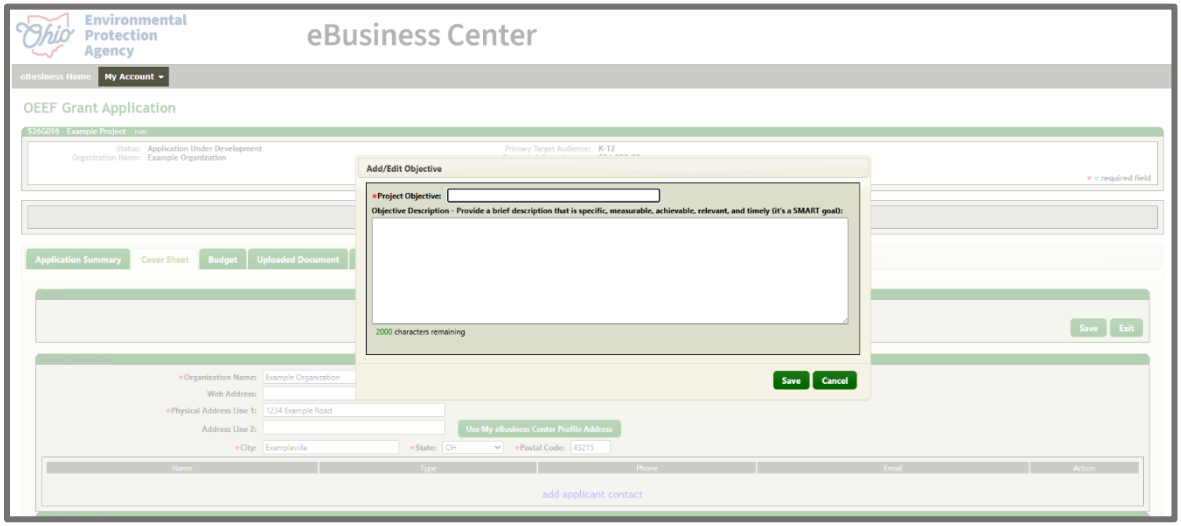
3. Complete remaining project information

What to Do

- Project Title — Choose a clear, concise title for your project
- Application Type — Choose Mini Grant (up to $5,000) or General Grant ($5,001 to $25,000)
- Requested Grant Amount — round to nearest dollar
- Project Start and End Dates — Start after the award date and end within the funding cycle
- Target Audience (select Primary/Secondary/None for each)
- Counties where the project will occur — List all counties where project work will take place
- Statewide impact (Yes/No) — Select Yes only if participants across multiple Ohio regions will be reached
- Educational Priority (choose from the drop-down) — Select the most applicable OEEF priority area

4. Project Objective Summary

You may enter up to two objectives. Each objective description is limited to 2,000 characters.



What to Do

- Add an Objective — Click ***Add Project Objective*** and enter the following:
    - Objective Title — A short label for the milestone
    - Objective Description — A brief SMART description (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, time-bound)
    - Click ***Save*** — Important: You must save the objective before you can add activities or outcomes
- Add an Activity — After the objective is saved, the system immediately displays an Add Activity link under the objective
    - Click ***Add Activity*** and enter the following:
        - Activity Title and Description — What you will do and how it supports the objective
        - Start Date/End Date
        - % of Budget (if applicable)
        - Click ***Save***
- Add an Outcome — After at least one activity is saved, an Outcome section appears with an Add Outcome Measurement link
    - Click ***Add Outcome Measurement*** and enter the following:
        - Outcome Title — Enter a title for your intended outcome measurement
        - Initial Outcome — Briefly describe the short-term, measurable benefit of the activity and how it directly supports the objective
        - Long-Term Effects — Briefly describe the long-term benefit of the activity and how it supports the objective over time
        - Click ***Save***.
- Complete Objective #2 details — if needed, repeat the steps above.

5. Add/Edit Continuation and Replication Plan

What to Do

- Click ***Add/Edit Continuation and Replication Plan***. In the text box, briefly explain the following (up to 3,000 characters):
    - How will the project continue after OEEF funding ends
    - How could others replicate your project or use your materials
- Click ***Save*** when finished

6. Project Justification (K–12 projects only)

What to Do

- Click ***Add/Edit Project Justification***. In the text box, provide the following (up to 2,000 characters):
    - List the Ohio Department of Education & Workforce learning standards that align with your project
    - Include only the standards relevant to the lessons or activities you are delivering
- Click ***Save*** when finished

7. Mark Complete

What to Do

- At the bottom of the Cover Sheet, select ***Yes*** once all fields in this section are finished. Choosing Yes locks the Cover Sheet and marks it complete in your checklist
- If you need to make changes later, switch it back to ***No***
- Click ***Save*** before leaving the page

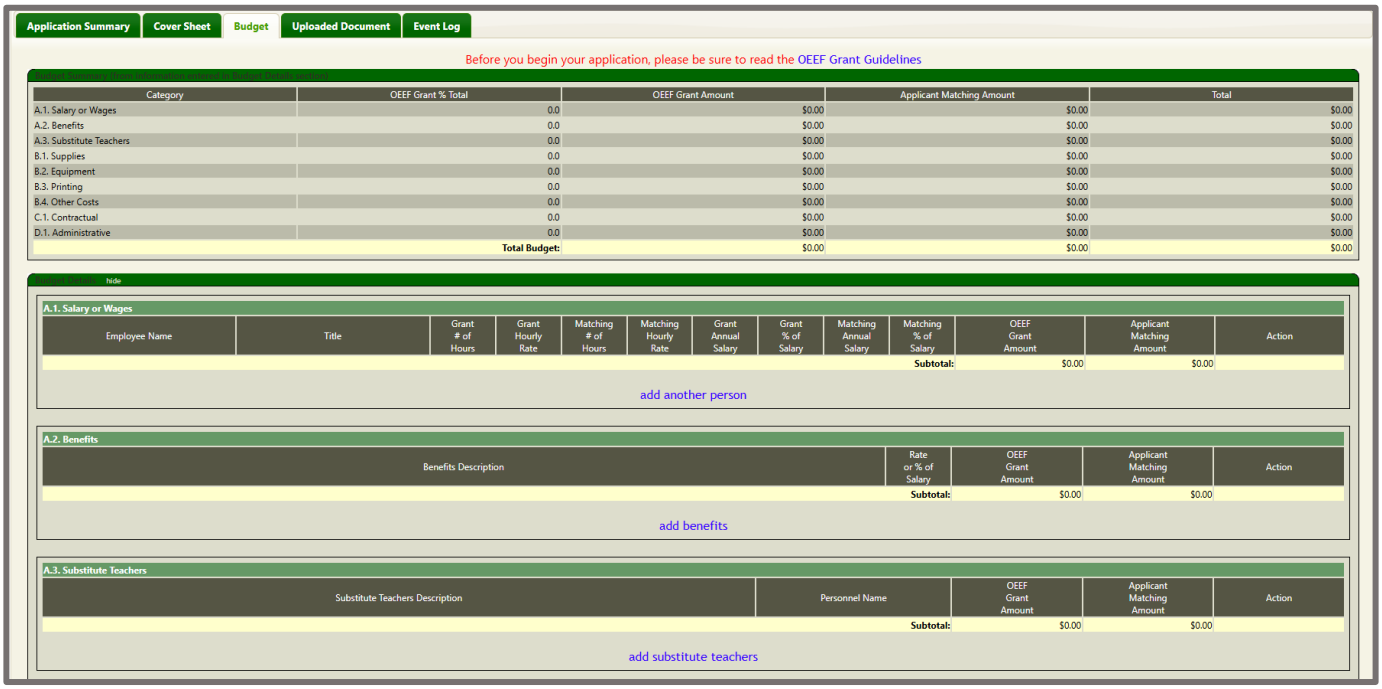
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Step 2: Complete the Budget Table

Salary or Wages — Click ***Add Another Person*** to enter salary or wage costs for each staff member working on the project.

What to Do

- Enter the staff member's name and title
- Enter the portion of their time paid by the grant (choose either Option A or Option B — whichever matches your payroll system)
    - Option A: Enter the grant funded hours and hourly rate
    - Option B: Enter the grant funded annual salary and percentage of time spent on the project
- Enter the portion of their time offered as a match, using either Option A or Option B (Optional)
    - Option A: Enter matching hours and hourly rate
    - Option B: Enter the matching portion of annual salary and percentage of time
- Click ***Save***
- Repeat this process for each additional person



Step 3: Enter Benefits

Enter benefits only for personnel whose salary or wages are included in the project budget.

What to Do

- Click ***Add Benefits*** to enter the benefit cost associated with project staff
- In the pop-up window, enter a brief description — Example: Health and retirement benefits or FICA and employer contributions
- Enter the benefit rate — Type the percentage of salary used to calculate benefits
- Enter the dollar amounts
    - OEEF Grant Amount – the portion of benefits paid by the grant
    - Applicant Matching Amount – the portion covered by your organization (if applicable)
- Click ***Save***

Step 4: Provide for Substitute Teachers

Use this section only for K–12 projects when substitute teachers are needed so educators can participate in project activities (planning, training, field work, etc.).

What to Do

- Click ***Add Substitute Teachers*** to open the entry screen — in the pop-up window, enter the following:
    - Description — Briefly describe why a substitute teacher is needed. Example: Substitute coverage while the classroom teacher attends training
    - Personnel Name — Enter the name of the person being replaced (the teacher)
    - OEEF Grant Amount — Enter the cost paid by the grant (e.g., daily or hourly substitute rate)
    - Applicant Matching Amount — Enter any match your organization is providing (optional)
- Click ***Save*** when finished
- Repeat this process for each teacher who needs coverage

Step 5: Identify Supply Needs

Use this section for consumable materials needed to carry out your project.

What to Do

- Click ***Add Supplies*** to open the entry screen — in the pop-up window, enter the following:
    - Description — Briefly describe the item (example: "water testing reagents," "field notebooks," "seed packets")
    - Quantity — Enter how many units you need
    - Unit Price — Enter the cost per item
    - OEEF Grant Amount — Enter the portion of the cost you want the grant to pay
    - Applicant Matching Amount — Enter any match your organization is providing (if applicable)
- Click ***Save*** when finished
- Repeat this process for each supply item

Step 6: Identify Equipment Needs

Use this section for non-consumable items that are essential to carrying out your project. Examples: microscopes, water quality meters, tablets used for field data collection, durable teaching kits.

What to Do

- Click ***Add Equipment*** to open the entry screen — in the pop-up window, enter the following:
    - Description — Briefly describe the item (example: pH meter, digital microscope, trail camera kit)
    - Quantity — Enter how many units you need
    - Unit Price — Enter the cost for each item
    - OEEF Grant Amount — Enter the portion of the cost you want paid by the grant
    - Applicant Matching Amount — Enter any cost your organization is providing as match (optional)

- Click Save when finished
- Repeat this process for each equipment item needed.

Step 7: Identify Printing Needs

Use this section for printed materials directly related to your project (examples: student worksheets, field guides, posters, handouts, outreach flyers).

What to Do

- Click ***Add Printing*** to open the entry screen — in the pop-up window, enter the following:
    - Description — Briefly describe what is being printed (example: student watershed workbooks, outreach flyers)
    - Rate Description — Provide the pricing basis (example: $0.12 per page, $40 per booklet, $150 per 500 copies)
    - OEEF Grant Amount — Enter the portion of printing costs you want the grant to cover
    - Applicant Matching Amount — Enter any match your organization is contributing (optional)
- Click ***Save*** when finished
- Add a separate entry for each type of printed material needed

Step 8: Identify Other Costs

Use this section for project-related expenses that do not fit under the previous sections. Examples: facility rental fees, postage or shipping for project materials, mileage for project travel (if allowable), software licenses directly tied to the project.

What to Do

- Click ***Add Contractual*** to open the entry screen — in the pop-up window, enter the following:
    - Description — Briefly describe the cost (example: postage for student mail back kits, room rental for community workshop)
    - OEEF Grant Amount — Enter the portion of the expense you are requesting from OEEF

  - Applicant Matching Amount — Enter any cost your organization is contributing (optional)

- Click ***Save*** when finished
- Add a separate entry for each additional cost

Step 9: Identify Contractual Costs

Use this section for consultants, speakers, facilitators, trainers, or service providers you are paying to support your project. All contractual services must be itemized in your project description.

Contractual, salary, and benefits combined cannot exceed 35% of the total budget request.

What to Do

- Click ***Add Contractual*** to open the entry screen — in the pop-up window, enter the following:
  - Description — Briefly describe the service being provided. Example: professional development trainer, water quality lab analysis, curriculum development consultant
  - Contractor Name — Enter the name of the individual or organization providing the service (if not yet selected, write TBD)
  - OEEF Grant Amount — Enter the cost you want the grant to cover
  - Applicant Matching Amount — Enter any match your organization is contributing (optional)
- Click ***Save*** when finished
- Add a separate entry for each contractual service

Step 10: Identify Administrative Costs

Use this section only for limited, allowable indirect administrative costs directly tied to managing the project.

Administrative costs must be 3% or less of the total budget.

What to Do

- Click ***Add Administrative*** to open the entry screen
- Examples of allowable administrative costs include: bookkeeping or payroll processing specifically for this grant, copying or internal services connected to grant administration, minor internal support fees linked to this project.
- Do not list routine operating costs here. Those are not allowed.

Step 11: Finalize the Budget Section

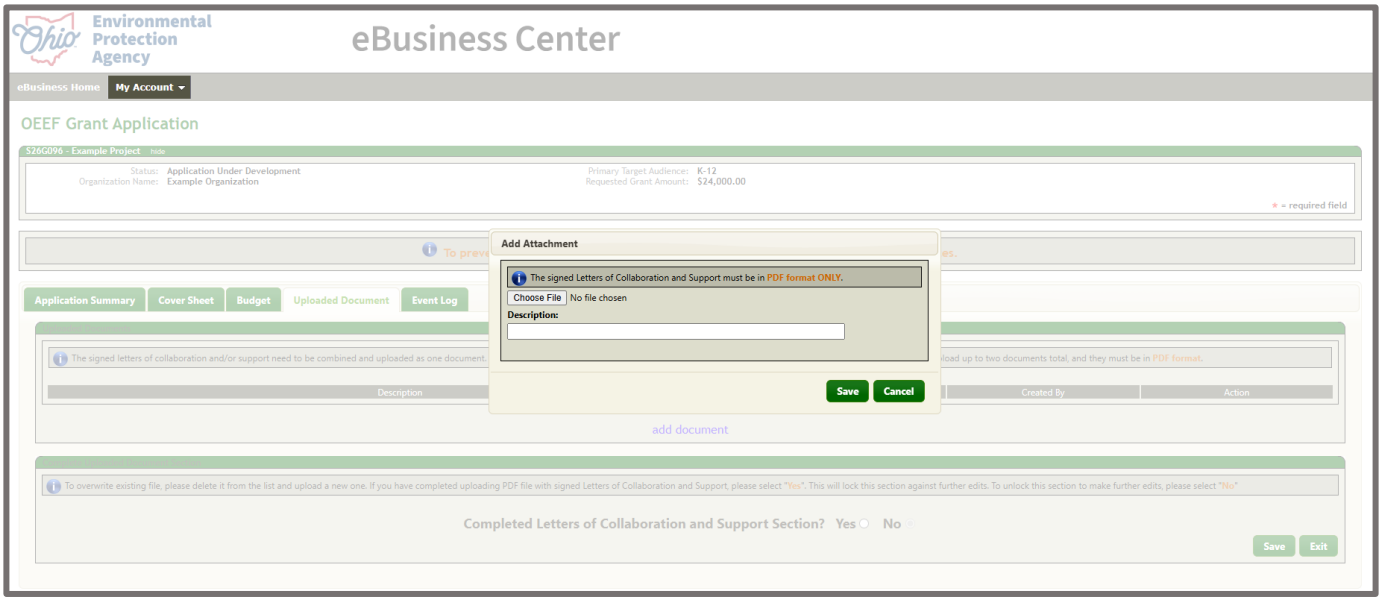
At the bottom of the Budget tab, you must indicate whether the entire budget is finished.

What to Do

- Select Yes if you have entered all budget items and the section is complete. This will lock the Budget section from further editing
- Select No if you still need to make changes
- Click ***Save*** before leaving the page

Step 12: Upload Required Documents

You must upload one combined PDF containing all signed Letters of Collaboration and/or Letters of Support. If your application needs an additional file (for example, a diagram or map), you may upload one extra PDF. Maximum: two PDF files total.



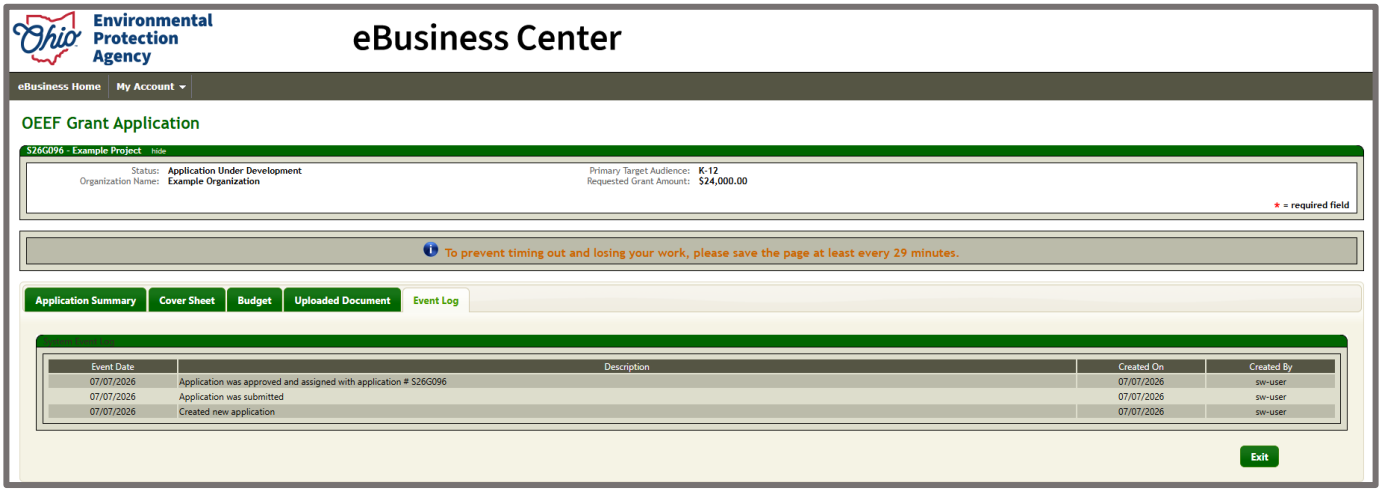
What to Do

- Click ***Add Document***
- Select your PDF file
- Add a short description (example: Letters of Support or Watershed Map)
- Click ***Save***
- Your uploaded document will appear in the table. If you need to replace a file, delete the existing file, then upload a new one.
- At the bottom of the screen, select the appropriate option for Completed Letters of Collaboration and Support Section
    - Yes: section complete and ready to lock
    - No: you still need to make changes
- Click Save before leaving the page.

Step 13: Review the Event Log

The Event Log shows a record of all system actions taken on your application. This page is for your reference only and lists:

- Event Date — when something happened
- Description — what the system recorded (e.g., Created new application, Application submitted)
- Created On/Created By — system generated audit details



You do not need to enter anything on this tab. You may simply review the history and then click ***Exit*** or return to another tab.

Submit Your Application

Once all sections are complete, go to the Application Summary tab. If the system shows each item as Completed, the Submit Application button will appear at the bottom of the page.

- Review the Application Checklist to make sure each section is marked Completed
- Click ***Submit Application***
- Confirm submission when prompted

After submission, the status will change from Application Under Development to Application Submitted, and a confirmation message will appear in your Event Log.

Your application is now officially submitted!