Instructions for New Markets Tax Credit Program Applicants in Electronic Handbooks

General Instructions for All NMTC Applicants:

Required Software

- Internet Explorer 5.5 or Netscape Navigator 6.0 (ensure JavaScript is Enabled, which is the default setting for most systems)
- Internet connection (56Kbps or higher is best)
- Windows 98 or higher (or other system compatible with the above Explorer and Netscape software)

Required Hardware

- A computer system that can run the above software

> **TIP**: Start filling in the electronic application early. The Fund **will not** grant extensions to individual organizations experiencing technology problems. Discovering technology issues early will allow the Fund to assist organizations in completing the application process by the deadline.

Registration and Getting Started

1) Look at the paper application on the Fund's website, www.cdfifund.gov, under New Markets as a guide on the requested information needed to complete the electronic application. Gather appropriate application documents.
2) Go to the Fund's website and click on ***Electronic Handbooks***.
3) If you need to register your organization or a user, click on ***Registering as a new user***. Otherwise, go to step 8.
4) You will be taken to a page where you have an option to search for or register your organization and add a user. If you have never started the registration process, skip to step 5. If you have previously begun the registration process, but did not receive a confirmation email, enter the applicant's EIN and click on ***Select Organization***. Fill out the appropriate fields and ***Submit***.
5) You may register your organization and add a user by clicking on ***here*** in the phrase "please register an organization by clicking here." Fill out the required information and ***Submit Organization Registration Request***. Then click ***Register User*** and fill out the appropriate fields and ***Submit***. If you are interrupted during this process, repeat step 4.
6) While adding the user you will create your organization's login information, user ID and password. You will then have to submit your registration information. NOTE: It is important to use a valid and current email address as all automatically generated emails will be sent to that address. Be sure to use an address that will be frequently checked by staff.

> **TIP**: All Fund communication will be through email and the electronic handbooks. It is important to use a valid email when registering. Remember to modify the contact information under the **Profile** page if there are changes to the authorized representative's email, phone, address or authorized representative. Be sure to retain the login user ID and password. You may check the status of your application by logging into the website and reviewing the Status page.

7) The website should confirm your registration and you should receive an email indicating acceptance. If you do not receive such notification, call the Fund at 202.622.7373 and press option 4. Once you have received the confirmation email, continue to the login screen to proceed in the electronic handbooks.
8) Log onto the website with the approved user ID and password. If you forget your password, click on ***Forgot Password***. You will be prompted to type in the user ID and then ***Send Message***. The Fund will send an email with the password to the authorized representative.
9) You will be taken to the Status screen where you can begin or resume working on an application. If beginning an application, select ***New Markets Allocation*** from the drop-down menu (Select a Program) and press ***Begin New Application***. If resuming work on an application, it will be listed in the status box. Click on ***Update***.

10) Follow the on-screen instructions for the application you have chosen.

General Tips

1) Most applications will be pre-filled with information from the Fund's database (e.g., authorized representative). If the information has changed, you should delete and retype the correct information. However, this will <u>not</u> change the profile information in the electronic handbooks, which the Fund uses to notify applicants of application status and awards. To change the Profile, click on the ***Return to Status Page*** link on the sidebar and click on ***Profile***. Make appropriate changes to the email, phone, address or authorized representative name.

2) Fill in the fields and click ***Save and Continue*** as you walk through the screens. Information is not saved until you click ***Save and Continue*** on each page. If you have filled out some fields, but not all, and wish to come back later, click ***Save and Continue*** before leaving the screen. An error message will indicate which fields are missing or entered incorrectly. To continue to save and move to the next page, click ***OK***. To go back and fix any errors, click ***Cancel***. If you wish to go back to the previous page to fix an error, hit ***Back*** in your web browser. The page status will not indicate "Complete" on the checklist until the other fields are completed. You will not be able to submit the final application until you go back and complete the page.

> **TIP**: Before going to the website, type narrative answers of the application in another program, such as Microsoft Word. Then copy and paste the answers into the appropriate sections of the electronic handbook. This will prevent the loss of information if there are problems saving your application or connection problems. It will also cut down on the time you spend filling out the application online.

3) An error message with only the ***OK*** button appears if the errors are mandatory (in contrary to the requirements of the system) and you cannot proceed without fixing them. An error message with both the ***OK*** and ***Cancel*** buttons appears if the missing or incorrectly entered fields are not mandatory errors. For example, if you leave a field blank, it is not mandatory that it is fixed right away and the error message is displayed with both ***OK*** and ***Cancel*** buttons. Alternatively, if you enter "abcde" in a numeric field, for example, it is considered a mandatory error since the system cannot save letters in a numeric field. Only the ***OK*** button is displayed, so you must fix it before proceeding any further. In this case, clicking on ***OK*** will <u>not</u> save the information but place you back in the same page to fix the error. Once you have corrected the error, you may click ***Save and Continue***. In both cases, an application will be considered incomplete until the errors are corrected.

4) Checklists are generally included after each section of an application. These checklists provide information on which sections and sub-sections are "complete," "incomplete" or "not applicable." Incomplete sections were likely filled out incorrectly or are missing information. You may return to the incomplete sections by clicking on the word ***Incomplete***. Generally those sections will have red lettered instructions explaining the problem next to the questions. If you click ***Save and Continue***, an error message will also describe any problems. The electronic handbooks will prevent an application with incomplete sections from being submitted to the Fund.

> **TIP**: If you're experiencing technology problems, call 202.622.7373 and press option 4 or send an email to the Fund at cdfifund@cdfi.treas.gov with the subject line "NMTC IT Questions."

5) If you enter information in numeric order, follow on-screen instructions and click ***Save and Continue***, the system will take you step-by-step through the applicable application. Alternatively, you can move from section to section via the sidebar (to the left on each screen). On the top of some screens, there is also a dropdown menu which allows you to move from sub-section to sub-section. Dropdown to the screen you want, then click ***Go***. <u>Do not</u> click on a link on the sidebar or dropdown menu unless you have already saved the page.

6) The electronic handbooks will automatically log a user out if there has been no activity within a 1 hour period. Therefore, it is important to click ***Save and Continue*** periodically so that the information won't be lost due to this timeout function.

7) In both Internet Explorer and Netscape, under certain circumstances if you hit the backspace key, the screen jumps back a screen (as if you clicked on the back arrow on your browser toolbar). If this occurs, click the forward arrow on your browser toolbar. Otherwise, the information you entered in that initial screen will be lost.

8) For sections that require you to “describe” or otherwise type in lengthy information, you should type the information in a separate program such as Word and copy and paste it in the designated area on the webpage. This will prevent the loss of work in case there are connection problems or other issues saving your application. This is also important because some areas allow only a particular amount of text and you may wish to go back and edit the information to fit the space provided.

9) To copy and paste information in a Windows platform from a Word file or other word processing file, go to the document with the appropriate text. Copy the information you wish to paste. Go to the website and click on the applicable text box. On the keyboard, press and hold down the Ctrl button, then press V. This will paste the information into the text box. Alternatively, you can use the toolbar to paste or right click the mouse and then click on paste. If you exceed the space provided, you will get an error message when you click ***Save and Continue***. You will need to shorten the information in order to submit the application. After you have pasted the information in the electronic handbooks, you will still be able to make any edits or modifications as necessary.

> **TIP**: The best strategy for filling out an application is to answer the questions in numeric order to ensure accurate computer responses. Answers to certain questions may affect other parts of the electronic application. You may be required to fill out additional questions/exhibits or prevented from filling out questions/exhibits based on your responses.

10) The text boxes only allow basic text. Any formatting (e.g., italics, bold, tabs) will be simplified to a basic font and you will not be able to check for spelling or grammar errors on the text in the electronic handbooks. <u>Charts and tables cannot be pasted or created in the text boxes.</u>

11) Do not use commas or dollar signs when entering numeric information in tables or answer spaces.

12) Although you may print each individual page throughout the handbook, in most cases the text will be longer than the viewable area and will not print out. To print everything, you should click on the ***Print Application*** link. This will give you the option to ***Print Entire Application*** or link to particular sections and print.

> **TIP**: Pay close attention to the messages that pop-up when you click *Save and Continue*. These will guide you through the requirements of the application and ensure that you haven’t answered questions incorrectly.

13) The ***Attach*** link refers to attaching electronic files in the application. When attaching documents, a separate window will pop-up. Follow the on-screen instructions to attach and be sure to ***Save and Continue***. Once the attached document appears on the list of attachments, you may ***Close Window***. Immediately after closing the window, it may not appear that you have attached anything or completed the section. However, once you ***Save and Continue*** and go back to that page, it will have registered the attachment. You may view all the attachments by clicking on the sidebar link ***View All Attachments***.

14) You cannot alter attachments within the electronic application. If you would like to make changes to an attachment, you must go to the application page where the attachment was uploaded, delete the attached file in the electronic handbook and then attach the revised version.

15) ***Add*** buttons are similar to the ***Attach*** button and take you to a separate pop-up window. Again, follow the instructions on those pages and be sure to save. Immediately after closing the window, it may not appear that you have added anything or completed the incomplete section. However, once you ***Save and Continue*** and go back to that page, it will have registered the information and be displayed on the screen.

16) Words that are both underlined and italicized are defined glossary terms. If you click on them, the Glossary will pop-up with that definition.

17) The Status page, which is the first screen upon logging in and may be accessed through a link at the bottom of the sidebar, will inform you of the status of your application and allows you to change your password and edit your user profile.

18) Most applications will have references near the top of the sidebar and other helpful tips or documents linked throughout the application. This information will assist you with questions you may have about application requirements, definitions and programmatic information.

19) A link to ***FAQs*** (Frequently Asked Questions) is on the bottom of the sidebar. These describe common technology problems which may occur during completion of the electronic version of the application. If you

are having problems, please review the FAQs and responses before contacting the Fund. At the bottom of each page is information on how to contact the Fund for questions not answered on the frequently asked questions site.

20) A ***Feedback*** link is also at the bottom of the sidebar. Please provide comments on making the site more accessible and user-friendly.

Instructions related to the NMTC Allocation Application:

Getting Started and Submitting

1) Once logged in, use the dropdown menu (Select a Program) to start a new NMTC Allocation Application and click ***Begin New Application***. If you have already started an application, click on the ***Update*** button next to the listed application.
2) The first page of the electronic application lists resources related to the NMTC Allocation Application. Click on the links to view or print those resources.
3) Before entering the electronic application, there are questions requiring you to agree to the Certifications and Assurances (or provide written explanation) and to check that you have read the resources. Click on ***Assurances and Certifications*** to review. Close the window and then check the appropriate answers.
4) The textboxes generally allow for 2500 characters (approximately ½ page, single spaced in Word). An error message will occur if you have exceeded the space provided and the system will consider that section incomplete until the narrative is shortened. Some areas have been expanded based on the expected narrative for the question (questions 16, 17, 23, 26, 38, 39, 41, 44, 50, 55, 58, 59, 62b, 64, 66, 72, 73, 74, 75).
5) In between each section, you will see a checklist for the sub-sections. The checklist will indicate which sections have been answered completely without errors. To complete an incomplete section, click on ***Incomplete*** under status and make additions or changes.
6) Once you have completed all sections, as indicated by the Checklists on the sidebar, you may ***Submit*** the application to the Fund. Before doing so, it's recommended that you ***Print*** the application (also a link on the sidebar) and review your answers. **<u>ONCE SUBMITTED, THE APPLICATION MAY NOT BE ALTERED.</u>**

> **TIP**: You will be prevented from submitting an electronic application after **5pm ET on August 29, 2002**. The system prevents the submission of an electronic application if it is incomplete, on behalf of an ineligible entity, or past the date/time of the application deadline. **<u>Once an application is submitted to the Fund, it may not be altered.</u>** An application will **not** be considered **complete** until the signature page (unaltered with the authorized representative signature) is received by **5pm ET on September 3, 2002,** and all electronic handbook instructions have been followed.

7) Follow the on-screen instructions for completing submission of the application. At a minimum, you must print off the signature page, have the authorized representative sign the signature page and mail or fax it to the address provided. An application is <u>not complete</u> until these documents are received at the appropriate address or fax number. All signed, faxed and/or mailed documents <u>must be received prior to the deadline</u> indicated on the signature page.

Subsidiaries (Question 7 and 8)

1) If you are intending to transfer allocations to subsidiaries (question 7) and they have already been incorporated, you must add them to the list under question 8. To do so, click the ***Add*** button.
2) You must have the name and a separate, unique Employee Identification Number (EIN) for each incorporated Subsidiary. If they have applied for CDE Certification, you must enter their CDE certification control numbers. Click ***Save***. Continue to add Subsidiaries as appropriate.

Service Area (Question 11 and 12)

1) Your service area under questions 11 and 12 should be the same as that designated by the Fund in its official letter of CDE certification. If you have not received such a letter, then it should be the same service area designated in your CDE certification application.

2) If you choose to serve a nationwide service area, you must add at least the 7 states or territories with the highest expected concentration of projected activities.

3) To identify your service area under question 12, click on ***Identify Area(s)***.

   a) For those serving an entire state (i.e. statewide) or entire states (i.e., nation, regional or multi-state area), choose one state from the list and select the option that you intend to serve the entire state. Press ***Continue***. The state will show up on the list below. Repeat these steps until all the states (up to seven) that you are serving are listed. Once you are done adding states, click ***Go Back*** to return to question 12.

   b) For those serving part of a state (i.e., local area) or parts of several states (i.e., regional, multi-state or local area for a multi-state Metropolitan Area), choose one state from the list and select the option that you intend to serve a specific county or counties. Press ***Continue***. Select all the counties which you intend to serve by pressing the Ctrl button on your keyboard and then using the mouse to click on the counties. Once you have highlighted all of the counties, click on ***Done*** or ***Select Another State***. You will return to question 12 (if ***Done***) or go back to the state page (if ***Select Another State***) where you can repeat the process of adding counties for a different state.

   c) For those serving specific census tracts (i.e., local service area), choose one state from the list and select the option that you intend to serve a specific county or counties. Press ***Continue***. Select one county and click on ***Identify Specific Census Tract***. Type in the specific 6-digit code for the census tract (do not use a decimal) that you are serving and click on ***Add to Census Tract List***. This will add the census tract to a list on the screen. Repeat until all of the census tracts from that county (up to 25 census tracts allowed per state) are added. After you are finished, you may either click ***Select Another State*** to go back to the state list or ***Done*** to return to question 12.

4) The electronic application does not check if the census tracts entered are eligible. It is your responsibility to check the Fund's Online Help Desk at www.cdfifundhelp.gov under the NMTC Program to see which census tracts are eligible. Eligible census tracts may change after the 2000 census data is made available on the Online Help Desk.

5) Under each of the above pages and when you return to question 12, you will see a complete list of the states, counties and census tracts added. If you wish to delete anything on the list, click on the button in the ***Select*** column next to the area you wish to delete and click ***Delete Area***. Repeat step 3 to add additional areas.

Transactions (Question 33)

1) To identify specific transactions that are likely to close by 12/31/03, click the ***Add*** button.

2) You will be required to enter a name, projected dollar amount, projected closing date and a census tract that qualifies under the 1990 census data. The electronic application does not check if the census tracts entered are eligible. It is your responsibility to check the Fund's Online Help Desk at www.cdfifundhelp.gov under the NMTC Program to see which census tracts are eligible. Once the information is entered, click on ***Save Transaction***.

3) If you are done, click on ***Return to Projected Business Activities***. If you wish to add additional transactions, repeat step 2.

4) If you wish to delete or modify a transaction from the list, click on the button in the ***Select*** column next to the transaction and click ***Update*** or ***Delete***.

Identifying Previous Awards, Programs and Impact (Questions 65, 66 and 73)

1) If you wish to list previous awards (#65), additional targeted programs (#66) or include other impacts (#73), click the ***Add*** button.

2) Enter the information and click ***Save***.

3) If you wish to delete or modify entries from a list, click on the button in the ***Select*** column next to the entry and click ***Update*** or ***Delete***.

Exhibits and Tables

1) Throughout the sections, you will be able to link to relevant Exhibits and Tables. When you click on a Table link, the Table will pop-up in a separate window. Once you have filled out the Table, you click ***Save*** and then close the window.
2) On the Exhibit Checklists and the links to the Tables throughout the application, there may be Tables you cannot access because they are "not applicable." These are not applicable based on your application responses or because you have not answered questions related to that Table. If you link to the Table through the general application, you may close the window and change your answer in the application. Then retry the link to the Table. To modify your responses when you are in the Exhibit Checklists, click on ***Not Applicable*** and then click on the link to the underlined section beneath the message. It will take you back to the appropriate question(s) within the application. Make the necessary changes or entries and click on ***Save and Continue***. You should then be able to link to the Table.
3) In some cases, there will be checkboxes beneath a Table labeled, "This table is complete in all aspects" and "This table is Not Applicable." If you check "This table is complete in all aspects," the blank cells will be populated with zeros once you have saved and continued. This box indicates that you have filled in all relevant information and the other rows or columns are not applicable. By checking "This table is Not Applicable," you are indicating that none of the information in the table is applicable to the Applicant or its Controlling Entity.
4) For some Tables, there are gray cells that will not allow you to enter information (e.g., Tables A1-A2, $ amount of financing (total)). Those cells are programmed to automatically calculate information based on other cell entries.
5) In certain Tables, there are references to other Tables in bold. This will guide you through the system requirements. For example, the total number of transactions to be financed from 2002 through 2007 (Table B1) should equal the sum of the number of QALICBs (Table B3). An error will occur if this isn't true.
6) Based on certain rows or columns that you have completed in the Tables, you may get an error message requiring that other rows or columns need to have information. For example, if you put a number in the row labeled "# of transactions to be financed" (Table C1), you must enter a dollar amount in either the debt or the equity row for that same year.

If you are having technical difficulties, please email (cdfifund@cdfi.treas.gov) or call the NMTC Program Information Desk at (202) 622 - 7373 and press option 4. If you have questions about the programmatic requirements, please email or call the NMTC Program Information Desk and press option 5. Support will be available Monday through Friday from 9 am to 5 pm Eastern Time.