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Positioning for Federal Grant Success

Southeast Conference Transportation Symposium

February 2, 2023

Presenter

Aurah Landau, Juneau
Senior Transportation Planner and
Alaska Grant Program Lead

Federal Grants

Benefits and Challenges

Benefits

- Provides additional funding
- Fills project funding gap
- Frees money for other projects
- Gets project attention

Challenges

- Federalizes project
- Subject to NEPA, Davis-Bacon, BABA, etc.
- Often requires match
- Requires performance reporting
- Sets deadlines
- Takes resources to apply
- Money takes time to arrive


Haines, Alaska via Adobe

Prepositioning is Key to Grant Success

- Evaluate projects to match to grants
- Prioritize projects for application
- Develop multi-year application strategy
  - Project development
  - Grant experience
  - Financial planning
- Assemble application team
- Manage award

Homer, Alaska via Adobe

Grant Application Components

- Narrative
- Data and analysis
- Scope
- Schedule
- Budget
- Environmental
- Engineering and design
- Visuals
- Letters of support
- BCA and Technical Appendix
- Grant management ability

Critical Roles in Grant Preparedness and Application

**** Previous federal grants experience important for aligning project with grant standards***

Local Champion – client-side or contracted project manager to coordinate activities supported by:

- Project Description – Program development, planners, engineers (cost estimates, schedules, plans), environmental analysts, financial analysts
- BCA – economists*
- Application – Grant manager*, grant writers*, graphic designer*, technical editor, engineers and subject matter experts, data researchers, political liaisons, economists*

Southeast Alaska via Adobe

Program Resourcing

Recommended

- Staff increase or reallocation
- On-call contract
  - Strategy + Program Management
  - Application, BCA
  - Grant and Construction Administration

Not Recommended

- Adding to current workloads
- Piecework


Petersburg, Alaska via Adobe

Community A

Pop. 4,000

- Combined similar maintenance projects with merit to create competitive project bundles
- Collaborated with city staff and combed planning documents to identify larger scale long-term community goals to advance through competitive grant applications
- Producing multi-year project development and grant financing plan

Community B

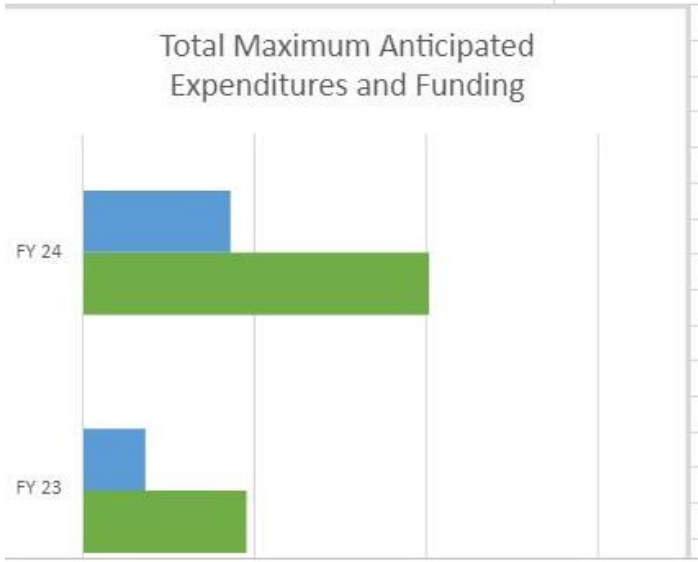
Pop. 5,000

- Evaluated project bundling scenarios to identify most competitive combinations
- Matched projects and project bundles to state and federal grants
- Developed multi-year project development and application schedule
- Created and populated grant program management tool to show interface of financial commitments and activity schedule
- Developed grant applications/BCA

Summary of Grant-Related Expenditures and Fundi

Does not include costs of project development activi

	FY 23	FY 24	FY 25	
Total Funds Requested	$ 47,975,000	$ 100,975,280	$ 2,900,000	$
Total Estimated Grant Cost to City	$ 18,634,500	$ 43,149,150	$ 2,030,000	$
Total Estimated Match	$ 15,137,000	$ 39,931,320	$ 1,885,000	$
Total Costs of Grant Applications	$ 430,000	$ 330,000	$ -	$
Number of Grants Applied Per Year	11	6	0	
Cost of Grant Applications	$ 330,000	$ 180,000	$ -	$
Number of BCAs per Year	2	6	0	
Cost of BCAs	$ 100,000	$ 150,000	$ -	$
Successful Grant Applications				
Estimated Costs of Grant Management	$ 3,027,500	$ 2,737,830	$ 145,000	$
Annualized Loan Repayment Costs	$ 9,155,598	$ 9,155,598	$ 9,284,115	$



Activity Schedule | Expenditures Summary | Assumptions and Requirements | Harbor Projects | Airport Projects | Streets, Sidev

Communities C, D, E

Pop. 2,000 - 111,000

- Matched priority water, facility, transportation, and water projects to federal and state funding sources
- Suggested project scope, schedule, budget changes to increase grant competitiveness
- Developed grant applications


Southeast Alaska via Adobe

Community F

Pop. 4,000

- Developed scenarios with potential economic benefit for a priority project
- Conducted BCA for 7 project scenarios and found 1 that exceeded the benefit-cost ratio threshold of 1.0
- Developing grant application

Agency 1

- Contracted multi-year on-call for grant writing and BCA
- Producing multiple applications concurrently for priority projects
- Conducting program management and grant administration

Readiness, Eligibility and Merit Tool

Project Snapshot

Project Name: Thomas County SR-10 Interchange Rehab.

Location: District C

Project Attributes: Safety, Congestion Reduction, System Reliability, Freight Movement, Economic Vitality, Livability/ Quality of Life, Community Connectivity

Project Description: Reconstruct SR-10 interchange with I-50 to a DDI with pedestrian facilities to accommoade regional development.

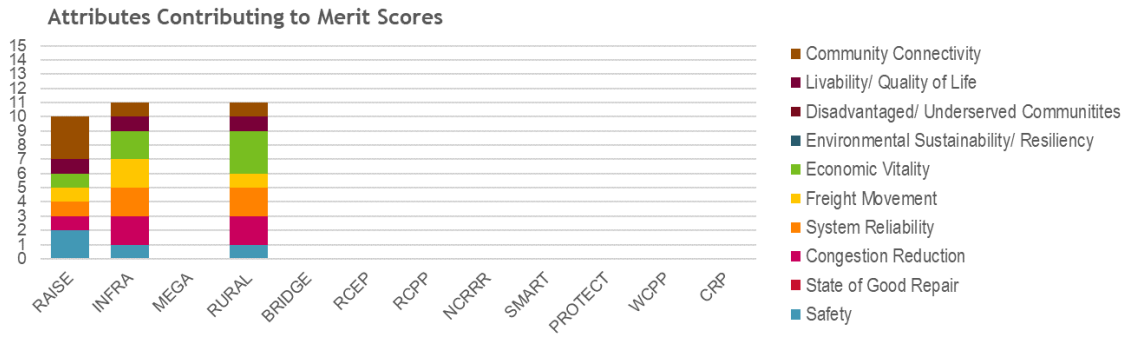
Expected Construction Start (Fiscal Year):	2026
Total Project Cost:	$35,000,000
Non-Federal Funds Committed:	$10,000,000
Other Federal Funds Committed:	$0
Committed Non-Federal Match:	29%
Committed Federal Match:	0%
Funding Gap:	$25,000,000
Funding Gap Percentage:	71%

Readiness Scores

On STIP or TIP	✓
On Regional Plan	X
At least 20% of funding committed	✓
Some Project Development Complete	✓
Construction Could Begin in the Next 24 Months	✓
TOTAL READINESS SCORE	**4 out of 5**

Merit Scores

PROGRAM ID	GRANT PROGRAM NAME	MERIT SCORE (out of 15)
RAISE	Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) - Local and Regional Proje	10
INFRA	Infrastructure for Rebuilding America (INFRA) - Nationally Significant Freight and Highway Projects	11
RURAL	Rural Surface Transportation Grant Program	11



OVERALL RANKING

PROGRAM ID	PROJECT RANK	APPROXIMATE TOTAL FUNDS AWARDED PER YEAR	FY 2022 NOFO RELEASE	FY 2022 APPLICATION DEADLINE
RAISE	10 out of 150	$1,500,000,000	January	April
INFRA	9 out of 150	$1,550,000,000	March	May
RURAL	1 out of 40	$300,000,000	March	May

Agency 2

- Contracted on-call for grant application and BCA
- Created Excel-based tool to screen nearly 200 capital projects for grant alignment and prioritization
  - Data-based approach for screening and prioritizing projects
  - Scores/ranks projects based on readiness, eligibility, merit
- Apples-to-apples comparison of competitive grant opportunities across portfolio of projects
- Guides multi-year grant application strategy

Why Preposition?

- Increase grant award successes
- Identify needs and define projects with agreed scope and budget
- Help identify potential funding streams
- Match projects to grants or other funding sources
- Develop actionable strategic plan to leverage funding
- Recognize funding constraints
- Focus on cost-effectiveness
- Greater emphasis on performance measurement
- Do more with less

Where to Start

- Communicate with regional, state, federal agency partners and staff
- Watch for program announcements and award announcements
- Participate in forums, webinars, conferences to know latest
- Talk to successful applicants – people love to talk about their wins
- Speak with advisors

HDR Grants Experience

An Industry-Leading Track Record

2022

- Secured **OVER $700 MILLION** in new federal discretionary funding for 19 states, including **OVER $100 MILLION FOR ALASKA**

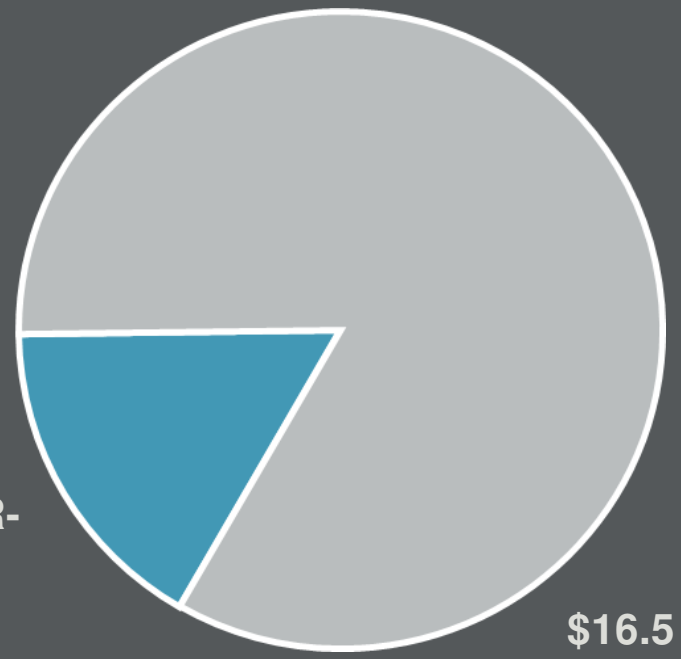
2009-2021

- HDR supported more than 200 USDOT INFRA, BUILD/RAISE, CRISI, and PID grant applications
- **100 PROJECTS'** requests for funding were successful
- HDR-supported transportation applications received **$2.5B IN FEDERAL FUNDS**
- **HDR-SUPPORTED APPLICATIONS WERE 15.4%** of the total construction funds awarded

WE EMPLOY 250+ ADVISORY SERVICES AND 40+ GRANT APPLICATION EXPERTS, supported by hundreds of transportation professionals

** Better Utilizing Investment to Leverage Development (BUILD)/RAISE and its predecessor TIGER; Infrastructure for Rebuilding America (INFRA), and its predecessor FASTLANE; Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements (CRISI); and Port Infrastructure Development (PID) programs.*

We assisted clients
in successfully competing for
15.4% of total funds available (2009-2021)



Over $700 million in FY 2022 grant awards

Grants, Funding & Financing

Ways we can assist

- Grant program strategy and management
- Evaluating project readiness, eligibility, competitiveness
- Matching projects to funding
- Project development
- Developing financial planning models
- Identifying match options
- Preparing grant applications
- Benefit-Cost Analysis (BCA)
- Grant administration
- Construction administration

Contact

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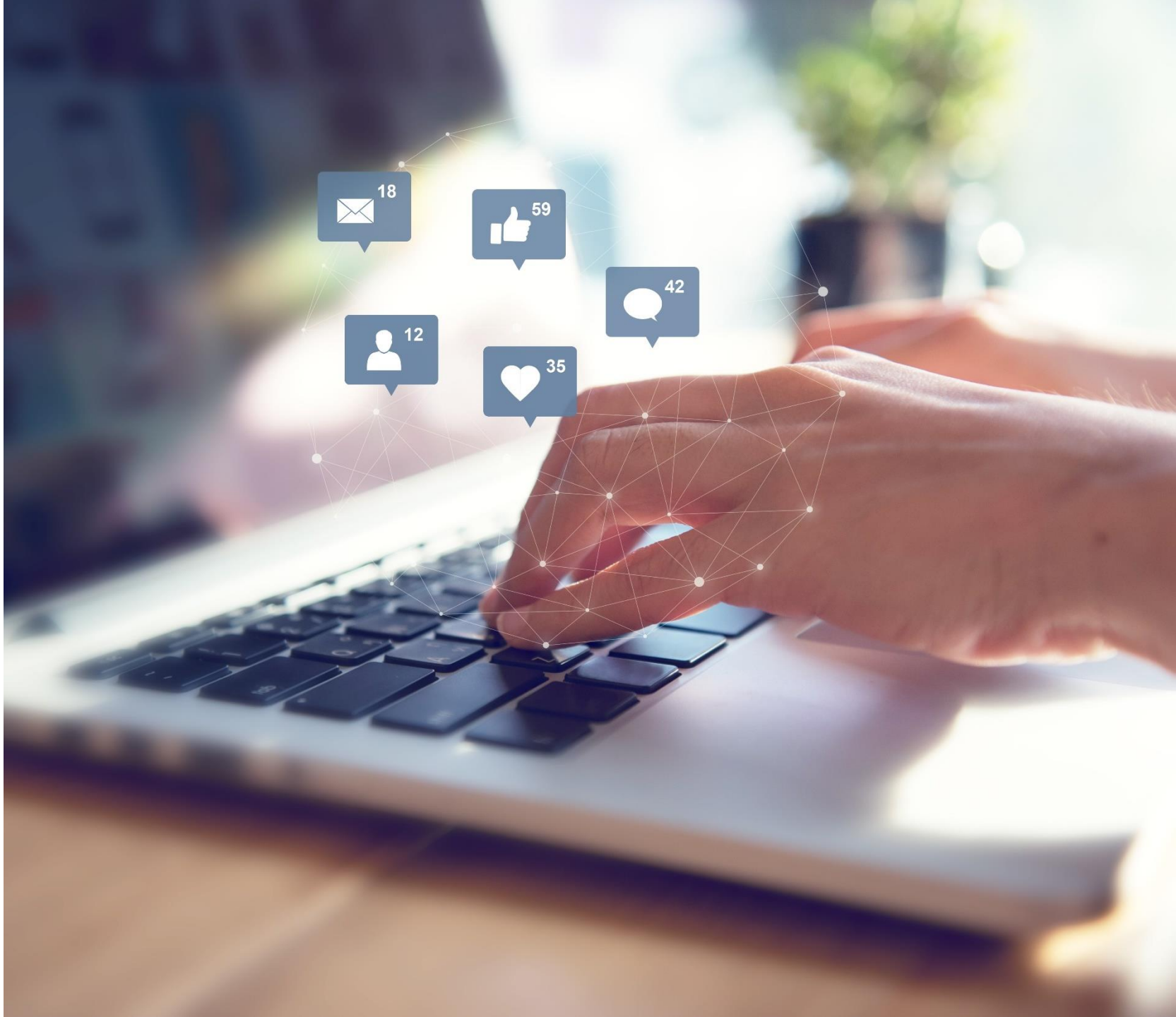

Questions?

Slides below are for panel presentation

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INSIGHTS ON PREPARING APPLICATIONS FOR IIJA

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Tips & Tricks for Grants Success

- Clear statement of needs/impacts
- Good presentation, themes
- Easy to read text, maps & graphics
- BCA in alignment with latest guidance
- Engage Congressional delegation and funders
- Strong political and stakeholder support
- Do not let NEPA delay schedule
- Scope the project to fit the grant criteria

Results of 2022 Award Analyses & Application Reviews

- Prioritize community capital needs and develop a project pipeline
- Develop grant program strategy
- Submit few applications per program
- Show commitment through match
- Address merit criteria by section
- Ensure alignment of project with grant program criteria
- Explain Alaska
- Write data-rich narrative
- Leverage subject matter experts
- Demonstrate partnerships
- Address readiness criteria
- Include complete and realistic schedule and budget
- Submit engineering products
- Hone BCAs
- Address policy priorities
- Ensure readability and quality visuals

Winning Words: Project Description

- Clearly define real problem
- Delineate specific project impact
- Back up with data and citations

Alaska is one of the planet's most seismically active regions and has more earthquakes than anywhere else in North America. Southcentral Alaska had the second largest earthquake ever recorded, M9.2 on March 27, 1964, and North America's largest on-land earthquake, M7.9 on November 3, 2002. Upper Cook Inlet was stuck by an M7.1 earthquake, about eight horizontal miles from _____ as recently as November 30, 2018. **The overall conditions of the ____ do not meet generally accepted factors of safety for stability under seismic loadings[1].**

_____ seismic risk is real, and it is significant. The cracks in the gravel fill behind the sheet pile retaining wall resulting from the 2018 earthquake suggest existing failure of the sheet pile support system making the structure even more vulnerable to seismic activity. Routine earthquakes will cause additional damage to the sheet pile system resulting in continued and accelerated deterioration of the structure. As the sheet pile system loses its ability of hold the gravel fill, more of the fill material and possibly the sheet pile system itself will spill into the _____ navigation lane.

Winning Words: Merit Criteria

- Align content with merit criteria
- Describe causal relationship between project and benefits / harm
- Use data analysis to develop and support main points

B. Supporting Economic Vitality at the National and Regional Level

The Project's economic vitality benefits were calculated from the increased truck operating costs, maintenance dredging costs, and other ___ operating and capital costs that would occur in the Without Project scenario. These increased costs would be the result of a minor or major failure of the ____ Additionally, increased truck operating cost, and ___ operating costs during construction of the cargo docks in the Without Project scenario are considered.

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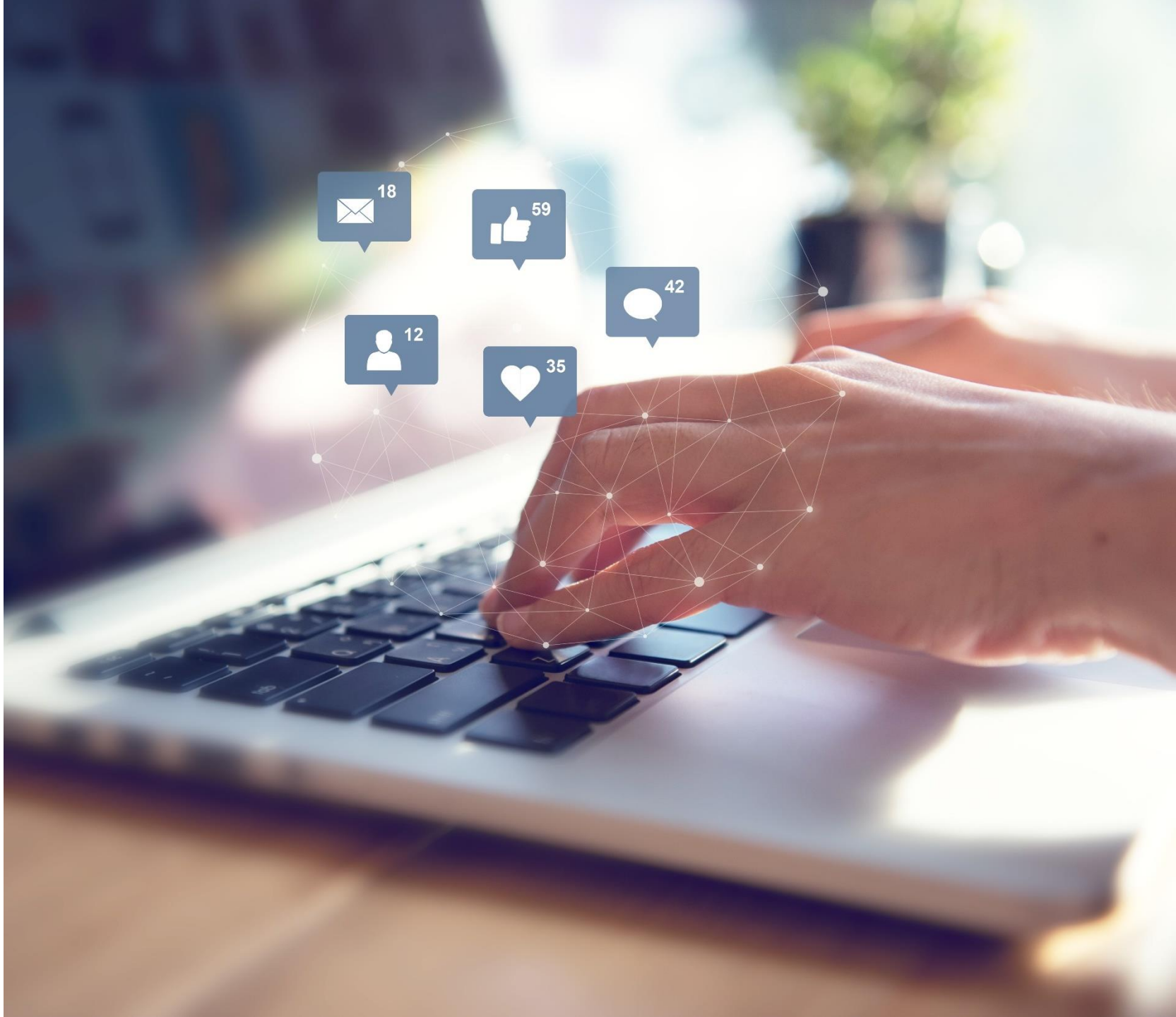

Questions?