

CLIENT SPOTLIGHT

Helping the State of Nebraska Department of Economic Development Find Numbers They Can Count On



AmpliFund has been working with the State of Nebraska Department of Economic Development (DED) since 2019. The Department, which manages nearly \$843 million in American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) and State funding, is best known for the wide-ranging programs they administer and the services they provide that enable the citizens of Nebraska to prosper.

Dr. Dave Dearmont, Chief Economist at the DED, says that because of the previous state of their internal grant management processes before getting support from AmpliFund, the Department felt more "like the wild west."

Previously, most individual Program Managers were in the practice of keeping track of all their program's grants on spreadsheets. They frequently found that due to high turnover, they were struggling to stay consistent with their internal processes, and that fund balances were not quite adding up. Dave says, "there just weren't numbers that you could count on."

At first, they thought they needed a custom-built solution to address their challenges, but this would have extended the time to return on investment, and in the meantime, the entire grant program would suffer. They knew this would significantly impact their ability to serve the citizens of Nebraska. After a comprehensive search, they decided that AmpliFund could meet their needs and provide a faster time to value.

Because awards were on a multi-year awarding cycle, there wasn't a set way of tracing programmatic milestones with spreadsheets. Now, having the data readily available in AmpliFund allows them to benchmark against program goals, and this real-time visibility into the data helps them make long-term programmatic decisions that positively affect the lives of their constituents.

Previously, when the Governor would ask them questions about performance, there was no quick way to get answers. Now getting answers about real-time performance takes three hours, including writing the memo, instead of three weeks.

Real-time data has also allowed them to provide feedback to the legislature about performance so programs that are making tangible outcomes can be prioritized with more resources to do even more work for the community.

AmpliFund also helped the Department create capacity so they could refocus their efforts on growing their grants program, and the Program Managers have noticed just how valuable that recouped effort is. Instead of being overwhelmed like they would have before, they found they were doing more with fewer resources.

The Department awarded more than \$420 million of CARES and ARPA funding with little to no audit findings.



“All of that funding went out with only 7 or 8 people working on it. AmpliFund made this manageable because it was simple, fast, and effective.”

- Dave Dearmont, Chief Economist at the State of Nebraska
Department of Economic Development