

The EITCplatform and One Economy are pleased to be able to offer small grants for free tax preparation programs interested in expanding their services to include facilitated self-preparation.

Facilitated self-prep works as follows: Side-by-side with your regular volunteer-preparer program, you set up a few computers where filers can prepare their own taxes on-line with support from a volunteer. It can be a way for sites to serve more filers, shorten wait times and empower those who are interested in completing their own returns. Since 2005, One Economy has helped over 20,000 low-to-moderate-income households file their taxes online through their award-winning website, www.theBeehive.org. You can learn more about self-prep by reading the Fact Sheet available at www.EITCplatform.org.

A limited number of grants of \$2,000 each are available through the EITCplatform and can be used to purchase computers or other equipment or to pay for staff time to support a self-prep program component. One Economy provides the on-line tool, via the Beehive, which allows filers to complete and submit their returns and also provides tax sites with data on those returns. Sites will also receive technical assistance and support from One Economy to operationalize their self-prep programs. Because the self-prep model works best at busier sites, those tax sites preparing at least 1,000 tax returns are particularly encouraged to apply.

To apply, complete the self-prep contact form at www.EITCplatform.org. You'll find it toward the bottom of the "Tax Prep" page. (And make sure to click "send" to submit your form.) Please note in the comments section that you are applying for a Self-Prep Grant. You can also use the same form to ask any questions about self-prep or the grants. Once you apply, One Economy will contact you to follow up and complete the process. One Economy has sole discretion in distributing the grants.

If you are not yet a member of the EITCplatform, you'll need to first register at www.EITCplatform.org -- membership is free and registration is simple.

We know that even small costs can be a big challenge for free tax preparation programs and hope that these grants will help sites expand your services to include self-prep alongside your regular tax preparation services.

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