



Environmental Justice Small Grants Program FACT SHEET

Background/ Objective

The EPA's Office of Environmental Justice (OEJ) established the Environmental Justice Small Grants Program (EJSG) in fiscal year (FY) 1994. The purpose of this grant program is to support and empower communities that are working on local solutions to local environmental and/or public health issues.

The long-term goals of the EJSG Program are to help build the capacity of the affected community and to create self-sustaining, community-based partnerships that will continue to improve local environments in the future.

In FY 1994, the pilot program started with only \$500,000 and a limit of \$10,000 per award. Each region received \$50,000 and funded a total of 61 projects. Below is a summary of the number of grants and total program funding for every year since 1995.

Year	Total Funding	Number of grants
1995	\$3,000,000	170
1996	\$2,800,000	152
1997	\$2,700,000	139
1998	\$2,500,000	134
1999	\$1,490,000	95
2000	\$899,000	61
2001	\$1,300,000	88
2002	\$1,113,000	74
2003	\$930,000	55
2004	\$423,545	17
2005	\$625,000	25
2006-2007	\$1,000,000	20
2008-2009	\$800,000	40
2010*	\$1,000,000	40

We anticipate releasing a new announcement for the FY 2010 EJSG Program in October 2009.*

The program has supported a diverse group of community-based recipients from all over the nation, working to create healthy, sustainable communities through dozens of local projects. **Past projects have addressed a variety of issues, including:**

- Identifying air pollutants from truck emissions and other sources at Port Newark in New Brunswick; New Jersey;
- Educating youth about the harmful effects of toxic substances such as asbestos and lead paint in Chicago, Illinois;
- Educating Albuquerque, New Mexico residents and businesses on ways to properly dispose of hazardous waste;
- Conducting residential energy efficiency workshops, training in Kansas City, Missouri for Spanish speaking communities; and
- Ensuring that local people in Barrow, Alaska have a voice in the decision making on oil and gas development projects in their village and the adjacent offshore area.

FY 2010 Focus

This year's grants will continue to aid community projects and will support EPA Administrator Lisa Jackson's top five priorities:

- Improving air quality;
- Managing chemical risks;
- Cleaning up hazardous-waste disposal sites;
- Reducing greenhouse gas emissions; and
- Protecting America's water.

There is a well-established scientific consensus that climate change will cause disproportionate impacts upon vulnerable populations.¹ Thus, the program is adding emphasis this year on addressing the disproportionate impacts of climate change in communities with environmental justice concerns. The goal is to recognize the critical role of grassroots efforts in helping shape climate change strategies to avoid, lessen, or delay the risks and impacts associated with climate change. An overarching goal of this emphasis is to help increase the number of underrepresented communities and ensure equitable green economic development in ways that build healthy sustainable communities.

Eligible Applicants

An eligible applicant MUST BE :

- (1) a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization as designated by the Internal Revenue Service;
- (2) a non-profit organization, recognized by the state, territory, commonwealth, or tribe in which it is located;
- (3) a city, township, county government; **OR**
- (4) a Native American tribal government (Federally recognized).

In addition, an eligible applicant must be able to demonstrate that it has worked directly with, or provided services to, the affected community. An "affected community," for the purposes of this assistance agreement program, is a community that is disproportionately impacted by environmental harms and risks and has a local environmental and/or public health issue that is identified in the proposal.

The focus of this assistance agreement program is to build the capacity of community-based organizations to address environmental and/or public health issues at the local level. Therefore, for this assistance agreement program, the term "non-profit organization" EXCLUDES:

- colleges and universities;
- hospitals;
- state governments and their entities;
- quasi-governmental entities (e.g., water districts, utilities)ⁱⁱ;
- national-, multi-state-, or state-wide- organizations with chapters;
- non-profit organizations that engage in lobbying activities as defined in Section 3 of the Lobbying Disclosure Act of 1995; and
- those non-profit organizations which are excluded from coverage under paragraph 5 of OMB Circular A-122 (see OMB Circular A-122, paragraph 5 at: http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/circulars/a122/a122_2004.html)

EPA's Commitment to Environmental Justice

"We must take special pains to connect with those who have been historically underrepresented in EPA decision-making, including the disenfranchised in our cities and rural areas, communities of color, native Americans, people disproportionately impacted by pollution, and small businesses, cities, and towns working to meet their environmental responsibilities. Like all Americans, they deserve an EPA with an open mind, a big heart and a willingness to listen...As we meet these challenges, we must be sensitive to the burdens pollution has placed on vulnerable subpopulations, including children, the elderly, the poor and all others who are at particular risk to threats to health and the environment. We must seek their full partnership in the greater aim of identifying and eliminating the sources of pollution in their neighborhoods, schools and homes."

EPA Administrator Lisa P. Jackson

For More Information

If you would like more information about the EJ Small Grants Program and summaries of all the EJSG projects funded in FY 2005 and prior years are available on the OEJ website:

<http://www.epa.gov/compliance/environmentaljustice/grants/ej-smgrants.html>

ⁱ As stated in the Technical Support Document for the Endangerment and Cause or Contribute Findings for Greenhouse Gases under Section 202(a) of the Clean Air Act (April 2009), "Within settlements experiencing climate change, certain parts of the population may be especially vulnerable; these include the poor, the elderly, those already in poor health, the disabled, those living alone, those with limited rights and power (such as recent immigrants with limited English skills), and/or indigenous populations dependent on one or a few resources. Thus, the potential impacts of climate change raise environmental justice issues."

ⁱⁱ Generally, a quasi-governmental entity is one that: (1) has a close association with the government agency, but is not considered a part of the government agency; (2) was created by the government agency but is exempt from certain legal and administrative requirements imposed on government agencies; or (3) was not created by the government agency but performs a public purpose and is significantly supported financially by the government agency.