

Questions and Answers from 2018 P3 Informational Webinar

EPA's People, Prosperity, and the Planet (P3) Program is a student design competition, highlighting the use of scientific principles in creative innovative technology-based projects that achieve the mutual goals of improved quality of life, economic prosperity, and the protection of the planet – people, prosperity, and the planet. Below are some questions that were asked during the January 11, 2018, P3 Informational Webinar. Please note that all requirements and documents are contained within the solicitation and that serves as the official resource for this funding opportunity. The solicitation can be found at www.epa.gov/p3. For additional questions regarding the program and application, please contact Angela Page at Page.AngelaD@epa.gov or 202-564-7957.

Frequently Asked Questions

Eligibility:

Can a project address more than one research area?

Per the Solicitation: "Applicants should address one of the research areas (Air Quality, Safe and Sustainable Water Resources, Sustainable and Healthy Communities, Chemical Safety) listed below in their Phase I proposals. *Note that each application must be submitted using a single Funding Opportunity Number (FON).* Within the selected research area, applicants should select one of the listed topics to be the focus of their project. If applicants propose a project that does not address one of these topics, they may not be evaluated as highly during the relevancy review, and therefore may not be recommended for an award."

If the project is based domestically, can it be implemented internationally?

Per the Solicitation: "The P3 Program is intended to address domestic U.S. needs. For this reason, P3 projects should primarily perform their research in the U.S., and the benefits of the research should primarily accrue to the U.S." The research may also potentially have international implications, though it should primarily benefit the U.S.

Is there a requirement to have the Human Subjects Research Statement?

Yes. Even if your project does not include any human subjects research, this needs to be stated within your application.

Can one Principal Investigator (PI) lead/submit multiple projects?

Yes. One PI can submit multiple proposals; however, it is extremely unlikely that a single PI would have multiple projects funded in the same cycle due to the competitive nature of the program.

Can someone apply from an international institution?

No. Per the Solicitation: "Public and private institutions of higher education (limited to degree-granting institutions of higher education) located in the U.S. (includes eligible institutions of higher education located in U.S. territories and possessions) are eligible to apply to be the recipient of a grant to support teams of undergraduate and/or graduate students. Profit-making firms are not eligible to receive assistance agreements from the EPA under this program." That being said, collaboration with an international university is allowed.

Does the PI need to be a U.S. citizen?

Yes, faculty advisors/Pis must be U.S. citizens and/or lawfully admitted to U.S.

Do the students need to be U.S. citizens?

No, international students are allowed to participate as well, provided they are here legally and attend a U.S. institution of higher education.

Team Composition:

How many students can be on a team?

The teams should be comprised of at least two students, as this is not a grant program that provides funding for an individual student's research project. There is no maximum number for team members, and the final size of the team is up to the PI in charge.

Can the group be a mix of both graduate and undergraduate students?

Yes. The team can include both graduate and undergraduate students.

Can the team include secondary/high school students?

Secondary or high school students may certainly collaborate with the team on the research; however, they may not be reflected as an official team member. The team must be comprised of graduate and/or undergraduate students.

Can the students within the team change?

Yes. It is understood that the composition of a team could change over time as students graduate, change universities, etc.

Do you need to have a student team assembled at the time of submission? Or is it sufficient to have one student as the main contact?

Per the Solicitation: "If student investigators are known at the time of the proposal, list them, indicate whether each student is an undergraduate or graduate student, and indicate the expertise they will contribute to the P3 team. If student investigators are not yet known, provide a brief explanation of how and when the P3 student team will be formed and the areas of expertise to be recruited for the team."

Do students have to have different majors in order to fulfill the interdisciplinary criteria?

Per the Solicitation: "Clearly identify the planned mix of disciplines to be represented on the team, including both the undergraduate and graduate student members and the PI and co-investigators/advisors." An "Interdisciplinary Team" is one containing students from different degree programs or departments, and preferably a mix of graduates and undergraduates.

Can there be Co-Principal Investigators (Co-PIs) on the team?

Yes. The application may include co-PIs or advisors who will significantly contribute to the project. However, the applications should be submitted with a single lead PI who will serve as the primary faculty advisor for the P3 student team.

General Questions:

Is travel to the P3 Expo included within the \$15,000 or is that paid separately?

All expenses related to the grant, including expo-related travel costs, must come from the amount your institution is awarded.

Do the students write the proposal and then let the PI review it, or does the PI write the proposal and then the students work on the project?

This decision is left to the institution, but typically the PI writes the proposal based on research they are already conducting, or research they wish to undertake. What is important is that applicants prepare proposals robust enough to be competitive and relevant throughout the review process.

Is there a preference for rural environments? Are urban environments considered as well?

The P3 Program supports research that responds to the needs of people in the U.S., especially those of the most disadvantaged communities throughout the country. Projects addressing both rural and urban environments will be considered, assuming they meet review process criteria.

What date will funds be disbursed for winners of Phase 1 P3 grants?

We anticipate that Phase 1 grants will be awarded in Fall 2018, so that the projects align with the academic calendar.

Is it required that all students in the team have to get paid through the project or can they also volunteer?

Students can volunteer or get university credit. No student support is provided by Phase I funds.

Can projects be hypothesis driven or do they have to be applied?

Projects can be research focused/hypothesis driven, but should clearly state how they will result in pollution prevention and/or control.

Does the technology/innovation need to be targeted toward/eventually used by the public, or it could be targeted towards researchers, i.e. a new software/technology for researchers in the field?

It would be up to your team to identify who receive the results or benefits of your technology/innovation. The technology/innovation should have clear outputs and outcomes related to sustainability and pollution prevention and/or control.

Because the criteria have changed somewhat, how relevant are the former proposals on the website?

While the abstracts listed on the website may be worth reviewing for general ideas, please see the Solicitation for the specific review criteria.