

# Inflation Reduction Act Air Monitoring and Sensors Direct Awards

## Questions and Answers

Last Updated: March 7, 2024

This Q&A has been updated to include webinar questions – the webinar was hosted on February 28, 2024 at 1p.m. EST, and the slides from that presentation can be found on the [grant webpage](#).

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is accepting applications for Air Monitoring Grants and Air Quality Sensors Grants. Please refer to the [grant webpage](#) for the complete Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) and additional information, including the Grants Guidance.

Funding opportunity numbers (FONs) for this noncompetitive grant are provided by EPA Regional Points of Contact—listed on page 14 [(a) & (b)] and 12 [(c)] of the Guidance Documents, and at the bottom of this Q&A. EPA encourages eligible state, local, Tribal, and territorial air agencies to submit grant applications as soon as possible and no later than April 8, 2024.

Please review all questions. If you have any additional questions, please contact your EPA Regional Point of Contact.

### **1. What does the Inflation Reduction Act say about how the Air Monitoring Grants are to be used?**

Section 60105 (a, b, and c) of the IRA states the following:

“Section 60105(a) of the IRA provides \$117.5M for grants and other activities authorized under subsections (a) through (c) of section 103 and section 105 of the Clean Air Act to deploy, integrate, support, and maintain fenceline air monitoring, screening air monitoring, national air toxics trend stations, and other air toxics and community monitoring.

Section 60105(b) of the IRA provides \$50M for grants and other activities authorized under subsections (a) through (c) of section 103 and section 105 of the Clean Air Act (1) to expand the national ambient air quality monitoring network with new multipollutant monitoring stations; and (2) to replace, repair, operate, and maintain existing monitors.

Section 60105(c) of the IRA provides \$3 million for grants and other activities authorized under subsections (a) through (c) of section 103 and section 105 of the Clean Air Act to deploy, integrate, and operate air quality sensors in low-income and disadvantaged communities.”

**2. What is a non-competitive direct award?**

The Clean Air Act authorizes EPA to award non-competitive direct awards to state, local, and Tribal air pollution control agencies to implement programs for the prevention and control of air pollution or implementation of the National Ambient Air Quality Standards.

**3. Who is eligible for this funding opportunity?**

Air pollution control agencies currently involved in air monitoring activities that regularly receive CAA section 103 or 105 grants either annually or every few years.

**4. What activities are eligible?**

Detailed information on eligible activities is available in the grant guidance documents. For IRA sections 60105 (a) and (b), generally, these include activities related to establishing new air monitoring stations or in maintaining, operating, or upgrading existing monitoring stations. For IRA section 60105 (c), generally, these include activities supporting the deployment, integration, and operation of air sensors in low-income and disadvantaged communities.

**5. What costs are allowed as part of the direct award?**

Detailed information on allowable costs is available in the grant guidance documents. Generally, these grants may include any cost category (e.g., personnel, supplies, contractual) provided:

- the costs are eligible under both CAA sections 103 (a)-(c) and the applicable IRA sections 60105(a)-(c);
- the costs are reasonable; and
- the costs are incurred directly or indirectly to carry out air monitoring activities included in the work plan.

**6. Why are there two grant guidance documents (i.e., funding opportunities)?**

The IRA sections 60105 (a) and (b) exhibit overlapping eligible activities, where section 60105(c) has a different set of eligible activities. Grantees can receive one grant for activities covered by the grant guidance for 60105(a) or (b), and/or one grant for activities covered by the grant guidance for 60105(c).

**7. Can EPA award these IRA funds as part of air agencies’ annual CAA section 103 or 105 grants?**

Because this funding comes from a different appropriation, the EPA must award these grants separately from other CAA section 103 and/or 105 grants that the eligible agencies may typically receive from the EPA (i.e., annual state and Tribal assistance grants). IRA monitoring grants can be combined with other grants for American Samoa, Commonwealth of the Northern Marian Islands, Guam, and the U.S. Virgin Islands under the Omnibus Territories Act, 48 USC 1469a. For other air agencies, there are legal challenges that prevent these grants from being combined with other grants.

**8. What is the period of performance for these grants?**

The maximum period of performance for these grants is up to five years. The period of performance should be based on the time required to accomplish the workplan components.

**9. How do eligible air agencies apply for an IRA Air Monitoring grants?**

Eligible air agencies must have an active SAM.gov and Grants.gov account. Applicants should ensure as soon as possible that their accounts are active. Click [this link](#) for additional information about registering in SAM.gov and Grants.gov.

**10. Are community-based organizations eligible for these funds?**

No, eligible entities for these awards are limited to state, local, Tribal, and territorial air agencies as defined in the grant guidance. Eligible entities differ depending on the funding opportunity. Please review open announcements at [Air Grants and Funding | US EPA](#).

**11. Is there a Tribal Set Aside?**

Each EPA Region will work with their eligible state, local, and Tribal air agencies to distribute these funds. The EPA allocated funding to each EPA Region for every eligible air agency without a specific Tribal set aside. These funding distributions will be based on the activities in the workplan, as detailed in the grant guidance documents.

**12. How do these grants address environmental justice and disadvantaged communities?**

These grants provide state, local, Tribal, and territorial air agencies with the opportunity to establish new ambient air monitoring sites, and maintain, operate, or upgrade existing ambient air monitoring networks, including in communities that bear the unequal health burden of air pollution.

Funding from IRA sections 60105(a)-(c) is covered by the [Justice40 initiative](#). Therefore, workplans should address how the overall outcomes of the workplan support Justice 40 goals and the IRA provision. IRA section 60105(c) requires that the funding be used for the deployment, integration, and operation of air quality sensors in low-income and disadvantaged communities.

**13. Are air agencies restricted to the activities that they submitted to the Fall 2023 IRA Direct Awards Needs Assessment? And did air agencies have to participate in that Needs Assessment in order to apply for this funding opportunity?**

EPA conducted the needs assessment to better understand air monitoring needs across eligible agencies, to develop eligible activities, and to inform the allocation methodology across the EPA Region Offices. Participation in the needs assessment was not required and therefore information in the needs assessment does not impact eligibility for this funding opportunity. Submissions to the needs assessment are a good start for the development of workplans, but air agencies are not limited to the needs previously identified. Eligibility is described in section VI of the grant guidance documents.

**14. Where can eligible air agencies find the Funding Opportunity Number (FON) in order to submit the application?**

Each EPA Regional Point of Contact (see question #18) has the FON for Grants.gov.

**15. Can eligible air agencies submit one application covering both the Air Monitoring (60105(a)&(b)) and the Sensors (60105(c)) funding opportunities?**

Separate applications for the two grant programs/funding opportunities are required and cannot be combined. Eligible agencies should discuss intent to apply with their EPA Regional Office point of contact (see question #18).

**16. Does this funding opportunity support funds for XYZ (i.e. new monitors, meteorological equipment, new station infrastructure upgrades, data management plans, quality assurance activities, staffing, etc.)?**

All funds from these grants must support ambient air monitoring, as listed in the eligible activities in Section IX of the grant guidance documents. Please discuss unique needs and questions with the EPA Regional Office Point of Contact listed in Section XI of the Grant Guidance documents.

**17. Can staffing be included in the workplans for these opportunities?**

In general, staffing to support ambient air monitoring activities as described in the grant guidance may be included in the workplan, but details should be discussed with the appropriate EPA Regional Office.

**18. Who should agencies contact with questions regarding the grant guidance documents and the development of workplans?**

Please contact the following individuals in the appropriate EPA Regional Office:

<b>EPA Region</b>	<b>Point(s) of Contact</b>	<b>Contact Information</b>
1	Jennifer Brady	617-918-1698; <a href="mailto:brady.jenniferL@epa.gov">brady.jenniferL@epa.gov</a>
2	Emmet Keveney	212-637-3459; <a href="mailto:Keveney.Emmet@epa.gov">Keveney.Emmet@epa.gov</a>
3	Krista Gonzalez	215-814-3300; <a href="mailto:gonzalez.krista@epa.gov">gonzalez.krista@epa.gov</a>

	AJ McCullough	215-814-2093; <a href="mailto:Mccullough.amanda@epa.gov">Mccullough.amanda@epa.gov</a>
4	Janine Morris Todd Rinck	404-562-9480; <a href="mailto:morris.janine@epa.gov">morris.janine@epa.gov</a> 404-562-9062; <a href="mailto:Rinck.Todd@epa.gov">Rinck.Todd@epa.gov</a>
5	Michelle Becker Nora Suntken	312-886-3901; <a href="mailto:becker.michelle@epa.gov">becker.michelle@epa.gov</a> 312-353-3298; <a href="mailto:suntken.nora@epa.gov">suntken.nora@epa.gov</a>
6	Donnett Patterson Aunjane Gautreaux (Tribal)	214-665-7418; <a href="mailto:Patterson.Donnnett@epa.gov">Patterson.Donnnett@epa.gov</a> 214-665-7127; <a href="mailto:Gautreaux.Aunjane@epa.gov">Gautreaux.Aunjane@epa.gov</a>
7	Stephanie Doolan Andy Hawkins	913- 551-7719; <a href="mailto:Doolan.Stephanie@epa.gov">Doolan.Stephanie@epa.gov</a> 913-551-7179; <a href="mailto:hawkins.andy@epa.gov">hawkins.andy@epa.gov</a>
8	Marisa McPhilliamy Emily Bertram	303-312-6965; <a href="mailto:McPhilliamy.Marisa@epa.gov">McPhilliamy.Marisa@epa.gov</a> 303-312-7057; <a href="mailto:bertram.emily@epa.gov">bertram.emily@epa.gov</a>
9	Angela Latigue Jean Samolis	415- 947-4170; <a href="mailto:latigue.angela@epa.gov">latigue.angela@epa.gov</a> 415-972-3939; <a href="mailto:samolis.jean@epa.gov">samolis.jean@epa.gov</a>
10	Christina Miller (S/L) Sandra Brozusky (Tribal)	206-553-6512; <a href="mailto:miller.christina@epa.gov">miller.christina@epa.gov</a> 206-553-5317; <a href="mailto:brozusky.sandra@epa.gov">brozusky.sandra@epa.gov</a>