Program Overview - March 2024

Office of Environmental Justice & External Civil Rights

COMMUNITY CHANGE GRANTS
Environmental and Climate Justice
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Overview of Community Change Grants Program
Introduction

EPA received $3 billion through the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) to fund environmental and climate justice activities to benefit disadvantaged communities.

- $2.8 billion for grants including $2 billion for the Community Change Grants Program (CCGP).
- $200 million for technical assistance related to the grants.
- Grants cannot exceed three years (no extensions).
- All grants must be awarded by September 30, 2026.
Goals

Designed with meaningful community, Tribal and other stakeholder input, the investments EPA makes through the CCGP are intended to achieve the following goals:

- Fund community-driven pollution and climate resiliency solutions.
- Invest in strong cross-sectoral collaborations with partners working with and for communities.
- Unlock access to more significant resources.
- Deliver technical assistance and capacity-building support.
- Strengthen communities' decision-making power.
Track I
Community-Driven Investments for Change
Funding Available: approx. $1.96 billion
Number of Awards: approx. 150
Per Award Amount: $10M – and cannot exceed $20M each

Track II
Meaningful Engagement for Equitable Governance
Funding Available: approx. $40 million
Number of Awards: approx. 20
Per Award Amount: $1M – and cannot exceed $3M each

Technical Assistance
- Community Change Technical Assistance Program
- Equitable Resilience Technical Assistance Program
- Thriving Communities Technical Assistance Centers (TCTACs)
Types of TA

- **Community Change Technical Assistance (CCTA)**
  - Broad-based pre-award and post-award TA
  - Submit an on-line TA Request Form
  - Call to make a TA Request or ask questions: 1 (800) 540-8123
  - Email: EJ_TechAssist@epa.gov

- **Community Change Equitable Resilience Technical Assistance (CCER TA)**
  - Submit an on-line TA Request Form
  - More limited and tailored TA focusing on disaster-prone areas
Overview of Threshold Eligibility Criteria
Eligibility

Applications must meet all eligibility criteria, as outlined in Section III of the NOFO, to be considered for funding.

- Comply with the content and submission requirements.
- Meet the eligibility and statutory partnership requirements in Section III.A.
- Meet threshold criteria in Section III.D, including that the projects will benefit disadvantaged communities.
- Projects must be completed within three years.
- Applications to conduct scientific research; assessment, removal, or remediation of Superfund sites; and permanent community relocation are ineligible.
Statutory Partnership

Applicants must either be a partnership of two community-based nonprofit organizations (CBOs) or a partnership between a CBO and a federally recognized Tribe, local government or institution of higher education.

Partnerships must be documented and meet certain legal requirements (see Appendix B).

Additional information on eligibility and partnerships can be found in Section III of the NOFO.

Note: While the CBO does not have to be the “Lead Applicant,” all statutory partnerships must include a CBO.
Collaborating Entities

Other entities can be involved in projects as **collaborating entities**.

Collaborating Entities may include entities that legally could be Statutory Partners (CBOs, Federally-recognized Tribes, local governments, and institutions of higher education) and entities that cannot legally be Statutory Partners (e.g., states and territorial governments).
How It Works

FORM A STATUTORY PARTNERSHIP
Lead Applicant + Statutory Partner

IDENTIFY COLLABORATING ENTITIES TO LEAD PROJECTS

THE COLLABORATIVE
EPA

Collaborating Entities
Lead Applicant + Statutory Partner
Disadvantaged Communities

Applicants must demonstrate that the projects in their application will benefit a disadvantaged community. EPA is defining disadvantaged community as one that meets at least one of the following criteria:

- A geographically-defined community identified as disadvantaged on the EPA IRA Disadvantaged Communities Map
- A Disadvantaged Unincorporated Community (DUC)
- A farmworker community

More information can be found in Appendix A of the NOFO.
Target Investment Areas

$50M
Disadvantaged Unincorporated Communities

$150M
Tribes in Alaska

$300M
Tribal Communities

$100M
Southern Border Communities

$50M
U.S. Territories

Note: These Track I investment area amounts are approximate and may be adjusted based on the quantity and quality of applications received.
Track I and Track II Overview
Projects under this track should ensure generations of future enjoyment and growth by meeting the below objectives:

1. **Increase** community climate resilience
2. **Reduce** local pollution & improve public health
3. **Center** meaningful community engagement
4. **Build** community strength
5. **Reach** priority populations
6. **Maximize** integration across projects
Track I: Community-Driven Investments for Change

Track I applications must also address these requirements, as further described in Section I.G and Section IV.B of the NOFO:

**Strategies**

- **Climate Action**
  - Green Infrastructure & Nature-Based Solutions
  - Mobility & Transportation Options
  - Energy-Efficient, Healthy and Resilient Housing & Buildings
  - Microgrid Installation
  - Community Resilience Hubs
  - Brownfield Redevelopment
  - Waste Reduction & Management
  - Workforce Development

- **Pollution Reduction**
  - Indoor Air Quality & Community Health
  - Outdoor Air Quality & Community Health
  - Clean Water Infrastructure
  - Hazardous Waste Management

**Plans**

- Community Engagement and Collaborative Governance Plan
- Community Strength Plan

**Additional Requirements**

- Readiness Approach
- Compliance Plan

Note: Projects must be place-based and include a Project Area Map, as described in Appendix A.
Track II: Meaningful Engagement for Equitable Governance

Objectives

• To build the capacity of communities to evaluate and redress environmental and climate injustices
• To give disadvantaged communities a meaningful voice in government decision-making processes

Project Examples

• Educational and Training Programs
• Environmental Advisory Boards (EABs)
• Collaborative Governance Activities
• Participation in Governmental Funding and Budgeting Processes
Overview of Application Submission, Evaluation and Selection Process
Applications Open

November 21, 2023

Applications will be accepted, reviewed and awarded on a rolling basis.

November 21, 2024

Applications Close

Application packages will be accepted until November 21, 2024, at 11:59 PM (Eastern Time) through grants.gov.
**SELECTION PROCESS**

**Track I**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Eligibility</th>
<th>Written Evaluation</th>
<th>Oral Presentations</th>
<th>Final Consideration</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Applications reviewed for threshold eligibility.</td>
<td>Written applications that receive a score of 110 or higher (out of 155) will be invited to give an oral presentation.</td>
<td>Worth a maximum of 45 points. Applications with a combined score of 170 or more, based on written and oral evaluation, move to final selection consideration.</td>
<td>Applications receiving a combined score of between 110 and 169 will be ranked and reviewed approx. monthly for final selection consideration.</td>
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**Track II**

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<th>Eligibility</th>
<th>Written Evaluation</th>
<th>Final Consideration</th>
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<tr>
<td>Applications reviewed for threshold eligibility.</td>
<td>Written applications that receive a score of 85 or higher (out of 100) will move to final selection consideration.</td>
<td>Applications receiving a score below 85 will be ranked and reviewed approx. monthly for final selection consideration.</td>
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Debriefings and Disputes

Applicants who are deemed ineligible or who are not selected for funding may request a debriefing.

For more information on the debriefing and dispute process, see Section VI of the NOFO.

Resubmission

Applicants who are deemed eligible but are not selected for funding may, after timely requesting and receiving a debriefing on the application, resubmit.

For more information see Section II.C of the NOFO.
Key Points

Check for Eligibility
• We know the NOFO is long but read it carefully!
• Make sure you meet the partnership eligibility requirements (Section III.A) and applicable threshold eligibility requirements (Section III.D).

Understand the Requirements for Different Tracks
• There are different requirements and evaluation criteria for Track I and II applications (Sections IV.B and V).
• Alaska Tribal and U.S. Southern Border target investment areas have unique requirements (Section II.B and Appendix H).
• Though it was not covered today, review the NOFO to understand the post-award and other requirements (Section VI).

Triple Check Your Application
• Make sure you do not exceed the page limits for the Project Narrative portion of the application package and other attachments (Section IV.B).
• Include all applicable attachments and forms to the application package (Section IV.B).
• Letters of support are not required, and additional attachments will not be evaluated.
Important Links

In addition to the application requirements in the NOFO, it’s important to understand what will be expected of grantees if they are awarded a grant. Below are a few important links to programmatic and administrative information - be sure to read the NOFO in full to understand them:

- Fraud, Waste & Abuse
- Davis Bacon Act
- Build America Buy America
- EPA's General Terms and Conditions
- EPA’s Solicitation Clauses
- Best Practice Guide for Procuring Services, Supplies, and Equipment Under EPA Assistance Agreement
- Methods of Procurement (2 CFR 200.320)
- Participant Support Costs (2 CFR 1500.1)
- Reporting Requirements (Section VI)
- Appendix G: Indirect Costs
Future Developments

• NOFO Modifications: The NOFO has been modified to clarify certain issues. Make sure to read the most updated version on grants.gov.
• Frequently Asked Questions: FAQs were posted to the CCGP website and will be updated as needed to address NOFO questions.
• Future Webinars: Check the CCGP website often for dates for future webinars and recordings.
Final Thoughts

Find partners and build coalition

Identify meaningful transformative projects to address environmental and climate justice concerns that can be completed within 3 years *(Track I)*

Identify governmental policies and programs that can be improved with community voices *(Track II)*

Register on SAM.gov and Grants.gov now *(this process can take up to a month)*

You can follow up with questions at CCGP@epa.gov

Stay up to date on webinars by signing up for EPA EJ listserv by sending a blank email to join-epa-ej@lists.epa.gov