

STAR: Advancing Sustainable Chemistry Funding Opportunity

Informational Webinar Questions and Answers

April 4, 2024

Application Information

1. Can the research be conducted in other countries?

Answer: Yes, research may be conducted in other countries and include researchers in other countries. Foreign organizations cannot be the primary applicant, but they may receive a sub-award. The research must be directly transferable to U.S. populations or environments in terms of sustainable chemistry.

2. Is there a page limit for the research plan?

Answer: Yes. The research plan should not exceed eighteen pages. Appendices may be included but must remain within the 18-page limit.

3. How many total projects will be funded? Would more projects be considered for funding if there is enough budget?

Answer: EPA anticipates funding approximately four awards under this funding opportunity, depending on the availability of funds, quality of applications received, and other applicable considerations. If there is additional funding available, it may be possible to fund more than four applications.

4. Will early-career faculty be evaluated under the same criteria as late-stage faculty?

Answer: This funding opportunity does not have an early-career applicant component, so every application is evaluated according to the same criteria.

5. Do you provide examples of awards successful in previous cycles?

Answer: You can find previously listed awardees on our [research grants website](#). However, each funding opportunity is different, so it is best to rely on the language in this funding opportunity.

6. Does the Environmental Justice section require an outreach component?

Answer: No, the Environmental Justice section is for applicants to demonstrate in their application how they will advance environmental justice for underserved communities.

7. When we are evaluating project relevance, should we send you a white paper?

Answer: No additional materials are needed other than your application, which should describe your research and how it fits the funding opportunity.

Research Projects

1. Is this funding opportunity restricted to any specific chemicals?

Answer: No, there is no restriction to specific chemicals in this funding opportunity.

2. Does this award fund basic research on chemical decomposition of environmental toxins?

Answer: The funding opportunity defines sustainable chemistry as “chemistry that produces compounds or materials from building blocks, reagents, and catalysts that are readily-available and renewable, operates at optimal efficiency, and employs renewable energy sources.” Therefore, chemical decomposition on environmental toxins could be considered relevant if it “does not adversely impact human health and the environment, while promoting circularity, meeting societal needs, contributing to economic resilience, and aspiring to perpetually use elements, compounds, and materials without depletion of resources or accumulation of waste.”

3. Are catalytic studies covered under Research Area 2?

Answer: Yes, as a component of methodologies of chemical production on a larger process, they are applicable.

4. Regarding life cycle analysis, is Research Area 3 looking for formal analyses within a specific life cycle stage or data and tools that can be used within life cycle analysis to better conduct assessment?

Answer: Both of these are covered under Research Area 3.

5. Is the evaluation of hazardous effects of chemicals using New Approach Models considered responsive?

Answer: Yes, hazardous chemicals are responsive to Research Area 2.

6. For Research Area 2's new approach method, what is the target technology maturity level?

Answer: There is no target technology maturity level.

7. Do the projects need to involve experimental work, or can they be exclusively focused on developing life cycle analysis methodologies, data, and analysis?

Answer: Projects do not need to directly involve experimental work. They can also be model-based, as long as they are innovative and responsive to the research areas.

8. For life cycle analysis, is this funding opportunity focused on a specific impact area?

Answer: The focus of this funding opportunity is on the impact to human health and the environment.

9. Would a life cycle analysis study of a novel production system fit under both Area 2 and 3?

Answer: Yes, the study of a novel production system would include chemical methodology processes, so it is responsive to both Areas 2 and 3.

Eligibility

1. Is there a maximum number of institutions participating per proposal?

Answer: There is not a limit on the number of co-PIs or collaborating institutions. However, applications require an explanation for what each PI and institution is responsible for regarding budget and other aspects of the project. Look carefully at personnel and project management peer review criteria. The peer review criteria discuss management and budget, so there may also be budget limitations.