

***Air Quality Information: Making Sense of Air Pollution
Data to Inform Decisions in Underserved Communities
Overburdened by Air Pollution***

**EPA Science to Achieve Results (STAR) Funding Opportunity
Funding Opportunity Number (FON): EPA-G2024-STAR-D1**

Informational Webinar for Potential Applicants

April 22, 2024


Webinar Objectives

- Review application information requirements in the funding opportunity:

Air Quality Information: Making Sense of Air Pollution Data to Inform Decisions in Underserved Communities Overburdened by Air Pollution

- Provide guidelines for eligibility, submission and technical aspects of application process
- Answer questions about the application process and information written in the funding opportunity notice

Webinar Ground Rules

- During the presentation, you may type your questions in the comment box 
- Questions will be addressed after the presentation
- No specific research project or idea can be discussed but clarifying questions regarding what is written in the funding opportunity announcement may be answered
- These slides are posted on the funding opportunity webpage: <https://www.epa.gov/research-grants/air-quality-information-making-sense-air-pollution-data-inform-decisions>
- Answers to questions will be posted on the webpage for this funding opportunity

Agency Contacts

- Technical Contact:
Serena Chung, Project Officer
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- Eligibility Contact:
Ron Josephson, Eligibility Officer and Science Review Officer
josephson.ron@epa.gov; 202-564-7823
- Electronic Submissions:
electronic-grant-submissions@epa.gov
- If interested in being on the **Peer Review Panel**, rather than applying, please contact:
Mirtha Cápiro, Science Review Officer
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Funding Opportunity and Award Information

- Deadline for Submission:
 - June 26, 2024 at 11:59:59 pm Eastern Time
- Funding Level:
 - Anticipated total for all awards: \$10 M
 - Estimated number of awards: 8
 - Funding per award: Up to \$1,250,000, including direct and indirect costs, with a maximum duration of 4 years

Expected Outcomes (1)

(Section I.D)

The overarching goal is to give underserved communities science-based information, tools and approaches to utilize air and related environmental data to engage with decision-makers and take actions to address community-identified air pollution concerns associated with criteria air pollutants or hazardous air pollutants. The projects funded under this solicitation should provide the communities engaged in the projects with science-based information, tools and approaches to address their needs, as well as develop insights and tools that can be generalized and applied, respectively, to other communities.

Expected Outcomes (2)

(Section I.D)

Specific outcomes that support the overarching goal may include, but are not limited to:

- Advances in methods and tools for integrating multiple streams of data, e.g., air sensor and other ground-level observations, satellite, modeling, and meteorological data to address air quality concerns in underserved communities
- Improved capability to integrate future data streams, as technologies evolve and new measurements become available, to achieve the above outcomes
- Enabling more exposure and health disparities research by maximizing the use of available air quality, environmental, and other relevant data
- Advances in approaches for creating data sharing frameworks, data standards, and analytical tools for harnessing air quality data to inform decision-making
- New social and behavioral insights on how introduction of air sensor data might empower communities to take actions and on how community monitoring efforts might be sustained
- New insights on how continuous provision of air quality information might be used to reduce air pollution exposures
- Advances in effective communication of air quality information tailored to the needs of underserved communities
- Advances in effective communication of air quality information tailored to help underserved communities have dialogues about community air quality with state, local, Tribal, or other air quality managers

Expected Outputs

(Section I.D)

Expected outputs should include reports, presentations, and peer-reviewed journal publications documenting the scientific basis of the outcomes and other outputs of the research. Other outputs may include, but are not limited to:

- Free and open-source analysis tools, with how-to training available for non-experts, that can be readily utilized by community members to characterize spatiotemporal distributions of air pollutant concentrations and to identify sources of air pollution exposures
- Free and open-source data visualization tools for communicating technical (including, e.g., probabilistic) information on air quality to general audiences
- Free and open-source tools and resources for sharing air monitoring data and associated metadata
- Communication or educational materials that translate research findings into appropriate information for affected populations or communities, public health and environmental professionals, Tribes, decision makers, and the public
- Reports on science-based strategies to reduce disparities in air pollution exposures, developed with community input that can be used for communication to policy makers
- Reports on the value and challenges of the lower-cost air monitoring data to address community air quality concerns
- Community action plans to reduce air pollution exposures in project communities
- Reports that document lessons learned and best practices for engagement and co-production of knowledge with communities, community-based organizations, and/or Tribes

Research Areas (Section I.E)

Research Area 1: Methods and Tools for Data Integration and Analysis

This research area seeks to advance methods and tools that integrate data to inform community exposures to air pollution in underserved communities. Here, integration includes the process of how data are quality assured, harmonized, aggregated, and shared with potential users. Projects should strive to develop methods and tools that can be readily utilized by community members to independently combine and analyze data from multiple sources to address their concerns without requiring detailed knowledge of the underlying analysis tools. These methods and tools should incorporate the performance (accuracy, precision, etc.) of the underlying measurement techniques and be adaptable to inclusion of future data streams (e.g., from networks of new sensors).

Research Area 2: Communicating to Communities and Decision Makers

This research area seeks research on effectively using air quality information derived from multiple streams to address air pollution concerns in underserved communities.

Applications should address both research areas

See topics within each research areas in Section I.E

Application Review Information

- **Peer Review Criteria** (see Section V.A for details, including sub-criteria)
 1. Research Merit
 2. Responsiveness
 3. Project Management
 4. Environmental Justice
 5. Community Engagement Plan
- **Relevancy Review Criteria** (Section V.B)
 1. The degree to which the proposed science/research is relevant to EPA’s priorities as described in Goal 4: Ensure Clean and Healthy Air for All Communities, Objectives 4.1: Improve Air Quality and Reduce Localized Pollution and Health Impacts, of [EPA’s FY2022-2026 Strategic Plan](#)
 2. The degree to which results (i.e., outputs/outcomes) of the research have broad application or affect large segments of society
 3. The degree to which the research is designed to produce data and methods that can immediately and/or with little to no translation be utilized by the public, states, and tribes to better assess or manage environmental problems
- See **Section V** for more detail on the above criteria and other review components

MSI Partnerships

- To increase participation of Minority Serving Institutions (MSIs), EPA intends to use up to 50% of the total funding amount available under this announcement for institutions that include MSI partnerships as part of the application. An application is considered to involve an MSI partnership by having significant collaborations with MSI(s) in the form of having at least one co-principal investigator from an MSI and at least one subaward to an MSI.
- For the purpose of this solicitation, the following are considered MSIs:
 - [Historically Black Colleges and Universities](#)
 - [Tribal Colleges and Universities](#)
 - [Hispanic-Serving Institutions](#)
 - [Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander-Serving Institutions](#)
 - [Predominately Black Institutions](#)
 - [Native American-Serving Non-Tribal Institutions](#)
 - [Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian-Serving Institutions](#)

See Sections I.A, II, and V.G for additional information.

Eligibility Information (1)

Eligible Entities

Public and private nonprofit institutions/organizations in the U.S. and U.S. territories

Public and private nonprofit institutions of higher education in the U.S. and U.S. territories

Hospitals located in the U.S. and U.S. territories

State and local governments in the U.S. and U.S. territories

Federally Recognized Indian Tribal Governments

U.S. territories or possessions

Eligibility Information (2)

- The following entities are **NOT** eligible:
 - Profit-making companies
 - Foreign governments
 - International organizations
 - Federally-funded research and development centers (FFRDCs)
 - Federal agencies
- Eligible entities may partner with some ineligible entities under [EPA's Subaward Policy](#)
- For profit companies are NOT eligible and may NOT be subawardees
- For profit companies may be consultants
 - Consultants are not to be considered key personnel
 - Contacts/Consultants are subject to competitive procurement requirements (see Section IV.C.5.iv.f)

Eligibility Information (3)

- Applications must be submitted via [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov)
 - If you cannot access [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov), see <https://www.epa.gov/grants/exceptions-grantsgov-submission-requirement>.
 - You must have [SAM.gov](https://www.sam.gov) registration ACTIVE in order to apply via [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov).
- Applications that exceed federal funding or performance period time limits will not be reviewed
 - Period of performance must be 4 years or less
 - Projects usually start nine to twelve months after the end of the solicitation period
- Applications must include a Community Engagement Plan (see Section IV.C.5.iii.e)
- Applications from ineligible organizations, or that are somehow not substantially compliant, will not be reviewed
- Organizations and PIs may submit more than one application, as long as the applications are substantially different

Application Materials (1)

- See Section IV. “Application and Submission Information”
- To apply under this solicitation, use the application package available at [Grants.gov](https://www.Grants.gov)
 - For further submission information see: Section IV.F. “Submission Instructions and other Submission Requirements”
- All necessary forms are included in the electronic application package, with the exception of the current and pending support form, which is available at: [Research Funding Opportunities: How to Apply and Required Forms](#)
- Letters of support or intent from EPA employees are prohibited

Application Materials (2)

Component	NOFO Section	Page Limit
¥SF-424 (Application for Federal Assistance)	IV.C.1	N/A
¥EPA Form 5700-54 (Key Contacts)	IV.C.2	N/A
¥EPA Form 4700-4 (Preaward Compliance Review Report)	IV.C.3	N/A
¥SF-424A Section B (Budget Information for Non-Construction Programs)	IV.C.4	N/A
Table of Content	IV.C.5.i	none
Abstract	IV.C.5.ii	1
Research Plan	IV.C.5.iii.a	15
Quality Assurance Statement (QAS)	IV.C.5.iii.b	3
Human Subjects Research Statement (HSRS)	IV.C.5.iii.c	4
Scientific Data Management Plan (SDMP)	IV.C.5.iii.d	2
Community Engagement Plan (CEP)	IV.C.5.iii.e	5
References	IV.C.5.iii.f	none
Budget Justification	IV.C.5.iv	3
Resume	IV.C.5.v	2 per investigator/senior personnel
§Current and Pending Support (w/ certification statements)	IV.C.5.vi	N/A
Letters of Intent/Letters of Support	IV.C.5.vii.a	1 per letter
§Additional Key Contacts Form, if appropriate	IV.C.2	N/A

Submit as one PDF

¥Available at <https://www.grants.gov>; §Available at <https://www.epa.gov/research-grants/research-funding-opportunities-how-apply-and-required-forms>

Electronic Submissions

- See Section IV.F “Submission Instructions and Other Submission Requirements.”
- If you experience difficulty with [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov), do the following steps **before** the end of the solicitation period (Section IV.F.5.):
 - Contact [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) Support Center (support@grants.gov; 1-800-518-4726)
 - Document the Grants.gov ticket/case number.
 - Send an email with the FON (EPA-G2024-STAR-D1) in the subject line to electronic-grant-submissions@epa.gov , including the following information:
 - i. Grants.gov ticket/case number(s)
 - ii. Description of the issue
 - iii. The entire application package in PDF format.
- You may resubmit an application before the deadline, but changes are not permitted after the solicitation period ends. If we see duplicates of the same application, we will process the most recent one
- If you are experiencing a natural disaster and cannot submit on time, please contact us immediately

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Questions?