

Grant Program Title: Community Change Grants Program

Funding Agency: Environmental Protection Agency

Award Amount: \$2 billion

Minimum: \$0

Maximum: \$20,000,000

Brief Description:

Established under the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA), the Environmental and Climate Justice Community Change Grants program (Community Change Grants) was provided \$2 billion to support environmental and climate justice activities in disadvantaged communities through projects that reduce pollution, increase climate resilience capacity, and aid in strengthening communities' ability to address environmental and climate justice challenges. The Community Change Grants program is part of the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Environmental and Climate Justice Program (ECJP) which is the largest national investment in environmental and climate justice to date. This program was designed with the intent to catalyze the transformative IRA investment to benefit communities that have been previously overlooked and most adversely impacted by climate change.

Eligibility:

Eligible applicants for this program include Community-Based Non-profit Organizations (CBO), Local Governments (in partnership with a CBO), Federally recognized Tribes (in partnership with a CBO), and Institutions of Higher Education (in partnership with a CBO). Additionally, this program requires a Statutory Partnership where one eligible entity (CBO, Local Governments, Federal Tribes, or Institutions of Higher Education) must serve as the Lead Applicant and enter into a Partnership Agreement with one Statutory Partner (CBO, Local Governments, Federal Tribes, or Institutions of Higher Education). To note, a CBO must either be the Lead Applicant or a Statutory Partner for the Statutory Partnership to be deemed eligible under this program. If an application is accepted for the award, the Lead Applicant would enter into a subaward with the Statutory Partner.

Eligible Project Types:

The projects proposed under the NOFO are required to address at least one Climate Action Strategy and at least one Pollution Reduction Strategy. An eligible entity may use a grant awarded under this NOFO for:

1. Community-led air and other pollution monitoring, prevention, and remediation, and investments in low and zero-emission and resilient technologies and related infrastructure and workforce development that help reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and other air pollutants.
2. Mitigating climate and health risks from urban heat islands, extreme heat, wood heater emissions, and wildfire events.
3. Climate resiliency and adaptation; and
4. Reducing indoor toxics and indoor air pollution; or

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5. Facilitating engagement of disadvantaged communities in state and federal advisory groups, workshops, rulemaking, and other public processes

Funding Tracks

EPA anticipates awarding approximately \$2 billion in funding through this NOFO, depending on funding availability, quality of applications received, EPA priorities, and other applicable considerations. EPA will consider applications under two separate tracks.

- **Track I applications – Community-Driven Investments for Change** will focus on multi-faceted applications with Climate Action and Pollution Reduction Strategies to meaningfully improve the environmental, climate, and resilience conditions affecting disadvantaged communities. Awards under Track I are expected to be \$10-20 million each and cannot exceed \$20 million. EPA expects to award approximately \$1.96 billion for approximately 150 Track I award, including those under the Target Investment Areas described in Section II.B.

- **Track II applications – Meaningful Engagement for Equitable Governance** will facilitate the engagement of disadvantaged communities in governmental processes to advance environmental and climate justice. Awards under Track II are expected to be \$1-3 million each and cannot exceed \$3 million. EPA will award approximately \$40 million for approximately 20 Track II awards.

CBO Definition and Examples

As defined in the Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO), in order for an organization to qualify as an eligible CBO for this program it must demonstrate that it is a “nonprofit organization” as defined in CFR 200.1, which “means any corporation, trust, association, cooperative, or other organization that is operated mainly for scientific, educational, service, charitable, or similar purpose in the public interest and is not organized primarily for profit; and uses net proceeds to maintain, improve, or expand the operation of the organization.”

In addition to being considered a nonprofit organization, an organization must demonstrate that they are a public or private nonprofit organization that supports and/or represents a community and/or certain populations within a community through engagement, education, and other related services provided to individual community residents and community stakeholders. A “community,” for these purposes, can be characterized by a particular geographic area and/or by the relationships among members with similar interests and can be characterized as part of a local, regional, or national community where organizations are focused on the needs of urban, rural, and/or Tribal areas, and other similar groups. For purposes of this NOFO, the CBO must have a geographic presence or connection in, or relationship with, the specified community that the projects are intended to benefit. For example, national or statewide CBOs must demonstrate the CBO’s connection to the community that will benefit from the grants.

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Match Funding Requirement: N/A

Application Open Date: June 5, 2024

Application Deadline: Nov 21, 2024

Period of Performance: The period of performance of every grant funded under this NOFO cannot by statute exceed three years. There can be no extensions.

Grant Program Link:

<https://www.epa.gov/inflation-reduction-act/inflation-reduction-act-community-change-grants-program#NOFO>

Program Contact Information

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