

AGENCY: U. S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY (EPA)
Office of Environmental Justice (OEJ)

TITLE: ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE SMALL GRANTS PROGRAM

ACTION: REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS (RFA)

TYPE: INITIAL ANNOUCEMENT

FUNDING OPPORTUNITY NO.: EPA-OP-OEJ-22-01

ASSISTANCE NO.: 66.604

DATES: ANNOUNCEMENT DATE: March 21, 2022
CLOSING DATE: May 20, 2022

DEADLINE: Application packages must be submitted by **May 20, 2022, at 11:59 PM (Eastern Time)** through Grants.gov. Applications received after the closing date and time will not be considered for funding.

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I. FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION

A. WORK TO BE FUNDED UNDER THIS RFA

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is working to improve the environment and public health conditions of tribal governments, low-income communities, and communities of color through the advancement of racial equity and environmental justice. This funding announcement supports the priorities detailed in President Biden’s [Executive Order 13985](#) titled *Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities Through the Federal Government* and [Executive Order 14008](#) titled *Tackling the Climate Crisis at Home and Abroad*.

\$1.6 million of American Rescue Plan (ARP) funds are now available to fund EJ Small Grants to federally recognized tribal governments to establish or modify public participation programs where fair treatment and meaningful participation priorities have been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. To be eligible for ARP funding, public participation programs must specifically address activities authorized by section 103(b) of the Clean Air Act (CAA; 42 U.S.C. 7403(b)) and/or section 1442 of the Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA; 42 U.S.C. 300j-1). **For this single funding announcement, EPA is limiting eligible applicants to federally recognized tribal governments only.** Applicants may request up to **\$100,000**. Approximately **16 to 20** EJ Small Grants will be awarded to federally recognized tribal governments nationwide.

Consistent with principles defined under the EPA Policy for the Administration of Environmental Programs on Indian Reservations and the EPA Policy on Environmental Justice for Working with Federally Recognized Tribes and Indigenous Peoples, EPA works with tribes to make decisions and carry out program responsibilities affecting tribal communities and the health and welfare of the populace, consistent with Agency standards and regulations.

EPA relies on tribal government partners for help identifying local environmental values as a cornerstone of EPA administered environmental protection programs. Tribal governments also require capacity to engage tribal members and other people impacted by the Tribe's environmental management program. This funding announcement includes costs associated with integrating environmental justice principles into tribal environmental protection program operations, including procedures to assure fair treatment and meaningful involvement of tribal members and others living in areas affected by the tribal program. EPA assists federally recognized tribes in building capacity to establish public participation, community involvement, education, and communication systems to engage with tribal members and others living in areas affected by the tribal program and to conduct their own environmental justice analysis.

This Environmental Justice Small Grants (EJSG) opportunity provides funding directly to eligible federally recognized tribal governments for projects that help residents of tribal communities understand, address and participate in local environmental and public health issues. In general, the EJSG program awards grants that support *community-driven* projects designed to engage, educate, and empower communities to better understand and address local environmental and public health issues. Community-driven projects are projects that include activities where community residents and/or representatives are integrally involved in the thinking behind and execution of those activities.

B. DEFINITION OF ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) defines “environmental justice” as the *fair treatment* and *meaningful involvement* of all people regardless of race, color, national origin or income with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies. *Fair treatment* means that no one group of people, including racial, ethnic, or socioeconomic groups, should bear a disproportionate share of the negative environmental consequences resulting from industrial, municipal, and commercial operations or the execution of federal, state, local, and tribal environmental programs and policies.

Meaningful involvement means that: (1) potentially affected community residents have an appropriate opportunity to participate in decisions about a proposed activity that will affect their environment and/or health; (2) the public's contribution can influence the regulatory agency's

decision; (3) the concerns of all participants involved will be considered in the decision-making process; and (4) the decision-makers seek out and facilitate the involvement of those potentially affected.

C. BACKGROUND

EPA's Office of Environmental Justice (OEJ) established the Environmental Justice Small Grants (EJSG) Program in fiscal year (FY) 1994. The purpose of this grant program is to support communities dealing with environmental justice concerns through projects designed to engage, educate, and empower these communities to better understand environmental and public health issues and to identify ways to address these issues at the local level. To address priorities of the American Rescue Plan (ARP), this single funding opportunity has been limited to federally recognized tribal governments to establish or modify public participation programs where fair treatment and meaningful participation priorities have been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

EJSG Program Goals: The immediate goals of the EJSG program are to support underserved communities through some of the initial steps of understanding, addressing, and developing solutions to local environmental and public health issues. Long-term, the EJSG program seeks to help build the overall capacity of communities with environmental justice concerns and help them create self-sustaining, community-based partnerships that will continue to improve local environments in the future. Additionally, the EJSG program is structured to be one of the more accessible federal grant programs, especially for community-based organizations who are unfamiliar with the federal grants process to strengthen their participation in the federal grant application process and build sustainable projects that continue after the award project period.

Tribal Governments and Public Participation: EPA and tribal governments each have a major role in protecting public health and the environment. At the federal level, the EPA enforces federal laws that protect the environment and establishes rules and regulations to enforce those laws. The 1984 EPA Policy for the Administration of Environmental Programs on Indian Reservations¹ recognizes tribal governments as the primary government for making decisions and carrying out program responsibilities affecting Indian reservations, their environments, and the health and welfare of the reservation populace. Furthermore, the EPA Policy on Environmental Justice for Working with Federally Recognized Tribes and Indigenous Peoples² promotes environmental justice principles in tribal environmental protection programs as follows:

- The EPA recognizes the right of the tribal governments to self-determination and acknowledges the federal government's trust responsibility to federally recognized tribes, based on the U.S. Constitution, treaties, statutes, executive orders, and court decisions.
- The EPA provides advice and recommendations to federally recognized tribes supporting the integration of environmental justice principles and programs into tribal government programs, policies, and activities, including procedures designed to ensure fair treatment

¹ <https://www.epa.gov/sites/default/files/2015-04/documents/indian-policy-84.pdf>

² <https://www.epa.gov/environmentaljustice/epa-policy-environmental-justice-working-federally-recognized-tribes-and>

and meaningful involvement of both tribal members and others living in areas affected by the tribal program.

- The EPA assists federally recognized tribes in building capacity to establish public participation, community involvement, education, and communication systems to engage with tribal members and others living in areas affected by the tribal program and to conduct their own environmental justice analysis.

Tribal governments may act as co-regulators with EPA or may implement authorized, approved or delegated EPA programs, where applicable³, including those that require public involvement opportunities. Similarly, many tribal governments may administer tribal environmental programs that benefit from public participation in the decision-making process. Environmental functions with community involvement requirements typically include the National Environmental Policy Act, permitting actions, rulemaking, cleanup and redevelopment, and compliance and enforcement activities.

Public participation can be any process that directly engages the public in decision-making and gives full consideration to public input in making that decision. Public participation is a process, not a single event. It consists of a series of activities and actions by a sponsor agency over the full lifespan of a project to both inform the public and obtain input from them. Public participation contributes to better decisions because decision-makers have more complete information – in the form of additional facts, values, and perspectives obtained through public input – to bring to bear on the decision process. Decision-makers can then incorporate the best information and expertise of all stakeholders. Decisions are more implementable and sustainable because the decision considers the needs and interests of all stakeholders including vulnerable and overburdened communities, and stakeholders better understand and are more invested in the outcomes.

Different forms that public participation might take include: (1) informing the public by providing information to help them understand the issues, options, and solutions; (2) consulting with the public to obtain their feedback on alternatives or decisions; (3) involving the public to ensure their concerns are considered throughout the decision process, particularly in the development of decision criteria and options; (4) collaborating with the public to develop decision criteria and alternatives and identify the preferred solution; and (5) empowering the public by placing final decision-making authority in their hands.

As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, many tribal, state, local, and federal government public participation processes have been disrupted by the inability to convene community meetings in public forums. This may be particularly true for tribal governments. According to the Indian Health Services, the COVID-19 pandemic has disproportionately affected tribal populations across the country. American Indian and Alaska Native populations have infection rates over 3.5 times higher than non-Hispanic whites, are over four times more likely to be hospitalized as a result of COVID-19 and have higher rates of mortality at younger ages than non-Hispanic whites⁴. Additionally, many tribal communities are in rural locations where access to broadband, technology, and native speakers may be limited. This, combined with the traditional ecological knowledge and communications practices of many tribal communities, creates unique public participation considerations. This funding opportunity is available to Federally recognized tribal

³ <https://www.epa.gov/tribal/tribal-assumption-federal-laws-treatment-state-tas>

⁴ <https://www.ihs.gov/coronavirus/>

governments to establish and or modify public participation programs to address COVID-19 impacts.

For more information on public participation programs, see:

- <https://www.epa.gov/system/files/documents/2021-08/powerpoint-meaningful-public-part-web-final.pdf>
- <https://www.epa.gov/international-cooperation/public-participation-guide>
- <https://www.epa.gov/sites/default/files/2015-02/documents/ips-final-report.pdf>

To find the latest information about the EJSG program visit the following link:

<https://www.epa.gov/environmentaljustice/environmental-justice-small-grants-program>

Full Project Summaries of past projects dating back to the year 2000 are available at the following link: <https://www.epa.gov/environmentaljustice/environmental-justice-small-grants-program#GrantRecipients>

All projects considered for funding under this announcement must include a workplan. All workplans should include strategies for: 1) establishing or modifying public participation programs, 2) addressing local environmental and public health issues, 3) educating and empowering the community about environmental issues, and 4) approaches to building consensus and setting community priorities through public participation programs

EJ Grantee Training Workshop - All recipients will be required to attend an EJ Grantee Networking and Training Workshop to be hosted by EPA. Depending on local COVID-19 recommendations, the workshop may be virtual and/or in-person. The national networking workshop is designed to: 1) connect grant recipients, 2) assist recipients with strategic planning for their communities, with particular focus on public participation programs, and 3) provide general project management and federal grant guidance. Additionally, recipients are encouraged, but not required, to participate in the EJ webinar series⁵ to discuss project results and share lessons learned with other tribal communities.

D. QUALIFIED ENVIRONMENTAL STATUTES

ARP funding is limited to activities authorized by section 103(b) of the Clean Air Act (CAA; 42 U.S.C. 7403(b)) and section 1442 of the Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA; 42 U.S.C. 300j-1). For this reason, in order to be eligible under this announcement, each project must include activities related to **at least one** of the following federal environmental statutes. Public participation programs may address other environmental programs or a broad spectrum of programs, as long as at least one of the required statutes is included. **Any failure to clearly and conclusively identify and cite at least one of the federal statutes in your workplan will result in your project not being considered for award.**

- 1. Clean Air Act, Section 103(b)(3):** conduct research, investigations, experiments, demonstration projects, surveys, and studies (including monitoring) related to the

⁵ The [EJ webinar series](#) for tribes and indigenous peoples seeks to enhance EJ integration, build capacity, raise awareness of EPA and other federal programs and resources, and provide technical assistance to tribes and indigenous peoples on priority environmental, public health, and other EJ concerns

causes, effects (including health and welfare effects), extent, prevention, and control of air pollution.

- 2. Safe Drinking Water Act, Section 1442:** develop and expand the capability to carry out a program (that may combine training, education, and employment) for occupations relating to the public health aspects of providing safe drinking water.

NOTE: EJ grant activities must relate to gathering or transferring information or advancing awareness. Applications should emphasize this “learning” concept, rather than trying to “fix” an environmental problem using a well-established method. Examples of unacceptable grant applications involve performing large-scale clean-ups, treatments, routine recycling services, and major disposal and/or energy recovery projects.

For projects that will support *demonstration* activities, the project must involve new or experimental technologies, methods, or approaches; where the results of the project will be shared so that others can benefit from the knowledge gained. A project that is accomplished through the performance of routine, traditional, or well-established practices, or a project that is simply intended to carry out a task rather than transfer information or advance the state of knowledge, however worthwhile the project might be, is not a demonstration. The applicant must clearly explain in the application how the technologies, methods, or approaches used are new or experimental and how the project otherwise meets the requirements of a demonstration as described in this RFA. If your project uses technologies, methods or approaches that have been used previously in other geographic areas and/or business sectors, then your application must include an explanation as to how your demonstration project is different from such prior projects and is a true demonstration. You must also explain what will be learned from the demonstration project and how information regarding the results of the project will be disseminated to interested stakeholders who may be able to replicate the techniques that have been demonstrated. If your project is truly a demonstration and complies with other eligibility factors, then it will be considered for funding. *Remember, your project doesn't have to include demonstration activities. But if it does, then those activities must comply with the details listed above.*

E.EPA STRATEGIC PLAN/EXECUTIVE ORDER LINKAGE & ANTICIPATED OUTPUTS, OUTCOMES & PERFORMANCE MEASURES:

This announcement supports key priorities of the Biden-Harris Administration as detailed in [Executive Order 13985](#) signed by President Biden on January 20, 2021 titled, *Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities Through the Federal Government*, and [Executive Order 14008](#) signed by President Biden on January 27, 2021 titled *Tackling the Climate Crisis at Home and Abroad*. Specifically, the projects selected under this announcement will support the federal government's efforts to advance racial equity, address health outcome disparities, and support underserved communities.

In addition, pursuant to Section 6a of EPA Order 5700.7, “Environmental Results under EPA Assistance Agreements,” (see <https://www.epa.gov/grants/epa-order-57007a1-epas-policy-environmental-results-under-epa-assistance-agreements>). EPA must link assistance agreements to the Agency's Strategic Plan.

EPA's Draft Strategic Plan 2022- 2026 is available at <https://www.epa.gov/planandbudget/strategicplan>. The activities funded under this

announcement support Goal 2, Take Decisive Action to Advance Environmental Justice and Civil Rights, Objective 2.1, Promote Environmental Justice and Civil Rights at the Federal, Tribal, State, and Local Levels of the [Draft Plan](#):

- EPA’s Draft Strategic Plan 2022 - 2026 Goal 2 (Take Decisive Action to Advance Environmental Justice and Civil Rights); Objective 2.1 (Promote Environmental Justice and Civil Rights at the Federal, Tribal, State, and Local Levels) which states: *“Building Community Capacity and Climate Resilience and Maximizing Benefits to Overburdened and Underserved Communities: EPA will increase support for community-led action by providing unprecedented investments and benefits directly to communities with environmental justice concerns and by integrating equity throughout Agency programs.”*

Applicants should explain in their application how their project will further the first strategy of Goal 2; Objective 2.1 of the Draft Strategic Plan. (*Building Community Capacity and Climate Resilience and Maximizing Benefits to Overburdened and Underserved Communities*).

EPA Order 5700.7 also requires that grant applicants adequately describe environmental outputs and outcomes to be achieved under assistance agreements. Applicants must include specific statements describing the environmental results of the proposed project in terms of well-defined outputs and, to the maximum extent practicable, well-defined outcomes that will demonstrate how the project will contribute to the goals and objectives described above.

1. Outputs (Evaluation Criteria, Section V.A) The term “output” means an environmental activity, effort, and/or associated work product related to an environmental goal and objective that will be produced or provided over a period of time or by a specified date. Outputs may be quantitative or qualitative but must be measurable during an assistance agreement funding period. Examples of some expected outputs from funded project(s) may include the following:

- A survey tool for collecting input from residents for a community assessment of environmental/public health hazards.
- The number of resident participants in a survey to identify and prioritize ways to improve the Tribe’s public participation program.
- A study into the feasibility of creating a public participation program that addresses lessons learned from COVID-19 impacts to communications.
- Results of a focus group piloting a technology-based approach, including content and reach.
- Revised tribal participation program with fair treatment and meaningful participation priorities.

2. Outcomes (Evaluation Criteria, Section V.A.) The term “outcome” means the result, effect or consequence that will occur from carrying out an environmental program or activity that relates to an environmental or programmatic goal or objective. Outcomes may be environmental, behavioral, health-related, or programmatic in nature; must be quantitative; and may not necessarily be achievable within an assistance agreement funding period. Additionally, outcomes should be organized by expected time period (short-term, intermediate, and long-term). Short-term outcomes refer to changes in knowledge or attitudes and usually occur during the project period. Intermediate outcomes refer to changes in behaviors and actions due to the knowledge acquired and are usually measured within several months after the end of the project. Long-term

outcomes refer to changes in conditions and are measured a year or several years after project completion. Short-term, intermediate, and long-term outcomes are related and build on one another. EPA encourages recipients to identify outcomes wherever possible because they lead to environmental and/or public health improvement more clearly than outputs. Here are examples of possible outcomes:

1. **Short-term** (change in knowledge) - Increase in number of residents that know about the opportunity for establishing or modifying the Tribe's public participation program (during project)
 2. **Intermediate** (change in behavior) - Increase opportunities for the community to provide input on the Tribe's environmental decision-making processes (6 - 12 months after project)
 3. **Intermediate** (change in behavior) – Increase in number of residents participating in the Tribe's public participation process
 4. **Long-term** (change in conditions) – Improved environment and public health as a result of community engagement in the Tribe's environmental decision-making processes (2+ years after project)
- 3. Performance Measurement Plan (Evaluation Criteria, Section V.A.)** Applicants should describe how they plan to track and monitor their project performance and progress throughout the project period. Outputs and outcomes are critical components of an applicant's overall plan for measuring their project's performance. An applicant will be evaluated on the quality of their overall performance measurement plan including the proposed outputs, outcomes, and associated timeframes for achieving those results. Generally, higher quality performance measurement plans include specific target metrics where possible for both outputs and outcomes. An applicant's performance measurement plan will help gather insights, will be the mechanism to track successful progress, output and outcome strategies, and will provide the basis for developing lessons learned to inform future recipients.

The following questions are also useful to consider when developing output and outcome measures of quantitative and qualitative results:

1. What are the measurable short term and longer term results the project will achieve?
2. How does the project measure progress in achieving the expected results (including outputs and outcomes) and how will the approach use resources effectively and efficiently?
4. Are the projected outputs and outcomes specific and detailed? Are specific target measures included where possible? Are target measures reasonable and achievable within the project period and for the funding amount?

F. ADDITIONAL PROVISIONS FOR APPLICANTS INCORPORATED INTO THE ANNOUNCEMENT- Additional provisions that apply to sections III, IV, V, and VI of this announcement and/or awards made under this announcement, can be found at [EPA](#)

[Announcement Clauses](#). These provisions are important for applying to this announcement and applicants must review them when preparing applications for this announcement. If you are unable to access these provisions electronically at the website above, please contact the EPA point of contact listed in this announcement (usually in Section VII) to obtain the provisions.

II. AWARD INFORMATION ([back to Contents by Section](#))

A. FUNDING AVAILABILITY AND PROJECT PERIOD

This opportunity includes \$1.6 million from the American Rescue Plan (ARP) to fund activities specifically under the Clean Air Act, section 103(b)(3) and/or the Safe Drinking Water Act, section 1442(c)(3). The ARP funds in this RFA are made available to address public participation programs for tribal communities where fair treatment and meaningful participation priorities have been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. All awards under this RFA are for one-year projects; requests for no-cost extensions will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

B. NUMBER OF ANTICIPATED AWARDS AND START DATES

It is anticipated that grants will be funded under this announcement. EPA anticipates awarding approximately 16 to 20 grants to tribal governments nationwide in amounts of up to \$100,000 per award. Applicants should plan for projects to begin on October 1, 2022. All awards are subject to the availability of funds, the quality of the applications submitted, and other applicable considerations.

In appropriate circumstances, EPA reserves the right to partially fund applications by funding discrete portions of the proposed projects. If EPA decides to partially fund an application, it will do so in a manner that does not prejudice any applicant or affect the basis upon which the application was evaluated and selected for award, thereby maintaining the integrity of the competition and selection process.

EPA reserves the right to increase or decrease the total number of grants awarded or reject all applications and make no awards under this announcement. Such changes may be necessary as a response to the quality of applications received by EPA or the amount of funds available.

If additional funding becomes available after the original selections are made, EPA reserves the right to make additional awards under this announcement consistent with Agency policy and guidance. Any additional selections for awards will be made no later than six months after the original selections decisions. Awards may be fully or incrementally funded, as appropriate, based on funding availability, satisfactory performance, and other applicable considerations.

Note - prior to naming a contractor (including consultants) or subrecipient in your application as a “partner”, please carefully review Section IV.d, “Contracts and Subawards” of EPA’s Announcement Clauses that are incorporated by reference in Section VI.B of this announcement.

III. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION ([back to Contents by Section](#))

Note: Additional provisions that apply to this section can be found at [EPA Announcement Clauses](#).

A. Eligible Applicants

Eligible applicants for this funding opportunity have been limited to the following:

- Federally recognized tribal governments.

NOTE - EPA has limited the Environmental Justice Small Grants (EJSG) Program, Assistance Listing 66.604, competitive grant opportunity to federally recognized tribal governments for this single announcement, FON EPA-OP-OEJ-22-01. This RFA provides funding opportunities to federally recognized tribal governments under the ARP. Future EJSG competitions will be open to the normal range of eligible entities.

The following entities are **INELIGIBLE** to receive an award, but applicants may partner with these organizations, as appropriate (see [Contracts and Subawards announcement clause](#) referenced in Section IV of EPA's Announcement Clauses), for technical assistance:

- Incorporated non-profit organizations;
- state recognized tribes;
- intertribal consortia;
- US territories;
- Freely Associated States (FAS);
- colleges and universities;
- hospitals;
- for-profit businesses;
- state and local governments and their entities;
- quasi-governmental entities (e.g., water districts, utilities);⁶
- national organizations and chapters of the aforementioned organizations⁷;
- non-profit organizations exempt from taxation under section 501(c)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code supporting lobbying activities as defined in Section 3 of the Lobbying Disclosure Act of 1995; and⁸
- International organizations and chapters of the aforementioned organizations
- Individuals

⁶ Generally, a quasi-governmental entity is one that: (1) has a close association with the government agency, but is not considered a part of the government agency; (2) was created by the government agency, but is exempt from certain legal and administrative requirements imposed on government agencies; or (3) was not created by the government agency but performs a public purpose and is significantly supported financially by the government agency.

⁷ National organizations are defined as comprising of one centralized headquarters or principal place of business that creates and controls the mission, structure and work carried out by its chapters or affiliates.

⁸ Funds awarded under this announcement may not be used to support lobbying activities or any activities related to lobbying or the appearance thereof. **Subawards made to 501(c)(4) nonprofit organizations that lobby are not allowed.**

B. COST-SHARING OR MATCHING FUNDS

No cost-sharing or matching is required as a condition of eligibility under this competition.

C. THRESHOLD ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

These are requirements that, if not met by the time of application submission, will result in elimination of the application from consideration for funding. Only applications from eligible entities (Section III.A) that meet all of these criteria will be evaluated against the ranking factors in Section V. Applicants deemed ineligible for funding consideration as a result of the threshold eligibility review will be notified within 15 calendar days of the ineligibility determination.

1. Applications must substantially comply with the application submission instructions and requirements set forth in Section IV of this announcement or else they will be rejected. However, where a page limit is expressed in Section IV with respect to the application or parts thereof, pages in excess of the page limitation will not be reviewed. In addition, initial applications **must be submitted through [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) as stated in Section IV of this announcement (except in the limited circumstances where another mode of submission is specifically allowed for, as explained in Section IV)** on or before the application submission deadline published in Section IV of this announcement. Applicants are responsible for following the submission instructions in Section IV of this announcement to ensure that their application is timely submitted.
2. Applications submitted after the submission deadline will be considered late and deemed ineligible without further consideration unless the applicant can clearly demonstrate that it was late due to EPA mishandling or because of technical problems associated with [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) or relevant [SAM.gov](https://www.sam.gov) system issues. **An applicant's failure to submit their application through [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) because they did not timely or properly register in [SAM.gov](https://www.sam.gov) and [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) will not be considered an acceptable reason to consider a late submission.**
DO NOT WAIT! Register in SAM.gov and Grants.gov as soon as possible. Finalizing these registrations could take a month or more. You do not want a late registration to prevent you from being able to properly and timely submit your application through Grants.gov. Applicants should confirm receipt of their application with Sarah Frederick, Frederick.Sarah@epa.gov, as soon as possible —failure to do so may result in your application not being reviewed.
3. Qualified Environmental Statutes: Projects must include activities related to at least one of the Qualified Environmental Statutes listed under Section I.C. A project workplan must explain how it is tied to the local environmental and/or public health issue in the underserved community. Any failure to clearly and conclusively identify and cite at least one of the federal statutes in your workplan will result in your project not being considered for award.

4. **Workplan:** All projects considered for funding under this announcement must include a workplan. All workplans should include strategies for: 1) establishing or modifying public participation programs, 2) addressing local environmental and public health issues, 3) educating and empowering the community about environmental issues, and 4) approaches to building consensus and setting community priorities through public participation programs

5. **Ineligible activities:** Projects must not be used for the following purposes:
 - **Construction**
 - **Lobbying**
 - **Routine program implementation** (e.g., funding of the same program, without changes or advancements, that has existed and been routinely available for multiple consecutive years),
 - **Implementation of routine environmental protection restoration measures** (e.g., municipal curbside trash service, recycling or community cleanup projects that do not qualify as training or demonstrations)
 - **Duplication of work performed under a prior EPA grant, and**
 - **Completion of work which was to have been completed under a prior EPA grant.**

If an application is submitted that includes any ineligible tasks or activities that portion of the application will be ineligible for funding and may, depending on the extent to which it affects the application, render the entire application ineligible for funding.

6. **Multiple Applications:** Applicants may submit only one application under this announcement. If an applicant submits more than one, then they will be contacted by EPA prior to the evaluation process to determine which one to withdraw. However, an applicant organization may be a partner on an application from another organization.

7. Please note that applications must be written in English only. Applications written in languages other than English will be deemed ineligible for funding.

8. As detailed in Section I.C, ARP funded awards must be for projects to address health outcome disparities from pollution and the COVID–19 pandemic that identify and address disproportionate environmental or public health harms and risks in minority populations or low-income populations. Specifically, funded projects must establish effective public participation programs that provide fair treatment and meaningful involvement for all people living in tribal communities disproportionately impacted by regulated pollution sources.

IV. APPLICATION & SUBMISSION INFORMATION ([back to Contents by Section](#))

Note: Additional provisions that apply to this section can be found at [EPA Announcement Clauses](#).

A. CONTENT AND FORM OF APPLICATION SUBMISSION

All applications must be submitted electronically through www.grants.gov. Applications transmitted via postal mail, fax, and/or email will not be considered. Applications are due **May 20, 2022**, at **11:59 PM (ET)**.

REQUIRED FORMS & DOCUMENTS: The following forms and documents are **required**. Failure to include all documents listed below may result in your application being rendered ineligible:

- 1) **Standard Grants.gov Application Forms** (the Grants.gov system will make you fill out these documents automatically):
 - Standard Form 424, *Application for Federal Assistance*
 - Standard Form 424A, *Budget Information for Non-Construction Programs*
 - EPA Form 4700-4, *Pre-award Compliance Review Report for All Applicants and Recipients Requesting EPA Financial Assistance*
 - EPA Form 5700-54, *Key Contacts Form* - Applicants are encouraged to ensure that information presented in the Key Contacts form is accurate. Information provided in the Key Contacts form may be used to reach the applicant in the event additional information is required and for notifying the applicant of their selection status.
- 2) **Project Narrative Attachment Form** - Use this form to submit your Project Workplan (Applicants are encouraged to use the optional template (i.e., the green section) provided in Section IV.A.2)
- 3) **Other Attachments Form:**
 - i. **Itemized Budget Sheet** (See optional template in Appendix B)
 - ii. **Resumes of the Project Manager (PM) and other key personnel**

It is strongly advised that applicants organize their applications in the order presented above when submitting through Grants.gov. This will facilitate review and scoring of your application. The following is a detailed description of all the required forms and documents:

1) STANDARD GRANTS.GOV APPLICATION FORMS: The SF-424 forms, EPA 4700-4 form and Key Contacts form are all official forms required for all EPA grants and cooperative agreements. These forms are required when submitting any EPA grant application through (<http://www.Grants.gov>). The forms request basic information about your organization and proposed project. To complete the forms, applicants must provide a SAM-issued Unique Entity Identifier (UEI). Applicants must use their UEI, not their DUNS number, when filling out forms in the package for this funding opportunity. Please see [RAIN-2021-G01](#) for information about EPA's implementation of the upcoming Government-wide transition from DUNS to UEI. Please note that until April 4, 2022, applicant organizations registering for the first time in SAM.gov will need a DUNS number.

2) WORKPLAN (Optional Workplan Template below): The workplan is the most important part of the application package. The workplan describes the project. Workplans

that are focused and succinct are stronger than ones that try to address too many issues. Under this announcement, applicants must submit a project focused on activities related to **at least** one Qualified Environmental Statute, as described in Section I.C. Types of eligible activities are those described within the Qualified Environmental Statutes section, as discussed in Section I.C of this announcement. Applicants should identify the chosen Qualified Environmental Statute in the Summary Page. The workplan, as described below, must not exceed eleven (11), single-spaced typewritten pages and be on letter size pages (8 1/2 X 11 inches). Any pages beyond eleven (11) pages will not be read by the Review Panel. It is recommended that applicants use a standard font (e.g., Times New Roman, Calibri, and Arial) and a 12-point font size with 1-inch margins. While these guidelines establish the minimum type size requirements, applicants are advised that readability is of paramount importance and should take precedence in selection of an appropriate font for use in the application. Supporting materials, such as resumes and partnership letters, can be submitted as attachments and are not included in the 11-page limit.

The following optional workplan template may be helpful when drafting the workplan:

Optional Workplan Template

The 11-page workplan must contain the following components (items 1.0-6.0 below) and should be identified by the headings in the order listed below. Also ensure that the workplan addresses all the evaluation criteria in Section V and any necessary threshold eligibility criteria in Section III.

1.0 PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

- a. Project Summary Page** – Recommended one-page summary document (**this page counts as part of 11-page workplan limit**). Include the following information on your summary page:
- Project Title
 - Project Location (including community, city, state, and zip code)
 - Applicant Information (name, address, main contact information)
 - Which Environmental Statute(s) your project qualifies for
 - Project Type(s) -- such as planning, process development, training, monitoring, demonstration, public education (related to statute(s) identified above)
 - List of Project Partners (if applicable)
 - Project Abstract -- Brief description (250 words or less) of the main objective, activities, and outputs/outcomes of the project, including the specific geographic areas of focus.
 - Whether you will need to develop a Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP) for your project (see Appendix C)
- b. Environmental and Public Health information of the Community** - applicants will be evaluated on their ability to clearly describe the local environmental justice issue(s) the project proposes to address. This should include description of the community that is impacted, the impact of COVID-19 on the Tribe's public participation programs and how the Tribe will address those COVID-19 impacts through establishment or modification of its public participation program.

Please describe the following:

- Describe and characterize the local community (or communities) the Tribe will engage. Describe how the community is disproportionately impacted by environmental and/or public health concerns (i.e., Who is the community comprised of and what are the disproportionate environmental and/or public health issues they experience?).
- How has COVID-19 impacted the Tribe's ability to implement public participation processes and receive input from the affected community on environmental decision-making?
- What are the local environmental/public health-related public participation issues that your project seeks to address?
- What are the local environmental/public health results the project seeks to achieve and **how** will the community benefit from those results?

NOTE: The application must include relevant information such as demographics, geographic location, and community history. We strongly encourage the use of EPA's [EJSCREEN](https://www.epa.gov/ejscreen) tool (or other EJ-based mapping tool) to help you characterize and describe your target community. Data from other sources (e.g., studies, census, and third-party reports) should also be included to give a more complete picture of the impacted communities and populations. **If scientific data is limited for a particular community, then applicants can include first-person accounts and/or a community's impressions of the environmental and/or public health issues impacting their communities.** Instructions and resources on how to use EJSCREEN (<https://www.epa.gov/ejscreen>). For any questions you have about EJSCREEN, please contact Tai Lung at Lung.Tai@epa.gov or 202-566-1296.

c. Public Participation Elements – applicants will be evaluated on their ability to clearly describe how the proposed public participation program incorporates successful public participation elements, including:

- How is the public participation process designed to meaningfully engage the community? What barriers have been removed to allow all members of the community to engage? Does the community have the background knowledge on the disproportionate environmental and/or public health issues to provide input? If not, describe how that knowledge would be effectively shared. Are cross-cultural formats and exchanges available?
- How does the public participation process recognize and incorporate Indigenous Tribal Ecological Knowledge (TEK) if offered by a tribal elder or knowledge holder? Given the sensitivity of some TEK, how would this knowledge be appropriately handled?
- Does the public participation include transparency in the process? Are goals, expectations, and limitations of the public participation process clearly articulated?
- How will the Tribe institutionalize the process so it continues over time?
- How will the Tribe evaluate its public participation program for effectiveness and continued improvement?

d. Project Linkages - applicants will be evaluated on their ability to clearly describe how the proposed public participation program incorporates supports strategies in EPA Draft Strategic Plan Goal 2 and is related to qualified environmental statutes and programs with EPA approval, authorization, or delegation:

Please describe the following:

- Briefly** describe how the project supports strategies in EPA Draft Strategic Plan Goal 2, Objective 2.1 (*Building Community Capacity and Climate Resilience and Maximizing Benefits to Overburdened and Underserved Communities*).
<https://www.epa.gov/planandbudget/strategicplan>
- Describe how the project is related to the qualified environmental statutes identified in your Project Summary. Please note each project must include activities that are authorized by at least one of the Qualified Environmental statutes listed in Section I.D.
- Identify whether the project is related to a program for which EPA has approved, authorized or delegated program administration responsibilities to the Tribe (i.e., treatment as a state (TAS)).

2.0 Project Activities / Milestone Schedule / Detailed Budget Narrative

Please describe the following:

- a. Project Activities – Provide a clear description of the steps the applicant will take to meet the program objectives and execute the project. Provide clear descriptions and details for each project activity or component **and** the anticipated products/results associated with each activity.
- b. Milestone Schedule – Include a clearly articulated/organized milestone schedule, detailing timeframes and major milestones to complete significant project activities. It is recommended that you insert a table in your workplan narrative to help organize your milestone schedule. Your milestone schedule should support and/or supplement the clear descriptions you provide in the Project Activities section.
- c. Itemized Budget Sheet - Clearly explain how EPA funds will be used. This document will supplement the budget information you provide in your SF-424A Form. Applicants must itemize costs into the following budget categories: personnel, fringe benefits, contractual costs, travel, equipment, supplies, other direct costs, indirect costs, and total costs. Describe itemized costs in sufficient detail for EPA to determine the reasonableness and allowability of costs for each workplan component/activity. *Applicants are permitted to attach the itemized budget sheet as an “Other Attachment” to their application so the sheet will not count against the 11-page workplan limit.*

3.0 Environmental Results – Outputs, Outcomes, Tracking and Sustainability

Please describe the following:

- a. Environmental Results-Outputs/Outcomes - Applicants will be evaluated on the quality of the expected project outputs and outcomes identified in the application for their project. The expected outputs and outcomes should be effective in achieving the Program Objectives listed in Section I. public participation, community involvement, education, and communication systems to engage with tribal members and others

living in areas affected by the tribal program to assure fair treatment and meaningful involvement.

- b. Performance Measurement Plan – Applicants should describe how they plan to track and monitor their project performance and progress throughout the project period. Applicants will be evaluated on the extent and quality to which the application demonstrates a sound plan for tracking progress towards achieving the expected outputs, outcomes, and associated timeframes for achieving those results.

When developing performance measures, please list and describe the following:

- Resources/Inputs:** Identify which resources the Tribe and its partners are putting forward to further the project goals. Resources may include but are not limited to staff time, in-kind contributions, monetary contributions, etc.
- Activities:** What activities will the Tribe and its partners conduct under your workplan?
- Outputs and Outcomes:** Describe the outputs and outcomes that will result from the project (potential outputs and outcomes are listed in Section I.D).

When developing performance measures for all projects, it is also important to consider the following:

- What are the measurable short term and longer term results the project will achieve?
 - How will my project measure progress in achieving the expected results (including outputs and outcomes) and how will the approach use resources effectively and efficiently?
 - Are the projected outputs and outcomes specific and detailed? Did I include specific target measures where possible? Are my target measures reasonable and achievable within the project period and for the funding amount?
- c. Sustainability Plan – Describe how the public participation process improvements and innovations developed during the proposed project will be implemented and continued following the completion of the 1-year grant project. You should include details about current work and initiatives in the community, whether additional resources are needed to sustain and implement the proposed public participation process improvements, and how the community has a vested interest in sustaining the project’s momentum on into the future.

4.0 Programmatic Capability

Please describe the following:

- a. Organizational Experience for timely and successfully achieving the objectives of the proposed project.
- b. Staff Experience / Qualifications of Project Manager (PM) - Provide information that clearly demonstrates that the proposed PM and other staff associated with the project are qualified to perform the project successfully. This will be determined through the description of the following:

- How the PM and associated staff are qualified to undertake the project successfully.
 - Illustrating the PM's ties/historical connection to the tribal community, including detailed descriptions of any activities that the PM has worked on with the community and/or Tribe.
- c. Expenditure of Awarded Grant Funds - Applicants will be evaluated based on their approach, procedures, and controls for ensuring that awarded grant funds will be expended in a timely and efficient manner.

5.0 Past Performance

Submit a list of federally and/or non-federally funded assistance agreements (assistance agreements include grants and cooperative agreements but not contracts) similar in size, scope and relevance to the proposed project that your organization performed within the last three years (no more than 5 agreements, and preferably EPA agreements) and describe:

- i. whether, and how, you were able to successfully complete and manage those agreements and
- ii. your history of meeting the reporting requirements under those agreements including whether you adequately and timely reported on your progress towards achieving the expected outputs and outcomes of those agreements (and if not, explain why not) and whether you submitted acceptable final technical reports under the agreements.

In evaluating applicants under the past performance factor(s) in Section V, EPA will consider the information provided by the applicant and may also consider relevant information from other sources, including information from EPA files and from current/prior grantors (e.g., to verify and/or supplement the information provided by the applicant). If your organization does **not** have any relevant or available past performance or reporting information please state this explicitly in your application (e.g., *Our organization has no past grants experience.*) Including this statement will ensure you receive a neutral score for these factors (a neutral score is half of the total points available in a subset of possible points). **Failure to include this statement may result in your** receiving a score of 0 for these factors.

6.0 Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP) Information

Please describe the following:

- Indicate whether you believe that your project will involve the use of existing environmental data or the collection of new data (use the checklist in Appendix C to assist you in making this determination). For more information about Quality Assurance Project Plans, please consult the following website <http://www.epa.gov/quality/qs-docs/g5-final.pdf>.

You are not required to develop a QAPP at the time of application. Applicants are only being asked to determine whether or not a QAPP is required should your project be selected for funding. If required, then an approved QAPP must be in place *prior* to the initiation of project activities.

3) Itemized Budget Sheet (Optional template available in Appendix B): Provide a detailed budget and estimated funding amount for each project component/activity. Identify the requested federal dollars. Applicants should budget for up to \$100,000 of EPA funding (keep in mind that EPA reserves the right to partially fund applications by funding discrete portions of the proposed projects). Clearly explain how EPA funds will be used. Applicants must itemize costs related to personnel, fringe benefits, contractual costs, travel, equipment, supplies, other direct costs, indirect costs, and total costs. All subaward funding should be located under the “other” category. This section provides an opportunity for narrative description of the budget or aspects of the budget such as “other” and contractual. Provide itemized costs with sufficient detail for EPA to determine the reasonableness and allowability of costs for each workplan component/activity. **Where necessary, your itemized budget sheet should include a budget narrative to make it clear how you determined/calculated the costs for each budget category.**

In accordance with 2 CFR 200.414(f), recipients that do not have a current negotiated IDC rate under 10% are eligible for a de minimis rate of 10% of modified total direct costs for all Federal awards. Please see EPA’s IDC Policy: <https://www.epa.gov/sites/default/files/2021-04/documents/indirect-cost-policy-for-recipients-of-epa-assistance-agreements.pdf> for full details.

Total estimated costs in the itemized budget sheet should reflect federal funding only.

Applicants are permitted to attach the itemized budget sheet as an “Other Attachment” to their application so the sheet will not count against the 11-page workplan limit.

4) Resumes of the Project Manager (PM) and Other Key Personnel: Applicants must attach a resume or curricula vitae (CV) for the PM and other key personnel named on the Key Contacts List. These are not subject to the workplan page limit although individual resumes should not exceed 2 pages in length.

B. PRE-APPLICATION ASSISTANCE CALLS, WEBINARS, & FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Applicants are invited to participate in conference calls with EPA to address questions about the EJSJG Program and this announcement. Interested persons should refer to the table below for dates and times, and call-in information on accessing the pre-application assistance calls. Additional conference call information, webinar links, and call recordings can be found at the following website:

<https://www.epa.gov/environmentaljustice/environmental-justice-small-grants-program>

See the following table for a schedule of the conference call dates, times, and preliminary call-in information:

Date	Time (Eastern Time)	Conference Call Information
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<p>April 7, 2022 (EJSG Live Webinar)</p>	<p>2:30pm - 3:30pm ET</p>	<p>Webinar Format - Applicants may ask general questions about this RFA.</p> <p>Visit the link below for log-in information:</p> <p>EJSG RFA Information Page</p>
<p>April 14, 2022 (EJSG Live Webinar)</p>	<p>2:30pm - 4:00pm ET</p>	<p>Webinar Format - Applicants may ask general questions about this RFA.</p> <p>Visit the link below for log-in information:</p> <p>EJSG Call / Webinar Schedule</p>
<p>May 3, 2022 (EJSCREEN Live Demo)</p>	<p>2:30pm – 4:00pm ET</p>	<p>Webinar Format - Applicants may ask general questions about this RFA and how to use the EJSCREEN tool.</p> <p>Visit the link below for log-in information:</p> <p>EJSG Call / Webinar Schedule</p>

In accordance with EPA's Assistance Agreement Competition Policy ([EPA Order 5700.5A1](#)), EPA staff will not meet with individual applicants to discuss draft applications, provide informal comments on draft applications, or provide advice to applicants on how to respond to ranking criteria.

Applicants are responsible for the contents of their applications. However, consistent with the provisions in the announcement, EPA will respond to questions from individual applicants regarding threshold eligibility criteria, administrative issues related to the submission of the application, and requests for clarification about the announcement. In addition, EPA will respond to questions about ARP funding and whether a proposed project appears to meet the criteria for eligibility for consideration for ARP funding. This is just to answer questions about eligibility for ARP funding and is not to indicate if the project will be selected for funding.

D. Requirement to Submit through Grants.gov and Limited Exception Procedures:

Applicants must apply electronically through [Grants.gov](#) under this funding opportunity based on the grants.gov instructions in this announcement. If your organization has no access to the internet or access is very limited, you may request an exception for the remainder of this calendar year by following the procedures outlined [here](#). Please note that your request must be received at least 15 calendar days before the application due date to allow enough time to

negotiate alternative submission methods. Issues with submissions with respect to this opportunity only are addressed in the Technical Issues with *Submission* section below.

Grants.gov Submission Instructions:

The electronic submission of your application must be made by an official representative of your institution who is registered with Grants.gov and is authorized to sign applications for Federal assistance. For more information on the registration requirements that must be completed in order to submit an application through Grants.gov, go to [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) and click on "Applicants" on the top of the page and then go to the "Organization Registration" link listed under the "Get Registered" section and follow the instructions. Please note, this process can take a month or more for new registrants. Applicants must ensure that all registration requirements are met in order to apply for this opportunity through Grants.gov and should ensure that all such requirements have been met well in advance of the submission deadline. Registration on both Grants.gov and SAM.gov is FREE. Obtaining a UEI number assignment is also FREE.

NEW – PLEASE READ: Existing and new SAM.gov registrants are also assigned a free SAM-issued Unique Entity Identifier (UEI). Applicants must use their UEI, not their DUNS number, when filling out forms in the package for this funding opportunity. Please see [RAIN-2021-G01](#) for information about EPA's implementation of the upcoming Government-wide transition from DUNS to UEI. Please note that until April 4, 2022, applicant organizations registering for the first time in SAM.gov will need a DUNS number.

Applicants need to ensure that the Authorized Organization Representative (AOR) who submits the application through Grants.gov and whose UEI is listed on the application is an AOR for the applicant listed on the application. Additionally, the UEI listed on the application must be registered to the applicant organization's SAM account. If not, the application may be deemed ineligible.

To begin the application process under this grant announcement, go to [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) and click the red "Apply" button at the top of the view grant opportunity page. If you encounter technical difficulties or the Apply button is grayed out please contact grants.gov for assistance at the grants.gov support center at support@grants.gov or 1-800-518-4726 before the application deadline. Please note: To apply through Grants.gov, you must use Adobe Reader software and download the compatible Adobe Reader version. For more information about Adobe Reader, to verify compatibility, or to download the free software, please visit [Adobe Reader Compatibility Information on Grants.gov](#).

Application Submission Deadline: Your organization's AOR must submit your complete application package electronically to EPA through Grants.gov (<http://www.grants.gov>) no later than **May 20, 2022, at 11:59 PM Eastern Time (ET)**. Please allow for enough time to successfully submit your application process and allow for unexpected errors that may require you to resubmit.

Please submit all of the application materials described in Section IV.A., *Content of Application Submission*) using the Grants.gov application package accessed using the instructions above. For additional instructions on completing and submitting the electronic application package, click the "Show Instructions" tab that is accessible within the application package itself.

Application Materials

The following forms and documents are required under this announcement:

Mandatory Documents:

1. Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424)
2. Budget Information for Non-Construction Programs (SF-424A)
3. EPA Form 4700-4 Pre-award Compliance Review Report
4. EPA Key Contacts Form 5700-54
5. Workplan (Project Narrative Attachment Form)-prepared as described in Section IV of the announcement

Optional Documents:

6. Other Attachments
 - i. **Itemized Budget Sheet**
 - ii. **Resumes of the Project Manager (PM) and other key personnel**

Applications submitted through Grants.gov will be time and date stamped electronically. If you have not received a confirmation of receipt from EPA (not from Grants.gov) within 30 days of the application deadline, please contact Sarah Frederick (Frederick.Sarah@epa.gov). Failure to do so may result in your application not being reviewed.

Technical Issues with Submission

1. Once the application package has been completed, the “Submit” button should be enabled. If the “Submit” button is not active, please call Grants.gov for assistance at 1-800-518-4726. Applicants who are outside the U.S. at the time of submittal and are not able to access the toll-free number may reach a Grants.gov representative by calling 606-545-5035. Applicants should save the completed application package with two different file names before providing it to the AOR to avoid having to re-create the package should submission problems be experienced or a revised application needs to be submitted.

2. Submitting the application. The application package must be transferred to Grants.gov by an AOR. The AOR should close all other software before attempting to submit the application package. Click the “submit” button of the application package. Your Internet browser will launch and a sign-in page will appear. ***Note: Minor problems are not uncommon with transfers to Grants.gov. It is essential to allow sufficient time to ensure that your application is submitted to Grants.gov BEFORE the due date identified in Section IV of the announcement.*** The Grants.gov support desk operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week, except Federal Holidays.

A successful transfer will end with an on-screen acknowledgement. For documentation purposes, print or screen capture this acknowledgement. If a submission problem occurs, reboot the computer – turning the power off may be necessary – and re-attempt the submission.

Note: Grants.gov issues a “case number” upon a request for assistance.

3. Transmission Difficulties. If transmission difficulties that result in a late transmission, no transmission, or rejection of the transmitted application are experienced, and following the above instructions do not resolve the problem so that the application is submitted to www.Grants.Gov by the deadline date and time, follow the guidance below. The Agency will make a decision concerning acceptance of each late submission on a case-by-case basis. All emails, as described

below, are to be sent to Sarah Frederick (Frederick.Sarah@epa.gov) with the Funding Opportunity Number, EPA-OP-OEJ-22-01 in the subject line. If you are unable to email, contact Sarah Frederick at 206-553-1601. Be aware that EPA will only consider accepting applications that were unable to transmit due to www.Grants.gov or relevant www.Sam.gov system issues or for unforeseen exigent circumstances, such as extreme weather interfering with internet access. Failure of an applicant to submit timely because they did not properly or timely register in SAM.gov or Grants.gov is not an acceptable reason to justify acceptance of a late submittal.

a. If you are experiencing problems resulting in an inability to upload the application to Grants.gov, it is essential to call www.Grants.gov for assistance at 1-800-518-4726 before the application deadline. Applicants who are outside the U.S. at the time of submittal and are not able to access the toll-free number may reach a Grants.gov representative by calling 606-545-5035. Be *sure* to obtain a case number from Grants.gov. If the problems stem from unforeseen exigent circumstances unrelated to Grants.gov, such as extreme weather interfering with internet access, contact Sarah Frederick at 206-553-1601.

YOU MUST KEEP A RECORD OF THE CASE NUMBERS THE GRANTS.GOV HOTLINE PROVIDES YOU WHEN YOU CONTACT THEM. ALSO KEEP ALL OF YOUR EMAILS AND A RECORD OF CALLS WITH THE GRANTS.GOV HOTLINE. In the case of a late submittal, these details may be utilized by EPA to help render a decision regarding whether the Agency will accept that specific late submission.

b. Unsuccessful transfer of the application package: If a successful transfer of the application cannot be accomplished even with assistance from Grants.gov due to electronic submission system issues or unforeseen exigent circumstances, send an email message to Frederick.Sarah@epa.gov prior to the application deadline. The email message must document the problem and include the Grants.gov case number as well as the entire application in PDF format as an attachment.

c. Grants.gov rejection of the application package: If a notification is received from Grants.gov stating that the application has been rejected for reasons other than late submittal promptly send an email to Frederick.Sarah@epa.gov with the Funding Opportunity Number, EPA-OP-OEJ-22-01, in the subject line within one business day of the closing date of this announcement. The email should include any materials provided by Grants.gov and attach the entire application in PDF format.

Please note that successful submission through Grants.gov or via email does not necessarily mean your application is eligible for award.

V. APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION ([back to Contents by Section](#))

Note: Additional provisions that apply to this section can be found at [EPA Announcement Clauses](#).

A. CRITERIA

Threshold Eligibility Evaluation Criteria. Before an application is reviewed by a Review Panel based on the criteria below, the application will be screened at EPA Headquarters in

Washington, DC by the Office of Environmental Justice (OEJ) and Office of International and Tribal Affairs (OITA) to ensure that it meets the Threshold Eligibility Criteria (See Section III.B). An application will not be reviewed according to the evaluation criteria set forth below if it does not meet the Threshold Eligibility Evaluation Criteria.

Ranking Criteria. Applications meeting the Threshold Eligibility Evaluation Criteria will be reviewed and scored by Review Panels organized by EPA staff. Review panels may include technical and subject matter experts from outside the Agency.

Each criterion has corresponding points that range from 2 points (lowest) to 20 points (highest). The score for each criterion will be based on how well each criterion is addressed. The maximum total number of points is 100. Please note that certain sections are given greater weight than others.

***Refer to the optional workplan template (i.e., the green section) in Section IV of this announcement for further guidance on the Ranking Criteria and how you should structure your application. You do not have to follow the optional workplan template, but it is there to help you.**

The application will be scored on the following Ranking Criteria:

Criteria	Category	Evaluation Criteria	Total Points 100
1.0	Program Objectives	Under this criterion, applications will be evaluated based on the extent and quality to which they address program objectives by demonstrating the following:	44
a.	Project Summary Page	One-page summary document that includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Project Title <input type="checkbox"/> Project Location (including community, city, state, and zip code) <input type="checkbox"/> Applicant Information (name, address, main contact information) <input type="checkbox"/> Which Environmental Statute(s) does the project qualify for? <input type="checkbox"/> Project Type(s) -- such as planning, process development, training, monitoring, demonstration, public education (related to statute(s) identified above) <input type="checkbox"/> List of Project Partners (if applicable) <input type="checkbox"/> Project Abstract -- Brief description (250 words or less) of the main objective, activities, and outputs/outcomes of the project, including the specific geographic areas of focus. <input type="checkbox"/> Whether applicants address the need to develop a QAPP for the project? (see Appendix C) 	2

Criteria	Category	Evaluation Criteria	Total Points 100
b.	Environmental and Public Health information of the Community	<p>Clearly describe the local environmental justice issue(s) the project proposes to address and the community that is impacted, specifically the impact of COVID-19 to the Tribe’s public participation program and the Tribe’s modification or establishment of its public participation program as a result, including the extent and quality to which the application addresses the following (3 points each):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Describe and characterize the local community (or communities) the Tribe will engage. Describe how the community is disproportionately impacted by environmental and/or public health concerns (i.e., Who is the community comprised of and what are the disproportionate environmental and/or public health issues they experience?). <input type="checkbox"/> How has COVID-19 impacted the Tribe’s ability to implement public participation processes and receive input from the affected community on environmental decision-making? <input type="checkbox"/> What are the local environmental/public health-related public participation issues that your project seeks to address? <input type="checkbox"/> What are the local environmental/public health results the project seeks to achieve and how will the community benefit from those results? <p>NOTE - The application must include relevant information such as demographics, geographic location, and community history. We strongly encourage the use of EPA’s EJSCREEN tool (or other EJ-based mapping tool) to help you characterize and describe your target community. Data from other sources (e.g., studies, census, and third-party reports) should also be included to give a more complete picture of the impacted communities and populations. If scientific data is limited for a particular community, then applicants can include first-person accounts and/or a community’s impressions of the environmental and/or public health issues impacting their communities. Instructions and resources on how to use EJSCREEN are included at the hyperlink above. For any questions you have about EJSCREEN, please contact Tai Lung at Lung.Tai@epa.gov or 202-566-1296.</p>	12

Criteria	Category	Evaluation Criteria	Total Points 100
c.	Public Participation Elements	<p>How well the established or modified public participation program incorporates successful public participation elements and, the extent and quality to which the application addresses the following (4 points each):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> How the public participation process designed to meaningfully engage the community, including hat barriers have been removed to allow all members of the community to engage. <input type="checkbox"/> Does the community have the background knowledge on the disproportionate environmental and/or public health issues to provide input? If not, describe how that knowledge would be effectively shared. Are cross-cultural formats and exchanges available? <input type="checkbox"/> How does the process recognize and incorporate Indigenous Tribal Ecological Knowledge (TEK) if offered by a tribal elder or knowledge holder? Given the sensitivity of some TEK, how would this knowledge be appropriately handled? <input type="checkbox"/> Does the public participation include transparency in the process? Are goals, expectations and limitations of the public participation process clearly articulated? <input type="checkbox"/> How will the Tribe institutionalize the process so it continues over time? How will the Tribe evaluate its public participation program for effectiveness and continued improvement? 	20

Criteria	Category	Evaluation Criteria	Total Points 100
d.	Project Linkages	<p>The extent and quality to which the proposed project:</p> <p>(1) Supports EPA Draft 2022-2026 Strategic Plan Goal 2, Objective 2.1 (Building Community Capacity and Climate Resilience and Maximizing Benefits to Overburdened and Underserved Communities) (2 points)</p> <p>Refer to link Below: https://www.epa.gov/planandbudget/strategicplan</p> <p>(2) Relates to the qualified environmental statutes identified in the Project Summary Page. Please note each project must include activities that are authorized by at least one of the federal environmental statutes listed in Section I.C (5 points)</p> <p>(3) Relates to a program for which EPA has approved, authorized, or delegated program administration responsibilities to the Tribe (i.e., treatment as a state (TAS)). (3 points)</p>	10
2.	Project Activities / Milestone Schedule / Detailed Budget Narrative Under this criterion, applications will be evaluated based on the extent and quality to which they:		20
a.	Project Activities	Clearly identify steps that the applicant will take that will reasonably progress towards achieving the program objectives, including a clear description of the detailed project activities or components and the anticipated products/results associated with each activity as described in Section IV.	10
b.	Milestone Schedule	Demonstrate a clearly articulated and realistic milestone schedule, including timeframes and major milestones to complete significant project activities.	4
c.	Itemized Budget Sheet	<p>Demonstrate reasonable and allowable costs for each component/activity, as described in Section IV.</p> <p><i>Applicants are permitted to attach the itemized budget sheet as an "Other Attachment" to their application so the sheet will not count against the 11-page workplan limit.</i></p>	6

Criteria	Category	Evaluation Criteria	Total Points 100
3.	Environmental Results—Outputs, Outcomes, Tracking, and Sustainability Under this criterion, applications will be evaluated based on the extent and quality to which:		20
a.	Environmental Results-Outputs/ Outcomes	The expected project outputs and outcomes identified in the application are effective in achieving the Program Objectives listed in Section I, including the development or modification of public participation, community involvement, education, and communication systems to engage with tribal members and others living in areas affected by the tribal program to assure fair treatment and meaningful involvement.	8
b.	Performance Measurement Plan	The application demonstrates a sound plan for tracking progress towards achieving the expected outputs, outcomes, and associated timeframes for achieving those results.	4
c.	Sustainability Plan	The application demonstrates a sound plan for how the community public participation process improvements and innovations developed during the proposed project will be implemented and sustained following the completion of the 1-year grant project funding. This includes current work and initiatives in the community, whether additional resources are needed to sustain and implement the proposed public participation process improvements, and how the community has a vested interest in sustaining the project’s momentum on into the future.	8
4.	Programmatic Capability Under this criterion, applications will be evaluated based on the applicant’s ability to successfully complete and manage the proposed project, taking into account their:		10
a.	Organizational experience	Organizational experience and plan for timely and successfully achieving the objectives of the proposed project.	4

Criteria	Category	Evaluation Criteria	Total Points 100
b.	Staff Experience / Qualifications of Project Manager (PM)	<p>Ability to clearly demonstrate that the selected PM and other staff associated with the project are qualified to successfully perform the project. This will be determined through evaluating the following (2 points each):</p> <p>(1) How the PM and associated staff are qualified to undertake the project successfully;</p> <p>(2) Illustrating the PM’s ties/historical connection to the tribal community, including detailed descriptions of any activities that the PM has worked on with the community and/or Tribe.</p>	4
c.	Expenditure of Awarded Grant Funds	Approach, procedures, and controls for ensuring that awarded grant funds will be expended in a timely and efficient manner. As described in Section IV.	2
5.	<p>Past Performance Under this criterion, applicants will be evaluated based on their ability to successfully complete and manage the proposed project taking into account the applicant’s past performance with respect to the agreements listed by the applicant in the application workplan as required under Section IV.A.</p>		6

Criteria	Category	Evaluation Criteria	Total Points 100
a.	List of Federally funded and/or Non-federally funded Assistance Agreements and Reporting History	<p>Applicants will be evaluated based on their ability to successfully complete and manage the proposed project taking into account their (3 points each):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> past performance in successfully completing and managing the assistance agreements identified in response to Section IV.A <input type="checkbox"/> history of meeting the reporting requirements under the assistance agreements identified in response to Section IV.A including whether the applicant submitted acceptable final technical reports under those agreements and the extent to which the applicant adequately and timely reported on their progress towards achieving the expected outputs and outcomes under those agreements and if such progress was not being made whether the applicant adequately reported why not. <p>In evaluating applicants under these factors in Section V, EPA will consider the information provided by the applicant and may also consider relevant information from other sources, including information from EPA files and from current/prior grantors.</p> <p>If your organization does not have any relevant or available past performance or reporting information, please state this explicitly in your application (e.g., <i>Our organization has no past grants experience.</i>) Including this statement will ensure you receive a neutral score for these factors (a neutral score is half of the total points available in a subset of possible points). Failure to include this statement may result in your receiving a score of 0 for these factors.</p>	6

B. REVIEW AND SELECTION PROCESS

Applications will be reviewed and scored under the following process:

1) Threshold Eligibility Screening Process - All applications will be screened for Threshold Eligibility purposes (see Section III.C) at EPA headquarters by EPA staff from the Office of Environmental Justice (OEJ) and Office of International and Tribal Affairs (OITA).

2) Panel Review and Evaluation Process – Only those applications which meet all the threshold factors will undergo technical review. EPA will convene review panel(s) comprised of OEJ, OITA, EPA regional staff, and/or subject-matter and technical experts from outside the Agency to review, score, and rank the eligible applications based on the evaluation criteria listed

above. Each application will be given a numerical score and will be rank ordered by the review panel.

3) Final Selection Process and Other Factors – Final rankings and selection recommendations from the review panels will be presented to the Director of the Office of Environmental Justice in Headquarters who will then make the final selections for award based on the ranking lists. In addition to this information, the Director of the Office of Environmental Justice may also consider any of the following other factors in making final selection decisions among high-ranking applications from the lists:

1. Geographic Diversity – EPA may consider the mix of high-ranking projects located in urban and rural areas or different regions of the country when making final selections, as well as the geographical nature or impact of the project.
2. Number and size of awards.
3. Availability of funds.
4. Agency and programmatic priorities.

It is anticipated that approximately 16 to 20 applications will be selected nationwide. After final selections are made, the EPA Regional Offices will then make the awards. All awards are subject to the availability of funds, the quality of the applications submitted, and other applicable considerations. EPA reserves the right to increase or decrease the total number of grants awarded or reject all applications and make no awards under this announcement. Such changes may be necessary as a response to the quality of applications received by EPA or the amount of funds available.

C. ANTICIPATED ANNOUNCEMENTS AND AWARD DATES

Below is a tentative schedule of important dates for the EJSJG Program. Please note dates are tentative and subject to change.

Date	Activity
March 21, 2022	Open competition period begins.
May 20, 2022	Open competition closes. Applications must be submitted through Grants.gov by 11:59 p.m. (ET) on May 20, 2022. Applications received after this date will not be reviewed.
June 2022	EPA will review applications for Threshold Eligibility Criteria (Section III). Ineligible applicants will be notified via email with details regarding ineligibility. Notification to ineligible applicants will be sent via email to the contact identified on the submitted SF424 providing brief explanations on the reason(s) for ineligibility. Ineligible applicants may request a debriefing within 15 days of receipt of the correspondence.
July – August 2022	Anticipated notification of selection. All applicants will be notified of the selection results by mail/email.
Sept. - October 2022	Anticipated award. Regional offices will request required application documentation from selected applicants. Awards will be made by the regional offices.
October 2022	OEJ will release a national announcement

VI. AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION [\(back to Contents by Section\)](#)

Note: Additional provisions that apply to this section can be found at [EPA Announcement Clauses](#).

A. AWARD NOTICES

EPA anticipates notification of selected applicants will be made via telephone or electronic or postal mail by the end of August 2022. The notification will be sent to the original signer of the application or the project contact listed in the application. This notification, which informs the applicant that its application has been selected and is being recommended for award, is not an authorization to begin work. The official notification of an award will be made by EPA's Regional Grants Offices. Applicants are cautioned that only a grants officer is authorized to bind the Government to the expenditure of funds; selection does not guarantee an award will be made. For example, statutory authorization, funding or other issues discovered during the award process may affect the ability of EPA to make an award to an applicant. The award notice, signed by an EPA grants officer, is the authorizing document and will be provided through electronic or postal mail.

The successful applicant may be requested to submit prepare and submit additional documents and forms which must be approved by EPA before the grant can officially be awarded. The time between notification of selection and award of a grant can take up to 90 days or longer.

B. ADMINISTRATIVE AND NATIONAL POLICY REQUIREMENTS

This award is subject to the requirements of the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards; Title 2 CFR, Parts 200 and 1500. 2 CFR 1500.2, Adoption of 2 CFR 200, states that the Environmental Protection Agency adopts the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) guidance Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards to Non-Federal Entities (subparts A through F of 2 CFR 200), as supplemented by this part, as the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) policies and procedures for financial assistance administration. This part satisfies the requirements of 2 CFR 200.110(a) and gives regulatory effect to the OMB guidance as supplemented by this part. EPA also has programmatic regulations located in 40 CFR Chapter 1 Subchapter B.

A listing and description of general EPA regulations applicable to the award of assistance agreements may be viewed at: <https://www.epa.gov/grants/epa-policies-and-guidance-grants>.

C. REPORTING

Progress Report/Final Report Requirement.

The Project Manager will be required to submit two semi-annual progress report for each 12-

month reporting period throughout the duration of the agreement to update the EPA Project Officer on project progress. The Project Manager will also be required to have semi-annual calls/meetings (at a minimum) with the EPA Project Officer to discuss progress. The Project Manager will also be required to submit a Final Technical Report for EPA approval within 120 days after the end of the 12-month project period. A Financial Status Report is also required and will be described in the award agreement. The EPA may collect, review, and disseminate those final reports that can serve as models for future projects. Many applicants may find it useful to document their progress using various media. This may include, but is not limited to the use of videos, blogs and other forms of social media.

Quality Assurance Project Plans (QAPP).

Quality assurance is sometimes applicable to assistance projects (see 2 CFR 1500.12). Quality assurance requirements apply to the collection of environmental data. Environmental data are any measurements or information that describe environmental processes, location, or conditions; ecological or health effects and consequences; or the performance of environmental technology. Environmental data include information collected directly from measurements, produced from models, and compiled from other sources, such as databases or literature. Once the award is made, if a Quality Assurance Project Plan is required for the project, the applicant will have to draft a QAPP prior to beginning work on the project. You must reserve time and financial resources in the beginning of your project in order to prepare your QAPP and include the cost for developing your QAPP in your Detailed Budget. Selected applicants cannot begin data collection until EPA approves the QAPP.

VII. AGENCY CONTACTS ([back to Contents by Section](#))

Main Contacts	Email	Phone
<i>Office of International and Tribal Affairs</i>		
Sarah Frederick, <i>Competition Lead</i>	Frederick.Sarah@epa.gov	206-553-1601
Lisa Berrios, <i>Program Lead & General Contact</i>	Berrios.Lisa@epa.gov	202-564-1739
<i>Office of Environmental Justice</i>		
Jacob Burney, OEJ Grants Program Manager	Burney.Jacob@epa.gov	202-564-2907
Danny Gogal, OEJ Tribal and Indigenous Peoples Program Manager	Gogal.Danny@epa.gov	202-564-2576

VIII. OTHER INFORMATION AND APPENDICES ([back to Contents by Section](#))

- A – Information on Preparing an EJ Grant Application
- B – Optional EJSJG Itemized Budget Sheet Template
- C – Quality Assurance Project Plan Questionnaire

APPENDIX A

INFORMATION ON PREPARING AN ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE GRANT APPLICATION

This information is intended to help you put together a competitive application for the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Environmental Justice Grants Program. *Please read the Application Announcement carefully -- this document is intended for informational purposes only.*

- **Target your audience carefully**

Identify a specific group or community to work with to develop a program that will give the highest return for your dollars invested.

- **Do some homework**

Allow time to develop and document your understanding of environmental justice issues within the community you work in or with. Find out what materials exist on the subject and the procedures you are planning to include in your workplan. Use this information to back up your project plans or to explain how your group activities are unique and/or creative.

- **Develop a project evaluation technique**

Define as carefully and precisely as possible what you want to achieve with this project and how you will test its success. Ask yourself: "what do you expect to be different once the project is complete?" Outline a plan you will use to measure the success of your activities/project.

- **Develop a timeline or project accomplishment schedule**

List the major tasks that you will complete to meet the goals of the project. Break these broad goals into smaller tasks and lay them out in a schedule over the twelve months of the grant period. Determine and identify in the application the total estimated cost for each task. You may estimate this cost by the number of personnel, materials, and other resources you will need to carry out the tasks.

- **Stay within the format and follow application instructions including any page limits**

This makes it easier for the reviewer to read and therefore, understand your workplan. Please refer to the application requirements in Section IV of this RFA.

- **Communicate the nature of your project accurately, precisely, and concisely.**

Describe exactly what you propose to do, how you are going to do it, when you are going to do it, who will benefit, and how you will know you are successful. Indicate not only what you propose but what expertise your group has for completing the project (include resumes).

- **As much as possible, include specific target metrics and estimates in your workplan**

Using detailed numbers in your workplan (e.g., # of workshops, # of attendees, # of water samples, etc.) better frames the scope and size of your project for your organization, your partners, if applicable, and EPA reviewers. Specificity and/or estimates make it easier for you to track project progress and make project adjustments.

Common Strengths typically found in successful EJ grant applications:

- Project application developed solidly from within the community

- Broad based community support for a project that has the potential to positively affect local people
- Application does a good job of outlining a complex problem and approach to solving it -- does not overlook any major issues or key players
- Clear identification and background description of population to be served
- Application identifies specific outputs, target accomplishments, and estimated budgets for each goal, and target dates for completion
- Proposed project builds on existing projects or programs
- The scope of the project can be completed in a year
- Application clearly describes how the project will achieve the program goals outlined in the application announcement
- Application includes innovative ideas and creative thinking about how to motivate and involve youth in the communities where they live
- Application includes honest discussion of challenges involved

Common Weaknesses typically found in unsuccessful EJ grant applications:

- Application did not include information specifically requested in the application announcement.
- Community members do not appear to be an integral part of the project planning process
- Not specific as to what EPA funds will be used for or planned use of funds involves ineligible activities
- Applicant is not an eligible organization
- Program may be too ambitious for a one-year project period
- Immediacy of need is not established
- Methods of evaluating the success of the project unclear
- Application seeks support for developing general environmental program with little mention of environmental justice issues. The link between goals of EPA's environmental justice program and the project is not clearly stated
- Discussion of overall mission and goals of the organization, but not enough detail on how the specific project and activities will help achieve the goals

APPENDIX B

Optional EJSG Itemized Budget Sheet Template

Note—EPA provides detailed guidance on how to characterize costs for budgeting purposes as well as a budget detail example in the agency's [Interim General Budget Development Guidance for Applicants and Recipients of EPA Financial Assistance](#). For a sample Itemized Budget Sheet refer to: <https://www.epa.gov/grants/rain-2019-g02>

	Description	Total
Personnel		
Fringe Benefits		
Travel		
Equipment		
Supplies		
Contractual		
Other		
Indirect Charges		
		\$100,000

APPENDIX C

Office of Environmental Justice Quality Assurance Project Plan Requirement (QAPP)

This checklist is provided as an option tool for Applicants to use to determine if their proposed project will require an approved Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP).

Please check Yes or No for each of the questions provided below as it applies to your specific project. If you answered **YES** to any of the items listed above, you are **REQUIRED TO SUBMIT** a Quality Assurance Project Plan in accordance with EPA Requirements and an approved QAPP must be in place *prior* to the initiation of activities.

1. Will your project involve the collection of groundwater, soil, sediment, surface water, air, biota or fauna samples for chemical or biological analysis?
Yes No
2. Will your project use existing computer databases containing analytical data or personal information previously collected?
Yes No
3. Will your project use existing historical research pertaining to this project or application?
Yes No
4. Will your project implement deed searches for current property or site?
Yes No
5. Will your project conduct medical records search for the population covered in the grant?
Yes No
6. Will your project compile meteorological data to determine weather trends or air mixing trends?
Yes No
7. Will your project use existing statistical studies or will conduct these studies as part of the project?
Yes No
8. Will your project create a new database based on the information gathered?
Yes No
9. Will your project use this information for litigation purposes?
Yes No
10. Will your project use this information to make recommendations on environmental decisions?
Yes No