

## FAQ

---

We signed up for the webinar on 11/30 but also had a question in regards to the non-profits that can apply. Are there stipulations to what non-profits can apply for the grants? If so, can you please let me know where I can find that information?

**Please refer to the website and RFA, the most important criteria is the 501 (c )(3) status, that the project be in an EJ area and for the purpose of improving the community. Lastly the organization itself also be located within the EJ area.**

I have looked over the Frequently Asked Questions section of the Environmental Justice Grant webpage, but I didn't see anything relating to eligibility of a village applying for the grant. Can a municipality, such as a village, apply for the grant?

**Generally speaking, no a municipality cannot apply for a grant. However, in some instances an organization that is a non-profit 501 (c)(3) status can act as a fiscal sponsor.**

I am writing on behalf of the Grow to Learn program at GrowNYC in regards to the eligibility requirements for 2016 Environmental Justice Community Impact Grant Program. Grow to Learn, a citywide school garden initiative that operates within the not-for-profit GrowNYC, would like to apply for this grant. While GrowNYC's entire organizational budget exceeds the \$3,000,000 limit outlined in the RFA, Grow to Learn's annual budget is just \$440,000 - well below the threshold. Grow to Learn facilitates and promotes the creation of sustainable school gardens in each and every public school across New York City. This program would be the sole benefactor of the grant funding, and could make a great community impact continuing the good work that they do. Can you advise on using the Grow to Learn program budget, which is the most accurate representation of the resources available to the work that would be done under the grant, for the application?

**The overall budget cannot exceed \$3,000,000 as described in the RFA Applicant Eligibility Requirements Section I (2)(b)**

I have not been able to access the site referenced in your article announcing the \$3 million Community Impact Grant program. I keep getting a notice that site is corrupted. Please advise

me on how to get a copy of the instructions and application. I am already signed up for the November 30 webinar.

**Please contact the grants gateway helpdesk for link and pdf instructions at [grantsgateway@its.ny.gov](mailto:grantsgateway@its.ny.gov) or call 518 474-5595.**

I'm the development coordinator of a not-for-profit organization with a primary office located in Manhattan, NYC. Our organization does advocacy projects in three states -- NY, NJ and CT. Some of our projects are extremely localized and focused on specific communities in a given city, and others coordinate efforts in multiple counties and/or states. Under the guidelines of the 2016 Environmental Justice Community Impact Grant Program, would we be considered a ineligible "regional" organization, even if we proposed an extremely localized project affecting an EJ community within the immediate vicinity of our primary office?

**Please see the RFA Section I (2)(f) Applicant Eligibility requirements which states the community based organization must have its primary location in the affected community**

We are considering submitting an application but I just have 2 questions about our eligibility? Our project would take place within Van Cortlandt Park which is an Environmental Justice Area. However, no one lives in the Park but 50% of those that participate in our programs live within EJ areas. Would we meet the first criteria for the declaration? Also, our office is located across the street from the Park and it's not in an EJ area. However, the work we do is within the park. Does that affect our eligibility?

**Please refer to the RFA Applicant Eligibility Requirements II. And page 16 for complete descriptions and criteria.**

Hello! We are a non-profit located in Geneva, NY and interested in developing a program that would help local contractors go through the certification program as WBE/MBE. As we have seen with many local projects, there is not adequate representation of local businesses of color (or owned by women) on the existing list, even though we do have many contractors that could qualify. As you might be aware, Geneva is currently dealing with the blowback from the determination that a large swath of land, and many, many residences are suffering contamination from the former Geneva Foundry site and the cleanup process will be intense. We think the time is right to help local contractors get onto the State's WBE/MBE list so that

they could have a chance in participating in the clean up effort directly. This is one way of making them whole for the economic losses the community is suffering in terms of impact to property value in a neighborhood that is largely non-white. Furthermore, prior to the revelations of the contamination, our non-profit submitted a successful grant application for housing construction in a portion of what is now the targeted clean up area. Having a list of local WBE/MBE certified contractors would allow us to hire locally to fulfill those State grant requirements, and again allow local residents to participate in the rehabilitation of their neighborhood. Is this effort the type of endeavor that would qualify under the program?

**Unfortunately because there is no EJ community here, the organization does not qualify.**

Are matching funds encouraged?

**Matching funds are not a requirement under this grant opportunity.**

Could you please tell me if the award amount is per year or spread over 3 years? For example, is it \$30,000 per year for a total of \$90,000 or \$10,000 per year for a total of \$30,000 total over the course of the grant award?

**Cap is \$50k dispersed over 3 year period in 4 installments.**

Would you let me know who I should contact with a specific budget question about the Community Impact grant?

**Please contact [justice@dec.ny.gov](mailto:justice@dec.ny.gov) and our grants administrator will send a prompt response to your question.**

The Wingate Campus school community, a high school campus encompassing 4 high schools that share facilities -- the farm, run by us as an organizational partner, is located on DOE land; and, we work with our surrounding Crown Heights/East Flatbush residential/commuter community. These two "communities" face often-overlapping environmental harms and risks. We are interested in proposing a project that engages Wingate students. However, if the population served must be residential we will submit a proposal that would help fund the work we do with our community members/neighbors that addresses local environmental harms and risks. For your reference, my fellow Youth Farm team members and I manage a 1 acre farm on the campus that serves as an outdoor classroom and dynamic learning space to explore nature and natural processes, as well as organic waste processing and sustainable agriculture. We run

programs with individual school classes and teachers, and provide a wide variety of training and volunteer opportunities for our Crown Heights neighbors.

**It depends on what is meant by residential but overall our criteria is that both applicant and project must be located within the EJ neighborhood.**

Does the DEC support initiatives that focus on school-based populations (students) facing EJ issues, or, does it tend to support initiatives focused on working with the general public? The RFP used the word "residents," so, I wondered if a proposal aimed to support our work in our school community would be acceptable. If not, we also do work with our general neighborhood community in Crown Heights.

**Yes, they absolutely qualify. Please see pages 9-10 in the RFA for a list of some of the projects the community impact grants have funded in the past.**

Can you please tell me the time frame for these EJ Grants, one- year; two-year; open ended? Please excuse me if this information is in the RFA and I missed it.

**The grants are paid in installments over a 3 year period.**

We are a cemetery, but we also have 501c3 status. We do a lot of public programs here, and we just recently became an arboretum. We were thinking about applying for the Community Impact Grant to plant trees. Does this sound like a good project?

**Please refer to our Request for Applications in the Grants Gateway for applicant eligibility requirements and also project eligibility requirements. You will also see a sample of previously funded projects to give you ideas on what types of projects you could undertake.**

Is a nonprofit with a budget over \$3million eligible to be a fiscal sponsor for the Environmental Justice Community Impact grants?

**No, but it might be able to act as a fiscal sponsor for a qualifying organization. Please refer to the RFA Section I (1)**

We are in process of applying for the 2016 Environmental Justice Community Impact Grant, due on January 31. Can you point us toward the most recent strategies for the regional economic plan (specifically Bushwick/New York)?

<http://regionalcouncils.ny.gov/content/new-york-city>

I am working with a non-profit who hopes to apply to this grant opportunity. They have not previously registered with Grants Gateway, and are in the process of doing that now. In terms of preparing the grant materials, it would be very helpful to see the questions that are being asked for the grant, and know just how to prepare answers. Is there any way to see the questions and documents needed, while we are awaiting access to the Grants Gateway?

**There is an FAQ up that is being updated weekly.**

We wanted to know if food insecurity and undernourishment in the community we work for is considered an environmental harm or risk by the DEP?

**Yes it would qualify. EJ communities largely located in food deserts. Community gardens that have been funded by EJ grants in the past help to address this issue. Please refer to the RFA pages 9-10 for a more detailed list of past programs.**

How long is the contract for Grant Opportunity DEC01-EJ-2016? I see on Grants Gateway that the anticipated contract is 3 years, but I can't find any details in the Grant Opportunity PDF.

Samuel A. Bishop II Education Director Trees New York

**Correct, it is distributed in increments over a three year period.**

We are an organization that is in the process of applying for the 2016-2017 DEC environmental justice grant. We are about to submit our documents for pre-qualification. Are all the essay/substantive questions that need to be answered for the grant, posted in the pdf entitled "2016 ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE COMMUNITY IMPACT GRANT PROGRAM For Communities Exposed to Multiple Environmental Harms and Risks in New York State? If not, I assume the question will be available once we've passed pre-qualification review?

**The RFA and any questions remain the same no matter what status they are in. So if you pre-qualify there won't be anything additional.**

What would be the anticipated start date of projects? If our project doesn't have a specific location, what do we list as the project location? We are looking to hold classes in several locations around the community--not just in one place. Do I consider a stipend for students as a contractual expense? I cannot find where to upload an authorizing resolution. Where does that go?

**There is no set start date, however the anticipated award date for the grant is April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2017. You should identify the locations for each class, and be sure that each location is in an EJ community. For ex: if you are using a local school, church, hall etc, those addresses should be included. Per the stipend money please refer to the RFA Section III. Additional Application Requirements and Information, Eligible Project Costs. You may have to attach the resolution as a separate document.**

We are registered on the NY State Grants Gateway and will be applying for this grant. However, we don't see a link to how to apply THROUGH the NYS Grants Gateway. Could you kindly advise the steps to get to the page on the NYS Grants Gateway where we can complete information and upload items?

<http://grantsgateway.ny.gov>

The City of Binghamton is applying for a DEC grant pertaining to urban forestry, and a question in the application refers to environmental justice areas. I have reviewed the maps available at <http://www.dec.ny.gov/public/899.html> and see that several EJ areas exist within the boundary of our proposed work. The site states, "Where uncertainty exists, staff should contact the Office of Environmental Justice to obtain a detailed map of the geographic area of interest." So, I suppose my question would be is there a detailed map(s) of the city of Binghamton for EJ areas, and/or does each area have a name which can be used to refer to it? Or, conversely should I just state the general areas/ boundaries when responding to the question in the grant application.

**If this is a Y/N option on the RFA, if so you should mark Y if the project area overlaps PEJAs, and be prepared to submit supporting documentation. If this is a question that requires a more in depth text, I would advise you to use that space to attach a map. As for the area itself, there is no official name for each area, just a census block group designation which can be rather difficult to find. It would be easiest for you to make a map showing the project locations in relation to PEJAs. Our detailed map of**

**Binghamton is on page 2 of the link here:**

**[http://www.dec.ny.gov/docs/permits\\_ej\\_operations\\_pdf/broomeej.pdf](http://www.dec.ny.gov/docs/permits_ej_operations_pdf/broomeej.pdf)**

**You could outline your project area on this map, scan it and attach to your application as supplemental documentation. For a higher tech option, you can use google earth and download the PEJA layers themselves at <http://gis.ny.gov/gisdata/inventories/details.cfm?DSID=1273> and then attach that. Finally, you have the option to just state the boundaries of the project to ensure that the project itself will be conducted within the EJ area.**

I am writing with a question on the Community Impact Grant Program application, specifically in regard to the “community based organization criteria” on page 8 of the RFP, point G: “50% of its members residing in the affected community or more than 50% of the people served by the applicant community group residing in the affected community”. We are located in Auburn and serve only the City of Auburn. In regard to the above, does “affected community” refer only to those areas that match the criteria under an EJ Community on page 13 of the RFP? Our office is located in an identified EJ community and we were planning to offer this particular program primarily to our Section 8 tenants and landlords in the EJ community, but our organization serves all of the City of Auburn, which is not 50% an EJ Community. I am wondering if this disqualifies us. Essentially, my two questions are: Does “affected community” refer to an EJ Community according to the definition on page 13 of the RFP? Do 50% of the people we serve for this particular program have to come from an EJ Community or do 50% of the people we serve for ALL our programs have to come from an EJ Community?

**The criteria applies to the overall organization that is the entity that is signing the grant application. RFA Section I (2)**

We are drafting an application in partnership with the Newburgh Community Land Bank (NCLB) for the upcoming EJ grants. NCLB will be the lead applicant. This may be a question for Grants Gateway staff however we are having trouble accessing the on-line application and the ‘Pre-submission Uploads’ such as the Work Plan work sheet and the “itemized expenditure budget in the Grants Gateway”Any advice or direction you could provide would be appreciated.

**Please email the grants gateway helpdesk at [grantsgateway.its.ny.gov](mailto:grantsgateway.its.ny.gov) or 518 474-5595**

I am putting together an application for this grant that involves a community organization working with an NFP fiscal sponsor. With the fiscal sponsor submitting the application, do *both* the fiscal sponsor and the community organization need to be registered and pre-qualified in the grants gateway?

**Only the fiscal sponsor has to register and pre-qualify in the grants gateway.**

Who should the letters of support for our proposal be addressed to? Is there a name and title of a person or just address it to DEC Office of Environmental Justice?

**You can address it to:**

**Kassandra Perez-Desir, Special Assistant Environmental Justice,**

**Dept. of Environmental Conservation**

**47-40 21<sup>st</sup> Street, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor**

**Long Island City, NY 11101**

Is there a boiler plate agreement we can give to property owners we plan to work with as part of the grant? Or do we prepare an agreement stating they will give us access to their property to prepare and implement the environmental and resiliency upgrades? If we prepare it, I am not clear as to what provisions it should contain, and if it needs to contain language about insurance, etc

**You should prepare the agreement and upload it as document in the grants gateway as part of your application**

Under the program specific questions, the last one, #27 says: "Have you checked to make sure all required uploads are complete and viewable in the Grants Gateway?" How do I view uploads in the Grants Gateway? In some places where I have uploaded something, there's now a link that says "view file" but there doesn't seem to be any place for me to see what files I've uploaded and where they are.

**Click on view file button you reference and then open document and insure it is the correct one you wanted uploaded for that question.**

The federal government just announced today that they are suspending all grant programs. Does this affect DEC's EJ Community Impact Grants?



**No. Our Community Impact Grants are funded by the state budget.**

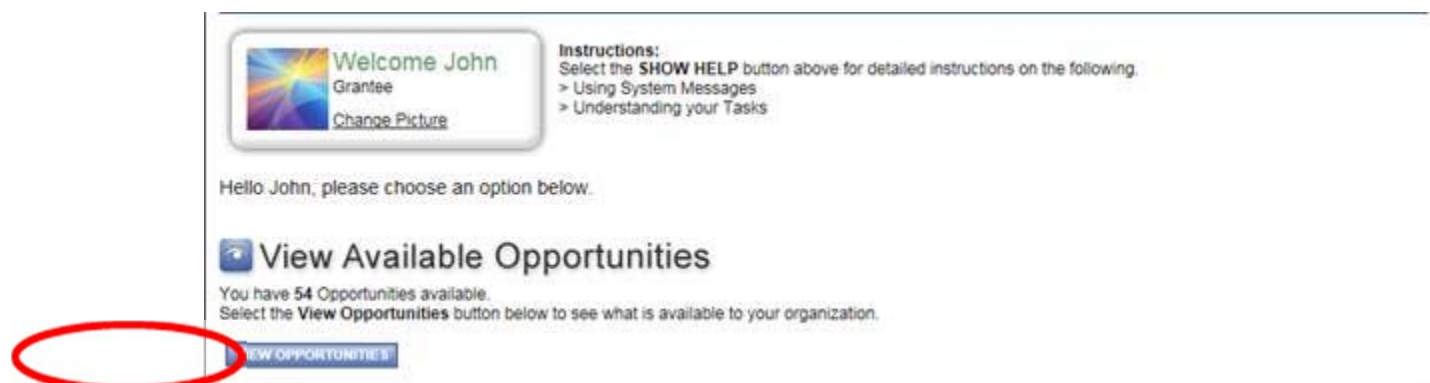
When/where will answers to other questions be posted on the website?

**The FAQs are attached to the Grant Opportunity Portal and are updated weekly.**

**\*Note to any applicants experiencing issues regarding applying, opening tabs, and using various functions in the gateway: Please make sure that when logging in, the role is appropriate for the functions you are trying to perform, as many of them have restricted capability. In many cases there has been confusion because applicants have been using roles that do not have access to particular functions. Below are some steps to walk you through once you have cleared that path.**

**While logged in the appropriate role follow these steps:**

Click the **View Opportunities** button on the home page underneath the **View Available Opportunities** heading.



Enter search criteria into the search fields to find the opportunity you wish to apply to. Click on the Grant Opportunity field of the opportunity you wish to apply to.

Funding Agency	Grant Opportunity	Status	Availability Date	Eligibility	Due Date
Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Services	<a href="#">Applying for a Grant Opportunity - October 2016</a>	Available	October 18, 2016	For Profit, Not-For-Profit	Oct 18, 2017 4:00PM

Review the information on the page to determine if you wish to apply to this opportunity. If you do wish to apply, click the **Apply for Grant Opportunity** button. You will be taken to the Application Main Page. Click on the **Forms** menu. The first actual question is **Project/Site Addresses**.

- Is a partner letter supposed to be combined into one file with support letters or is it treated differently? Where does an authorizing resolution get uploaded?
  - **Upload these in grantee document folder. The partner letter should be kept separate from the letters of support. Unless the question specifically asks for an upload, anything else you need to show through an upload should go in grantee document folder like insurance, MWBE plan, letters of support etc.**

Brooklyn Movement Center-we found one particular excerpt from the instructions confusing: "Paid staff, including fringe benefits, to any individual person cannot exceed 30 percent of the total grant award." This also refers to contract staff time. My questions are: 1) Does this mean that ANY ONE individual payment line cannot exceed 30% of the total grant award, or that the TOTAL staff budget line — which could include several staff lines -- cannot exceed 30%? 2) However question 1 is answered, do the instructions that I quoted mean that paid staff can be up to 30% of the grant award and that contract staff time can be up to ANOTHER 30%? Or should I read that as either/or? In other words, does it mean paid and contract staff time COMBINED cannot exceed than 30% of the grant award?

- **The RFA reads as though paid staff time (individuals who work for the entity applying) can be up to 30% of total grant award which includes fringe benefits and the fringe cannot exceed 15% of the staff salary. It also says that contractual staff time for a paid professional can be 30% of total grant award. This means that there can be 30% for paid staff and then ANOTHER 30% for professional staff paid through the contractual services line. Sample Budget for this example:**

**\$200,000 project**

**Personal Services & fringe- \$52,175 salary and \$7,825 fringe- total \$60,000  
(30% of total award)**

**Contractual Services for professional - \$60,000**

**Equipment- \$50,000**

**Travel- \$10,000**

**Other- \$20,000**

Now that the application deadline have been extended to Feb 28, 2017 can you please let us know when you anticipate making awards. The implementation of our application will be dependent on when awards are made.

- **We anticipate announcing grant awards by April 30<sup>th</sup>**

If a municipality is interested in building a community center in a designated environmental justice area, would they be eligible for assistance from an Environmental Justice Area grant?

**Entities that are not eligible to apply and receive funding under this grant program are: individuals; universities; government bodies; water districts or similar entities; large non-governmental organizations such as a county (outside New York City), regional, state or national environmental groups and organizations.**

Does that mean that this grant program is for not-for-profits or private sector?

**It is only for not-for-profit organizations.**

Our company (Crauderueff & Associates) is acting as a consultant for several non-profit clients with large building portfolios in New York City. If we are applying for the Environmental Justice Grant funding on their behalf, do we have to submit Prequalification requirements (we are for profit), or do our clients have to submit their own Prequalification requirements?

**According to our guidelines, an eligible applicant must be a not-for-profit corporation (NFP) community-based organization, or a community based organization may partner with a NFP that will serve as their fiscal sponsor. The fiscal sponsor would be responsible for submitting the online grant application in the Grants Gateway.**

Does the community based organization need to go through the registration process for approval before sending in the application on behalf of the NFP?

**Yes**

Paid staff, including fringe benefits, to any individual person cannot exceed 30 percent of the total grant award.” This also refers to contract staff time. My questions are: 1) Does this mean that ANY ONE individual payment line cannot exceed 30% of the total grant award, or that the TOTAL staff budget line — which could include several staff lines -- cannot exceed 30%? 2) However question 1 is answered, do the instructions that I quoted mean that paid staff can be up to 30% of the grant award and that contract staff time can be up to ANOTHER 30%? Or should I read that as either/or? In other words, does it mean paid and contract staff time COMBINED cannot exceed than 30% of the grant award?

**The RFA and it reads as though paid staff time (individuals who work for the entity applying) can be up to 30% of total grant award which includes fringe benefits and the fringe cannot exceed 15% of the staff salary. It also says that contractual staff time for a paid professional can be 30% of total grant award. This mean that there can be 30% for paid staff and then ANOTHER 30% for professional staff paid through the contractual services line.**

**Sample Budget for this example:**

**\$200,000 project**

**Personal Services & fringe- \$52,175 salary and \$7,825 fringe- total \$60,000 (30% of total award)**

**Contractual Services for professional - \$60,000**

**Equipment- \$50,000**

**Travel- \$10,000**

**Other- \$20,000**

If a municipality is interested in building a community center in a designated environmental justice area, would they be eligible for assistance from an Environmental Justice Area grant?

**Entities that are not eligible to apply and receive funding under this grant program are: individuals; universities; government bodies; water districts or similar entities; large non-governmental organizations such as a county (outside New York City), regional, state or national environmental groups and organizations.**