



**Department of
Environmental
Conservation**

Frequently Asked Questions 2021 Community Impact Grants

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New York State
Department of Environmental Conservation
Office of Environmental Justice

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Cancelling An Application

Q: Somehow I created three applications when I only needed one. I can't figure out how to delete the next two extras. Can you do that for me?

A: Applications can be cancelled by someone from within the organization. Here are the instructions:

How to Cancel an Application:

In the Grants Gateway system, any application which is in "Application in Process" status can be cancelled.

Roles mentioned below can change the application status to "Application Cancelled"
Grantee Contract Signatory
Grantee System Administrator

1. Start by logging in to Grants Gateway.
2. Retrieve the application you would like to cancel.
3. Click on the Status Changes link.
4. Click on the APPLY STATUS button located under APPLICATION CANCELLED.
5. To confirm the status of your Application click on the Details link. The current Status of the application would be "Application Cancelled".

Grants Gateway/Prequalification

Q: Our fiscal sponsor is prequalified through the grant gateway, does the applicant organization also need to need to also pre-qualify?

A: Only the fiscal sponsor has to register and pre-qualify in the grants gateway. The fiscal sponsor does not have to meet the eligibility requirements, however the applicant organization must meet all other eligibility requirements. The fiscal sponsor should answer the eligibility questions based on the applicant organization.

Q: We are in the process of asking a 5013c organization to be our fiscal sponsor for the Environmental Justice Community Impact Grant.

If a not-for-profit as pre-qualified, applied, and received a EJ grant in the past, do they need to pre-qualify again if they are going to be a fiscal sponsor for a community organization for the July 1st deadline?

A: Prequalification should be done on an annual basis to maintain a “document vault prequalified” status. If you do not update the required documents annually the document vault will expire. The fiscal sponsor must register on the grants gateway and be prequalified on the grants gateway by the deadline.

Q: How do I send in my application?

A: All applicants must apply through the NYS Grants Gateway.
https://grantsgateway.ny.gov/IntelliGrants_NYSGG/module/nysgg/goportal.aspx.

This includes answering all program questions and uploading completed and required program documents and forms. Paper applications will NOT be accepted for this grant opportunity. Late applications will not be accepted.

All Applicants must be Registered with Grants Gateway to submit an application. In addition to registration, not-for-profits must also be Prequalified at the time and date that the application is due. If you are not Prequalified at that time and date, your application will not be considered.

Q: I am inquiring about whether or not our organization is a qualified NFP to apply for the DEC’s Community Impact Grants (DEC01-EJCIG-2021)? We do have a Grants Management account, but I can’t seem to find the “apply now” or “Apply here”...Is there a step I have missed to register properly? It appears the registration forms were submitted in November 2019.

A: In order to initiate an application a Delegated Admin will need to assign yourself or someone else one of the roles below that are able to **initiate an application**. I'd highly recommend someone be assigned the "Grantee System Administrator" role so you can initiate, work on AND submit an application. More information on how to assign roles can be found at the Grants Management website: <https://grantsmanagement.ny.gov/grants-gateway-system-faq>

Role	Create and Maintain user Roles	Initiate Application	Complete Application	Submit Application	Only view the Application
Delegated Admin	✓				
Grantee		✓	✓		
Grantee Contract Signatory		✓	✓	✓	
Grantee Payment Signatory		✓	✓		
Grantee System Administrator		✓	✓	✓	
Grantee View Only					✓

Once you are assigned the correct role and are logged into the Gateway (make sure your log in role is either grantee, grantee system administrator, or grantee contract signatory) you will find the grant under "Environmental Justice Community Impact Grant".

It also appears to me that someone started the document vault but it has only been initialized but not prequalified. Please be sure that you prequalify in the Gateway prior to the due date of July 1.

Q: We are thinking about doing the EJ Community Impact Grant, unfortunately, I can't find the link for application for 2021 can you email it to me? Also can you explain how this grant is supposed to be tied in with Economic Development and why it would be?

A: Applications are being accepted through the Grants Gateway Portal. Link: https://grantsgateway.ny.gov/IntelliGrants_NYSSGG/module/nysgg/goportal.aspx.

Once you are logged in (make sure your log in role is either grantee, grantee system administrator, or grantee contract signatory) you will find the grant under "COMMUNITY IMPACT GRANT PROGRAM For Communities Exposed to Multiple Environmental Harms and Risks in New York State". If you put "community" in the search box the grant opportunity will come back.

If your other question is about the Regional Economic Development Council (REDC) question, it is not mandatory for your project to align with the REDC strategy. Applicants may answer N/A to that question. The REDC plans are available here: <http://regionalcouncils.ny.gov>. Points will be given if the proposed project aligns with any of the strategies from the applicable to the applicant's project.

Q: Is this application offered through Consolidated Funding Application?

A: No, you will apply through the Grants Gateway.

Q: We can not locate the Environmental Justice Community Impact Grant application in the Gateway, can you explain how to find it?

If you use the "Grant Opportunity Portal" (as seen below) click on "Search for Opportunities".

In the "Search by Grant Opportunity" box please type in "environmental justice" and leave all the other boxes the way they are and then select "Search". The grant opportunity will be returned.



Back

Grant Opportunity Portal - Search for Opportunities

[Browse for Opportunities](#) | [Search for Opportunities](#)

Search for Opportunities

Enter the criteria and click the Search button.

Search by Grant Opportunity:

Search by Due Date: From: To:

Search by Status:

Search by Eligibility:

Search by Funding Agency:

Search by Service Area:

Search for "environmental justice" in the Grant opportunity box leave everything else the way it is and click search.

Search Results

Click the Grant Opportunity Name to view more detail on Available Opportunities. Sort the results by clicking on a column heading (sorting by Eligibility is not an option).

Funding Agency	Grant Opportunity	Status	Eligibility	Availability Date	Anticipated Release Date	Due Date
Department of Environmental Conservation	Environmental Justice COMMUNITY IMPACT GRANT PROGRAM For Communities Exposed to Multiple Environmental Harms and Risks in New York State	Available	Not-For-Profit	April 20, 2021	NA	July 01, 2021
Department of Environmental Conservation	2016 Environmental Justice Community Impact Grant Program	Closed	Not-For-Profit	November 17, 2016	NA	
Department of Environmental Conservation	2017 Environmental Justice Community Impact Grant Program	Closed	Not-For-Profit	April 17, 2018	NA	

Q: I am registered and logged in to the Grants Gateway in one of the three roles that can start the application (Grantee, Grantee System Administrator, or Grantee Contract Signatory) but the "Apply for Grant Opportunity" button has not appeared.

A: If you do not see the "Apply for Grant Opportunity" button please go to your home page and click on "View Opportunities" listed under View Available Opportunities.



From that page you may search for available grant opportunities.

On the opportunity page, you will see the “  ” button on the bottom left side of the page.

Q: Do we apply through the Grants Gateway or the Consolidated Funding Application?

A: You will apply through the Grants Gateway.

Q: I would love to learn more about the guidelines for Gov. Cuomo's [community impact grant](#). Is there a way to find out relevant information prior to the July deadline?

A: Thank you for your inquiry. You can find more information about this grant opportunity including applicant eligibility and eligible project locations at the NYS Grants Gateway or by clicking on this link: [Grant Opportunity](#) and entering “Community Impact” into the “Search by Grant Opportunity” field. Once you click on the opportunity if you scroll to the bottom of the page you can then click on “View Grant Opportunity” and the full guidelines and instructions will open.

Q: 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?

A: The short answer is to make sure you are logged in as a role with the function to start an application. Please see below. Additionally, you can find New York State Grants Gateway Vendor's Quick Start Guide on How to apply for Opportunities here: https://grantsreform.ny.gov/sites/default/files/grantee_quick_start_guide.pdf

*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.

Role	Create and Maintain user Roles	Initiate Application	Complete Application	Submit Application	Only view the Application
Delegated Admin	✓				
Grantee		✓	✓		
Grantee Contract Signatory		✓	✓	✓	
Grantee Payment Signatory		✓	✓		
Grantee System Administrator		✓	✓	✓	
Grantee View Only					✓

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.

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**.

Q: 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?

A: Only the fiscal sponsor has to register and pre-qualify in the grants gateway. The fiscal sponsor does not have to meet the eligibility requirements, however the applicant organization must meet all other eligibility requirements. The fiscal sponsor should answer the eligibility questions based on the applicant organization.

Q: Does the fiscal sponsor need to go through the registration process for approval before sending in the application on behalf of the NFP?

A: Yes. The fiscal sponsor must register on the grants gateway and be prequalified on the grants gateway.

Eligibility

Q: Is it unusual for organizations to be funded 2 years in a row, even though we are eligible?

A: It is not unusual for organizations to be funded 2 years in a row.

Q: How do you define “affected community?”

A: The “affected community” will be the EJ community that you are going to be doing the project in.

Q: Would you be able to tell me what our score was last time?

A: Yes. Any organization who applied can call the office after awards are announced to get a debriefing.

Q: I read in the RFP information that we can apply up to 3 times for 3 different projects. I am trying to figure out how to do that because I already started one for this grant: Environmental Justice COMMUNITY IMPACT GRANT PROGRAM For Communities Exposed to Multiple Environmental Harms and Risks in New York State

Do I just finish this then start a new one? Or can I simultaneously do three?

A part 1: Thank you for your question. You will repeat the process you did to start the first application and you are able to work on all three simultaneously.

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.

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**.

A Part 2: I attached the RFA for your review, please look it over carefully. Please note on page 3: **e) Application Limit/Award limit:** Applicants may submit up to three applications, however, only one application per applicant may be funded.

Q: I wanted to touch base with you as I know our previous DEC-EJ grants are still open as we await completion of our expansion project. Due to the fact that we still have 2 active grants, are we then not eligible to apply for the round due on 7/1?

A: Thank you for your question. So long as you meet all the eligibility requirements and are in good standing (which you are) you would be eligible to apply.

Q: You can see on the EJ map that we are 4 blocks outside of the designated EJ area. The area did have an over 20% poverty rate in 2000. But does our 2-block distance inhibit our applying?

A: If you can use authoritative demographic information to meet the eligibility in one of the listed ways in the RFA the EJ map does not inhibit you from applying. There are different methods to demonstrate that your location and the residents served are located in an EJ community, not just the potential environmental justice area maps. You may demonstrate on the map where your organization is located in relation to the community served and project area.

Q: I have a question about the community impact grant. Can we apply again for an expansion of a project? We were awarded a community impact grant for it in 2017. It has expanded and we want it to continue to do so and we are wondering if we are eligible to receive a grant for the same project again?

A: Yes, you would be eligible to apply for an expansion of a project. Current and past grantees can apply however you cannot use funds from a new grant to help cover expenses or costs that are also being paid for by your previous award. If you are expanding upon the current project you must be able to differentiate the current program costs and expenses from your new proposal.

Please also note that you will need to be “in good standing” for progress reports come 7/1/2021.

Q: Our nonprofit would be proactively seeking out upgrading rental buildings that serve the LMI community in EJ areas within our town. Please let me know if that would be sufficient to qualify.

A: Due to the competitive nature of the grant opportunity we can not comment on specific project ideas.

Please review pages 10-13 of the RFA that discusses previously funded project ideas and for a full list of past funded projects, organization, project title, project description and award amounts can be found at Open Data. The list can be exported into Excel and searched. <https://data.ny.gov/Energy-Environment/Office-of-Environmental-Justice-OEJ-Grant-Awards-B/n4r8-9j2b>

Q: We perform refrigerator replacements in disadvantaged communities across the US. In NY we currently work with NYSERDA, NYPPA, NYPA, NYCHA, NYSEG, RGE, ConEd, PSEG-LI, O&R, to name a few.

We provide RAD recycling (Responsible Appliance Disposal) for our New York programs.

My question is, would this level of recycling and disadvantages appliance replacement services qualify for the environmental grant?

If yes, could we potentially partner with a non profit that has revenues greater than \$3M annually or less than \$3M?

A: Thank you for your question. I have attached the RFA for your review. Due to the competitive nature of the grant I cannot comment on specific project ideas. Please note that there are both organizational and project location requirements for this grant opportunity.

For this grant, an eligible applicant **must be a not-for-profit corporation (NFP) community-based organization**, or a NFP community-based organization may partner with a NFP that will serve as their fiscal sponsor. Please see the RFA for all eligibility requirements.

That being said, an ineligible organization may be involved in a proposed EJ project by partnering as a subcontractor for an eligible organization.

For purposes of this grant application, a “community-based organization” is defined as an organization that satisfies and meets all of the following criteria:

- a. Serves the residents of an area **equal to or smaller than one county, one town, city or New York City borough**. Organizations serving areas larger than indicated such as regional or national organizations are not eligible for this grant. However, ineligible not-for-profits may serve as fiscal sponsors for eligible NFP community-based organizations or partner with eligible organizations; and
- b. Has a **total annual revenue that does not exceed \$3,000,000**, based on the applicant’s IRS Form 990 filing from the previous year (line 12); and
- c. Cannot have its charter revoked or otherwise be dissolved through the action of another organization; and
- d. Can enter into legal agreements independent of any affiliated not-for-profit organization, government body, university or other entity that would be ineligible to apply for this grant; and
- e. Focuses on addressing the environmental and/or public health problems of the residents of the community that is impacted by the multiple environmental harms and risks that are the focus of the project (the “affected community”); and
- f. Must have its primary office location in the affected community; and
- g. Has more than 50 percent of its members residing in the affected community, or for organizations that do not have members, have more than 50 percent of the people

served by the applicant community group residing in the affected community. (A NFP 6 serving as a fiscal sponsor is not required to have members in the affected community.); and

h. The applicant (and partner NFP fiscal sponsor, if applicable) must declare that it has not caused or contributed to the environmental harms or risks that are to be the subject of the proposed project. (Note: A declaration can be viewed on the last page of this RFA. The declaration must be signed and uploaded in the Grants Gateway.); and

i. Be in good standing and will have submitted all required progress reports for current open grants and final narrative and financial reports for previously awarded Office of Environmental Justice grants where the term has expired.

So you would need to find a NFP, community based organization that is in an EJ area to partner with. Please also note that there is a required research component.

Q: In Section 2 - F & G

f. Must have its primary office location in the affected community; and

g. Has more than 50 percent of its members residing in the affected community, or for organizations that do not have members, have more than 50 percent of the people served by the applicant community group residing in the affected community.

We are an environmental non-profit located in the town of Bedford, NY. There is an environmental justice area we are looking to serve within our town. Our office is not located within the environmental justice area, our office is in the same town but not the exact EJ area.

Additionally, we do not have members as we serve our entire community, including the environmental justice area. We focus on addressing the environmental and/or public health problems of the residents of the community that is impacted by the multiple environmental harms and risks that are the focus of the project (the “affected community”)

I would like to clarify those eligibility requirements.

Thank you for your question.

f. Must have its primary office location in the affected community

If you can use authoritative demographic information to meet the eligibility in one of the listed ways in the RFA (please see pages 3-4 or 15-16) the EJ map does not inhibit you from

applying. There are different methods to demonstrate that your location and the residents served are located in an EJ community, not just the potential environmental justice area maps. You may demonstrate on the map where your organization is located in relation to the community served and project area.

g. for organizations that do not have members, have more than 50 percent of the people served by the applicant community group residing in the affected community.

Think of members as people served. Some nonprofits have an official membership program so we ask that 50 percent of the members of the applicant organization must reside in the affected community (not staff). Or, for organizations that do not have members, 50 percent of the people served by applicant organization must reside in the affected community.

Q: . I'm seeking some clarification regarding the qualifications of a CBO applicant for the "COMMUNITY IMPACT GRANT PROGRAM FOR COMMUNITIES EXPOSED TO MULTIPLE ENVIRONMENTAL HARMS AND RISKS IN NEW YORK STATE" funding opportunity.

Our NFP is a local affiliate for a National NFP. We have a 6 region territory, but our location and 90% of our services, board members and participants are from the affected community.

Would we be eligible to apply as the CBO or would we need to act as the fiscal sponsor for a NFP that only serves the City?

Thank you for your question. For the purposes of this grant opportunity, an eligible community based organization must serve the residents of an area *equal to or smaller than one county, one town, city or New York City borough*. Organizations serving areas larger than indicated such as regional or national organizations are not eligible for this grant.

However, ineligible not for profits may serve as fiscal sponsors for eligible community based organizations or partner with eligible organizations.

Q: Could a county government apply? If not, could a sheriff's department be a partner/subcontractor in the grant, if a non-profit were the prime contractor?

A: Entities that are **not** eligible to apply and receive funding under this grant program are: individuals; universities; municipalities; government bodies; water districts or similar entities; large non-governmental organizations such as serving multiple counties, regional, state or national environmental groups and organizations.

However an ineligible organization may be involved in a proposed EJ project by partnering as a subcontractor for an eligible organization.

Q: For Question 12, does "people served by the organization" refer to all activities of the organization, or just those that pertain to the project we are applying for funding?

A: People served by the organization refers to your organization as a whole.

Q: Does our organization need to be directly on property in the Potential Environmental Justice (EJ) shaded area to apply, in addition to 50% of the population we're serving? Our property lies just past the border of the EJ area indicated on the map. This question is phrased as "affected community", and we consider our project to serve a slightly larger area that includes our property line.

Related to this, since the EJ area map doesn't encompass any town or city boundaries neatly, do we need to demonstrate that this project *only* serves people who reside in that area, or can a city, whose majority is considered EJ area, serve as our project area?

A: The applicant organization must be located in the EJ community where your proposed project will serve.

For question 4, there are different methods to demonstrate that your location and the residents served are located in an EJ community, not just the potential environmental justice area maps (please see pages 14-15 of the RFA). The potential environmental justice areas are based on census block groups of 250 to 500 households each. As you indicated, the block group may not match up to a neighborhood boundary. You may demonstrate on the map where your organization is located in relation to the community served and project area.

Your organization may serve an area larger than the project area but cannot serve an area larger than a town or city (for example, regional or national organizations are not eligible).

Q: Would the County Cornell Cooperative Extension be an eligible non-profit? While it does have the name of the University within its own name, the agency is not dependent on the University for funding, guidance, programing etc. and in fact is required to declare that they are not part of the University when applying for grants. They do only serve the County residents, and do not have any financial or administrative bonds with any of the other Cornell Cooperative Extension agencies serving other counties.

A: Thank you for your question. You would need to demonstrate that you are independent from Cornell with the information you provided also fit all other organization eligibility requirements and be sure to look at the location eligibility to make sure that your office is in an EJ community.

Q: Is there a GIS boundary file of the eligible (purple) territory for this grant?

A: Please see our website that has each county map with EJ areas on it. <http://www.dec.ny.gov/public/911.html>

To view PEJAs in greater detail or to combine them with other spatial information, [download the GIS layer of PEJAs in KMZ format for Google Earth \(TM\)](#). You will need Google Earth 5 or later to view the KMZ file; the latest version of Google Earth is available to download for free at <https://www.google.com/earth/desktop/>. When this data layer is opened in Google Earth, the PEJAs appear as transparent purple polygons superimposed on the map of New York State.

Q: We're curious about working both inside and outside of the EJ boundaries. If our project serves areas that are largely inside but also works on the perimeter of the purple boundaries cited in the RFP, will our application be disqualified?

A: Yes, you can apply for a grant to do work both in the EJ area AND for work just outside of the EJ area. Be sure to discuss in your narrative the harms and risks along with benefits of doing this work and how it will help the folks **IN** your EJ area.

Q: Does the fiscal sponsor have to be located in an EJ area?

A: No, the fiscal sponsor does not have to be located in an EJ area. The fiscal sponsor does not have to meet the eligibility requirements and can have an operating budget over \$3 million, however the applicant organization must have a budget under \$3 million and meet all other eligibility requirements. The fiscal sponsor should answer the eligibility questions based on the applicant organization. Please refer to the RFA Applicant Eligibility Section and Fiscal Sponsors on pages 2-3.

Q: We are a Canadian based organization would we be eligible to apply?

A: Please see page 4 of the RFA.

Eligible Project Locations

Projects must serve an EJ community, as defined in DEC *Commissioner Policy 29, Environmental Justice and Permitting* (available on DEC's website at: <http://www.dec.ny.gov/public/36929.html>). Applicants can identify EJ communities in the following ways:

- Refer to maps on DEC's website showing these areas: <http://www.dec.ny.gov/public/911.html>.
- Refer to census tracts and block numbering areas which, as of the 2000 U.S. Census, had a poverty rate of at least 20 percent and an unemployment rate of at least 125 percent of the New York State unemployment rate.
- Refer to census tracts and block numbering areas which, as of the 2000 U.S. Census, had a poverty rate of at least two times the poverty rate for the county in which the tract is located.
- Refer to the Empire State Development Corporation's (ESDC) designated environmental zones. Maps of *environmental zones* in each county can be found on the ESDC Brownfield Redevelopment website at <http://www.esd.ny.gov/BusinessPrograms/BrownfieldCleanupTracts.html>.

Note: The ESDC has designated the Environmental Zones for the purpose of providing tax incentives for brownfield redevelopment. The Environmental Justice Community Impact Grants ARE NOT related in any way to the Brownfield Redevelopment tax incentives. The link to the ESDC Brownfield Redevelopment website is provided here only as a reference to the Environmental Zone maps.

Q: My question was can we use the 990 along with the Audited Financial Report since this clearly shows that our organization's revenue is much less than 3 million without in-

kind donations of food. We count in-kind as both revenue and expenses according to the audited financial report.

A: For this particular opportunity it is in the RFA that we base revenue on the 990 (specifically line 12) and we cannot allow other exemptions or base it on other financials.

Q: We are a CBO that has revenue over 3,000,000 but it is due to in-kind donations of food to our food pantry. Our revenue without these in-kind donations is 1.8 million. However, on our 990, it shows a total revenue greater than 3 million. Can we based on revenue on our audited tax forms rather than our 990 so that we are eligible to submit?

A: The overall revenue of the applicant organization cannot exceed \$3,000,000 based on the applicant's IRS Form 990 filing from the previous year (line 12) as described in the RFA Applicant Eligibility Requirements Section 2 (b) on page 8.

Q: I have reread the RFP a few times but am still not sure: If an organization is applying through a Fiscal Sponsor and has an operating budget under \$3 million, is it OK if the Fiscal Sponsor has an operating budget over \$3 million?

A: Yes, if an organization is applying through a fiscal sponsor, the fiscal sponsor does not have to meet the eligibility requirements and can have an operating budget over \$3 million, however the applicant organization must have a budget under \$3 million and meet all other eligibility requirements. The fiscal sponsor should answer the eligibility questions based on the applicant organization. Please refer to the RFA Applicant Eligibility Section and Fiscal Sponsors on pages 2-3.

Q: 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?

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

Fiscal Sponsors

Q: I have reread the RFP a few times but am still not sure: If an organization is applying through a Fiscal Sponsor and has an operating budget under \$3 million, is it OK if the Fiscal Sponsor has an operating budget over \$3 million?

A: Yes, if an organization is applying through a fiscal sponsor, the fiscal sponsor does not have to meet the eligibility requirements and can have an operating budget over \$3 million, however the applicant organization must have a budget under \$3 million and meet all other eligibility

requirements. The fiscal sponsor should answer the eligibility questions based on the applicant organization. Please refer to the RFA Applicant Eligibility Section and Fiscal.

Q: Does the fiscal sponsor need to go through the registration process for approval before sending in the application on behalf of the NFP?

A: Yes. The fiscal sponsor must register on the grants gateway and be prequalified on the grants gateway.

Regions

Q: Can you help me determine which regions I'm in for DEC and REDC?

A: Thank you for your question. You can determine what DEC region you are in by visiting this link: <https://www.dec.ny.gov/about/76070.html> It gives you a breakdown of each region by the county you are in.

You can visit the REDC's website to determine which region you are in <https://regionalcouncils.ny.gov/capital-region>

Research Component

Q: With regards to the research component--should the audience of research be the impacted community?

A: Yes, that is correct. The audience of the research component would be the affected EJ community.

Q: What defines research--would developing best practices count as research?

A: The research component can be either primary or secondary to the project. The research should be related to the environmental harms or risks in the affected community.

Q: What type of research would be best for our organization to include in this project?

A: The research component can be either primary or secondary. The research should be related to the environmental harms or risks in the affected community.

Q: We have been funded in the past. Do we need to have a new research component?

A: Yes, you would need to have a new research component. Please see page 10 of the RFA. (3) **Research Component-** Project proposal must include a research component that will be used to expand the knowledge or understanding of the affected community.

For current grantees: please note that this **must** be a **NEW** research component. Previously approved and funded research components will not be accepted.

The research component can be primary or secondary and should be related to the environmental harms or risks in the affected community.

Work Plan

Q: Just looking for the definitive answer as to whether the entire Work Plan has to be submitted or just the Objectives and Performance Measures. I'm hoping that because the guidelines say "may be used", the answer is no.

A: I believe what you are looking at is the section in Pre-Submission Uploads about the Work Plan Worksheet not the actual Workplan Properties section of the application.

Workplan Worksheet

The Work Plan **Worksheet** may be used as a tool to help applicants organize their proposed project objectives, tasks, and performance measures. The Work Plan Worksheet should NOT be uploaded back into the Grants Gateway. The worksheet is intended to better assist applicants in developing their application work plan in the Grants Gateway. **Only objectives, tasks and performance measures entered into the Workplan Properties page of the Grants Gateway application will be evaluated.**

Please see page 14 of the RFA (attached).

d. Work Plan and Timeline

Applicants must complete a work plan in the Grants Gateway application that provides a clear overview of the project. Applications must include proposed project objectives and tasks associated with meeting each objective and the desired project outcome or deliverables accounted for in performance measures.

The work plan should include anticipated time frames in meeting the proposed project objectives, tasks and deliverables (i.e., spring, summer, fall, winter). Project time frames must be consistent with the timeline an applicant will be required to upload in the Grants Gateway Program question section of the application. Applicants must upload an anticipated timeline to support completion of the proposed project work plan.

Note: A Work Plan 'worksheet' is available for applicants in the Grants Gateway (under Pre-submission uploads). The 'worksheet' can be downloaded and used as a tool to help applicants organize their proposed project objectives, tasks and performance measures. A completed 'worksheet' should NOT be uploaded back into the Grants Gateway. The intent of the 'worksheet' is to assist applicants in developing their application work plan in the Grants Gateway.

For your best chances to be funded I would highly recommend filling out the Workplan, Objectives, Tasks and Performance Measures in the actual Work Plan Overview form and the Work Plan Properties section of the application.

Project timeframes

Q: 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.

A: Please see page 3 of the RFA. The grants are paid in installments up to a 3-year period. Your proposal may be for a project undertaken in less than three years.

Proposed Project Timeframes

All projects must have defined objectives, tasks, and deliverables accounted for in performance measures that can be completed and invoiced within a **36- month contract period/term** and will have a contract term of **January 1, 2022 to December 31, 2025**. Costs outside of the contract period/term are ineligible.

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

A: Please see page 3 of the RFA. Contracts will be for a three year period although your project may be completed in less time.

Proposed Project Timeframes

All projects must have defined objectives, tasks, and deliverables accounted for in performance measures that can be completed and invoiced within a **36- month contract period/term** and will have a contract term of **January 1, 2022 to December 31, 2025**. Costs outside of the contract period/term are ineligible.

Projects

Q: How is "substantial improvement to environmental conditions" defined?

A: This will depend on what the project is and also the view of each individual reviewer.

Q: For projects that involve testing water samples: does your office follow the same guidelines as DEC Hudson River Estuary Program? In other words do you require a QAPP and must the lab be certified by the New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH) under the Environmental Laboratory Approval Program (ELAP)?

A: We do not require a QAPP and do not follow the guidelines of the Hudson River Estuary Program. However, the information collected by the grant recipient must be shared with the affected community.

Q: We are thinking about purchasing vacant lots to develop as part of our program. Can you tell me if grant funds can help with the cost of those purchases?

A: There is nothing in the costs section preventing use of funds that way, so yes their purchase would be eligible.

I do want to point out the other section you should be aware of then:

Letters of Permission/Municipal Endorsement

The applicant must own the property, or obtain an applicable access agreement, for the proposed project site. The applicant must provide proof of land ownership and/or applicable landowner permission and/or municipal endorsement. Applicable proofs of land ownership are required to be in place and uploaded (in a single PDF file) in the Grants Gateway at the time of application. Acceptable proofs of land ownership information or permissions include:

- If the property is owned by the applicant – a copy of the current deed.*
- If the property owner is a municipality – A resolution by the municipality supporting the project.*
- If the property is not owned by the applicant – a formal written agreement between the applicant and landowner which allows the applicant access to the property, and represent the landowner, to accomplish the proposed project.*
- If the applicant is a not-for-profit proposing a project on municipal property - a signed Municipal Endorsement. A municipal endorsement provides authorization for the not-for-profit to conduct the proposed project on municipal property. A sample municipal endorsement can be downloaded and viewed in the Pre-submission Upload section in the Grants Gateway.*

You will need to address the purchase in this section.

I would also highly recommend discussing a contingency for if for some reason you cannot purchase the land and how that would impact the project.

Q: May a portion of the grant award be used to purchase an electric vehicle and charger, for example, an electric bookmobile or law enforcement mobile command center, providing that there is a community outreach program associated with the electric vehicle purchase?

A: Due to the competitive nature of the grant I cannot comment on specific project ideas. However, looking over the eligible and ineligible expenses I do not see anything that would prohibit a nonprofit, community-based group from purchasing an electric vehicle and charger.

Please be sure to demonstrate in your narrative the environmental harms and risks in the community along with benefits of doing this work and how it will help the folks in your EJ area.

I have attached the RFA for your review. Please be sure to review the organizational and project location eligibility requirements carefully. Because you mentioned law enforcement I wanted to make sure you were aware that entities that are not eligible to apply and receive funding under this grant program are: individuals; universities; municipalities; government bodies; water districts or similar entities; large non-governmental organizations such as serving multiple counties, regional, state or national environmental groups and organizations.

Q: Is it my understanding that the CBO must be the owner of the vehicle? Or can the CBO receive the funds, if awarded, and then give the funds to a third party to purchase and own the vehicle, if that third party uses the vehicle to fulfill the CBO's project proposal?

A: We have reviewed the RFA carefully and there is nothing in RFP that prevents it.

Please be sure that you include the purchase as part of the project and wanted to note that scoring includes cost effectiveness.

Q: The CBO does not need to own the vehicle – that it can allocate (“give”) the funds to a third party to purchase the vehicle as an expense in support of the project?

A: That is correct, there is nothing in the RFA that prohibits the NFP CBO to allocate funds to a third party to purchase a vehicle.

Again you’ll want to address how that purchase relates to the entire project in your project narrative and address the cost effectiveness of the purchase.

Q: I’m assuming that DEC will provide “written approval” for use of the funding for purchase of equipment by a third party.

1. **Equipment: Costs for equipment (purchase or rental). Note that any equipment purchased with funding provided by this grant program cannot be sold, transferred or used for other purposes without prior written approval from DEC.**

A: If the project was funded and part of the award was for a subcontractor to purchase an electric vehicle to complete the project and then the subcontractor decided to sell the vehicle that is when the subcontractor would need to request permission to sell the vehicle.

Uploads

Q: Can I upload additional documents that we’d like the reviewers to see to the “Grantee Document Folder”?

A: The grantee document folder is used after an organization is awarded funds as a place to put documents that are required to execute their contract.

If you want the reviewers to see anything that information should be uploaded to the question as reviewers do not have access to the grantee document folder.

Q: 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?

A: The partner letter should be kept separate from the letters of support.

An authorizing resolution from a municipality to demonstrate permission to use municipal property should be uploaded for program specific question 6.

Unless the question specifically asks for an upload, anything else you need to show through an upload should go either in the “pre-submission uploads” or in grantee document folder like insurance, MWBE plan, etc.

The grantee document folder is **not** the same as your document vault. The grantee document folder can be found by clicking on forms menu when you are in the application and scrolling down to grantee document folder.

Q: Do we need to complete the mandatory Sexual Harassment Prevention Certification form?

A: Yes, the Sexual harassment Prevention Certification form is mandatory.

Sexual Harassment Prevention Certification*

State Finance Law §139-I **requires all applicants** of grant funding to certify that they have a written policy addressing sexual harassment prevention in the workplace and provide annual sexual harassment training (that meets the Department of Labor’s model policy and training standards) to all its employees.

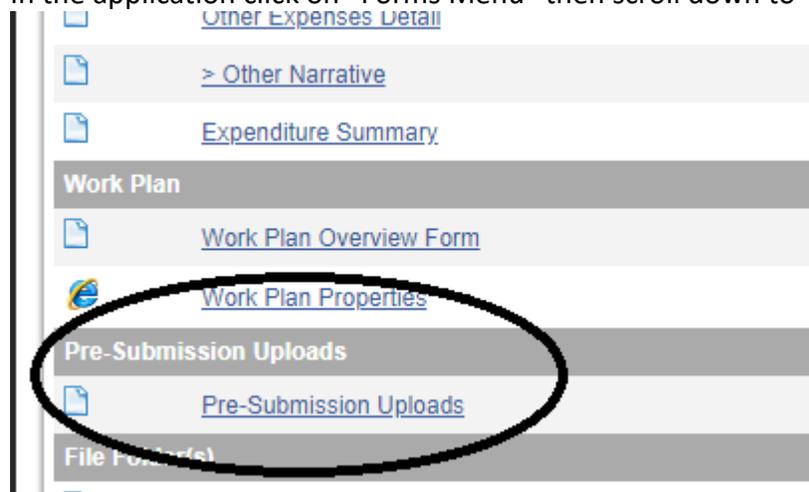
Applications that do not contain the certification will not be considered for award; provided however, that if the applicant cannot make the certification, the applicant may provide a signed statement with their application detailing the reasons why the certification cannot be made.

Applicants are required to sign and upload the Sexual Harassment Prevention Certification form or upload a signed statement with their application detailing the reasons why the certification cannot be made into the pre-submission uploads folder."

Q: Can you help me find where to upload the Sexual Harassment Prevention Certification form?

A: Thank you for your question. Here is where you will find where to upload it:

In the application click on “Forms Menu” then scroll down to "Pre-submission Uploads"



Once in there scroll down and its the very last form to upload.

Smart Growth Assessment Form
(If applicable to your project) NYS Smart Growth Public Infrastructure Policy Act (ACT) requires : infrastructure projects. Completion of the Smart Growth assessment Form will inform DEC on w/ whether or not it complies with the ACT.

No file chosen
Document Template: [Click here](#)

Sexual Harassment Prevention Certification*
State Finance Law §139-I requires all applicants of grant funding to certify that they have a written workplace and provide annual sexual harassment training (that meets the Department of Labor's

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No file chosen
Document Template: [Click here](#)

Other questions

Q: The guidelines ask us to demonstrate staff members' track record. If we anticipate a leadership transition in the near future, how should we demonstrate that?

A: You could demonstrate the track record of staff and past projects by discussing other projects/tasks that have successfully been completed on time, within budget and the impact the project had.

Q: Are there word counts or page counts available for the work plan?

A: Once you start an application in the Grants Gateway you'll be able to see what the word counts are. They range anywhere from 500-4000 depending on the question.

Q: Under the program specific questions, the last one 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.

A: Click on view file button you referenced and then "open document" and ensure it is the correct one you wanted uploaded for that question.

Funding

Q: I'm reviewing the requirements for this grant, and I am wondering if it is 100K per year, or over three years?

A: The grant is for \$100,000 over a 3-year contract term.

Q: Are matching funds encouraged?

A: Matching funds are not a requirement under this grant opportunity.

Review Process

Q: How will we be reviewed/evaluated? A single person or group?

A: Applicants who submit applications by the due date will first receive an “eligibility” and “completeness” pass/fail review. If the application receives a single ‘fail’ response in the eligibility review, the application will be disqualified from further review. If the application meets all eligibility pass/fail criteria, it will receive further evaluation and scoring by at least three members of a review team. For further information about the evaluation process please see the Application Evaluation, Scoring and Selection starting on page 19 of the RFA.

Letters of Support and Permission

Q: Who should letters of support be addressed to and where do we mail them?

A: Support letters **must be uploaded as a single pdf file in the Grants Gateway** by the application due date.

You can address it to:
Rosa Méndez, Director, Office of Environmental Justice
Dept. of Environmental Conservation
625 Broadway, 14th Floor
Albany, NY 12233

Letters received in the mail will not be counted. Only letters of support uploaded in the Grants Gateway will be counted.

Q: If we will be educating property tenants by going door to door, do we need to get a letter of permission from each tenant we visit?

A: No, you do not need to have a letter of permission from each tenant. The letters of permission are intended for use by organizations that will be hosting programs on property that they do not own. For instance you were holding your project at a local community center or municipality.

Q: In terms of the Municipal Endorsement Form, which office does that need to be issued from? We have strong relationships with a number of municipal agencies but I want to be sure it's coming from the right source.

A: Typically the municipal endorsement comes from the City/Town Clerk's office.

Please see page 14 of the RFA: If **the applicant is a not-for-profit proposing a project on municipal property** - a signed Municipal Endorsement. A municipal endorsement provides authorization for the not-for-profit to conduct the proposed project on municipal property.

A sample municipal endorsement can be downloaded and viewed in the **Pre-submission Upload** section in the Grants Gateway.

What to expect if we are given an award/Reporting Requirements

Q: Based on the application guidelines, I believe that we do not have to submit the Contract Document Properties at the application phase, and that we will instead be required to submit this information if we receive a grant, within 60 to 90 days of an award letter, is this correct?

A: Yes, that is correct. If you are awarded funding we will work with you on the next steps along with documentation required to execute your contract.

Q: What kind of reporting requirements will be necessary if we are given an award?

A: Please refer to page 27 of the RFA. If you are awarded a grant you will be expected to submit quarterly narrative and expenditure reports (ie. 3/30, 6/30, 9/30, 12/30 for each year of the grant). At the end of the grant period you'll be expected to submit a final report no later than 60 days after the end of the contract term or upon completion of the project.