

**Track I:**

**Application  
Development  
Workbook**

A technical assistance workbook to support communities developing applications for the Community Change Grants program.



**COMMUNITY  
CHANGE GRANTS**

**Environmental and Climate Justice**

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency



## Disclaimer

This workbook and associated worksheets are designed to aid applicants of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA's) Community Change Grants Program. As EPA technical assistance providers for this program, EnDyna and its subcontractors strive to present accurate information and technical assistance about the Program and the Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO). However, none of the statements, advice, or opinions made by EnDyna or its subcontractors in this document constitute official EPA advice, interpretations, or positions and as such do not guarantee that following the material in this document will result in the award of a grant from EPA. All users of the information in this document are solely responsible for their application's contents.



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# Introduction

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA's) \$2 billion Community Change Grants (CCG) Program will support community and place-based approaches to redress environmental and climate injustices for communities facing legacy pollution, climate change, and persistent disinvestment. This workbook and its worksheets summarize key information about EPA's Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) that is designed to help you better understand its requirements and walk you through the development of a strong grant application.

Your project(s) should be community driven and rooted in tackling specific, environmental justice (EJ) challenges. Through strong collaborative partnerships, applications must demonstrate sustained benefits to disadvantaged communities related to climate resilience, pollution reduction, community health and strength, and economic success. For this funding opportunity, EPA defines disadvantaged community as one that meets at least one of the following criteria:

1. A geographically defined community labeled disadvantaged on [EPA's Inflation Reduction Act \(IRA\) Disadvantaged Communities Map](#), or
2. A farmworker community as defined in NOFO Appendix A; or
3. A Disadvantaged Unincorporated Community (DUC) as defined in NOFO Appendix A.

Refer to NOFO Appendix A for a detailed definition of disadvantaged communities.

***Exhibit 1. Designed with meaningful community, Tribal, and other stakeholder involvement, the investments EPA makes through the CCG are intended to achieve five main objectives.***

**This Workbook Provides**

- Important information about the NOFO
- Guidance
- Helpful tips
- Resources
- Worksheets

**Note, reading this document does not replace reading the NOFO and Frequently Asked Questions.**

## CCG OBJECTIVES



**Provide** resources for community-driven projects to deal with environmental and climate challenges in disadvantaged communities.



**Invest** in strong cross-sectional partnerships with partners committed to working with and for communities' ECJ concerns.



**Unlock** access to extra and more important resources to advance ECJ goals.



**Empower** communities and strengthen their ability to drive meaningful, long-lasting, positive change.



**Strengthen** affected communities' participation in government decision-making processes.

# Program Summary

EPA will consider applications on two separate tracks:

**Track I**—*Community-Driven Investments for Change*—will focus on multifaceted applications with Climate Action and Pollution Reduction Strategies to meaningfully improve the environmental, climate, and resilience conditions affecting disadvantaged communities. Track I is the primary emphasis for the CCG. EPA expects to award approximately 150 Track I grants, each between \$10 million and \$20 million.

**Track II**—*Meaningful Engagement for Equitable Governance*—will facilitate the engagement of disadvantaged communities in governmental processes to make progress in environmental and climate justice. EPA expects to award approximately 20 Track II grants, each between \$1 million and \$3 million.

Applications must include a Statutory Partnership (NOFO Section III.B), defined as:

- A partnership between two community-based non-profit organizations (CBOs), or
- A partnership between a CBO and either a federally recognized Tribe, a local government, or an institution of higher education (IHE).

Each partnership is composed of one Lead Applicant and one Statutory Partner. Other organizations can participate as Collaborating Entities (*strongly recommended*) or as contractors (*you must select any contractors in accordance with federal competitive bidding requirements*). The Partnership must enter into a legally binding agreement, which you will include in your application package. NOFO Appendix B outlines the minimum requirements of the agreement.

## Tips for Building a Successful Partnership

- **Clearly define your goals and objectives.**
- **Identify critical needs and skills for project development and performance.**
- **Leverage complementary capabilities.**
- **Define roles and responsibilities.**
- **Communicate regularly and proactively.**
- **Build and maintain trust.**
- **Establish helpful governance leadership and processes.**

EPA has identified five Target Investment Areas (TIA) for Track I grants to help make sure that communities with unique circumstances, geography, and needs can fairly compete for funding (NOFO Section II.B).



**\$150M**

Tribes in  
Alaska



**\$300M**

Tribes in the Continental  
United States & Hawaii



**\$50M**

U.S.  
Territories



**\$50M**

Disadvantaged Unincorporated  
Communities (DUCs)



**\$100M**

Southern Border  
Communities

## Track I Application Requirements

Each Track I grant application must address at least one Climate Action Strategy and at least one Pollution Reduction Strategy, both of which must be responsive to the community's needs and challenges. Your application will need to explain how the strategies fit together. You should address their combined impact on providing long-term meaningful benefits to community residents and explain how you designed the project's scale and scope to achieve these impacts.

**Climate Action Strategies** focus on strengthening a community's climate resilience, reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, or both. There are eight allowable Climate Action Strategies:

1. Green Infrastructure and Nature-Based Solutions
2. Mobility and Transportation Options for Preventing Air Pollution and Improving Public Health and Climate Resilience
3. Energy-Efficient, Healthy, Resilient Housing and Buildings
4. Microgrid Installation for Community Energy Resilience
5. Community Resilience Hubs
6. Brownfields Redevelopment for Emissions Reduction and Climate Resilience
7. Waste Reduction and Management to Support a Circular Economy
8. Workforce Development Programs for Occupations that Reduce GHG Emissions and Air Pollutants

**Pollution Reduction Strategies** include monitoring, prevention, reduction, and remediation activities that support community efforts to address quantifiable and health-harming pollutants. There are four allowable Pollution Reduction Strategies:

1. Indoor Air Quality and Community Health Improvements
2. Outdoor Air Quality and Community Health Improvements
3. Clean Water Infrastructure to Reduce Pollution Exposure and Increase Overall System Resilience
4. Safe Management and Disposal of Solid and Hazardous Waste

A Review Panel, made up of EPA staff and external reviewers, will evaluate each application based on track-specific evaluation criteria and processes (NOFO Section V). This review will ensure that the application will advance environmental justice, meet CCG objectives, and provide maximum benefits to disadvantaged communities.

Track I applications include a Project Narrative comprised of (1) an Executive Summary and (2) a Project Workplan. The Executive Summary is limited to three pages. The entire Project Narrative cannot exceed 20 pages. The written application criteria of the Project Workplan are outlined in Exhibit 2. The worksheets that accompany this workbook will provide more guidance on how to develop your application.

## Worksheets

Track I - Is CCG the Right Program for You?

Track I - Application Checklist

SAM.gov Registration Checklist

Grants.gov Registration Checklist

### **Community-Driven Investments for Change Worksheets**

Track I – Community Vision Description Worksheet Series:

- Track I – Community Description Worksheet
- Track I – Community Challenges Worksheet
- Track I – Community Vision Worksheet

Track I – Climate Action Strategy Worksheet

Track I – Pollution Reduction Strategy Worksheet

Alaska Tribal Lands TIA Worksheet

Track I – Priority Populations Worksheet

Track I – Community Engagement and Collaborative Governance Plan Worksheet

Track I – Community Strength Plan Worksheet

### **Program Management, Capability, and Capacity Worksheets**

Statutory Partnerships Worksheet

Selecting Collaborating Entities Worksheet

### **Readiness to Perform, Feasibility, and Sustainability Worksheets**

Track I – Readiness Approach Worksheet

Track I – Compliance Plan Worksheet

Budget Worksheet

Track I – Self-Assessment Worksheet

**Exhibit 2. Written Application Criteria for Track I Applications (NOFO Section V.C)**

Element	Brief Description	Possible Points	NOFO Section(s)
<b>Part 1: Community Driven Investments for Change</b>			
Community Vision Description	Provide an overview of the Project Area, including a Project Area Map describing the community needs and challenges; and the vision for the short- and long-term impacts and benefits of proposed project(s).	10	Section IV.B Appendix A
Selected Strategies	Provide an overview of the selected Climate Action Strategy(ies) and Pollution Reduction Strategy(ies) and describe how the proposed project(s) will address local climate and environmental challenges.	45	Section I.G Appendix C Appendix D
Community Engagement and Collaborative Governance Plan	Demonstrate how past engagement affected the strategy and associated project selection and implementation approach; list the specific community engagement methods; and detail the roles and responsibilities of the Partners for grant implementation, management, and oversight.	15	Section I.G
Community Strength Plan	Describe how project(s) will provide maximum economic benefits and discuss and assess the near- and long-term community risks.	10	Section I.G
<b>Part 2: Program Management, Capability, and Capacity</b>			
Performance Management Plan, Outputs/Outcomes	Identify expected project outputs and outcomes and describe how they will be measured. Outputs may be quantitative or qualitative but must be measurable, whereas outcomes must be quantitative.	6	Section I.I Appendix F
Project Linkages to the EPA Strategic Plan	Describe how the proposed project activities support and advance <a href="#">EPA Strategic Plan</a> Goal 2, Objective 2.1.	4	Section I.I
CBO Experience and Commitment	Describe the history and experience of the Lead Applicant and / or Statutory Partner as a CBO and the depth of commitment, connections, and relationships with the benefiting communities.	5	Section IV.B
Programmatic and Managerial Capability and Resources	Provide information demonstrating the Lead Applicant's and Statutory Partner's ability to successfully complete, oversee, and manage the award.	15	Section IV.B



<b>Element</b>	<b>Brief Description</b>	<b>Possible Points</b>	<b>NOFO Section(s)</b>
Past Performance	Describe the Lead Applicant's prior history with funded assistance agreements within the last 3 years.	5	Section IV.B
<b>Part 3: Readiness to Perform, Feasibility, and Sustainability</b>			
Readiness Approach	Demonstrate ability and readiness to proceed with grant performance upon award and generally no later than 120 days post-award.	8	Section I.G
Feasibility	Demonstrate that the project(s) can be successfully and effectively performed within the 3-year period of performance.	9	Section IV.B
Sustainability	Demonstrate the extent to which the benefits and outcomes from the projects can last after the 3-year period of performance.	5	Section IV.B
Program Budget Description	Provide a detailed budget description and estimated funding amounts for each project component/task.	8	Section IV.B Appendix G
Compliance Plan	Describes how you will ensure compliance with the grant's terms and conditions and manage broader legal and compliance risks.	10	Section I.G

# Acronym Glossary

ANCSA	Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act
AOR	Authorized Organization Representative
CAA	Clean Air Act
CBO	Community-based Non-Profit Organization
CCG	Community Change Grants
CCTA	Community Change Technical Assistance
CDP	Census Designated Places
CEJST	Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
DUC	Disadvantaged Unincorporated Community
EAB	Environmental Advisory Boards
EBiz	e-Business
ECJ	Environmental and climate justice
EJ	Environmental justice
EJScreen	Environmental Justice Screening and Mapping Tool
EPA	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
EO	Executive Order
FAQ	Frequently Asked Question
GHG	Greenhouse gas
HUD	U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
IAQ	Indoor Air Quality
IHE	Institution of Higher Education
IRA	Inflation Reduction Act
LTP	Lead TA Provider
MSI	Minority-serving institution
NBS	Nature-based solutions
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
NOFO	Notice of Funding Opportunity
POP	Period of performance
SAM	System for Award Management
TA	Technical Assistance
TIA	Target Investment Areas
UEI	Unique Entity ID
URA	Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisitions Policies Act

# Glossary

**Climate Resilience:** The ability to prepare and plan for, withstand, recover rapidly from, and more successfully adapt to adverse climatic hazards, such as drought, heatwaves, hurricanes, and extreme flooding.

**Collaborating Entities:** Other entities that can receive subawards from the Lead Applicant to implement and perform specific grant project activities. Collaborating entities include the Statutory Partner. The Statutory Partner must be a CBO, a federally recognized Tribe, a local government, or an IHE. However, other collaborating entities that are not part of the Statutory Partnership can include State and Territorial governments, and international organizations.

**Community Based Organization (CBO):** A non-profit organization that is operated to advance the public interest. Its purpose could be scientific, educational, service, charitable, or other. A CBO also supports and represents a community or certain populations within a community through engagement, education, and other related services provided to individual community residents and community stakeholders.

**Disadvantaged Community:** A community that is one or both of the following:

A geographically defined community labeled disadvantaged on [EPA's IRA Disadvantaged Communities Map](#).

A community that is a farmworker community or a Disadvantaged Unincorporated Community (DUC) as defined in NOFO Appendix A.

**Disadvantaged Unincorporated Communities (DUCs):** Census Designated Places that lack fixed, legally determined geographic boundaries and have certain common characteristics and conditions (e.g., not enough permanent water, sewer services, or acceptable housing). This includes all areas that the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) defines as Colonias. Colonias that are not defined by HUD but are identifiable on the "Colonias" layer in EJScreen are also considered DUCs.

**Farmworker Community:** A community made up of individuals with no fixed work address, who travel from their permanent residence to work in agriculture on a temporary or seasonal basis, and who may relocate several times throughout the year.

**Federally Recognized Tribe:** Any Indian Tribe, band, nation, or other organized group or community, including any Alaska Native village, that is federally recognized as eligible for the special programs and services that the U.S. government provides to Indians because of their status as Indians.

**Institution of Higher Education (IHE):** An educational institution that—(1) admits as regular students only persons having a certificate of graduation from a school providing secondary education, or the recognized equivalent of such a certificate; (2) is legally allowed to provide a program of education beyond secondary education; (3) provides an educational program for which the institution awards a bachelor’s degree or provides at least a 2-year program that is acceptable for full credit toward such a degree, or awards a degree that is acceptable for admission to a graduate or professional degree program; (4) is a public or other nonprofit institution; (5) is approved by a nationally recognized accrediting agency or association, or has preapproval status; (6) is any school that provides at least a 1-year program of training to prepare students for gainful employment in a recognized occupation; and (7) admits as regular students individuals—(A) who are beyond the age of required school attendance in the State in which the institution is located; or (B) who will be dually enrolled or enrolled at the same time in the institution and a secondary school. (Refer to [20 U.S.C. § 1001](#) for the complete definition.)

**Lead Applicant:** Entity that is responsible for submitting the application and that will become the grantee. Must be a CBO, a federally recognized Tribe, and local government, or an IHE.

**Remediation:** Procedures and methods to restore or redress the environment following public health and environmental incidents and disasters, such as hazardous substance contamination following chemical, radiological, and biological incidents.

**Statutory Partner:** Forms a statutory partnership with the lead applicant. The Statutory Partner or the Lead Applicant must be a CBO. The Statutory Partner is also considered a Collaborating Entity and can receive subawards from the Lead Applicant.

**Statutory Partnership:** A partnership between two CBOs, or between a CBO and one of the following: a federally recognized Tribe, a local government, or an IHE. The partnership must enter into a legally binding agreement.

# Is the Track I CCG Program Right for You?



Purpose: The Environmental and Climate Justice Community Change Grants Program (CCG) is a unique opportunity for funding community projects, but the program is not for everyone. This worksheet includes all the major topics that your projects need to be clear on in order to write a Track I CCG application.

Note: This worksheet is not a replacement for carefully reading [the Notice of Funding Opportunity \(NOFO\)](#).

## Funding Track I: Community-Driven Investments for Change

Track I grants are the primary focus of the Community Change Grants program. Track I projects should be implemented through strong collaborations to achieve sustained impacts related to climate resilience, pollution reduction, community health, economic prosperity, and community strength. The objectives of this track are to (NOFO Section I.G):

- Increase community resilience through climate action activities
- Reduce local pollution to improve public health
- Center meaningful community engagement
- Build community strength
- Reach priority populations
- Maximize integration across projects

## Guiding Questions

The following information and questions are designed to help you understand all the aspects of a Track I grant. You do not have to have the finalized answers right now, but the questions can help you determine if your projects are a good fit for Track I of the CCG. You are probably not ready to apply until you can answer all the questions below.

## Track I Grants Should be Designed to Help Disadvantaged Community and Priority Populations:

The CCG is an environmental justice program designed to improve the lives of disadvantaged communities (for more information, see the NOFO Appendix A). The community must qualify as disadvantaged based on the definition provided by EPA in the NOFO.

# Is the Track I CCG Program Right for You?



Applications should also speak to how they will benefit priority populations in the disadvantaged community (see [Priority Populations Worksheet](#) and NOFO Section I.G footnote 3, quoted below).

*NOFO Section I.G footnote 3: “This may include populations of concern as identified in [The Impacts of Climate Change on Human Health in the United States: A Scientific Assessment \(2016\)](#) that “experience disproportionate, multiple, and complex risks to their health and well-being in response to climate change,” such as children and pregnant women, older adults, and those with low incomes, limited-English-proficiency, disabilities or chronic medical conditions, or other risks that may put them at greater vulnerability.”*

- The Disadvantaged Community that will benefit from this proposal is:
  
- The Priority Populations in our Community who will benefit are:

## Partnership:

No organization can apply for the CCG without a Statutory Partner. Rather than a hurdle to eligibility, this requirement is designed to allow smaller, less experienced organizations to apply for a federal grant which they otherwise they may not be prepared for. Each partnership must include a Lead Applicant, who will be the organization that applies for and will be responsible for the grant, and a Statutory Partner. One or both must be a community-based organization, or CBO. To be competitive you will likely also need Collaborating Entities, which enhance your proposal and bolster your ability to successfully implement the proposed grant activities (NOFO Section III.B).

- Our organization has a partner in mind:  Yes  No
  - If yes:
    - Our Lead Applicant is \_\_\_\_\_
    - Our Statutory Partner is \_\_\_\_\_
  - If no: Consult the [Statutory Partnership Worksheet](#)
- Collaborating Entities: Do you know of organizations that support the partnership and can help you implement parts of your proposed projects? [Collaborative Entities Worksheet](#)
  - Collaborating Entities with their role:

## Community Issues based on Community Input:

EPA wants meaningful community input on the issues to be addressed by the projects. For more information, consult NOFO Section I.G.

- How we will get community input:
  
- Issues we know are important to our community:



## Climate Action Strategy(s):

You must have at least one Climate Action Strategy that is consistent with the Community Vision Description (see [Community Description](#), [Community Challenges](#), and [Community Vision](#) worksheets). For more information, consult NOFO Section I.G and Appendix C.

- My Climate Action Strategy(s):
  - Strategy 1: Green Infrastructure and Nature-Based Solutions
  - Strategy 2: Mobility and Transportation Options for Preventing Air Pollution and Improving Public Health and Climate Resilience
  - Strategy 3: Energy-Efficient, Healthy, and Resilient Housing and Buildings
  - Strategy 4: Microgrid Installation for Community Energy Resilience
  - Strategy 5: Community Resilience Hubs
  - Strategy 6: Brownfield Redevelopment for Emissions Reduction and Climate Resilience
  - Strategy 7: Waste Reduction and Management to Support a Circular Economy
  - Strategy 8: Workforce Development Programs for Occupations that Reduce Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Air Pollutants

## Pollution Reduction Strategy(s):

You must have at least one Pollution Reduction Strategy that is consistent with the Community Vision Description (see [Community Description](#), [Community Challenges](#), and [Community Vision](#) worksheets). For more information, consult NOFO Section I.G, and Appendix D.

- My Pollution Reduction Strategy(s):
  - Strategy 1: Indoor Air Quality and Community Health Improvements
  - Strategy 2: Outdoor Air Quality and Community Health Improvements
  - Strategy 3: Clean Water Infrastructure to Reduce Pollution Exposure and Increase Overall System Resilience
  - Strategy 4: Safe Management and Disposal of Solid and Hazardous Waste

## Funding and Timeline:

How much do you expect your proposed projects to cost? Grants will be awarded for \$10-\$20 million.

How long will it take your organizations to implement the proposed projects? Projects must be completed within 3 years.



## Tips to consider:

As you think through your projects, what are:

- The problems you are trying to solve?
- The solutions you are proposing? (which should connect to the problems)
- The ways your solutions will benefit local residents?
- The ways you are strengthening the community?
- The benefits the community will receive now and in the future?
- Going to be your Climate Action and Pollution Reduction Strategies?

Have connections between the projects:

- EPA wants to see programs that fit together to create a larger whole.

Be sure you can complete the projects:

- Can you complete them with \$10 million to \$20 million?
- Can you complete them in 3 years?
- Are they something that fits within the allowable strategies?



# Track I Application Checklist



Purpose: These are the required documents and forms for Track I Applications. We advise applicants not to start on the application until they have read and fully understood the [Notice of Funding Opportunity \(NOFO\)](#) for the Environmental and Climate Justice Community Change Grants Program (CCG).

The following checklist includes required documents followed by formatting and tips for applying.

## Track I - Required Documents and Forms

### Forms

#### **Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424):**

[https://apply07.grants.gov/apply/forms/readonly/SF424\\_2\\_1-V2.1.pdf](https://apply07.grants.gov/apply/forms/readonly/SF424_2_1-V2.1.pdf)

- This is the basic information form for federal grants – including name, address, etc. The most complicated question is the Congressional District of your project, which you can look up here: <https://www.house.gov/representatives/find-your-representative>

#### **Budget Information for Non-Construction Programs (SF-424A):**

<https://apply07.grants.gov/apply/forms/readonly/SF424A-V1.0.pdf>

- This is a budget overview form for federal grants. Even if your project includes construction activities, you must fill out this form! For instructions, go to: [https://apply07.grants.gov/apply/forms/instructions/BudgetNarrativeAttachments\\_1\\_2-V1.2-Instructions.pdf](https://apply07.grants.gov/apply/forms/instructions/BudgetNarrativeAttachments_1_2-V1.2-Instructions.pdf)

#### **EPA Key Contacts Form 5700-54:**

[https://www.epa.gov/system/files/documents/2021-08/epa\\_form\\_5700\\_54.pdf](https://www.epa.gov/system/files/documents/2021-08/epa_form_5700_54.pdf)

- This form requires you to provide contact information for key project personnel to EPA, including your authorized representative, payee, administrative contact, and project manager.

#### **EPA Pre-award Compliance Review Report Form 4700-4:**

[https://www.epa.gov/system/files/documents/2023-03/epa\\_form\\_4700\\_4\\_2023.pdf](https://www.epa.gov/system/files/documents/2023-03/epa_form_4700_4_2023.pdf)

- This is a short document focused on making sure you follow civil rights laws. EPA has a webpage with tips for completing the form: <https://www.epa.gov/grants/tips-completing-epa-form-4700-4>

# Track I Application Checklist



## Application

### **Project Narrative:**

- 20-page limit including an Executive Summary of no more than three pages.
- This is the heart of the application and includes the Community Vision Description and the Climate Action and Pollution Reduction Strategies. Please review the NOFO for requirements including:
  - NOFO Section IV.B for what is included in the Project Narrative.
  - NOFO Section V.C for the evaluation requirements for Track I grant applications.

## Attachments

Attachments do not count towards the Project Narrative page limit.

### **Attachment A: Program Budget Template:**

- A budget breakdown to show how you will spend the grant money among different categories such as salary, equipment, and indirect costs.
- See NOFO Appendix G for a sample budget template.
- EPA provides detailed guidance on budget development in the [Interim General Budget Development Guidance for Applicants and Recipients of EPA Financial Assistance](#). However, you may use other forms instead of this template for your application as long as you include total costs per category (and specific descriptions of costs).

### **Attachment B: Partnership Agreement:**

- Your Statutory Partnership must have a legally binding document spelling out the roles and responsibilities of the Lead Applicant and Statutory Partner.
- See NOFO Section III.A and Appendix B for requirements.

### **Attachment C: Indirect Cost Rate Agreement**, if applicable:

- This is only required if applicable to your proposal's budget.
- See NOFO Appendix G for details on indirect costs. In general, indirect costs should not be more than 20 percent of the total grant award.

### **Attachment D: Project Area Map:**

- A map that reflects where the project is located and the disadvantaged community that will benefit from the project.
- See NOFO Appendix A for requirements.
- You can use [EJScreen](#) to create a Project Area Map with the [IRA Disadvantaged Communities Map Layer](#).

# Track I Application Checklist



## **Attachment E: Community Engagement and Collaborative Governance Plan:**

- 10-page limit
- A plan that describes how your partnership, including Collaborating Entities, will work together and with the community to achieve your project objectives. Please review the NOFO for requirements including:
  - NOFO Sections I.G and IV.B for what is included in this plan.
  - NOFO Section V.C for the evaluation requirements for Track I grant applications.

## **Attachment F: Community Strength Plan:**

- 5-page limit
- A plan that explains how your project will improve the overall strength and prosperity of the community for existing residents. Please review the NOFO for requirements including:
  - NOFO Sections I.G and IV.B for what is included in this plan.
  - NOFO Section V.C for the evaluation requirements for Track I grant applications.

## **Attachment G: Readiness Approach Information:**

- No page limit. It is recommended to be concise yet thorough.
- A plan that explains how you will be able to start work on the grant within 120 days of award and complete it within 3 years. Please review the NOFO for requirements including:
  - NOFO Sections I.G and IV.B for what is included in this plan.
  - NOFO Section V.C for the evaluation requirements for Track I grant applications.

## **Attachment H: Compliance Plan:**

- 5-page limit
- A plan that describes how you will ensure compliance with all the grant's terms and conditions. Please review the NOFO for requirements including:
  - NOFO Sections I.G and IV.B for what is included in this plan.
  - NOFO Section V.C for the evaluation requirements for Track I grant applications.

## **Tips for Applying**

- Use a standard 12-point font (such as Times New Roman, Calibri, or Arial), using single spacing and 1-inch margins.
- Use spell check and a proofreader to make sure your application is written clearly.
- Develop clear, organized sections so the Review Panel can easily see how you meet each requirement.
- Stick to page limits. Extra pages will not be reviewed.
- Letters of recommendation are not required and will not be reviewed.
- Tell a compelling story and be direct, concise, and consistent in your story from beginning to end.
- Keep the EPA Review Panel in mind as you write your application. They will be scoring your application using the criteria in Section V.C of the NOFO.

# SAM.gov Registration Checklist



Purpose: The Lead Applicant must be registered in SAM.gov and Grants.gov to be able to submit a grant application (NOFO Section IV.A). The System for Award Management (SAM) registers organizations to conduct business with the U.S. Government. Grants.gov is where organizations manage their grant application (see [Grants.gov Registration Checklist](#)). The lead applicant should complete this SAM.gov Registration Checklist first.



Start registration at least **two months** before you plan to submit your application.



## Lead Applicant: Create an account at Login.gov

- Determine which email address you will use for your grant application.
- Go to [https://secure.login.gov/sign\\_up/enter\\_email](https://secure.login.gov/sign_up/enter_email).
- Enter your email address and click “Submit”.
- Check your email for a message from Login.gov and click “Confirm Your Email”.
- Create your login password and click “Continue”.
- Select at least two (2) authentication methods and click “Continue”.
- Follow the additional steps as prompted for each of your authentication methods and click “Submit” until you see a screen that says “You’ve created an account with Login.gov”.

## Lead Applicant: Use your Login.gov account to register your organization in SAM.gov

If you need help with SAM.gov registration, call the Federal Service Desk at 866-606-8220, Monday-Friday, 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. Eastern Time.

### 1. Complete Lead Applicant profile in SAM.gov

- Go to <https://sam.gov/content/home>.
- Click on “Sign In” in the upper right corner and click “Accept” on the pop-up window to agree to the terms.
- Enter your login.gov account email address and password and click “Sign In”.

# SAM.gov Registration Checklist



- Complete an additional authentication method as prompted.
- On the page titled “Complete Your Profile,” check the box to agree to the terms and click “Next”.
- Complete your profile by filling in all the required fields (first name, last name, email address) and click “Submit”.
- On the page titled “Request Role (Optional),” click “Skip and Finish”.

## 2. Obtain a Unique Entity ID (UEI) for the Lead Applicant from SAM.gov

- Go to <https://sam.gov/content/entity-registration>.
- At the bottom of the pop-up window, check the box for “Do not show this message again” and click “OK”.
- Click “Get Started” in the box titled “Register your Entity or Get a Unique Entity ID”.
- On the page titled “Get Started,” click “Register Entity”.
- On the page titled “Workspace,” click “Get Started”.
- At the bottom of the page titled “Overview,” click “Start Registration”.
- In the window titled “Before You Start,” click “Continue”.

On the page titled “Purpose of Registration”

- Select the Lead Applicant entity type.
- Select “I only want to apply for federal assistance opportunities like grants, loans, and other financial assistance programs”.
- Click “Next”.
- To confirm purpose of registration, click “Next” again.

To obtain a Unique Entity ID, enter the following Lead Applicant information

- Legal business name
- Physical address (not a post office box)
- Date of incorporation
- State of incorporation

Follow the prompts until you can

- Click “Receive Unique Entity ID” and,
- See the Lead Applicant’s newly assigned 12-character Unique Entity ID.

*NOTE: Statutory partners and other collaborating entities do not need to complete a registration on SAM.gov in order for the grant to be submitted. However, if these collaborating entities plan to receive subawards after the grant is funded, they will need a valid UEI. When planning your*

# SAM.gov Registration Checklist



*application, encourage your collaborating entities to think ahead and obtain a UEI from SAM.gov if they do not already have one. They will need to create an account on Login.gov and complete Steps 1 and 2 of the above SAM.gov registration process to obtain a UEI.*

## **3. Register the Lead Applicant with SAM.gov**

To continue Lead Applicant registration, follow the “Core Data” entry prompts to provide the following information:

### Business Information

- Organization start date
- Date on which your company's fiscal year ends
- Organization's division name and number (optional)
- Organization's website URL (optional)
- Marketing Partner Identification Number (MPIN) (you will create this when you register)
- Physical address
- Mailing address
- Taxpayer Identification Number (TIN)

### IRS Consent

- Taxpayer name
- Taxpayer address

### Commercial and Government Entity (CAGE) Code

- If Lead Applicant has a CAGE code, enter it, otherwise select “No,” and one will be assigned after you submit your registration.

### General Information

- Country of incorporation
- State of incorporation
- Company security clearance (optional)
- Highest employee security clearance level (optional)
- Institution type (such as foundation, hospital, educational)
- Disadvantaged business enterprise (must be certified)
- Native American entity type (if applicable)
- Organization factors (such as S corporation, LLC, foreign-owned)

# SAM.gov Registration Checklist



- Entity structure (such as Corporate Entity-Not Tax Exempt, Corporate Entity-Tax Exempt, Sole Proprietorship)
- Profit structure (such as for-profit, non-profit)
- Socio-economic categories (such as veteran-owned, minority-owned)

## Financial Information

- Accept credit cards as a method of payment (yes or no)
- Electronic funds transfer (account type, routing number, and account number)
- Automated clearing house (U.S. phone number)
- Remittance address (name and address)

## Executive Compensation

- Indicate if in the last fiscal year:
  - 80% or more of your organization's revenue comes from federal sources (such as contracts, grants, loans), or,
  - Your total revenue from federal sources exceeded \$25 million.
- Indicate whether the public has access to information about the compensation of the top executives (for example, if you file an annual IRS Form 990).
- If prompted, provide names, titles, and total compensation values of your top five executive compensated employees.

## Proceedings

This section is unlikely to be applicable to Community Change Grant applicants.

To continue Lead Applicant registration, follow the "Representations and Certifications" entry prompts to provide the following information:

## Financial Assistance Response

- Indicate that the Lead Applicant wishes to apply for federal financial assistance.
- Indicate that the Lead Applicant has legal authority to apply and will comply with all requirements of federal financial assistance.

To continue Lead Applicant registration, follow the "Points of Contact (POCs)" entry prompts to provide the following information:

# SAM.gov Registration Checklist



## Mandatory POCs contact information

For each person: First and last name, email, phone number, and address (if applicable)

- Accounts Receivable POC
- Electronic Business POC (EBiz POC)
- Government Business POC

*NOTE: The eBiz POC is the only person who can manage the SAM.gov account, create the Grants.gov profile, and designate the Grants.gov authorized organization representative (AOR). The Grants.gov AOR is the only person who can apply for the grant in Grants.gov.*

## Optional POCs contact information

For each person: First and last name, email, phone number, and address (if applicable)

- Past Performance POC (optional)
- Past Performance Alternate POC (optional)
- Electronic Business Alternate POC (optional)
- Government Business Alternate POC (optional)
- Additional Optional POCs as needed

To finish your registration, go to the bottom of the page titled “Entity Review” and click “Submit.”

## Tips to Consider

- Start your SAM.gov registration at least two months before you plan to submit your application.
- Statutory partners and other collaborating entities do not need to complete a full registration on SAM.gov in order for the grant to be submitted. However, if these collaborating entities plan to receive subawards after the grant is funded, they will need a valid Unique Entity Identifier (UEI).
- When planning your application, encourage your collaborating entities to think ahead and obtain a UEI from SAM.gov if they do not already have one. They will need to create an account on Login.gov and complete Steps 1 and 2 of the above SAM.gov registration process to obtain a UEI.



# Grants.gov Registration Checklist



Purpose: The Lead Applicant must be registered in SAM.gov and Grants.gov to be able to submit a grant application (NOFO Section IV.A). The System for Award Management (SAM) registers organizations to conduct business with the U.S. Government. Grants.gov is where organizations manage their grant application. The lead applicant should complete the SAM.gov registration first (see [SAM.gov Registration Checklist](#)).



## Glossary

Electronic Business Point of Contact (EBiz POC): Assigned as part of your organization's SAM.gov application. The EBiz POC manages the SAM.gov account and login, sets up the Grants.gov profile for the organization, oversees the organization's activities in Grants.gov, and assigns all roles in Grants.gov for others from the organization. The EBiz POC cannot submit the grant application in Grants.gov.

Authorized Organization Representative (AOR): Submits the grant proposal in Grants.gov. The AOR role can be given additional privileges by the EBiz POC.

- Expanded AOR role: Grants all the access and privileges of the Standard AOR role, in addition to privileges that allow the user to modify organization-level settings.

Workplace Manager: Authorized to create new workspaces and manage users' access to workspaces within the organization on Grants.gov.

## Lead Applicant: Register at Grants.gov

The EBiz POC should complete the following steps to register at Grants.gov.

- On the Grants.gov home page, click Register.
- At the bottom of the Register page, click the "Get Registered Now" button.
- Enter your information in the form, using the same email address as used in SAM.gov for the EBiz POC and click Continue.
  - You will need the first name, last name, email address, and primary phone number of the EBiz POC. The email address should be the same one used to register at SAM.gov. You will have to create a username and password for your Grants.gov account.

# Grants.gov Registration Checklist



- Click the Send Temporary Code button.
  - Check your email for a message from Grants.gov containing your temporary code number.
  - Enter the number in the Temporary Code box and click Continue.
- Select Add Organization Application Profile.
- Enter the unique entity identifier (UEI) you obtained from SAM.gov.
- Enter a name for this profile. This can be the name of the organization or any other name that you will use to refer to the profile.
- Enter the job title for the person who will use this profile. This may be helpful to other users.
- Click Save.
- Go to the [Environmental and Climate Justice Community Change Grants Program](#) 'View Grant Opportunity' page to view the opportunity, subscribe, and submit your application.



# Part 1 of 3: Community Description

Purpose: There are three sections within the Community Vision Description. This worksheet will help you complete the Community Description section, as required by the Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO), Section IV.B.

To complete your Community Vision Description, see also:

- Part 2 of 3: [Community Challenges Worksheet](#) and
- Part 3 of 3: [Community Vision Worksheet](#)

## Community Vision Description

The Community Vision Description is the applicant's chance to introduce their community and how their proposed grant activities will advance environmental justice in their community. It includes three sections: (1) community description, (2) community challenges, and (3) community vision. This worksheet will help you develop the Community Description section.



## Goals of Community Description Section

- Describe the community that will benefit from your project.
- Describe how the boundary of the Project Area was determined (*Information on Disadvantaged Communities, the Project Area, and the requirements of the Project Area Map can be found in NOFO Appendix A*).
- Describe the Project Area's resources, assets, and features.
- Demonstrate how your proposed projects focus on benefiting residents of disadvantaged communities in the Project Area.



# Part 1 of 3: Community Description

## Guiding Questions

EPA's evaluation of your project will rate how well your proposed strategies and activities are designed to maximize benefits for the Project Area's disadvantaged communities and priority populations (See the [Priority Population Worksheet](#)). First, you will need to describe these communities and the Project Area itself.

### Community Knowledge

1. How do people who live in your community tend to describe the community?  
*(What do members of the community have in common culturally or historically? How have residents created a sense of community in the Project Area?)*
  
2. What environmental and climate issues impact community members? What data, evidence, and/or community input do you have to inform your understanding of these issues?
  
3. What are some specific types of locations in the community where residents tend to want to see change? How do you know?  
*(For example, parks and recreational areas, housing, schools, roadways, etc. What did you hear from community members that makes you confident in your choice of Project Area?)*



# Part 1 of 3: Community Description

## **Boundaries of the Project Area and Defining Your Disadvantaged Communities**

1. How did you decide on the boundaries of the Project Area?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. Describe your Project Area. As defined in the NOFO, Appendix A, what type of disadvantaged communities are within your Project Area?
  - A. Geographically defined community designated as disadvantaged on the EPA IRA Disadvantaged Communities Map
  - B. Farmworker community (see NOFO Appendix A for more details)
  - C. Disadvantaged Unincorporated Community (see NOFO Appendix A for more details)

### **EPA IRA Disadvantaged Communities**

You will need to identify which census block groups within your Project Area are designated as disadvantaged communities. *This should be done as part of your Project Area map.*

Be sure to also describe what municipality, county, and state or territory your Project Area is located in.

### **Farmworker Community or Disadvantaged Unincorporated Community (DUC)**

Refer to NOFO Appendix A for verification guidelines. *You will need to submit a Project Area Map that specifies where the communities and projects designed to benefit them are located.*



# Part 1 of 3: Community Description

3. How would you describe the disadvantaged communities and priority populations within your Project Area who will benefit from your project activities (see [Priority Populations worksheet](#))? How would they describe themselves?

## Characteristics, Assets, and Resources of the Project Area

1. What are the characteristics of the Project Area?  
*(These may include the neighborhood's physical, social, economic, and demographic features. Be specific.)*
  
2. What community resources and assets do community members identify?
  
3. How do these resources and assets relate to your proposed projects?  
*(Think about which assets and resources will be relevant to include on your Project Area Map. Relevant assets and resources may include:*
  - *Environmental assets such as ecosystem services or different species of plants and animals.*
  - *Institutional assets such as schools, non-profit organizations, and congregations.*
  - *Social assets such as community spirit and informal organizations.*
  - *Recreational assets such as parks and community centers.*
  - *Existing grants or ongoing projects in the area.)*



# Part 1 of 3: Community Description

## Benefits to Disadvantaged Communities

1. Describe how each of your proposed projects will benefit residents of disadvantaged communities in your Project Area.

Project 1:

- Project Description:
  
- Benefits to disadvantaged residents of your Project Area:

Project 2:

- Project Description:
  
- Benefits to disadvantaged residents of your Project Area:

Project 3:

- Project Description:
  
- Benefits to disadvantaged residents of your Project Area:

## Tips to Consider

- All parts of your project should be community driven. Use community input to define and describe the community within the Project Area.
- Consider making your Project Area concentrated and compact to give maximum benefits to the residents of the disadvantaged community (NOFO Appendix A).
- The Community Description section and the broader Community Vision Description section should guide the rest of your application. Think about how the description, environmental and climate issues, assets, and resources of your identified community will inform the projects and strategies you choose.



# Part 1 of 3: Community Description

## Resources

### 1. **EJScreen**

The Environmental Justice Screening and Mapping Tool is a web-based interactive map with layers that allow users to identify disadvantaged communities and their pollution burdens.

<https://www.epa.gov/ejscreen>

### 2. **Climate & Economic Justice Screening Tool**

This screening tool identifies disadvantaged communities that are underserved & overburdened by pollution.

<https://screeningtool.geoplatform.gov/en/#3/33.47/-97.5>

### 3. **EnviroAtlas**

EnviroAtlas is an interactive, web-based tool that decision-makers can use to inform policy and planning in the places where people live, learn, work, and play.

<https://www.epa.gov/enviroatlas>

### 4. **Mapping Tools for Communities to Identify Assets and Hazards in Local Areas**

Index of Federal Mapping Tools Related to Environmental Justice and Sustainability

<https://www.epa.gov/environmentaljustice/mapping-tools-communities-identify-assets-and-hazards-local-areas>

### 5. **Re-Powering Mapper**

EPA's RE-Powering Mapper, an interactive web application, allows users to identify contaminated lands, landfills, and mine sites for renewable energy development.

<https://www.epa.gov/re-powering/re-powering-mapper>





# Part 2 of 3: Community Challenges

Purpose: There are three sections within the Community Vision Description. This worksheet will help you complete the Challenges section, as required by the Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO), Section IV.B.

To complete your Community Vision Description, see also:

- Part 1 of 3: [Community Description Worksheet](#) and
- Part 3 of 3: [Community Vision Worksheet](#)

## Community Vision Description

The Community Vision Description is the applicant's chance to introduce their community and how their proposed grant activities will advance environmental justice in their community. It includes three sections: (1) community description, (2) community challenges, and (3) community vision. This worksheet will help you develop the Community Challenges section.



## Goals of Community Challenges Section

- Describe the climate change and/or pollution-related challenges and unmet needs that residents of the Project Area face, particularly those faced by priority populations.
- Describe the impacts of these challenges and unmet needs on residents in the Project Area, including priority populations.
- Inform the Community Vision section to help identify the most appropriate Climate Action and Pollution Reduction Strategies for advancing environmental justice in the community.



# Part 2 of 3: Community Challenges

## Guiding Questions

EPA’s evaluation of your project will consider how well you describe the challenges and needs of the Project Area’s disadvantaged communities and priority populations. You will also need to describe how these communities are impacted by these challenges.

### Community Knowledge

1. What do community members consider to be the challenges that impact them? (*Issues that come up often in community meetings, interviews with key stakeholders, and other methods of community engagement.*) List them, along with their possible climate- or pollution-related cause.

Challenge	Possible climate- or pollution-related causes
<b>Example 1:</b> High incidence of heat-related illnesses	Increasingly intense heat waves and inadequate access to cooling
<b>Example 2:</b> Frequent trips to the emergency room for asthma and heart or lung diseases	Trucking route through neighborhood that concentrates diesel exhaust in the area



## Part 2 of 3: Community Challenges

2. Which of the challenges identified are of the highest priority to your community? Why? *We encourage you to focus on the highest priority climate and environmental justice issues impacting your community. These grant awards are \$10-20 million for projects that must be executed within 3 years, so it is necessary to prioritize the highest-impact opportunities.*

Challenge 1:

Challenge 2:

Challenge 3:

3. How have the community, the government, or other groups tried to address these community challenges in the past? *(Timeline of key events and organizations. Tip: Consider whether these entities could be a good Statutory Partner or Collaborating Entity for your proposal.)*

Attempts to Address Challenge 1:

Attempts to Address Challenge 2:

Attempts to Address Challenge 3:



# Part 2 of 3: Community Challenges

## Groups Vulnerable to Challenges

1. Which disadvantaged groups and priority populations in your Project Area are most vulnerable to your top community challenges? To learn more about Priority Populations, please see the [Priority Population Worksheet](#).

*(For example, children, pregnant people, older adults, low-income people, people with limited English proficiency, people with disabilities, or people with chronic medical conditions)*

Groups Vulnerable to Challenge 1:

Groups Vulnerable to Challenge 2:

Groups Vulnerable to Challenge 3:

2. What are the impacts of the challenges on disadvantaged communities and priority populations? Use the community members' input and language to describe disproportionate impacts on priority populations (consider in terms of health, finances, or other challenges). Also, provide data that supports the lived experience of members of your community. *(The online map-based tool from EPA called [EJScreen](#) is a good place to start, along with other tools in the Resources section of this worksheet.)*

Impacts of Challenge 1 on Vulnerable Groups:

Impacts of Challenge 2 on Vulnerable Groups:

Impacts of Challenge 3 on Vulnerable Groups:



# Part 2 of 3: Community Challenges

## Tips to Consider

- All parts of your project should be community driven. Use community input to identify and describe the needs and challenges facing the Project Area.
- Many types of data may be important to your project, but it is most important to learn from the community's lived experience.
- The Community Challenges subsection is part of the broader Community Vision Description that should guide the rest of your application. Think about how the needs and challenges of your identified community will inform and be addressed by the projects and strategies you select.
- While the Community Change Grants focuses on environmental issues, it is important to let residents speak about all the issues they face. After people have gotten everything off their chest, they can then focus on the environmental problems.

## Resources

### 1. **EJScreen**

Environmental Justice Screening and Mapping Tool is a web-based interactive map with layers that allow users to identify disadvantaged communities and their environmental burdens.

<https://www.epa.gov/ejscreen>

### 2. **Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool**

This screening tool identifies disadvantaged communities that are underserved and overburdened by pollution.

<https://screeningtool.geoplatform.gov/en/#3/33.47/-97.5>

### 3. **EnviroAtlas**

EnviroAtlas is an interactive web-based tool that decision-makers can use to inform policy and planning in the places where people live, learn, work, and play.

<https://www.epa.gov/enviroatlas>

### 4. **Mapping Tools for Communities to Identify Assets and Hazards in Local Areas**

Index of Federal Mapping Tools Related to Environmental Justice and Sustainability

<https://www.epa.gov/environmentaljustice/mapping-tools-communities-identify-assets-and-hazards-local-areas>

### 5. **Re-Powering Mapper**

EPA's RE-Powering Mapper, an interactive web application, allows users to identify contaminated lands, landfills and mine sites for renewable energy development.

<https://www.epa.gov/re-powering/re-powering-mapper>



# Part 3 of 3: Community Vision

Purpose: There are three sections within the Community Vision Description. This worksheet will help you complete the Challenges section, as required by the Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO), Section IV.B.

To complete your Community Vision Description, see also:

- Part 1 of 3: [Community Description Worksheet](#) and
- Part 2 of 3: [Community Challenges Worksheet](#)

## Community Vision Description

The Community Vision Description is the applicant's chance to introduce their community and how their proposed grant activities will advance environmental justice in their community. It includes three sections: (1) community description, (2) community challenges, and (3) community vision. This worksheet will help you develop the Community Vision section.



## Goals of Community Vision Section

- Describe the community's vision for how receiving the grant will affect and benefit the community in the near and long-term.
- Describe the short- and long-term benefits the grant activities will have on the priority populations and disadvantaged communities in the Project Area.
- Provide justification for the selected project activities and strategies that will help the community achieve their vision.





# Part 3 of 3: Community Vision

## Climate Action [Outcomes]

Each Climate Action Strategy should focus on building climate resilience and/or reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Based on the community's discussion about its environmental challenges and its vision for the future, check the strategies you would like to explore further with your community.

- Green Infrastructure and Nature-Based Solutions.
- Mobility and Transportation Options for Preventing Air Pollution and Improving Public Health and Climate Resilience.
- Energy-Efficient, Healthy, and Resilient Housing and Buildings.
- Microgrid Installation for Community Energy Resilience.
- Community Resilience Hubs.
- Brownfields Redevelopment for Emissions Reduction and Climate Resilience.
- Waste Reduction and Management to Support a Circular Economy.
- Workforce Development Programs for Occupations that Reduce Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Air Pollutants.
- Workforce Development Programs for Occupations that Reduce Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Air Pollutants.

1. How could the strategies you wish to explore make climate change risks in the Project Area less severe in the short term?

2. How could these proposed strategies make climate change risks in the Project Area less severe in the long term, beyond the life of the project?







# Part 3 of 3: Community Vision

## Tips to Consider

- All parts of your project should be community driven and focus on community priorities. Use community input to determine the vision for the Project Area.
- The Community Vision Description should ensure that the priority population of the disadvantaged communities in the Project Area receive the benefits of investments now and in the future.
- The Community Vision subsection and the broader Community Vision Description section should guide the rest of your application. You want grant application reviewers to see a consistent story: Start by describing the community and its assets. Then describe problems and issues the community faces. Conclude with the meaningful change your solutions will produce. Include how the community vision will inform the projects and strategies you select.
- As you move forward, keep in mind that your Climate Action and Pollution Reduction Strategies should respond to the community challenges described in the Community Vision Description.

## Resources

### 1. **Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool**

This screening tool identifies disadvantaged communities that are underserved and overburdened by pollution.

<https://screeningtool.geoplatform.gov/en/#3/33.47/-97.5>

### 2. **EJScreen**

Environmental Justice Screening and Mapping Tool is a web-based interactive map with layers that allow users to identify disadvantaged communities and their environmental burdens.

<https://www.epa.gov/ejscreen>

### 3. **EnviroAtlas**

EnviroAtlas is an interactive web-based tool that decision-makers can use to inform policy and planning in the places where people live, learn, work, and play.

<https://www.epa.gov/enviroatlas>

### 4. **Mapping Tools for Communities to Identify Assets and Hazards in Local Areas**

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<https://www.epa.gov/environmentaljustice/mapping-tools-communities-identify-assets-and-hazards-local-areas>

### 5. **Re-Powering Mapper**

EPA's RE-Powering Mapper, an interactive web application, allows users to identify contaminated lands, landfills, and mine sites for renewable energy development.

<https://www.epa.gov/re-powering/re-powering-mapper>



This worksheet will help you:

- Understand Requirement 1. Climate Action Strategies (Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) Section I.G).
- Develop your Track I written application section on Climate Action Strategies.

## Overview

### Requirements

Track I applications must include at least one project using at least one Climate Action Strategy. Below are the eight Climate Action Strategies you can choose.

Strategy 1: Green Infrastructure and Nature-Based Solutions

Strategy 2: Mobility and Transportation Options for Preventing Air Pollution and Improving Public Health and Climate Resilience

Strategy 3: Energy-Efficient, Healthy, and Resilient Housing and Buildings

Strategy 4: Microgrid Installation for Community Energy Resilience

Strategy 5: Community Resilience Hubs

Strategy 6: Brownfields Redevelopment for Emissions Reduction and Climate Resilience

Strategy 7: Waste Reduction and Management to Support a Circular Economy

Strategy 8: Workforce Development Programs for Occupations that Reduce Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Air Pollutants

Climate Action Strategies reduce greenhouse gas emissions and build climate resilience. The strategies also provide non-climate benefits to community members. Non-climate benefits include health or economic improvements. For details about each strategy, see the individual Climate Action Strategy [Fact Sheets](#).

NOFO Section I.G describes all eight Climate Action Strategies. Appendix C provides example projects for each strategy. Appendix F provides example outputs and outcomes for each strategy.



## Evaluation Criteria

The evaluation criteria for Climate Action Strategies include:

- How well your described *climate benefits* solve the community challenges you explained in your Community Vision Description.
- Whether your strategy explanation includes *Project Area outcomes*. (For example, reduced greenhouse gas emissions or improved resilience to climate hazards.)

You can score up to 15 points in the Climate Action Strategies section of your Track I written application. See the Track I Self-Evaluation Worksheet or NOFO Section V.C for evaluation criteria details.

## Guiding Questions

Work with community members to answer the following questions. As you consider strategies, remember that your application needs to show how you will get the most project benefits possible for disadvantaged community members in the Project Area.

### Choosing Your Climate Strategy(ies)

1. What climate challenges, impacts, and risks does your community face? Climate challenges come from extreme weather, including severe heat waves, floods, and wildfires.
2. How do these challenges especially affect the disadvantaged groups in your Project Area?
3. Which climate challenges, impacts, and risks are your community most worried about?



4. Which strategy or strategies would be a good way to solve the challenges in your community, particularly for disadvantaged groups?
  
5. Which strategy or strategies would reduce greenhouse gas emissions in the Project Area?
  
6. Which strategy or strategies will help the community respond to current and future climate change risks?
  
7. How do the most appropriate strategies fit with your community's short- and long-term vision?

## **Planning Your Project(s)**

1. What project activities will use the climate strategy or strategies you chose?
  
2. How will the project activities handle community climate challenges? Do they deal with the challenges of most concern to the community? Do they deal with the challenges that especially burden the most disadvantaged groups in the community?



3. What are the expected outcomes of your projects? How will they increase climate resilience or reduce greenhouse gas emissions in the Project Area?

## Combining Strategies

After choosing both your Climate Action and Pollution Reduction Strategies, consider how project activities can go together. (See the Pollution Reduction Strategy Worksheet for help choosing a Pollution Reduction Strategy.)

1. Are there projects that can use both types of strategies?
2. Are there ways to combine the strategies to make one or more of the strategies more effective?
3. Are there ways to combine the strategies to make the project more cost-effective?

## Next Steps

Consult the Track I Readiness Approach and Track I Self-Assessment worksheets for tips on planning project and application review details.



## Tips to Consider

Be sure to write your Climate Action Strategies section in a way that aligns with the rest of your application. It should fit well with your Pollution Reduction Strategies section and your Community Vision section. You need to show that your solutions will lead to meaningful change that your community wants and needs.

Read the project examples in NOFO Appendix C. It contains examples for each Climate Action Strategy. For some strategies, the appendix also includes guidelines for your application.

Before writing your Climate Action Strategies section, make a list of your resources, outputs, and outcomes.

- For resources, consider what you need to put into a project to reach your goals.
- For outputs, consider the activities and work products you will accomplish on the way to your goals.
- For outcomes, consider the lasting results you will achieve and how you will measure them. Think about the short-term and long-term outcomes.

Read the output and outcome examples in NOFO Appendix F. It contains a table with examples for each Climate Action Strategy. The table will help you understand the difference between an output and an outcome.

## Resources

**Resource Library for Community Change Grants** from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency <https://communitychangeta.org/resource-library>.

**National Climate Resilience Framework** from the White House, at <https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/National-Climate-Resilience-Framework-FINAL.pdf>.

**What You Can Do About Climate Change** from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, at <https://www.epa.gov/climate-change/what-you-can-do-about-climate-change>.

**U.S. Climate Resilience Toolkit** from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, at <https://toolkit.climate.gov>.



This worksheet will help you:

- Understand Requirement 2. Pollution Reduction Strategies (Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) Section I.G).
- Develop your Track I written application section on Pollution Reduction Strategies.

## Overview

### Requirements

The Pollution Reduction Strategies focus on monitoring, preventing, and remediating (cleaning up) pollutants that are measurable and harmful to human health. As a Track I applicant, you must include at least one project using at least one of the following strategies:

Strategy 1: Indoor Air Quality and Community Health Improvements

Strategy 2: Outdoor Air Quality and Community Health Improvements

Strategy 3: Clean Water Infrastructure to Reduce Pollution Exposure and Increase Overall System Resilience

Strategy 4: Safe Management and Disposal of Solid and Hazardous Waste

Your project must include clean-up pollution by removing or preventing it in addition to any increase in monitoring capabilities or community awareness. For details about each strategy, see the individual Pollution Reduction Strategy [Fact Sheets](#).

The NOFO Section I.G describes all four Pollution Reduction Strategies. Appendix C provides example projects for each strategy. Appendix F provides example outputs and outcomes for each strategy.

### Evaluation Criteria

The evaluation criteria for Pollution Reduction Strategies include:

- How well your described *pollution reduction benefits* solve the community challenges you explained in your Community Vision Description.
- Whether your strategy explanation includes *substantial and measurable Project Area* outcomes toward preventing or reducing pollution.





You can score up to 15 points in the Pollution Reduction Strategies section of your Track I written application. See the Track I Self-Evaluation Worksheet for evaluation criteria details.

## Guiding Questions

Work with your community to answer the following questions. Remember that your application will be evaluated on how well your strategies and projects are designed to yield the most benefits possible for the residents of the disadvantaged communities in the Project Area.

### Choosing a Pollution Reduction Strategy(ies)

1. What local pollution-related challenges has your community identified?
2. How do these challenges affect the disadvantaged communities in your Project Area?
3. Which pollution challenge(s) is your community most worried about?
4. Is this pollution measurable?
5. Which strategy or strategies would prevent or reduce pollution in a measurable way? Remember that prevention and reduction must go along with monitoring.
6. How do the strategy(ies) align with your community's short- and long-term vision?



## Planning Your Project

1. What project activities will use the Pollution Reduction Strategy(ies) chosen?
2. How will the project activities deal with pollution in the local community? Do they deal with the challenges of most concern to the community? Do they deal with the challenges that affect the most disadvantaged people in the community?
3. What are the outcomes of your projects, and how will they prevent and/or reduce existing and future pollution in the Project Area?

## Combining Strategies

After choosing both your Climate Action and Pollution Reduction Strategies, consider how project activities can complement each other. (See the Climate Action Strategy Worksheet for help choosing a Climate Action Strategy.)

1. Are there projects that can use both types of strategies?
2. Are there ways to combine the strategies to make one or more of the strategies more effective?
3. Are there ways to combine the strategies to make the project more cost-effective?



## Next Steps

Consult the Track I Readiness Approach and Track I Evaluation worksheets for tips for project execution and evaluation.

## Tips to Consider

Be sure to write your Pollution Reduction Strategies section in a way that aligns with the rest of your application. It should fit well with your Climate Action Strategies section and your Community Vision section. You need to show that your solutions will lead to meaningful change that your community wants and needs.

Read the project examples in NOFO Appendix D. It contains examples for each Pollution Reduction Strategy and guidelines for your application.

Before writing your Pollution Reduction Strategies section, make a list of your resources, outputs, and outcomes.

- For resources, consider what you need to put into a project to reach your goals.
- For outputs, consider the activities and work products you will accomplish on the way to your goals.
- For outcomes, consider the lasting results you will achieve and how you will measure them. Think about the short-term and long-term outcomes.

Read the output and outcome examples in NOFO Appendix F. It contains a table with examples for each Pollution Reduction Strategy. The table will help you understand the difference between an output and an outcome.

## Resources

**Resource Library for Community Change Grants** from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. <https://communitychangeta.org/resource-library>

**Environmental Topics** providing guides, articles, and other resources organized by topic and developed by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. This resource includes topic pages for (1) Air; (2) Land, Waste, and Cleanup; and (3) Water.

<https://www.epa.gov/environmental-topics>

**Report on the Environment** describing trends that the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has identified in the condition of the nation's air, water, and land. Also describes the associated trends in human exposure and health and ecological condition. Separate pages of information and additional resources are provided for Outdoor Air Quality, Indoor Air Quality, Drinking Water, Wastes, and Contaminated Lands.

<https://www.epa.gov/report-environment>



This worksheet will help you:

- Understanding Target Investment Area A (Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) Section II.B)
- Develop your Track I written application components on the Alaska Tribal Lands Target Investment Area (NOFO Appendix H).

## Overview

### Requirements

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has identified five Target Investment Areas (TIA) for Track I applications. The Alaska TIA is specific to Alaska Tribal Lands. It allows for applications that include projects to clean up contaminated lands conveyed through the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA). Applications for the Alaska TIA can use either the general Climate Action and Pollution Reduction Strategies in Section I.G or any Alaska-TIA specific ones described in Appendix H. EPA strongly encourages applicants to include Pollution Reduction Strategy projects for cleaning up contaminated lands conveyed through ANCSA. For more details about each strategy, see the Alaska TIA fact sheet and the Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) Appendix H. Applicants applying under a specified TIA will compete against other applicants under the same TIA, as opposed to the broader application pool.

#### Additional Eligibility Requirements for ANCSA-related projects and activities:

- Your application must include projects cleaning up contaminated lands conveyed through ANCSA.
- Lands must have been contaminated by hazardous substances, pollutants, contaminants, or petroleum at the time of conveyance.
- Lands must be listed on the interim [EPA inventory](#) of Contaminated ANCSA Lands.
- You must provide proof that the landowner will allow access to the site and supports taking action to address contamination if the applicant is not the owner of the contaminated site(s).



## Guiding Questions

Collaborate with your community to answer the following questions. Refer to the [Fact Sheets](#) on Climate Action Strategies, Pollution Reduction Strategies, and the Alaska TIA to help guide the selection of strategies for your application.

### Choosing Pollution Reduction Strategy(ies)

1. What local pollution challenges has your community identified?
2. How do these challenges affect the disadvantaged communities in your Project Area?
3. Which pollution challenge(s) is your community most worried about?
4. How can this pollution be measured?
5. If applicable, which ANCSA-Specific Pollution Strategy activities would prevent or reduce the pollution in a measurable way?
6. How do they align with your community's short- and long-term vision?



## Planning your Pollution Reduction Project(s)

Below are questions that related to the ANCSA-Specific Pollution Reduction Strategy and associated project activities. Please see the general [Pollution Reduction Strategy Worksheet](#) for general Pollution Reduction project planning questions.

1. Does your project include planning and site plan development?
  - a. For a proposed project that includes a primary location along with additional surrounding sites, how will work conducted at the surrounding sites benefit the primary location?
  
2. Will the project include carrying out a site assessment and related activities?
  - a. Will the project require collection of environmental samples or data? For example, you may need to use these samples or data to develop a Health and Safety Plan, Quality Assurance Project Plan, or Sampling Plan.
  - b. If sampling is necessary, what [EPA accredited laboratory](#) will you use to analyze samples? What are the costs for analyzing those samples?
  
3. Are initial cleanup activities associated with your project?
  - a. What are the cleanup endpoints in the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation's aligned Site Cleanup Plan?
  - b. What entities will you partner with to conduct cleanup activities such as contaminated material removal, sampling, or health and safety monitoring?
  - c. How will you conduct sampling after cleanup activities to determine if further action is required?



4. Will the project include community engagement activities?
  - a. Effective community engagement is vital to working with Alaska Native communities. What culturally sensitive protocols will you include in your community engagement activities?
  
5. Does your project include a plan to gather information to use to comply with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)?
  - a. NEPA compliance requires creating Environmental Information Documents (EIDs). **Projects funded by Community Change Grant (CCG) funds are not required to comply with NEPA.** But you can use CCG funds to compile EIDs to comply with NEPA under *other* federal grants.
  
6. Summarize: How will the project activities deal with local community pollution? Do they address the challenges of most concern to the community? Do they address the challenges that affect the most disadvantaged members of the community?

## Choosing Climate Action Strategy(ies)

1. What unique climate challenges, impacts, and risks does your Alaska-TIA community face? Climate challenges may come from permafrost degradation or extreme weather, including heat waves, floods, and wildfires.
  
2. How do these challenges affect the disadvantaged communities in your Project Area?



3. Which unique climate challenges, impacts, and risks is your community most worried about?
4. Which strategy or strategies would be a good way to solve the climate challenges in your Alaska-TIA community, particularly for the disadvantaged members?
5. How do these strategies align with your community's short- and long-term vision?

## Planning your Climate Action Project(s)

1. What project activities will use the climate strategy or strategies you chose?
2. How will the project activities deal with the climate challenges in your Alaska-TIA community and benefit the community? Will the activities solve the challenges of most concern to the community? Will they solve the challenges that affect the most disadvantaged members of the community?

## Combining Strategies

After choosing both your Climate Action and Pollution Reduction Strategies, consider how project activities can go together.

1. Are there projects that can use both types of strategies?





2. Are there ways to combine the strategies to make one or more of the strategies more effective?

3. Are there ways to combine the strategies to make the project more cost-effective?

## Next Steps

Consult the Track I Readiness Approach and Track I Self-Assessment worksheets for tips on planning project and application review details.

## Tips to Consider

Be sure to write your Selected Strategies section in a way that aligns with the rest of your application. It should fit well with your Community Vision section. You need to show that your solutions will lead to meaningful change that your community wants and needs.

Read the project examples in the NOFO Appendix H. It contains examples for ANCSA-Specific Pollution Reduction Strategy activities and Alaska-Specific Climate Action Strategies. The appendix also includes requirements and guidelines for your application.

Read the output and outcome examples in the NOFO Appendix F. It contains a table with examples for Alaska-Specific Climate Action Strategies along with ANCSA-Specific Pollution Reduction Strategies. The table will help you understand the difference between an output and an outcome.



## Glossary

Helpful terms to know for the Alaska TIA:

- [Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act \(ANCSA\)](#): was enacted in 1971 to settle Native claims to public lands through the conveyance of 46 million acres of land to Alaska Native regional and village corporations and the transfer of one billion dollars from the state and federal governments as compensation for lands that could not be returned to Alaska Native ownership.
- Environmental Information Document (EID): consists of information that is required to comply with NEPA.
- Multi-energy systems: energy systems including renewable (such as solar or wind) and traditional sources to increase ability to adjust during extreme events and support clean energy.
- [National Environmental Policy Act \(NEPA\)](#): requires federal agencies to assess the environmental effects of their proposed actions before making decisions. Using the NEPA process, agencies evaluate the environmental and related social and economic effects of their proposed actions. Agencies also provide opportunities for public review and comment on those evaluations.
- [Permafrost](#): is a layer of earth or soil that stays frozen for two or more years. It usually lies below an “active layer” of soil that freezes and thaws every year. In Alaska, about 80 percent of the ground has permafrost underneath it.
- Portable micro-water treatment: mobile water purification systems to make safe drinking water in areas without a functional water treatment plant.

## Resources

**Resource Library for Community Change Grants** from EPA at <https://communitychangeta.org/resource-library>.

**EPA Region 10’s Inventory of Contaminated ANCSA Lands** at <https://www.epa.gov/aboutepa/epa-region-10-pacific-northwest>

**Contaminated ANCSA Lands Assistance Program** begun by EPA at <https://www.epa.gov/r10-tribal/contamination-ancsa-conveyed-lands>

**Sustainable Management of Food** from EPA at <https://www.epa.gov/sustainable-management-food>

**Climate Change Indicators: Permafrost** from EPA at <https://www.epa.gov/climate-indicators/climate-change-indicators-permafrost>

**EPA’s Laboratory Enterprise** from EPA at <https://www.epa.gov/labs>

**U.S. Climate Resilience Toolkit** from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration at <https://toolkit.climate.gov>

# Priority Populations Worksheet



Purpose: This worksheet will help you complete the following sections of your application:

- 'Community Challenges' section of the Community Vision Description (NOFO Section IV.B)
- 'Maximizing Economic Benefits of Projects' section of the Community Strength Plan (NOFO Section I.G)

## Goals for Addressing Priority Populations

One of the EPA's goals for Track I grants is to reach and improve the lives of priority populations. Your application will need to show:

- Who are the priority populations in your Project Area.
- How your community's challenges affect them.
- How your planned strategies and projects will benefit them.

## What Are Priority Populations?

Priority populations are groups of people who are more vulnerable, susceptible, or subject to climate change, environmental pollution, and weather-related threats when compared to the general population. When identifying priority populations in your community, consider that they may be vulnerable for at least one of the following reasons:

1. **Exposure:** They are more likely to live near pollution or other threats at higher levels for a longer time.
2. **Sensitivity:** They are more affected by the threat.
3. **Ability to Adapt:** They find it harder to respond to the threat due to their health or social and economic inequalities.

Priority populations are made up of individuals with diverse backgrounds, needs, and views. The NOFO Section I.G Footnote 3 notes that priority populations may include:

- Children
- Pregnant women
- Seniors
- Those with low incomes
- Those with limited-English-proficiency
- Those with disabilities or chronic medical conditions
- Those with other risks that may put them at greater vulnerability

# Priority Populations Worksheet



These groups are listed because they are more vulnerable than the general population for a variety of reasons. For example, low-income populations generally have a harder time accessing quality medical care and have fewer resources (like paid sick leave) to deal with illness. Older adults are more likely to have medical conditions that make them more sensitive to pollution or power outages. A person can also be a part of more than one priority population. This can often make the person even more vulnerable to specific threats. Your community might also have priority populations that are not listed here.

## Example Priority Population: Children

Small children have unique behaviors like crawling on the floor, playing outside, and putting their hands in their mouths. This makes them *more likely to be exposed* to pesticides, lead, or other pollutants. Children are also *more sensitive* to these exposures because they are going through important periods of development and growth. They also breathe more air, eat more food, and drink more water on a pound-for-pound basis. It is also *more difficult for children to adapt* because they are highly dependent on their caregivers.

Children may belong to more than one priority population. For example, children in low-income households may live in poorly maintained homes with greater exposure risks. These children may also have a more difficult time accessing needed but costly healthcare.

## Guiding Questions

Work with your community to answer the following questions. Remember that your application will be evaluated on how well your strategies and projects address challenges and provide benefits to priority populations in your Project Area.

## Link Priority Populations to Community Challenges and Strategies

1. Think about the challenges community members have brought up in conversations. Are some specific priority populations more vulnerable to these challenges than others? What makes them more vulnerable? (NOFO Section IV.B)

*(Try to be as specific as possible about why priority populations are vulnerable to each challenge. This will help you plan projects that benefit these vulnerable groups.)*

# Priority Populations Worksheet



Community Challenges	Priority Populations	Vulnerabilities
<i>Extreme heat events</i>	<i>Children</i>	<i>Usually spend more time outdoors exercising, more sensitive to extreme heat.</i>
<i>Extreme heat events</i>	<i>Low-income groups</i>	<i>More likely to live in urban areas that have higher temperatures than surrounding areas, more likely to work outdoors, less able to afford air conditioning or medical care.</i>



2. Think about the community challenges and the ways that priority populations are vulnerable to these challenges. What are some ways to address these vulnerabilities?
3. Think about specific Climate Action and Pollution Reduction Strategies (see NOFO Section I.G. and Appendices C and D). Which might be the best at addressing these challenges and related vulnerabilities?
4. How will priority populations be helped by specific projects?

## **Describing Priority Populations in Your Community**

1. Which priority populations are most vulnerable to challenges you plan to address? Do these groups make up a significant portion of the community?

2. What additional information or data can you include about these priority populations?

*EJScreen and the U.S. Census Bureau's Census Profile website have useful data about priority populations. However, these tools are limited in terms of what they can tell us about a specific community and its priority populations. It is also important to include information on the specific lived experiences of your community and priority populations, which you can gather through community engagement exercises.*



## Tips to Consider

- In the Community Challenges section of the Community Vision Description, make sure to say how priority populations are affected by climate and pollution challenges (NOFO Section IV.B).
- In the Community Strength Plan, make sure to say how priority populations will benefit economically from your planned projects (NOFO Section I.G).
- People can be a part of more than one priority population. Many factors can influence how vulnerable populations are to climate and pollution challenges.
- Your community is made up of individuals with diverse backgrounds and views, and so are priority populations in your community. Data can provide a basic understanding of these priority populations, but it is important to provide additional information about lived experiences. You may need to engage with community members to get this information.

## Resources

1. The Impacts of Climate Change on Human Health in the United States: A Scientific Assessment, Chapter 9: Populations of Concern  
A report from the U.S. Global Change Research Program that summarizes research on the health impacts of climate change in the United States. Chapter 9 covers vulnerability for different groups of people.  
<https://health2016.globalchange.gov/populations-concern>
2. Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool (CEJST)  
This screening tool identifies disadvantaged communities that are underserved and overburdened by pollution. <https://screeningtool.geoplatform.gov/en/#3/33.47/-97.5>
3. EJScreen  
The Environmental Justice Screening and Mapping Tool is a web-based interactive map with layers that allow users to identify disadvantaged communities and their environmental burdens. <https://www.epa.gov/ejscreen>
4. U.S. Census Bureau Census Profile  
Census Profiles provide helpful summaries of various types of demographic and socioeconomic data at many different geographic scales including at Census Block Groups. <https://data.census.gov/profile>
5. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: Environmental Public Health Tracking – Info By Location  
Provides an overview of environmental health data and trends at the county level.  
<https://ephtracking.cdc.gov/InfoByLocation/>

# Community Engagement and Collaborative Governance Structure



Purpose: To ensure that communities are active participants and decision makers in the development and implementation of Track I CCG grants, applicants must submit a Community Engagement and Collaborative Governance Plan (Attachment E). This plan ensures that communities are active participants and decision makers in the development and implementation of the proposed projects. The attachment should demonstrate how you will inform, respond to, and engage community members throughout project development and performance.

## Goals of Community Engagement and Collaborative Governance Plan

Active and ongoing community engagement will be critical to ensure that the projects are community driven. EPA is looking for applicants who can show pre-existing community outreach and engagement to ensure the projects are meeting community needs. Your application will need to show:

- **Past Community Outreach and Engagement Conducted**

How your past engagement with the Project Area community affected the Strategy and associated project selection and approach in your application. This includes the outreach and engagement methods you used for the Project Area and specific neighborhoods or groups within the Project Area.

- **Community Engagement Plan Implementation**

The specific community engagement methods (e.g. community meetings, surveys, social media advertisements) you will use and how they will lessen barriers and involve governmental stakeholders that are necessary to support the overall project performance.

- **Collaborative Governance Structure**

The specific roles and responsibilities each organization or community representative will have throughout project development, management, and implementation. This should include how community members or chosen representatives will be meaningfully included, the process for internal coordination and decision-making, and the process for replacing a collaborating entity.

### Bottom Line

Conduct robust community engagement throughout the process – from design to implementation. Provide detailed roles and responsibilities for the Lead Applicant, Collaborating Entities, and community residents and/or community-selected representatives.

### Double Check

Has community feedback influenced:

- ✓ the Community Vision Description
- ✓ the Climate Action Strategies
- ✓ the Pollution Reduction Strategies





## Guiding Questions and Considerations

### Past Community Outreach and Engagement Conducted

1. What key neighborhoods and communities have you reached out to?
2. How have you used existing relationships with community partners and organizations to capture diverse perspectives?
3. What was the method and frequency of the outreach and engagement?
4. What did you learn through the outreach process? Consider what best practices and available resources you identified, as well as knowledge gaps, community-specific concerns, hopes and dreams, and shared goals.
5. How did the community input inform the selection of Strategies and Projects? What changes did you make in response to the information you collected during outreach?



## Community Engagement Plan Implementation

1. How will you continue to meaningfully engage members of the community?

*Describe:*

- a. *Outreach methods that provide opportunities for broad and diverse community member involvement:*

- b. *Mechanisms for how you will be accountable to the needs and preferences of residents in the Project Area:*

- c. *How you will continuously inform communities throughout the entire application and project life:*

2. How will you overcome or lessen barriers to participation?

*Barriers may include:*

- a. *Lack of awareness*

- b. *Lack of access (time/location)*

- c. *Cultural or social norms*

- d. *Lack of motivation*



3. What are the appropriate government agencies you need to involve in carrying out your projects? These include federal, state, local, and Tribal governments.
  - a. *Which government agencies will you reach out to and how?*
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  - b. *How will you involve these government agencies in the projects?*

## **Collaborative Governance Structure**

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

1. What are the roles and responsibilities of the Lead Applicant, Statutory Partner, and each Collaborating Entity?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. Who are the community resident(s) or community-selected representative(s) who are officially part of the collaborative governance structure?

*Describe:*

  - a. *How will they be/were they selected?*
  - b. *What was their involvement in selecting the Strategies?*
  - c. *What roles will they play in overseeing implementation?*
  - d. *What additional responsibilities, if any, do they have on the project?*



3. How have you reached consensus among all your partners on these roles and responsibilities? How have you documented and communicated these roles and responsibilities among the partners and to the community?

## **Process for Internal Coordination and Decision-Making**

1. What coordination strategies are you creating to communicate with your Collaborating Entities and Statutory Partner?

*Describe:*

- c. The method and frequency of communication.*
  - d. Mechanisms to support transparent communication.*
2. What type of decision-making process will you use, and who will play a role in making decisions?
3. How do the Statutory Partner and the Collaborating Entities have real decision-making authority to implement and achieve project goals?



## Process for Collaborating Entity Replacement

1. If you need to replace Collaborating Entities, what process will you use? EPA will need to formally approval of the qualifications, expertise, and experience of the replacement Collaborating Entity.

*Consider:*

- a. *Who needs to be involved in the decision to replace a Collaborating Entity?*
  - b. *How will you get input from the other members of the partnership and the community members/representatives?*
  - c. *How will you make sure that the replacement is qualified?*
  
2. How will you make sure that the replacement entity has similar skills, qualifications, expertise, community support, and experience?

*Consider:*

- a. *Keeping records and/or resumes that prove the skills, qualifications, expertise, community support, and experience of the existing Collaborating Entity.*
- b. *Maintaining ongoing communication and participation with the community and other potential Collaborating Entities so that they can help identify an alternative Collaborating Entity, if needed.*
- c. *Understanding the roles and responsibilities of the Collaborating Entity and demonstrating how an alternative would meet those needs.*

# Community Engagement and Collaborative Governance Structure



## Tips to Consider

This section provides tips for possible concerns and solutions related to the Community Engagement and Collaborative Governance Plan. See NOFO Section I.G for more information.

Concerns	Solutions to Consider
<i>Meaningful community involvement</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Consider multiple types of community engagement and outreach opportunities (such as online surveys, workshops, advisory committees).</li> <li>✓ Create spaces for brainstorming and sharing experiences together.</li> <li>✓ Remember that the point of the project is to improve the lives of the community, so their voice must be at the center of all decisions.</li> </ul>
<i>Clear and accountable outreach</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Be clear about how input will be and has been a part of your project decisions.</li> <li>✓ Explain any limits or constraints.</li> <li>✓ Have clear roles and responsibilities for stakeholders and partners.</li> <li>✓ Use agendas in meetings to maintain clear goals and provide minutes.</li> <li>✓ Have a process for collecting, storing, and sharing meeting minutes and decisions.</li> <li>✓ Provide timelines with milestones and make data, measurements, and reports available to the public.</li> </ul>
<i>Continuous outreach and engagement</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Consider which types of messages are most likely to reach your community (such as mail, in-person, social media).</li> <li>✓ Community advisory board</li> <li>✓ Email lists and physical mailings</li> <li>✓ Ongoing public events or presentation</li> <li>✓ Other communication tools</li> </ul>
<i>Handling of awareness barriers</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Multiple methods of announcing outreach and engagement opportunities.</li> <li>✓ Social media; press releases; flyers; direct outreach by partners; short, low-commitment surveys to generate interest.</li> </ul>
<i>Handling of logistical barriers</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Consider public transportation, parking, and access for persons with disabilities.</li> <li>✓ Provide childcare and meals, as appropriate and available.</li> <li>✓ Hold meetings in an adequate and trusted facility.</li> <li>✓ Offer multiple time options to make diverse participation possible.</li> <li>✓ Piggyback on other planned events that people are already attending.</li> <li>✓ Use websites only as a backup to any engagement and outreach.</li> </ul>

# Community Engagement and Collaborative Governance Structure



Concerns	Solutions to Consider
<i>Handling of cultural or social barriers</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Make sure that community partners are equal partners and able to connect with different cultural and social groups.</li> <li>✓ Provide translation services if appropriate, including American Sign Language.</li> <li>✓ Use materials that are easy for the community to read and understand.</li> <li>✓ Provide enough background information during outreach activities so that individuals from the community can meaningfully engage.</li> <li>✓ Promote an atmosphere of equal participation by avoiding the use of a head table or panel at in-person events.</li> </ul>
<i>Handling of personal or motivational barriers</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Present the Lead Applicant, Statutory Partner, and Collaborating Entities as being balanced, neutral, and welcoming to diverse audiences.</li> <li>✓ Be transparent about the intent of the engagement and outreach efforts.</li> <li>✓ Communicate how the public can impact the project design.</li> <li>✓ Make it clear what the outcomes and results of the projects will be and how they can benefit the community.</li> </ul>
<i>Government involvement</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Tribal Nations may have specific procedures on who is able to represent them.</li> <li>✓ Multiple agencies may work in the same communities but not coordinate.</li> <li>✓ Consider other new or ongoing efforts, plans, and policies (such as town conceptual plans, state incentive programs, or new federal sites for pollution remediation).</li> </ul>
<i>Successful partnerships</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Modeling collaboration, grace and goodwill go a long way to making the decision making easier and the project work better by fostering goodwill.</li> <li>✓ Preparing the application is an opportunity to see if you'll work well with potential partners. It is easier to replace a partner in the application phase than it will be to replace them after EPA has approved the Collaborating Entities.</li> </ul>
<i>Different methods of decision-making</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Majority rule (more than 50 percent of members of a group support a decision).</li> <li>✓ Plurality (a decision is made based on what has the most support even if it is not more than 50 percent of the group).</li> <li>✓ Consensus (all members of a group agree on the decision).</li> <li>✓ Consider creating a diagram to illustrate decision-making processes, especially if some entities will have more authority than others.</li> </ul>



## Resources

1. EPA Guidance on Participant Support Costs  
EPA guidance on participant support costs for community outreach and engagement efforts.  
<https://www.epa.gov/sites/default/files/2020-11/documents/epa-guidance-on-participant-support-costs.pdf>
2. Guidance on Selected Items of Cost for Recipients  
EPA guidance on the allowability of certain costs for community outreach and engagement efforts, including advertising, advisory councils, entertainment, fundraising, meals and light refreshments, and proposal costs.  
[https://www.epa.gov/sites/default/files/2018-05/documents/recipient\\_guidance\\_selected\\_items\\_of\\_cost\\_final.pdf](https://www.epa.gov/sites/default/files/2018-05/documents/recipient_guidance_selected_items_of_cost_final.pdf)
3. Community Involvement Plans  
A Community Involvement Plan (CIP) is a site-specific strategy to enable meaningful community involvement throughout the Superfund cleanup process.  
<https://semsub.epa.gov/work/11/174739.pdf>
4. Community Engagement Strategy  
Issues to consider when planning and designing community engagement approaches for Tribal Integrated Waste Management Programs.  
<https://www.epa.gov/sites/default/files/2017-03/documents/tribalswcommunityengagementstrategy508.pdf>
5. Capacity Building Through Effective Meaningful Engagement: A Tool for Local and State Governments  
A tool for local and state governments to have a roadmap for meaningful engagement and innovative examples of engagement.  
[https://www.epa.gov/system/files/documents/2023-09/epa-capacity-building-through-effective-meaningful-engagement-booklet\\_0.pdf](https://www.epa.gov/system/files/documents/2023-09/epa-capacity-building-through-effective-meaningful-engagement-booklet_0.pdf)
6. Stakeholder Involvement & Public Participation at the U.S. EPA  
Provides lessons learned, barriers, and innovative approaches to community engagement and outreach.  
<https://nepis.epa.gov/Exe/ZyPDF.cgi/2000CQR5.PDF?Dockey=2000CQR5.PDF>
7. The Model Plan for Public Participation  
A report and checklist on public participation from EPA's National Environmental Justice Advisory Council.  
<https://www.epa.gov/sites/default/files/2015-02/documents/model-public-part-plan.pdf>



# Community Strength Plan Worksheet



Purpose: This worksheet helps you build your Community Strength Plan (Attachment F) as required by the Notice of Funding Opportunity and described in Sections I.G. and V.C. The Community Strength Plan cannot exceed five pages.

## Goals of the Community Strength Plan

- Describe how your proposed projects could enhance the overall strength and economic prosperity of your community.
- Explain how you intend to minimize the risk of displacement, which is when disadvantaged households are forced to leave their community due to rising costs.
- Explain how the projects would benefit existing residents, particularly disadvantaged and priority populations, in the Project Area. Priority populations are more vulnerable to climate change risks, like children and older adults. For more information about priority populations, check out the Priority Populations Worksheet.
- Describe how the projects could allow residents to continue to build on the benefits past the life of the project, for future generations.

## Part 1: Maximizing Economic Benefits

You should maximize the economic benefits of your proposed projects for residents in the Project Area. Example strategies for maximizing economic benefits include:

### Example: Opportunities for Local Small Businesses or Contractors

- Directly inform local businesses, including Disadvantaged Business Enterprises, of open solicitations and encourage them to compete for contracts. These may result in short-term benefits for local businesses.
- Partner with your local government's small business office, minority business associations, unions, or local Chambers of Commerce to advertise contracting opportunities. This may result in short-term benefits for local businesses.

### Example: High Quality Jobs for Community Members

- Develop recruitment strategies with your local workforce development board to support project work. Establish goals for hiring individuals from your Project Area on your proposed projects. These strategies can have short- and long-term benefits, providing jobs for the span of the projects and giving workers training and experience for future-related jobs.



- Fund supportive services for workers on grant-funded projects. Examples of supportive services are transportation vouchers, childcare subsidies, and mental health support. These are short-term benefits for workers.

## **Example: Financial Savings for Residents**

- Choose Climate Action and Pollution Reduction projects that reduce costs to provide the community with financial savings. For example, energy-efficient retrofits of homes can save money for homeowners or renters or low-cost public transportation options. This can provide short- and long-term savings for community members.
- Consider using tools such as Community Benefits Agreements (CBAs) to ensure lasting benefits. CBAs are legally binding contracts in which parties such as private developers and local governments commit to providing long-term benefits for members of communities. Read below for more information about CBAs.

## **Part 2: Displacement Avoidance**

Large investments in communities can come with the risk of unintended consequences like rising property values. Higher property values can lead to higher rents and property taxes. This can make it difficult for communities to remain affordable for some low-income and other disadvantaged members. Existing residents are sometimes displaced, and newer residents, often with higher incomes, receive the benefits of the community investments.

You should explain how you intend to minimize the risks of displacement. Examples of anti-displacement strategies you might consider include:

### **Community Benefits Agreements**

- A CBA is a legally binding contract between community groups and a private developer. Sometimes government entities are a part of CBAs.
- It can require the developer to provide benefits to the communities. These benefits can include anti-displacement measures such as providing affordable housing and hiring locally.
- You could negotiate for some benefits of the CBA to continue beyond the construction of the project. For example, you could require continued workforce development initiatives.

### **Education and Outreach**

- You could provide existing residents with information about their rights as renters and homeowners.
- This could include distributing information packets or running tenant protection workshops in your community.



- You could also provide information to residents about tenants' unions, which are renter-created groups that advocate for the rights of renters.

## Foreclosure Assistance

- [Foreclosure assistance](#) helps households avoid foreclosure.
- Assistance can range from financial counseling to financial aid.
- Research shows that both non-financial and financial foreclosure assistance results in more families being able to keep their homes. This can help reduce displacement.

## Inclusionary Zoning

- Local governments create [inclusionary zoning codes](#).
- Inclusionary zoning codes require every housing development to include a minimum percentage of affordable housing units either in their new development or at another location.
- Inclusionary zoning codes can be made mandatory throughout a town or city. They can also include requirements that units are made affordable for a long time span, such as 30 years.
- Providing incentives for developers, such as quicker permit approval processes, often makes inclusionary zoning more successful.
- Consider partnering or collaborating with a local government to create an inclusionary zoning code.

## Just Cause Evictions

- Local jurisdictions implement just cause eviction programs.
- Just cause eviction programs allow property owners to evict tenants only for specific reasons, such as not paying rent or otherwise violating their lease.
- These programs often include procedures that property owners must follow to prove that they have cause to evict.
- Just cause eviction programs can help limit how many multi-family rental housing units in your community are replaced with condominiums and other individually owned units.
- Consider partnering or collaborating with a local government if you would like to have a just cause eviction program.

## Partnerships with Landlords

- If property owners benefit from your proposed projects, you could require that the landlords that benefit agree to not raise rents for a certain length of time.
- This could be important if the projects increase the value of the property, which if unregulated, could lead to landlords raising rents and potentially displacing disadvantaged community members.



## Rent Control

- Local governments can create rent control policies.
- [Rent control policies](#) put limits on rent. These policies may require that rents stay below a certain price or limit how much property owners can increase a tenant's rent each year.
- There are often limits on which buildings or units the rent control restrictions apply. A common limit is that they only apply to units built before a certain year.
- Rent control is not legal everywhere in the United States, so check the laws in your state.
- Local governments have the power to create rent control policies. Consider partnering or collaborating with a local government if you would like to use rent control policies.

## Other Considerations

- Consider working with local governments to create other policies, plans, or programs to reduce displacement. These could include zoning policies that encourage dense, affordable housing.
- Consider using a variety of measures together, like rent control policies, just cause evictions and limits on converting rental housing to condominiums. This would help to preserve rent-controlled housing units.



## Guiding Questions

### Part 1: Maximizing Economic Benefits of Projects

#### Business Opportunities

1. Are there ways the projects proposed in your application create opportunities for local small businesses? (Note: Do not forget that work must be procured in line with EPA requirements)
2. What outreach methods could you use to ensure that local small businesses and Disadvantaged Business Enterprises are aware of and apply for opportunities related to your project?

#### Job Opportunities

1. What high quality jobs could your proposed projects create?
2. How do you plan to make sure that residents within your Project Area have access to those jobs? For example, will you partner with a workforce development program (such as a pre-apprenticeship program), and/or collect and publish data about the workers on the projects?
3. How do you plan to retain workers (for example, by funding services such as transportation, childcare, and mental health supports)?



## Financial Savings

1. Will Project Area residents receive direct financial benefits from the proposed projects in your application?
  
2. How can you make sure that these financial benefits last beyond the three-year span of the grant?

## Part 2: Displacement Avoidance

1. Is the community in your Project Area vulnerable to displacement associated with your proposed project? Factors that may put communities at risk of displacement, as compared with the wider city or metropolitan statistical area include:
  - Low proportion of owner-occupied housing: Renters have less control over their housing. If property values in an area rise, landlords may choose to sell their properties which may force renters to move.
  - Low median household income: Households with low incomes may not be able to afford the higher rents and property taxes that might come with significant investments in the community.
  - High vacancy rate: Communities with high vacancy rates may be more vulnerable to gentrification because the vacant lots provide more opportunities for investment.

# Community Strength Plan Worksheet



2. How could your proposed projects create or increase the risks of rising costs for residents, small businesses, and other community members in your Project Area?
  
3. What programs, plans, or activities already exist in the Project Area to help lessen these risks? For example, is there a citywide anti-displacement plan, a non-profit running renters' rights workshops, a statewide program for foreclosure assistance?
  
4. What programs, plans, and activities could you propose to help lessen the risks of displacement that your proposed projects might create or increase? What partners would you need to successfully implement those proposed activities?



## Tips to Consider

- All parts of your project should be community driven. Use community input to assess and describe the risks of displacement and to identify ways to lessen this risk.
- All jobs you propose creating should follow [Good Jobs Principles](#). Good jobs are high-quality, family-sustaining, community-strengthening jobs with the free and fair choice to join a union.

## Resources

1. HUD Displacement of Lower-Income Families in Urban Areas Report  
This report suggests key strategies that could address displacement of lower-income families and long-time residents in urban areas.  
<https://www.huduser.gov/portal/sites/default/files/pdf/displacementreport.pdf>
2. Sharing in the Benefits of a Greening City  
This toolkit presents policies that can be used to prevent residential displacement after large investments in environmental assets.  
<https://create.umn.edu/toolkit/>
3. Strategies to Minimize Displacement  
A set of fact sheets on strategies and tools to minimize displacement alongside brownfields redevelopment.  
<https://www.epa.gov/brownfields/strategies-minimize-displacement>
4. White Paper on Anti-Displacement Strategy Effectiveness  
A paper evaluating the effectiveness of common anti-displacement strategies.  
<https://www.urbandisplacement.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/19RD018-Anti-Displacement-Strategy-Effectiveness.pdf>



# Statutory Partnerships Worksheet



Purpose: This worksheet helps applicants build their Statutory Partnership and define roles for the Lead Applicant and the Statutory Partner. This worksheet also helps applicants write a Partnership Agreement.

A Partnership Agreement between the Lead Applicant and Statutory Partner, Attachment B of your application, is required for each application. See the Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) Section III.B and Appendix B for more details on Statutory Partnerships and Partnership Agreements.

## Visualizing a Statutory Partnership

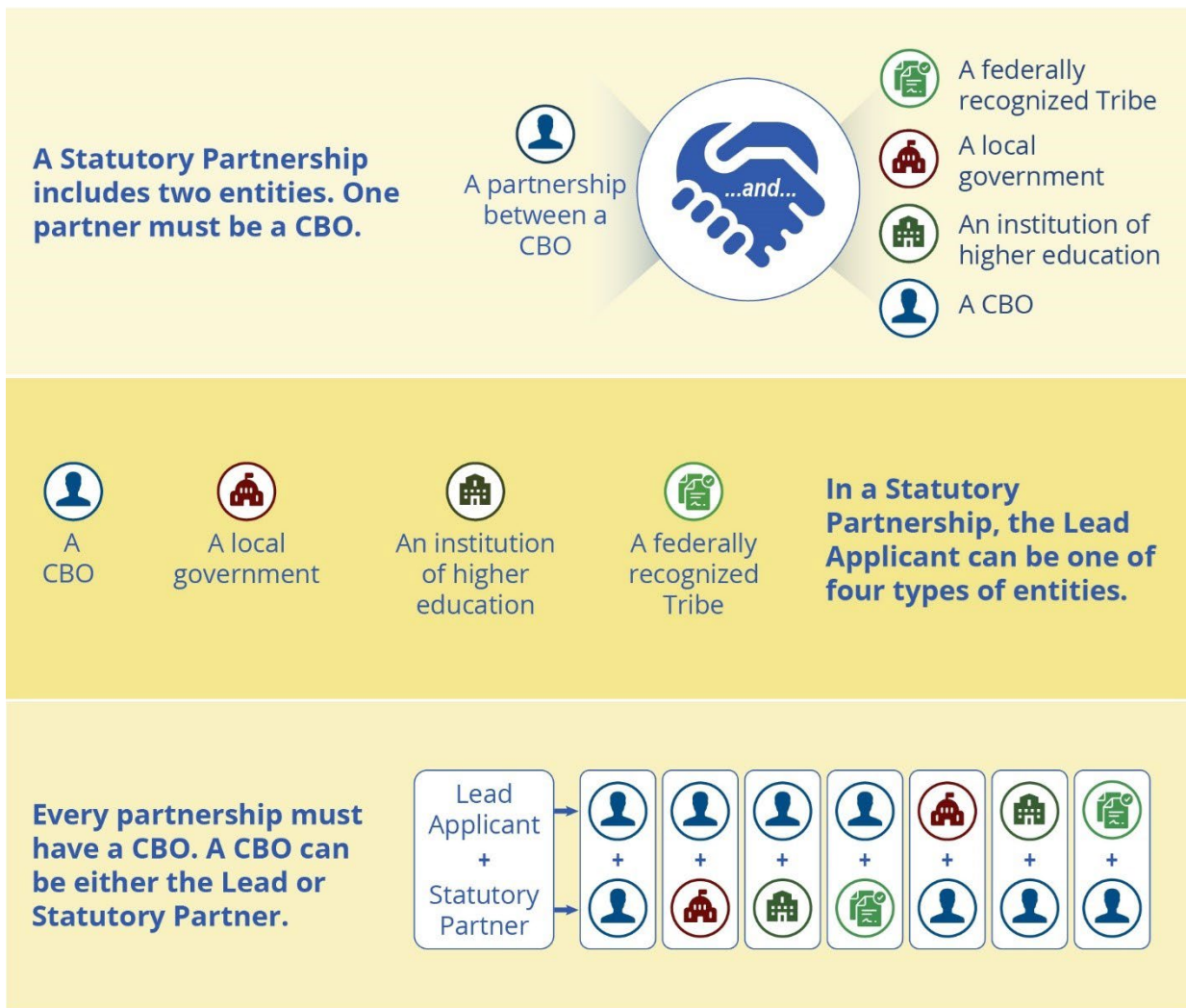


Exhibit 1: Visualizing a Statutory Partnership



## Lead Applicant Responsibilities

Determining the Lead Applicant is a key decision the partnership will need to make. We strongly advise selecting your Lead Applicant carefully. EPA will score your Lead Applicant's past grant performance and ability to manage a grant of this size as part of scoring your application. The Lead Applicant is:

- Responsible for overall grant management, performance, oversight, risk management, and reporting.
- Accountable to EPA for compliance, legal, and financial provisions.
- Responsible for making subawards to the Statutory Partner and other Collaborating Entities.
- While subrecipients can carry out competitive procurements for contractors, the lead applicant is ultimately responsible for ensuring that all procurements are in compliance with EPA standards.

## Guiding Questions for Establishing a Statutory Partnership

### Step One: Evaluating Partner Strengths

First, have an honest conversation about each partner's strengths and limitations. You can use this information to make the most of each partner's strengths when dividing roles and responsibilities.

Each partner should separately answer these two questions and then compare and talk through the answers:

1. What are my organization's strengths?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. What roles and responsibilities do I want my partner to take on?

# Statutory Partnerships Worksheet



## Step Two: Comparing Partner Strengths Against Program Competencies

A robust partnership will be well-balanced across the many evaluation criteria EPA considers (see NOFO Section V.C for full evaluation criteria). Here is a table listing strengths needed in your partnership. As you go through the questions in the section below, mark off the relative strengths of each partner.

Collaborating entities may be identified to strengthen areas of weakness for both partners. Please see the [Selecting Collaborating Entities Worksheet](#) for more information and guiding questions on choosing addition partners.

Partnership Competency	Partner 1 Name: _____	Partner 2 Name: _____	Collaborating Entities
Relationships and trust with the community			
Community engagement experience			
Environmental justice expertise			
Climate Action and/or Pollution Reduction expertise			
Grant compliance expertise			
Financial management expertise			
Add your own:			
Add your own:			



## Step Three: Guiding Questions to Consider when Determining Who is Lead Applicant

- Which partner has more documented experience managing EPA grants?

If neither has any EPA grant experience, does either partner have experience with other federal grants?

If neither has any federal grants experience, does either partner have experience managing other public or private grant awards?

- *Consider compliance.* Which partner has a stronger record of grant management that is problem-free, well-documented, and compliant with reporting requirements including an acceptable final report?
  - *Consider outcomes.* Which partner has a stronger record of successful grants with outcomes aligned with goals?
  - *Consider relevance.* Which partner has past performance that is the most comparable to the project you are proposing in your Community Change Grant application in terms of size, scope and focus of the project you are proposing? Were the grants related to environmental justice?
- Which partner has stronger grant management systems in place to ensure their ability to manage funds efficiently and ethically?

On the table above, circle the partner who will take on the responsibility of Lead Applicant.

# Statutory Partnerships Worksheet



## Step Four: Determining Responsibilities of the Partners

Consider strengths of partners, identified above, when dividing responsibilities for each project activity.

1. What activities are required to complete the Community Change Grants **program application**?

Which should be done by the Lead Applicant?

Which should be done by the Statutory Partner?

Which should be done by the Collaborating Entities?<sup>1</sup>

2. What **administrative activities** are required to complete this project after the grant is awarded?

Which should be done by the Lead Applicant?

Which should be done by the Statutory Partner?

Which should be done by the Collaborating Entities?

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<sup>1</sup> For more information on Collaborating Entities, go to the [Selecting Collaborating Entities Worksheet](#)

# Statutory Partnerships Worksheet



3. What activities are required to complete this project's **Climate Action Strategy(ies)**?

Which should be done by the Lead Applicant?

Which should be done by the Statutory Partner?

Which should be done by the Collaborating Entities?

4. What activities are required to complete this project's **Pollution Reduction Strategy(ies)**?

Which should be done by the Lead Applicant?

Which should be done by the Statutory Partner?

Which should be done by the Collaborating Entities?

# Statutory Partnerships Worksheet



5. Is there expertise needed to successfully implement this grant that is not currently represented among the partners?

What expertise is missing?

Who are potential additional partners?



## Resources

1. **EPA Grants Management Training for Applicants and Recipients**

This training will clarify what EPA means by “management responsibilities” for the Lead Applicant. The training courses are available in both video and text format. <https://www.epa.gov/grants/epa-grants-management-training-applicants-and-recipients>





## NOFO Requirements for a Partnership Agreement

From NOFO Appendix B:

To be reviewed, applications must include a signed, legally binding Partnership Agreement between the Lead Applicant and Statutory Partner.

Suggestions of the topics that could be covered in the Partnership Agreement include but are not limited to:

- Who will be the Lead Applicant and the Statutory Partner.
- The Lead Applicant will be responsible for the overall management, performance, oversight, and reporting responsibilities under the grant, and for making subawards to the Statutory Partner<sup>2</sup> and Collaborating Entities.
- The Lead Applicant will be responsible for the receipt of federal funds from EPA, the proper expenditure of these funds, and liability for any unallowable costs.<sup>3</sup>
- Roles and responsibilities of the Lead Applicant and Statutory Partner for project activities and how they will handle and resolve disputes between them. Please note that EPA is not a party to the Partnership Agreement, and any disputes between the parties must be resolved under the law applicable to the Partnership Agreement.
- The Lead Applicant is responsible for compliance and legal issues, and managing risks associated with the project.<sup>4</sup>
- If the application is selected for award, the Lead Applicant will make a subaward to the Statutory Partner that complies with the subaward requirements in the grant regulations at 2 CFR 200.331 and in EPA's Subaward Policy and related guidance.

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<sup>2</sup> A Statutory Partner may use their subaward to make subawards to collaborating entities.

<sup>3</sup> Liability for any unallowable costs includes paying back any misused funds.

<sup>4</sup> The Partnership Agreement must also describe the procedures for replacing a Statutory Partner with another Statutory Partner, and for ensuring the replacement has the comparable expertise, experience, knowledge, and qualifications of the replaced Statutory Partner to ensure successful grant completion within three years. Replacement may be necessary for various reasons, including performance issues. Note that replacement requires prior approval by an authorized EPA official pursuant to 2 CFR 200.308(c)6.



Purpose: This document is a template of a Partnership Agreement. It is an aid to help you get started on creating an Agreement to include in your grant application. It is not a substitute for legal advice.

## Example of a Partnership Agreement

**DISCLAIMERS: This document is only meant to be an example of a possible Partnership Agreement. It was not produced by EPA and is not exhaustive of all the possible terms that may be appropriate for your partnership. It is not legal advice and not meant to replace advice from a licensed attorney in your state.**

This Partnership Agreement (the “Agreement”) is made and entered into this (the “Effective Date”). The \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ are the “Partners” in this Agreement are as follows:

The Partners of this Agreement to the following:

- I. The Partners are executing this document to create a Partnership. This Partnership will be known as \_\_\_\_\_ (the “Partnership”).
- II. The partnership
  - a. The Partners wish to become partners for the primary purpose of applying for and, if awarded, completing an Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Community Change Grant (CCG).
  - b. The terms and conditions of their Partnership will be outlined in this Agreement.
  - c. The Partnership will be in effect on \_\_\_\_\_
  - d. The Partnership will only be terminated as outlined in this Agreement.
  - e. The Partnership will be governed under the laws of the state of \_\_\_\_\_
  - f. The Partners shall be responsible for the work of their employees or volunteers and for completing their agreed-to roles and responsibilities.
- III. Roles of the Partners
  - a. \_\_\_\_\_ shall be the Lead Applicant of a CCG. If the CCG is awarded, \_\_\_\_\_
    - i. Be responsible for the overall management, performance, oversight, and reporting responsibilities under the grant, and for making subawards to Collaborating Entities.

# Statutory Partnerships Worksheet



- ii. Make a subaward to the \_\_\_\_\_ in the amount \_\_\_\_\_ consistent with the final EPA approved grant budget.
    - iii. Make sure that all subawards comply with the subaward requirements in the grant regulations at 2 CFR 200.331 and in EPA's Subaward Policy and related guidance.
    - iv. Be responsible for the receipt of federal funds from EPA and the proper expenditure of these funds and will bear liability for unallowable costs.
    - v. Be responsible for all compliance and legal issues, and managing risks associated with the project.
    - vi. Be responsible for the following project-specific activities:
      - vii. Share decision making authority with the \_\_\_\_\_ and other parties as specified in the Collaborative Governance Structure that is submitted to EPA as part of the CCG application.
  - b. \_\_\_\_\_ if the CCG is awarded, shall:
    - i. Be responsible for the following project-specific activities:
      - ii. Share decision making authority with the \_\_\_\_\_ and other parties as specified in the Collaborative Governance Structure that is submitted to EPA as part of the CCG application.
- IV. Dispute Resolution
  - a. \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. Both members of this partnership recognize that EPA is not a party to this agreement and any disputes between the parties must be resolved under the law applicable to the Partnership Agreement.
- V. Replacement of \_\_\_\_\_ as Statutory Partner
  - a. \_\_\_\_\_

# Statutory Partnerships Worksheet



- b. Any replacement requires prior approval by an authorized EPA official pursuant to 2 CFR 200.308(c)6.

VI. Grant application

- a. \_\_\_\_\_ shall not submit a CCG application for this Partnership without the written approval of the

VII.

VIII. End of the Partnership

- a. Unless overridden by a new written agreement of the Partners, the Partnership shall end in one of the following ways:
  - i. When \_\_\_\_\_ is replaced under the procedure listed in Section V of this agreement.
  - ii. When the CCG is completed as determined by EPA.
  - iii. When the Partnership is informed that their application for a CCG is rejected unless, as agreed by both Partners, they resubmit an amended application.
  - iv. When the Partnership is informed that their resubmitted application is rejected.
- b. The Partners agree to be bound by the terms of this Partnership Agreement and agree that the Partners have received due consideration for entering into this contract.

Signature Block for Lead Applicant, including date:

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Lead Applicant

Date

Signature Block for Statutory Partner, including date:

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Statutory Partner

Date

# Collaborating Entities Worksheet



Purpose: This worksheet can help applicants select Collaborating Entities. These entities should bring different skills and resources to the table, adding to the skills and resources that the Statutory Partners already have.

## Overview of Collaborating Entities

EPA strongly encourages proposals to include Collaborating Entities beyond your organization and your Statutory Partner. Your application is unlikely to score well during the evaluation process if you do not have any. Collaborating Entities can demonstrate the strength of the coalition of organizations you assembled to deliver on your grant proposal. They can receive subawards to implement and perform specific grant project activities that may not have resources or experience in. You should select Collaborating Entities based on the additional people, funds, skills, knowledge, and resources they may bring according to your goals and the projects you want to pursue.

### Eligibility

Collaborating Entities may include any organization eligible to serve as the Statutory Partner as well as a broader group of prospective partners. As a reminder, CBOs, federally recognized Tribes, local governments, and institutions of higher education are eligible to be Statutory Partners. Collaborating Entities may also include some organizations that cannot be part of a Statutory Partnership, such as state government agencies, territorial governments, international organizations, foundations, or other non-profit organizations that do not meet the definition of a “CBO” in the Community Change Grant (CCG) Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO). The only organizations which cannot be Collaborating Entities are for-profit firms, individual consultants, or other commercial service providers. For more information on Collaborating Entities, please see NOFO Section III.B.

### Examples

- Transportation projects that involve public transit or improvements to public property must include a governmental agency as a Collaborating Entity that will help perform and oversee the project.
- A project that involves building a public park to provide green space and reduce urban heat island impacts should involve a Public Parks Department that will maintain the park.

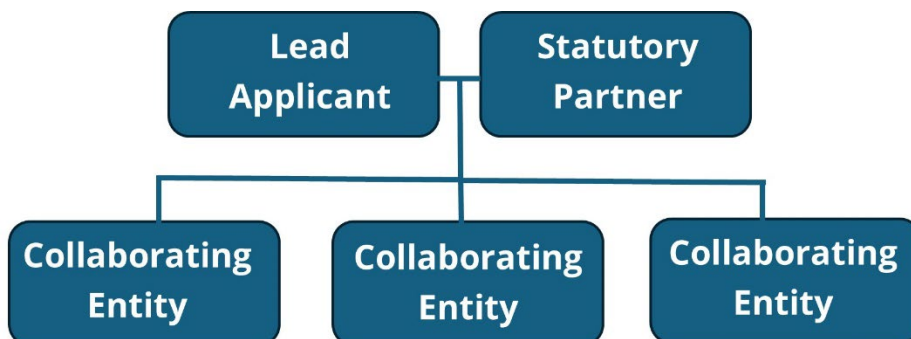


Exhibit 1: Example Structure of Collaborating Entities

# Collaborating Entities Worksheet



## Guiding Questions

When considering organizations to serve as Collaborating Entities, it may be useful to consider:

### Step 1: Identifying Collaborating Entities

- What resources will you need to complete the project that the Statutory Partnership doesn't have—who has those skills, resources, or trained personnel? (See the [Statutory Partnership worksheet](#) for more information.)

Use the table below to brainstorm potential Collaborating Entities

Area of Need	Description	Prospective Partner 1	Prospective Partner 2

Step 2: Evaluate how Collaborating Entities could enhance application in alignment with CCG scoring criteria

- How could potential Collaborating Entities reflect community priorities and facilitate community engagement?
- Readiness: If your project requires new infrastructure, do you own or control the land that it will be installed on? Are there any Collaborating Entities that you should engage to address this concern?
- Sustainability: How can Collaborating Entities help ensure the sustainability of projects, such as making sure new infrastructure is maintained after the grant period has ended?

# Collaborating Entities Worksheet



## Step 3: Describing the role of your Collaborating Entities

- What Collaborating Entities have you identified for your proposal? What does each bring to the proposal?

Collaborating Entity Name	Description	Roles and Responsibilities	Getting a Subaward? (Yes/No)	Total Amount?

## Tips to Consider

- Making Collaborating Entities feel welcomed and heard will strengthen the connection within the governance structure, and a common understanding of the roles and responsibilities will help you accomplish your collective goals. See the [Collaborative Governance worksheet](#) for more information.
- Gathering input from community members throughout the process is likely to clarify project needs and potential Collaborating Entities to help address those needs within your project.
- The Statutory Partners and the other Collaborating Entities combine to make a team. The relationships among the Collaborating Entities are important. Make sure that in addition to having a common understanding of how they will work with you, they all understand and agree on how they will work with each other.
- The resources that Collaborating Entities bring can be as important as the work they do. The resources can include grant management experience, relationships in the community or with the government, space for public meetings, or anything else that will be important for your project.

# Readiness Approach Worksheet



Purpose: This worksheet helps applicants write their Readiness Approach attachment. Track I applicants are required to submit a Readiness Approach (Attachment G). The requirements are stated in the Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) Section I.G. The Readiness Approach has no page limit but should be concise.

## Goals of the Readiness Approach

Under the law, these grants can only last for three years. Since EPA cannot extend the grant, EPA wants to see that you can complete the project within three years. The Readiness Approach is where you show this in your application. You must:

- Demonstrate that you can complete the projects within the three-year period.
- Show that you are prepared to start your proposed projects right away, generally no later than 120 days after receiving the award.

You should address the following factors as part of the readiness approach. If any of these are not applicable, your application should explain why not. You should also include other factors that hinder your ability to start your project on time or complete it within three years. We provide more information on these requirements on the following pages.

- Government approvals: Government approvals may be necessary to implement portions of your project. You must show that you have either (1) already obtained these approvals or (2) will be able to obtain them right after you receive the award so they will not delay your plans.
- Alignment with existing plans: Development plans may already be in place for land within the Project Area. You must show how planned work in the Project Area is consistent with community development, climate resilience, or hazard mitigation plans, as well as any similar government land use restrictions that may exist and apply to your project.
- Site control: You must show that you own or control sites where project work will take place OR that you have legally binding access to or permission to access the site.
- Operations and Maintenance: You must explain how you will ensure the operation and maintenance of infrastructure investments during and after the grant period.
- Federal requirements for construction projects: Federally funded construction projects must comply with various laws and executive orders (NOFO Section VI.B) including the prevailing wage requirement under Davis-Bacon and Related Acts, and the domestic preference requirement under Build America, Buy America.





## Guiding Questions

### Developing a Readiness Approach

While you need to keep Readiness Approach requirement in mind as you develop your application, it is not something that can be done early in the process. As you do community outreach and work with possible partners and collaborating entities you should make sure they are aware of grant limitations so they focus on potential projects that can realistically be completed within the time limit. Once you have a decent sense of your strategies and projects, you can start to develop a Readiness Approach.

1. First, break down each project into all the different steps that you will need to do in order to complete the project.

2. Then you should make realistic timelines for each of the steps.

*If you can, have your project timeline reviewed by people who did not help to develop it and have expertise with that type of project. Your lead Technical Assistance Provider (LTP) can help you get outside experts to review the timeline.*

### Project Resources

1. What resources do you need to complete your project?

- a. People
- b. Materials
- c. Land
- d. Contractors

Do you have them, or can you get them in time?

Can you demonstrate to EPA that you can get them in time?



2. Have you added enough time to complete competitive bidding processes for materials and contractors?

*EPA has [guidance](#) and a [best practice guide](#) on procuring supplies and contractor services.*

## Government Approvals

You may need approval from a governmental entity before you can begin a certain activity. While you do not need to have approval by the time you submit your proposal, you should at least be aware of any necessary approvals, and you should state how and when you will get those approvals shortly after you are awarded the grant. Consider:

1. What types of government approvals are necessary to begin your projects? Some could include:
  - Municipal or County construction permits
  - Municipal or County zoning changes
  - State environmental permits

*Building departments, planning departments, small business development offices, and similar entities may be able to help you identify and apply for any required government approvals. Look to your partners and Collaborating Entities for any expertise they may have.*

2. Have you obtained all government approvals necessary for the project? If not, how will you get the approvals as soon as the grant is awarded?



## Alignment with Existing Plans

1. What existing development plans and policies might dictate or direct the type of activities you pursue within your Project Area?

*For example, a climate plan written by your City, a development plan written by your County transit or planning Agency, a Hazard Mitigation or Disaster Response Plan written by your Emergency Management Agency, or other plans that dictate restrictions on land uses. Check with your local government to see what plans exist and how they may or may not affect your project. Your local government representative may be a good place to start.*

2. How are your proposed projects consistent with the plans and policies you have identified? Would the entity that developed the plan be a strong Collaborating Entity on your proposal?

## Site Control

1. At which location(s) will you conduct projects?
2. Do you or your Statutory Partner/Collaborating Entities have control over all these locations? If you do not have control, do you have guaranteed access? If you do not have it now, can you demonstrate how you will have control or access when you need it for the project?

## Operations and Maintenance

1. Think about any infrastructure projects you are planning. How will you operate and maintain this infrastructure during and after the three-year grant period?

# Readiness Approach Worksheet



2. How will you finance these projects?

*Include any information on long-term service costs, fee structures, and detailed information on debt for all properties.*

3. Does your overall operations and maintenance plan demonstrate how you will ensure the continued functioning of these infrastructure investments during and after the grant period?



## Federal Requirements for Construction Projects

Domestic preference requirement under Build America, Buy America (BABA) Act. This act requires that certain products and construction materials used in federally funded projects must be produced in the United States.

1. Have you evaluated which products and construction materials you will need that are most likely to be unavailable domestically?

*During the grant period, you will need to apply for a waiver from EPA before purchasing non-domestic products that are covered by BABA.*

Prevailing wage requirement under Davis-Bacon and Related Acts. These are a collection of labor standards that are applicable to grants involving construction. Are you prepared to comply with the following requirements:

- Post the Davis-Bacon Act poster on workers' rights at all jobsites? It must be posted in an accessible and easy-to-see location, protected from elements.
- Post the project wage rate sheet, which must include each role, how much each role gets paid, fringe benefits, and other details? The wage rate sheet must be posted at all jobsites in an accessible and easy-to-see location, protected from elements.
- Certify and submit weekly payroll.
- Retain all payroll information for three years.
- Regularly perform confidential employee interviews to make sure the work being done is consistent with job titles and wages being reported.

For more information on the Davis-Bacon Act, see the [EPA Davis-Bacon Grant Term and conditions webinar](#).

For more information on Build America, Buy America compliance, see the [CCG Build America Buy America webinar](#).



## Tips to Consider

1. When you are getting community input, make sure community members understand the timing requirement from the beginning. It is an important limitation on what you can do. Be open with them about these and other constraints. This will help you keep the trust of community members.
2. Before committing to any project, think through all the timing implications. Do you have or can you get all the resources, people, materials, land, and approvals you might need to complete the project in three years.
3. Have your project reviewed by people who are not part of the grant process and have expertise in what you are trying to do. Your Lead Technical Assistance Provider (LTP) can help you in the review process.
4. The Readiness Approach is as much about what you can demonstrate as it is about what you can do. You must be able to make a convincing case that you can finish within the three-year time limit.

## Resources

1. Build America Buy America (BABA) Webinar  
Webinar recording and slides on Build America Buy America compliance and waivers. <https://communitychangeta.org/webinar-recordings>
2. Build America, Buy America Act Domestic Preference Overview  
A brief summary document explaining the requirements of BABA. <https://www.epa.gov/system/files/documents/2022-10/Buy%20America%20Preference%20Overview.pdf>
3. EPA Davis-Bacon Term & Condition  
Set of slides summarizing the various requirements for the Davis-Bacon and Related Acts (DBRA). [https://www.epa.gov/system/files/documents/2024-03/presentation\\_epa-davis-bacon-tc-march-2024.pdf](https://www.epa.gov/system/files/documents/2024-03/presentation_epa-davis-bacon-tc-march-2024.pdf)
4. EPA Grants Management Training for Applicants and Recipients  
Online training course covering key aspects of the entire grant cycle. Module 2: “Demonstrating Financial Management System and Internal Controls Capability,” Module 3: “Applying for a Grant,” and Module 5: “Managing a Grant” are particularly helpful for this stage of the process. <https://www.epa.gov/grants/epa-grants-management-training-applicants-and-recipients>



## 5. Disadvantaged Business Enterprise Program Requirements

Provides a summary of the Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) Program and its requirements for grantees. <https://www.epa.gov/grants/disadvantaged-business-enterprise-program-requirements>

# Compliance Plan Worksheet



Purpose: This worksheet helps you write your Compliance Plan (Attachment H). The Community Change Grant Program (CCG) Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) Section I.G. requires a Compliance Plan for Track I applications. The Compliance Plan should be a maximum of five pages. You will likely need someone who has knowledge of financial management and legal compliance to develop this plan.

## Goals of the Compliance Plan

- Describe how you will comply with the grant's terms and conditions.
- Demonstrate your capability to manage the legal and compliance risks of the grant.
- Plan for and describe how you will manage finances and maintain control over the award. This includes managing subawards.

## Creating a Compliance Plan

To create the Compliance Plan, you should carefully review and create a plan to manage:

- The grant's terms and conditions including a financial management plan that meets the following regulations:
  - [2 CFR § 200.302\(b\)](#): Financial Management,
  - [2 CFR § 200.303](#): Internal Controls, and
  - [2 CFR § 200.332](#): Requirements for pass-through entities.
- Legal and compliance risks.

You may choose to write your plan with three sections – financial management, internal controls, and requirements for pass through entities – and address legal and compliance risks within each of those sections.

## Before You Begin

The EPA has two helpful resources that you should review before you begin writing your Compliance Plan or even completing this worksheet. Take a break to review:

1. [EPA's training on grants management](#), especially Module 2, Demonstrating Financial Management System and Internal Controls Capability. This module provides helpful information for creating the Compliance Plan.
2. [EPA's CCG Webinar on Complying with Federal Grants Requirements and Developing a Compliance Plan](#)





## Guiding Questions

### Financial Management

Your financial management section could include a description of the financial management software you use to track and report finances and your written policies and procedures for finances. Answering the following questions might help you write your Compliance Plan:

1. What financial management systems, past experience and expertise does your organization have that will help it manage a large federal grant?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. How will your organization's financial management systems, past experience, and expertise help it be compliant?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
3. Will your financial management system:
  - Have a separate account for the award?
    - Funds used for the projects must be identified in accounting entries by an EPA account number, the EPA grant number, or some other identifier.
    - Federal program and federal award identification (FAIN) must include, as applicable:
      - Assistance listing title and number for the grant program.
      - Federal award identification number.
      - Name of the federal agency that made the award.
  - Control and be accountable for all funds, property, and other assets and make sure that they are used for authorized purposes?
  - Track grant funds and record information that is accurate, current, and complete?
  - Compare actual expenditures to budget amounts?
  - Be able to provide timely and accurate reports to EPA?



## Internal Controls

Your internal controls section should demonstrate a clear separation of duties for staff e.g. making sure the person who manages the grant accounts is different than the person who signs checks.

1. How will your organization make sure that you manage the award in ways that comply with relevant statutes and regulations?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. How will your organization monitor compliance and make corrections when something is non-compliant?

## Requirements for pass-through entities: Subawards

You are responsible for managing subaward recipients and monitoring their compliance with the requirements of the grant's terms.

1. How will your organization manage subawards?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. How will your organization monitor sub-recipients' compliance and make corrections when something is non-compliant?



## Summaries of Relevant Code of Federal Regulations Sections

Disclaimer: These summaries are meant to give you a feel for the requirements of each regulation. You should not solely rely on them to plan your compliance, they are NOT a substitute for reading the regulations.

### § 200.302 Financial management.<sup>1</sup>

Requirements include:

- Having a separate account for the award. Funds used for the projects must be identified in accounting entries by an EPA account number, the EPA grant number, or some other identifier. Federal program and federal award identification (FAIN) must include, as applicable:
  - Assistance listing title and number for the grant program.
  - Federal award identification number.
  - Name of the federal agency that made the award.
- Effectively controlling and being accountable for all funds, property, and other assets.
- Making sure that all funds, property, and other assets are used for authorized purposes.
- Tracking financial results of grant funds and recording information that is accurate, current, and complete.
- Treating all grant transactions the same as other, similar transactions that your organization conducts.
- Comparing actual expenditures to budget amounts.

### § 200.303 Internal controls.<sup>2</sup>

Internal controls are processes that your oversight body and management carry out to make sure that you achieve the grant objectives with respect to operations, reporting and compliance. Internal controls should adhere to the following principles:

1. The oversight body and management should demonstrate a commitment to integrity and ethical values.
2. The oversight body should oversee the entity's internal control system.
3. Management should establish an organizational structure, assign responsibility, and delegate authority to achieve the entity's objectives.

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<sup>1</sup> Adapted from [Module 2 - Financial Management System and Internal Controls Capability \(epa.gov\)](#)

<sup>2</sup> Taken from [GAO-14-704G, STANDARDS FOR INTERNAL CONTROL IN THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT](#)

# Compliance Plan Worksheet



4. Management should demonstrate a commitment to recruit, develop, and retain competent individuals.
5. Management should evaluate performance and hold individuals accountable for their internal control responsibilities.
6. Management should define objectives clearly to enable the identification of risks and define risk tolerances.
7. Management should identify, analyze, and respond to risks related to achieving the defined objectives.
8. Management should consider the potential for fraud when identifying, analyzing, and responding to risks.
9. Management should identify, analyze, and respond to significant changes that could impact the internal control system.
10. Management should design control activities to achieve objectives and respond to risks.
11. Management should design the entity's information system and related control activities to achieve objectives and respond to risks.
12. Management should implement control activities through policies.
13. Management should use quality information to achieve the entity's objectives.
14. Management should internally communicate the necessary quality information to achieve the entity's objectives.
15. Management should externally communicate the necessary quality information to achieve the entity's objectives.
16. Management should monitor the internal control system and evaluate the results.
17. Management should fix identified internal control deficiencies on a timely basis.

## § 200.303 Subaward Requirements<sup>3</sup>

Information that you must include at the time of the subaward:

- Federal award identification.
- Requirements imposed onto the subrecipient so the federal award is used in accordance with federal statutes, regulations, and the terms and conditions of the federal award.
- Any additional requirements that you impose on the subrecipient for you to meet your responsibility to the EPA.
- An approved federally recognized indirect cost rate negotiated between the subrecipient and the federal government.
- A requirement that the subrecipient permit you and auditors to have access to its records and financial statements as necessary.

Appropriate terms and conditions concerning the closeout of the subaward.

<sup>3</sup> Adapted from [Module 2 - Financial Management System and Internal Controls Capability \(epa.gov\)](#)



## Resources

[EPA's training on grants management](#) provides helpful information for creating the Compliance Plan. Module 2, Demonstrating Financial Management System and Internal Controls Capability, is especially helpful. The training courses are available in both video and text format.

[Standards for Internal Control in the Federal Government](#) (the "Green Book"), sets the standards for an effective system of internal controls for federal agencies. It also provides the overall framework for designing, implementing, and operating an effective internal control system.

# Program Budget Description



Purpose: This worksheet can guide you, the lead applicant, in developing the Program Budget Description, which is a key part of the Project Narrative. It includes:

- (1) An overview of the required budget components.
- (2) Tips to consider, including for specific consideration for construction projects.
- (3) Guiding questions.
- (4) A description of each budget category.
- (5) Additional resources.

You can use this worksheet with the example budgets in the [Sample Budget Examples](#).

## Objectives of the Budget Components

Your budget components should make it clear how you will spend the grant money, show how the money will benefit disadvantaged communities, and show that the spending plan is reasonable to complete the projects. As you develop the budget and write the narrative, provide enough detail for each item so that EPA can determine that the cost is reasonable and allowable. EPA will look at the cost-effectiveness of the budget in terms of using the largest possible share of funds for the delivery of benefits to disadvantaged communities in your Project Area. Three budget components are required for Track I and II proposals:

- **SF-424A: Budget Information for Non-Construction Programs**

All applicants must use the SF-424A form, even if you have construction components in your application. In SF-424A, explain how the costs associated with each category relate to the implementation of the work plan and achievement of the grant goals. Access SF-424A at: <https://www.grants.gov/forms/form-items-description/fid/241>

- **Project Narrative: Program Budget Description**

The Project Narrative includes a Program Budget Description in the workplan. Since the SF-424A form also requires a description of the budget, you may choose to use the same description for both. The guiding questions below will help you think through both how to build a budget and questions to ask as you write your Program Budget Description.

- **Attachment A: Program Budget Template**

Attachment A to your application is a Budget Template describing the itemized costs of your budget. EPA has provided an example of a budget template, but you can use other formats. Whatever template or form you use, be sure to include total costs per budget

# Program Budget Description



category and descriptions of specific costs. Below, you will find descriptions of some standard budget categories. A budget template and example budgets are provided in the Budget Template Worksheet.

## Tips to Consider

Budgets represent best estimates. They should be realistic and represent a good faith effort to be accurate, but EPA understands that many variables impact grant budgets. This section provides tips to consider related to the Program Budget Description. See NOFO Section IV.B and Appendix G for more information, as well as the Community Change Grant (CCG) webinar on budgeting (provided in the Resources section of this worksheet).

Questions	Considerations when building a budget
<i>Does my budget meet the standard for a good budget?</i>	Include items in the budget that are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Eligible: Permitted by statute, regulations, or program guidance.</li> <li>✓ Reasonable: Costs should not be greater than what might ordinarily be associated with performing the scope of work.</li> <li>✓ Allocable: Incurred directly or indirectly to carry out the work.</li> <li>✓ Allowable: Allowed to be charged to EPA assistance agreements and not specifically prohibited by statutes.</li> <li>✓ Necessary: Costs should be essential for achieving the goals and objectives of the project and aligned with the grant's purpose.</li> <li>✓ See Section VI.B., VI.E., and Appendix G of the NOFO and EPA's Interim General Budget Development Guidance for Applicants and Recipients of EPA Financial Assistance for more information.</li> </ul>
<i>Is my budget complete?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Think through all the things you will do, what it will cost, and who will do them.</li> <li>✓ Consider the costs of the project itself, including the need for construction contingency reserves.</li> <li>✓ Consider the costs of managing the project.</li> <li>✓ Keep in mind the costs of dealing with grant requirements like tracking results, reporting, accounting, and other compliance costs.</li> <li>✓ Round total costs in Attachment A to the nearest dollar.</li> </ul>
<i>What are examples of eligible program administration costs?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Conducting due diligence and underwriting financial transactions.</li> <li>✓ Establishing and convening advisory councils.</li> <li>✓ Conducting program performance and other reporting activities.</li> <li>✓ Supporting, monitoring, overseeing, and auditing subrecipients, contractors, and program beneficiaries.</li> </ul>

# Program Budget Description



Questions	Considerations when building a budget
<i>Can my budget change at all?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ The budget will be finalized during Project Workplan negotiations, and there may be opportunities to modify the budget. But the budget is an evaluated criterion in the NOFO, so it cannot change in a way that could affect how the application would have been scored.</li> <li>✓ The grant terms and conditions provide flexibility to re-budget up to 10% of the grant award without prior EPA approval.</li> <li>✓ If the budget changes more than 10%, the recipient can request a change from the Project Officer and Award Official. When making a determination, these EPA staff would evaluate whether the budget changes materially change the scope of work for the grant award.</li> </ul>
<i>How do I build a construction budget?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ If you have not yet conducted a competitive procurement, include an estimate but identify the amount as an estimate (ranges are acceptable).</li> <li>✓ Detailed breakdowns to the levels of individual components like screws are not necessary.</li> <li>✓ Budgets represent best estimates. They should be realistic and represent a good faith effort to be accurate, but EPA understands that many variables impact grant budgets. An applicant will not fully know their construction budget until they have their construction contractor.</li> </ul>
<i>Are there construction specific regulations?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Projects related to the construction, alteration, or maintenance of infrastructure must comply with the Build America, Buy America Act (see the Resources section).</li> <li>✓ Construction is subject to prevailing wage requirements under the Davis-Bacon Act (see the Resources section).</li> </ul>
<i>What if I have construction overruns?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ EPA grant regulations allow applicants to budget for reasonable contingencies in construction projects. Generally, contingencies of 20% or less of the anticipated cost of construction contracts would be considered reasonable, provided there's a reasonable justification for the potential variability and the overall budget is within the \$20 million award limit.</li> <li>✓ As an example, an applicant proposing installation of electric vehicle (EV) chargers would require a lower contingency than an asbestos remediation project or a building retrofit where the site-specific conditions may be less known until construction begins.</li> </ul>





## Guiding Questions

The following questions can guide you in developing a budget and the program budget description.

1. Have you defined the scope of the projects within your grant application?
  - Have you identified and defined each step required to complete each part of the projects?
  - When and for how long would that step occur in the timeline of the grant?
  - Who will complete each step? Your employees, your Statutory Partner, collaborating entities, or contractors?
2. Have you broken down the costs of all the activities that make up each step of each project? Consider getting input from professionals in the field or other communities with similar projects to estimate how much it will cost to do the work. Contractors are often willing to provide estimates and break them out by project or activity type.
3. Have you included the costs of complying with the terms of the grant? Items like:
  - Reporting and oversight.
  - Funding for professional services like accounting and compliance/
  - The costs of signs saying the project was funded by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the Inflation Reduction Act?
4. Are the Community Based non-profit Organizations (CBOs) receiving a significant portion of the budget? See the [Community Engagement and Collaborative Governance Structure](#) Worksheet for guidance on ensuring that community organizations have decision-making and financial leadership.
5. Is your budget cost effective in using the highest possible share of funds to do the things in your projects that actually deliver benefits? Are funds passed directly to community partners to address both direct and indirect costs associated with the projects?



## Descriptions of Budget Categories

**Personnel:** Only record the salaries of your employees in this category. If a staff position is only working part time on the projects, show that in your budget and total cost. Personnel costs can include general administrative personnel, grants managers, and accountants.

*What it is not:* It should not include the salaries of employees who do not directly support the program (such as human resources staff). Do not report costs associated with contractors, employees of subrecipients, or program participants like interns or volunteers in this category.

*Level of detail:* Record the position title and the number of people for each role. Be sure to include the project manager and other key personnel identified elsewhere in your application. Provide the annual salary by staff position, the Full Time Equivalent (FTE) or FTE percentage of time the staff would be assigned to the projects, and the total cost for the budget period.

**Fringe Benefits:** Fringe benefits include things like the cost of leave, employee insurance, pensions, and unemployment benefit plans—anything you provide your employees in addition to salary. Some do not consider the cost of leave a fringe benefit. If that is you, and you plan to use grant funds toward leave, be sure to include the cost of leave elsewhere in the budget.

*Level of detail:* Include the percentage used to calculate the fringe benefits, the basis for its computation, and the types of benefits included.

**Travel:** Travel may be necessary for the project activities. It includes things like site visits, attendance at community engagement meetings, and technical trainings or workshops. Travel costs reported in this category should only include those for your employees. Keep in mind, you should specifically identify any travel outside of the United States, and EPA's Office of International and Tribal Affairs will need to approve it.

*What it is not:* Note that bus rentals for group trips are considered a contractor agreement and should be included under that category.

*Level of detail:* Include the mileage (if driving), per diem, estimated number of trips in-state and out-of-state, number of travelers, and other costs for each type of travel.

# Program Budget Description



**Equipment:** The Equipment cost category should include each item you will purchase that you estimate will cost \$5,000 or more per unit and have a useful life of more than one year. This includes accessories needed to make the equipment operational. Note that if you have a written procurement procedure with a reporting threshold lower than \$5,000, you should use that instead.

*What it is not:* Do not include leased or rented equipment or service/maintenance contracts that are not included in the purchase price for the equipment. Keep in mind that projects requiring the purchase of goods, products, and materials for infrastructure projects must comply with Build America, Buy America.

*Level of detail:* Include the item, cost, units purchased, and total cost. If installation is part of the equipment expense, itemize the labor costs with the hourly wage. In addition, provide detailed explanations for proposed purchases of certain items such as cars, trucks, and scientific devices that have useful lives beyond the project period.

**Supplies:** The Supplies category includes all the supplies you expect to buy that are estimated to cost less than \$5,000. If you have written procurement procedures with a lower threshold for reporting equipment purchases, use that threshold instead. This includes items like laboratory supplies or office supplies.

*What it is not:* It does not include non-tangible goods and services, such as printing services, photocopy services, or rental costs.

*Level of detail:* Identify each category of items you are purchasing, the unit cost, the units purchased, and the total cost. Items should cost less than \$5,000 per unit, unless you have a written procurement procedure with a lower threshold.

**Contractual:** This category includes any of the contracted services you plan on using during the projects, including subcontractors and consultants. You do not need to identify specific contractors, and you should plan on using a competitive procurement process. If you do identify specific contractors, you need to demonstrate that you selected them competitively (see 2 CFR Parts 200 and 1500).

*What it is not:* Do not include subawards or subrecipients in this category (see the EPA Subaward Policy in the Resources section for the differences between contractors and subrecipients). Do not include leased or rented goods in this category. You should include construction contractors in the Construction Category (see below for more detail).

*Level of detail:* Identify proposed contracts by the purpose of the services; you do not need to identify specific contractors. Provide an estimated typical cost for the services. Provide the cost of acquisition of intangible property as a separate line item within this category.

# Program Budget Description



**Construction:** The Construction Category includes activities like site preparation, demolition and building of facilities, permanent improvements to facilities or other real property, major renovations of existing facilities, cleanup of contamination, and related architectural or engineering services. Construction is often completed by subcontractors. If you are outsourcing construction activities, include the anticipated costs for hiring the general contractors and other contractors performing construction activities. Keep in mind that projects requiring the purchase of goods, products, and materials for infrastructure must comply with Build America, Buy America, and construction projects are subject to prevailing wage requirements under the Davis-Bacon Act.

*What it is not:* Pre-construction architectural and engineering services should be reported under the Contractual Category. You should report equipment purchases for construction under the Equipment Category. You should report costs of land acquisition or relocation assistance under the Other Category.

*Level of detail:* Provide an estimate of the cost of hiring general contractors or other construction contractors, including costs for the different construction activities. A cost estimate can be based on square footage and does not need to be at the level of individual components (such as screws). A range estimate is acceptable at this stage. Include in your narrative a list of planned construction contracts, a brief description of the scope of work or services to be provided, the planned duration of the contract, and the planned procurement method.

**Other:** This category includes only those types of direct costs that do not fit in any of the other budget categories. This includes subawards, which are awards that you provide to a subrecipient (your Statutory Partner and Collaborating Entities) for them to carry out part of the projects. See the Subawards Policy in the Resource Section for more information on distinguishing between subrecipients and contractors. You should identify each major subaward including those with the Collaborating Entities and show the individual and aggregate amounts you propose to issue as subawards.

This category also includes participant support costs, which are direct costs for things like stipends or subsistence allowances, travel allowances, and registration fees paid to or behalf of participants or trainees, but not employees. It includes subsidies, rebates, and other payments to program beneficiaries to encourage participation. You can find more information on allowable costs in the EPA Guidance on Participant Support Costs in the Resources section.

# Program Budget Description



Finally, this category includes other costs like insurance, acquiring real property or land, rental or lease of equipment or supplies, equipment service or maintenance contracts, and printing or photocopying.

*Level of detail:* Provide enough detail for each item so that EPA can determine the reasonableness and allowability of the cost.

**Indirect Costs:** This category allows you to cover the costs that you might have for your overall organization that provides support for multiple organizational efforts, including this one. An example would be your human resources department or your electric bill. The specific categories of indirect costs do not need to be itemized in your budget.

Indirect costs are calculated based on your Modified Total Direct Cost (MTDC) or your direct labor cost. This is referred to as your approved distribution base. MTDC means all direct salaries and wages, applicable fringe benefits, materials and supplies, services, travel, and up to the first \$25,000 of each subaward.

*What it is not:* It excludes equipment, capital expenditures, charges for patient care, rental costs, tuition remission, scholarships and fellowships, participant support costs, and the portion of each subaward in excess of \$25,000.

To calculate the indirect costs, multiply your approved distribution base by your Indirect Cost Rate or Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate. For this grant, you can use the *de minimus* rate for indirect costs of 10% without further negotiation, if you don't have a previously negotiated rate, and apply it to your MTDC. Then multiply your total budget amount by 20%. The lower amount is the total amount of allowable indirect costs.

Indirect costs should not exceed 20% of your proposed budget, even if your negotiated indirect cost rate is greater. The 20% cap applies to both the initial award amount and any subaward. It does not apply to indirect costs on procurement contracts. The 20% cap and its application to subawards does not apply to Indian Tribes as defined in section (r) of the Clean Air Act or intertidal consortia that meet requirements of 40 CFR 35.504(a) and (c). For more information about indirect costs, rates, and limitations see [Indirect Cost Guidance for Recipients of EPA Assistance Agreements](#).

*Level of detail:* Show the approved rate for any indirect costs and the distribution base.



## Resources

### **Required Grants Management EPA Webinars and Trainings for Awardees**

Required trainings before receiving funds:

<https://www.epa.gov/system/files/documents/2024-03/rain-2024-g01.pdf>

Budgeting: <https://www.epa.gov/grants/how-develop-budget>

Grant Management: <https://www.epa.gov/grants/epa-grants-management-training-applicants-and-recipients>

Indirect Costs: <https://www.epa.gov/grants/indirect-cost-rates-webinar-december-6-2023>

### **Best Practice Guide for Procuring Services, Supplies, and Equipment**

EPA guidance on procuring services, supplies, and equipment under EPA Assistance Agreements.

<https://www.epa.gov/sites/default/files/2021-03/documents/best-practice-guide-for-procuring-services-supplies-equipment.pdf>

### **CCG Webinar: Build America, Buy America (BABA) 101**

Webinar for applicants to EPA's CCG program on Build America, Buy America.

[https://communitychangeta.org/sites/default/files/BABA-101-Webinar-Slidedeck\\_FINAL.pdf](https://communitychangeta.org/sites/default/files/BABA-101-Webinar-Slidedeck_FINAL.pdf)

### **CCG Webinar: Preparing a Grant Budget**

A detailed webinar for applicants to EPA's CCG program on mastering the art of budgeting for grants, including budget categories, indirect costs, and allowable expenses. Includes example budgets.

English: [https://communitychangeta.org/sites/default/files/pdf/CCTA-Webinar-8-508\(Preparing-A-Grant-Budget\).pdf](https://communitychangeta.org/sites/default/files/pdf/CCTA-Webinar-8-508(Preparing-A-Grant-Budget).pdf)

Español: [https://communitychangeta.org/sites/default/files/Webinar-%2338-EPA-Community-Change-Grants-Preparing-a-Grant-Budget.PPT\\_Spanish\\_Final.pdf](https://communitychangeta.org/sites/default/files/Webinar-%2338-EPA-Community-Change-Grants-Preparing-a-Grant-Budget.PPT_Spanish_Final.pdf)

### **Cost Principles (2 CFR Part 200, Subpart E)**

*Code of Federal Regulations* provisions related to allowable costs under federal awards.

<https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-2/subtitle-A/chapter-II/part-200/subpart-E>

### **Davis-Bacon Grant Term and Condition Webinar**

EPA resource on the Davis-Bacon requirements.

<https://www.epa.gov/grants/new-epa-davis-bacon-grant-term-and-condition-webinar-march-28-2024>

### **Indirect Costs Limitation Webinars**

An EPA webinar on indirect costs limitation for the grants.

# Program Budget Description



Link to recording (Passcode: 91869331):

[https://usepa.zoomgov.com/rec/share/QUTvM3KjxnrATcbALW5Q4w\\_YSVED4gGxGOSgWufxu-7viy10H2aapqNVnoAT5OPp.48jo\\_4S4Hv1taOR2](https://usepa.zoomgov.com/rec/share/QUTvM3KjxnrATcbALW5Q4w_YSVED4gGxGOSgWufxu-7viy10H2aapqNVnoAT5OPp.48jo_4S4Hv1taOR2)

Presentation Slides: [https://www.epa.gov/system/files/documents/2023-11/idc-limitation-webinar\\_ecj-community-change-grants-october-2023-webinar-slides.pdf](https://www.epa.gov/system/files/documents/2023-11/idc-limitation-webinar_ecj-community-change-grants-october-2023-webinar-slides.pdf)

## **Indirect Cost Guidance for Recipients of EPA Assistance Agreements**

EPA policy and guidance on indirect costs.

<https://www.epa.gov/grants/rain-2018-g02-r>

## **Interim General Budget Development Guidance for Applicants and Recipients of EPA Financial Assistance**

EPA guidance on budget development. It provides uniform standards across all EPA grant programs and is not tailored to CCG grants.

<https://www.epa.gov/sites/default/files/2019-05/documents/applicant-budget-development-guidance.pdf>

## **Subaward Policy**

EPA subaward policy for EPA assistance agreements.

<https://www.epa.gov/grants/grants-policy-issuance-gpi-16-01-epa-subaward-policy-epa-assistance-agreement-recipients>

## **Participant Support Costs**

EPA guidance on participant support costs.

<https://www.epa.gov/grants/rain-2018-g05-r1>



## Purpose:

- This worksheet will help you compare your Track I application to the scoring criteria. It will help you see whether each section covers what is important according to the criteria.
- For the full text of scoring criteria, see the Notice of Funding Opportunity Section V.C.

## Self-Assessment Guidance

As you approach the end of your application development process, you may benefit from comparing your draft to the scoring criteria in the Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO). How would you score your application if you were on the review panel?

When you assess your application, pretend you know nothing about your community or project goals except what is written in your application.

- Ask yourself how clearly your application tells the story of your community and the benefits of your proposed projects.
- Ask yourself how confident the application makes you feel about your Statutory Partnership's ability to implement and manage the grant.

## Guiding Questions for Self-Assessment

Below you will find the NOFO scoring criteria. How well have you maximized your application's chances of receiving a high score? Use the tables below to make sure everything you have written in your application aligns with EPA evaluation criteria.





Your self-assessment total is the sum of points scored in the three sections below — Part 1, Part 2, and Part 3. Written applications that score at least 110 points during EPA's review will advance to the next round of evaluation. See NOFO Section V.C. for more details of the Track I application review and scoring process.

## Part 1. Community-Driven Investments for Change

For each aspect of your application in the tables below, reflect on the related self-evaluation question. Score yourself based on the points possible for that row.

Community Vision Description			
SCORED CRITERIA	EVALUATION QUESTIONS	MAX. SCORE	MY SCORE
Community description	How thorough is the description of the Project Area's features and strengths?	4	
	How clearly have you described projects as being designed to provide meaningful benefits to disadvantaged community members in the Project Area?		
Community challenges	How well are challenges framed in terms of climate, weather, or local pollution?	3	
	How clear is the difference between challenges for disadvantaged community members in the Project Area and heightened risks for priority populations in the Project Area?		

# Track I Self-Assessment Worksheet



Community vision	How understandable are the descriptions of short-term and long-term outcomes for disadvantaged community members in the Project Area?	3	
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Selected Strategies			
SCORED CRITERIA	EVALUATION QUESTIONS	MAX. SCORE	MY SCORE
Strategy Overview: Description of projects	How easy is it to identify which strategies you chose and how their timelines align with the grant term?	5	
Strategy Overview: Choice of projects and Project Area	How obviously do the strategies work together for the benefit of disadvantaged community members in the Project Area?  How evident is the logic of the Project Area boundaries relative to the project activities?	7	
Strategy Overview: Explanation of requested funding	How clear is your reasoning for each strategy's requested funding amount?  Does your reasoning include <i>each</i> project within <i>each</i> strategy?	3	

# Track I Self-Assessment Worksheet



Selected Strategies			
SCORED CRITERIA	EVALUATION QUESTIONS	MAX. SCORE	MY SCORE
Climate Action Strategies: Projects' climate and resilience benefits	<p>In terms of climate impacts or risks for disadvantaged community members, how obvious is the connection between Project Area needs and your project choices?</p> <p>Does your explanation include at least one of the below outcomes for the Project Area?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduce greenhouse gas emissions<sup>1</sup></li> <li>• Improve resilience to floods, heatwaves, drought, hurricanes, or wildfires</li> </ul>	8	
Climate Action Strategies: Meeting needs of Project Area	<p>How well do your described climate benefits seem to address the challenges listed in your Community Vision Description?</p>	7	
Pollution Reduction Strategies: Local pollution	<p>In terms of local pollution issues for disadvantaged community members, how obvious is the connection between Project Area needs and your project choices?</p> <p>Does your explanation include one or both of the outcomes below?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pollution prevention (stopping a source)</li> <li>• Pollution mitigation (decreasing a source)</li> </ul>	8	

<sup>1</sup> Examples of reducing greenhouse gas emissions include reducing electricity use or vehicle miles (less carbon dioxide into air) and diverting food waste from landfills to compost (less methane into air).

# Track I Self-Assessment Worksheet



Selected Strategies			
SCORED CRITERIA	EVALUATION QUESTIONS	MAX. SCORE	MY SCORE
Pollution Reduction Strategies: Meeting needs of Project Area	How well do your described pollution benefits seem to address the challenges listed in your Community Vision Description?	7	

Community Engagement and Collaborative Governance Plan			
SCORED CRITERIA	EVALUATION QUESTIONS	MAX. SCORE	MY SCORE
Past community outreach and engagement conducted	How apparent is the connection between what you learned from community engagement in the Project Area and your choice of Strategy?  Do you specify <i>how</i> you engaged with residents?	4	
Community Engagement Plan implementation	How clearly does your Plan describe the ways you will collaborate with the community?  Does your plan specify how you will build support for project implementation among hesitant government and community stakeholders?	6	

# Track I Self-Assessment Worksheet



Collaborative Governance Structure	<p>Does your description of the roles and responsibilities include all the following details?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lead Applicant</li> <li>• Statutory Partner</li> <li>• Collaborating Entities</li> <li>• Community residents or representatives</li> <li>• Project implementation</li> <li>• Project management</li> <li>• Project monitoring</li> <li>• Frequency of governance meetings</li> </ul>	5	
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Community Strength Plan			
SCORED CRITERIA	EVALUATION QUESTIONS	MAX. SCORE	MY SCORE
Maximum economic benefits of projects	<p>How clearly are the projects designed to financially benefit priority populations in the Project Area?</p> <p>Do the projected economic benefits seem realistic?</p>	5	
Displacement avoidance	<p>How adequate do the Plan's protections seem against rising living costs for Project Area residents?</p> <p>Do the protective measures seem realistic?</p>	5	
<b>Subtotal for Part 1. Community-Driven Investments for Change</b>		<b>80</b>	



## Part 2. Program Management, Capability, and Capacity

For each aspect of your application in the tables below, reflect on the related self-evaluation question. Score yourself based on the points possible for that row.

Performance Management Plan and Outputs/Outcomes			
SCORED CRITERIA	EVALUATION QUESTION	MAX. SCORE	MY SCORE
Plan for measuring progress	<p>Does the plan specify how you will measure progress toward each output and outcome?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Outputs</i> may be measured in numbers or words.</li> <li>• <i>Outcomes</i> must be measured in numbers.</li> </ul>	2	
Outputs and outcomes	<p>Are the descriptions of outputs and outcomes detailed and clear?</p> <p>Are the outputs and outcomes clearly linked to environmental and health conditions of disadvantaged community members?</p>	2	
Evaluations throughout project	<p>Does the plan include ongoing program evaluation?</p> <p>Does the plan specify <i>reputable evaluation tools</i> or organizations you will use for evaluations?</p> <p>Does the plan specify <i>how you will use evaluations</i> to meet timelines and goals?</p>	2	

# Track I Self-Assessment Worksheet



Project Linkages to the EPA Strategic Plan			
SCORED CRITERIA	EVALUATION QUESTION	MAX. SCORE	MY SCORE
Project linkages to the EPA Strategic Plan	<p>How clearly do the project activities contribute to EPA Strategic Plan Goal 2 (Take Decisive Action to Advance Environmental Justice and Civil Rights) and Objective 2.1 (Promote Environmental Justice and Civil Rights at the Federal, Tribal, State, and Local Levels)?</p> <p>How clearly do the project activities contribute to any other applicable EPA Strategic Plan Goals?<sup>2</sup></p>	4	

Community Based Organization (CBO) Experience and Commitment			
SCORED CRITERIA	EVALUATION QUESTION	MAX. SCORE	MY SCORE
CBO experience and commitment	<p>Based only on what is written in your application, how impressive is the CBO experience with your Project Area's disadvantaged communities?</p> <p>How clearly does the application describe the below characteristics of CBOs that are Lead Applicant or Statutory Partner?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Commitment to the community members</li> <li>• Relationships with the community members</li> </ul>	5	

<sup>2</sup> Other relevant EPA Strategic Plan goals: Goal 1 - Tackle the Climate Crisis; Goal 4 - Ensure Clean and Healthy Air for All Communities; Goal 5 - Ensure Clean and Safe Water for All Communities; Goal 6 - Safeguard and Revitalize Communities; Goal 7 - Ensure Safety of Chemicals for People and the Environment.

# Track I Self-Assessment Worksheet



Programmatic and Managerial Capability and Resources			
SCORED CRITERIA	EVALUATION QUESTION	MAX. SCORE	MY SCORE
Project management	Does the application show that the Lead Applicant and Statutory Partner are highly capable of managing the proposed projects?	4	
Resources and expertise	Does the application show that the Lead Applicant and Statutory Partner have the resources and expertise needed to complete the proposed projects with excellence in under three years?	4	
Funds expenditure	Does the application show that the Lead Applicant and Statutory Partner are highly capable of spending all the grant funds efficiently, reasonably, and on schedule?	3	
Financial controls and oversight	Does the application show that the Lead Applicant and Statutory Partner have financial policies that ensure all the below? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Financial stability</li> <li>• Risk management</li> <li>• Program oversight</li> <li>• Confidential reporting</li> <li>• Identification of waste, fraud, or abuse</li> </ul>	4	



# Track I Self-Assessment Worksheet



Past Performance			
SCORED CRITERIA	EVALUATION QUESTION	MAX. SCORE	MY SCORE
Successful assistance agreements	<p>Does your application show that the Lead Applicant successfully managed assistance agreements in the past?</p> <p>Or, if no relevant past performance, does your application include a sentence such as: “our organizations have no relevant past grants experience”?</p>	3	
Adequate and timely reporting	<p>Does your application show that the Lead Applicant successfully met reporting requirements in the past?</p> <p>Does your application mention all the below?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Acceptable final technical reports</li> <li>• Timely progress reports</li> <li>• Explanation of any inadequate reporting</li> </ul> <p>Or, if no relevant past performance, does your application include a sentence such as: “our organizations have no relevant past grants experience”?</p>	2	
<b>Subtotal for Part 2. Program Management, Capability, and Capacity</b>		<b>35</b>	



## Part 3. Readiness to Proceed, Feasibility, Sustainability, and Budget

For each aspect of your application in the tables below, reflect on the related self-evaluation question. Score yourself based on the points possible for that row.

Readiness Approach			
SCORED CRITERIA	EVALUATION QUESTION	MAX. SCORE	MY SCORE
Readiness Approach	<p>How well does the application show that you are prepared to begin the projects within 120 days of receiving the award and complete them in three years?</p> <p>Do you already have all necessary approvals to begin your projects, such as construction permits? And does your application list these details?</p>	8	

Feasibility			
SCORED CRITERIA	EVALUATION QUESTION	MAX. SCORE	MY SCORE
Feasibility	<p>Do timelines in the application clearly show that you can complete all proposed projects within three years?</p> <p>Does the application show how you will minimize the risk of being unable to complete projects within three years?</p>	9	

# Track I Self-Assessment Worksheet



Sustainability			
SCORED CRITERIA	EVALUATION QUESTION	MAX. SCORE	MY SCORE
Sustainability	<p>Does the application show how your projects will provide lasting change after the three years of grant funding?</p> <p>Does the application describe funding sources and plans for extending the benefits and outcomes into the future?</p>	5	

Program Budget Description			
SCORED CRITERIA	EVALUATION QUESTION	MAX. SCORE	MY SCORE
Budget reasonableness and clarity	<p>Is funding distributed across project partners in a way that makes sense?</p> <p>Are budget categories clear and detailed?</p>	4	
Maximizing funds to disadvantaged communities	How well does the budget prioritize members of disadvantaged communities?	4	



Compliance plan			
SCORED CRITERIA	EVALUATION QUESTION	MAX. SCORE	MY SCORE
Compliance Plan	<p>How clearly does the application describe the below?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How you will comply with grant requirements for financial management, internal controls, and subawards</li> <li>• How you will manage legal and compliance risks</li> </ul>	10	
<b><i>Subtotal for Part 3. Readiness to Perform, Feasibility, and Sustainability</i></b>		<b>40</b>	

## Final Self-Assessment Score

Add together the subtotals from Part 1, Part 2, and Part 3 for your total score. If your total score is less than 110 points, you'll need to make improvements to your application to help it succeed.

## Page Limits and Other Required Forms

Do the Project Narrative portions of your application total 20 pages or less?

# Track I Self-Assessment Worksheet



Project Narrative (20 pages total)		
SECTION NAME	SUB-SECTION NAME	MAX. LENGTH
Section A: Executive Summary	<p>There are no subsections, but there is a list of contents to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Application title</li> <li>• Name of the Lead Applicant</li> <li>• Name of the Statutory Partner</li> <li>• Contact information</li> <li>• Eligibility description</li> <li>• Name of Climate Action Strategy(ies)</li> <li>• Name of Pollution Reduction Strategy(ies)</li> <li>• Grant award period and completion dates</li> <li>• Amount of EPA funding requested</li> <li>• Target Investment Area, if applicable</li> <li>• Disadvantaged Community to benefit</li> <li>• Other sources of funding</li> <li>• Resubmission status</li> </ul>	3 pages
Section B: Project Workplan*	<p>Part 1. Community-Driven Investments for Change</p> <p>1.1 Community Vision Description</p> <p>1.2 Selected Strategies</p> <p>Part 2. Program Management, Capability and Capacity</p> <p>2.1 Performance Management Plan, Outputs / Outcomes</p> <p>2.2 Project Linkages to the EPA Strategic Plan</p> <p>2.3 CBO Experience and Commitment</p> <p>2.4 Programmatic and Managerial Capability and Resources</p> <p>2.5 Past Performance</p> <p>Part 3. Readiness to Proceed, Feasibility, Sustainability, and Budget</p> <p>3.1 Feasibility</p> <p>3.2 Sustainability</p> <p>3.3 Program Budget Description</p>	Not specified
<b>Total page limit for Project Narrative Section A plus Section B</b>		<b>20 pages</b>

\*All scored criteria are in the Project Narrative Section B: Project Workplan portion of the application.

# Track I Self-Assessment Worksheet



Do the other portions of your application comply with section-specific page limits?

Other Sections (Not Project Narrative)	
FORM OR DOCUMENT NAME	MAX. LENGTH
Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424)	Not specified
Budget Information for Non-Construction Programs (SF-424A)	Not specified
EPA Key Contacts Form 5700-54	Not specified
EPA Pre-award Compliance Review Report Form 4700-4	Not specified
Project Narrative Attachment Form	Not specified
Attachment A: Program Budget Template	Not specified
Attachment B: Partnership Agreement	Not specified
Attachment C: Indirect Cost Rate Agreement, if applicable.	Not specified
Attachment D: Project Area Map	Not specified
Attachment E: Community Engagement and Collaborative Governance Plan	10 pages
Attachment F: Community Strength Plan	5 pages
Attachment G: Readiness Approach	"applicants should be as concise as possible"
Attachment H: Compliance Plan	5 pages

You might notice that some sections of the application listed above are not included in the self-assessment scoring tables. That is because some sections are unscored. These sections are still required and important. You can think of evaluation of the unscored portions as pass/fail and the evaluation of the scored portions as graded. All the scored portions are within the Project Narrative's "Section B: Project Workplan."



## Tips to Consider

Keep in mind the reviewers will not read anything over the section page limit. Refer to NOFO Section I.V for page limits.

Review the application checklist to make sure that your application has all the required attachments and forms before submitting.

Keep the EPA Review Panel in mind as you write your application. The application should tell a consistent and compelling story throughout. The Community Vision Description should set the stage for everything that follows. The EPA Review Panel will evaluate your application based on the Community Vision Description AND how your selected Climate Action Strategies and Pollution Reduction Strategies connect back to the Community Vision Description.

Consider asking a colleague or peer to also review your application with this worksheet. Someone unfamiliar with your planned projects could provide a truly objective evaluation. Keep in mind that critical feedback isn't a reflection of you or your community. Feedback could prompt edits to your application that make it successful.