



## 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?

<b>Other Sections (Not Project Narrative)</b>	
<b>FORM OR DOCUMENT NAME</b>	<b>MAX. LENGTH</b>
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.