



Purpose: This worksheet will help you plan for engaging communities throughout the planning and implementation phases of your Community Change Grants Program (CCG) Track II proposed projects.

Community Engagement in Track II

Unlike the Track I CCG grants, Track II grant applications have no separate community engagement attachment to include. Instead, the community engagement elements should be clear and well-integrated into the Project Narrative. Active and ongoing community engagement will be critical to make sure that your project is community driven. EPA is looking for applicants that can show pre-existing community outreach and engagement to ensure the project is meeting community needs.

Bottom Line

Center meaningful community engagement: conduct robust community engagement throughout the project – from design to implementation.

Per the Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) Section V.D, a strong application should show:

1. You and your Collaborating Entities (your Statutory Partner and potential subaward recipients) have a history of engagement and collaboration with disadvantaged communities and governmental bodies to address environmental and climate justice issues.
2. Members of the disadvantaged community had opportunities to give meaningful input and feedback which was considered in the design and development of your application.
3. You will implement measures to build and maintain trust between the disadvantaged community and government officials.
4. Your proposed project(s) will increase disadvantaged communities' engagement in governmental processes related to environmental and climate justice.

Guiding Questions

The following questions can guide your development of the Community Outreach and Engagement you will be conducting.



Past Experience with Community Engagement

1. What past experience do your organization, your Statutory Partner, and any other Collaborating Entities have with engaging disadvantaged communities to address environmental and climate justice issues?
2. What past experience do your organization, your Statutory Partner, and any other Collaborating Entities have with engaging governmental bodies to address environmental and climate justice issues?
3. How will you capitalize on your past experiences in the design and implementation of your proposed projects?

Project Design and Development

1. What important populations, neighborhoods, and communities have you reached out to or will you reach out to design your project?
2. What are the appropriate government agencies you need to involve in carrying out your project?



3. What was or will be the methods and frequency of your outreach and engagement?

4. What did you discover or will you try to discover through the outreach process?
Consider what best practices and available resources you want to identify, as well as knowledge gaps, specific concerns, and shared goals.

Building Trust

1. How will you demonstrate clear methods for engagement and transparency?

Describe:

- a. *Outreach methods that provide opportunities for broad and diverse community member involvement.*
- b. *Clear mechanisms for how you will be accountable to the needs and preferences of residents in the Project Area.*
- c. *How you will keep communities informed throughout the entire application and project life.*



2. What barriers exist to building trust between members of the disadvantaged community and government bodies?

Barriers may include:

- d. Awareness barriers (in other words, making sure that you reach the desired audience).*
- e. Logistical barriers (such as those associated with time and location).*
- f. Cultural or social barriers.*
- g. Personal barriers or lack of motivation.*

3. How will you overcome or lessen barriers to trust-building and participation?

Increasing Disadvantaged Communities' Engagement in Governmental Processes

1. How will your project change the disadvantaged community's relationship with governments? This might include getting communities' access to governmental entities or improving existing relationships.

2. How will those changes help disadvantaged communities and governments to better work together towards environmental and climate justice?



Tips to Consider

This section provides tips for possible concerns and solutions related to the Community Engagement Plan. Refer to NOFO Section I.H for more information.

Concerns	Solutions to Consider
<i>Meaningful community involvement</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Consider multiple types of community engagement and outreach opportunities (such as online surveys, workshops, advisory committees). ✓ Create spaces for brainstorming and sharing experiences together.
<i>Clear and accountable outreach</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Be clear how input will be and has been a part of your project decisions. ✓ Explain any limits or constraints. ✓ Have clear roles and responsibilities for stakeholders and partners. ✓ Use agendas in meetings to maintain clear goals and provide minutes. ✓ Provide timelines with milestones and make data, measurements, and reports available to the public.
<i>Continuous outreach</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Community advisory board. ✓ Email lists and physical mailings. ✓ Ongoing public events or presentation. ✓ Other communication tools.
<i>Handling of awareness barriers</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Use multiple methods of announcing outreach and engagement opportunities. ✓ Use social media; press releases; flyers; direct outreach by partners; and short, low-commitment surveys to generate interest.
<i>Handling of logistical barriers</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Consider public transportation, parking, and access for persons with disabilities. ✓ Provide childcare and meals, as appropriate and available. ✓ Hold meetings in an adequate and trusted facility. ✓ Offer multiple time options to make diverse participation possible. ✓ Piggyback on other planned events that people are already attending. ✓ Use websites only as a backup to any engagement and outreach.
<i>Handling of cultural or social barriers</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Make sure that community partners are equal partners and able to connect with different cultural and social groups. ✓ Provide translation services if appropriate, including American Sign Language. ✓ Use materials that are easy for the community to read and understand. ✓ Provide enough background information during outreach activities so that people from the community can usefully engage. ✓ Promote an atmosphere of equal participation by avoiding the use of a head table or panel at in-person events.

Track II Community Engagement Worksheet



Concerns	Solutions to Consider
<i>Handling of personal or motivational barriers</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Present the Lead Applicant, Statutory Partner, and Collaborating Entities as being balanced, neutral, and welcoming to diverse audiences.✓ Be clear and open about the intent of the engagement and outreach efforts.✓ Make the outcomes and results of the project attractive to people.
<i>Plan with the end in mind</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Design your process to allow community input to inform decisions about project design and carrying out the project.
<i>Government involvement</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Tribal Nations may have specific procedures for deciding who is able to represent them.✓ Multiple agencies may work in the same communities but not coordinate.✓ Consider other new or ongoing efforts, plans, and policies (such as town conceptual plans, state incentive programs, or new federal sites for pollution cleanup).



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 allowing certain costs for community outreach and engagement efforts. These include 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

3. 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>

4. Capacity Building Through Effective Meaningful Engagement

A tool that gives local and state governments 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