

AGENCY: ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY (EPA)

TITLE: “NATIONAL AIR TOXICS MONITORING PROGRAM- COMMUNITY ASSESSMENTS - REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS”

ACTION: Request for Applications (RFA) - Questions and Answers.

RFA NO: OAR-EMAD-03-08

CATALOG OF FEDERAL DOMESTIC ASSISTANCE (CFDA) NO: 66.034

SUMMARY: The following are formal Agency responses to questions/comments regarding the subject solicitation.

1. Does acceptance of these grant funds include the need to match funding?

No. There is no requirement for match funding under this program announcement.

2. What is required of the Letter of Intent?

An informal notice of “Intent to Apply” simply states that your organization intends to submit a proposal to be received by the deadline. Submission of the “Intent to Apply” is optional and does not commit an organization to submit a final proposal. Eligible entities not submitting an “Intent to Apply” are still eligible to apply by the deadline. The notice of “Intent to Apply” should be written and may be submitted via electronic mail. Please provide name of the organization, point of contact, phone number, email address and project title.

3. Can we use a former scope of work that we developed for another project as our proposal?

Applicants submitting a former Scope of Work developed for another project must ensure that the requirements detailed in the program announcement for this solicitation (OAR-EMAD-03-08) are fully addressed. Proposals which are fully compliant with *Section III(C), Requirements of All Grantees*” and are best able to directly and explicitly address the *Section V, Selection Criteria* will have a greater likelihood of being selected for award.

4. In *Section V, Selection Criteria*, the first ranking factor states “25 points are awarded for clarifying spatial concentration patterns of key hazardous air pollutants (HAPS) within urban areas.” Does this mean that only urban areas are eligible for these grants?

No. The term “urban” is intended to refer to a community area relative to populations at risk. For example, remote areas with no community centers affected by possible pollutants would not be considered. However, smaller community areas or population centers in remote areas that are being affected by hazardous air pollutants (with the exception of mercury) will be considered.

5. Are Regional Planning Organizations eligible?

Yes.

6. Can a project be proposed that is regional (not community) in nature?

All projects will be scored according to the criteria in “*Section V, Selection Criteria.*” Projects with a community emphasis are awarded more points relative to other ranking factors. A regional project that has a more expansive scope than a community scope, would receive less points than a community-oriented project. Cut-off for projects is dependent on the number of projects received relative to the funds available, after all rankings are made.

7. Can we have a partnership with an academic institute (university research team) for these projects?

Yes, provided the grant applicant meets the requirements listed under “*Section II, Eligible Entities*” of the program announcement.

8. When will the review take place and the awards be made?

The Office of Air Quality Planning and Standards expects to complete the Evaluation/Selection process by April 30, 2004. The process for formal award of grants by EPA’s Grants Administration Division can take up to 150 days from the date of selection.

9. Should we send our proposal, via Federal Express, directly to you? If so, what is your mailing address?

Please refer to *Section IX, How to Apply* of the program announcement for correct mailing instructions.

10. If a state or local agency receives grant funds, what is the actual start date for the community assessment toxics monitoring? As I read the guidance document, it should be April 2004. Is this correct? What would the official end date be?

In view of the extension of the deadline for submission of proposals to March 31, 2004 and, considering the evaluation, selection, and award process, we believe it is prudent that recipients should not expect to receive funds before Fall, 2004. As a result, EPA would expect the project performance period to begin on or about January 1, 2005 and extend through December 31, 2005.

11. Is it possible to submit two (2) separate, yet very similar, grant proposals? We have a basic proposal and then a proposal that would provide, in return for an infrastructure investment from EPA, continued monitoring for VOCs and carbonyls for another 2 years beyond the limit of this grant.

Yes. Proposals which are fully compliant with *Section III(C), Requirements of All Grantees*” and are best able to directly and explicitly address the *Section V, Selection Criteria* will be considered and have a greater likelihood of being selected for award.

12. The program announcement states that the narrative work plan cannot be over 10 pages in length. Can it be a single-spaced narrative, and can it include the budget?

The maximum page length is applicable to the applicant’s narrative workplan as described in *Section VII, Proposals* of the program announcement. The narrative can be single spaced. The maximum page length does not include the applicant’s detailed budget.

13. The competition calls for an Indirect Cost rate, SF424 checklist, and a biography. What are these things and who evaluates them? If states already have these things on file with the Regions, do they need to resubmit?

Please refer to <http://www.epa.gov/ogd/AppKit/index.htm> for a checklist of documents contained in the Grant Application Kit. Typically, if these items are already on file within the Regional Grants Management Office and are less than one year old, they do not need to be resubmitted. However, since the applications will be reviewed by a selection panel made up of staff who might not be aware of the qualifications of key personnel proposed, it is recommended that a biography or, at a minimum, a paragraph discussing the qualifications of all key personnel be included.

14. Is a Tribal Consortium in Alaska eligible for funding under the Community Assessments RFA?

Yes, provided the grant applicant meets the requirements listed under “*Section II, Eligible Entities*” of the program announcement.

15. Is a program that monitors both indoor & outdoor air quality eligible for funding under this RFA?

Please refer to “*Section V, Selection Criteria*” for a discussion on the kinds of programs or projects EPA will support under this funding opportunity.

16. Are 501(c)(3) non-profit organizations eligible to apply?

No. The funds appropriated by Congress for this particular grant program were authorized only for funding state and local air pollution control agencies, designated pursuant to Clean Air Act Section 302(b).

17. Why was the closing date for submission of applications extended?

Currently we are updating the Concept Paper, which will now be called the Air Toxics National Monitoring Strategy document. This document will list objectives of both the trends and the community assessment components of the National network. A draft of the document will be

posted on our AMTIC website (<http://www.epa.gov/ttn/amtic/airtxfil.html>), on December 1, 2003. The additional time will applicants an opportunity to review this material before they submit their proposals for a community assessment grant.

18. Will larger projects (submitted for the \$500,000 cutoff amount) take precedence over smaller projects?

No.