

AGENCY: ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY (EPA)

TITLE: “CLIMATE CHANGE TRIBAL IMPACTS, COMMUNICATION AND OUTREACH”

ACTION: Request for Proposals (RFP)

RFP Number: EPA-OAR-CCD-07-13

CFDA: 66.034

SUMMARY: Formal Agency responses to questions regarding the subject RFP

DATE: November 5, 2007 *RFP Closing date

Q1: Is there a website that has the announcement of funding for the “climate impacts on Indian Country and Alaskan Native Villages”? I would like to include a short notice in the R10 tribal newsletter

A1: Yes. Here are the links:

The synopsis of the announcement has been posted on Grants.gov. You can view the announcement at:
<http://www07.grants.gov/search/search.do?oppId=15498&flag2006=true&mode=VIEW>.

And this is the link to the announcement on EPA/OAR's grants' funding page:
http://www.epa.gov/air/grants_funding.html#0713

Q2: On what scale are you looking for outputs and outcomes from this project to apply? Nationwide? Local?

A2: The RFP was written with the intent of being broad and general so as to cover all of Indian Country and Alaskan Native Villages, with the understanding that the focus could vary from a specific local example to a more general nationwide approach.

Q3: Are you willing to consider small projects focused on single resources of importance to tribes as long as the outputs provide a model for future, similar work?

A3: Yes.

Q4: Is this the first year the grant has been awarded?

A4: This is the first year “CLIMATE CHANGE TRIBAL IMPACTS, COMMUNICATION AND OUTREACH” solicitation has been competed.

Q5: How many applicants are expected?

A5: This is an open competition, all eligible entities are encouraged to apply.

Q6: The NOFA indicates that there is no matching requirement, but will it be seen as favorable in comparison to others?

A6: There is no matching requirement and will not be part of the evaluation criteria. If you do have matching funding, however, it should be noted in the budget.

Q7: I'm having difficulty downloading the application and instructions?

A7: You can email support@grants.gov or call (800) 518-4726, if you're having difficulties with grants.gov.

Q8: We have a consortium of tribes in Region 2, 3 tribes in that consortium are federally recognized, that have shown interest in applying for this RFP. Would a consortium be considered an eligible entity for this RFP?

A8: Yes, a consortium of tribes would be considered an eligible entity.

Q9: I run a not for profit 501(C)(3) organization which has a pool of over 100 volunteer "partners" have acted as independent consultants on contract/cooperative agreement awards. Given our unique business scenario, how would we comply with the requirements of the RFP particularly with regard to subawardees/subgrantees?

A9: As stated in the RFP (Section III C) public or private nonprofit institutions, as defined by OMB Circular A-110 and OMB Circular A-122 are considered eligible entities. In addition please see Section IV D and E, which details answers to your questions regarding subawardees/subgrantees. All eligible entities applying must comply with federal procurement regulations 40 Code of Federal Regulations part 30 (nonprofits) or 31, as applicable.

D. Can funding be used for the applicant to make subawards, acquire contract services or fund partnerships?

EPA awards funds to one eligible applicant as the recipient even if other eligible applicants are named as partners or co-applicants or members of a coalition or consortium. The recipient is accountable to EPA for the proper expenditure of funds.

Funding may be used to provide subgrants or subawards of financial assistance, which includes using subawards or subgrants to fund partnerships, provided the recipient complies with applicable requirements for subawards or subgrants including those contained in 40 [CFR](#) Parts 30 or 31, as appropriate. Applicants must compete contracts for services and products, including consultant contracts, and conduct cost and

price analyses to the extent required by the procurement provisions of the regulations at 40 CFR Parts 30 or 31, as appropriate. The regulations also contain limitations on consultant compensation. Applicants are not required to identify subawardees/subgrantees and/or contractors (including consultants) in their proposal/application. However, if they do, the fact that an applicant selected for award has named a specific subawardee/subgrantee, contractor, or consultant in the proposal/application EPA selects for funding does not relieve the applicant of its obligations to comply with subaward/subgrant and/or competitive procurement requirements as appropriate. Please note that applicants may not award sole source contracts to consulting, engineering or other firms assisting applicants with the proposal solely based on the firm's role in preparing the proposal/application.

Successful applicants cannot use subgrants or subawards to avoid requirements in EPA grant regulations for competitive procurement by using these instruments to acquire commercial services or products from for-profit organizations to carry out its assistance agreement. The nature of the transaction between the recipient and the subawardee or subgrantee must be consistent with the standards for distinguishing between vendor transactions and subrecipient assistance under Subpart B Section .210 of [OMB Circular A-133](#), and the definitions of subaward at 40 CFR 30.2(ff) or subgrant at 40 CFR 31.3, as applicable. EPA will not be a party to these transactions. Applicants acquiring commercial goods or services must comply with the competitive procurement standards in 40 CFR Part 30 or 40 CFR Part 31.36 and cannot use a subaward/subgrant as the funding mechanism.

E. How will an applicant's proposed subawardees/subgrantees and contractors be considered during the evaluation process described in Section V of the announcement?

Section V of the announcement describes the evaluation criteria and evaluation process that will be used by EPA to make selections under this announcement. During this evaluation, except for those criteria that relate to the applicant's own qualifications, past performance, and reporting history, the review panel will consider, if appropriate and relevant, the qualifications, expertise, and experience of:

- (i) an applicant's named subawardees/subgrantees identified in the proposal/application if the applicant demonstrates in the proposal/application that if it receives an award that the subaward/subgrant will be properly awarded consistent with the applicable regulations in 40 CFR Parts 30 or 31. For example, applicants must not use subawards/subgrants to obtain commercial services or products from for profit firms or individual consultants.
- (ii) an applicant's named contractor(s), including consultants, identified in the proposal/application if the applicant demonstrates in its proposal/application that the contractor(s) was selected in compliance with the competitive Procurement Standards in 40 CFR Part 30 or 40 CFR 31.36 as appropriate. For example, an applicant must demonstrate that it selected the contractor(s) competitively or that a proper non-competitive sole-source award consistent with the regulations will be made to the contractor(s), that efforts were made to provide small and disadvantaged businesses with opportunities to compete, and that some form of cost or price analysis was conducted. EPA may not accept sole source justifications for contracts for services or products that are otherwise readily available in the commercial marketplace.

EPA will not consider the qualifications, experience, and expertise of named subawardees/subgrantees and/or named contractor(s) during the proposal/application evaluation process unless the applicant complies with these requirements.

Q10: Is there only one grant to be awarded?

A10: Yes, for this particular RFP, there will only be one cooperative agreement of \$40,000 awarded.

Q11: *Section I. C. 3. Outcomes (page 3) the last bullet states "improve communication between the Agency and tribal entities on climate change activities." Does "the Agency" refer to EPA?*

A11: Yes, the Agency is EPA.

Q12: *Section IV. B. 1. Proposed Materials III (page 7) Is this grant for fiscal year 2007 or 2008?*

A12: This cooperative agreement will start in FY2008 and continue through the Project Period, which may be up to one year.

Q13: *Regarding the electronic submission of the proposal, do we send separate signature pages via the mail or is there a way to use electronic signatures with Grants.gov Submission. Sending the grant electronically is a new format for me.*

A13: Yes, it is possible to submit electronically a signed copy of the forms. If you need further assistance regarding submission, please call 1-800-518-4726 or email support@grants.gov. Also, this information is also in the RFP and for additional guidance, please check the grants.gov website.

Q14: *Is there a format template for the summary page that EPA prefers we use?*

A14: No, EPA has no format preference for the summary page.

Q15: *Section IV. C. 2. c. Past Performance I. Programmatic Capability (page 9). Is funding from the Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) considered federal funding?*

A15: It is the applicant's responsibility to determine if BPA is a federal entity. You may want to check with your administrative personnel within your own organization.

Q16: *Section IV. C. 3. Detailed Narrative (page 9) "In addition to the SF 424A, please provide specified total costs of the project." I don't know what is being referred to in that phrase. What additional budget information or level of budget detail would EPA like to see in the grant beyond that provided in SF 424A? Does EPA want us to break out the total costs associated with the object class categories (Section B of the form)?*

A16: Yes, be as detailed as possible about the costs associated with the project.

Q17: *Is there a way to download the Standard Form SF 424A-Budget Information? Although we plan to submit our grant using the electronic format, I would like a hard copy of the forms to use as drafts.*

A17: Yes, the download information can be found in Section IV of the announcement

Q18: *Should the expected environmental results, outcomes and outputs for the grant be displayed in a table similar to those used in the EPA General Assistance Program fund grants? If a table is used to summarize that information, should the same information also be featured in the text of the Narrative Work Plan?*

A18: There is no requirement to use the table format, but you may find it useful. As long as the information is provided, it is not necessary to repeat it in a different format. Please note that the entire Narrative Proposal cannot exceed a maximum of 20 single-spaced typewritten pages, including the summary page.

Q19: *The Narrative Work Plan requires a description of how the proposed project benefits the public. Does the term 'public' include tribal members and the non-tribal public? Are those benefits synonymous with environmental results?*

A19: Yes, the Narrative Work Plan (IV.C.2.a.iii.) requires the project summary to contain an "Explanation of project benefits to the public, and specifically the potential audience(s) served." The defined Scope of Work (I.B) states "...producing a summary of this information that could be used for outreach to a broad audience including tribes, policy makers, and the public; and developing a communications strategy for transmitting the materials to these audiences." So, yes, the potential audience includes both tribes and non-tribal members of the public. Project "benefits" are to be described by the applicant, and may include environmental benefits.

Q20: *We have an existing research project, a significant part of which focuses on native communities, the local traditional knowledge that reflects their understanding of their environment, and how that understanding is changing in response to climate change. We have received partial funding for the project. Can we submit a proposal for the educational component of the project (i.e. receive funding from multiple sources?)*

A20: Yes, you can submit a proposal for the \$40,000 Climate Change Tribal Impacts, Communication and Outreach cooperative agreement, as part of a larger project that is funded by others. Regarding cost sharing or matching (III.B), there is no statutory or regulatory match requirement. Eligible and allowable voluntary contributions of funds and/or in kind contribution of resources will be treated as cost shares.

Q21: *Can the proposal focus on one, or a few tribes, or does it have to be a nationwide focus?*

A21: The RFP was written with the intent of being broad and general so as to cover all of Indian Country and Alaskan Native Villages, with the understanding that the focus could vary from a specific local example to a more general nationwide approach.

Q22: *Is it appropriate to put in previous relationships working with tribes?*

A22: Yes, one of the threshold criteria (III.C. 1) is the applicants' previous documented relevant project experience and demonstrated capability to develop communications and outreach materials that are relevant and culturally sensitive to Native Americans. In addition, evaluation criteria will include past performance (IV. C.2.c).

Q23: *Is the project just a one-year project?*

A23: Yes, the proposed project period may be up to one year. The estimated project period will begin in January, 2008.

Q24: *Can you help me determine whether I should apply for the EPA Grant EPA-OAR-CCD-07-13?*

A24: To keep this competition fair, we cannot provide you with feedback regarding the appropriateness or merit of your potential proposal. Please see Section I.B (Scope of Work) and Section V (Proposal Review Information) of the RFP for more information.

Q25: *Is it possible to look at similar previous proposals?*

A25: Unfortunately, we cannot provide you with any similar previous proposals because this is the first time that we have competed this type of work. In addition, it would not be appropriate to share the contents of previous proposal due to the confidential nature of the information within.

Q26: *Where on the EPA website can I locate the application package?*

A26: You can obtain application materials and apply electronically through http://www.grants.gov/applicants/apply_for_grants.jsp.

Q27: *Are there any restrictions on using the grant money for meals for the Workshop we are planning as part of our proposal?*

A27: Generally, the costs of meals and refreshments may be charged to assistance agreements only to the extent that they are allowable under the OMB Circulars A-21, A-87, and A-122. Typically, the cost of meals that are essential to the business of a conference because they are accompanied by presentations or panel discussions are not likely to be questioned. Also, refreshments at breaks are generally allowable, provided the costs are reasonable. For more information on this topic, please see <http://intranet.epa.gov/ogd/policy/7.0-GPI-GPI-98-11.htm#allowabilityof>.

Q28: *Can we send you hard copies of related materials to our proposal?*

A28: Supporting materials, such as resumes and letters of support, can be submitted as attachments and are not included in the 20-page limit.

Q29: We have been unable to submit our application via the grants.gov website, as we are not able to locate our N-pin number and today is the proposal deadline. Is there is a way to send the application in advance and make sure that you have the hard copy tomorrow?

A29: No, as stated in the RFP, the deadline for receipt of hard copy proposal packages is 4:00 p.m., EST today, November 5, 2007, no exceptions. Electronic submissions must be submitted via Grants.gov by today at 11:59 EST. Proposals received after the closing date will not be considered for funding. Please contact the grants.gov contact center at (800) 518-4726 to see if they can be of assistance. You can also contact the CCR (Central Contractor Registry) to see if they can assist you in retrieving your N-pin number.

Q30: Are we able to charge a nominal fee for attendees to pay for the Climate Change Conference we will be proposing?

A30: Regarding your question, we are not able to provide guidance on details of an applicants' budget. However, as a general rule, your budget should be as detailed as possible regarding the costs associated with the project.