

AGENCY: ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY (EPA)

TITLE: COMMUNITY ACTION FOR A RENEWED ENVIRONMENT (CARE) PROGRAM

ACTION: Request for Initial Proposals (RFIP) - Questions and Answers

RFIP NO.: OAR-IO-05-08

CATALOG OF FEDERAL DOMESTIC ASSISTANCE (CFDA) NO: 66.035

SUMMARY: Formal Agency responses to questions/comments regarding the subject solicitation.

DATE: May 17, 2005

Getting an Application

Question 1: I am interested in submitting an initial proposal for a Level I grant from the recently announced CARE Program. I have accessed the RFIP, but have been unable to find an application package (and grant application forms) on the EPA's Grants and Debarment website.

Answer: For copies of all the necessary forms please go to:

http://www.epa.gov/ogd/grants/how_to_apply.htm

There is not a CARE specific application. You should write up an application package based on the instructions and criteria in the RFIP.

Leveraging

Question 2: If Level I applicants offer leveraged funds, does that make their application more competitive?

Answer: No

Question 3: For Level II applicants, is it better to provide cash or in-kind leveraged funds?

Answer: EPA does not weigh one type more highly than the other.

Question 4: I know it says no match required, but if we have matching funds, should we list them?

Answer: It is your decision whether or not to list matching funds. You should examine the evaluation criteria and see whether listing the matching funds help you demonstrate that you meet the criteria. If you do you should be prepared to account for them.

Future CARE Agreements

Questions 5: Will there be another round of similar CARE funding in '06?

Are you going to be running the grant competition every year?

Answer: It is our intent to continue the CARE program and fund additional cooperative agreements in the future but that will depend on future appropriations and budget decisions.

Question 6: Should I submit my grant this year with the hope that if it doesn't get funded this year, it might be funded next year or the year after that?

Answer: No. EPA will not save applications that are not awarded this year and use them in future competitions.

Speaking to Someone

Questions 7: Is there a contact officer I can speak with to ask further detailed questions?

I understand that formal questions are requested in writing, but it would be quite helpful to learn more informally about the genesis of the program and the results EPA hopes for. It so happens that I will be back in Washington, DC next week (Thursday and Friday) and I wonder if you or some other appropriate person might be available to meet? *(Received via e-mail)*

To whom it may concern - I am sending a draft outline of a proposal that we would like to submit and would like to speak to someone about our ideas. Upon receipt of this fax could you please notify me at the above telephone number.

Answer: Because this is an open competitive opportunity, in the interest of fairness, we are unable to meet with individual potential applicants to discuss details of the program or proposal development. Specific questions regarding the solicitation to the must be submitted as stated in the RFIP:

“All questions or comments must be communicated in writing via postal mail, facsimile, or by using our website listed above. Answers will be posted, bi-weekly, until the closing date of this announcement at the OAR Grants/Funding webpage (http://www.epa.gov/air/grants_funding.html).

Send mail to:
US EPA
Attn: CARE Program
Mail Code 8001A
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20460

Send fax to:
202-564-7739 (attention CARE program)

Go to our website, and click on the words contact us at the bottom of the screen:
www.epa.gov/care”

Of course additional information about the program can be accessed at
www.epa.gov/care.

Is this Eligible for Funding?

Questions 8: Our county is interested in learning more about the CARE technical assistance offered through EPA. We are looking to change over our cleaning products to non-toxic products to create a safer environment for employees and county residents. Similarly through our purchasing dept. neighboring municipalities would have access to purchase non-toxic chemicals. Is this something that is eligible for CARE technical assistance? Thanks for your help.

What are the chances the CARE Level II funding could be used to support an ISO 14001 implementation at the our seaport? Is this the kind of project that might possibly be funded?

Our Tribe is requesting ... a level II CARE Cooperative Agreement to develop the engineering design, leverage funding, scope the community and plan for the construction of an overpass at the railroad crossing (as a disaster mitigation action in the event of a train derailment).

Answer: We can not answer specific questions about whether one idea or another is eligible for funding. In addition, it is hard to evaluate projects based on short descriptions. However, in order to give you some guidance we would remind everyone that, as stated in the RFIP, CARE will “form collaborative partnerships, develop a comprehensive understanding of all sources of risk from toxics, set priorities, and identify and implement projects to reduce risks through collaborative action at the local level. CARE’s long term goal is to help communities build self-sustaining, community-based partnerships that will continue to improve local environments into the future.” Based on these objectives of the CARE program the projects listed above may be useful parts of a CARE project but seem too limited.

Most importantly, you should review the RFIP’s Evaluation Criteria and the Threshold Criteria for Level II Cooperative Agreements to determine whether

your project meets the criteria listed.

Other

Question 9: We are very much interested in applying. We can collaborate with our tribal EPA and several other local agencies concerned with air quality, water quality, and recycling. My question is, is there an opportunity to apply for a planning grant to organize our collaboration?

Answer: Yes, the Level I Agreements provide money that can be used to organize a community based collaboration, but we would expect that more than just organization and planning to occur. For example, refer to the RFA evaluation criteria 3 - Alignment with CARE Strategies.

Question 10: When EPA says we can lend technical expertise, what does that mean? Do we need to specify in the application what type of assistance we might need from EPA?

Answer: You do not have to specify the type of assistance you might need. In general EPA sees its role as providing tools, technical assistance and other support. That support can come in the all phases of the CARE project based on the needs of the community. One place you can go to find the kinds of information and tools that EPA has is the CARE Resource Guide which can be found on the CARE website.

Please note that the specific assistance provided will depend on the situation and needs of the community and will be worked out by the EPA Project Officer and the selected applicants in the performance of the work supported.

Question 11: I know the web page says that all toxins with negative health and environmental impacts can be considered, but would a pollutant like nitrate rank as highly as one whose health endpoints of concern are more well known, like dioxin?

Answer: EPA will not be ranking toxins please refer to Evaluation Criteria 1 in the RFIP.

Questions about the RFIP Round 2

Eligible Organizations

Questions 12: I am curious to know whether or not a community group that is not a non-profit is eligible for the CARE grant?

Does community organization have to be a 501c3?

Answer: According to the RFIP, a community group must be a non-profit as defined by OMB Circular A-122. The Circular defines a non-profit as:

“any corporation, trust, association, cooperative, or other organization which:

- 1) is operated primarily for scientific, educational, service, charitable, or similar purposes in the public interest;
- (2) is not organized primarily for profit; and
- (3) uses its net proceeds to maintain, improve, and/or expand its operations. For this purpose, the term "non-profit organization" excludes (i) colleges and universities; (ii) hospitals; (iii) State, local, and federally-recognized Indian tribal governments; and (iv) those non-profit organizations which are excluded from coverage of this Circular in accordance with paragraph 5.

Question 13: Here is my information and I realize that I am not an agency list only an individual but looking over the grant requirements it is to prevent pollution, well that is what I am trying to do also. Is it possible for me to apply?

Answer: Individuals are not eligible to apply for CARE Cooperative Agreements.

Question 14: Are local county health departments eligible to apply for CARE program funding?

Answer: If the county health department is an agency of the county or other local or tribal government entity they could apply. However, in some states the county health department is part of the State government. In those States they can not apply since State Agencies are ineligible. They could of course be a partner working on a CARE project that has an eligible grantee.

Legitimate Expenses

Question 15: Would it be possible to apply for CARE grants in order to support laboratory biomonitoring programs (the measurement of toxic chemicals in human blood, urine, saliva, etc.) in order to determine community exposures and develop plans to reduce these exposures?

Answer: While such expenditures are an allowable expense, we would expect to see more than monitoring programs in any CARE application. The Level 1 grants help communities form partnerships that may include community-based organizations, businesses, government agencies and others to identify risks from toxics in their communities, set priorities, and begin to explore voluntary approaches, including EPA's voluntary programs, to find ways to reduce emissions and exposures to toxics in the community. The Level 2 grants are primarily designed for communities that have already assessed the toxic risks in their communities, and to help them implement solutions. Please see the Evaluation Criteria.

Question 16: A staffer at the US Fish and Wildlife Service is hoping to work with a local watershed group on a Level I grant. Can a portion of the budget include salary and equipment for my contribution? (I would also provide an in-kind match).

This is not a pass through. The watershed group would have the lead with an additional contribution from a university. Thanks for your consideration.

Answer: While Federal agencies are not eligible to get CARE agreements they can receive reimbursement from the recipient of a CARE agreement for providing with services to CARE partnerships. EPA hopes to work with other Federal agencies to encourage them to support communities that receive CARE agreements at no charge.

Forms

Question 17: Are the forms listed on the Grant Applications Forms page (<http://www.epa.gov/ogd/AppKit/application.htm>) the ONLY forms that need to be completed and submitted with the CARE RFIP? If not, a specific listing of forms would be helpful. Thank You

Answer: For copies of all the necessary forms please go to:

http://www.epa.gov/ogd/grants/how_to_apply.htm

There is not a CARE specific application. You should write up an application package based on the instructions and criteria in the RFIP.

CERCLA and Monitoring

Question 18: Your note, below, says that groups around sites that are CERCLA cleanup sites do not qualify. Can you explain? Do you mean that Superfund related PROJECTS would not be eligible (e.g., the kinds of projects that are eligible under the TAG program)? Or did you mean if the site is a CERCLA site, no matter what you propose in the community, it would not be eligible? Or, put another way, would a project be eligible if it involved a Superfund site IF the project clearly was not about the Superfund cleanup of that site. For example, would sampling for potential airborne emissions (should the community desire that) downwind be a potentially eligible project -- as that has zero to do with the CERCLA cleanup at the site? Or perhaps a series of mediated meetings with site management on pollution prevention technologies -- as that is not related to CERCLA either??? I went through the guidelines and FAQs and other things, and didn't get a clear answer to this. any help you can offer would be appreciated.

Answer: The CARE grants can't be used to fund work that is typically done under Superfund, e.g., funding cleanup work at a Superfund site or hiring a technical advisor to assist a community in understanding issues associated with a Superfund site cleanup. A community that has a Superfund site in it can be eligible for a CARE grant to assess toxic problems in their community beyond the Superfund site, and to identify ways to reduce the risks from these toxic problems.

You are right that something like air sampling unrelated to the Superfund site could be covered by a CARE grant, but, in general, we are hoping that projects that seek to use existing air emissions information from sources such as the EPA Toxics Release Inventory to prioritize toxic problems in a community would have a better chance of being selected. CARE projects are designed to use readily available information to set priorities and get quickly to risk reduction efforts as opposed to air emission sampling which can be very expensive and time consuming. Air sampling may be necessary for some communities, but funding for this kind of more detailed assessment activity would more likely come from the air monitoring program.

CARE Strategies

Question 19: We are writing a grant proposal for a Level I project. When I looked at the guidelines, it mentioned the the grant proposal should link to the 5 CARE program strategies, but I saw 6 strategies in the guidelines and the webpage. Can you clarify the number of strategies?

Answer: The RFIP lists the 6 CARE strategies. They are:

- 1) Empower communities to address toxics issues at the local level,
- 2) Build effective collaborative partnerships that include community residents, organizations, and businesses, governments, academic institutions, non-profit organizations, and other appropriate stakeholders,
- 3) Examine and understand toxic risks from multiple sources in the community and set priorities for effective action to reduce risks,
- 4) Focus on action, use information and analysis to build consensus and help target greatest risks,
- 5) Focus on using voluntary programs and approaches to find solutions and reduce risks; and
- 6) Mobilize local resources and build long term community capacity to understand and address environmental risks

For Level I agreements the 3rd Evaluation Criterion “Alignment with CARE Strategies” covers strategies 1, 3, 4, 5, & 6 only. The response to Evaluation Criterion 2 Community Involvement/Collaboration/Partnerships” covers alignment with the second CARE strategy.

CARE Funding

Question 20: Please clarify if the funding amount is \$60,000-\$90,000 per year or is it the total award amount for the 2-year project period.

Answer: You will have 2 years to spend the \$60,000-\$90,000. You do not get additional money from the CARE agreement in the second year

QUESTIONS FROM ROUND 3 RFIP

CARE Definitions

Question 21: How do you define "risk" as mentioned in the CARE request for initial proposals?

Answer: Risk is the possibility of a person(s) suffering harm to their health or to the quality of their environment. Risk comes from the exposure of the person(s) or their environment to a toxic substance or pollutant, or to the combination several threats. In some cases a substance may be harmful not because it is intrinsically hazardous but because of the amount may be so large as to disrupt the natural ecological or biological systems.

Question 22: How do you define "community" and "local level?" Specifically, could we apply for work at a statewide level? What about work with a particular community of interest or subpopulation (e.g., children)?

Answer: The CARE website, Frequently Asked Questions (<http://cfpub.epa.gov/care/index.cfm?fuseaction=faq.showFAQ>) defines "community" as follows:

"The Community for a Renewed Environment (CARE) program is not strictly defining the term community. Generally speaking a community is a group of people living in the same area sharing the same environment. It will often be a relatively small area, but in rural locations a larger area such as a watershed would be considered a community. For purposes of CARE the New York City metropolitan area or the entire Missouri River watershed would be considered too large to be a community."

Based on this definition, a State is too large of an area and could not be a community. Action at the "local level" means action taken in a (the) community. While a CARE project could, and in many cases will, involve some work that is specific to a subpopulation within a community, you can not use a subpopulation to define a community for purposes of getting a CARE cooperative agreement because the subpopulation does not represent the community as a whole.

Question 23: Listed under background the paragraph mentions toxic concerns. Could you define toxic concerns?

Would harmful algal blooms and toxic phytoplankton fall under the *other substances in the environment that can cause negative health or environmental impacts*?

Do you consider nitrogen and phosphorous or their toxic outcomes as toxic substances?

Answer: On our website we define toxics as:

“When the CARE program uses the term ‘toxics’ it means those chemicals, pollutants or other substances in the environment that can cause negative health or environmental impacts. We are trying to use an expansive common sense definition of the term. We are specifically not limiting it to a legalistic definition where only those chemicals that are specifically listed in or covered by a piece of legislation are considered toxics.”

Therefore, “toxics concerns” means any interest, worry, anxiety that a community may have because of the existence of toxics in its environment and the risks they represent.

Harmful algal blooms, toxic phytoplankton, nitrogen and phosphorous or their toxic outcomes, would fall under that definition if they were of a sufficient magnitude to cause negative health or environmental impacts in that community.

Eligible Programs

Question 24: Would an IPM program addressing rodent control with community input and collaboration be considered a eligible program?

Answer: As stated in our response to previous questions submitted by other potential applicants (<http://www.epa.gov/air/grants/05-08qa.pdf>), because of a matter of fair competition, we can not answer specific questions about whether one idea or another is eligible for funding during the RFIP solicitation period. In addition, it is hard to appropriately evaluate projects based on limited descriptions. However, in order to give you some guidance, we would remind potential applicants that, as stated in the RFIP, CARE will “form collaborative partnerships, develop a comprehensive understanding of all sources of risk from toxics, set priorities, and identify and implement projects to reduce risks through collaborative action at the local level. CARE’s long term goal is to help communities build self-sustaining, community-based partnerships that will continue to improve local environments into the future.” Based on these objectives of the CARE program, the projects listed above may be useful parts of a CARE project but *seem* too limited to be a stand-alone project.

Question 25: Our goal is to work with all sectors of the community to draft state legislation that will allow the creation of an Aquifer Protection Area for a sole-source aquifer. The funds generated from the Aquifer Protection Area will be used to reduce toxic contamination to the Aquifer. QUESTION: Is this even eligible for CARE?

Answer: EPA grant funds can not be used for lobbying as the drafting of state legislation would entail.

Organizational Capacity

Question 26: In addressing the criteria "organizational capacity," it's not clear what information you want regarding prior EPA grants. Do you simply want to know that we are current with all required reports, or do you want to know what we have accomplished substantively?

Answer: Your response should describe other projects that you have successfully managed, or organizational features and controls that will help ensure the project can be effectively managed and successfully completed. You must describe and provide substantiation of your ability to manage a project such as the one proposed. Please also describe the system(s) that will be used to appropriately manage, expend, and account for Federal funds. If you are, or have been, a recipient of an EPA grant/cooperative agreement in the last 5 years the applicant must provide information regarding compliance reporting measures, and annual financial status reporting. If for some reason you have problems complying with some of the requirements of previous federal grants, you may also want to include how those problems were resolved and what measures have been put in place to avoid the same problems to happen in the future.

Voluntary Programs

Question 27: What is the list of EPA voluntary programs to choose from for the Level II awards?

Answer: EPA does not have a specific list of voluntary programs at this time, although we are working on producing one. For purposes of applying to the RFIP, you do not need to include the specific set of voluntary programs you plan to implement. It is expected that a community partnership will work with EPA and the State to examine possible voluntary programs that will address the community's priority risks. If you are interested in looking at some of the voluntary programs that would be available, we suggest you look at the section of the CARE Resource Guide entitled, "Methods to Reduce Your Exposure". The Resource Guide can be found on the CARE website at:
<http://cfpub.epa.gov/care/index.cfm?fuseaction=Guide.showIntro#>

Question 28: Is it mandatory to promote or implement only EPA's voluntary programs?

Answer: No. While we expect CARE projects to focus on voluntary programs to reduce toxic concerns we do not require or expect that only EPA voluntary programs will be implemented. EPA staff will work with the community partnership and provide information on EPA's and other programs. In addition, the other partners will also provide information on other voluntary programs they have or know about. The partnership will then select the programs that best meet their needs and resources.

Threshold Criteria

Question 29: Does our project meet the Level II threshold eligibility if our stakeholder group was formed to address a known problem rather than our specific stakeholder group identifying the priority problem?

Does our project meet the threshold standard if it is focused on water resources and not addressing all toxics in the Groundwater Management Area even if those toxics are already being dealt with in other arenas?

Answer: In order to meet the Level II threshold eligibility criteria, as stated in the RFIP you must represent a partnership that has "... completed a detailed examination of toxics in the community which includes more than one environmental media, come to consensus on the specific community priorities for risk reduction, and be prepared to choose a risk reduction to address community priorities and mobilize the community and its partners to implement this plan."

Based on the limited information provided, it does not appear that your project meet the established threshold criteria.

Eligible Applicants

Question 30: Is a Council of Governments eligible to be an applicant for the CARE Program? We are a regional planning organization that serves city and county governments who are members of the Council.

Answer: An organization of local government or local officials would be eligible to be an applicant.

Question 31: I've read the RFP and have a question(s) about eligibility (III.). Are local health departments eligible? Are 501(c)(3)s eligible? Are local hospital foundations eligible?

Answer: As we stated in our response to previous questions submitted by other potential applicants (<http://www.epa.gov/air/grants/05-08qa.pdf>):

If the county health department is an agency of the county or other local or tribal government entity, they could apply. However, in some states the county health department is part of the State government. In those States, they can not apply since State Agencies are ineligible. They could of course be a partner working on a CARE project that has an eligible grantee.

According to the RFIP, a 501(c)(3) is eligible or a local hospital foundation would be eligible as long as they meet the definition of a non-profit, as defined by OMB Circular A-122 (<http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/circulars/a122/a122.html>).

Question 32: Will CARE consider funding a Level I and a Level II grant for a community? We would like to submit a Level I grant for developing a high school educational and outreach initiative but do not want to interfere with the community's larger collaboration that may be seeking Level II funding.

Answer: According to the RFIP an applicant (organization) can submit only one proposal. An organization could partner in more than one CARE project or proposal. However, you should be aware that it is EPA's intent, to the extent it can, provide geographic diversity in the CARE projects. As a practical matter, we intend to have one community with a CARE agreement in each EPA region.

Question 34: I'd like to know if there is a Chicago based organization that will be applying for this grant. We'd like to work with them to supply an IPM component to their proposal.

Answer: We have not received any applications at this time and the CARE program is not keeping track of potential applicants.

Budget

Question 35: What projects or project costs are considered ineligible for the CARE grant?

Answer: All costs associated with any project must be eligible, allowable, allocable and reasonable. Allowable costs must be consistent with the appropriate OMB cost principles. These are: OMB Cost Principles A-21 for Educational Institutions (<http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/circulars/a021/a021.html>); OMB Cost Principles A-87 for State, Local and Tribal Governments (<http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/circulars/a087/a087-all.html>); and OMB Cost Principles A-122 for Non-Profit Organizations (<http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/circulars/a122/a122.htm>).

Question 36: If a university and community are applying for this grant together, is there a specific percentage that has to be allocated to each of the partners?

Answer: No, the percentage is for the partners to decide.

Question 37: If we want to use the services of an employee of one of our partner groups, do we have to go through the competitive procurement process?

Answer: EPA is unable to answer this question without more information as to the status of this partner group employee. If this employee will be paid as a contractor, then that contract would be subject to the competition procedures outlined by the contracting organization. Typically, competition would occur or a satisfactory sole source justification and accompanying cost reasonableness determination would have to be conducted.

Question 38: Can you explain a little more what you mean by "successful applicant cannot use subgrants or subawards to avoid requirements in EPA Grant regulations for competitive procurement by using these instruments to acquire commercial services...." (Section IID).

Answer: In the past, some organizations have tried to characterize contractual relationships as one of assistance (or subgrants), thereby getting around the competition requirements. This is only a reminder that it is the nature of the relationship that determines whether a contract or subgrant is the appropriate mechanism.

Costs and Funding

Question 39: Will indirect costs be allowed with the CARE grants? If so, is there a limit on the amount of indirect costs?

Answers: Yes, indirect costs are allowed. Any organization claiming indirect costs in its budget, must submit a copy of their approved indirect cost rate, if selected for award. The government would only reimburse indirect costs up to the approved rate

Question 40: Can CARE funds be used for purchasing equipment, like diesel retrofit kits?

Answer: Yes, CARE funds can be used for that purpose, as long as the activity is within the context of a larger CARE project.

Question 41: Is the funding awarded per year or is the total amount to cover both years? In other words is the award ceiling \$400,000.00 per year or \$400,000.00 for two years?

Answer: Funding for the project is awarded for a 2-year period, but the money is provided incrementally. Funding for the second year is contingent on the performance of the award recipient. It should be noted that while we do not have a specific ceiling we expect Level II Grant Awards to be closer to \$300,000 than to \$400,000.

Question 42: The RFP mentions 'providing information regarding compliance measures, and annual financial status reporting' for previously received (past 5 years) EPA grants and cooperative agreements.

We currently have an EPA Tools for Schools grant. Can you give us an example of what the 'compliance reporting measures' and the 'annual financial status reporting' should include? Or an example for any EPA grant. We are not familiar with this specific terminology.

Answer: EPA is looking for evidence of an organizations timely preparation and

submission of annual financial status reports. Compliance measures would include a recipient's history of providing progress reports within timeframes outlined in any existing or past EPA work plans, and in meeting milestones and deliverables.

Question 43: Are there administrative or indirect cost limits for RFIP NO. OAR-IO-05-08?

Answer: No. If selected for award, a copy of your organization's approved indirect cost rate must be provided. The government will accept up to that approved rate.

Question 44: What forms are required to be submitted with my application?

Answer: No forms are required at this time. If selected for award, EPA will request proposed recipients complete a full application at that time.

Locations for CARE Communities

Question 45: Are the six (6) LEVEL 1 awards earmarked for big cities with large populations? With a population of 52,000 would our city be in the running for a Level 1 grant award?

Answer: None of the cooperative agreements are earmarked for any size of community. EPA is looking for a variety of different projects in communities of different sizes with different awardees.

Collaborating Organizations

Question 46: Regarding the letters of commitment from collaborating organizations, agencies, or entities, what level of commitment is required? For example, do we need to obtain a memorandum of understanding or is it fine to have a letter of commitment signed by the representative that will be collaborating with us on the project?

Answer: A letter of commitment by a representative of the organization is sufficient. Please remember that EPA reserves the right to contact organizations to verify their commitment.

Length of CARE Agreement

Question 47: Our organization is applying for a CARE grant- level I. Is it possible to complete the work in one year instead of two?

Answer: EPA expects that it will take more than a year for a community to achieve the goals of a Level I agreement - i.e. create a broad based stakeholder group, examine the toxics risks in the community and achieve consensus on priority risk, etc.. However, there is no problem if the community can achieve those results in

a year or less.

Technical Support

Question 48: For a Level I grant, what level of technical support will the EPA provide? For example, if we are interested in identifying multiple sources of exposure for a cumulative risk assessment, will EPA be able to provide modeling expertise to help us identify those sources of highest health risk? Or, would we need to bring on an academic partner that could provide that level of technical expertise?

Answer: In a previous question regarding technical support we said:

“In general EPA sees its role as providing tools, technical assistance and other support. That support can come in the all phases of the CARE project based on the needs of the community. One place you can go to find the kinds of information and tools that EPA has is the CARE Resource Guide which can be found on the CARE website. Please note that the specific assistance provided will depend on the situation and needs of the community and will be worked out by the EPA Project Officer and the selected applicants in the performance of the work supported.”

In regards to this specific question, in some cases EPA’s technical support could include modeling support. It should be noted that the CARE program has a bias for action. In general, we do not believe that full scale cumulative risk assessments are necessary or appropriate for CARE projects. They are usually too expensive and time consuming. We believe in using screening level assessments, which can include modeling, to help prioritize risks so that communities can move more quickly to take actions that will reduce risk.

Application Forms

Question 49: I have a question regarding RFIP No - OAR-I0-05-08 - CARE Grant Program. Your RFIP instructions say that the 10-page proposal must have an original signature. Can the signature be on a regular page of the proposal, or do I need to submit form SF 424 with an original signature along with the 10 pages?

My question is regarding RFIP No OAR-I0-05-08 - RFIP for CARE Program. Do I need to include EPA Application Forms S 424 and SF 424 A with the 10 page initial proposal? Are any other EPA forms required to be submitted with the initial 10 page proposal?

Answer: Applicant’s are not required to complete an SF-424 or any other application forms at this time. A transmittal letter with original signature is sufficient at this time. This transmittal letter does not count towards the 10-page proposal limit.

Questions from Round 5

Documentation

Question 50: Do you require a face page from a community organization who will be a subaward/subcontract on the project?

Answer: No. What EPA requires is outlined in Section IV, "Application and Submission Information", of the RFIP.

Question 51: What kind of documents do you require from a subaward/subcontract?

Answer: What EPA requires is outlined in Section IV, "Application and Submission Information", of the RFIP. Letters of commitment from a proposed subcontract is sufficient.

Eligible entities/applicants whose initial proposals are tentatively selected for award will be requested to submit final applications. EPA may request additional documentation regarding subawards/subcontracts when final applications are submitted.

Question 52: I don't see any budget guidance. We hope to work with EPA around some of the project ideas we have, so we don't have specific breakdown of costs in some cases (ie in terms of personnel, contract, supplies). How would you like us to proceed?

Answer: Your budget narrative is an estimate. Guidance on preparing a budget can be found at: <http://www.epa.gov/ogd/recipient/tips.htm>

EPA may request additional, more specific budget information when final applications are requested from those entities/applicants whose initial proposals have been tentatively selected for award.

Question 53: re. the care grant application, it is unclear from your instructions on the web site whether we are supposed to file the standard form for epa grant applications (424?) and the standard budget sheets, or just the narrative sections described.

Answer: Applicant's are not required to complete an SF-424 or any other application forms at this time. A transmittal letter with original signature is sufficient at this time. This transmittal letter does not count towards the 10-page proposal limit.

Question 54: Also you refer to meeting the guidelines established in I.B Scope of Work. Section I.B is entitled EPA Strategic Plan Linkage. Please clarify. We have completed our proposal draft and are trying to format the information according to your instructions, but they are difficult to follow.

Answer: We apologize for the mistake Scope of Work is I.C.

Question 55: The original application package says that the estimated project period is from September 2005 to October 2007. Since the anticipated date of announcements was changed recently to October 2005, what is the estimated project period?

Answer: The estimated project period is October 2005 to November 2007.

Bidding Requirements

Question 56: As the lead sponsor of our application, we are collaborating and proposing to pay for deliverables by a local on the ground not for profit group with whom we have a long working relationship; it is a local member of our national organization. This local group, with strong grassroots connections, is uniquely positioned as a trusted convener locally, but does not have the precise expertise in the issues our proposal will address in their community. We see this as a strong partnership, not subject to putting out to bid.

A follow up question. To ensure that we reach consensus with a set of grassroots and institutional stakeholders in a well-known and troubled major urban area, we want to include another nonprofit as facilitator with whom we have worked during the last three years. As the prime application sponsor, we need the mentoring and need large group facilitation; our grassroots partner agrees. Does the proposed facilitation work by a nonprofit need to go to bid?
(Received via e-mail)

Answer: EPA grant regulations requires that procurement transactions be conducted in a manner that provides, to the maximum extent practical, open and free competition. Non-profit organizations and Universities whose initial proposals are tentatively selected for award will be required to follow the procurement standards as outlined in 40 *CFR 30.41 through 30.48. Local and tribal governmental agencies will be required to follow the procurement standards as outlined in 40 *CFR 31.36. EPA may request additional documentation regarding subawards/subcontracts when final applications are submitted. (* = Code of Federal Regulations).

For a copy of 40 CFR, please go to:

<http://www.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/cfrassemble.cgi?title=200240>