



## Environmental Justice Collaborative Problem-Solving Cooperative Agreement Program FACT SHEET

### Background

For the first time in 2003, the Office of Environmental Justice (OEJ) launched the Environmental Justice Collaborative Problem-Solving Cooperative Agreement (EJ CPS) program. To find out the latest information on the EJ CPS program visit:

<http://www.epa.gov/compliance/environmentaljustice/grants/ej-cps-grants.html>. This website also provides a description of the current projects that have been awarded.

The EJ CPS program requires selected applicants, or recipients, to use the Environmental Justice Collaborative Problem-Solving Model (EJ CPS Model) as part of their projects. The purpose of the EJ CPS Model is to assist affected communities so that they can develop proactive, strategic, and visionary approaches to address their environmental justice issues and to achieve community health and sustainability.

The key elements of the EJ CPS Model are:

- Issue Identification, Visioning, and Strategic Goal-Setting;
- Community Capacity-Building and Leadership Development;
- Development of Multi-Stakeholder Partnerships and Leveraging of Resources;
- Consensus Building and Dispute Resolution;
- Constructive Engagement with Other Stakeholders;
- Sound Management and Implementation; and
- Evaluation.

The New Request for Applications period will be open from June 22, 2006 to 11:59pm October 23, 2006.

### Request for Applications

On February 1, 2006, OEJ released the Request for Applications (RFA) for the EJ CPS Program. The EJ CPS Program is of a national scope, and therefore, the purpose of the RFA was to make one assistance agreement award per region. The RFA closed on March 31, 2006; however, the EJ CPS program was cancelled and no awards were made because OEJ did not receive enough applications to meet its national program objectives.

**On June 22, 2006**, a new announcement for the EJ CPS will be released. Significant changes to the RFA have been made in an effort to solicit more applications. Some of these changes include:

- The definition of "eligible applicant"
- The contents of the application package
- The format of the workplan
- The Threshold Eligibility Criteria

Any organization that applied under the earlier RFA must submit a new application.

### Eligible Applicants

An eligible applicant MUST BE either:

(1) a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization as designated by the Internal Revenue Service; OR

(2) a non-profit organization, recognized by the state, territory, commonwealth, or tribe in which it is located.

In addition, an eligible applicant must be able to demonstrate that it has worked directly with, or provided services to, the affected community. An "affected community," for the purposes of this assistance agreement program, is a community that is disproportionately impacted by environmental harms and risks and has a local environmental and/or public health issue that is identified in the proposal.

A "non-profit organization," means any corporation, trust, association, cooperative, or other organization that:

- (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.

The focus of this assistance agreement program is to build the capacity of community-based organizations to address environmental and/or public health issues at the local level. Therefore, for this assistance agreement program, the term "non-profit organization" **EXCLUDES:**

- colleges and universities;
- hospitals;
- state and local governments and federally-recognized Indian tribal governments;
- quasi-governmental entities (e.g., water districts, utilities)\*;
- national-, multi-state-, or state-wide- organizations with chapters;
- non-profit organizations that engage in lobbying activities as defined in Section 3 of the Lobbying Disclosure Act of 1995; and
- those non-profit organizations which are excluded from coverage under paragraph 5 of OMB Circular A-122 (see OMB Circular A-122, paragraph 5 at [http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/circulars/a122/a122\\_2004.html](http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/circulars/a122/a122_2004.html))

\* Generally, a quasi-governmental entity is one that: (1) has a close association with the government agency, but is not considered a part of the government agency; (2) was created by the government agency but is exempt from certain legal and administrative requirements imposed on government agencies; or (3) was not created by the government agency but performs a public purpose and is significantly supported financially by the government agency.

## For More Information

If you would like more information about the EJ Collaborative Problem-Solving Program, please call the Office of Environmental Justice's 24-hour hotline (1-800-962-6215) or visit the website at:

<http://www.epa.gov/compliance/environmentaljustice/grants/ej-cps-grants.html>

### EPA's Commitment to Environmental Justice

On November 4, 2005, United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Administrator Stephen L. Johnson issued a memorandum reaffirming EPA's commitment to environmental justice for all people, regardless of race, color, national origin, or income. Environmental justice means not only protecting human health and the environment for everyone, but also ensuring that all people are treated fairly and are given the opportunity to participate meaningfully in the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies.

Because minority and/or low-income communities frequently may be exposed disproportionately to environmental harms and risks, EPA works to protect these and other burdened communities from adverse human health and environmental effects of its programs, consistent with existing environmental and civil rights laws and regulations, as well as through the implementation of Executive Order 12898 ("Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and/or Low-Income Populations," Feb. 11, 1994).

The memorandum identified eight national environmental justice priorities and directed the integration of environmental justice considerations into EPA's planning and budgeting processes, including into the Agency's Strategic Plan for Fiscal Years 2006-2011. This cooperative agreement program (Program) focuses on one of those eight priorities, which is the use of collaborative problem-solving to address local environmental and/or public health issues. Each remaining priority involves a specific issue, including: (1) reducing asthma attacks; (2) reducing exposure to air toxics; (3) increasing compliance with regulations; (4) reducing the incidence of elevated blood lead levels; (5) ensuring that fish and shellfish are safe to eat; (6) ensuring that water is safe to drink; and (7) revitalizing contaminated sites (please note that this Program cannot be used to fund Brownfields projects).

EPA will continue to fully implement its programs, policies, and activities to ensure that they do not adversely affect populations with critical environmental and/or public health issues, including minority and/or low-income communities.