

## Audio Transcript

### How to Apply for a P3 Grant - Part 1

**Narrator:** This podcast series has been produced by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's P3 program staff. This is part 1 and covers slides 1 through 7 of the How to Apply Powerpoint Presentation.

**Cynthia Nolt-Helms:** Hello my name is Cynthia Nolt-Helms and I am the Program Manager for EPA's People, Prosperity and the Planet, P3 Program. In this presentation I'm going to cover how to apply for an EPA P3 grant. I'm not going to be getting into technical issues, but covering the application process, and focusing on aspects that have presented problems to applicants in the past.

Slide 2:

So what is the P3 Program? It's a two-phase grants competition for teams of students to design for sustainability. The P3 program is unique in that the teams themselves provide both the scientific or technical question and they propose the hypothesis, or design, to address it. P3 is a college competition that gives students the opportunity to both identify an environmental problem and design a solution as a team to sustainably address that problem. The P3 competition is intended to get students to think about a solution that goes beyond cleaning up pollution. A P3 project must do three things: benefit people, promote prosperity, and protect the planet.

Slide 3:

Although it may be a little boring and read like it was written by a bureaucracy, which it was, it's very important that the first thing you do is read the Request for Applications-the

RFA-completely. As you go through it, highlight the sections or phrases that are critical for your success. Believe it or not, the majority of the questions that we receive are actually already addressed in the solicitation.

Slide 4:

So, as you begin to draft your proposal some logical questions you may ask are: “Who will be reading my proposal?” and “How will it be evaluated?” Your proposal is used by three groups for three different purposes. The first is the external peer review panel. That panel provides the technical review of the scientific, innovative research proposal using the criteria that are presented in section 5.A.2 of the RFA.

The second set of reviewers are EPA staff and EPA conducts a programmatic review, evaluating each proposal relative to EPA's priorities and the statutory authorities that EPA has to award research grants. These considerations are presented in Section 5.A.3 of the RFA.

The third group who will use your proposal is your team yourselves. A well-written proposal will put your research in the context of the work that has gone before. It will clearly identify the innovative research component of what is being proposed and define the roadmap for your team to use as it conducts the proposed research project.

Slide 5:

P3 is also unique in that it is a two phase program. Here's a little bit more background on the program: Phase I is for proposals up to \$15,000 and that's the proposal that we are soliciting with the RFA. Teams receiving a P3 phase I grant will bring their projects to the National Sustainable Design Expo in the spring following the grant award and while they

are there Phase I teams will compete for a P3 award and a phase II grant. The judging of the Phase I projects is done by outside experts convened for EPA by the American Association for the Advancement of Science, AAAS. This review is equivalent to the peer review process that the phase I proposals will go through.

Phase II grants are up to \$90,000 to take the project to the next level. Phase II grants are intended to provide resources to implement a design in the field or conduct additional research leading to commercialization.

Phase II's are only open to teams that have successfully competed for and received a P3 phase I grant.

Slide 6:

Authority and Regulations. This may come as a surprise, but there are distinct strings attached to EPA's funds and how they can be used. P3 is a research grants program and this means that we need to be able to show how each proposal is supported by the statutes that give EPA the authority to fund research grants. Therefore it is really important that your proposal make this connection and you can do this in one of two ways: In the RFA we provide language from key sections of each of the statutes and you can link your research to one of those statutes or you can just clearly demonstrate how your project or design will result in pollution prevention and we will be able to link it to the correct supporting statute.

Slide 7:

Because Statutory Authority is so important, we have an example for you. Section 104 of the Clean Water Act authorizes the EPA to make grants to institutions for research, investigations, experiments, training, demonstrations, surveys and studies relating to the causes,

extent, prevention, reduction and elimination of water pollution.

Application A presents the goal to design an innovative irrigation drip system which minimizes agricultural water use while maximizing the yield of corn. This may be very innovative and exciting research, but it would not be fundable because it does not relate to the authority provided to EPA in section 104 of the Clean Water Act. However, Application B states its goal as designing an innovative irrigation drip system which minimizes agricultural water use to protect groundwater resources and reduce water pollution from nutrient, pesticide and contaminant leaching. That proposal would be fundable with EPA's statutory authority.

**Narrator:** This concludes part 1 of How to Apply for a P3 grant. Please close the file and open up How to Apply part 2.