Environmental Protection Network

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Community Change Grant Track II Project Narrative Instructions

Instructions from the Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) are in red; suggestions are in dark gray.

The Project Narrative for Track II is comprised of Sections A and B as described below and should include the information and content below. Applicants should ensure it includes information addressing the relevant evaluation criteria in Section V for Track II applications and any applicable threshold eligibility criteria in Section III.D, including identifying and describing the disadvantaged communities to benefit from the grants.

- The Project Narrative for Track II applications must not exceed fifteen (15) single-spaced pages and be on letter size pages (8 1⁄2 X 11 inches). Excess pages will not be reviewed.

Applicants are encouraged to be concise and do not need to use all the pages within the page limit. Links to external websites or content will not be reviewed or considered. Any pages beyond the page limitations will not be reviewed by the Review Panel. It is recommended that applicants use a standard font (e.g., Times New Roman, Calibri, and Arial) and a 12-point font size with 1-inch margins. While these guidelines establish the acceptable type size requirements, applicants are advised that readability is of paramount importance and should take precedence in selection of an appropriate font for use in the application. **The grant application forms and other attachments identified in Section IV.A.4: Required Forms and Documents above are not included in the Project Narrative page limits.**

To assist EPA reviewers, applicants should reference the numbers and titles of the evaluation criteria in their Project Narratives to help identify where the criteria are being addressed as applicable. A table is included in Section V.A to show how the components relate to one another and to the evaluation criteria. Applicants should contact EPA with any questions about the application content requirements.

Track II Application Requirements

Track II applications consist of a Project Narrative with two sections as identified below: (A) Executive Summary and (B) Project Workplan. **Together these cannot exceed 15 pages as described above.**

Section A. Executive Summary

The Executive Summary should contain the elements below and **should not exceed two pages.**

- **Application Title:** Provide a name for the application.
- **Lead Applicant:** Name of the organization applying.
- **Statutory Partner to the Lead Applicant:** Name of the Statutory Partner.
- **Contact information:** Include a name, title, email address, and phone number for key personnel for Lead Applicant, Statutory Partner.
- **Eligibility:** Describe how the Lead Applicant and Statutory Partner meet the eligibility

requirements in Section III.A of the NOFO.

- **Disadvantaged Community to benefit from the projects:** Identify and describe the disadvantaged communities, as defined in Appendix A, intended to benefit from the projects in the application. See Section III.D.3 for more detail.
- **Grant Award Period and Completion:** Provide estimated beginning and ending dates for the period of performance for your proposed grant. Given the requirement under CAA § 138(b)(1) that all grants must be completed within three years, all applications must state how the projects in the application can be completed within three years of award.
- **EPA Funding Requested:** See award sizes specified in Section II.A.
- **Other Sources of Funding:** Briefly explain, to the extent you can, whether funding for the projects in your application is available under the Infrastructure Investments and Jobs Act (IIJA), other IRA programs, or other funding streams and, if so, your reasons for seeking funding for these projects under this NOFO. Please also note the Duplicate Funding clause included in Section IV of the EPA Solicitation Clauses incorporated by reference in this NOFO and referenced in Section V.E.
- **Resubmission Status:** Specify if the application is for a resubmission of a previously submitted and reviewed application. If so, please identify the date of the original submission and date of EPA debriefing of the previously submitted application (See Section II.C for further information on the resubmission process).

Section B. Project Workplan

1. **Track II Program Objectives:** Applications should describe the following:

    - How the application addresses the Track II objectives identified in Section I.H.

    - What methods, tools, and trainings the applicant will use to facilitate the engagement of disadvantaged communities in state and Federal advisory groups, workshops, rulemakings, and / or other public processes, including local, Tribal, and other governmental processes, related to environmental and climate justice.

    - How the application addresses the disadvantaged community's lack of access to, or weak relationships with, governmental entities, including how the application improves those relationships, increases points of access for disadvantaged communities with government entities, and creates channels to work cooperatively to promote environmental and climate justice

    - How the application will result in governmental entities better understanding the root causes of environmental and climate justice issues that impact disadvantaged communities, so government leaders and decision-makers are better prepared to proactively address concerns before issues materialize.

2. **Project Collaboration and Participation:** Applications should describe the following:

    - How meaningful input and feedback was considered from the disadvantaged community and other stakeholders in designing and developing the project and how input will continue

to be obtained and considered during grant performance.

- The facilitation and accountability measures to establish and maintain trust between the disadvantaged community and government officials to ensure the community can collaborate in an authentic and meaningful way, rather than an insincere manner, on environmental and climate justice issues with governmental bodies.

- The applicant's and any Collaborating Entities' history of relationships and collaborations with disadvantaged communities, governmental bodies, and other stakeholders to address environmental and environmental / climate justice issues.

3. **Project linkages:** Applicants should describe how their application supports and advances EPA Strategic Plan Goal 2 (Take Decisive Action to Advance Environmental Justice and Civil Rights), Objective 2.1, (Promote Environmental Justice and Civil Rights at the Federal, Tribal, State, and Local Levels).

4. **Program Budget Description:** Applicants should describe:

   - The reasonableness of the budget and allowability of the costs for each component / activity of the project and their approach, procedures, and controls for ensuring that awarded grant funds will be expended in a timely and efficient manner to comply with the statutory 3- year project period limitation.

   - The cost effectiveness of the budget / project in terms of maximizing the share of funds used for the delivery of benefits to disadvantaged communities (both the direct costs of funds passed through for financial assistance as well as associated indirect costs to the greatest extent practicable).

5. **Environmental Results:** Applicants should describe the following:

   - Their plan, with associated timeframes, for tracking and measuring their progress in achieving the expected project outcomes and outputs for Track II applications. See Section I.I and Appendix F for more detail on expected outputs and outcomes.

   - Whether and how the projects and their outcomes are sustainable beyond the three-year grant period, and how they will leverage resources, community support, etc. to facilitate this. The quality and specificity of the proposed outputs and outcomes, and how they will lead to the success of the grants, should also be addressed.

6. **CBO Experience and Commitment:** Applicants should describe the following for the Lead Applicant and / or Statutory Partner for the proposed grant:

   - Their history and experience as a CBO.
   - The depth of their commitment, historical connections, and relationships with the disadvantaged community the application is intended to benefit.

7. Programmatic and Managerial Capability and Resources: Provide information demonstrating the Lead Applicant's and Statutory Partner's ability to successfully complete, oversee, and manage the award including:

- Their organizational experience and capacity related to performing the proposed projects or similar activities (e.g., experience in managing projects and activities like those in the application).

- Their resources, capacity, capabilities, staff (e.g., project manager and other key personnel), expertise, and skills to perform and manage the award activities effectively during the three-year award period. For Lead Applicants submitting two applications under this NOFO, this includes how they demonstrate they have the above attributes to perform, manage, and oversee two awards effectively within the three-year award period.

- Their milestone schedule for the proposed projects (up to three years) including the breakout of the project activities into phases and timeframes for completion of tasks, and the approach, procedures, and controls for ensuring that the award funds will be expended in a timely and efficient manner while ensuring that costs are eligible, reasonable, and allowable.

- Their legal and financial controls in place, and capacity to manage taxpayer dollars ethically and efficiently as well as the policies and controls for project oversight and program risk. This includes the extent and quality to which the application includes controls to identify waste, fraud, and abuse, and reduce the potential for waste, fraud, and abuse by including plans and policies for program oversight, including confidential reporting (e.g., whistleblower protections).

8. Past Performance: Describe federally funded and / or non-federally funded assistance agreements (assistance agreements include grants and cooperative agreements but not contracts) that the Lead Applicant performed within the last three years (no more than three agreements in total) and provide the information below for them. EPA agreements are preferred to be included.

- Describe whether, and how, the Lead Applicant was able to successfully complete and manage the agreements.

- Describe the Lead Applicant's history of meeting the reporting requirements under the agreements including submitting acceptable final technical reports.

- Describe how the Lead Applicant documented and / or reported on whether progress towards achieving the expected results (i.e., outputs and outcomes) under those agreements was being made. If progress was not being made, please indicate whether, and how, this was documented.

  Note: In evaluating the Lead Applicant's past performance, the Agency will consider the information provided in the application and may also consider relevant information from other sources, including information from EPA files and / or from current and prior federal agency grantors (e.g., to verify and / or supplement the information provided by the applicant). **If there is no relevant or available past performance information, please indicate this in the application, and you will receive a neutral score for these factors under Section V. Failure to provide any past performance information, or to include a statement that you do not have any relevant or**

available past performance or reporting information, may result in a zero score for these factors (see also Section V).