

Funding

For FY 1996, the Office of Environmental Justice Small Grants Program will award grants subject to the amount of funds appropriated by Congress. Each of EPA's ten regions are expected to have at least \$100,000 to award grants under this program. A maximum of \$20,000 can be awarded for each grant.

Translations Available

A Spanish translation of this announcement may be obtained by calling the Office of Environmental Justice at 1-800-962-6215.

Hay traducciones disponibles en español. Si usted está interesado en obtener una traducción de este anuncio en español, por favor llame a La Oficina de Justicia Ambiental conocida como "Office of Environmental Justice," línea gratuita (1-800-962-6215).

Important Pre-Application Information

Pre-applications must be postmarked no later than Saturday, March 2, 1996. Pre-applications will serve as the sole basis for evaluation and recommendation for funding. This notice contains all information and forms necessary to submit a pre-application. EPA will award grants based on the merits of the pre-application.

Pre-applications must be mailed to your EPA regional office. A list of addresses and phone numbers for the regional contacts is included at the end of this notice.

Background

In its 1992 report, *Environmental Equity: Reducing Risk for All Communities*, EPA found that minority and low-income populations may experience higher than average exposure to toxic pollutants than the general population. The Office of Environmental Justice (OEJ) was established in 1992 to help these communities identify and assess pollution sources, to implement environmental awareness and training programs for affected residents, and to work with community stakeholders to devise strategies for environmental improvements.

In June of 1993, OEJ was delegated granting authority to solicit, select, supervise, and evaluate environmental justice-related projects, and to disseminate information on the projects' content and effectiveness. Fiscal year (FY) 1994 marked the first year of the OEJ Small Grants Program. Seventy-one (71) grants totaling \$507,000 were awarded in FY 1994 and in FY 1995,

over \$3,000,000 was awarded to 175 small grant recipients.

Eligible Activities

A. How Does EPA Define Environmental Justice Under the Environmental Justice Small Grants Program?

Environmental justice is the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, or income with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies. Fair treatment means that no groups of people, including racial, ethnic, or socioeconomic groups, should bear a disproportionate share of the negative environmental consequences resulting from industrial, municipal, and commercial operations or the execution of federal, state, local, and tribal programs and policies.

B. Who May Submit Pre-Applications and May an Applicant Submit More Than One?

Any affected, non-profit community organization or federally recognized tribal government may submit a pre-application upon publication of this solicitation. Applicants must be incorporated and non-profit to receive these federal funds. State recognized tribes or indigenous peoples organizations are able to apply for grant assistance as long as they meet the definition of a non-profit, incorporated organization. "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. Individuals are not eligible to receive grants.

EPA will consider only one pre-application per applicant for a given project. Applicants may submit more than one pre-application as long as the pre-applications are for separate and distinct projects or activities.

Applicants who were previously awarded small grant funds may submit an application for FY 1996. The FY 1996 pre-application may or may not have any relationship to the project funded in previous years. Every pre-application for FY 1996 will be evaluated based upon the merit of the proposed project in relation to the other FY 1996 pre-applications, regardless of whether or not the proposal expands a project funded in a previous year.

C. What Types of Projects Are Eligible for Funding?

To be selected for an award, the project must develop and implement surveys, demonstrations, training, or research in areas related to environmental justice programs and activities under at least two of the following statutes:

- a. *Clean Water Act*, Section 104(b) (3);
- b. *Safe Drinking Water Act*, Section 1442(b) (3);
- c. *Solid Waste Disposal Act*, Section 8001(a);
- d. *Clean Air Act*, Section 103(b) (3);
- e. *Toxic Substances Control Act*, Section 10(a);*
- f. *Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act*, Section 20(a);**
- g. *Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act*, Section 311(c);*** and
- h. *Marine Protection, Research, and Sanctuaries Act*, Section 203.

* Projects under this statute are limited to research or development activities.

** Projects under this statute are limited to research activities (e.g., surveys).

*** Projects under this statute are limited to activities related to hazardous substance detection, assessment, and evaluation, and associated human health effects and risks.

D. What Are the Evaluation Criteria for the Program?

EPA will award an Environmental Justice Small Grant after it has determined that the applicant has met at least two of the following three evaluation criteria, and after review of the applicant's qualifications in the narrative section of the grant application. Each applicant is required to provide information on how it meets the evaluation criteria in the grant application.

1. Identify necessary improvements in communication and coordination among all stakeholders, including existing community-based/grassroots organizations and local, state, tribal, and federal environmental programs. Facilitate communication, information exchange, and partnerships among stakeholders to address disproportionate, high and adverse environmental exposure (e.g., workshops, awareness conferences, establishment of community stakeholder committees);

2. Motivate the general public to be more conscious of their local environmental justice issues and involve the community in efforts to address these concerns (e.g., community clean-up projects, monitoring of socioeconomic changes due to disproportionate, high and adverse environmental exposure);