

Federal Funding Webinar

EPA Community Change Grants

February 1, 2024



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Please Introduce yourself in the chat

- Organization/Town you represent
- Interested in Track 1 or Track 2 (if you already know)
- Do you have an idea for a proposal? Share a sentence!
- What geography will your proposal serve?
- Your email (optional)

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EPA Community Change Grant Agenda

1. Community Change Grants Overview
2. Eligibility
3. Technical Assistance
4. Track I Overview
5. Track II Overview
6. Readiness and Compliance
7. How to apply (and win)
8. Q&A
9. Forming Partnerships

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Overview of Community Change Grants Program

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Introduction

EPA received \$3 billion through the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) to fund environmental and climate justice activities to benefit disadvantaged communities.

- \$2 billion for the Community Change Grants (CCG) Program
- \$200 million for technical assistance related to the grants
- Grants **cannot exceed three years** (no extensions)

Applications are being accepted until November 21, 2024.

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Goals

Community Change Grants are intended to achieve the following goals:

- Fund community-driven pollution and climate resiliency solutions
- Invest in strong cross-sectoral collaborations with partners working with and for communities
- Unlock access to more significant resources
- Deliver technical assistance and capacity-building support
- Strengthen communities' decision-making power

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Program Innovations

4 characteristics uniquely
designed for communities:

- Rolling Applications
- Oral Presentations (Track I)
- Rolling awards
- Indirect Cost Limitations

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Track I: Community Driven Investments for Change

- Funding Available: approx. \$1.96 billion
- Number of Awards: approx. 150
- Per Award Amount: \$10M - \$20M each

Track II: Meaningful Engagement for Equitable Governance

- Funding Available: approx. \$40 million
- Number of Awards: approx. 20
- Per Award Amount: \$1M - \$3M each

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Overview of Eligibility Criteria

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Eligibility

Applications must meet **all** eligibility criteria ([Section III](#) of the NOFO) to be considered for funding.

- Comply with the content and submission requirements
- Meet the eligibility and partnership requirements in [Section III.A](#)
- Meet threshold criteria in [Section III.D](#), including that the projects will benefit **disadvantaged communities**
- Projects must be completed within three years
- Applications to conduct scientific research; assessment, removal, or remediation of Superfund sites; or community relocation are **ineligible**

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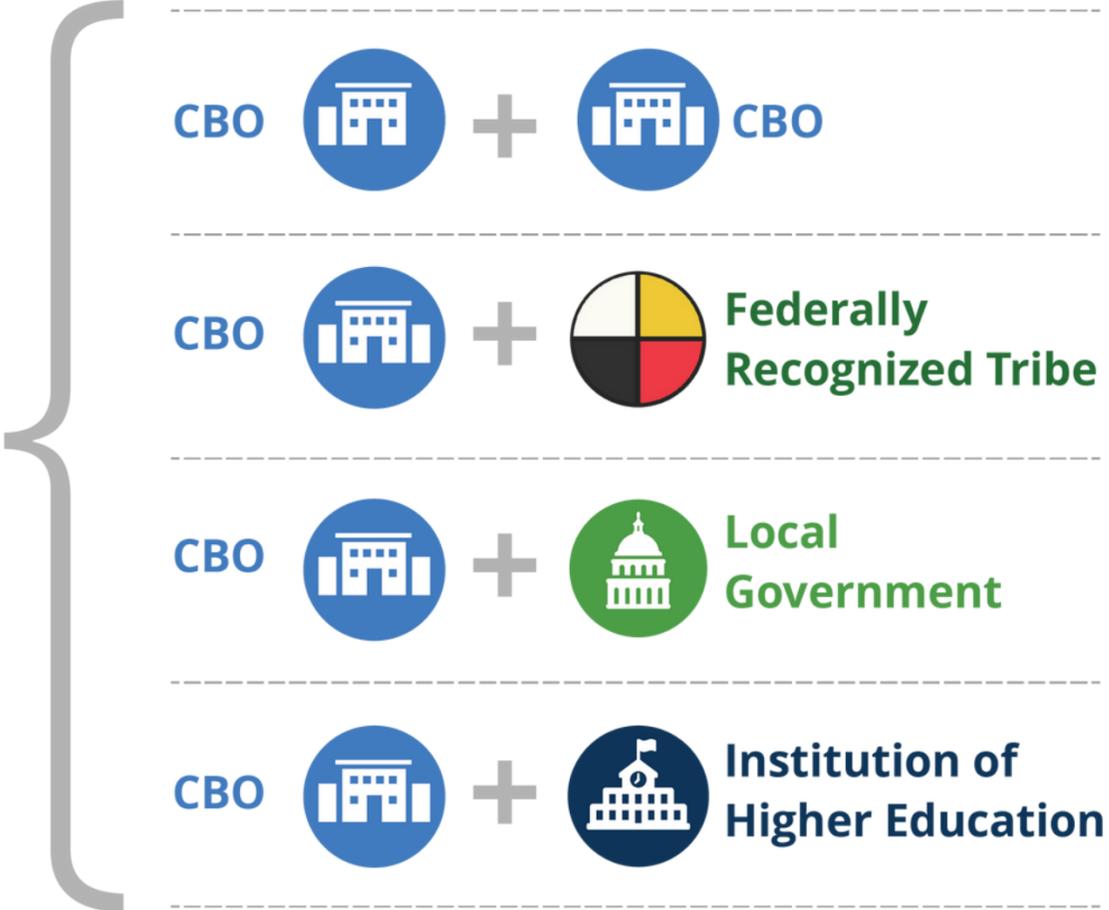
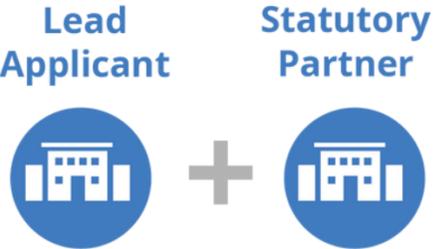


Partnership

Applicants must either be a partnership of two community-based nonprofit organizations (CBOs) or a partnership between a CBO and a federally recognized Tribe, local government or institution of higher education.

Other entities can be involved in projects as **collaborating entities**.

Collaborating Entities may include entities that *could* be application Partners (CBOs, Federally-recognized Tribes, local governments, and institutions of higher education) and entities that *cannot* be application Partners (e.g., states and territorial governments).

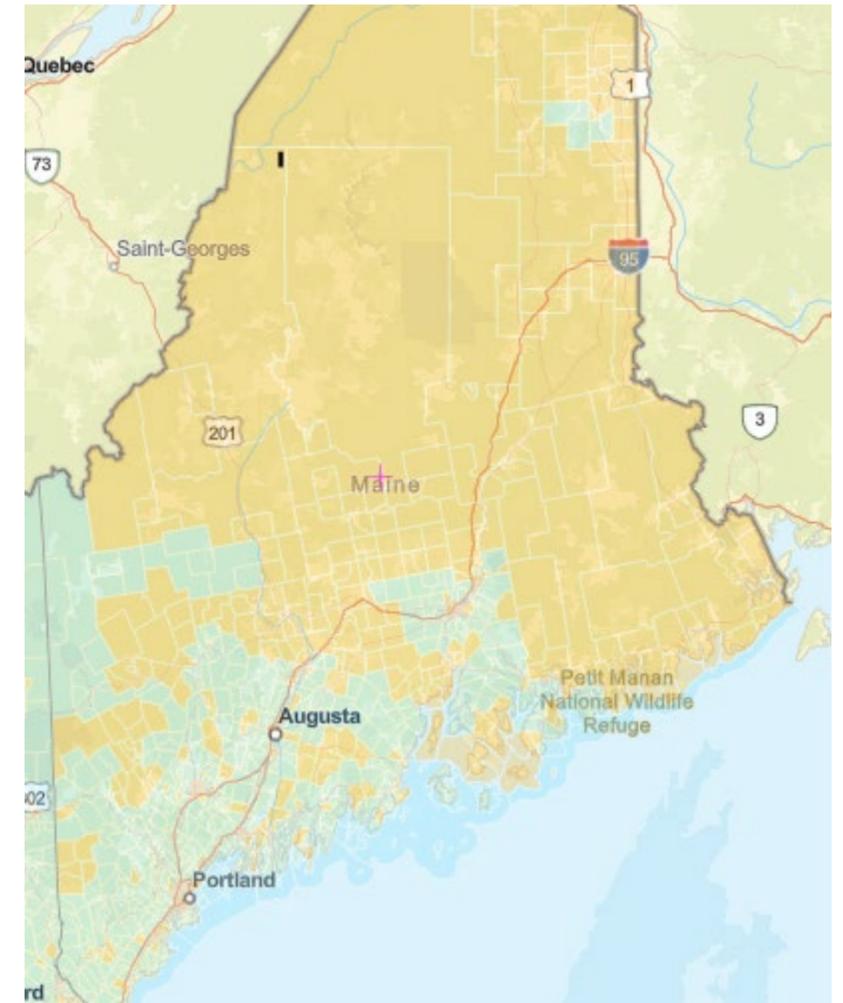


Disadvantaged Communities

Projects must benefit a disadvantaged community.

EPA is defining disadvantaged community as one that meets at least one of the following criteria:

- A geographically-defined community identified as disadvantaged on the EPA IRA [Disadvantaged Communities Map](#)
- A farmworker community
- A disadvantaged unincorporated community (N/A in Maine)
- **Note: \$300mil carveout for tribal communities (Track 1)**



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Overview of Technical Assistance

IRA provided EPA with \$200M for technical assistance (TA) for eligible entities related to the Environmental and Climate Justice Program, including the **Community Change Grants**. This TA is available to any entity eligible for this grant.

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Purpose

Technical assistance is available
for:

- **Pre-award** support including but not limited to designing a project, preparing an application, [grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) support, or facilitating partnerships, and
- **Post-award** support to help grant recipients manage, oversee, perform, and report on the grants.
- TA **does not include** writing an application *for* an applicant.
- Receiving technical assistance **does not** guarantee that applicants will be selected for funding.

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Types of TA

Community Change Technical Assistance (CCTA)

- Broad-based pre-award and post-award TA
- Submit an on-line [TA Request Form](#)
- Call to make a TA Request or ask questions: 1(800) 540 8123
- Email: EJ_TechAssist@epa.gov

Community Change Equitable Resilience Technical Assistance (CCER TA)

- Submit an on-line [TA Request Form](#)
- More limited and tailored TA focusing on disaster-prone areas

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Track I Overview

**Community-Driven
Investments for
Change**

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Community-Driven Investments for Change

Projects under this track should ensure generations of future enjoyment and growth by meeting these objectives:



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Climate Action

Applications must address at least one climate action strategy that serves to increase a community's resilience or adaptive capacity:



Green Infrastructure & Nature-Based Solutions



Mobility & Transportation Options



Energy-Efficient, Healthy and Resilient Housing & Buildings



Microgrid Installation



Community Resilience Hubs



Brownfield Redevelopment



Waste Reduction & Management



Workforce Development

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Pollution Reduction

Applications must include at least one pollution reduction strategy that focuses on pollution monitoring, prevention, and remediation of quantifiable and health harming pollutants:



Indoor Air Quality & Community Health



Outdoor Air Quality & Community Health



Clean Water Infrastructure



Hazardous Waste Management

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Track 1 Requirements

1. Climate Action Strategy
2. Pollution Reduction Strategy
3. Community Engagement and Collaborative Governance Plan
4. Community Strength Plan
5. Readiness Approach (Track I only)
6. Compliance Plan (Track I only)

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Engagement + Governance Plan

Community Engagement: Applicants should address the following elements:

- Past community outreach and engagement conducted
- Methods for implementation
- Measures to minimize and mitigate barriers
- Government involvement

Collaborative Governance Structure

Community Strength Plan

This plan should describe how projects will:

- Maximize the economic benefits of the projects for residents in the project area; and
- Avoid unintended consequences for existing residents, including displacement/gentrification

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Readiness

Applicants must demonstrate a plan for:

- Government Approvals
- Federal Requirements for Construction
- Alignment with Existing Plans
- Site Control
- Operations and Maintenance

Compliance

Applicants must submit a Compliance Plan that describes how they will:

- Ensure compliance with the federal terms and conditions
- Manage broader legal and compliance risks

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Track II Overview

Meaningful Engagement for Equitable Governance

To build the capacity of communities to evaluate
and redress environmental and climate injustices
To give disadvantaged communities a meaningful
voice in government decision-making processes

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Project Examples

- **Educational and Training Programs**, such as leadership development programs for community members to learn to participate in public process, budgeting; or to develop equitable action plans
- **Establishing Advisory Boards**, comprised of community members to engage with government around permitting, community infrastructure development, zoning/siting, etc
- **Collaborative Governance Activities**, which facilitate the process of providing recommendations and implementing decisions that will benefit disadvantaged communities
- **Participation in Governmental Funding Processes**

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Track II Outcomes

- How the project meets the stated outcomes, especially **facilitating engagement of disadvantaged communities in State and Federal advisory groups, workshops, rulemakings, and other public processes**
- **The methods, tools, and trainings** the applicant will use to facilitate the engagement of disadvantaged communities
- How the proposal **improves the community's lack of access to, or weak relationships with, governmental entities** and changes those relationships to increase access
- **Bidirectional:** the project results in governmental entities better understanding the root causes of environmental and climate justice issues that impact disadvantaged communities
- Meaningful ongoing input in both application design and implementation
- Measures to create and maintain trust between communities and government bodies
- Existing relationship with both communities and decisionmakers

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Participant Support Costs

Common examples include travel assistance and stipends for trainees and incentives to participate in community meetings (including childcare).

EPA expanded the definition of participant support costs in to include rebates and subsidies for the purchase of pollution control equipment (e.g. low-emission wood stoves, indoor air filters) as well as subsidies to promote participation in environmental stewardship programs.

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**Overview of
Application
Submission, Evaluation
and Selection Process**

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Evaluation Criteria: Track I

(200 pts)

- Community Driven Investments for Change (80 pts)
- Program Management, Capability, and Capacity (35 pts)
- Readiness to Proceed, Feasibility, and Sustainability (40 pts)
- Oral Presentations (45 pts)

Evaluation Criteria: Track II

(100 pts)

- Program Objectives (35 pts)
- Project Collaboration and Participation (20 pts)
- Project Linkages (4 pts)
- Budget (8 pts)
- Environmental Results (6 pts)
- CBO Experience and Commitment (5 pts)
- Programmatic and Managerial Capability and Resources (16 pts)
- Past Performance (6 pts)

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SELECTION PROCESS



Eligibility

Applications reviewed for threshold eligibility



Written Evaluation

Track I: Written applications that score of 110 or higher (out of 155) will be invited to give an oral presentation

Track II: Applications that score of 85 or higher (out of 100) will move to final consideration

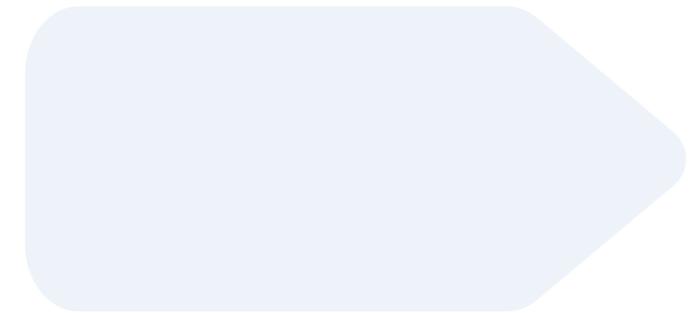


Oral Presentations

Track I: Worth a maximum of 45 points

Applications with a combined score of 170 or more, based on written and oral, move to final selection consideration

Not for Track II



Final Consideration

Applicants receiving high scores will move to final consideration, ranking, and awards

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Nuts and Bolts

- Rolling Application until Nov 21, 2024
- Eligible entities may be lead applicants on up to two proposals; resubmission encouraged
- **Register with SAM.gov and grants.gov ASAP**
- Pay attention to page limits
- There are optional budget templates in the NOFO
- Track 1 projects require a map and the plans we talked about
- Limitation of indirect cost to 20% (waived for tribal entities)
- **Davis Bacon** applies to construction
- **Build America/Buy America**
- Subawards + Consultants
- Use the technical assistance!

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Davis Bacon Act

- Applies to contractors and subcontractors performing work on construction contracts in excess of \$2,000
- Applicants must demonstrate that they have systems in place, or a plan to have such systems in place immediately after the grant award, to comply with Davis-Bacon and Related Acts prevailing wage requirements.

“**Construction**” is defined as “... erection, alteration, or repair (including dredging, excavating, and painting) of buildings, structures, or other improvements to real property, and activities in response to a release or a threat of a release of a hazardous substance into the environment, or activities to prevent the introduction of a hazardous substance into a water supply.”

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Build America, Buy America Act

- Requires all iron, steel, manufactured products, and construction materials used in federally funded infrastructure projects to be produced **in the United States**
- “**Infrastructure**” is defined broadly to include structures, facilities, and equipment that are **permanently affixed** and **serve a public function**, including:
 - buildings and real property water systems; energy generation, transport, and distribution; roads, highways, and bridges; public transportation; dams, ports, harbors, and other maritime facilities; intercity passenger and freight railroads; broadband infrastructure

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Build America, Buy America Act

Applying. Applications should reflect items that are made in the U.S. in the budget and project timelines for any infrastructure projects.

Complying. Recipients will be responsible for ensuring that products used in their projects follow BABA requirements.

Waivers. Recipients may request waivers for items not made in the U.S.

Questions. For help finding products made in the U.S. or other questions about BABA waivers, please contact

EPA_BABA_Waiver@epa.gov

More information.

<https://www.epa.gov/cwsrf/build-america-buy-america-baba>

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Questions?

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Forming Partnerships

Please use the chat to tell each other:

- Organization/Town you represent
- Interested in Track 1 or Track 2 (or both)
- Do you have an idea for a proposal?
Share a sentence!
- Where/who will your proposal serve?
- Your email (optional)

Raise your hand if:

- You have an idea for a proposal **and** are seeking partners
- You have an idea for a proposal **and** you've seen something similar in the chat
- You have an idea for a proposal **and** you serve the same geographic area as another participant on the call
- You have additional questions

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Next Steps

Reach out if:

- You are going to apply
- You need any support with your application
- You are looking for an application partner
- You have any other questions

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