



Environmental Justice for New England Thriving Communities Grantmaking Program EPA Region 1

Seed Fund Fixed Amount Subawards Request for Proposals (RFP)

Background & Context

The mission of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is to protect human health and the environment for all people with an emphasis on assisting those communities adversely and disproportionately affected by environmental, climate, and human health harms and risks. Under the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2022, and the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2023, EPA received significant investments for environmental justice (EJ) and in the health, equity, and resilience of these and all communities to address past, current, and future environmental health and justice challenges. Additionally, the 2022 Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) created the Environmental and Climate Justice block grant program in section 138 of the Clean Air Act (CAA) and provided EPA with \$ 2.8 billion in grant funding for the program for projects to benefit disadvantaged communities. With these funds, EPA has created the Environmental Justice Thriving Communities Grantmaking program (TCGM).

In a cooperative agreement with the Environmental Protection Agency, Environmental Justice for New England will implement the EJ Thriving Communities Subgrants in New England. This grant program seeks to counter historical disinvestment in communities on the frontlines of the climate crisis including communities of color, immigrant communities, indigenous communities, urban, rural, and low-income communities. **It seeks to seed and build deeper capacity for a sustainable environmental justice movement to address environmental hazards, climate resiliency, and energy justice, and build livable and healthy communities.** A total of \$48 million in grants will be made in New England States in the coming three years to community-based organizations, environmental justice organizations, nonprofits, and other entities representing underserved, urban, rural, indigenous, remote, and capacity-constrained communities in implementing projects to address local environmental and/or public health challenges across Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island and Vermont.

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Eligibility

This funding opportunity is available for community work by severely capacity-constrained community-based organizations, which are defined as comprised of four (4) or less full-time equivalent (FTE) paid staff members at the time of application (for example, if there are 8 staff that are all ½ time – that is 4 FTE).

Funded projects must focus on at least one disadvantaged community in the New England States (Region 1) as indicated on [this map](#) or make a case for why they propose a project outside this area. (Explore the [EPA IRA Disadvantage Communities Tool](#)). For details on this tool, please see the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)).

Eligible applicants include:

- Nonprofit and community-based organizations
- Tribal governments (both federally recognized and state-recognized) and intertribal consortia
- Native American Organizations

All applicant entities, including fiscally sponsored organizations/groups, must have a UEI (Unique Entity Identifier). This process checks to see if you are a licensed entity in your state (does not require you to be a 501(c)3). Note, if an organization applies using a fiscal sponsor, the fiscal sponsor is the official sub awardee and is responsible for reporting activities.

Ineligible applicants include:

- Individuals
- For profit businesses
- Local governments
- State governments



Tier & Funding Levels

This Request for Proposals is specific to the category of fixed amount sub-awards for severely capacity constrained organizations. To view details on Tiers 1 through 3, refer to the separate Request for Proposals document dedicated to those funding streams.

These fixed amount sub-awards are available for up to \$75,000 for activities needed by community-based organizations with limited capacities, which are defined as comprised of four (4) or less paid staff members at the time of application.

The project must also serve a community identified by the Climate Justice and Economic Screening Tool (CJEST) as disadvantaged. More details can be found [here](#). Examples of activities supported by these sub-awards include trainings, community meetings, development of a report, etc.

Environmental & Climate Issues

Applications may address a wide range of environmental issues and consist of a variety of project types including (but not limited to) the following:

- Air quality & asthma
- Fence line air quality monitoring
- Monitoring of effluent discharges from industrial facilities
- Water quality & sampling
- Small cleanup projects
- Improving food access to reduce vehicle miles traveled
- Stormwater issues and green infrastructure
- Lead and asbestos contamination
- Pesticides and other toxic substances
- Healthy homes that are energy/water use efficient and not subject to indoor air pollution
- Illegal dumping activities, such as education, outreach, and small-scale clean-ups
- Emergency preparedness and disaster resiliency
- Environmental job training for occupations that reduce greenhouse gases and other air pollutants
- Environmental justice training for youth and/or underserved communities



Instructions for Completing the Application

You need not complete your application in one sitting on the grant application portal. HOWEVER, you must hit the green **“Save Draft”** button in the lower left-hand corner before exiting. You can return to this application at any time via the link sent to you in your email.

Before starting the application, we suggest that you review the entire form in this **preview document**. We highly recommend that you first draft responses in this document, then copy and paste your answers into the online form.

Application Requirements

Applicant Overview

1. Lead Applicant Organization Name
If you are applying on behalf of a partnership, collaboration, or coalition, please choose one organization to serve as the lead applicant and submit only their information in this section. If you are applying with a fiscal sponsor, they are the lead.
2. Lead Applicant Street Address
3. Lead Applicant City
4. Lead Applicant State
5. Lead Applicant Zip
6. Website Address
7. Primary Contact’s First Name
8. Primary Contact’s Last Name
9. Primary Contact’s Title



10. Primary Contact's Email Address
11. Primary Contact's Phone Number
12. Employer Identification Number (EIN) or Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) from the federal government
13. Lead applicant's total organizational expenses for the current fiscal year
14. Number of paid full-time equivalent (FTE) staff within the organization seeking funding (not the fiscal agent organization)
15. If you are applying on behalf of a community-led project that you host, what were their total expenses for this current fiscal year (note you will be the funded party)?
16. Which state(s) within New England. does your application intend to focus activities and resources in (select all that apply)?
 - Connecticut
 - Maine
 - Massachusetts
 - New Hampshire
 - Rhode Island
 - Vermont
 - Tribal Nation within EPA Region 1
17. Entity Type (select one)
 - Non-Profit: Community-based Organization, Faith-based Organization
 - Tribal government (both federally recognized and state-recognized) and/or Intertribal Consortia
18. Please select all that apply:
 - Organizational budget of the entity seeking funding (and not the fiscal agent) is under \$350,000"
 - Our tribal government or nonprofit is based in disadvantaged areas that have been under a state of emergency (either federally or state-designated) over the last 5 years.
 - Our organization was formed in the past 3 years.
 - 4 or less full-time equivalent staff members are employed by our organization.



- None of these reasons above apply, but I/we believe my organization is capacity-constrained for another reason.

Please describe:

19. Funded projects must focus on at least one (1) disadvantaged community in Region 1 of the EPA, or provide a rationale for why it is not. Will your project serve at least one of the disadvantaged communities identified on this [map](#) (Explore the map - Climate & Economic Justice Screening Tool)? Please plan to complete an application only if you answer yes. If you answer no, your organization or entity is ineligible to apply.

- Yes

- No (*Note that selecting "no" makes you ineligible for this grant*)

Application Questions

1. **Organization Overview:** Provide a brief description of the applicant organization, including its mission and key activities (1 page)
2. **Proposed Scope of Work:** Detail the environmental, climate or public health issue(s) you intend to address and your scope of work. (1 page)

Application Formats

Please adhere to the following parameters depending on the format you select. Note all applications must submit a budget and workplan (templates provided below).

A complete application must include the following:

1. Application (Select One): Written Narrative, Presentation Slides, Video
2. Budget
3. Workplan

Budget and Workplan templates are available for download at:

<https://environmentaljusticenewengland.org/>



Applications can be submitted as written narratives, presentation slides, or videos.

Option 1: Written Narrative

- 1-2 pages max
- 12-point, Times New Roman font, 1-inch margins
- Answer questions in order
- Consider word counts as a guide not a requirement
- You can include and weave in photos or graphics as you see fit

Option 2: Presentation Slides

- 5-6 slides max
- Answer each question in order
- Ensure the information you provide is clear with detailed information when you are addressing each question; remember you are not presenting live and won't be able to provide nuanced details
- Use a font that is easily readable
- Use art/photos to help convey your message
- Create clear labels for charts and graphs
- Make slide backgrounds subtle and consistent
- Use high contrast between background and text colors
- Save presentation as a PDF before submitting

Option 3: Video

- 5 minutes max
- Answer questions in order; state the question you are answering
- Use imagery and interviews to help convey your message
- If you include any graphics, ensure labels are clear and backgrounds are subtle and consistent
- Upload video to a video website such as YouTube, Vimeo, etc. and include the URL in your application.

For applicants choosing to submit videos:

- Applicants are not expected to develop highly produced videos. The intention of offering videos as a format for applications is to enable creative options for answering application questions beyond a written narrative. The choice of formats is up to applicants. Reviewers' assessments of videos will be based on content rather than production quality.
- If you plan to submit in video format, we highly encourage you to utilize the technology available to you and tap into your community's existing



resources (for example: local media, high school video clubs, local businesses, or youth organizations). We also encourage you to rely on economical, user-friendly means such as smartphones and/or online video-production platforms, such as [Animoto.com](https://animoto.com), [Windows Photos](https://windowsphotos.com), [iMovie](https://imovie.com). There are also other user-friendly platforms that offer video editing tools for free or at a nominal cost, such as [Canva](https://canva.com).

Budget (Required)

Submit a budget form to request one year of funding using the provided template available at <https://environmentaljusticenewengland.org/>. Grant dollars can be allocated for staff/personnel and fringe benefits, direct operational costs (e.g., communications, meeting expenses, supplies, equipment, etc.). Up to 15% of the direct project costs can be utilized for indirect or overhead expenses. You may also indicate the allotment of resources for partners or consultants. We recommend allocating at least 10% of your budget for evaluation-related activities such as staff time to participate in focus groups, taking surveys, and evaluation activities specific to your project.

Workplan (Required)

Below is a preview of the provided Workplan template. Please outline your activities, key milestones, and timeline in the Workplan. Budget and Workplan templates are available for download at: <https://environmentaljusticenewengland.org/>

| Activities | Milestones (Outputs, Metric, or Deliverables) | Duration of Activity |
|---|--|---|
| Example Activity 1: Hold a series of community meetings to gauge environmental job training needs for youth | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Example Milestone: Four community meetings held with at least 20 participants at each, with the outcome being a gauge of environmental job training needs for youth identified. • Example Outputs: Outreach plan (flyers, social media post, newsletter), partner meetings to co-develop community meeting schedule | May 2025 - October 2025 (Quarter 1–Quarter 2) |



| | | |
|--|---|--|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Example Metrics: Registration and attendance lists and/or number of partnerships/speakers (ongoing or new) to host/co-develop community meetings. • Example Deliverables: List of training needs/topics or number of partnerships/speakers (ongoing or new) for trainings for youth. | |
|--|---|--|

Review Criteria

Grant readers and a Grantmaking Committee will review applications and make recommendations for funding. The following criteria will be used to determine which applications are recommended for funding:

- Community need
- Impact of the proposed approach on communities inequitably affected by environmental and climate injustices
- Feasibility of approach as supported by organizational and other capacities
- Engagement of community directly affected by environmental, climate, and public health challenges
- Opportunity to build on this project – to address needs in your community related to environmental and climate justice and/or public health.

What to Expect if Funded

If you are selected for funding, project staff will work with you and your team to complete:

- **Reporting** – Grantee will remain in communication with project staff and partners throughout the grant period to provide feedback, success stories, lessons learned, and status updates. The grantee will be asked to share progress on expenditures and explanations for unanticipated variances. The grantor will establish formal deadlines. Note, if an organization applies using a fiscal sponsor, the fiscal sponsor is the official sub awardee and is responsible for reporting activities.



- **Convening and Capacity Building** - Throughout the grant period, project staff will provide learning and capacity building opportunities for grantees. We anticipate one regional convening/year in person (please budget for travel/hotel for one night for at least two staff). Other convenings will be via Zoom. Grantees are expected to attend and participate in as many events as possible.
- **Evaluation** - Grantee will collect and report process and outcome data as part of the collective overarching Environmental Justice Thriving Communities evaluation plan. This may include participating in focus groups, taking surveys, and evaluation activities specific to your project. We encourage grantees to allocate at least 10% of your total budget (staff time) for evaluation activities.

Key Dates

- Thurs. December 12, 2024 10:30 AM EST: Funding Announcement Webinar
 - *Note that this webinar will be recorded and posted on:*
<https://environmentaljusticenewengland.org/>
- Application Deadlines:
 - Round 1: Fri. February 14, 2025 5:00 PM EST
 - Round 2: Fri. May 16, 2025 5:00 PM EST
 - Future funding rounds anticipated in August 2025, November 2025, January 2026, and April 2026 and/or until all funding is allocated, whichever is earlier.

Please reach out to project staff if you have any questions or if you encounter technical difficulties: ejgrantsnewengland@hria.org