

**AGENCY:** ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY (EPA)

**TITLE:** “2016 Targeted Air Shed Grant Program”

**ACTION:** Request for Applications (RFA) Questions and Answers (Q/A)

**RFA #:** EPA-OAR-OAQPS-16-03

**SUMMARY:** Formal Agency responses to questions regarding the subject RFA:  
[new Q/A’s are listed below](#)

**DATE:** June 14, 2016

- Q1)** We (Applicant) have a couple of privately owned municipal waste and green waste facilities that currently burn their green yard waste. Two of them are within the nonattainment area. One of them has expressed a desire to purchase a "tub grinder" which would allow them to NOT burn green waste and expand their green waste collection. Do you know if the grant funding can be used to purchase a tub grinder for a private individual? The reason we would want to do that is they would be willing to maintain it, run it and collect green waste.
- A1)** Based on the requirements outlined in the RFA’s Scope of Work in Section I, Threshold Eligibility Criteria in Section III, and the Evaluation Criteria in Section V, the purchase of a ‘tub grinder’ would be allowable. However, as outlined in the RFA, applicants will need to ensure their overall proposed project will meet all of the requirements in the RFA. Specifically:
- Proposed activities must be for emission reduction activities that will assist in complying with the NAAQS for these pollutants, and that demonstrate the potential for inclusion in the affected jurisdiction’s SIP or TIP submission to EPA intended to meet those standards.
  - Proposed activities must take place in at least one of the nonattainment areas identified in Section I.A of this announcement.
  - Proposed activities must be designed to achieve reductions in direct PM<sub>2.5</sub>, ozone precursors and/or PM<sub>2.5</sub> precursor emissions (NO<sub>x</sub>, CO, VOC, direct PM<sub>2.5</sub>, SO<sub>2</sub> and ammonia) in one or more of the designated nonattainment areas identified in Section I.A by addressing one or more of the priority emissions-generating or emissions-reducing activities listed in Section I, Part B.
  - Proposed activities must not overlap with the applicant’s current CAA §103 or 105 grant activities.
  - Proposed activities must be to implement emission reductions; applications only including planning exercises will not be awarded.
  - The maximum amount of federal funding that may be requested by an applicant in an application is \$3,000,000 million. Applications requesting more than \$3,000,000 will be rejected.
  - Ineligible activities: If a proposal is submitted that includes any ineligible tasks or activities, that portion of the proposal will be ineligible for funding and may,

depending on the extent to which it affects the proposal, render the entire proposal ineligible for funding.

- Q2)** Air District received a grant last year for a five year woodstove changeout program. Is there a possibility that we could apply for a grant that would compensate the City for the increased permitting they are needing to do for the five year program?
- A2)** No, a reimbursement project would not be an eligible project under this RFA. Please refer to the RFA's Scope of Work in Section I, Threshold Eligibility Criteria in Section III, and the Evaluation Criteria in Section V to assist you with determining what would qualify as an eligible activity.
- Q3)** Can any funds received under the Targeted Air Shed RFP be used for technology development program?
- A3)** All proposed projects, including a technology development program, must meet the requirements outlined in the RFA's Scope of Work in Section I, Threshold Eligibility Criteria in Section III, and the Evaluation Criteria in Section V. Applicants should review these sections carefully in order to ensure their overall proposed project will meet all of the requirements in the RFA. Specifically:
- Proposed activities must be for emission reduction activities that will assist in complying with the NAAQS for these pollutants, and that demonstrate the potential for inclusion in the affected jurisdiction's SIP or TIP submission to EPA intended to meet those standards.
  - Proposed activities must take place in at least one of the nonattainment areas identified in Section I.A of this announcement.
  - Proposed activities must be designed to achieve reductions in direct PM<sub>2.5</sub>, ozone precursors and/or PM<sub>2.5</sub> precursor emissions (NO<sub>x</sub>, CO, VOC, direct PM<sub>2.5</sub>, SO<sub>2</sub> and ammonia) in one or more of the designated nonattainment areas identified in Section I.A by addressing one or more of the priority emissions-generating or emissions-reducing activities listed in Section I, Part B.
  - Proposed activities must not overlap with the applicant's current CAA §103 or 105 grant activities.
  - Proposed activities must be to implement emission reductions; applications only including planning exercises will not be awarded.
  - The maximum amount of federal funding that may be requested by an applicant in an application is \$3,000,000 million. Applications requesting more than \$3,000,000 will be rejected.
  - Ineligible activities: If a proposal is submitted that includes any ineligible tasks or activities, that portion of the proposal will be ineligible for funding and may, depending on the extent to which it affects the proposal, render the entire proposal ineligible for funding.
- Q4)** Can any of the grant money be used to fund the operation of the tub grinder? Can any of the grant money be used in the collection of the material that goes into the tub grinder? Specifically, can we use the money to fund a residential greenwaste pickup program

within the non-attainment area? That would include bins or bags for collecting the residential greenwaste and the actual cost of picking up the material and transporting it to the processing facility.

- A4)** As previously addressed in the answer to Q1 above, the purchase of a tub grinder is allowable. EPA will not comment on components of an applicant's proposed project (ie: greenwaste pickup program.) Applicants are responsible for ensuring their overall proposed project will meet all of the requirements in the RFA. As referenced above in Answer #1 (A1) and outlined in detail in the RFA, an applicant's project must demonstrate quantifiable reductions in ozone and/or direct PM2.5 air pollution in the designated non-attainment areas, and that the reductions be additive and not already accounted for in the affected jurisdiction's SIP or TIP submission to EPA intended to meet those standards.

EPA is limited in the level of pre-proposal/application assistance and communications with potential applicants. In accordance with EPA's Assistance Agreement Competition Policy (EPA Order 5700.5A1), EPA staff will not meet with individual applicants to discuss draft proposals, provide informal comments on draft proposals, or provide advice to applicants on how to respond to ranking criteria. Applicants are responsible for the contents of their applications/proposals. However, consistent with the provisions in the announcement, EPA will respond to questions from individual applicants regarding threshold eligibility criteria, administrative issues related to the submission of the proposal, and requests for clarification about any of the language or provisions in the announcement. Please note that applicants should raise any questions they may have about the solicitation language to the contact identified in Section VII as soon as possible so that any questions about the solicitation language may be resolved prior to submitting a proposal.

- Q5)** It appears that only recipients of 103 or 105 grants may apply – is this correct?
- A5)** Yes, that is one part of the eligible entities requirement in section III of the RFA. The other part is the applicant must also have responsibilities for development and/or implementation of a SIP or TIP to attain and maintain national ambient air quality standards for either ozone or PM2.5 within an area.
- Q6)** Can applicants submit more than one application?
- A6)** Yes, applicants may submit multiple applications.
- Q7)** If State Env agency is the only eligible entity that can apply for a Targeted Air Shed Grant, can they make a sub-award to a local air control agency or other organization to administer and implement the project?
- A7)** Yes, an applicant may sub-award the grant to another organization to perform the work in the grant's workplan. The applicant will ultimately be responsible for ensuring that all grant requirements (reporting, tracking, adherence with federal stipulations) are met. The

applicant should reserve some percentage of the funding to manage the grant. This is acceptable and does not lower their score in the evaluation process. (For the FY 15 TAS process, a state agency applied on behalf of a local air agency.)

- Q8)** Is there an overall cap for a state? Or is the 3 million cap for each application or applicant?
- A8)** No, there is not a cap for states. The \$3 million limit is total funding per application, not Applicant. So in theory, an applicant could submit multiple \$3 million applications. Each application would be evaluated separately.
- Q9)** Can an owner operator of a company that makes catalytic devices for wood heaters be eligible to apply for a grant?
- A9)** No, individuals are not eligible to apply. Please refer to section III part A Eligible Entities of the RFA for more details.

**6/14/16 (new questions/answers)**

- Q10)** I have a question about when grant funding would begin for the successful applicants. One of our work plan tasks would be scheduled to begin in mid-December, 2016 and I wonder if the intent is for the assistance agreements to begin at the beginning of the federal fiscal year, October, 2016.
- A10)** EPA estimates the start date for successful applications will be Fall 2016. We cannot give you a more precise date because it is dependent on the number and quality of applications received. Typically the application evaluation process takes between 6-8wks. After the application evaluation process is complete, EPA will follow the applicant notification process identified in the RFP Section VI. Part A. Applicant Notifications.
- Q11)** Can States collaborate on projects to reduce pollution in nonattainment areas that span both States?
- A11)** Yes, but we recommend that both parties sign a letter of agreement that defines roles, responsibilities and commitments of each party during the project period.