

October 2019

Grants 101

Finding Opportunities

- Grants.gov
 - Search by keywords, CFDA number, funding agency, and more
- Beta.SAM.gov
 - Learn more about the programs each Agency funds using the Assistance Listing

Take Your Time

- Learn about the funding agency
- Read the opportunity thoroughly
- Research and complete your application

Determine Viability of Applying

- Do you have enough time?
- Do you have the capability?
- Are the budget and resource requirements appropriate?
 - Consider match or cost share requirements
- Are your partners and stakeholders on board and available?

Developing Your Project

- Problem statement: What problem are you solving?
- Project Objectives: What are your goals?
- Project Activities: What will you do to achieve the goals?
- Project design and methodologies
 - Timeline, deliverables, outputs, outcomes
- Key Personnel and Staffing
- Budget
- Evaluation

Problem Statement

- Well-supported statement of the problem/project
- Clear, concise
- Specifies manner in which the problem will be solved through the requested funding
- Cite relevant and recent work completed and/or reference other successes

Outcomes

- Develop outcome measures
 - See funding opportunity announcement
 - Environmental Results ([EPA Order 5700.7A1](#))
- Establish procedures needed to measure outcomes
 - Project/product evaluation
 - Process evaluation

Budget

Your budget transforms your project plan into monetary needs.

- Requested costs – your estimate of funds needed to complete your plan/project
 - Must meet cost principles ([2 CFR 200 Subpart E](#))
 - Review budget guidance in [RAIN-2019-G02](#)
- Includes match or cost share
- Program Income: income earned as a direct result of grant supported activities; may be added to EPA funding for allowable costs or used as cost share depending on terms of agreement.
- Approach, procedures, and controls for ensuring that awarded grant funds will be expended in a timely and efficient manner

Direct Costs - Personnel

- Direct costs for salaries, wages, and allowable incentive compensation
- For recipient employees (receive W-2 forms)
- Does not include:
 - Consultant costs
 - Compensation for program participants, interns, or fellows who are not employees
- If no personnel costs are listed, EPA may ask for an explanation on how the award will be managed

Direct Costs – Fringe Benefits

- allowances and services provided by employers to their employees in addition to salaries/wages
- Includes:
 - leave
 - employee insurance
 - pensions & unemployment
 - cell phone allowances
 - holiday bonuses
- Usually based on a rate. If no rate exists, applicant must provide an estimate and explanation, including calculations

Direct Costs - Travel

- costs from trips that are necessary to perform the EPA agreement
- only for recipient employees
- *does not* include travel for non-employees:
 - Trainees
 - Interns
 - Fellows
 - Workgroup members
 - Transportation services (bus + driver) classified as contractual
 - Van rentals (with no driver) for local transportation
- *does* include costs for:
 - transportation fares
 - Lodging
 - Per diem
 - Rental vehicles
 - Taxes
 - Internet access charges
 - Phone calls

Direct Costs - Equipment

- tangible, non-expendable, personal property having a useful life of more than one year and an acquisition cost of \$5,000 or more per unit
- does not include equipment rentals
- includes accessories and services included with purchase
- does not include separate equipment service or maintenance contracts

Note: Include itemized list of equipment in budget for approval

Direct Costs - Supplies

- Tangible personal property other than equipment with a per item acquisition cost of less than \$5,000
 - Exception: if the recipient's written property management policies are based on a lower dollar threshold
- Includes laptops, personal computers, tablets, and cell phones

Direct Costs - Contracts

- Procurement contracts acquire property and services to carry out the EPA funded project
- Includes:
 - Consultant and contractual services (note: consultant fees are capped – 2 CFR 1500.9)
 - Speaker fees, honoraria, and travel for non-employees
 - Stand-alone contracts
- Does not include facility rentals
- Do not identify contractors in competitive proposals

Direct Costs - Construction

- Erection, alteration, or repair of buildings, structures, or other improvements to real property, and activities in response to a release or a threat of release of a hazardous substance into the environment, or activities to prevent the introduction of hazardous substance into a water supply
- Typically not found in competitive programs

Direct Costs - Other

- Direct costs that do not fit in a specific budget category
- Examples:
 - Insurance and indemnification
 - Telephone service and utilities
 - Occasional document reproduction at local copying centers
 - Third party in-kind contributions towards cost share
 - Tuition remission and scholarships
 - Rental/lease of equipment, office space, conference facilities
 - Participant support costs (stipends, travel costs, etc)
 - Subawards

Indirect Costs (IDCs)

- Costs incurred for a common or joint purpose that benefit more than one cost objective or project, and are not readily assignable to specific cost objectives or projects as a direct cost
- May budget for IDCs pending IDC rate approval or exception from EPA (cannot draw down until IDC rate is approved or exception granted)
- Review [EPA's Policy, Guidance, Q&As, and Training](#) on IDCs
- Also 2 CFR 200.414 for Indirect Cost information

Negotiating the Award

For competitive awards the negotiation process is minimal

- Negotiate deliverable dates, timelines, etc
- No substantive changes

For non-competitive awards the negotiation process may be extensive

- give-and-take negotiation of all aspects of the award, including the scope of work, funding levels, inclusion of milestones, the budget, and the terms and conditions

Pre-award Certification

- Non-profit Awardee Assessment
 - Funds deposited in separate account
 - Written accounting procedures
 - Accounting system to separately track all expenditures and drawdowns vs. budget
 - Inventory system in place
 - Procurement procedures
 - Codes of conduct
 - Record retention

Notice of Award

- Grants Management Office prepares and signs the grant award, certifying that the award complies with all legal, regulatory, and internal policy requirements and that it is a sound business agreement into which the EPA should enter
- Legally obligates federal funds

Notice of Award

Read your award agreement carefully!!

- Grant identification number (“grant number”)
- Name of recipient organization
- Name of the Principle Investigator
- Project period and budget period start and end dates
- Amount of Federal funds authorized for obligation by the recipient
- Amount of matching or cost sharing (if applicable)

Notice of Award

- Programmatic and financial reporting requirements
- Names of the cognizant awarding office: Project Officer, Grants Management Officer, and Grants Management Specialist
- Applicable terms and conditions of award, either by reference or inclusion
- Payment procedures

Affirmation of Award

- Recipient signature not requested or required
- Recipient accepts terms of award by:
 1. drawing down funds within 21 days after the EPA award or amendment; or
 2. not filing a notice of disagreement with the award terms and conditions within 21 days after the EPA award mailing date.

Managing Your Award

- Responsible for managing the day-to-day operations of grant-supported activities
- May use established controls and policies, as long as they are consistent with award requirements
- Completion of: Program Progress Reports, financial reports, audits/reports, and correspondence
- Identify potential problems and areas where technical assistance might be necessary
- Request changes requiring prior approval

OMB Uniform Grants Guidance (Omni-Circular)

- Guidance supersedes and streamlines requirements from 40 CFR 30 and 31; OMB Circulars A-21, A-87, A-110, and A-122 (which have been placed in OMB guidances); Circulars A-89, A-102, and A-133; and the guidance in Circular A-50 on Single Audit Act follow-up
 - Now located at 2 CFR 200, and available at: www.ecfr.gov
- EPA-specific regulations located at 2 CFR 1500

Cost Principles

- Cost Principles apply to funding awarded before 12/26/2014
 - A-21 (no longer at 2 CFR 220) for Educational Institutions
 - A-87 (no longer at 2 CFR 225) for State, Local & Tribal Recipients
 - A-122 (no longer at 2 CFR 230) for Non-Profits
- Current Cost Principles located at 2 CFR 200 Subpart E
 - Apply to funding awarded on or after 12/26/2014
 - Read the Terms & Conditions of any award and/or amendment for specifics

RAINs

Recipient/Applicant Information Notice

- New guidance
- New resources
- Important changes and other information
- Check out our [Policy Resource Page](#)!

[EPA Grants Home](#)[Open Opportunities – Grants.gov](#)[Grant Programs – beta.SAM.gov](#)[Overview for Applicants and Recipients](#)[How to Apply](#)[Grant Forms](#)[Competition](#)[Training](#)[Policy, Regulations and Guidance](#)[Introduction](#)[Uniform Grants Guidance \(UGG\)](#)[Public Policy Requirements](#)[EPA Policies and Guidance](#)[EPA Grants Policy Resources](#)[Terms & Conditions](#)[Grant Closeouts](#)[Suspension and Debarment](#)[Regional Grants Information](#)

EPA Grants Policy Resources

EPA grant policies may affect how recipients manage and administer EPA assistance agreements. Refer to the resources below for specific information that may be pertinent to your grants. Use the dropdown selections to filter the table or enter a keyword in the search box to find resources. Click on the column heading to sort the table. [Help: what is shown in the table \(column definitions\)?](#)

Show entries[Copy](#)[CSV](#)[PDF](#)Search:

New	Type	Number	Policy Resource	Applicability
NEWEST	RAIN	RAIN-2019-G10	Class Exception for Fair Share Objectives Pursuant to 40 CFR Part 33, Subpart D and EPA MBE/WBE Certification Pursuant to 40 CFR Part 33, Subpart B 10/1/2019 This Recipient/Applicant Information Notice (RAIN) informs recipients and applicants of the approved exception that temporarily waives the requirements in 40 CFR Part 33, Subpart D and permanently suspends the EPA certification process in 40 CFR Part 33, Subpart B. The certification requirements located in 40 CFR Part 33, Subpart B remain unchanged. This Policy is effective on October 1, 2019.	DBE
NEW	RAIN	RAIN-2018-G01-R	EPA Office of Grants and Debarment Guidance on Selected Items of Cost for Recipients 4/13/2018 This Recipient/Applicant Information Notice (RAIN) informs recipients and applicants of new guidance on selected items of cost.	General
NEW	RAIN	RAIN-2018-G02	Indirect Cost Guidance for EPA Assistance Agreements 10/1/2018	General

EPA Grants Update Listserv

Sign up today to receive timely notifications about:

- new guidance and information posted on this website
- new trainings and webinars available to potential applicants and recipients
- changes in grants management requirements
- other pertinent general grants information

Subscribe here:

<https://www.epa.gov/grants/forms/subscribe-epa-grants-update-listserv>

Resources

- [Electronic Code of Federal Regulations \(eCFR\)](#)
- [beta.SAM.gov](#)
- [Recipient Training Opportunities](#)
- [EPA Grants Main Website](#)
- [EPA Grants Policy Resources](#)
- [EPA Grants Policy and Guidance Overview](#)
- [Specific EPA Grants Programs](#) (not an exhaustive list)
- [EPA Grants Update Listserv](#)

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Questions?