

2019 Targeted Airshed Grant Program
EPA-OAR-OAQPS-20-01
Questions and Answers
As of January 31, 2020

Question 1 (12/6/19):

Can you provide any grant applications submitted in response to the 2018 targeted airsheds competition?

Answer 1: You would need to submit a Freedom of Information Act Request to request grant applications from prior grant competitions. See <https://www.epa.gov/foia> for information on EPA's FOIA process.

Question 2 (12/16/19):

If we have a diesel truck replacement project funded by DERA and working with one equipment manufacturer, is it possible to submit a targeted airshed application with a different company as a complementary project?

Answer 2:

Yes, that could be allowable, depending on the details of the two projects. Basically, if they are two distinct projects, then it could be allowable.

Question 3 (12/16/19):

Although a compressed natural gas station might not be an eligible cost for reimbursement either on its own or accompanied by trucks in a proposal, could it still be counted as cost-share or match?

Answer 3:

Under the targeted airshed grant competition, compressed natural gas stations can possibly be eligible expenses, as long as it meets the description from Section I.B. Scope of Work in the RFA. Specifically, from pages 4-5:

"The goal of the Targeted Airshed Grant Program is to implement programs, projects, and approaches that: demonstrate documentable reductions of ozone and/or PM_{2.5} concentrations in the designated areas; demonstrate documentable reductions in precursor emissions of ozone, which include nitrogen oxides (NO_x), carbon monoxide (CO) and volatile organic compounds (VOCs), and/or direct or precursor emissions of PM_{2.5}, which include sulfur dioxide (SO₂), NO_x, VOCs, and ammonia; and are replicable elsewhere. Proposed activities must be for emission reduction activities deemed necessary to assist with compliance 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."

Additionally, any proposed voluntary cost share expenses must be spent on activities that are eligible under the competition (see "Voluntary cost share" on page 12 of the RFA). Leveraged resources do not have to be for eligible expenses, but they should complement or support the proposed project(s).

Question 4 (12/17/19):

Will EPA be claiming emissions reductions with the Targeted Airsheds Program?

Answer 4:

The applicant needs to quantify the emission reductions of their proposal (see pages 5 under Scope of Work; page 7 under Outcomes; page 15 under Emission Inventories and Emission Reduction Calculations; page 26 under Emissions Inventory & Progress Towards Attainment; page 28 under Expected Project Outputs and Outcomes; and Attachments listed on page 36). Grantees will be expected to report on their emission reductions when they submit progress reports.

Question 5 (12/17/19):

Can the funds be co-mingled with other grant funds?

Answer 5:

Targeted airshed grants cannot be co-mingled with other grant funds; targeted airshed grants are stand-alone.

Question 6 (12/17/19):

Can targeted airshed funds be used for fleet expansion projects, or do fleet projects need to be replacement only?

Answer 6:

Fleet expansion projects are likely ineligible since as noted on page 13, "Primary activities that do not achieve emission reductions in the applicable nonattainment area or lead to no emission reductions in the applicable nonattainment area will not be funded." Additionally, from page 12, "Proposed activities must be designed to achieve quantifiable reductions in direct PM_{2.5}, ozone precursors, and/or PM_{2.5} precursor emissions (NO_x, CO, VOC, direct PM_{2.5}, SO₂, and ammonia) but may also include activities that reduce emissions through changing behavior (e.g., education/outreach to reduce residential wood burning)."

Question 7 (1/8/20):

Are infrastructure projects where the vehicles have been funded through federal and state sources eligible? Would the EPA Targeted Airshed Grant be funds that could support the infrastructure project and claim the PM_{2.5} reductions?

Answer 7:

Infrastructure projects where the vehicles have been funded through federal and state sources may be eligible for funding under the targeted airsheds grant program. For calculating the emissions reductions, you should follow the instructions on page 15 of the RFA:

- 4. Emissions Reduction Calculations** (Required, not part of the 15-page limit). Use the Optional Attachments form in Grants.gov. The applicant must thoroughly describe and document emissions reduction calculation methods in an attachment to the project narrative. The applicant should provide additional information on the quantification used to calculate the anticipated emission reductions from the proposed project, including the key assumptions that were used for any existing calculator tool or citations of any studies or reports. This information does not count towards the project narrative 15-page limit. See Appendix B.

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Depending on the details of the project(s), an applicant may be able to claim PM_{2.5} reductions. The applicant should but be sure to detail their methodology and any assumptions of their calculations.

Question 8 (1/8/20):

Please clarify the following paragraph from page 36 of the RFA:

“Partnership Letters: If applicable, letters of support that demonstrate strong, long-term involvement throughout the project from a variety of project partners are encouraged. Letters should specifically indicate how project partners and supporting organizations will participate in or directly assist in the design and performance of the project, or how obtaining support from project partners will allow the applicant to more effectively perform the project. Letters should be addressed to the applicant organization and included as attachments to the application. Please do not ask partners to submit letters directly to EPA.”

Does this mean that the letters of support should be addressed to my agency and not EPA? Is it OK if the letter is addressed to EPA, but sent to my agency and submitted by us as an attachment to the application?

Answer 8:

This is in the RFA primarily to make sure that applicants submit a full application package in Grants.gov and EPA is not receiving separate information from other sources that will inform our review of applications. If the partner letter has already been drafted, it is ok for the partner letter to be addressed to EPA and not the targeted airsheds applicant, as long as the applicant submits it to us as part of their application submission in Grants.gov.

Question 9 (1/23/20):

(Add-on to question #5). Can you please confirm that grant funding from non-federal sources (e.g. state) can be used as cost share? If so, are there restrictions on combining grant funds within single line-items in the budget?

Answer 9:

Yes, non-federal sources of funding can be considered Voluntary Cost Share or Matching Funds and these funds can be combined within a single line-item in the various budget documents. You can find more information about Voluntary Cost Share or Matching Funds in the RFA: Section III.B. starting on page 11; Section V.A. in the Evaluation Criteria both 6. and 7. on page 18; and Appendix B in the Example Budget Table on pages 34-35, including the footnotes.

Question 10 (1/24/20):

Are utility companies, such as an electric supply company, considered an “Eligible Entity” to apply for a targeted airshed grant?

Answer 10:

Utility companies are not eligible to apply for the targeted airshed grants. The language below from page 10 of the RFA is the description for eligible entities:

“Entities eligible to submit applications under this announcement are those air pollution control agencies, as defined by Section 302(b) of the Clean Air Act, that: (a) have responsibilities for the prevention and control of air pollution for one or more nonattainment areas identified in Section I.A. of

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this announcement, and (b) have an active air program grant under Sections 103 or 105 of the Clean Air Act to carry out those responsibilities.”