

EPA RFA (EPA-OAR-ORIA-20-09) Reducing Public Exposure to Indoor Pollutants

Questions and Answers

As of August 28, 2020

Q: Can you provide a list of potential policy or community-level partners we might team with on an application?

A: We are not able to provide a list of potential project partners. The “Network and Collaborate” section of our web site (<https://www.epa.gov/indoor-air-quality-iaq>) has general information about national and community-level partners, as well as information about previous grantees. *Posted August 28, 2020.*

Q: Can this grant be used for interior asbestos remediation in public housing ?

A: As described in Section I.B (Scope of Work), EPA will not consider applications under this RFA which specifically address indoor asbestos, lead, polychlorinated biphenyl (PCBs), or other chemical-specific pollutants. These contaminants are addressed by other EPA program offices.

You can learn about other EPA grant opportunities here: <https://www.epa.gov/grants>. *Posted August 28, 2020.*

Q: I cannot find any information in the RFA to indicate whether we are to submit proposed activities, outputs, outcomes and budget for one year, or for three years. Can you please clarify?

A: As described in Section II, awards may be for one and up to three years. If the applicant anticipates a three-year project, the activities, outputs, outcomes and budget for the entire project period should be reflected in the Contents of the Application Submission, as described in Section IV.C. and Appendix B. Please be sure to review [RAIN-2019-G02, “Interim General Budget Development Guidance for Applicants and Recipients of EPA Financial Assistance”](#) prior to preparing your budget. *Posted August 28, 2020.*

Q: May our subaward budget proposal include travel funding for subaward recipients to attend project specific meetings?

A: If you intend to name a subrecipient as a project partner or otherwise in your application, EPA recommends that you carefully review, and comply with, the directions contained in the “Contracts and Subawards” clause that can be accessed under the Section IV.E clause for “Additional Provisions for Applicants Incorporated Into the Solicitation.” This clause is available here: <https://www.epa.gov/grants/epa-solicitation-clauses#contractssubawards>. Subaward travel

for project specific purposes may be an allowable cost and should be documented in the “Other” category as described the Travel section of Appendix B. *Posted August 28, 2020.*

Q: How specific must the application be in terms of travel outside of the US? Some of the meetings/conferences will not be announced until the year it is offered.

A: Applicants proposing international travel costs must comply with the guidance in Appendix B, and proposals should be as specific as possible in describing this activity in the context of the project plan and budget narrative. After an application is selected for funding but prior to the grant being awarded, applicants will work with their EPA project officer to address the review and approval requirements by the EPA Office of International and Tribal Affairs for any international activities, including international travel. *Posted August 28, 2020.*

Q: I'm uncertain what the section "b. Project Summary/Approach " entails and whether this is indeed a summary (abstract) or the full narrative that includes specific aim and approaches.

A: The contents of the application submission are described in Section IV.C. Specific to the Project Narrative (Section IV.C.2), items a-f are included in the 10-page limit. And as described, Section IV.C.2.b.ii-iv, includes the full narrative, detailed approach proposed by the applicant. Inclusion of a project abstract is not required. *Posted August 21, 2020*

Q: Where should I address the topic of leveraged funds? I see it mentioned in Section IV.C.2.b.iv and Section IV.C.2.e.

A: Applications will be evaluated on Leveraging, as described in the evaluation criteria Section V.A.6. on page 20 of the RFA. This element should be addressed in the Project Narrative as described in Section IV.C.2. Applicants only need to address leveraging once, as described in Section IV.C.2.e. Leveraging was accidentally included twice in the Project Narrative description under Section IV.C.2. *Posted August 21, 2020*

Q: Can I use this funding to retrofit a school air handling system?

A: This RFA is not intended to fund small-scale local projects.

As described in Section I.B, EPA is soliciting applications from eligible entities (as described in Section III.A) to conduct demonstration, technical assistance, training, education, and/or outreach projects that seek to reduce exposure to indoor air contaminants by advancing national policy and systems-level initiatives. Applications should clearly articulate a plan to produce results that have implications and/or benefits on a national level.

Please refer to Section I.B to determine if your proposal aligns with the RFA. There is specific guidance in this section addressing research proposals. There is specific guidance concerning demonstration projects in Section I.D. *Posted August 21, 2020*

Q: Can I use this funding to provide portable air cleaners to people with asthma in my community?

A: This RFA is not intended to fund small-scale local projects.

As described in Section I.B, EPA is soliciting applications from eligible entities (as described in Section III.A) to conduct demonstration, technical assistance, training, education, and/or outreach projects that seek to reduce exposure to indoor air contaminants by advancing national policy and systems-level initiatives. Applications should clearly articulate a plan to produce results that have implications and/or benefits on a national level.

Please refer to Section I.B to determine if your proposal aligns with the RFA. There is specific guidance in this section addressing research proposals. There is specific guidance concerning demonstration projects in Section I.D. *Posted August 21, 2020*

Q: We are currently funded by EPA through May 2021. Since that overlaps with the new project period, does that pose a problem for our eligibility? Is there any flexibility in the start date of a new 12-month project period?

A: Current EPA grantees are eligible to apply for this opportunity, provided they meet the eligibility criteria described in Section III.A. Non-profit organizations, as defined by [2 CFR 200.70](#), are eligible to apply. Funding may not be used to duplicate efforts, however, applicants may, in consultation with their project officer, elect to close an existing agreement, may propose different work for the new award and/or propose a different start date. The proposed project period dates in Section II.D. are for planning purposes. The project end date can be up to three years from the actual award date. In accordance with EPA grants policy, after an award is made, grantees may request adjustments to the project period in consultation with the EPA project officer. Note, funding past the initial 1st year of an award is contingent upon grantee progress and availability of funds. *Posted August 21, 2020*

Q: The solicitation states that the estimated project period for awards resulting from this solicitation is expected to begin on January 8, 2021 and may continue for up to three years. Are different project dates allowed or does my application need to use the estimated dates that are stated?

A: Applicants may elect to submit proposals with an anticipated start date after January 8, 2021. Actual project start and end dates will be determined after a proposal is accepted for award; the estimated project period dates in Section II.D. are for planning purposes. The project

end date can be up to three years from the actual award date, e.g. January 7, 2024 for an award made on January 8, 2021. In accordance with EPA grants policy, after an award is made, grantees may request adjustments to the project period in consultation with the EPA project officer. Note, funding past the initial 1st year of an award is contingent upon grantee progress and availability of funds. *Posted August 21, 2020*

Q: The availability of funds indicates that 20% of the \$800k/year might be allocated to the “comprehensive indoor air risks”. Does that translate to a maximum award in any one year of \$160k/year ($\$800k \times 20\% = \$160k$) or does EPA anticipate some flexibility around the 20% based on proposed deliverables?

A: The maximum award for any project selected under this funding opportunity will not exceed \$200,000 per year. *Posted August 21, 2020*

Q: The letter of intent deadline has passed; is it too late to submit a letter of intent to EPA or would a letter still be helpful?

A: Submission of the intent to apply notice is optional. EPA does appreciate the notice at any time up to the closing date of September 15, 2020. *Posted August 21, 2020*

Q: In years past, EPA in its national cooperative agreements grants has sometimes advanced requested federal funds for the first quarter of year one work plan, then thereafter, reimbursed project expenses as submitted quarter by quarter. Will EPA offer an advance for the first quarter of year one in this RFA?

A: No funding will be provided in advance of the award start date. Successful applicants may request pre-award costs as part of their final budget submission. *Posted August 21, 2020*

Q: We are considering a workplan that would offer small stipends to project participants. Do the specific participants need to be identified upfront in the RFA and provide us with a letter of commitment? Or, may we propose the stipends and propose a process of how project participants will be selected and awarded small stipends?

A: If you intend to name a contractor (including an individual consultant) or a subrecipient as a project partner or otherwise in your application, EPA recommends that you carefully review, and comply with, the directions contained in the “Contracts and Subawards” clause that can be accessed under the Section IV.E clause for “Additional Provisions for Applicants Incorporated Into the Solicitation.” This clause is available here: <https://www.epa.gov/grants/epa-solicitation-clauses#contractssubawards>.

Briefly, funds may be used to provide subawards of financial assistance, which includes using subawards to fund partnerships, provided the recipient complies with applicable requirements for subawards including those contained in 2 CFR Part 200 and [EPA's Subaward Policy](#). EPA has also posted [Additional Resources](#) on Subawards for applicants to consult.

Applicants are not required to identify subrecipients and/or contractors (including consultants) in their application proposal but must comply with the policies cited. These, and the other provisions that can be found at the website link, are important, and applicants should review them when preparing applications for this solicitation. *Posted August 21, 2020*

Q: Can I include lowering COVID-19 risk as part of my project?

A: As described in Section I.B, EPA is soliciting applications from eligible entities (as described in Section III.A) to conduct demonstration, technical assistance, training, education, and/or outreach projects that seek to reduce exposure to indoor air contaminants by advancing national policy and systems-level initiatives. This RFA is not intended to fund small-scale local projects.

Applications should clearly address one or more of the following EPA Indoor Air Program priority areas: Radon, Indoor Asthma Triggers, Comprehensive IAQ Risk Reduction.

This RFA does not preclude the inclusion of biological contaminants, including viruses, in applications that are responsive to the Scope of Work described in Section I.B.

Funding opportunities intended to uniquely address corona virus/COVID-19 can be identified by searching grants.gov. *Posted August 21, 2020*

Q: Is an international project based outside the United States eligible for this funding?

A: This funding opportunity is intended to support U.S. based projects to reduce indoor air risks in the U.S. Please refer to Section I.B to determine if your proposal aligns with the RFA, and Section III.A. for information about eligible organizations. *Posted August 17, 2020*

Q: Would you be willing to meet with my research team to discuss more details about the grant?

A: We are not able to meet with applicants, or comment or review pre-application concepts or materials. Please refer to Section I.B to determine if your proposal aligns with the RFA. *Posted August 17, 2020*

Q: Can an organization that is leading an application in one of EPA's priority areas (radon, asthma triggers, comprehensive) also be a partner on an application led by another organization in another topic area?

A: As described in Section I.B Scope of Work: Applicants may submit applications that uniquely address one or more of the priority areas of this RFA. Applicants may not submit multiple applications addressing the same program priority area. Successful applicants may provide funds to a project partner through a contract, provided the applicant follows the procedures contained in the RFA. Please refer to Appendix B for information about contractual services. If you intend to name a contractor (including an individual consultant) or a subrecipient as a project partner or otherwise in your application, EPA recommends that you carefully review, and comply with, the directions contained in the "Contracts and Subawards" clause that can be accessed under the Section IV.E clause for "Additional Provisions for Applicants Incorporated Into the Solicitation." This clause is available here: <https://www.epa.gov/grants/epa-solicitation-clauses#contractssubawards>. *Posted August 17, 2020*

Q: Are Federal Agencies eligible to receive funding under RFA (EPA-OAR-ORIA-20-09)?

A: Federal agencies are not eligible to receive an award under this RFA. *Posted August 17, 2020*

Q: Can you tell me if my project is too research focused to be eligible for this funding?

A: We are not able to comment or review pre-application concepts or materials. Please refer to Section I.B to determine if your proposal aligns with the RFA. There is specific guidance in this section addressing research proposals. *Posted August 17, 2020*

Q: Can you provide some examples of projects/improvements that funding would be approved for?

A: We are not able to provide project examples. Please refer to Section I.B for a description of the priority areas that this RFA supports. In addition, Section I.C (2. Outputs; 3. Outcomes) is illustrative of the outputs and outcomes of projects to be funded under this announcement. *Posted August 17, 2020*

Q: Can you advise where I might find information about the awards for the 2017 RFA: National Indoor Environments Program: Reducing Public Exposure to Indoor Pollutants RFA# EPA-OAR-ORIA-17-02, Closing date: February 17, 2017 ?

A: Previous funding announcements grantees are available here: <https://www.epa.gov/indoor-air-quality-iaq/cooperative-agreement-funding-indoor-air-quality> *Posted August 17, 2020*

Q: I do not see information in the RFA regarding a references cited page. Is a reference cited page allowed? If so, do we upload it with the project narrative and is it excluded from the 10-page limit? Or do we upload it separately with the other supporting documents?

A: Please see Section IV.C for details regarding the required components of the application package. The Project Narrative parameters, including the 10-page limit, are described in Section IV.C.2.a through f. Use of references, either as footnotes or a separate list, is at the discretion of the applicant. If a reference page is included with the Project Narrative, it will count toward the 10-page limit. The only documents that may be included outside the 10-page limit are listed in Section IV.C.3.a through e. *Posted August 17, 2020*

Q: Can you tell me if my proposal aligns with the RFA?

A: We are not able to comment or review pre-application concepts or materials. Please refer to Section I.B to determine if your proposal aligns with the RFA. *Posted Aug 7, 2020.*

Q: I am interested in applying for a grant but missed the informal notice deadline. May I do that now?

A: Submission of the informal notice of Intent to Apply is optional and may be submitted to IndoorAirQualityRFA_2020@epa.gov any time prior to the September 15 closing date. The closing date and time for receipt of applications is **September 15, 2020, at 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time (ET)** in order to be considered for funding. Application packages must be submitted electronically to EPA through Grants.gov (www.grants.gov) no later than **September 15, 2020, at 11:59 p.m. (ET)** in order to be considered for funding. *Posted Aug 7, 2020.*

Q: Are for-profit entities allowed to be a subcontractor to the applicant? Secondly, are for-profit entities allowed to be a subcontractor if they charge non-profit rates - or rates where the for-profit business does not earn a profit?

A: Successful applicants may provide funds to a for-profit entity through a contract, provided the applicant follows the procedures contained in the RFA. Please refer to Appendix B for information about contractual services. If you intend to name a contractor (including an individual consultant) or a subrecipient as a project partner or otherwise in your application, EPA recommends that you carefully review, and comply with, the directions contained in the “Contracts and Subawards” clause that can be accessed under the Section IV.E clause for “Additional Provisions for Applicants Incorporated Into the Solicitation.” This clause is available here: <https://www.epa.gov/grants/epa-solicitation-clauses#contractssubawards>. *Posted Aug 7, 2020.*

Q: Are non-profit-operated national labs an eligible applicant?

A: Please refer to Section III.A. for information about eligibility. Non-profit organizations, as defined by 2 CFR 200.70, are eligible to apply. *Posted Aug 7, 2020.*