

US EPA ARCHIVE DOCUMENT

AGENCY: ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY (EPA)

TITLE: "COMMUNITY ACTION FOR A RENEWED ENVIRONMENT (CARE) PROGRAM"

ACTION: Request for Proposals (RFP)

RFP Number: EPA-OAR-IO-08-02

CFDA: 66.035

SUMMARY: Formal Agency responses to questions regarding the subject RFP

DATE: February 12, 2008

Eligible Applicants

Question 1: I am curious to know whether or not a community group that is not a non-profit is eligible for the CARE grant? Does community organization have to be a 501c3? Are 501(c)(3)s eligible? Are local hospital foundations eligible?

Answer: According to the RFP, a 501(c)(3) is eligible. A community group or hospital foundation or other organization must be a non-profit as defined by OMB Circular A-122. The Circular defines a non-profit as:

"any corporation, trust, association, cooperative, or other organization which:

- 1) is operated primarily for scientific, educational, service, charitable, or similar purposes in the public interest;
- (2) is not organized primarily for profit; and
- (3) uses its net proceeds to maintain, improve, and/or expand its operations. For this purpose, the term "non-profit organization" excludes (i) colleges and universities; (ii) hospitals; (iii) State, local, and federally-recognized Indian tribal governments; and (iv) those non-profit organizations which are excluded from coverage of this Circular in accordance with paragraph 5.

Question 2: I am not an agency, only an individual but looking over the grant requirements it is to prevent pollution; well that is what I am trying to do also. Is it possible for me to apply?

Answer: Individuals are not eligible to apply for CARE Cooperative Agreements.

Question 3: Are local county health departments eligible to apply for CARE program funding?

Answer: If the county health department is an agency of the county or other local or tribal government entity they could apply. However, in some states the county health department is part of the State government. In those States they can not apply since State agencies are ineligible. They could of course be a partner working on a CARE project that has an eligible grantee.

Question 4: Is a Council of Governments eligible to be an applicant for the CARE Program? We are a regional planning organization that serves city and county governments who are members of the Council.

Answer: An organization of local government or local officials would be eligible to be an applicant.

Question 5: Will CARE consider funding a Level I and a Level II grant for a community? We would like to submit a Level I grant but do not want to interfere with the community's larger collaboration that may be seeking Level II funding.

Answer: According to the RFP an applicant (organization) can submit only one proposal. An organization could partner in more than one CARE project or proposal. However, you should be aware that it is EPA's intent, to the extent it can, provide geographic diversity in the CARE projects. As a practical matter, it is highly unlikely that we would have two CARE Cooperative Agreements in the same community.

Question 6: In Puerto Rico, nonprofits apply for certification under Section 1101 under the PR Internal Revenue Code and are not directed to apply under any other code, are they eligible as non-profits?

Answer: If you are legally recognized as a non-profit in Puerto Rico you are eligible. Similarly, if an organization qualifies as a non-profit organization under state law, that organization also is eligible.

Question 7: Are 501 C (4) non profits eligible to apply -or only 501(c) 3?

Answer: No. Non profits that meet the definition of non profit under OMB Circular A-122, with the exception of Nonprofits that fall under Section 501(c)(4) of the Internal Revenue Act and lobby, are eligible. Nonprofits can demonstrate eligibility by providing documentation of nonprofit status under the state law in which the organization was incorporated or by providing evidence that the IRS considers the organization exempt from taxation under 501(c)(3), 501(c)(6) or another provision of the IRS.

Question 8: 1. Will the community spanning across the border be eligible providing that all other criteria are met?
2. Are non-US institutions eligible to provide services/be partners providing that this is the only option/the most efficient option available?

Answer: Border communities are eligible for funding provided the money goes to an American grantee. Once an American grantee gets the money they can use a non-American entity to provide services if all other criteria for efficiently spending money are met.

Documentation

Question 9: What kind of documents do you require from a subaward/subcontract?

Answer: What EPA requires is outlined in Section IV, "Application and Submission Information", of the RFP. Letters of commitment from a proposed subcontract is sufficient.

Eligible entities/applicants whose initial proposals are tentatively selected for award will be requested to submit final applications. EPA may request additional documentation regarding subawards/subcontracts when final applications are submitted.

Question 10: We hope to work with EPA around some of the project ideas we have, so we don't have specific

breakdown of costs in some cases (i.e. in terms of personnel, contract, supplies). How would you like us to proceed?

Answer: Your budget narrative is an estimate. Guidance on preparing a budget can be found at:

<http://www.epa.gov/ogd/recipient/tips.htm>

EPA may request additional, more specific budget information when final applications are requested from those entities/applicants whose proposals have been tentatively selected for award.

Question 11: In addressing the criteria "organizational capacity," it's not clear what information you want regarding prior EPA grants. Do you simply want to know that we are current with all required reports, or do you want to know what we have accomplished substantively?

Answer: Your response should describe other projects that you have successfully managed, or organizational features and controls that will help ensure the project can be effectively managed and successfully completed. You must describe and provide substantiation of your ability to manage a project such as the one proposed. Please also describe the system(s) that will be used to appropriately manage, expend, and account for Federal funds. If you are, or have been, a recipient of an EPA grant/cooperative agreement in the last 3 years the applicant must provide information regarding compliance reporting measures, and annual financial status reporting. If for some reason you have problems complying with some of the requirements of previous federal grants, you may also want to include how those problems were resolved and what measures have been put in place to avoid the same problems to happen in the future.

Question 12: Regarding the letters of commitment from collaborating organizations, agencies, or entities, what level of commitment is required? For example, do we need to obtain a memorandum of understanding or is it fine to have a letter of commitment signed by the representative that will be collaborating with us on the project?

Answer: A letter of commitment by a representative of the organization is sufficient. Please remember that EPA reserves the right to contact organizations to verify their commitment.

Questions 13: Are there any required supporting documents for ex. 990-forms, bi-laws, articles of incorporation, IRS 501(c)3 tax letters etc. that need to be included with the grant application. We will be applying for a level I grant.

Answer: No, you do not need to include these forms with your application, although you may be asked for some of them if you are selected.

Questions 14: I am interesting in applying for a CARE Cooperative Agreement unfortunately I am unable to fill out the application over my computer, I was hoping you could tell me where to obtain the application papers. I look forward to your response

Answer: To get information on the EPA grant process including any grant related forms please go to: <http://www.epa.gov/ogd/>

Alternatively, if you are willing to use a delivery service, instead of grants.gov to submit your application you can go to:

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants/sf424.pdf> and download the only "form" you need to fill out.

In addition, to your SF 424 you must submit your Project Narrative as required by the Request for Proposals (RFP). While you must follow the format described in the RFP there is no specific form to download. Remember to follow the instructions and address the evaluation criteria.

Questions 15: We are submitting our CARE application via gants.gov. Can letters of support be attached to the application as a PDF file? I read in the RFP that the narrative should be in Word but didn't see any mention of what format is necessary for supplemental attachments? Thank you.

Answer: PDF files are fine.

Speaking to Someone

Question 16: I understand that formal questions are requested in writing, but it would be quite helpful to learn more informally about the genesis of the program and the results EPA hopes for. Is there a contact officer I can speak with to ask further detailed questions about the program or the details of my proposal?

Answer: Because this is an open competitive opportunity, in the interest of fairness, we are unable to meet with individual potential applicants to discuss details of the program or proposal development. Specific questions regarding the solicitation to the must be submitted as stated in the RFP:

“All questions or comments must be communicated in writing via postal mail, facsimile, or by using our website listed above. Answers will be posted, bi-weekly, until the closing date of this announcement at the OAR Grants/Funding webpage (http://www.epa.gov/air/grants_funding.html).

Send mail to:
US EPA
Attn: CARE Program
Mail Code 8001A
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20460

Send fax to:
202-564-7739 (attention CARE program)

Go to our website, and click on the words contact us at the bottom of the screen:
www.epa.gov/care”

Of course additional information about the program can be accessed at www.epa.gov/care.

Question 17: We have a specific idea and want to submit a question to the website to see if it is something that is eligible for CARE technical assistance? Can you provide any information?

Answer: Because this is a competitive process, we can not answer specific questions about whether one idea or another is eligible for funding. In addition, it is hard to evaluate projects based on short descriptions. However, in order to give you some guidance we would remind everyone that, as stated in the RFP, CARE will “form collaborative partnerships, develop a comprehensive

understanding of all sources of risk from toxics and environmental pollutants, set priorities, and identify and carry out projects to reduce risks through collaborative action at the local level. CARE's long term goal is to help communities build self-sustaining, community-based partnerships that will continue to improve local environments into the future."

Costs and Funding

Question 18: Is the funding awarded per year or is the total amount to cover both years?

Answer: Funding for the project is awarded for a 2-year period, but the money is provided incrementally. Funding for the second year is contingent on the performance of the award recipient.

Question 19: Will indirect costs be allowed with the CARE grants? If so, is there a limit on the amount of indirect costs?

Answers: Yes, indirect costs are allowed. Any organization claiming indirect costs in its budget, must submit a copy of their approved indirect cost rate, if selected for award. The government would only reimburse indirect costs up to the approved rate

Question 20: What projects or project costs are considered ineligible for the CARE grant?

Answer: All costs associated with any project must be eligible, allowable, allocable and reasonable. Allowable costs must be consistent with the appropriate OMB cost principles. These are: OMB Cost Principles A_21 for Educational Institutions (<http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/circulars/a021/a021.html>); OMB Cost Principles A_87 for State, Local and Tribal Governments (http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/circulars/a087/a087_all.html); and OMB Cost Principles A_122 for Non-Profit Organizations (<http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/circulars/a122/a122.htm>).

Question 21: If a university and community are applying for this grant together, is there a specific percentage that has to be allocated to each of the partners?

Answer: No, the percentage is for the partners to decide.

Question 22: Can you explain a little more what you mean by "successful applicant cannot use subgrants or subawards to avoid requirements in EPA Grant regulations for competitive procurement by using these instruments to acquire commercial services...." (Section IID).

Answer: In the past, some organizations have tried to characterize contractual relationships as one of assistance (or subgrants), thereby getting around the competition requirements. This is only a reminder that it is the nature of the relationship that determines whether a contract or subgrant is the appropriate mechanism.

Question 23: A staffer at the federal agency is hoping to work with a local group on a Level I grant. Can a portion of the budget include salary and equipment for their contribution? This is not a pass through.

Answer: While Federal agencies are not eligible to get CARE agreements they can receive reimbursement from the recipient of a CARE agreement for providing services to CARE partnerships. EPA hopes to work with other Federal agencies to encourage them to support communities that receive CARE agreements at no charge.

Question 24: Our goal is to work with all sectors of the community to draft state legislation that will allow the creation of an Aquifer Protection Area for a sole-source aquifer. Is this even eligible for CARE?

Answer: EPA grant funds can not be used for lobbying as the drafting of state legislation would entail.

Questions 25: I can complete a Level I project in 1 year. Can I apply for up to \$100,000 for 1 year?

Answer: There is nothing in the RFP that says the grant has to be two years long or limits the money to \$50K a year. You must justify why you believe you can do the work half the time but still need all the money.

Questions 26: Can you tell me when the two conferences that a Level I grant require attendance at would occur so that I can price tickets appropriately? We can be \$580-\$1180 depending upon the month and vacation times.

Answer: The training conference would probably occur between early October to mid November.

Bidding Requirements

Question 27: As the lead sponsor of our application, we are collaborating and proposing to pay for deliverables by a local on the ground not for profit group with whom we have a long working relationship; it is a local member of our national organization. This local group, with strong grassroots connections, is uniquely positioned as a trusted convener locally, but does not have the precise expertise in the issues our proposal will address in their community. We see this as a strong partnership, not subject to putting out to bid.

A follow up question. To ensure that we reach consensus with a set of grassroots and institutional stakeholders in a well-known and troubled major urban area, we want to include another nonprofit as facilitator with whom we have worked during the last three years. As the prime application sponsor, we need the mentoring and need large group facilitation; our grassroots partner agrees. Does the proposed facilitation work by a nonprofit need to go to bid? *(Received via e-mail)*

Answer: EPA grant regulations requires that procurement transactions be conducted in a manner that provides, to the maximum extent practical, open and free competition. Non-profit organizations and universities whose proposals are tentatively selected for award will be required to follow the procurement standards as outlined in 40 *CFR 30.41 through 30.48. Local and tribal governmental agencies will be required to follow the procurement standards as outlined in 40 *CFR 31.36. EPA may request additional documentation regarding subawards/subcontracts when final applications are submitted. (* = Code of Federal Regulations).

For a copy of 40 CFR, please go to:

http://www.access.gpo.gov/cgi_bin/cfrassemble.cgi?title=200240

Question 28: If we want to use the services of an employee of one of our partner groups, do we have to go through the competitive procurement process?

Answer: EPA is unable to answer this question without more information as to the status of this partner group employee. If this employee will be paid as a contractor, then that contract would be subject to the competition procedures outlined by the contracting organization. Typically, competition would occur or a satisfactory sole source justification and accompanying cost

reasonableness determination would have to be conducted.

CARE Definitions

Question 29: How do you define "risk" as mentioned in the CARE request for initial proposals?

Answer: Risk is the possibility of a person suffering harm to their health or to the quality of their environment. Risk comes from the exposure of the person or their environment to a toxic substance or pollutant or to the combination several threats. In some cases a substance may be harmful not because it is intrinsically hazardous but because the amount may be so large as to disrupt the natural ecological or biological systems.

Question 30: Listed under background the paragraph mentions toxic concerns. Could you define toxic concerns?

Would harmful algal blooms and toxic phytoplankton fall under the *other substances in the environment that can cause negative health or environmental impacts*?

Do you consider nitrogen and phosphorous or their toxic outcomes as toxic substances?

Answer: We define toxics as:

“environmental pollutants that cause negative health or environmental impacts. These environmental pollutants can be in the air, water and/or land or in the indoor environment. We are not limiting the term toxics to chemicals listed in one or more statutes or regulations.”

Therefore, “toxics concerns” means any interest, worry, anxiety that a community may have because of the existence of toxic substances in its environment and the risks they represent.

Harmful algal blooms, toxic phytoplankton, nitrogen and phosphorous or their toxic outcomes, would fall under that definition if they were of a sufficient magnitude to cause negative health or environmental impacts in that community.

Question 31: How do you define "community" and "local level?" Specifically, could we apply for work at a statewide level? What about work with a particular community of interest or subpopulation (e.g., children)?

Answer: As stated in the RFP:

“CARE is designed help place-based communities build collaborative partnerships that can work to understand and improve environments at the local level. Since the size of local level place-based communities varies, the Community for a Renewed Environment (CARE) program is not strictly defining the term community. A community is the people living in the same area sharing the same environment, including both residents and businesses. A community will often be in a relatively small area, but in rural locations a larger area would be considered a community. A tribal reservation would normally be considered a community. Eligible CARE partnerships can be formed at the neighborhood level or in larger place-based areas. For purposes of CARE program’s focus on building local level capacity, New York City would be considered too large to be a community. However, sections of New York City would be considered communities. Moreover, a subpopulation of a community (e.g., all the schools in a specific area) does not qualify as representing the entire community and would not be eligible

for a CARE grant.”

Based on this definition, a State is too large of an area and could not be a community. Action at the “local level” means action taken in a community. While a CARE project could, and in many cases will, involve some work that is specific to a subpopulation within a community (such as daycares or schools), those subpopulations would not, by themselves constitute a community. There are certainly many communities that revolve around their local schools, but those schools are not, by themselves, communities.

In addition, a group of locations or subpopulations that are not co-located can not be “joined together” to form a community. For example, all the public housing spread throughout different locations in a city is not a community for purposes of CARE.

Leveraging

Question 32: For Level II applicants, is it better to provide cash or in-kind leveraged funds?

Answer: EPA does not weigh one type more highly than the other.

Question 33: I know it says no match required, but if we have matching funds, should we list them?

Answer: It is your decision whether or not to list matching funds. You should examine the evaluation criteria and see whether listing the matching funds help you demonstrate that you meet the criteria. If you do, you should be prepared to account for them during the project.

Working with EPA

Question 34: When EPA says we can lend technical expertise, what does that mean? What level of technical support will the EPA provide? For example, if we are interested in identifying multiple sources of exposure for a cumulative risk assessment, will EPA be able to provide modeling expertise to help us identify those sources of highest health risk? Or, would we need to bring on an academic partner that could provide that level of technical expertise? Do we need to specify in the application what type of assistance we might need from EPA?

Answer: You do not have to specify the type of assistance you might need. In general EPA sees its role as providing tools, technical assistance and other support. That support can come in the all phases of the CARE project based on the needs of the community. One place you can go to find the kinds of information and tools that EPA has is the CARE Resource Guide which can be found on the CARE website.

Please note that the specific assistance provided will depend on the situation and needs of the community and will be worked out by the EPA Project Officer and the selected applicants in the performance of the work supported.

In some cases EPA’s technical support could include modeling support. It should be noted that the CARE program has a bias for action. In general, we do not believe that full scale cumulative risk assessments are necessary or appropriate for CARE projects. They are usually too expensive and time consuming. We believe in using screening level assessments, which can include modeling, to help prioritize risks so that communities can move more quickly to take actions that will reduce risk.

Question 35: What is the list of EPA voluntary programs to choose from for the Level II awards?

Answer: EPA has produced the Voluntary Program Guide which can be found on the CARE website. However, for purposes of applying to the RFP, you do not need to include the specific set of voluntary programs you plan to carry out. It is expected that a community partnership will work with EPA and the State to examine possible voluntary programs that will address the community's priority risks.

Question 36: Is it mandatory to promote or carry out only EPA's voluntary programs?

Answer: No. While we expect CARE projects to focus on voluntary programs to reduce the impact of toxics and environmental pollutants, we do not require or expect that only EPA voluntary programs will be used. EPA staff will work with the community partnership and provide information on EPA's and other programs. In addition, the other partners will also provide information on other voluntary programs they have or know about. The partnership will then select the programs that best meet their needs and resources.

Question 37: In the RFP, section "5 Utilization of EPA voluntary programs", under the category two section, there is mention of two voluntary programs "pollution prevention" and "Make a Difference Campaign Programs". I can not find either of these two on the list of voluntary programs listed in the resources. Can you tell me the url to find descriptions of these two programs?

Are new proposals expected to include EPA's voluntary programs already in existence as part of their program goals/objectives?

Answer: The URL for the pollution prevention program is: <http://www.epa.gov/p2/>. The URL for the Make a Difference Campaign is: <http://www.epa.gov/osw/students/choices.htm>. More importantly, applicants do not need, and are not expected, to decide at this point what voluntary programs they will use. The decision of what programs to implement need to be made collaboratively by the stakeholder partnership.

CERCLA and Monitoring

Question 38: Your note, below, says that groups around sites that are CERCLA cleanup sites do not qualify. Can you explain? Do you mean that Superfund related PROJECTS would not be eligible (e.g., the kinds of projects that are eligible under the TAG program)? Or did you mean if the site is a CERCLA site, no matter what you propose in the community, it would not be eligible? Or, put another way, would a project be eligible if it involved a Superfund site IF the project clearly was not about the Superfund cleanup of that site. For example, would sampling for potential airborne emissions (should the community desire that) downwind be a potentially eligible project -- as that has zero to do with the CERCLA cleanup at the site? Or perhaps a series of mediated meetings with site management on pollution prevention technologies -- as that is not related to CERCLA either??? I went through the guidelines and FAQs and other things, and didn't get a clear answer to this. Any help you can offer would be appreciated.

Answer: The CARE grants can't be used to fund work that is typically done under Superfund, e.g., funding cleanup work at a Superfund site or hiring a technical advisor to assist a community in understanding issues associated with a Superfund site cleanup. A community that has a Superfund site in it can be eligible for a CARE grant to assess toxic problems in their community beyond the Superfund site, and to identify ways to reduce the risks from these toxic problems.

Something like air sampling unrelated to the Superfund site could be covered by a CARE grant, but, a project that seek to use existing air emissions information from sources such as the EPA

Toxics Release Inventory to prioritize toxic problems in a community may be a better CARE project. CARE projects are designed to use readily available information to set priorities and get quickly to risk reduction efforts as opposed to air emission sampling which can be very expensive and time consuming. Air sampling may be necessary for some communities, but funding for this kind of more detailed assessment activity would more likely come from the air monitoring program.

Threshold Criteria

Question 39: Does our project meet the Level II threshold eligibility if our stakeholder group was formed to address a known problem rather than our specific stakeholder group identifying the priority problem?

Answer: In order to meet the Level II threshold eligibility criteria, as stated in the RFP you must represent a partnership that has "... completed a detailed examination of toxics and environmental pollutants in the community which includes more than one environmental media, come to consensus on the specific community priorities for risk reduction, and be prepared to choose a risk reduction to address community priorities and mobilize the community and its partners to carry out this plan."

Based on the limited information provided, it does not appear that your project meets the established threshold criteria.

Questions 40: I am facilitating a PACE EH process in my community and would like to apply for CARE II funding. Our process will not be complete by the deadline for applications but we expect that it will be completed by the time the funding would arrive in Oct/Nov. 08, we will have come to consensus on the specific community priorities for risk reduction and have a draft plan of action. However, in the CARE RFP, it states that to apply for a CARE II grant, "the applicant must have come to consensus on the community priorities for risk...". Can we still apply although we are only 1/3 of the way through our process? We would hate to have to wait another year to begin implementing risk reduction activities. Thank you for responding to this question!

Answer: The language of the RFP is what matters. All Level II applications will need to meet the Threshold Criteria which states the applicant:

- must have completed a detailed examination of all or most of the toxic risks in the community including all environmental media (air, water, etc.).
- must have come to consensus on the specific community priorities for risk reduction.
- must be prepared to choose a risk reduction program to address community priorities.

This language means the applicant must meet the Threshold criteria at the time of application.

Locations for CARE Communities

Question 41: Are the LEVEL I awards earmarked for big cities with large populations? With a population of 52,000 would our city be in the running for a Level I grant award?

Answer: None of the cooperative agreements are earmarked for any size of community. EPA is looking for a variety of projects in communities of different sizes with varying types of organizations.

Length of CARE Agreement

Question 42: Our organization is applying for a CARE grant- level I. Is it possible to complete the work in one year instead of two?

Answer: EPA expects that it will take more than a year for a community to achieve the goals of a Level I agreement - i.e. create a broad based stakeholder group, examine the toxics and environmental pollutants risks in the community and achieve consensus on priority risk, etc.. However, there is no problem if the community can achieve those results in a year or less.

Future CARE Competitions

Question 43: Will there be another round of similar CARE funding in '09?

Are you going to be running the grant competition every year?

Answer: It is our intent to continue the CARE program and fund additional cooperative agreements in the future but that will depend on future appropriations and budget decisions.

Question 44: Should I submit my grant this year with the hope that if it doesn't get funded this year, it might be funded next year or the year after that?

Answer: No. EPA will not save applications that are not awarded this year and use them in future competitions.

Is My Project Eligible for Funding?

Questions 45: We are a very rural area in on St. John in the US Virgin Islands with only 1500 people. We have stormwater pollutants entering ocean and damaging coral, need for rainwater cistern drinking water to be purified in homes, and an old auto junkyard needing detox and removal. Are any of these needs eligible?

I am wondering if unsewered communities that discharge to a drainage tile which ultimately goes to a drainage ditch and/or stream would be considered a toxic exposure and would qualify for this CARE program?

Are there grants available for meth cleanup?

Will the CARE Program fund initiatives related to lead poisoning prevention?

We would like to produce and distribute to the residents of our small community, a video outlining how they can prepare for and protect themselves from, these hazards in the event of a release of some kind. We were wondering if funding under the Care Program would be applicable to this application.

Answer: We can not answer specific questions about whether one idea or another is eligible for funding. Not only is it unfair to the other applicants to prejudge a specific idea, it is hard to evaluate projects based on short descriptions. However, in order to give you some guidance we would remind everyone that, as stated in the RFP, under the CARE program communities form collaborative partnerships, develop a comprehensive understanding of all sources of risk from toxics, set priorities, and identify and implement projects to reduce risks through collaborative action at the local level. CARE's long term goal is to help communities build self-sustaining, community-based partnerships that will continue to improve local environments into the future.

Therefore, a particular action could be eligible for funding if it was part of a larger CARE project but CARE does not simply fund the implementation of a specific project.

Multi-Media

Questions 46: Do the projects considered for the CARE grants have to be multi-media, or can the projects be limited to one media (e.g. air)?

Is it correct to say that we cannot limit its program to multiple sources of contamination to a single medium (like a waterway) without having that medium come out on top during the risk assessment?

Answer: The CARE program is designed to be a multi media program. We expect communities with a Level I agreement to analyze toxic risks in all media. In order to pass the threshold criteria to be considered for a Level II agreement, a community would have to do have completed a screening level, multi media assessments of toxics in their community. At that point a community which has examined risks from different media would be allowed to set their priorities as they see fit and those priorities could be in one media.

Question 47: In a previous project in the targeted community, we had assessed air and soil contamination, but not water. Are we required to examine all three media - air, soil, and water - or is two enough?

Answer: If you look at the threshold criteria it says: “the partnership must have completed a detailed examination of toxics in the community which includes more than one environmental media (air, water, etc.)” (emphasis added)

Question 48: We are planning to submit an application to address Lead Poisoning and the problems associated with Mold and the problem is trying to identify the multi-media for both pollutants. Air is a media for both and water can easily be identified with Lead but not with Mold. Since we would be addressing two issues would both medias have to address both issues? Could physical contact be accepted as a media? Physical contact in the case of Lead would be actual digestion and with mold it would be if some touched visible mold or got it on their clothing.

Answer: For purposes of the CARE program we generally consider the indoor environment to be one media and drinking water to be another. Physical contact is not a media, for a pollutant to impact the body, something (matter or energy) must have some contact with the human body. Please remember that being multi-media is only one requirement of the CARE Program. The CARE Program is very competitive, your application will need to do a good job addressing all the CARE Evaluation Criteria in order to successfully compete for funding.

Difference between Grant and Cooperative Agreement

Question 49: I am unsure what the difference is between a grant and cooperative agreement.

Answer: A cooperative agreement is a type of grant in which EPA has substantial involvement with the grantee and the project.

Number of Applications

Questions 50: 1: Have you had more interest in Level 1 or Level 2 funding?
2: How many proposals did you receive last year total (Level I & Level II)? Thanks.

Answer: We do not keep track of the number of people expressing interest in the program, much less whether they are interested in Level I or Level II cooperative agreements. Last year we received 130 proposals and there were substantially more Level I proposals than Level II proposals.

CARE Training Seminars

Questions 51: I have a question about the CARE Grant. Would an applicant be able to apply for the CARE Grant if they had missed the three CARE Internet Seminars?

Answer: Please feel free to apply. There is no requirement that you attend any of the seminars. However, if you want you can listen to the seminar and see the presentation at <http://www.clu-in.org/live/archive.cfm>.

Questions and Answers about the CARE RFP Addition Questions – 1st addendum

Educational Institutions and Related Organizations

Question 52: I am writing to request clarification of the eligibility requirements for the above referenced solicitation. According to the first paragraph under Eligibility Information on Page 15, "...colleges, and universities could be eligible to apply for CARE funds." However, on the next page, in the paragraph regarding non-profit organizations, it says, "For this purpose, the term non-profit organization" excludes (i) colleges and universities..." I represent The University of ----- Center for Research). We are a private, non-profit organization (501c3) affiliated with the University of -----, and handles the administrative and financial functions of grants for the university. Are we eligible to submit a proposal to this initiative?

Would a self-supporting program of a state-supported (public) university be an eligible applicant?

Answer: Colleges and universities as well as non-profit organizations can apply for CARE. The only thing is an organization must be either one or the other. This is due to the existence of some administrative differences in the handling of grants to colleges as opposed to nonprofits. For example, the requirements of OMB circular A-122 apply to non-profits and the requirements of OMB circular A-21 apply to institutions of higher learning.

Question 53: Could you clarify that for me, and if a public school was to apply, how might that application might look for consideration?

Answer: A public school would be considered an agency of local government and thus eligible. A local chapter of a Parent Teacher Association or similar organization would be considered a nonprofit. EPA would judge an application from a school the same as other applications. Please note that while a school would be part of a community a school in and of itself is not a community. As we stated in the RFP:

A community is all the people living in the same area sharing the same environment, including both residents and businesses. ... Moreover, a subpopulation of a community (e.g., all the schools in a specific area *[or a single school]*; or all the people of the same ethnic group; or all the people with a single occupation to the exclusion of the other people living in the same area), does not qualify as representing the entire community and a project addressing a subpopulation is not be eligible for a CARE grant. *[material added]*

Principal Investigators

Question 54: What qualifications should the PI have for this grant? Please be as specific as possible. Thanks!

Answer: There are no specific qualifications for the head of a CARE grant. EPA has asked for brief biographical sketches of key technical experts who will be involved in the proposed project in order to see if their qualifications and experience are consistent with workplan and provide confidence that the project will be successfully completed. Please note that EPA does not use the term Principle Investigator (PI) because CARE projects are not research projects but collaborative projects designed to bring communities together to reduce risks from toxics.

Letters of Intent

Question 55: Is a letter of intent mandatory? And if so, what is the deadline for the letter?

Answer: Letters of intent are not required to submit a proposal for a CARE grant

Old Applications and Workplans

Question 56: We are looking to do a project that might be eligible for this CARE program but would really appreciate seeing an example of an approved/funded project, such as the application narrative or work-plan. If you can please provide this information, I would greatly appreciate it.

Answer: Unfortunately, it is EPA policy not to distribute applications and workplans they are not considered public documents they belong to the grantees. I would recommend your participation in the upcoming webcast to learn more about the CARE program. As an alternative you could listen to the first webcast which is archived at: <http://www.cluin.org/live/archive.cfm> . As of February 12 only one webcast is archived but future webcasts will be archived as well.