

US EPA ARCHIVE DOCUMENT

AGENCY: ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY (EPA)

TITLE: Indoor Environments: Reducing Public Exposure to Indoor Pollutants

ACTION: Request for Proposals (RFP)

RFP No: EPA -OAR-ORIA-09-09

CFDA: 66.034

SUMMARY: Formal Agency responses to questions regarding the subject RFP

Date: August 18, 2009

Q1: In the announcement on the grants.gov web site, it lists the CFDA number and then this descriptor:

CFDA Number(s): 66.034 -- Surveys, Studies, Investigations, Demonstrations and Special Purpose Activities Relating to the Clean Air Act

Can we include surveys as part of our activities under this RFP? In the past surveys were prohibited.

A1: Yes, your organization may propose surveys as part of the activities it will carry out if EPA awards your organization a cooperative agreement under this RFP. Surveys are authorized by the statutory authority for the cooperative agreement, the program description in the Catalogue of Federal Domestic Assistance and are not prohibited by the terms of the RFP. However, using EPA funds to develop and administer a survey may lead to substantial delays in the performance of your cooperative agreement and impose substantial administrative burdens on EPA and your organization. OMB regulations implementing the Paperwork Reduction Act require EPA to obtain "information collection request" (ICR) authorization if a recipient of a cooperative agreement uses EPA funds to develop and administer a survey which asks identical questions to ten or more persons. The ICR approval process is complex and requires a significant amount of time to complete. Please review OMB regulations at 5 CFR Part 1320 for details <http://ecfr.gpoaccess.gov/cgi/t/text/text-idx?c=ecfr&rgn=div5&view=text&node=5:3.0.2.3.9&idno=5> .

Successful applicants can design and administer surveys with their own funds, and use EPA cooperative agreement funds to analyze and distribute the results of the survey without triggering the need for EPA to obtain an ICR. In addition, OMB regulations at 5 CFR 1320.3(h)(4) provide that EPA does not need to obtain an ICR for cooperative agreement recipients to use EPA funds to design and administer pre and post training tests for program participants.

Q2. Our organization is considering proposing a project that will involve..... Please provide advice as to whether this project is acceptable under this RFP EPA -OAR-ORIA-09-09.

A2. Unfortunately, EPA cannot provide pre-proposal comment or advice on applicant project proposals. As stated in the RFP EPA-OAR-ORIA-09-09 under section:

IV. PROPOSAL AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

H. Pre-Proposal Assistance and Communications

In accordance with EPA's Assistance Agreement Competition Policy (EPA Order 5700.5A1), EPA staff will not meet with individual applicants to discuss draft proposal packages, provide informal comments on draft narrative proposals, or provide advice and/or guidance to applicants on how to respond to ranking criterion. Applicants are responsible for the contents of their proposals. However, EPA will respond to questions in writing from individual applicants regarding threshold eligibility criterion, administrative issues related to the submission of the proposal, and requests for clarification about the announcement.

Q3. Are letters of support or endorsement considered part of the 13 page limit?

A3. Yes. An applicant's **ENTIRE** proposal package that they submit must be 13 pages or less, as stated in "C. Threshold Eligibility Criteria number 7" and "C. Content of Proposal Submission".

Q4. What type of asthma care education activities are covered under this RFP?

A4. With respect to asthma, only those activities that directly address environmental factors that may influence asthma onset or exacerbation are eligible for funding under this RFP (although ancillary activities related to medical management are acceptable). Applicants are encouraged to integrate environmental trigger avoidance into comprehensive asthma management initiatives, as recommended by the National Asthma Education Prevention Program, or NAEPP, found at <http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/about/naepp/>. Where substantial non-environmental management (e.g., medical management) activities are described in concept proposals submitted under this RFP, applicants should be prepared to document alternative funding sources for any substantial non-environmental components that are part of comprehensive asthma management initiatives.

Q5: Is EPA seeking projects at the local level?

A5: EPA's Indoor Environments Program makes progress towards its goal by funding demonstration, training, outreach and/or education **projects that achieve national scale impacts** by supporting or leveraging networks with proven delivery channels. The RFP "Scope of Work" on page 3 states...

EPA is soliciting proposals from eligible entities (as described in Section III.A) to conduct demonstration, training, education, and/or outreach projects that seek to reduce exposure to indoor air contaminants. All proposals:

- Must yield results that can be tracked, evaluated and reported on.
- Must clearly articulate a plan to produce results that have national-scale implications or benefits (in other words, this RFP is not designed to fund small-scale local projects).
- Must align with EPA strategic goals, objectives, outputs and outcomes as

described in Section IC, below.

Q6. The RFP does not appear to restrict activities that include smoking cessation. Is this assessment correct?

A6. Activities primarily intended to discourage non-smokers (e.g., teens) from starting to smoke, or which are intended to encourage or assist smokers in quitting (cessation), fall outside of EPA's authorities to conduct research and disseminate information on indoor air pollutants and are therefore ineligible for funding through this Request for Proposals. However, activities related to secondhand smoke are eligible for consideration within the context of the asthma priority area and as a component of an integrated approach, as these activities are described in Section I.B. Scope of Work.

Q7. Can you please tell me if in addition to the 13 page narrative, can we attach letters of support or other appendices?

A7. Letters of support or other appendices may be submitted, but will be included in the 13 page limit. An applicant's **ENTIRE proposal submission must be 13 pages or less**, as stated in "C. Threshold Eligibility Criteria number 7" and "C. Content of Proposal Submission". If the **ENTIRE proposal submission** is more than 13 pages **it will not be considered for evaluation.**

Q8. Do all outcome measures have to be quantitative, or can some also be qualitative? Also, please indicate whether your response applies to short-term and intermediate action outcomes, to long-term environmental health outcomes, or both.

A8. As described on pages 8-9 (C. EPA Strategic Plan Linkage and Anticipated Outcomes/Outputs, 3. Outcomes), activities must yield measurable environmental outcomes that demonstrate progress towards project goals, objectives and long-term environmental health benefits. These outcomes may be environmental, behavioral, health related or programmatic but must be quantitative. Applicants must estimate the intermediate **action** outcomes they will achieve and describe how they will quantify them.

EPA recognizes that intermediate and long-term environmental **health** outcomes can not always be achievable within an assistance agreement funding period and applicants may not always be able to quantify the link between intermediate and long-term outcomes. In this case, applicants should be able to qualitatively describe this link.

Please refer to pages 14-15 which describe the Work Plan content, referencing both quantitative and qualitative outcomes.

Q9. When preparing our proposals, are Applicants allowed to use both the front and back of each page?

A9. No, we will not accept double sided pages for this RFP. The 13 page limit is for one sided pages only, not for front and back of a page. EPA will strictly adhere to the page limitation stated in the RFP, as outlined below, and **will not review any proposal that exceeds 13 (one sided) pages of text.**

7. Applicants' narrative proposals **MUST NOT** exceed 13 single-spaced pages and must be written in the English language and submitted on letter sized paper (8.5 inch by 11 inch) only. The minimum acceptable font size for the narrative proposal and the budget is 12 point; material in smaller font sizes will not be considered. Pages must have at least 1 inch margins on all sides.

(page 13) Section IV. Part C. Content of Proposal Submission

Narrative Proposal — MUST NOT EXCEED 13 pages (using 8.5 inch x 11 INCH paper)

The document should be readable format or in PDF for Windows and consolidated into a single file and be prepared as stated below.

The Narrative Proposal cannot exceed a maximum of 13 single-spaced typewritten letter sized pages, using no less than a font of size 12 and 1 inch margins on all sides. The Narrative proposal is comprised of three sections: the summary information, the work plan and the budget. Any narrative proposals submitted in excess of 13 pages will not be evaluated nor considered for funding.

Q10. In Section IV. Part C "Content of Proposal Submission" of the RFP, it does not mention the SF 424B (Assurances), the Lobbying certificate, or the Key Contact Form, which are all listed on the EPA website. Do these additional application forms need to be included in my proposal package?

A10. No, only the listed items as identified in Section IV. Part C "Content of Proposal Submission" are required at this time. Standard Form (SF) 424, Application for Federal Assistance and (SF) 424A, Budget Information and the Narrative Proposal are required for proposal submission. **In addition, Standard Form 424 and Standard Form 424A do not count in the 13 page single sided limit for the Narrative Proposal.** Please refer to the sections noted below in the RFP on pages 13 and 14.

Section IV. Part C. Content of Proposal Submission (page 13)

The proposal package **must** include all of the following materials:

Standard Form (SF) 424, Application for Federal Assistance

Complete the form, available at <http://www.epa.gov/ogd/forms/forms.htm>. There are no attachments. Please be sure to include organization fax number and e-mail address in Block 5 of the Standard Form SF 424.

Please note that the organizational Dun and Bradstreet, or D&B, Data Universal Number System, or DUNS, number must be included on the SF-424. Organizations may obtain a DUNS number at no cost by calling the toll-free DUNS number request line at 1-866-705-5711 or at <http://www.dnb.com>.

Standard Form (SF) 424A , Budget Information

Complete the form, available at <http://www.epa.gov/ogd/forms/forms.htm>. There are no attachments. The total amount of federal funding requested for the project period should be shown on line 5(e) and on line 6(k) of SF-424A; the amount of indirect costs should be entered on line 6(j). The indirect cost rate (i.e., a percentage), the

base (e.g., personnel costs and fringe benefits) and the amount also should also indicated on line 22.

Narrative Proposal — MUST NOT EXCEED 13 pages (using 8.5 inch x 11 INCH paper)

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****Reminder****

All Questions must be communicated in writing as stated on page 21 of the RFP under “VII. AGENCY CONTACTS”:

VII. AGENCY CONTACTS

All questions or comments regarding this RFP must be communicated in writing via e-mail to Victoria Drew at

QsonNationalIndoorAirRFP2009@epa.gov. Questions and answers will be posted until the closing date of this announcement at the OAR Grants/Funding Web site at http://www.epa.gov/air/grants_funding.html.