

US EPA ARCHIVE DOCUMENT

**US EPA State Innovation Grant Program
National Center for Environmental Innovation**

Guide for Developing a Quarterly Project Progress Report

Each State Innovation Grant state project manager is required to report at quarterly intervals on the project's progress. The report should be sent to the EPA's Grants Project Officer who is usually located within the EPA Regional Office, and to EPA's National Center for Environmental Innovation. The quarterly reporting cycle begins with the budget and project period start date of the Assistance Agreement. Each report should cover a 90-day period. States may take an additional 30 days to complete and forward the report. All subsequent quarterly progress reports should be submitted approximately 90 days following the first report (e.g., if the first progress report is submitted 30 days after the quarter is completed, the next progress report would be due 90 days after submittal of the prior report. It would include accomplishments that occurred during the 30-day progress report preparation time, and the following two months). Within 30-days of receipt of the report, EPA may provide comment, suggestions, or questions about the report based upon either regional or NCEI review. Revisions or responses to EPA's comments or questions are expected to be addressed not later than the following progress report.

The quarterly progress report is designed to document a State's progress in implementing the project workplan and meeting milestones identified for the project and reporting those to EPA. Additionally, EPA may make the report generally available for others wishing to try a similar project, or EPA may include information from the quarterly progress report in its own periodic reports on the program. The quarterly progress reports provide an effective way for EPA to monitor the progress of each project. The reports also become a source of information for evaluation studies that can help other States determine the benefits and difficulties in adapting a State Innovation Grant funded project for their own use.

Part 1 – Synopsis of Accomplishments During the Reporting Period

This section of the quarterly report should provide an initial brief narrative that summarizes the major accomplishments during the period. This section provides the opportunity to compare and describe the actual accomplishments with activities, outputs and outcomes that were specified in the approved assistance agreement workplan. It also provides an opportunity to provide a qualitative assessment of how well these activities worked or did not work and the success of or issue with any particular product or process. The use of an annotated project milestone table is strongly suggested. The length of the synopsis can be reduced by incorporating relevant portions of the project milestones table from the workplan with 2 additional columns – one to indicate whether or not a scheduled milestone has been achieved, the second additional column should be used to add explanatory comments. Examples of comments include a notation about why a particular milestone is delayed and what the new anticipated completion date is, or a comment on a change in a milestone that was originally anticipated in the workplan but may have changed or been deleted in the course of the work, or comments on something that has worked particularly well.

Part 2 – Narrative Discussion

This part of the quarterly report should provide an interpretive analysis of issues or problems that have arisen in the project during the reporting period. The Project Manager should focus first on a discussion about specific problems that might have occurred in meeting specific milestones and what remedial actions the state is taking to place the project back on track. Discussions about significant problems (ones with repercussions on the eventual success of the project or with impacts on the program budget), of course, should not wait until the quarterly report. The State Project Manager should engage the EPA's Regional Grant Project Officer and the NCEI Project Liaison whenever issues such as these arise. Summaries of such discussions should be included in this section of the quarterly report. This section is useful for detailing the types of issues and "mid-course corrections" that are often necessary when piloting an innovative approach. This section allows the State Project Manager to document issues and decision points in a project, and this information will be useful to other States that may decide to replicate this experience in the future. For example, changes in key personnel, delays in initiating parts of the project, issues that may arise in responding to public concerns or litigation could be included here. If the State forecasts a possible need for an amendment due to workplan modifications, budget realignments, time-extensions and the like; this can be initially stated in this section of the quarterly report.

Part 3 – Projection of Activities, Accomplishments, and Major Expenditures for Next Quarter Report

In this section, the State should briefly list or describe the next steps and anticipated highlights (if known) for the upcoming quarter. It will enable EPA to better anticipate the workflow, and more effectively monitor progress from quarter to quarter without having to continually refer to the original workplan.

Part 4 – Financial Report

The purpose of this part of the quarterly report is to provide an assessment of how well the project is doing with regard to its projected budget. It is a means for tracking the projects actual and projected costs and identifying issues that may negatively impact the budget for the project. The section should provide both a quarterly and cumulative report on expenditures and an assessment of how well the expenditures are tracking projected costs. Information in this section may also be used by EPA to prepare analysis of costs for specific types of innovation and to help EPA advise other States about the real costs of implementing similar innovations. NCEI suggests that State Project Managers consider a tabular presentation of data but there should also be sufficient analysis and narrative provided so that it is easy to interpret whether or not the project is on its projected financial course and if there are problems on the horizon. **PLEASE NOTE:** On multi-year projects a SF-269 Financial Status Report reflecting total outlay is due to EPA on an annual basis. State may take up to an additional 30 days to complete and forward the Report to EPA.

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Guide for Developing a Final Technical Project Report

Each project funded by the EPA's State Innovation Grant Program is required to complete and submit a final technical project report. The report is due to the EPA Project Officer who is usually located within the EPA Regional Office, and to EPA's National Center for Environmental Innovation 90 days after the end of the grant budget and project periods. EPA may provide comments and request modifications to be addressed in a revision within an agreed timeframe. The purpose of the report is to fully chronicle the project and its outcomes, to both document the benefits of the innovative approach and to create a vehicle for transferring the innovation to other States. Therefore, a final project report must provide sufficient analysis and detail to accomplish these ends.

NCEI recognizes that the States may prepare a final project report with additional purposes in mind, such as a report to the State Legislature or as a manuscript publication. NCEI, therefore, does not want to be overly proscriptive in giving this guidance and will allow States some flexibility in the structure of their report.

The final project report should provide the following:

- a re-statement of the purpose and goals of the project ;
- a description of the initially projected outputs and outcomes (including the project's logic model may be useful);
- a description of the general approach that was used to implement the project – this discussion could include a description of methodologies, stakeholders, etc. (inclusion of the project milestones table may be useful);
- a specific statement regarding key project milestones that were included in quarterly reports
- a detailed description of project results - including a description of major project outputs (e.g., a compliance self-certification manual; a stakeholder training workshop, etc.); and outcomes, with a focus on measured changes in environmental impact, conditions, knowledge, and behaviors resulting from the project;
- a copy of actual final materials generated in connection with project activities should be provided, such as workshop announcements, newspaper/newsletter announcements, articles or releases, press packets, pamphlets, workbooks, checklists, etc.)
- the methods used to effectively disseminate project information and/or continue the benefits of this project (although the project itself may not be continuing);
- a project analysis describing whether or not the goals for the program have been reached and if not, an analysis of what fell short, as well as:
 - a description of what, if anything, could have been changed in the project (e.g., design, implementation, etc) so that goals could/would have been met,
 - a description of the process with some commentary on where the problems were and how they were surmounted,

- a description of what worked well in the project and what will be carried forward, in part or in whole, or in another area of the agency's work,
- any information on how the facilities felt about the process and outcome,
- a discussion of whether or not the program will continue and if not, why,
- recommendations to EPA or other states interested in pursuing a similar project.

The final project report should supply, as an addendum, a financial report describing how well the project's actual expenditures matched the projected costs as well as a description of problems or circumstances encountered that impacted actual cost.