

EPA 2010 Innovation Symposium Grant Competition

Questions and Answers on US EPA Partnership to Promote Innovation in Environmental Practice Grant Solicitation

The following is a list of questions that have been asked during the open solicitation period. The answer follows each question and the general topic for each question has been put in **bold print**. As questions continue to come in, this list will be updated during the solicitation period to provide equal access to potentially interested applicants.

- Q1. We are a **not-for-profit organization (incorporated as a 501(c)(3))** that is a subsidiary of a for-profit entity. May we apply for the grant?
- A1. Yes, provided that you are able to certify your organization's not-for-profit (501 (c)(3)) status. Contractors (typically providers of goods or services) should not be identified in the proposal. Be aware that contractual relationships must be established after award through a competitive process.
- Q2. I own a **private company** with a lot of great ideas to benefit the environment. I often work with States. May I submit a project proposal?
- A2. For-profit organizations and individuals are not eligible under this solicitation. An eligible organization may, through a competitive process, subcontract or subgrant funding to a consulting firm or other entity to accomplish the work.
- Q3. Will the **recipient** have the **final say** on presentation topics, etc., or will that be determined by the Steering Committee?
- A3. In the past, the Steering Committee has had the final agreement on presentation topics. The Steering Committee will include members from the recipient, EPA offices supporting the symposium, and State environmental agencies, with the latter forming the majority. The Steering Committee will assist with analyzing environmental innovations, developing symposia agendas, identifying and suggesting appropriate speakers and presenters, and promoting the event within their respective organizations.
- Q4. It appears as though the symposia do not need to have an overarching **theme** other than the theme of environmental innovation. Is this correct?
- A4. No. The symposia themes will be determined by the Steering Committee which includes members from the recipient, EPA offices supporting the symposium, and State environmental agencies, with the latter forming the majority.

- Q5. We are a state government agency, so if we were to be awarded these funds we would anticipate having both of the **symposia** in our state, although not necessarily in the same **location**. Would this be acceptable?
- A5. We are interested in geographic diversity to provide the best opportunity possible between the two symposia to reach the broadest audience by reducing travel costs and times for our primary target audience of State environmental agency officials. The recipient will provide a recommendation to the Steering Committee for potential symposia locations and cost. However, this recommendation will be weighed with other factors in making a final decision (e.g., a particular State being interested in hosting, other meetings in a location or within a certain time frame that might facilitate State participation, a locality of special significance in demonstrating the use of environmental innovations that may provide exceptional opportunity for learning events and field trips into the community).
- Q6. Is it possible, through the **competitive bidding process**, hire an event planning firm to do a portion of the work?
- A6. Yes. Be aware that contractual relationships must be established after award through a competitive process and contractors (typically providers of goods or services) should not be identified in the proposal.
- Q7. Is a **state agency**, rather than a state government, eligible to apply for this grant?
- A7. Yes, state agencies are eligible to apply for this grant.
- Q8. We've read in the news that **www.grants.gov**, the portal for submission of applications is having problems because of the high volume of applications related to the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) economic stimulus bill. If I have a problem submitting an application through **www.grants.gov** is there any other way I can apply?
- A8. As instructed on page 11 of the Solicitation (<http://www.epa.gov/innovation/symposium-solicitation.pdf>), if an applicant experiences repeated problems with their proposal submission via **www.grants.gov** and has exhausted assistance options at **grants.gov**, contact Scott Fontenot at (202) 566-2236 or at innovation_state_grants@epa.gov, prior to 4 p.m. Eastern Standard Time on April 22, 2009, for alternative instructions for submittal.
- Q9. Is the grant award of \$750,000 intended to cover all symposia costs, including facility and hotel costs, catering, etc.?
- A9. The grant award of \$750,000 is intended to cover all symposia cost. Recipients are not required to provide **matching funds**; however, funding matches are not prohibited.

Q10. Is the recipient permitted to charge a **registration fee** for the symposia, or are they free of charge for all attendees?

A10. We are disinclined to accept an approach that requires a registration fee. Historically, we have not charged registration fees. We want to maximize States participation at the Symposia and, given the current budget restraints of States, we feel a registration fee would discourage participation.

Q11. Is the recipient permitted to secure sponsorships to help offset costs?

A11. No

Q12. I notice that in Section VI. A. Anticipated Announcement and Award Dates of the RFP (p. 17), is found the text "EPA expects to make a selection in March 2009". However, the proposal deadline is April 22, 2009. Should we assume that the March date is a typographical error?

A12. That is a typographical error and we apologize for any confusion. That should have been May 2009 rather than March. The competition close date is correctly identified as April 22, 2009.

Q13. Can you provide a list of prospective bidders?

A13. We have not compiled a list of prospective bidders based upon inquiries about this solicitation, nor did we have a bidders conference for this solicitation. We will however, post contact information for bidders on the previous competition and ask any interested parties who would like to be identified in a list to send contact information to us no later than 11 PM EDT on Wednesday, April 8, 2009. This contact list will be posted to the Q&A section of this website the following day. Please send your contact information to us by email to: innovation_state_grants@epa.gov ; or by fax to: 202-566-2211.

A13. Addendum - List of bidders from previous competitions and other interested parties

Organization	Contact Name	Phone Number	E-Mail Address
Council for Excellence in Government – has merged with National Partnership for Public Service		(202) 775-9111	Online email available at: http://www.ourpublicservice.org/OPS/contact/

National Governors Association Center for Best Practices	Sue Gander, Director for Energy, Environment and Natural Resources	202-624-5300	webmaster@nga.org
JFK School of Government, Ash Institute for Democratic Governance and Innovation	Caitlyn Steirman, Assistant to Stephan Goldsmith		caitlin_steirman@hks.harvard.edu
Taubman Center for State and Local Government	Andra Hibbert, Assistant to Archon Fung		andra_hibbert@hks.harvard.edu
Mossavar-Rahmani Center for Business and Government Regulatory Policy Program			rpp@ksg.harvard.edu
International Life Sciences Institute (and ECOS)	Stephen Olin, Deputy Director	202-659-3306	solin@ilsi.org ilsi@ilsi.org
Colorado State University	Dr. Lyn Kathlene, Director, Colorado Institute of Public Policy	970-491-2544	Lyn.kathlene@colostate.edu
Environmental Law Institute	Linda Breggin, Loretta Reinersmann Grants and Contracts Manager	202-939-3830	Breggin@eli.org

University of Louisville	Carol Norton, Project Assistant, Center for Environmental Policy and Management	502-852-1588	Carol.norton@louisville.edu
The Evergreen State College	John Perkins	360-867-6503	perkinsj@evergreen.edu
Academy of Board Certified Environmental Professionals (ABCEP) www.abcep.org	Corry Platt, CEP	919.362.3700	corry.platt@concept2delivery.com

Q14. On page 5 of the solicitation, it states that the recipient will offer up to 50 scholarships. Is it ok for the recipient to offer 25 scholarships for the 2010 symposium and 25 for the 2012 symposium?

A14. No. The 50 scholarships are for each symposium.

Q15. Do you specify a maximum on overhead (**indirect**) charges?

A15. We don't but, indirect costs should conform to government guidelines and previously audited rates. Please refer to this reference link for additional information on indirect cost. <http://www.epa.gov/ogd/recipient/indirect.htm>

Q 16. In Section IV.3.F.2, there is a request for an itemized budget that is similar to budget information that is available on the SF424A form. Can you please clarify if an SF-424A form is to be submitted along with the SF-424, or if only an SF-424 form is required with the itemized budget (with similar information to the SF-424A) is to be included in the narrative according to the instructions on page 13?

A 16. We'd like you to include both an itemized budget in the narrative as well as an itemized budget in the SF-424A.

Q 17. For the 50 scholarships per symposium, does it include travel, meals, and lodging?

A 17. Yes