**Questions and Answers for the Fiscal Year 2017-2018 AB 617 Community Air Grants**

**April 3, 2018**

As a part of the California Air Resource Board's (CARB) Community Air Protection Program efforts, and pursuant to AB 617, CARB created the Community Air Grants Program. The Community Air Grants Program provides opportunities for community-based organizations to participate in the AB 617 process and to build capacity to become active partners with government. CARB hosted a Community Air Grants teleconference on Tuesday, March 27, 2018 from 3:30PM – 6:30pm, PST to answer questions regarding the Community Air Grants Guidelines, eligibility, application completion, and other requirements. The questions answered in this document include both questions asked during the teleconference and questions received via email by 6:30 p.m. PST on Tuesday, March 27, 2018. Staff encourages applicants to read through this document as CARB has provided more written detail in their responses to stakeholder questions than what was discussed at the teleconference. In the event of any differences, the following written responses take precedence over verbal responses up to this point.

Please note that CARB will not respond to additional questions regarding the Solicitation now that the Teleconference has already taken place.

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ELIGIBILITY

1. My organization holds a current tax-exempt status under Section 501(c)(3) of the IRS. The organization is based in Sacramento County. It has implemented community-based projects in Sacramento County, specifically idle-free schools efforts to reduce vehicle idling at schools to improve air quality. Does this qualify as a "California community-based organization"?

   Answer: An organization must demonstrate its connection to the community that it wishes to work with or in.  In the Application, under "I. Applicant Background and Project Description (20 pts.), section a, number 3" we request that you explain your connection to the community.

2. If my organization does qualify under this designation, would it also qualify for a project in disadvantaged or low-income communities outside of Sacramento County under the grant guidelines?

   Answer: See above.

3. Are local government departments eligible to apply?

   Answer: Local governments are not eligible.  Only one of the four eligible organization types are eligible to apply.

4. Can three organizations and maybe a few others submit as a collaborative group?

   Answer: Multiple organizations may submit as a group; partnerships are encouraged.

5. Can a project address indoor air quality that is affected by an outdoor source?

   Answer: This funding cannot fund indoor air quality projects.  However, if an outdoor source is affecting indoor air quality, the project must address the outdoor source. Please see Table 1, page 4, for Assistance Concepts that projects may be derived from.

6. Does addressing indoor air quality issues fall under the scope and spirit of AB 617, and therefore the Community Air Grants? For example, addressing unhealthy conditions inside a home that lead to health issues like exacerbated asthma.

   Answer: See above.

7. If indoor air quality is something that AB 617 seeks to address, does the pollution have to be from an outdoor, community-wide source like industry or transportation? (As opposed to a source within the home, like mold or moisture).

   Answer: See above.

8. Can I collaborate with multiple non-profits that will each send in their own grant application?

   Answer: Yes, there is no limit to the number of applications that an entity can submit.

9. Is it possible for an organization to be part of more than one proposal, especially if the proposals involve a collaboration of various partners?

   Answer: See above.

10. The RFP states that organizations applying must be a California community-based organization with 501 (c)(3) status. May a 501(c)(3) based in another state with a field office in California be able to apply?

    Answer: Please review to Page 2 on eligibility. If a non-California-based organization wishes to apply for the Community Air Grants, they must do so in partnership with one of the four types of eligible organizations.

11. Is there a cap on how much AB 617 grant funding an organization can receive under this funding round?

    Answer: No.

12. May an organization be included in more than one proposal -- if different organizations are the lead on the different proposals?

    Answer: Yes.

    a. For example -- would including Non-Profit Organization A as a subgrantee or subcontracting partner in proposals submitted by For-Profit Organization B and Non-Profit Organization C affect how either of both of those proposals would be considered?

       Answer: No.

    b. Would being included as a sub or partner in other proposals submitted by For-Profit Organization B and/or Non-Profit Organization C affect how a separate proposal submitted by Non-Profit Organization A would be considered?

       Answer: No.

    c. Would it matter whether or not the total activities of Non-Profit Organization A to be funded under the combined proposals fell within the $50,000 limit for informational program work and/or within the $150,000 limit for participatory program work?

       Answer: This question is unclear, but please see responses above.

13. My organization does community-based work, in so far as we bring EJ folks and labor together to solve problems and form common goals, but we are not like other organizations, for example: we don't have members from the community, for example, nor do we speak on behalf of a community. We do speak on behalf of refinery workers and building trades workers, if that is included in the concept of "community."

    Answer: We cannot advise. Please review the guidelines.

14. As only one partner will be the qualifying 501(c)(3), and the scope of the project is managing and coordinating the technical aspects of community air monitoring, exposure, pollution source and community selection, QA/QC and providing COTC services to that effort, would the other participating partners be eligible to apply for Informational or Participatory funding to address aspects of 617 not directly addressed in the Technical SOW?

    Answer: The application must reflect the project as a whole.

15. Is the grant application strictly restricted to 501(c)(3) or can a 501(c)(4) apply?

    Answer: A 501(c)(4) can partner with a 501(c)(3) but is ineligible on its own.

16. What kind of projects are not eligible under this grant program?

    Answer: Please see Table 1, page 4, for Assistance Concepts that projects may be derived from.

17. Would it be acceptable if a university signs for my grant to monitor air near biomass incinerators, power plants, oil/gas wells, and elsewhere for radioactivity, PM 2.5 & radioactive PM 2.5, and possibly determine which metals are present in dust.

    Answer: If the university is a 501(c)(3), yes.  Only the four eligible organization types are eligible to apply.

18. Do we need to have additional community partners already identified by the time of submittal (regardless of whether we are providing a mini grant or not)?

    Answer: Yes.  Community partners must be identified in the grant application.  If additional community partners arise, the grant may be amended at CARB's sole discretion.

19. Is there any webinar (or web page) from CARB to help small grassroots (having no 501(c)(3) status) to create such partnerships?

    Answer:  Not currently.

20. Are on the ground green construction projects eligible? Like a green park, or green alley?

    Answer: To the extent that the project is derived from one of the Assistance Concepts in Table 1, page 4 of the guidelines, then possibly. However, we cannot advise on specific aspects of a proposed project. We will be evaluating applications using the criteria table.

21. Would equipment for detection purposes only be eligible, ex. Methane detection (flare cameras)?

    Answer: Yes.

22. Can an applicant apply to multiple projects?

    Answer: Yes.

23. Should we submit multiple applications?

    Answer: We cannot advise, but you may submit multiple applications.

24. Would subgrantees fall under subcontractors?

    Answer: Yes.

25. Are minigrants covered under subgrantees as well?

    Answer: Yes.

TIMELINE

26. When will decisions be made public about which projects get selected under the Community Air Grants Program?

    Answer: We expect to announce selected projects in May 2018.

27. When will the grant period then begin (for projects selected)?

    Answer: Grant period will begin when the grants are signed by the applicant and executed by CARB. All grant agreements should be signed by the applicants and submitted to CARB for execution no later than June 15, 2018.

BUDGETING

28. I had a question in regards to the grant guidelines for the Community Air Grants Program. Page 3 of Exhibit C: Draft Grant Agreement reads:

Administrative costs may account for not more than twenty (20) percent of the awarded Air Grant Funds. Consistent with best practices for project administration, administrative costs are defined as: Indirect costs that are not tied directly or solely to the project, such as: distributed administration, non-project related contracts or subscriptions, rent, phones, printing, or mailing services not associated with staff working on the project, or any other costs that are not directly and fully incurred to support the grant.

Does this mean to say that costs such as rent, phones, printing, or mailing services in general are considered administrative costs OR costs such as rent, phones, printing, or mailing services all related to the project are considered administrative costs? In other words, are costs such as rent that *are* associated with the project at hand considered administrative costs?

Answer: Project costs (costs specifically related to the project) should be detailed such that they include all necessary staff and tasks to implement the project.  If appropriate this would include activities such as outreach and education, research, data management and reporting.  A listing of potential project implementation costs are as follows:

     i. Personnel costs and fringe benefits

    ii. Operating costs (i.e. rent, supplies and equipment)

   iii. Indirect costs (e.g. general administrative services, office space and telephone services)

   iv. Travel expenses

    v. Overhead

   vi. Printing, records retention and mailing

29. Are rent costs associated with project implementation an eligible expense? If so, where on the budget template should such costs be included? Perhaps services and supplies?

Answer: See question 28.  There are areas for direct and indirect costs in the budget template.

30. My question is whether or not larger grants are available if multiple communities across a region are engaged in the process, would ARB consider issuing a $1.5 million dollar grant, or would any proposal need to still be capped at $500,000?

Answer: A single grant cannot exceed $500,000.

31. What is CARB's thinking about grant funding after this fiscal year? Are there any updates?

    Answer: An additional $5 million for FY 18/19 has been included in the Governor's budget. We don't know whether it will be included in the final budget passed by the legislature.

32. Are participant stipends an acceptable budget item? I see personnel costs and subcontract costs, but would like to know about participant stipends. For example, if a project was to have an advisory committee or involve a coalition, it can often be helpful to have participant stipends for members to help defray the costs of participating. Typically, they're flat payments rather than based on an hourly rate.

    Answer:  Yes, when defined as a fixed regular sum paid as a salary or allowance.

33. Per the budget template that subcontracts appear to be calculated on a rate and unit basis. Could a project instead budget for a deliverables-based contract where there wouldn't be an hourly rate but a fixed dollar amount for a set of services provided?

    Answer: Yes.

34. Can we modify the budget template?

    Answer: Yes.

35. Is there a threshold for sub-granting or a cap?

    Answer: No.

36. Can you clarify Report and Budget section 4 bullet "if claiming benefits…" top of page 8?

    Answer: This section contains examples of minimum reporting requirements.  Final Grant Agreements will determine reporting requirements for approved projects, including benefits to disadvantaged and low-income communities, or low-income households, depending on the project scope, consultation with CARB, and in line with the goals of AB 617.

37. Do individuals need to submit their travel to CARB or to the organization?

    Answer: All documentation from individuals traveling is required for reimbursement, but must be submitted to CARB through the grantee, as part of their approved project.

38. Is the $500,000 cap for the entirety of the project?

    Answer: Yes.

39. Does the budget need to fall under each category, for example Section 1 under 50k?

    Answer: We believe this has been explained in Table 1 of the guidelines.

CONCEPTUAL CATEGORIES

40. What balance is CARB looking for between (i) conducting air pollution monitoring technical work and (ii) community work, e.g., to identify solutions for reducing emissions from certain pollution sources as identified by the monitoring campaigns (i.e., informational and/or participatory)?

    Our proposal would fall at least 80% into the technical category.

    Answer: CARB is looking for innovative projects, across all categories. Projects may encompass several categories, depending on the scope.

41. How should applicants choose between applying under multiple Conceptual Categories or applying under one Conceptual Category while also listing another as a mere component, especially when deciding whether or not we need to answer section IV. Integration in the application?

    Answer: We cannot advise.

42. Can we cross-conceptual lines?

    Answer: Yes.

43. If we do a project that includes the technical category and parts of the participatory category, should we opt to apply to both?

    Answer: You may apply for two separate projects or one that encompasses multiple categories.

44. Where do you describe what categories you fall under and may you say it is informational with participatory elements?

    Answer: Under project description and yes.

45. Under the "Example Projects" column on Table 1 on page 4 of the Grant Guidelines document, the Participatory Conceptual Category lists "All Informational category examples as components" and the Technical Conceptual Category lists "All Informational and Participatory category examples as components." However, there is also the option to choose more than one Conceptual Category. How should applicants choose between applying under multiple Conceptual Categories or applying under one Conceptual Category while also listing another as a mere component, especially when deciding whether or not we need to answer section IV. Integration in the application?

    Answer: We cannot advise.

APPLICATION

46. Would funding a high school or college project to monitor air in their community be eligible for the Community Air Grants?

Answer: If the students are, or partner with an eligible entry (page 3 guidelines), they may apply for the Community Air Grants.

47. Am I correct that the application does not provide a scope of work template you'd like applicants to use?

Answer: Yes.

48. Pages three and four of the application have several numeric references but I don't see any foot/endnotes. Can you clarify?

Answer: References on pages 3 and 4 of the guidelines, are listed in the "References and Resources" Section, beginning on page 8.

49. Would travel to attend an air sensor conference be an eligible expense in the community air grant program?

Answer: Yes.  Travel to events on AB 617 concepts, is an eligible expense.

50. Would an anti-idling sign campaign be eligible for funding?

Answer: This is not prohibited.

51. Could you clarify which of the possible activities are preferentially supported by this grant: a) isolated campaigns (on the order of weeks) to identify air pollution sources, b) longer term monitoring efforts to first identify, then monitor, air pollution sources over months to years, and c) development and implementation of policies to reduce air pollution based on targeting sources.

Would a proposal that tackles option a, and provides insight into b, c without also conducting activities b, c be successful? Or, does a team need to tackle a-c in order to have a fundable project?

Answer: We cannot advise.  Regarding a proposal that addresses project items in phases - this is not prohibited.

52. When the grant application materials say that community groups are to do education/outreach around AB617, could you clarify what that specifically means?

Answer: This depends on your community, and the capacity of your group to engage in your community – examples are listed in the guidelines, and may include, but are not limited to:

      i. Community or neighborhood meetings on AB 617 topics

      ii. Community and district or governmental meetings to discuss air issues specific to that community

      iii. Promotion or advocacy of community need in regards to AB 617.

53. Also, do you happen to have a version of the cover sheet that is easy to type information into? With some PDF versions of forms, you can type right into the PDF. Or, perhaps a Word document version of the cover sheet (a Word document would be ideal).

Answer: A fillable pdf has been posted.

54. I notice that there are page limits for sections I.a) and I.c) of the grant application. If we include letters of support under section I.a)4 -- do those letters county toward the 2 page limit?

Answer: No.

55. Are there any limits on the length of permissible answers for sections II. - VII.?

Answer: No.

56. What's the difference between scope of work (IIIb) and the timeline (VIIa)?

Answer: Given the variation of potential projects, there is no template scope of work for the Community Air Grants. The applicants should provide the scope of work for what they will propose. This can integrate a timeline, or the timeline can be standalone – but both elements wil be evaluated under the scoring criteria as described in the scoring table.

57. For the technical project types, under Project Criteria: Programmatic and Technical Alignment in Exhibit B, the evaluation of the monitoring hardware is based on methods that don't include the air monitoring device we use.

We use a device for pesticide drift monitoring, and we intend to apply for funding to monitor pesticides that are listed by DPR on its Toxic Air Contaminants list. However, the sensors and air monitoring devices associated with the links included are only for air pollutants that don't include pesticides.

Given that the device we use (the Drift Catcher) can't be correlated with these devices nor evaluated by the South Coast AQM District, how could we go about evaluating our equipment? I attached a technical report, in which we monitored the air for the pesticide chloropicrin.

Answer: Table 1 (page 4) of the Community Air Grants Guidelines includes data collection and air monitoring support as example projects. Regarding the scenario described in the question, please provide a response to Application Section III(c)(3)" "Are your planned data quality assurance and control methods addressed?" This should include, but is not limited to: information on the parameters your project will sample or monitor for, sampling or monitoring method (including hardware or equipment) quality assurance and validation, and validation for analytical methods proposed.

58. Regarding: "Multi-year projects should be described in your application," is specifying that in the budget template enough, or should it also be stated elsewhere in the application? If also the latter, where in the application should it be stated?
Answer: This should also be included in Project Description, Scope of Work and Timeline.

59. Regarding the Budget and Reporting section, please clarify and/or provide examples about the following instructions: "Please describe the reporting procedures for your project." and "Please describe the documentation procedures for your project."?
Answer: Approved projects will require tracking and reporting of progress and milestones achieved. Specific, minimum, examples are listed in the Community Air Guidelines, Budget and Reporting Section, page 8. Appendix C, Draft Grant Agreement, page 10, lists project records and documentation examples. Final Grant Agreements will determine final reporting requirements for approved projects.

60. Is there a format CARB would like for the letters of support and letters of commitment?
Answer: No.

61. Is there a difference between the letters of support and letters of commitment?

    Answer: Yes. Letters of support should demonstrate a general support for the overall project and its goals. Letters of commitment should demonstrate an actual commitment to participate or contribute to the project a specific way, for in-kind support, or other type of collaboration.

62. May grant funds be used to support drafting of and/or presenting comments regarding community air quality concerns?

    Answer: Yes.

63. May grant funds be used to support the preparation of reports of community mapping or ground-truthing of sources?

    Answer: Yes.

64. May grant funds be used to support preparing comments regarding communities to be considered for recognition as priority communities?

    Answer: Yes.

65. May grant funds be used to pay for applicants' staff time involved in attending community-based workshops or regional meetings organized by the air districts?

    Answer: Yes.

66. May grant funds be used to support preparation and/or presentation of comments on CARB statewide policies related to implementing AB 617?

    Answer: Yes.

67. In a severely- disadvantaged and polluted community located next to a 15-lane freeway, a community-driven Concept Plan has been developed for construction of a 1/4-mile long tree and vegetation barrier, earthern berms and a sound wall to reduce criteria air pollutants and toxic air contaminants from the freeway and surrounding trucking and industrial land uses.

    Would conducting the technical analyses, planning and community/stakeholder engagement to complete the Phase 2 technical design so that the construction of a 1/4-mile long tree and vegetation barrier, earthern berms and a sound wall to reduce criteria air pollutants and toxic air contaminants from the freeway and surrounding trucking and industrial land uses can advance to permitting and construction be eligible for funding under the Community Air Protection program?

    Answer: Yes.

68. When submitting a proposal with two community based organizations, one as a lead and another as a partner, which portions of the application do we need to submit for each one. I understand one budget, one scope of work, and one-time line but as far as the Cover sheet, Application and other sections - should we be submitting one doc per organization or one doc solely for the leading organization?

    Answer: One application with background on both organizations.

69. Our partner will be our subgrantee, are we allowed to include mini grants (up to $10K for each) for additional community partners (with a 501(c)(3)) for outreach, engagement, and education? We would like to provide support to some small grassroots organizations that could use the resources to effectively contribute to outreach in specific vulnerable communities.

    Answer: Yes.

70. Do funds have to directly involve communities or just support community? i.e. can we give money directly to the community?

    Answer: Yes.

71. Is there overlap between the scope of work and timeline?

    Answer: Scope of work must be provided by applicant along with timeline. There may be overlap in the narrative of the scope of work and the timeline.

72. May a coalition of community groups apply to participate in the county general plans update?

    Answer: Yes.

73. Do all sections of the application have a 2-page limit?

    Answer: Only Section 1 has a page limit.

74. Do we need multiple application pages if we are jointly applying?

    Answer: No.

75. Does only one "applicant" need to provide background information if jointly applying?

    Answer: There is only one applicant.  However, in the case of a subgrantee partnership, we need the background information of the subgrantee.

76. Will the applications be available online?

    Answer: CARB will post a list of eligible applications received on its webpage.

77. Do all community-based organizations (CBOs) have to be identified as part of a proposal?

    a. Participant stipends for community outreach and engagement where the specific participants or organizations have yet to be identified, and/or

    b. A technical assistance "pool," where TA needs have not yet been identified but will be surfaced as the project goes on.

    c. Are both approaches acceptable?

    Answer: All community based organization partners must be identified. Number of stipends (see question 32) and costs must be specified for budget purposes. Technical assistance is an allowable expense and costs must be specified for budget purposes. Community need assessments are also an allowable expense and costs must be specified.

## SCORING

78. If collaborative projects will be accepted, will they be ranked higher than applications submitted by single organizations?
    Answer: Possibly depending on the overall application. In the Application, section "II. Collaboration and Leveraging (10 pts.)," we ask that applicants discuss leveraging, collaboration or partnership building.

## OTHER

79. Does "Best Available Retrofit Control Technologies" include the ARB's recently-adopted recommendations for "Anti-Pollution Design Elements", including trees, vegetation barriers, earth berms and sound walls?
    Answer: No.

80. Why would a larger 501(c)(3) nonprofit want to partner with someone with no 501(c)(3) nonprofit designation?
    Answer: We cannot advise.

81. Will the grants be available online?
    Answer: CARB will post a list of the awarded Projects on its webpage.

82. What documentation is needed for a Native American tribe?
    Answer: Please print out the page of the Federal or State list under which your tribe falls, and highlight your tribe. Attach this to your application.

83. Can you supply a list of applicants that I may be able to partner with before the 12th?

    Answer: We cannot.

84. Do I need to include the CCI logo on my fliers?

    Answer: Yes.

85. What kind of insurance do 501 (c)(3)s need to have?

    Answer: Please review insurance requirements in Exhibit C, page 8 of the Draft Grant Agreement.

86. I had to leave the conference call but wanted to ask one more question related to the question I asked earlier about construction projects (tree planting, green infrastructure, urban greening projects) – for example this could be a portion of a public park

    a. Is there a max % in the budget for construction projects?

    b. Is concrete removal an eligible expense – for example concrete removal in order to plant trees (along a sidewalk, for example)

    c. Can we plant trees larger than 15 gallons?

    d. Are community-serving amenities that would support this air-quality improving construction project eligible – this includes things like benches, public art, picnic tables, lighting, trash cans, interpretive signage – things that go along with the trees and urban greening elements that encourage community engagement with the space

    Answer: To the extent that the project is derived from one of the Assistance Concepts in Table 1, page 4 of the guidelines, then possibly.  We cannot advise on specific aspects of a proposed project.  We will be evaluating applications using the criteria table.

87. Are re-granting programs in bounds?

    Answer: Yes.