

General:

1. How can I get on the email list to know the grants that are coming out from CalEPA?

To sign-up to receive notices, updates, and information regarding the Program, visit the [Program webpage](#), scroll down to the “Contact the Program” section towards the bottom of the page, and click the “EJ Action Grants Listserv” link. This will take you to the [CalEPA EJ Action Grants Listserv webpage](#) where you can subscribe.

2. What projects have been funded under the EJ Action Grants Program (Program)?

None. This is the first round of funding for the Program. No projects under this Program have been funded yet.

3. Is this Program replacing the EJ Small Grant Program?

No! The Program is separate from EJ Small Grants and has different legal guidelines. The money we received from the legislature for the Program must be awarded by June 30, 2026. CalEPA wants to encumber and release these monies to show the need for these types of funds for more investment in communities in the future.

The legal authorization for EJ Small Grants still exists, but that grant program currently does not have funding. CalEPA is currently focused on EJ Action Grants but may also seek funding for EJ Small Grants in the future.

Public Comment Period:

4. Are consultations available to all California Native America tribes, not just federally recognized tribes?

Yes, the consultation period is open and available until July 28, 2023, to all California Native American tribes. Requests for consultations can be sent via email to EJActionGrants@calepa.ca.gov with the subject line “EJ Action Grants.”

Given delayed mailing times, email submission is preferred for consultation requests, but California Native American tribes may also submit consultation requests via mail to:

California Environmental Protection Agency
ATTN: Moisés Moreno-Rivera, Deputy Secretary for Environmental Justice, Tribal Affairs, and Border Relations
1001 I Street, 25th Floor
Sacramento, CA 95814

5. Who can provide comment on the Program draft guidelines?

Any member of the public can provide comment on the EJ Action Grants draft guidelines. Any California Native American tribe can request consultation. Members of

the public who want to improve our Program can provide comment and engage with us. There is no need to be a part of an organization to provide comment.

CalEPA encourages all perspectives, including our youth to provide feedback to our Program.

CalEPA wants to diversify the way we message and wants to reach a broader pool.

6. Will CalEPA diversify the regions in which meetings are held in-person?

Thankfully, this initial outreach is part of the first round of funding for the Program! Both listening sessions were recorded and the English recording is accessible online.

An application workshop will be taking place on September 27, 2023. Please see this registration link to register for the workshop:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/91012020000?pwd=Z0RfUmQqTOiGdNpl6dc66ybyelxzVZQ.1zX#registration>

The second round of grant solicitation will occur in 2024. CalEPA will host EJ Action Grant meetings in different geographic locations to reduce travel times for members of the public who want to participate and to encourage broader participation and offer hybrid options. CalEPA will also provide technical assistance/capacity building opportunities.

Funding Eligibility:

7. Are cities or counties eligible to apply?

No. Eligible entities include federally recognized tribes, 501(c)(3) organizations, and organizations that are fiscally sponsored by a 501(c)(3) organization. Eligible entities may collaborate on projects with local partners, such as cities and counties, but cities and counties are not eligible to apply or to receive funds either directly or indirectly from the grant.

8. Who is eligible to apply?

Eligible entities include federally recognized tribes, 501(c)(3) organizations, or organizations receiving fiscal sponsorship from 501(c)(3) organizations. For more information on fiscal sponsors, please visit Section 6, Appendix 1 and the relevant Fiscal Sponsor application area of Appendix 2. For more information on eligibility please visit Section 2.1 of the Program Guidelines.

9. What types of projects can be funded?

CalEPA is administering the Program to provide grant funding to a wide variety of projects. The Legislature has directed CalEPA to use that money for grants to support community-based organizations and residents to engage in:

1. emergency preparedness,
2. public health protection,

3. environmental and climate decision-making, and
4. coordinated enforcement efforts affecting their communities.

CalEPA is exercising its discretion to focus, within those categories, on projects that meaningfully involve and engage disadvantaged communities to serve environmental justice purposes.

10. Can a project have one or more sources of funding in addition to EJ Action Grants?

Yes. Neither the grant guidelines nor legislative conditions placed on the disbursement of grant funds prohibit funding projects that depend on funding from other sources, so long as the proposed project is not fully funded by another source. However, a project that depends on unsecured or unidentified funding sources may score lower on feasibility, which is one of the project evaluation criteria.

11. Will technical assistance be provided?

No, not for this first round. However, CalEPA is identifying opportunities for technical assistance and capacity building in 2024.

12. Can grant applicants contract with consultants for technical or community expertise?

Yes. For the purposes of the Program, grant applicants may contract with consultants for technical or community expertise, including with individuals supporting community science projects. Consulting contracts, however, must not exceed 20 percent of the total grant award (Section 3.2). Grant applicants are required to include in applications potential project consultants.

13. Must California Native American tribes that are not recognized but recognized as 501(c)(3)s also be included on the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) contact list?

The NAHC manages the NAHC contact list, not CalEPA. However, 501(c)(3) organizations are eligible applicants whether or not they are also recognized as California Native American tribes.

14. Does this proposal require a federal System for Award Management (SAM) ID?

No. The Program is a state-run and state-funded program.

Grant Activities:

15. Is this a reimbursement-based grant?

Yes. Existing legal requirements require that EJ Action Grants be reimbursement-based. CalEPA recognizes this creates barriers and is identifying opportunities to make our Program more accessible.

16. What activities qualify as an eligible cost? Will translation of outreach materials qualify?

Yes. Translation and interpretation for meetings and written materials are eligible costs, in Section 3.2 in the current draft guidelines.

Section 3.2 details other eligible activities that qualify for reimbursement.

17. Will there be a requirement for tribes to sign a limited waiver of tribal sovereignty?

CalEPA will consider not including limited waivers of sovereignty for grants less than \$50,000 under certain circumstances.

18. What is the permissible length of a grant?

Section 2.3 provides that grants may be for up to 24 months.

19. What are the insurance requirements for contracting? For example, will a grantee be required to have a certain amount of liability insurance, and will subcontractors be required to have the same level? This can be prohibitive for smaller organizations.

CalEPA grants include the following provision related to an insurance requirement as a standard term and condition:

The Recipient will procure and maintain or cause to be maintained insurance on the Project with responsible insurers, or as part of a reasonable system of self-insurance, in such amounts and against such risks (including damage to or destruction of the Project) as are usually covered in connection with activities similar to those activities undertaken for this Project. Such insurance may be maintained by a self-insurance plan so long as such plan provides for (i) the establishment by the Recipient of a separate segregated self-insurance fund in an amount determined (initially and on at least an annual basis) by an independent insurance consultant experienced in the field of risk management employing accepted actuarial techniques and (ii) the establishment and maintenance of a claims processing and risk management program.

The Recipient agrees that for any policy of insurance concerning or covering the Project activities, it will cause, and will require its contractors and subcontractors to cause, a certificate of insurance to be issued showing CalEPA, its officers, agents, employees, and servants as additional insured; and must provide the Division with a copy of all such certificates prior to the commencement of Project activities.

20. Does any proposal we send become the intellectual property of CalEPA once submitted?

No; however, records, including submissions accompanying the application, will become government records and may be subject to disclosure under the Public Records Act.

Review and Scoring Process:

21. What is the timeline for review and funding?

Grant solicitation will occur August 29, 2023 through October 13, 2023. Awards will be announced on a rolling basis.

22. How will disadvantaged communities be prioritized?

The Program application requires a description of how proposed activities would serve a specific Environmental Justice program or project (defined in Section 1.2), using appropriate documentation and identification tools (e.g. CalEnviroScreen). For more information on Scoring Criteria Details, please visit Section 4.4 of the guidelines.

23. What steps are being taken for accountability and transparency when it comes to allocation of grants?

CalEPA aims to have regional diversity across the state when funding projects. We want to uplift the Administration and Agency's commitment to forwarding Environmental Justice by including an environmental justice component in the grant application process.

CalEPA is coordinating closely with its BDOs' Environmental Justice Liaisons to ensure the Program development and the grant review process takes a holistic and comprehensive approach to the scoring process and rubric criteria development.

24. Is there a plan of evaluating or tracking the long-term efficacy of the funded projects? And if so, how? And if not, do you plan to in the future?

CalEPA is considering opportunities and tools to evaluate and track the efficacy of projects funded by the Program.

Grant Application:

25. Are you planning on designating a portion of funding to each type of application outlined in Section 4.3?

No! We wanted to give applicants a diversity of choices so that they wouldn't duplicate efforts.

If our organization has submitted a SEP or other grant application, but has not been funded, what actions do we need to take to be considered for EJ Action Grant funding?

If your project is a CalEPA-approved SEP and has not been funded as of June 30, 2023, you do not have to do anything! CalEPA will work with the SEPs coordinators

across CalEPA's BDOs to gather your project information. If more information is needed, a representative from CalEPA will reach out.

Please visit [this link](#) to see if your project has been approved.

26. Will there be future coordination with other agency grant programs to integrate grant applications?

We are working diligently on inter-agency coordination. We've reached out to California Natural Resources Agency and other agencies across the Administration to see how projects like this could leverage other funds.

27. Can applicants use more than the listed EJ screening tools in the current draft guidelines to support their application?

Yes. The guidelines give examples of tools that exist, and we are very understanding that different tools serve different purposes. The examples in the guidelines are not the only tools we are considering.

28. Has CalEPA considered a simplified and digital application form? Is there an online portal to submit materials?

Yes! This is something we're considering for future application rounds. We are pursuing a grant management system to provide a simplified application process. This round of applications will be transferred to the new grant management system once it's implemented.

CalEPA will post on its website once the grant management portal is available.