

Monitoring for Communities RFA Informational Webinar Q&A

Date: June 25th, 2014, 2-3pm EDT

Webinar information: <http://www.epa.gov/ncer/events/news/2014/06-25-14-calendar.html>

RFA: <http://www.epa.gov/ncer/rfa/2014/2014-star-air-pollution-monitoring.html>

REMINDERS

- Please make sure your application is complete. We review for completeness, so make sure all required pieces are in place. If an application is missing major pieces, it will not be reviewed. Unless it is the fault of the government, an application cannot be amended after the deadline.
- Please remember to fill out the human subjects research statement (maximum 6 pages) even if no human subjects research will be conducted.
- For those who choose not to apply or who are ineligible to apply, let us know if you are interested in being a peer reviewer.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

- Can federally-funded research and development centers receive funding?
 - There can be some collaboration with federally-funded R&D centers for planning/conducting research. Federally-funded R&D centers cannot direct research on behalf of the primary applicant. Funding cannot pay salaries for permanent employees at these types of facilities.
- Are there restrictions on the primary awardee location?
 - The primary awardee must be located within the U.S. Subawardees and subcontractors can be outside the U.S. Research can be conducted outside the U.S.
- Role of subawards and subcontracts
 - It is advised that no more than 40% of direct costs go to subawards or subcontracts. Please note that this is an advised limit, not a hard limit.
- Can early career scientists apply?
 - Early career scientists are welcome to apply as long as they are eligible. There is no separate early career competition.
- Does air monitoring include monitoring soil vapors associated with groundwater contamination?
 - Please review the RFA for details on what type of research the RFA is asking for. The application must be responsive to the RFA and address the RFA.
- How is community defined?
 - Please see RFA section I.D. "Specific Research Areas of Interest/Expected Outputs and Outcomes" – Community is defined in this section.
- Does this RFA support new sensor development, or focus more on using existing sensors? Can any fraction of this project be devoted to technology (sensor) development? If so, could it comprise a significant fraction of the work?
 - Please see RFA section I.D. "Specific Research Areas of Interest/Expected Outputs and Outcomes." Your application must address two or more of the research topics listed in this section. It is up to the applicant to judge whether sensor development would be in

service of those objectives.

- Are there any restrictions on funding for graduate students?
 - No. Funds can go towards the stipend, tuition, etc. for both graduate and undergraduate students.
- Are there minimum specifications for air pollution detection devices?
 - There are no specific quantitative criteria listed in the RFA.
- Do you expect applicants to attach the budget form as an attachment?
 - The SF-424 budget form will automatically be uploaded through the grants.gov application. The budget justification should be included in the project narrative.
- Are there any restrictions on activities outside the U.S.?
 - The lead institution must be inside the U.S., but you can partner with institutions outside the U.S. and research activities may take place outside the U.S. There are no geographic restrictions on research activities outside the U.S.
- Will incentives (paid to human subjects) be allowed?
 - Yes, as long as ethical standards are used. Compensation should not be extravagant, out of range, or put undue influence on that person.
- How are “low-cost” and “portable” defined for the air pollution sensors?
 - There is no definition listed in the RFA. What is considered low-cost or portable is open to interpretation of the applicant. Keep in mind that reviewers will be using the criteria and questions listed in the RFA to judge proposals, so reviewers will have the same information that applicants have.
- Can there be multiple lead institutions?
 - See RFA Section I.F – Multiple investigator applications may be submitted as a single Lead Principal Investigator (PI) application with co-PIs or a multiple PI application (with a single Contact PI). Only one institution can be listed as the main contact.
- What determines when a human subject is a human subject?
 - Check with your Institutional Review Board on what is classified as human subjects. If you are recruiting people, you may be doing human subjects research. Please contact Sherri Hunt for specific questions.
 - Note that EPA has a very specific human subjects requirement in that EPA cannot fund intentional exposure changes to pregnant women and their fetus, nursing mothers, or children.
 - Free online training: http://www.epa.gov/osainter/phre/phre_course/index.htm
 - Code of Federal Regulations Title 40 Part 25 – Protection of Human Subjects: <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CFR-2010-title40-vol1/xml/CFR-2010-title40-vol1-part26.xml>
- Will cost-sharing increase the probability of being funded?
 - This is up to the review panel. Please note that cost-sharing is not required.
- Are projects with smaller budgets less likely to receive support?
 - This is up to the review panel.

- Do human subjects differ between a citizen science project and a research project?
 - Please note that you cannot use the term “citizen science” to get around a human subjects review. Whether or not something is human subjects depends on the specifics and is determined on a case-by-case basis. Surveys and questionnaires could be human subjects research. Any data that contains personally protected information may be considered human subjects research. Please contact Sherri Hunt for specific questions.
- Is noise included as a targeted pollutant?
 - Noise is not mentioned in RFA.
- Should we assume that sample buckets or bottles are not part of this research?
 - The RFA discusses sensors. It is up to the applicant to decide what they think is a sensor. It is up to the applicant to consider whether sample buckets and bottles are sensors.
- Is there any preference on the size, type, or location of a community?
 - The RFA does not define the type, size, or location of community, so this is at the discretion of the applicant. Please see RFA section I.D. “Specific Research Areas of Interest/Expected Outputs and Outcomes” for a definition of community.
- Can a proposal include air monitoring in two different locations in two different states?
 - There is nothing preventing work in multiple communities.
- Can a community based organization be the lead agency in partnership with an institution of higher education?
 - Yes, assuming they are eligible to apply.
- Is particulate matter included?
 - Yes. The [Six Common Air Pollutants](#) and [Air Toxics](#) are included. Particulate Matter is one of the six common (“criteria”) air pollutants.
- Can applicants utilize existing infrastructure at air quality management facilities (existing sensors and monitoring stations)?
 - Yes, applicants can use existing infrastructure as long as the application is responsive to the RFA.
- Would low-cost measurement and characterization of spatial patterns in indoor radon be viewed positively or negatively?
 - The RFA does not specify that we are or are not interested in radon. Read the RFA carefully and make sure your application is responsive to the RFA.
- Are state regulators eligible for managing sensors in their communities?
 - Yes. State regulators are eligible to receive grant funding. Please note that funds should not be used for routine air monitoring – funds should be used for addressing the RFA and being responsive to the RFA.