

# Request for Applications: Advancing Environmental Justice through Technical Assistance Mini Grants

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## Purpose

The [National Environmental Health Partnership Council](http://www.apha.org/NEHPC) ([www.apha.org/NEHPC](http://www.apha.org/NEHPC)), which is convened by the American Public Health Association with support from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s National Center for Environmental Health/Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry, is currently accepting applications from community-based organizations to participate in a one-time technical assistance mini-grant program. The purpose of the project is to provide technical assistance and mini-grant awards to three local communities as they work to address environmental injustices.

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services defines **Environmental Justice** as “the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, or income with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies” ([HHS](https://www.hhs.gov)). Some examples of **environmental injustices** include

disproportionate health impacts to specific populations due to such issues as: lead contamination, drinking water contamination, air pollution, diesel bus and truck depot locations, hazardous waste or industrial site locations, climate change impacts, preparedness and disaster response, pesticide impacts, inadequate housing and more. These environmental injustices are often a result of **environmental racism**, which includes “any environmental policy, practice or directive that differentially affects or disadvantages — whether intentionally or unintentionally — individuals, groups or communities based on race, ethnicity or color” ([APHA](#)).

### Technical Assistance

Technical assistance will be provided collaboratively by NEHPC member organizations. The specific technical assistance provided will be based on the information in the applicant’s Request for Applications response, communications between the NEHPC and the grantee, and an initial needs-assessment period, which may include one listening session. The specific technical assistance provided will vary depending on the interests of the applicant, but some examples of technical assistance support include:

- Access to environmental justice and environmental health subject matter experts
  - Strategic planning consultation
  - Mentoring
  - Assistance in developing a plan or protocol around key activities or processes
  - Participation in key community meeting(s)
- Peer networking and learning opportunities/information sharing with other funded grantees
- Assistance in developing or reviewing strategies to establish relationships with key decisionmakers and other stakeholders
- Facilitation of virtual convenings of key stakeholders
- Support for the development of communications and/or social media materials
- Mentorship around effective fundraising strategies and impactful storytelling
- Summaries of available evidence to support the environmental justice work of the organization

### Timeline

This request for applications will be open until **Jan. 8, 2021**. The NEHPC anticipates awarding three community-based organizations (up to \$10,000 each), who will be notified in early February. Other dates of interest include a listening session (likely late February/March) and sharing your experience with the NEHPC at their summer meeting (likely July 2021). This one-time grant opportunity will conclude in July 2021.

## Eligibility

- U.S.-based 501(c)(3)\* nonprofit organizations with a demonstrated ability to work with community members to advance environmental justice
  - Organizations should be reflective of the communities disproportionately affected by the environmental injustice addressed
    - We highly encourage organizations led by people of color (e.g. African American, Black, Latino, Asian), Native and Indigenous, LGBTQ, poor or working class, people with disabilities, young, elderly, undocumented, people who speak English as a second language, and/or others with marginalized identities to apply.
- Funding cannot be used for any federal, state or local lobbying activities.

*\*Some exceptions may apply. If your organization does not have 501(c)(3) status but has an existing relationship with an organization that holds 501(c)(3) status that could serve as a fiscal agent, please email [ivana.castellanos@apha.org](mailto:ivana.castellanos@apha.org) to provide more information and discuss potential eligibility.*

## Selection Criteria

Grantees will be selected based on the following:

- Organization's demonstrated ability to work with disproportionately affected communities experiencing environmental injustices
- Capacity of the NEHPC to meet the specific needs of the organization
- Diversity among grantees in terms of types of environmental justice concerns, geography, population density, and communities served

*We are looking for organizations that demonstrate deep cultural connections to and a history of engaged partnerships with the communities they serve. We will prioritize organizations that are led by representatives of groups who are most directly and/or disproportionately affected by the environmental injustice(s) that the organization is addressing.*

*For the full selection criteria, please see [Appendix A](#).*

## Roles and Responsibilities

This project is a collaborative process between the grantee and the NEHPC and APHA to advance the grantee's environmental justice goals, as determined by the grantee. The specific technical assistance provided will be based on the information in the applicant's RFA response, communications between the NEHPC and the grantee, and an initial needs-assessment period, which may include one listening session. A memorandum of understanding between APHA/NEHPC and the grantee will be developed describing commitments and responsibilities

for all parties, including disbursement process of the \$10,000 award and the grant timeline. If selected, the grantee will be expected to:

- Select one person to be the primary person of contact for this technical assistance project. This individual will be responsible for communicating with the NEHPC on all matters related to the project, submitting the completed grant reporting template, participating in conference calls and completing any evaluation activities.
- Enter into a memorandum of understanding with APHA and the NEHPC, which will broadly outline commitments and expectations for all parties.
- Communicate regularly with the NEHPC's technical assistance coordinator.
- Participate in one virtual listening session to identify potential avenues for technical assistance (likely late February/March 2021).
  - Listening session could include organization staff, community members, members of the NEHPC, APHA and CDC. *Funds for honorariums for participating community members may be available.*
- Use award funds to advance environmental justice work. Activities should be completed within the project period (ending July 2021). Some examples include, but are not limited to:
  - Coalition-building meetings or activities
  - Informational workshops
  - Assessments
  - Capacity-building or trainings for community or other organizations
  - Professional development that supports efforts to address environmental injustices
  - Train the trainers
  - Communications campaign
  - Translation of materials into other languages
- Complete a short grant reporting template and participate in any program evaluation activities.
- Work with technical assistance coordinator to share your story on national platforms, discussing the environmental injustices faced by your community and highlighting the work of your organization to address these concerns.
- Share your experience at the NEHPC meeting hosted in Washington, D.C., at the end of the grant cycle (July 2021) – travel support will be provided, if applicable (otherwise meeting will be held virtually).

### About the National Environmental Health Partnership Council

The [National Environmental Health Partnership Council](http://www.apha.org/NEHPC) ([www.apha.org/NEHPC](http://www.apha.org/NEHPC)), comprised of executive-level members from over 20 organizations, works to promote and support priority environmental health issues. The Council strives to:

- Build a collective voice in support of priority environmental health issues.
- Foster and coordinate activities to advance environmental health.
- Communicate new information and research to support better and more effective environmental health programs, practices and policies.
- Promote ways to leverage current and future resources to maximize the impact of environmental health activities.
- Generate momentum and build greater public awareness of the role environmental health plays in sustaining and promoting human health.

Some of the Council members' areas of expertise include:

- Air quality
- Climate effects
- Drinking water
- Emergency preparedness and response
- Chemical safety
- Food safety
- Healthy housing
- Community design
- Children's environmental health

### Contact

If you have any questions, please contact Ivana Castellanos at [ivana.castellanos@apha.org](mailto:ivana.castellanos@apha.org).

## Advancing Environmental Justice through Technical Assistance Mini Grants

### Application

Applications must be submitted online at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/EJminigrant>. The information requested is outlined and provided below. We strongly encourage applicants to prepare their responses in advance, and then copy and paste the responses into the form. Please review the [Appendices](#) for information such as the selection criteria that will be used to evaluate responses, a brief glossary of terms, and tools that may be useful in answering select questions.

If you have any questions, please contact Ivana Castellanos at [ivana.castellanos@apha.org](mailto:ivana.castellanos@apha.org).

### Applicant Information

1. Point of Contact (Name)
2. Point of Contact (Email)
3. Organization name
4. Organization address
5. Organization website (if applicable)
6. Brief description of organization's mission and values

### Additional Questions

Please answer the following questions, taking note of the character limits for each question:

#### **Demonstrating need (15 points)**

7. Please describe the environmental injustice(s) your community is facing. (character limit: 5,000 characters)

*You are welcome to share your community's story in whatever way you think is best. Please include information on how long the environmental injustice has been impacting your community (or if it is an injustice you are trying to prevent) and any health issues that may be associated with the environmental injustice. Some tools that may be helpful are shared in [Appendix C](#).*

8. Tell us more about the community that is being disproportionately impacted by this environmental injustice. (character limit: 4,000 characters)

*Please provide information that shares how your community is disproportionately affected relative to your city, region, state or other geographic scale. You are welcome to share your personal knowledge and experience of the community, any sociodemographic information*

(e.g. race/ethnicity, income information), impacted ZIP codes, or neighborhood history, etc. Some tools that may be helpful are shared in [Appendix C](#).

### **Organizational readiness (30 points)**

9. Please describe what your organization's short- and long-term goals are in addressing this issue. (character limit: 1,500 characters)
10. Please describe the activities your organization has done in the past to address the environmental injustice(s) described in Question 1 and describe any other relevant experience to your proposed activities. (character limit: 1,500 characters)
11. How are the perspectives of the community included at various stages of your organization's environmental justice work (e.g. town halls, door to door information gathering, advisory boards, program design and delivery)? (character limit: 1,500 characters)
12. How does your organization reflect the population you serve as answered in Question 2? (character limit: 1,500 characters)

*You are welcome to answer this in any way that you think is best. Some examples may be by providing information about the makeup of your leadership team, board or staff.*

### **Project plan and impact (55 points)**

13. What barriers have you identified that prevent your community from achieving your plans or goals to address the environmental injustice(s) in your community? (character limit: 1,500 characters)
14. Which technical assistance activities are you most interested in?  
Please select up to three technical assistance activities you are most interested in receiving. *These selections are not binding, and we understand that technical assistance needs may shift over time.*
  - Strategic planning consultation
  - Mentoring
  - Assistance in developing a plan or protocol around key activities or processes
  - NEHPC participation in key community meeting(s)

- Assistance in developing or reviewing strategies to establish relationships with key decisionmakers and other stakeholders
- Facilitation of virtual convenings of key stakeholders
- Mentorship around effective fundraising strategies and impactful storytelling
- Support for the development of communications and/or social media materials
- Summaries of available evidence to support your environmental justice work
- Other:

15. In narrative form, please share your proposed project activities and an estimated budget for each activity to show how you plan to use the \$10,000 mini-grant to advance environmental justice in your community. (character limit: 4,000 characters) *Example: "Development of educational booklets for community members, \$2,000." Please note: Funding cannot be used for any federal, state or local lobbying activities.*

16. Please share an estimated timeline for your proposed project activities (February 2021-July 2021). (character limit: 1,500 characters)

*This can be an estimated, informal timeline. We understand that project timelines may shift depending on technical assistance activities and other factors. One way to share this timeline would be to list project activities by month.*

17. Please provide information about the individuals who will be leading the proposed activities and any relevant prior experience or activities. (character limit: 1,500 characters)

18. How do you believe receiving these funds and technical assistance will help you make progress on your community environmental justice goals (described in Question 3)? (character limit: 1,500 characters)

Optional: You may submit a video (maximum 3 minutes) and/or up to five images to complement your application. This is completely optional and not required to submit the application but may provide an opportunity to share your story visually if desired. Photos (File types accepted: PDF, DOC, DOCX, PNG, JPG, JPEG, GIF, Size: up to 16MB for each file) can be submitted directly into the application.

If submitting a video, please note that it does not need to be edited and can be a casual clip shot on a phone. You may submit your video by email to Ivana Castellanos



([ivana.castellanos@apha.org](mailto:ivana.castellanos@apha.org)). Please be sure to include your name and name of organization in the email so we can identify which application it corresponds to.

## **Appendices**

### **Appendix A: Selection Criteria**

Applications will be evaluated using the following criteria:

#### **Demonstrated need (15 points)**

1. Does the applicant's community have a significant environmental injustice, or has the applicant identified an injustice they're working to prevent? (Question 7 in RFA)
2. Does the environmental injustice disproportionately affect specific communities or subpopulations? (Question 8 in RFA)

#### **Organization readiness (30 points)**

3. Does the organization demonstrate that community members are actively engaged with the organization's work and have a history of partnering with community members to address environmental injustices? (Questions 10 and 11 in RFA)
4. Does the organization reflect the community disproportionately impacted by the environmental injustice? (Question 12 in RFA)
5. Has the organization demonstrated that it has the ability and expertise to carry out the proposed work? (Questions 10 and 16 in RFA)

#### **Project Plan and Impact (Combined 55 points)**

##### ***Clarity of plan for mini grant and potential impact of the mini grant (30 points)***

6. Does the applicant have a clearly articulated project plan and a feasible timeline? (Questions 15-17 in RFA)
7. What is the potential impact (short- and long-term) or local significance of the technical assistance and proposed activities? (Questions 13 and 18 in RFA)

***Ability for APHA/NEHPC to meet organizational needs (25 points)***

8. Do the goals of the organization, barriers described, proposed activities and requested technical assistance align with the expertise of the National Environmental Health Partnership Council members? (RFA question 7, 9, 13, 14)

**The following considerations may be considered:**

- Diversity among grantees with regard to:
  - affected subpopulations
    - this includes but is not limited to: communities of color (e.g. African American, Black, Latinx, Asian), Native, Queer or Trans, poor or working class, people with disabilities, young, elderly, undocumented, who speak English as a second language, and/or others with marginalized identities
  - environmental justice concern
  - region
  - population density (rural/urban)

**Appendix B: Glossary of terms**

For reference, we have collected definitions of some of the terms used in this RFA:

**Disproportionally impacted population:** a population that is impacted or affected more than other populations.

**Environmental justice:** “the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, or income with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies” ([HHS](#))

- Examples of **environmental injustices** include disproportionate health impacts to specific populations due to such issues as: lead contamination, drinking water contamination, air pollution, diesel bus and truck depot locations, hazardous waste or industrial site locations, climate change impacts, preparedness and disaster response, pesticide impacts and inadequate housing.

**Environmental racism:** “any environmental policy, practice or directive that differentially affects or disadvantages — whether intentionally or unintentionally — individuals, groups or communities based on race, ethnicity or color” ([APHA](#))

## Appendix C: Resources

Some resources and tools that may be helpful in providing responses are:

- National Equity Atlas Indicators
  - <https://nationalequityatlas.org/indicators>
- Environmental Justice Screening and Mapping Tool
  - <https://ejscreen.epa.gov/mapper/>
- Air Quality data from AirNow
  - <https://www.airnow.gov/>
- Demographic Data from the U.S. Census Bureau
  - <https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/ces/data/restricted-use-data/demographic-data.html>
- Income by ZIP code
  - <https://www.incomebyzipcode.com/>
- ESRI Tapestry Neighborhood Community Lifestyle + Demographic Info
  - <https://www.esri.com/en-us/arcgis/products/tapestry-segmentation/zip-lookup>
- Info by Location on EH health issues by country
  - <https://ephtracking.cdc.gov/InfoByLocation/>
- The National Environmental Public Health Tracking Network (Tracking Network) brings together health data and environment data from national, state, and city sources and provides supporting information to make the data easier to understand.
  - <https://ephtracking.cdc.gov/DataExplorer/#/>