

EPA Grants Competition Process Webinar, June 18, 2024 Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

- Q1: Will the new Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) updates impact all Notice of Funding Opportunities (NOFOs) across agencies?
- A1: Yes, it will.
- Q2: Do applications submitted before the implementation of the new 2 CFR guidelines have to be updated? Should we work under the new regulations if we submit sooner?
- A2: Follow the instructions in the NOFO you are applying to. If changes need to be made after your application is selected to comply with the new regulations, the EPA will work with you to make that happen. If you have questions about how to handle some of the regulations that impact your application (such as procurement or indirect costs), contact the point of contact listed in the NOFO.
- Q3: How do we register for the recipient training courses? Can you forward the link?
- A3: You can find the courses on the [EPA Grants Recipient Training Opportunities webpage](#).
- Q4: I have taken both training courses but do not have a current application. Will I have to take it again once we submit an application?
- A4: Once you complete the training and submit the form at the end of the training, there is nothing more you have to do. The EPA records completions automatically and will be able to look up your record once you submit an application.
- Q5: Will the Environmental Justice Thriving Communities Technical Assistance Centers (EJ TCTACs) help with grant writing during the application process?
- A5: You can read more about the TCTACs and the services they provide in the [TCTAC Fact Sheet](#), as well as on the [EJ TCTAC webpage](#). For more specifics on the services they provide, reach out to the specific TCTAC with which you are seeking assistance.
- Q6: When is the deadline to submit an application?
- A6: Check the NOFO you are interested in applying to for the deadline. It should be listed in the Grants.gov synopsis, the first page of the NOFO, and Section IV of the NOFO. Typically, deadlines are 45-90 calendar days after the NOFO is published.
- Q7: In Section IV of the NOFO, it states that the content of the application is uploaded in different attachments. Are the attachments included in the page count of the application?
- A7: It depends on the NOFO. Typically, the attachments are not counted towards the total page count, but if the NOFO is not clear, you should reach out to the Section VII contact to clarify. However, not all NOFOs impose page limits on applications.
- Q8: We have questions about indirect costs (IDCs) through the course of a two-year grant. These numbers and dates are hypothetical: Say we submit a budget in a two-year proposal in March 2022. Our indirect rate at the time, as determined by the Department of Interior, is 50%, which the full project budget is based on. We get the award in September of 2022. Then, in July 2023, we have a new approved IDC of 36%. Then, in 2024, we get yet another IDC. Do we have to re-

submit a budget each time? What are the approvals that the new budgets would need to go through?

A8: Please consult the following resources for information on IDCs: the Recipient/Applicant Information Notice ([RAIN](#)) 2018 G02-R Indirect Cost Guidance for Recipients of EPA Assistance Agreements, as well as the [Indirect Cost Rates Webinar](#) from December 2023.

Q9: Will there be a recording available for today's webinar?

A9: A recording of today's webinar will be available on the Competition Process Webinar webpage at: <https://www.epa.gov/grants/competition-process-webinar-june-18-2024>.

Q10: Do the 2 CFR 200 modifications apply to all agencies or only to the EPA?

A10: They apply to all federal agencies.

Q11: Can an applicant who has been selected to receive an award also ask for a debriefing to work on improving their future applications?

A11: Debriefings are generally only offered to unsuccessful applicants. If a successful applicant requests a debriefing, the Program Office has discretion to decide whether to debrief a successful applicant. A selected applicant should work with the program point of contact on addressing minor changes to the proposed workplan to strengthen the quality of a project.

Q12: Are evaluations and scores given back to the applicant during debriefing or is it just general commentary on how to make improvements?

A12: The principal purposes of a debriefing are to provide unsuccessful applicants with an assessment of their application, specifically an evaluation of its strengths and weaknesses, and provide information on the rationale for any ineligibility determinations or why the applicant was not selected for award. During a debriefing, an applicant can ask for its total score as well as its scores by criterion; however, to receive the evaluation score sheets, an applicant generally must submit a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request.

Q13: Is it required for all EPA applicants to complete the EPA grant administration and EPA budget courses?

A13: Yes. The EPA is now requiring all new assistance agreement applicants to complete two mandatory trainings before receiving EPA grant funds. Those recipients who are new to EPA grants and/or cooperative agreements will be required to complete the [EPA Grants Management Training for Applicants and Recipients](#) and the training on [How to Develop a Budget](#).

Q14: Will there be a webinar on the regulation changes? Or are there resources available on how it may impact us?

A14: There will be webinars on the regulation changes forthcoming. There will also be resources that detail the specifics, impacts, etc.

Q15: For the training courses, do the participants need to be staff to be considered part of the applying organization, or would a consultant grant writer be considered part of the organization?

A15: Only one staff person at the recipient organization needs to complete the training; the Office of Grants and Debarment recommends it is an individual listed on the EPA Key Contacts Form 5700-54. Recipients will not be required to maintain an ongoing training requirement or retake the training if new staff are hired.

Q16: How long after an award (or rejection) are we allowed to ask for debriefings?

A16: Applicants that are deemed ineligible or are not selected have 15 calendar days to request a debriefing. This information will be in the notification. Debriefings are not offered to applicants that are selected to receive an award. If a successful applicant requests a debriefing, it is at the discretion of the Program Office on whether to conduct the debriefing.

Q17: How do we record training completion by a staff member?

A17: Upon completion of the individual modules of the training, users are prompted to provide their name, organization name and Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) – which, once collected, are automatically stored in an EPA dashboard for reference by EPA employees.