

- III. Description of the Environmental Justice Collaborative Problem-Solving Model
- IV. Evaluation Criteria (Performance Measures) for Collaborative Problem-Solving Grant Program
- V. Environmental Justice Collaborative Problem-Solving Grant Application Instructions
- VI. Selection Process and Program Schedule
- VII. Reporting Requirements/Special Conditions

Translations Available

A Spanish translation of this material is available at 1-800-952-6215. It can also be downloaded from: <http://www.epa.gov/compliance/recent/ej.html>.

I. Scope and Purpose of Request for Applications

The purpose of this notice is to solicit applications from eligible community-based organizations in order for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to provide financial assistance to those organizations through the new Environmental Justice Collaborative Problem-Solving Grant Program described in this notice. Community-based organizations who are eligible to receive financial assistance must be non-government, nonprofit organizations currently exempt from taxation under section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code or exempt under applicable state law, and working on or planning to work on projects to address local environmental and/or public health concerns in their communities. All awards will be made in the form of a Federal grant to 15 community-based organizations in the amount of \$100,000.00 to be used over a three-year period.

Identification Number: CFDA 66.306.

Date of Notification: May 30, 2003.

Submission Due Date: September 30, 2003.

EPA's Office of Environmental Justice (OEJ), in coordination with the Federal Interagency Working Group on Environmental Justice (IWG), has developed an Environmental Justice Collaborative Problem-Solving Model. (See section III of this RFA for a complete description of this model.) The purpose of the Environmental Justice Collaborative Problem-Solving (CPS) Grant Program is for EPA to provide financial assistance to community-based organizations to utilize this model to address one or more environmental and/or public health issues in their communities. An underlying purpose of the Environmental Justice CPS Grant Program is to replicate lessons learned so that the Environmental Justice Collaborative Problem-Solving Model

can be utilized by other, similarly situated communities seeking to address local environmental and/or public health issues.

This Request for Applications (RFA) outlines the purpose, goals, and general procedures and guidelines for applying for the Environmental Justice CPS Grants, for Fiscal Year (FY) 2003. OEJ's Environmental Justice CPS Grants seek to accomplish a strategically defined set of objectives that address one or more local environmental and/or public health issues by focusing on two key areas (e.g., capacity-building of the community residents, and forming collaborative partnerships). Application instructions are provided in section V of this RFA.

Number of Grants Proposed: Fifteen (15) Environmental Justice CPS grants will be awarded for fiscal year (FY) 2003.

Applications must be date stamped by courier service or postmarked by U.S. Postal Service by 12 p.m. Eastern Time, September 30, 2003. Use the appropriate address below, depending on your method of delivery.

VIA U.S. Postal Service

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Office of Environmental Justice (MC 2201A), 1200 Pennsylvania Ave., NW., Washington, DC 20460-0001.

Attention: Linda K. Smith, Project Officer, *Phone:* (202) 564-2602.

VIA Federal Express, Airborne, United Parcel Service, or Other Courier Service

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Office of Environmental Justice, Ariel Rios Building South, Room 2232, 1200 Pennsylvania Ave., NW., Washington, DC 20004.

Attention: Linda K. Smith, Project Officer, *Phone:* (202) 564-2602.

Applications Sent by Fax or E-mail Will Not Be Accepted

II. Commonly Asked Questions About Environmental Justice

How Does EPA Define Environmental Justice?

EPA 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. Fair treatment means that no one group of people, including racial, ethnic, or socioeconomic groups, should bear a disproportionate share of the negative environmental consequences resulting from industrial, municipal, and commercial operations or the

execution of federal, state, local, and tribal environmental programs and policies. Meaningful involvement means that: (1) Potentially affected community residents have an appropriate opportunity to participate in decisions about a proposed activity that will affect their environment and/or health; (2) the public's contribution can influence the regulatory agency's decision; (3) the concerns of all participants involved will be considered in the decision-making process; and (4) the decision-makers seek out and facilitate the involvement of those potentially affected.

What Is the EPA's Commitment to Environmental Justice?

EPA Administrator Christine Todd Whitman reaffirmed the Agency's commitment to environmental justice as the "goal to be achieved for all communities and persons across this Nation * * * when everyone, regardless of race, culture, or income, enjoys the same degree of protection from environmental and health hazards and equal access to the decision-making process to have a healthy environment in which to live, learn and work." In her August 9, 2001, memorandum, the Administrator directed EPA's senior managers and staff to integrate environmental justice into all EPA policies, programs, and activities. Consequently, in FY 2003, each Regional and Headquarters Office developed Environmental Justice Action Plans to transform the Administrator's words into action, with strategic goals and measurable results. Each Regional and Headquarters Office began implementing these action plans which are available at: <http://epa.gov/compliance/environmentaljustice>. Inherently strategic in nature and deemed as "works in progress," these action plans represent the commitments of each office over the next 1-5 years.

Consistent with this commitment, EPA, through OEJ, will provide financial assistance to those community-based organizations who wish to engage in capacity-building initiatives, and also utilize constructive engagement and collaborative problem-solving to seek viable solutions for their community's environmental and/or public health issues. Moreover, OEJ staff members will provide hands-on technical assistance to those grantee community-based organizations throughout the duration of the grant.

What Does the OEJ Mean by Capacity-Building?

Capacity-building refers to the mechanisms a community uses which