

Questions & Answers for FOA # CDC-RFA-EH17-1702

Enhancing Innovation and Capabilities of the Environmental Public Health Tracking Network

Q: What are the informational conference call/webinar details?

A: The Informational Call will be held on Friday, April 28, 2017 from 12:30 PM – 1:30 PM EST. The Conference Call #: 1-888-326-7492 and the Access code: 63177769#.

Q: I am working to submit an application for CDC-RFA-EH17-1702 that's due May 31st, 2017. With regards to this, is it possible to submit this application through ASSIST?

A: Applications need to be submitted through www.Grants.Gov.

Q: Page 4, there is reference to a CDC logic model that should inform the purpose, strategies & activities, (and subsequently, the work plan and evaluation and performance measurement plan). The model appears to be missing in the description section of the instructions packet.

A: The logic model is posted here <https://www.cdc.gov/nceh/tracking/foa.htm> and on www.grants.gov under the 'Related Documents' tab.

Q: Page 4, Does the 75% criteria for core activities make only existing grantees eligible?

A: No, this is an open competition. We created this set of activities through an evaluation process, not just current recipient requirements. These activities are critical for creating and sustaining a successful Tracking program.

Q: Page 4, there is a requirement to complete 2 advanced activities per year – is this 2 per category per year, or 2 total advanced strategies per year?

A: 2 total advanced strategies per year.

Q: Page 4, when choosing advanced activities, can any combination of 2 activities from any category be selected (ex. 1 IT, 1 Communications), or 2 from each category?

A: Awardees must select and implement at least 2 new advanced activities per year, from any category.

Q: Page 7, there are no advanced strategies listed under Program Services Strategy II. Is this accurate?

A: Yes, there are no advanced strategies listed under Program Services Strategy II.

Q: Could you please provide an example (or more detail) about what a “partnership plan” (page 7) looks like?

A: A partnership plan provides a list of your partners and a brief description of how they will contribute to completing objectives.

Q: Page 8, Emerging Topical Activities (to submit if funding is available): Question: Is funding available for Emerging Topical Activities? If yes, should we budget for these as separate line items?

A: Funding for emerging topical activities is not available during Year 1. Applicants should not provide information about potential emerging topical activities in their application. Funding may become available in future years and the program will provide more information about applying for supplemental funding in annual continuation guidance.

Funding for emerging topical activities is not guaranteed, and will be based on overall program funding. Information about applying for supplemental funding will be provided in annual continuance guidance; applicants do not need to provide information about potential emerging topical activity projects in their application.

Q: Page 9 letters of support. Instructions imply all listed are required. Please see specific questions below:

Q: Can the letter of collaboration mentioned in #1 (signed by both the state (or local) Secretary/Director of Health or equivalent and the state (or local) Secretary/Director of Environmental Quality/Protection/Natural Resources or the equivalent agency/department) contain evidence of the partnership (first bullet)?

A: Yes.

Q: Can the second bullet just be our existing DUA's?

A: Yes.

Q: The application implies that a letter of collaboration (#1) is different than a letter of liaison (#2). Can they be combined since they may be the same individual?

A: Yes, they can be combined if they are the same individual.

Q: Since we are not a local health department, does #3 apply to us? #3 states “Eligible local health departments must provide a letter from responsible state authority assuring that activities related to this program will be coordinated with the State Health Department, and that the state will cooperate in providing relevant data to support NCDMs on the local and CDC network portals.”

A: No, #3 only applies to applicants at the local health department.

Q: We don't routinely use data or collaborate with our lab...If this is the case, does #4 apply?

A: No, you are not required to collaborate with your laboratory. #4 was included for any current and possible future collaborations.

Q: Page 9, there are a number of places where "external" or "groups outside of traditional public health practice" are listed – in the partnership development context, but also in the CDC description of long-term outcomes (50% of requests for EPHT data, etc., should be these outside groups). What does this mean? Would a Regional Planning Association count? Hospitals? Community Advocacy? Academia?

A: An important component of this announcement is to build partnerships with both traditional and non-traditional (external, groups outside of traditional public health practice, etc.) partnerships to assist in completing and enhancing activities. Regional Planning Associations, hospitals, community advocates, and academia may be applicable.

Q: Page 10, what is the meaning of section iv and N/A?

A: N/A means not applicable. The Tracking Branch did not include requirements for the 'Funding Strategy' section.

Q: Page 14, can we use alternate page orientation (e.g., Can we have the workplan in landscape orientation?)

A: Yes.

Q: Page 14, if we have tables (e.g., workplan), are we able to use a smaller font than the 12 point that is mentioned on page 22 of the FOA? For example, can we use a 10 point font in tables?

A: No, only 12 point font is acceptable.

Q: It is stated that we don't have to use the example workplan template (page 14) that is provided but we do need to include all required elements (i.e., strategies, activities, performance measures (including data sources, targets, timeframes), entity responsible, core and advanced activities)? Do we need to include all of these required elements in the workplan table? Or can we include more basic information in the workplan table and then provide detail (including all required elements) within the narrative?

A: Applicants need to include all required elements in the workplan, but they can include additional elements as needed.

Q: In regards to position descriptions (page 14, last bullet of "Staffing Plan and Project Management Structure), do these need to be the multi-page documents that are developed when hiring a position? Or are simple paragraphs providing a brief overview of the position (and what it entails) sufficient?

A: This section should be paragraphs providing a brief overview of the position and their roles and responsibilities.

Q: Page 14 and page 30, Staffing Plan and Project Management Structure: Position Descriptions and resumes are described here. Question: Where do the position descriptions and resumes go in the application? To save space can we submit the position descriptions with the budget narrative? Can we submit the resumes as a separate attachment, for example as an optional project narrative file?

A: Resumes and position descriptions are acceptable attachments; applicants can upload as PDF files as part of their application at www.grants.gov.

Q: Page 16, item 13, what is the Tracking Program's Data Re-Release Plan? The link provided is broken?

A: The link was corrected - <https://www.cdc.gov/nceh/tracking/foa.htm>.

Q: Page 19, the Approximate Average award is listed at \$785,000 with a ceiling of \$1,200,000 per budget period. Does this mean we can submit an annual budget request anywhere between those 2 amounts?

A: The 'ceiling' is the max amount we can fund for this award. You can submit an annual budget request up to \$1,200,000 per budget period.

Q: Page 22, should the approach section of the project narrative list all anticipated strategies and activities for the full 5 year funding period, or should it more closely reflect the work plan, which is to focus on the next year? Should the 2 new advanced activities be specified in the narrative for all 5 years?

A: The project narrative should list all anticipated strategies and activities for year 1 of your application. The 2 new advanced activities should be specific for year 1.

Q: Target Populations, Health Disparities is referred to in section D "Application and Submission Information," on page 23. Here, it says, "Applicants must address the Target Populations and Health Disparities requirements as described in the CDC Project Description." However, there is no text in the CDC Project Description on Health Disparities ... only a notation of N/A on page 10.

A: Number 2. Target Populations and Health Disparities on page 23 is boilerplate language from GMO. This section states that "applicants must address the Target Populations and Health Disparities requirements as described in the CDC Project Description." The Tracking Branch did not include health disparities requirements in the CDC Project Description section, so applicants are not required to provide information specifically on addressing health disparities in their application.

Q: Page 24, although this is a new 5 year cycle, we wanted to confirm that we only need to submit a budget narrative for Year 1?

A: Correct. We will ask for a budget and budget justification each year because all activity is contingent on the availability of funding.

Q: Page 25, there is no link to the "Clear Communication Index." The most current guide identified on the internet is from May 2013: <https://www.cdc.gov/healthliteracy/pdf/clear-communication-user-guide.pdf>?

A: The application does not include a link to the CDC Clear Communication Index. That is the correct link: <https://www.cdc.gov/healthliteracy/pdf/clear-communication-user-guide.pdf>.

Q: Page 30, Budget, 2nd bullet: "Does the budget allow for a minimum of two project staff and for management staff to attend two yet-undetermined CDC hosted meetings or training sessions for each budget year?" Does this mean budget for a minimum of 3 attendees per meeting? Is that right?

A: Yes. A minimum of 3 attendees to attend two yet-undetermined CDC hosted meetings or training sessions for each budget year.

Q: Page 33, will a template be made available for the evaluation plan?

A: An evaluation reporting template for required performance measures will be provided to awardees.

Q: In regards to the optional attachments (i.e., appendices) on page 37, are we allowed to submit any appendices beyond those that are listed here? For example, could we include an appendix of our logic model? Could we include an appendix of screen shots of our portal or resources?

A: Yes, you can include a logic model under the 'Other Information' section on Page 37. It will be categorized as an organizational chart.