EPA PREPARED: Building evidence-based tools to integrate community experiences

Increasing Community Preparedness to Apply for EPA's Community Change Grants (CCG) Program

CCG grants provide up to \$20 million per award to support placebased approaches that address environmental and climate challenges. The program supports projects that focus on pollution reduction, climate resiliency and adaptation, and meaningful involvement of communities in governmental processes. The CCG program provides funding for targeted infrastructure upgrades and community-driven projects to address environmental and climate justice injustices. The program is funded by the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) and the Environmental and Climate Justice Program (ECJP).



U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Data Collection for Identifying Community Challenges in CCG Grant Applications

To be considered for a CCG grant, your proposed project must benefit a **disadvantaged community** according to **EPA's IRA Disadvantaged Communities**.

Under the first sections of the project workplan, you have to describe your community, and the challenges experienced by the populations in your area, showcasing the project area using a Project Area Map. Note that the Project Area Map is required only for Track I applications, however the description of environmental and climate justice challenges in EPA IRA Disadvantaged Communities is still relevant for Track II applications.

Project Area Maps

A Project Area Map can be illustrated as an outlined boundary using EPA's EJScreen Tool. The Project Area Map should demonstrate the area census block groups that are designated as disadvantaged communities according to the EPA IRA Disadvantaged Communities.





CCG Program Tracks

Track I: Community-Driven Investments for Change Projects that support Climate Action and Pollution Reduction Strategies with requests \$10-20 million per award. Track II: Meaningful Engagement for Equitable Governance Projects that facilitate the engagement with requests \$1-3 million per award.

Relevant Grant Application Sections

Executive Summary & Section B. Project Workplan (Part 1. Community-Driven Investments for Change. 1.1. Community Vision Description, Community Description & Community Challenges)

Executive Summary & Section B. Project Workplan (Track II Project Objectives)

To describe the environmental, climate and other challenges of your community, you may use the EJScreen and the Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool (CEJST) platforms to acquire quantitative data. However, some of the community needs may not be reflected in the databases but can be captured through community input. These insights should also inform your project plan.

GRANT WRITING TIP! The community challenges outlined in your application should be closely linked to your proposed project, demonstrating how your project goals will effectively address climate change and pollution issues in your community.

Example parameters you may use to describe community challenges paired with the CCG Climate Action & Pollution Reduction Strategies

Climate Action Strategy 1: Green Infrastructure and Nature-Based Solutions Climate Action Strategy 5: Community Resilience Hubs

Relevant CEJST Indicators

- **Climate Change** [Expected agriculture loss rate; Expected building loss rate; Expected population loss rate; Projected flood risk; Projected wildfire risk]
- **Housing** [Historic underinvestment; Housing cost; Lack of green space; Lack of indoor plumbing; Lead paint]
- Water and Wastewater [Underground storage tanks and releases; Wastewater discharge]

Relevant EJScreen Indicators

- Climate Change [Flood Risk, Wildfire Risk, 100 year floodplain, Sea level rise, Extreme heat
 - Critical Service Gaps [Housing Burdens]

Climate Action Strategy 2: Mobility and Transportation Options for Preventing Air Pollution and Improving Public Health and Climate Resilience

Relevant CEJST Indicators

- Health [Asthma; Diabetes; Heart disease; Low life expectancy]
- **Transportation** [Diesel particulate matter; Transportation barriers; Traffic proximity and volume]

Relevant EJScreen Indicators

- Environmental Air Quality Parameters [Particulate matter PM2.5, Ozone; Nitrogen dioxide; Diesel particulate matter; Toxic releases to air; Traffic proximity]
 - Critical Service Gaps [Transportation Access, Food Desert]

Climate Action Strategy 3: Energy-Efficient, Healthy, and Resilient Housing and Buildings Climate Action Strategy 4: Microgrid Installation for Community Energy Resilience

Relevant CEJST Indicators

- **Energy** [Energy costs; Particulate matter of 2.5 micrometers or less (PM 2.5) in the air]
- **Housing** [Historic underinvestment; Housing cost; Lack of green space; Lack of indoor plumbing; Lead paint]

Climate Action Strategy 6: Brownfield Redevelopment for Emissions Reduction and Climate Resilience

Climate Action Strategy 7: Waste Reduction and Management to Support a Circular Economy

Relevant CEJST Indicators

- **Housing** [Historic underinvestment; Housing cost; Lack of green space; Lack of indoor plumbing; Lead paint]
- Legacy Pollution [Abandoned mine land present; Formerly Used Defense Site (FUDS) present; Proximity to hazardous waste facilities; Proximity to Superfund or National Priorities List (NPL) sites; Proximity to Risk Management Plan (RMP) sites]
- Water and Wastewater [Underground storage tanks and releases; Wastewater discharge]

Relevant EJScreen Indicators

- Environmental Pollution Parameters [Lead paint; Superfund proximity; RMP Facility Proximity; Hazardous Waste Proximity; Underground Storage Tanks; Wastewater discharge; Drinking Water non-compliance]
- **Public Health Parameters** [Asthma; Low life expectancy; Heart disease; Cancer; Persons with Disabilities]

Climate Action Strategy 8: Workforce Development Programs for Occupations that Reduce Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Air Pollutants

Relevant CEJST Indicators

- **Energy** [Energy costs; Particulate matter of 2.5 micrometers or less (PM 2.5) in the air]
- Health [Asthma; Diabetes; Heart disease; Low life expectancy]
- **Transportation** [Diesel particulate matter; Transportation barriers; Traffic proximity and volume]
- Workforce Development [Linguistic isolation; Low median income; Poverty; Unemployment]

Relevant EJScreen Indicators

- Environmental Air Quality Parameters [Particulate matter PM2.5, Ozone; Nitrogen dioxide; Diesel particulate matter; Toxic releases to air; Traffic proximity]
 - Socioeconomic Parameters [People of color; Low income populations; Unemployment; Limited English Proficiency; Less than High School Education]

Pollution Reduction Strategy 1: Indoor Air Quality and Community Health Improvements Pollution Reduction Strategy 2: Outdoor Air Quality and Community Health Improvements

Relevant CEJST Indicators

- **Energy** [Energy costs; Particulate matter of 2.5 micrometers or less (PM 2.5) in the air]
- Health [Asthma; Diabetes; Heart disease; Low life expectancy]
- **Housing** [Historic underinvestment; Housing cost; Lack of green space; Lack of indoor plumbing; Lead paint]
- **Transportation** [Diesel particulate matter; Transportation barriers; Traffic proximity and volume]

Relevant EJScreen Indicators

- Environmental Air Quality Parameters [Particulate matter PM2.5, Ozone; Nitrogen dioxide; Diesel particulate matter; Toxic releases to air; Traffic proximity]
- Public Health Parameters [Asthma; Cancer]
- Socioeconomic Parameters [People of color; Low income populations; Unemployment; Limited English Proficiency; Less than High School Education; Under age 5; Over age 64]

Pollution Reduction Strategy 3: Clean Water Infrastructure to Reduce Pollution Exposure and Increase Overall System Resilience

Pollution Reduction Strategy 4: Safe Management and Disposal of Solid and Hazardous Waste

Relevant CEJST Indicators

- **Housing** [Historic underinvestment; Housing cost; Lack of green space; Lack of indoor plumbing; Lead paint]
- Legacy Pollution [Abandoned mine land present; Formerly Used Defense Site (FUDS) present; Proximity to hazardous waste facilities; Proximity to Superfund or National Priorities List (NPL) sites; Proximity to Risk Management Plan (RMP) sites]
- **Transportation** [Diesel particulate matter; Transportation barriers; Traffic proximity and volume]
- Water and Wastewater [Underground storage tanks and releases; Wastewater discharge]

Relevant EJScreen Indicators

- Environmental Pollution Parameters [Lead paint; Superfund proximity; RMP Facility Proximity; Hazardous Waste Proximity; Underground Storage Tanks; Wastewater discharge; Drinking Water non-compliance]
- **Public Health Parameters** [Asthma; Low life expectancy; Heart disease; Cancer; Persons with Disabilities]

This factsheet provides some examples of how CEJST and EJScreen indicators may be utilized to link community challenges with relevant project goals and strategies. Additional parameters and other quantitative and qualitative data can be used to draft your narrative.

For more information on how to collect data for grant applications, you may see our brief <u>User Guides on Data Collection</u>, <u>CEJST & EJScreen</u>.

What is EPA PREPARED?

The EPA Promoting Readiness and Enhancing Proficiency to Advance Reporting and Data (PREPARED) program at UMass Dartmouth provides capacity-building resources and services to increase community preparedness to apply for, manage, collect and analyze data, and report results for EPA and State Revolving Loan Funds. For more information, scan the QR code to visit the website.

