

Clean Ports Program: Climate and Air Quality Planning Competition

PCFO IGAP Grant Snapshot

May 12, 2024

Agency: Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)	Bureau: Office of Transportation and Air Quality
Application Deadline: May 28, 2024	Max Award: \$3 million

Description

The Climate and Air Quality Planning Competition is poised to fund climate and air quality planning activities at U.S. ports; including emissions inventories, strategy analysis, community engagement, and resiliency measure identification, all of which will build the capacity of port stakeholders to continue to reduce pollution and transition to zero-emissions operations over time.

Eligible Recipients

- Port authority
- State, regional, local, or Tribal agency that has jurisdiction over a port authority or port
- Air pollution control agency
- Private entity that:
 - Applies in partnership with an eligible entity above, **and**
 - Owns, operates, or uses facilities, cargo-handling equipment, transportation equipment, or related technology of a port

Under this funding opportunity, a port is defined as either a water or dry port along the following definitions:

- **Water port:** places on land alongside navigable water (e.g., oceans, rivers, or lakes) with one or more facilities in close proximity for the loading and unloading of passengers or cargo from ships, ferries, and other commercial vessels. This includes facilities that support non-commercial Tribal fishing operations.
- **Dry port:** an intermodal truck-rail facility that is included in the [2024 Federal Highway Administration's \(FHWA\) Intermodal Connector Database](#). These criteria include having more than 50,000 20-foot equivalent units per year or 100 trucks per day, or comprising more than 20 percent of freight volumes handled by any mode within a State.

Eligible Projects

The Climate and Air Quality Planning Competition is designed to fund climate and air quality planning activities focused on one or more ports that fall under the categories of (1) emissions inventory and accounting exercises, (2) strategy analysis and goal setting, (3) stakeholder collaboration and communication, and (4) resilience planning. Note that all applicants are required to include one or more emissions inventory and accounting exercises as part of the project.

Examples of activities under each four categories can be found on Page 6 of the [Notice of Funding Opportunity](#).

Matching Grant Requirements

None required

New or Existing Program

New

Tips for Being Competitive

EPA has established three programmatic priorities for this funding opportunity:

- **Environmental Justice and Disadvantaged Communities:** EPA is committed to advancing the Justice40 Initiative under this grant. Specifically, this program is seeking to prioritize projects that take place in or near communities overburdened by air pollution, including those in designated PM2.5 and Ozone nonattainment areas for the EPA's National Ambient Air Quality Standards, and with high concentrations of diesel particulate matter (PM). The EPA will evaluate applications on their benefits to disadvantaged communities experiencing poor air quality and the quality and extent of community engagement efforts.
- **Pollution Reduction:** The EPA encourages applicants to focus on and seek funds for planning projects that will best enable them to build capacity to reduce port emissions and transition to zero-emission (ZE) operations over time. For example, applications primarily focused on resiliency planning will not score as favorably as those that include a strong focus on planning activities directly tied to emissions reductions and ZE technology deployment such as emissions inventory development, ZE technology feasibility assessments, and community engagement efforts to identify and prioritize emissions sources to address.
- **Nonattainment areas:** To help ensure the program's goal of deploying ZE technologies in communities burdened by poor air quality, the EPA plans to award a minimum of \$750 million for projects in nonattainment areas across both Clean Ports Program funding opportunities.

Labor Requirements Section 6 of the Workplan is focused on Workforce Development. In this section, EPA encourages applicants to prepare for the workforce impacts that may result from their proposed planning activities. Under this sub-criterion, the EPA will evaluate applicants on the quality and extent to which the application will carry out a workforce impact analysis related to ZE technology deployment or other emissions reduction efforts as part of the project. Applications may request funding to support workforce planning activities tied to a proposed activity.

Partners Required Private entities must partner with another eligible non-private entity through a Statutory Partnership. The Statutory Partnership application consists of one eligible private entity who enters into a Statutory Partnership Agreement with one or more Statutory Partners (other eligible non-private entities). In a Statutory Partnership application, the eligible private entity is considered the grant recipient and is responsible for carrying out the grant activities if the application is selected for funding.

All other partners, including eligible and non-eligible entities, will be considered Collaborating Entities. EPA strongly encourages Letters of Commitment from Collaborating Entities. Collaborating Entities may include, but are not limited to, fleet operators, air pollution control agencies, utilities, and academic organizations.

Agency Contact cleanports@epa.gov

Upcoming Events There are several webinar recordings available on the [EPA Ports Initiative website](#).

Total Allocation \$150 million

Anticipated Award Date December 2024

Resources

- [Clean Ports Program Page - EPA](#)
- [Request for Applications - EPA](#)
- [Grant Listing - Grants.gov](#)