Air Quality Prevent Nonattainment Competitive Grants

2021-23 Funding Guidelines

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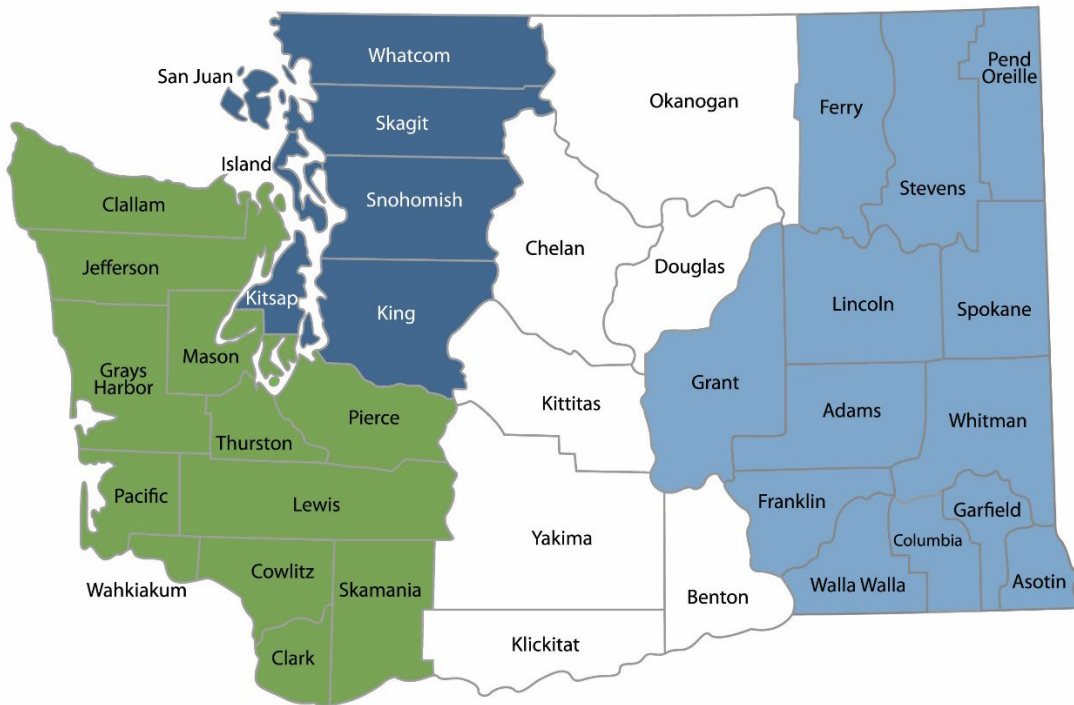
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[1] www.ecology.wa.gov/contact

Department of Ecology's Regional Offices

Map of Counties Served

| Southwest Region 360-407-6300 | Northwest Region 206-594-0000 | Central Region 509-575-2490 | Eastern Region 509-329-3400 |

Region	Counties served	Mailing Address	Phone
Southwest	Clallam, Clark, Cowlitz, Grays Harbor, Jefferson, Mason, Lewis, Pacific, Pierce, Skamania, Thurston, Wahkiakum	PO Box 47775 Olympia, WA 98504	360-407-6300
Northwest	Island, King, Kitsap, San Juan, Skagit, Snohomish, Whatcom	PO Box 330316 Shoreline, WA 98133	206-594-0000
Central	Benton, Chelan, Douglas, Kittitas, Klickitat, Okanogan, Yakima	1250 W Alder St Union Gap, WA 98903	509-575-2490
Eastern	Adams, Asotin, Columbia, Ferry, Franklin, Garfield, Grant, Lincoln, Pend Oreille, Spokane, Stevens, Walla Walla, Whitman	4601 N Monroe Spokane, WA 99205	509-329-3400
Headquarters	Across Washington	PO Box 46700 Olympia, WA 98504	360-407-6000

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Washington State Department of Ecology

Olympia, WA

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Table of Contents

Introduction

The Washington Department of Ecology's 2021-2023 Air Quality grant cycle offers funding for projects designed to [maintain national standards for air quality in Washington.](#)[2] This work is known as "preventing nonattainment" or "PNA."

In May 2021, the Washington State Legislature approved a biennium budget of **$2.4 million** to expand and enhance Ecology's PNA program, which includes grant funding. The 2021-2023 grant cycle is a pilot project aimed at building and better-formalizing our existing grant program.

The information in this document provides guidance for PNA grant applicants, including eligibility requirements, project categories, application process, and the criteria we use to evaluate and award grants. All grant applicants should review and understand these guidelines along with the [Administrative Requirements for Recipients of Ecology Grants and Loans ("the Yellow Book")](#)[3] before entering into a grant agreement with Ecology.

Purpose

If the air quality in a geographic area meets or is cleaner than the national standard, it is called an "attainment area." Areas that do not meet the national standard are called "nonattainment areas." Nonattainment areas must develop implementation plans outlining how they will attain and maintain the standards by reducing emissions from criteria air pollutants. Currently, almost all of Washington State is in attainment, yet there are areas of concern.

The purpose of PNA ("prevent nonattainment") grants is to fund innovative, locally lead projects and solutions to resolve current air pollution problems, reduce production of air pollutants, and prevent all regions in Washington from reaching the federal designation of nonattainment for air quality.

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[2] https://ecology.wa.gov/Regulations-Permits/Plans-policies/Areas-meeting-and-not-meeting-air-standards

[3] https://apps.ecology.wa.gov/publications/documents/1701004.pdf

Eligibility Requirements

PNA grant funds can be provided to public entities located in Washington State.

The organization's grant-funded PNA project must demonstrate reductions for one or more criteria pollutants:

- particulate matter (PM2.5, PM10).

- ozone (and precursors VOCs, NOx, and SO2).

- carbon monoxide.

- lead.

Priority is given to areas that are within or impact the state's Area of Concern for Criteria Pollutants.[4]

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[4] https://ecology.wa.gov/Regulations-Permits/Plans-policies/Areas-meeting-and-not-meeting-air-standards

Project Categories and Examples

Direct pollution reduction projects

These projects focus on efforts to reduce emissions of criteria pollutants and provide measurable metrics. Some general direct pollution reduction projects could involve the following:

- Alternatives to outdoor burning. Example: Creating a community chipping program or curbside/community collection of yard waste.

- Certain equipment purchases. Example: Purchasing equipment such as chippers, grinders, and clean burning devices. Note: Facility construction does not qualify.

- Establishing commute trip reduction/rideshare programs. Example: Providing incentives for reducing commutes or using alternative means of transportation such as walking, biking, carpooling, public transit, etc.

Outreach projects

These projects focus on education programs, outreach, and other media campaigns to target a specific air quality issue. This may include messaging to improve air quality knowledge, how to reduce pollution, and other topics. Outreach campaigns and programs can also be components within other projects. These may be dedicated tasks within a larger project, and are generally still eligible for funding. The following activities are typical for outreach and education projects:

- Coordinating radio public service announcements, local newspaper, magazine advertisements, television advertisements, billboards, etc.

- Creating a promoted social media presence or plan.

- Participating in or coordinating educational school programs.

Data collection and monitoring projects

These projects concentrate on improving data collection or availability and accessibility of air quality data. The following activities are some examples of data collection projects:

- Establishing new air quality monitor or sensor networks. (Requirements & standards must be met. Review by the Monitoring Advisory Committee and Quality Assurance Project Plan necessary.)

- Analysis of existing data to determine current/future areas to focus either outreach and/or pollution reduction projects.

- Research program to determine sources of air quality pollutants and ways to reduce them.

- Developing new data monitoring or delivery systems.

Application and Evaluation Process

Submitting your application

- **Email your application to**: Kari Johnson, Washington Department of Ecology, Air Quality Prevent Nonattainment Coordinator at kari.johnson@ecy.wa.gov.

- **Application must be received by November 1, 2021.**

You may submit applications for multiple projects. However, Ecology may limit recipients to one grant if the amount of funding requested by all applicants exceeds the biennial budget. Ecology may also fund only a portion of the amount requested in an application.

Application screening and evaluation

Once received, applications will go through a screening process. Applications that fail the screening questions may be determined ineligible for funds. Applications that pass the screening process will move to the evaluation and scoring phase.

The following questions will be used in the application screening:

- Has the applicant answered all questions?

- Is the applicant a public entity?

- Are the project's estimated start and end dates within the biennium ending June 30, 2023?

- Is the targeted project area within Washington State?

- Does the project target one of the air quality criteria pollutants?

- Did they answer "Yes" to Question #13? (If they answered "No," the project is ineligible.)

- Was the application submitted on time?

- Have they signed and dated the application?

Evaluation criteria and scoring

All eligible applications will be evaluated against a scoring matrix. The scoring criteria point values are as follows:

Prevent nonattainment specific

Geographic location:

    A. Within an area of concern and under Ecology jurisdiction (30 points).

2021 Areas of Concern Map[5]

    B. Within an area of concern and under local clean air jurisdiction (20 points).

WA Clean Air Agencies map[6]

    C. Not within an area of monitored coverage, but within an area of high exposure ranking on the DOH map[7]. High exposure is defined as anything valued 7 or greater on the Environmental Health Disparities layer (10 points).

    D. In a monitored area, but with no exceedances. Or outside monitored coverage, and with no recorded health exposures on DOH map (0 points).

Target pollutants:

Ranking of elevated pollutant levels based on Areas of Concern Map.

    A. Ozone (20 points).

    B. PM10 or PM2.5.

- Red (30 points).
- Orange (20 points).
- Light Orange (10 points).

    C. More than one criteria pollutant (30 points).

    D. Not on list of criteria pollutants (0 points).

Scope of work:

    A. Clear goals with measureable benefits and actual emission reduction (i.e. dust mitigation, commute trip program) (20 points).

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[5] https://ecology.wa.gov/Regulations-Permits/Plans-policies/Areas-meeting-and-not-meeting-air-standards
[6] https://ecology.wa.gov/About-us/Accountability-transparency/Partnerships-committees/Clean-air-agencies
[7] https://fortress.wa.gov/doh/wtn/wtnibl/

B. Goal and tasks have air quality benefit. Project does not result in monitored emission reduction (i.e. monitoring work, outreach, etc.) (10 points).

C. No connection to air quality improvement or pollution reduction (0 points).

Health:

Review DOH map[8], Environmental Health Disparities, Socioeconomic Factors, Environmental Exposures, click on pollutant layer.

Note: The area of the project's coverage and census tract(s) will vary from project to project

A. Rank of 9-10 (20 points).

B. Rank of 7-8 (10 points).

C. Rank of 0-6 (0 points).

Environmental justice

Environmental justice:

Review DOH map[9], Environmental Health Disparities, Socioeconomic Factors.

Note: The area of the project's coverage and census tract(s) will vary from project to project.

A. Rank of 9 to 10 (25 points).

B. Rank of 7 to 8 (15 points).

C. Rank of 0 to 6 (0 points).

Community benefit:

A. Project provides direct benefits to underrepresented, underserved, or highly impacted populations (up to 25 points).

B. No stated benefit to vulnerable or sensitive populations (0 points).

Project development / implementation

Project schedule:

A. Project schedule is clear, consistent, and reasonable (5 points).

B. Project schedule is provided but little detail (2 points).

C. No project schedule/timeline provided (0 points).

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[8] https://fortress.wa.gov/doh/wtn/wtnibl/
[9] https://fortress.wa.gov/doh/wtn/wtnibl/

Applicant readiness:

    A. Ready to proceed in less than 3 months (10 points).

    B. Ready to proceed within 5 months (5 points).

    C. Ready to proceed within 6 months (3 points).

    D. Not ready to proceed within 6 months (0 points).

Applicant structure:

    A. Internal structure is intact and ready to begin (10 points).

    B. Needs to set-up internal processes, administrative protocol, resource acquirement, approvals, or hire/assign staff before beginning (5 points).

    C. No defined internal processes (0 points).

Budget proposal:

    A. Provides cost estimates, quarterly breakdown, and is reasonable (up to 10 points).

    B. Budget provided but little detail (5 points).

    C. No budget provided (0 points).

Cost effectiveness:

    A. Applicant cost share at or above 90% (10 points).

    B. Applicant cost share of 50% to 89% (5 points).

    C. Applicant cost share of 25% to 49% (2 points).

    D. Applicant cost share of 0% to 24% (0 points).

Community support:

    A. More than three documented support from residents, stakeholders, etc. (i.e. surveys, emails, letters of support, supporting data) (15 points).

    B. 1 to 3 documented support from residents, stakeholders, etc. (10 points).

    C. No support by key players/partners that should be involved (0 points).

A total of 210 points is possible. A committee of Ecology employees will evaluate the applications and conduct the scoring evaluation. Ecology will develop a ranked list of all applications. Grants are awarded to the highest-ranking applications.

A note on Ecology's use of the [Department of Health's Washington Tracking Network](https://fortress.wa.gov/doh/wtn/wtnibl/)[10] (the "DOH map"): Ecology will use the Environmental Health Disparities (EHD) index to determine which areas are considered highly impacted communities. To view your community's ranking,

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[10] https://fortress.wa.gov/doh/wtn/wtnibl/

select "Environmental Health Disparities V 1.1." Then select the "locate yourself" icon and enter the zip code where your project is located. The EHD ranking legend on the right of the screen.

Selection announcement

After final scoring is complete, Ecology will notify each applicant whether their project was selected or not, and the next steps. Upon award acceptance, Ecology will contact awardees to negotiate their grant agreement.