

**Questions and Answers for the Fiscal Year 2017-18  
Clean Mobility Voucher Pilot Program Solicitation  
Preliminary Applicant Teleconference**

**October 23, 2018**

**Introduction**

On October 23, 2018, California Air Resources Board (CARB) staff held the Preliminary Applicant Teleconference to answer questions regarding the Fiscal Year (FY) 2017-18 Statewide Administrator for Clean Mobility Options Projects for Disadvantaged Communities (Clean Mobility Voucher Pilot Program) Solicitation (Solicitation). The Clean Mobility Voucher Pilot Program was approved in the FY 2017-18 Funding Plan for Clean Transportation Incentives. This solicitation is different from the last two car sharing solicitations in FY 2014-15 and FY 2016-17 as this seeks a Statewide Administrator to help smaller entities and communities with limited resources to fund small-scale car sharing, and ridesharing projects for disadvantaged communities. The Statewide Administrator is responsible to verify projects meet the eligibility requirements set by CARB, and distribute vouchers on a first-come, first-served basis to eligible applicants for small-scale Clean Mobility Options Projects.

The questions answered in this document include both questions received via email before the teleconference and questions asked during the teleconference. Staff encourages applicants to read this document as CARB has provided more written detail than what was discussed at the teleconference. The following written responses take precedence over verbal responses provided at the teleconference.

The Questions and Answers document for the Final Applicant Teleconference held on November 6, 2018, will be posted soon.

**Clarification Note:** This solicitation should have included a 5 percent cap on administrative costs. Applicants should take this into consideration when creating a budget. Administrative costs are indirect costs, which are not tied directly or solely to the project, such as distributed administration and general administrative services; non-project related contracts or subscriptions (items such as membership dues, general internet services, magazine subscriptions, utilities, etc.), rent and office space, phones and telephone services, printing, or mailing services not associated with staff working on the project; or any other costs that are not directly and fully incurred to support the grant. All other costs are considered project implementation costs. Costs that are not considered administrative costs include personnel costs, memorandums of understanding, application development, application processing, and other costs directly tied to the project.

## Grantee Eligibility

1. Question: While lead applicants must be either government entities or non-profits, are for-profit companies allowed as subcontractors?

Answer: This Solicitation is only open to applications from government agencies (federal, state, local, etc.) and California non-profit organizations. Eligible applicants may partner with or subcontract with other entities such as for-profit companies, for specific aspects of the work, including but not limited to, outreach and education activities, facilitating workshops, funding application development, etc. All subcontractors information must be provided as described in the Clean Mobility Voucher Pilot Program Grant Application (Appendix A, page 4).

2. Question: What is the definition of “California nonprofit organization”, is this limited to 501c nonprofit?

Answer: As described in Section VI of the Solicitation, a California non-profit organization is defined as a nonprofit organization with at least one office located in California, that has tax-exempt status with the Internal Revenue Service under Internal Revenue Code Section 501 (only 501(c)(3) organizations are allowed) and are also tax exempt under California state law.

3. Question: Are transit operators eligible for the grant?

Answer: Per the Solicitation, Section VI. Eligible Grantee, this competitive solicitation is open to federal, State, or local government entities, or non-profit organizations that have tax-exempt status with the Internal Revenue Service under Internal Revenue Code Section 501(c)(3) and are also tax-exempt under California state law. A transit operator must fit into one of these categories to be eligible as a grantee.

4. Question: What is the selection process to ensure the administrator has specific experience working with disadvantaged communities?

Answer: The scoring criteria doesn't specifically require having experience working with disadvantaged communities, however, as outlined in Section XII (A) of the Solicitation (page 14) as part of the Applicant Qualifications and Resources to Implement the Program, scoring will be based upon the applicant's ability to successfully act as the grantee based on its experience and/or expertise and history of administering and implementing similar incentive programs, car sharing or ridesharing programs, creating streamlined funding application, and working with community-based organizations, relevant local agencies, state agencies, and local air districts. Furthermore, per Section XII (D) of the Solicitation, the applicants will be evaluated based on their ability to develop an outreach plan, including a strategy to engage, build partnerships, and support community-based organizations and other groups that are representative of the target audiences (i.e., tribal, rural, low-income residents, and disadvantaged communities).

## Eligible Projects to Receive Voucher Funding

5. Question: What are the eligibility criteria to apply for clean mobility voucher funds?

Answer: The criteria and minimum requirements will be determined by CARB through the work group process after the Statewide Administrator has been awarded and the Grant Agreement has been executed. As described in the Sample Implementation Manual (Appendix B, Section 1[A]) The Sample Implementation Manual for the FY 2017-18 Clean Mobility Voucher Pilot Program (Implementation Manual) provides examples of some of the necessary definitions, explanations, and processes associated with those minimum requirements. The criteria will include, but not be limited to the following:

- Voucher applicant requirements (non-profit, community-based organization, etc.)
- Vehicle and equipment eligibility requirements (zero-emission vehicles, bicycles, electric bicycles, etc.)
- Type of eligible project models (car sharing, bike sharing, electric bike sharing, etc.)
- Definition of the “small-scale” project
- Eligible amount of voucher funds for each project
- Project participants (end-users) eligibility requirements

6. Question: What is the largest or smallest size of vouchers this project covers? Is there a minimum or maximum size?

Answer: The criteria for eligible amount of voucher(s) for each project has not been determined yet. Please see the answer to Question 5.

7. Question: What is the process for approving and distributing voucher(s) to eligible projects?

Answer: The process for approving and distributing the clean mobility voucher(s) to eligible projects will be developed after the grant execution. Please see Section VII (D) of the Solicitation for an example of voucher processing.

8. Question: Does CARB have any guidance for a party that is considering applying for the administrator role and would also like to be a project developer? Could it be permissible to play both parts?

Answer: No, the Statewide Administrator cannot be an operator of a project receiving voucher funds under this program.

9. Question: Does CARB envision funding for customized projects, such as a \$2 million bike share network in a city? Does this type of project fit the mold of the voucher concept?

Answer: Bike sharing is considered an eligible model for clean mobility options project under the Clean Mobility Voucher Pilot Program, however the criteria for eligible amount of voucher(s) for each project has not been determined yet.

10. Question: Under this project, can CARB reimburse people for vehicle leases, ride hail or ride sharing fees, and of other clean mobility services for an existing transportation provider?

Answer: An existing transportation provider could be eligible for receiving voucher funds for vehicle leases, ride hail or ride sharing fees under this program. However, project costs that have occurred prior to submitting the voucher application are not reimbursable by the Statewide Administrator.

## Budget

11. Question: What is the expenditure deadline for this grant funding?

Answer: The Legislature has directed CARB to ensure funds are encumbered by June 30, 2019 and funds must be liquidated according to the expenditure deadline, by the grantee no later than June 30, 2021. The final request for payment and Final Report shall be received by CARB no later than March 30, 2021. Please see Section V of the Solicitation (Program Timeline, page 3).

12. Question: Page 3 of the grant solicitation notes "The FY 2017-2018 grant funds are required to be encumbered by June 30, 2019 and expended by June 30, 2021." Would you please elaborate on what's meant by "encumbered"? Does it mean all clean mobility projects that are to be supported with FY 2017-2018 funding have to be selected/approved by June 30, 2019?

Answer: No, June 30, 2019 is the deadline for CARB to have the funds encumbered. This requires that a grant agreement with the selected Administrator be finalized and fully executed by May 31, 2019.

13. Question: Can CARB provide any guidance as to the balance it hopes to see regarding funding projects vs. state administrator costs?

Answer: We expect that the majority of grant funds will be spent on funding projects.

14. Question: How soon can the administrator get payment for voucher project costs?

Answer: Per the Draft Sample Grant Agreement (Appendix B, Section H[3]), the Grantee may submit an application for an initial disbursement of up to 10 percent of the total grant amount (\$1,700,000) as seed money to support initial administration of the Clean Mobility Voucher Pilot Program and to process clean mobility voucher applications quickly after the Grant Agreement has been signed and upon availability of funds. The Statewide Administrator may submit a request to CARB for advance

payment to cover the approved voucher funds. There will be a system in place to make sure there are enough funds available in the Grantee's account to pay for the approved vouchers.

15. Question: On page 6 of the Solicitation, Figure 1 states in box 3 that "The administrator would reserve funds to cover project costs." In box 7 states that "The Administrator would approve the voucher and provide reimbursement for the vehicles/equipment/infrastructure..." Whose funds are being reserved? The Administrator's organization/agency or CARB's? In other words, is CARB expecting the Administrator's organization/agency to provide the funds up front and then be reimbursed by CARB? If so, how quickly would the Administrator's organization/agency be reimbursed?

Answer: CARB may approve advance payments to the Statewide Administrator to cover the approved voucher funds. The Administrator will not be required to provide any voucher funds upfront and out of pocket if the requirements for requesting and receiving advance payments have been met. There will be a system in place to make sure there are enough funds available in the Statewide Administrator's account to pay for the approved vouchers.

16. Question: Are there any requirements for match funding or in-kind contributions?

Answer: There is no minimum match funding required under this grant solicitation, however voluntary match funding (including cash match, in kind services, or leveraged funding) will be considered in application scoring as bonus points. Please see Section XII (B) of the Solicitation (Grant Solicitation, page 16).

17. Question: What is the expected turnaround time from when disbursement claims are submitted until they are paid?

Answer: Per the Draft Sample Grant Agreement (Appendix B, Section H [4]), CARB will disburse funds in accordance with the [California Prompt Payment Act, Government Code, Section 927, et seq](#), which is 45 calendar days. All claims must be complete before the 45 day timeline starts.

18. Question: Can monthly recurring costs, such as payroll, rent, and other operating costs directly related to the grant, be billed on a monthly basis, or do they need to be tied to a specific task?

Answer: Yes. Reoccurring costs may be billed on a monthly basis if the grantee meets specific requirements outlined in the Grant Agreement. These requirements are listed in the Draft Sample Grant Agreement (Appendix C, Section H [4]).

19. Question: Is this solicitation for a single award of \$17 million or will it be divided into multiple awards?

Answer: CARB intends to select only one Statewide Administrator.

20. Question: Will the administrator be holding the full \$17 million and managing its release for vouchers, or must the administrator go back to CARB each time voucher funding is needed?

Answer: No, the Administrator will not hold the full \$17 million. The Statewide Administrator may submit a request to CARB for advance payment to cover the approved voucher funds. There will be a system in place to make sure there are enough funds available in the Grantee's account to pay for the approved vouchers.

## Miscellaneous

21. Question: Please further define potential conflicts of interest covered by Attachment 6: "CARB may consider the nature and extent of any potential or apparent conflict of interest in evaluating, considering, or scoring the grant application and may disqualify the applicant at CARB's sole discretion."

Answer: A conflict of interest would exist if the Grantee or a proposed subcontractor has some kind of interest that may impede their ability to impartially complete any of the grant tasks, such as a personal or financial relationship. Some potential types of conflicts include but are not limited to current and former state and public employees, as set forth in Public Contract Code Section 10410 and 10411 and Government Code Sections 1090 and 87401 et seq. if applicable. If an applicant is uncertain whether they may have a conflict of interest, they must submit to CARB a declaration setting forth the relevant details for CARB's consideration, as set forth in the Application (Appendix A- Attachment 6). CARB will evaluate disclosures made by applicants regarding personal or financial relationships that may affect the potential award of the grant agreement.

22. Question: Page 9 of the grant solicitation notes "The CEQA review process...will be determined after the Administrator is selected." Given that the review process may impact program planning (and thus the details of the application), does CARB have any sense of what the CEQA might look like?

Answer: It is difficult for CARB to opine concretely on the CEQA review process until after the Administrator is selected because there may be somewhat different CEQA review needs depending on whether the Administrator is a public agency, whether any other discretionary approvals are required by other local government agencies for the project being funded, etc. If the Administrator is a public entity, it would likely have the primary responsibility for any necessary CEQA documentation – that is, it would likely serve as the "lead agency" under CEQA. However, regardless of which agency serves as the lead agency, CARB expects that most, if not all, of the activities funded by this program will be categorically exempt and will be sited where similar infrastructure already exists.

23. Question: Will the Statewide Administrator be prohibited from contracting to provide services to individual grantee projects? Can Statewide Administrator's subcontractors still provide separate services to these projects?

Answer: The Statewide Administrator or its subcontractor(s) are not allowed to provide individual service(s) to the project operator(s). However, as described in Section VII (D) of the Solicitation, grantee can provide training and education in the format of public forums to prospective groups interested in designing and implementing small-scale car sharing and ridesharing projects for disadvantaged communities.

24. Question: On page 5, under Section VII (B), the Solicitation states that the webpage must include: "Downloadable multilingual outreach and educational materials..." Which languages do you expect the webpage to need to be translated to?

Answer: The application webpage and paper application materials should be available at least in Spanish and English. However, depending on each individual community needs, the outreach and education materials also may be translated to the dominant language for that specific community.

25. Question: What is the timeline for the administrator to launch the project to the public, and when do the voucher projects need to be finished?

Answer: The Statewide Administrator Program can be launched soon after the grant agreement has been executed and CARB has approved and finalized the project criteria, and the Program Implementation Manual through the work group process. Please see Table 1 in the Sample Implementation Manual (page 3, Appendix B). As stated in the Solicitation (Section V, page 3) grant fund is required to be liquidated by the grantee no later than June 30, 2021. Final disbursement requests must be received by CARB no later than March 30, 2021 to ensure adequate time for processing prior to the end of the fiscal year.

26. Question: When CARB first started publicly discussing this state administrator role late last year/early this year, a CARB staff member mentioned the intent to pull together and share a list of organizations, their missions, capacities, etc., to facilitate partnerships related to the solicitation. Was that list ever compiled?

Answer: Yes. CARB has established a voluntary partnership list. If you would like to be added to this list, please send an email to [Ava.Yaghoobirad@arb.ca.gov](mailto:Ava.Yaghoobirad@arb.ca.gov) by 5:00 p.m. PDT on November 7, 2018. CARB will resend the partnership list to those on the list, on November 9, 2018.