

TVA Grant Application Q&A
Through 9/17/2012

1.
 - a. The letters of support we obtained for the previous RFP only mentioned that each recipient would support our request for TVA grant funding, but did not mention the previous “voided” TVA RFP by name. Can we resubmit those letters of support for this TVA proposal? If so, how will they be evaluated (possibly count toward the 25 points of qualifications?), and would the letters count toward the 25-page limit of the narrative?

Yes if the commitment is still there. They will be evaluated as match if they are monetized. The letters do not count toward the 25-page limit.

- b. Submitted projects can indeed bleed over into the next biennial budget period?

This grant process is not subject to the biennium restrictions.

- c. Can revenue obtained over the course of a funded project be counted as cash match?

Match reduces the cost to the government for a given project or expands its scope. You will need to argue convincingly that the future revenue stream will be realized and that it will be applied as match.

2. Page 7 of the application for the referenced grant says “the application manual, application, detailed budget form, and question and compilation” will be posted to the Cabinet’s website. I see nothing on the Cabinet’s homepage or the TVA grant process page. Have any Q&As been received and compiled, and if so, can you please provide guidance on where their located?

There have been some questions received. The Q&A will be posted on the Application site as soon as possible.

3. Is it possible to see a list of the recipients for last year? I would like to have a better idea of where this program is dedicating funding.

The current Application process is the one and only time the Grant opportunity will be offered. There is no list of previous recipients.

4. “Cash contributions will be evidenced by a letter of commitment.” Does this letter need to be included in the Grant Application submittal or intended to be required only following notification of award? If included within the Grant Application itself, does the letter need to be notarized? Is there a particular format expected with this sort of letter or would a standard letterhead and simple statement of commitment suffice? I assume the letter should specifically detail the amount to be contributed.

The letter needs to be submitted with the Grant Application to be considered as match. It does not have to be notarized and a standard business letter will suffice. It does need to specify the amount of the contribution.

5. With regard to the Tennessee Valley Authority Clean Air Act Settlement Grant Program that we were notified about earlier this week, I would like to ask you whether there is an upper limit of funding per project that applicants can ask for in their proposals.

There is no limit on the funding per project. Hypothetically, one outstanding project could be chosen that consumes the entire amount.

6.

- a. The manual states that only “new projects” will be considered. Page 9. Please confirm that this means that the grant will not be available for projects that have already been initiated. However, new phases that are initiated on a project following grant funding will be acceptable. For example: A facility has begun a lighting upgrade and has completed two of four buildings. The second phase which has not begun is to retrofit one more building. The work to retrofit the third building is acceptable. Reimbursement for buildings one and two is not. Correct?

The fund is for new work or new phases of existing work, not for reimbursement of prior work.

- b. The manual states on page 5 that “for purposes of evaluating and scoring the applications, only cash contributions will be considered as leverage (match).” However, there is an acceptance of a rate of 15% for indirect charges in the calculation of the budget. This implies that in-house efforts may be used as a match. While the cost of in-house labor can be calculated with accuracy, it is not cash. Does the entry on page 5 mean that no in-house labor may be used as match? Additionally, if a grant applicant is able to obtain goods or services from an outside party at no cost in furtherance of the project, how can the value of that donation be used to provide match?

For purposes of including as match, applicants must monetize contributions, be they labor, real property, or service, and stipulate that the monetary equivalent is being utilized for the project. For example, if 50% of a manager’s time is to be devoted to the project, the monetary value of that time may be claimed as match if the applicant stipulates to that commitment and would be prepared to defend it in the event of audit. The same applies to donated equipment, land, or services. Indirect charges do not qualify as these are often a reflection of infrastructure costs and/or non-task support staff. Since these exist without the project, they are not match. For purposes of stipulating the monetization of match, a letter of commitment from the donor or donating organization must be sent with the Application.

7. I am doing research on federal buildings and wanted to know specifically if there are any grant opportunities through the TVA Grant Process which would allow our federal courthouse to go after funding for a deep building energy retro fit? We are upgrading and completely renovating the GSA courthouse and looking for opportunities which may exist to help procure funding for our project. I’m not sure if our building would qualify for this grant, so any insight would be helpful.

Improving energy efficiency or conservation in existing buildings is a relevant topic for the Grant Application. You are encouraged to apply.

8. I saw that The Cabinet is redoing the TVA proposal. I am assuming that all questions and answers submitted the first time around are invalid, so I apologize if I am repeating some of what I asked the last time. That said, I would like to ask you:

- a. Will you be posting questions/answers throughout the application period, or will you be doing these in rounds covering set date ranges? Are there any deadlines for submitting these questions?

The Cabinet intends to answer questions directly as they are asked, then post the Q&A on the web site for the Grant Application regularly. The posting will delete identifying or project-specific information.

- b. What should the project dates (start/stop) be for a proposed project budget?

Projects can be of any length. We will be able to write the Grant Contract for the length of the project.

9.

- a. Does a statewide project qualify as being located in TVA service territory?

The Cabinet will use a ratio of the number of TVA counties to all 120 in that case.

- b. Other than “after November 1,” is there a more definitive target date for awarding the first round of funding?

No.

- c. Section 5 of the Application Manual discusses reporting requirements for electricity, natural gas and GHGs. Should site energy reductions or source energy reductions be input into EPA’s emissions reduction calculator?

The Cabinet will assume site energy reductions unless otherwise specified

10. I’m emailing you regarding the current TVA Grant Program and eligible projects that will be considered for funding. I have read through the Application Manual and provisions of the Consent Decree. Though optimistic that the project I have in mind is eligible, I’d like to get some feedback from you prior to establishing the project team and preparing the application. Below are some highlights of the project be considered.

The project would work with a refuse collection fleet to deploy advanced series hybrid drive refuse collection vehicles within a fleet. The technology recently became commercially available and provides 35-50% fuel consumption, GHG reductions, and a 30% reduction in NOx and PM. Assuming that a refuse vehicle consumes approximately 10,000 gallons of diesel fuel annual, replacing an existing vehicle with this advanced series hydraulic hybrid would displace 3,500-5000 gallons of diesel fuel and reduce 39-56 short tons annually.

Based on the sample project description above, would this type of project be eligible for funding?

The Cabinet cannot comment on a project's eligibility for funding except to reference the project categories in the Manual. We will review and evaluate all applications received on or before the deadline.

11. I assisted *City Electric & Water* prepare an application last March for the referenced TVA environmental mitigation grant. *City* management and I are aware this grant process is being re-opened, an announcement is now on the Cabinet's website, and interested applicants need to re-apply. Assuming the Cabinet still possesses all applications received last March, I request on behalf of *City* an opportunity to visit the Cabinet's office and retrieve the envelope containing *City's* original application documents, which include several letters of support from *City* stakeholders. Retrieving the original application will greatly reduce the time and expense of resubmitting a new application. If the originals are no longer available will the Cabinet accept copies of *City's* letters of support as part of the new application? Will scoring of *City's* application be affected by resubmitting copies of the original letters?

Documents submitted under the previous solicitation are not available. Photocopies of the original letters of support are acceptable if Applicant can assure that the commitment still applies, and the fact that they are copies will not affect scoring of the application.

12.

- a. Will the application have to be submitted by an organization like a university or it can be submitted by faculty members such as me and my colleagues?

My understanding of university policies is that all grant proposals are submitted through the Research Foundation, but are written by the PI. The contract is with Research Foundation but we work directly with the PI for technical matters.

- b. Is there a limit on the number of applications submitted by an applicant? by an organization?

There is a limit of one application per applicant per topic (as listed in the Manual), but no limit on the number of applications for different topics by an applicant or organization.

- c. Are research and educational activities appropriate for project activities?

Yes.

- d. There are many relevant questions asked in the March solicitation. Are those questions and answers arising from the March solicitation still applicable to this solicitation?

Some of the Q&A from the previous solicitation are applicable but many are not, so I cannot respond in general. Please ask or reference specific questions.