

Bay Area Air Quality Management District
James Cary Smith 2019 Community Grants Program
Frequently Asked Questions

Updated: June 5, 2019, [New questions since May 1 in blue](#)

Please note: FAQs will be updated periodically until the application period ends.

1. *Who can apply?*

Non-profit organizations, community-based organizations, faith-based organizations, and public schools.

2. *Can this funding be used to purchase air sensors for educational purposes?*

This grant cannot be used to fund air quality sensors. This funding is for non-technical activities.

3. *Can this funding be used to purchase incentives?*

Yes, but this should not be the entirety of your budget proposal. In the past we have funded ~1/3 of the total amount of the grant on incentives but these were linked to the overall proposal and main goals of the grant.

4. *Can my organization apply even if we're not located in an AB 617 Community?*

Yes. You can still apply for funding under this grant as long as your project addresses an environmental justice issue.

5. *Can fiscally-sponsored orgs apply?*

Yes.

6. *Can you provide any examples of Active Transportation Programming that would be eligible?*

Bicycle safety education projects, such as those that are part of many Safe Routes to School Programs. Walking campaigns would also qualify as active transportation programming.

7. *Do you accept letters of support?*

No. Letters of support are not necessary as part of your application.

8. *What about developing classroom activities to understand/interpret sensor data?*

The current funding cycle of the JCS grants is meant to fund non-technical projects and we are not looking to fund projects that involve sensors. Activities requiring the use of air quality sensors would not be funded for this grant cycle but could be funded under future school and other community grant programs (which will be announced in late 2019 or early 2020).

9. *Is there a list of past grantees/projects available?*

Internally, yes, but not publicly posted.

10. *The Richmond San Rafael Bridge bike walk path will be opening in Sept 2019. Can funding be used to promote this new facility to AB 617 communities in Richmond, connecting Richmond neighborhoods to the bridge path and Bay Trail?*

Yes, this would be an eligible activity for this round of JCS Community Grants.

11. *Did you say that climate change education is eligible?*

Yes, climate change education that is specific to air quality and reducing air pollution is eligible for funding as long as the proposed activities do not involve the use of air quality sensors.

12. *Could we apply funding to help local independent gardeners transition from gas powered equipment to electric equipment?*

Currently, only 1/3 of the grant can fund incentives (such as new equipment). Before answering this question we would need to know more about your proposed project, such as "is there an educational component to this proposal?" Will there be education provided to a group of gardeners or a specific community? How will this work? How is your proposal connected to air pollution reduction?

13. *What is the next cycle that you have referred to? (That includes sensors and technical AQ).*

Internally, we are planning to support technical projects, pending an announcement of the role of an external resource to support future grantees with projects that involve air quality sensors. The School Community Grants would be an example of funding opportunities that would fund air quality sensors for educational purposes only. The Air District is considering making other funds available for community science projects in the future.

14. Housing is an important air quality/climate change education issue. Public education on the relationship between housing and climate change/air quality is critical for making progress. Does this grant allow for a housing/climate education focus?

We would need to know more about your proposal and how it aligns with air quality education. Air quality education can certainly include teaching about the connection between climate change and buildings. We are open to being intersectional about the kinds of projects we support as long as there is a clear connection to air quality education and engagement.

15. Can the grant money be used for operating support for the non-profit?

Yes, this grant can be used to fund staff time for air quality education and engagement programs.

16. Can more than one org partner to submit a single grant proposal?

Yes, but we prefer one application per entity. However, if a grantee wants to subcontract part of their work out to another community-based organization, that would be eligible.

17. We are planning to build a pedestrian/bicycle bridge over a green cul-de-sac and freeway. I'd like to do something in the cul-de-sac (like plant trees) to mitigate the exhaust coming from all the vehicles on the freeway. Also, we'd want to involve students (K thru college in an educational program about what we're doing and why). Does this sound like something fundable?

Yes, this kind of project would fall under the category of urban greening. You would need the support of a community-based organization to support this work. You would also need to make sure you have proper approvals from the entity in charge of the cul-de-sac, and a plan for maintaining the trees.

18. Looking at the AB617 map in the Appendix, are all CARE program (purple) areas eligible? Or is it only a subset of them?

All CARE program areas are eligible. The map is a guide, but we can check specific zip codes with our Planning staff to verify if your projects takes place in a CARE or AB 617 community.

19. What is the Tri Valley area?

The Tri-Valley Area includes:

- City of Dublin
- City of Livermore
- City of Pleasanton
- City of San Ramon

20. What kind of active transportation grants have you funded in the past?

We have previously funded Safe Routes to School programming (biking, walking, carpooling, idle free campaigns, and promoting public transit to schools). We have also funded bicycle safety education programs in low income communities (ex. SF Bicycle Coalition's Community Bike Builds Program), and programs that encourage students to change their transportation habits (Center for Climate Protection's ECO2School program), among others.

21. Please be more specific about what is an environmental justice need.

Per the EPA's definition "Environmental justice is the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, or income, with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies. This goal will be achieved when everyone enjoys:

- the same degree of protection from environmental and health hazards, and
- equal access to the decision-making process to have a healthy environment in which to live, learn, and work."

For the JCS Community Grants, we are interested in funding air quality related projects that encourage the authentic engagement of communities that have historically been left out of environmental decision-making processes.

22. Is preference given to new projects or to projects that have been previously funded? Or does it matter?

If you have received funding in the past, you may still apply although preference will be given to new projects.

23. A. Can you provide an example of support for community engagement work in areas of high air pollution? B. Can this be community engagement around active transportation projects (e.g. street redesigns?), transportation planning projects?

- A. An example of a great community engagement project in an area of high air pollution includes our work with the Rose Foundation to engage Oakland youth on environmental justice issues in West Oakland. With support from the James Cary Smith Community Grants Program, the Rose Foundation will work with youth to create a West Oakland Tree Planting Blueprint, a map and report that will pinpoint air quality hot-spots in the West Oakland neighborhood that would benefit from, and are suitable for, tree plantings and will engage youth on environmental justice education.
- B. Yes, transportation planning projects may qualify but we would like to know more about the specific project you have in mind. For example, who's involved? how does it relate to air quality education? Do your proposed

activities reach a demographic that has been left out of the current community engagement process for that transportation project?.

24. *(In reference to an earlier question). So far it is just my personal opinion that the Pedestrian/Bicycle path over the cul-de-sac and bridge will expose the public to a specific pocket of polluted air. Should his be quantified for the proposal and any recommendation on how to do that. Quantify the immediate danger.*

Technical specification is not necessary for proposal given that we are looking to fund non-technical, educational activities. However, you may use data from the Air District or CalEnviroScreen to create a narrative about the air quality in the community where your project is taking place.

25. *Would a series of events on air quality and intersectional issues qualify?*

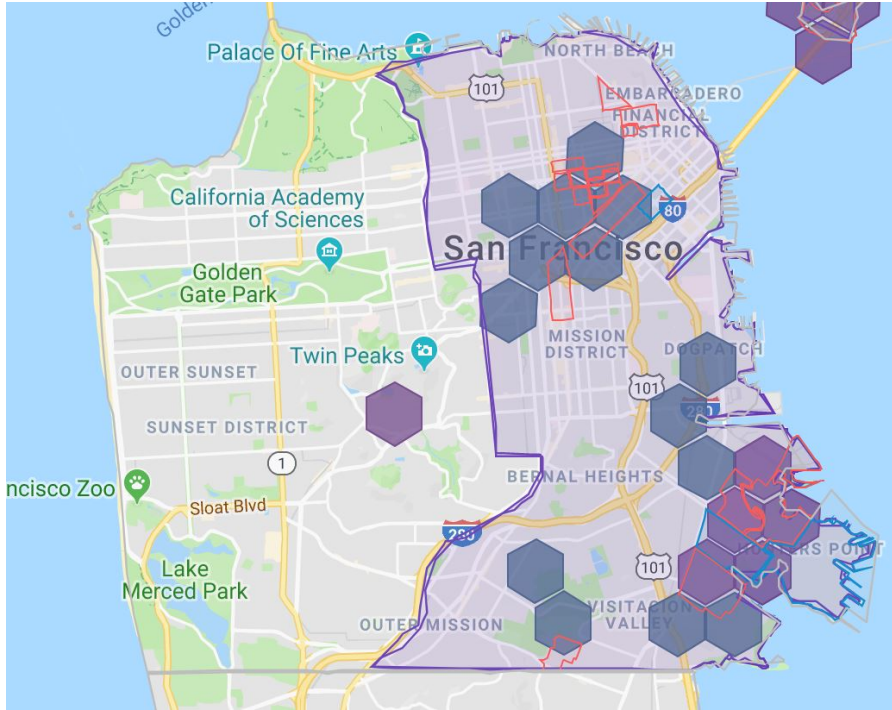
We would need more information about your proposal before answering this question.

26. *How about home electrification education projects that have the goal of reducing the use of gas-fired appliances (indoor air quality).*

We would need to know more about the kind of indoor air quality educational campaign you are proposing to answer this question.

27. *What exactly is the Eastern San Francisco Area? (? Eastern Daly City)?*

The eastern part of San Francisco includes neighborhoods such as the Mission, Excelsior, SoMa, Bayview-Hunters Point, Bernal Heights, Visitation Valley, Potrero Hill, Dogpatch, and Tenderloin. For more specific information, please see the map below or send us the specific zip code where you project is taking place and we can let you know if it falls within an AB 617 or CARE community.



28. *Other than San Jose, does any other portion of Santa Clara/Silicon Valley fall within an AB 617 community?*

Although San Jose is in our year 2-5 AB 617 Communities, we would also consider other areas in Silicon Valley where there is high area pollution or low life expectancy (such as East Palo Alto) as AB 617 communities. Please see complete highlighted areas in this map.

31. I have a question on the guidelines for the subject program. Appendix B has a map describing AB 617 high risk burden areas that includes a portion of Benicia identified as having low life expectancy. Is their documentation available describing how low life expectancy was defined or what is meant by this term, and how was it determined for this portion of Benicia (assuming not all of the city is included in this area)?

To identify communities that experience high cumulative exposure burden in the SF Bay Area, the Air District considered geographic areas that fell into one of four categories: 1) the Air District's CARE areas; 2) areas with large sources of air pollution; 3) areas identified via statewide screening tools, including both CalEnviroscreen 3.0 and the California Healthy Places Index; and 4) areas with low life expectancy.

Life expectancy data was obtained from the California Healthy Places Index project. Further description of the data sources and development of the AB 617 map can be found in the following document submitted to the California Air Resources Board: http://www.baaqmd.gov/~media/files/ab617-community-health/ab617_baaqmd-initialsubmittal-pdf.pdf?la=en

32. Are letters of support a requirement? If not, can they still be included?

33. Hi, I do see in your FAQ that Letters of Support are not necessary, does that mean we are not allowed to submit them either? Thank you for the clarification.

Letters of support are not required or accepted in the grant applications.

34. [We were] awarded a JCS grant in 2015, and the guidelines say that priorities will be given to new applications. Do we have a fair opportunity in your opinion, if our program is more competitive than new applications?

Past grantees are encouraged to apply if eligible. The applications will be scored according to the criteria in the guidelines, so the preference for past or new projects is not a critical contributing factor to the strength of the proposal. If you have any additional questions, please feel free to reach out to us.