



PROPOSITION 1

IRWM IMPLEMENTATION GRANT PROGRAM

2019 Guidelines and Proposal Solicitation Package

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS



Please note: These Frequently Asked Questions may be updated as additional questions arise. Please check back frequently for updates.

FUNDING QUESTIONS

1. How much funding will be made available through the Proposition 1 Integrated Regional Water Management (IRWM) Implementation Grant Program?

Proposition 1 allocated \$510 million to DWR for IRWM. A total of approximately \$403 million will be made available through the IRWM Implementation Grant Program. Of this funding amount, at least 10% of authorized funds (\$51 million) will be reserved for projects that directly benefit Disadvantaged Communities.

2. How much funding is available for implementation grants in Round 1? How much funding is available for implementation projects that benefit Disadvantaged Communities (DACs)?

Approximately \$222.3 million will be available in Round 1 for IRWM Implementation Grants. Of that amount, approximately \$23.6 million will be made available for implementation projects that directly benefit DACs (DAC Implementation Projects). See the [Final PSP](#) Table 2 for maximum amounts available to Funding Areas in Round 1.

3. How were funding amounts available in Round 1 determined?

DWR asked each of the twelve (12) Proposition 1 Funding Areas to provide feedback during the Public Comment Period as to how much funding should be made available for Round 1 for General Implementation Projects and DAC Implementation Projects, based on each Funding Area's project funding needs and readiness to implement.

4. Can a Funding Area apply for more grant funding for DAC Implementation Projects than their allotted Round 1 DAC maximum?

Yes. However, any additional funding for DAC projects above the Round 1 DAC Implementation Project maximum will come from General Implementation Project funds scheduled for this round. This will not reduce the amount of funding available for DAC Implementation Projects in future funding rounds.

APPLICATION PROCESS QUESTIONS

5. Is each Funding Area required to submit a single grant application?

No. Applications may be submitted by each IRWM region, or two or more regions may coordinate to submit a combined application. Please note, a coordinated Funding Area application will result in a single grant agreement/Grantee for the Funding Area. (There may be multiple Local Project Sponsors within one grant agreement).

6. How would an IRWM region participate in the application process when a proposed project falls within more than one Funding Area?

In such circumstances, an applicant has two options and may submit: (1) separate applications, one in each Funding Area, or alternatively (2) one application that covers multiple Funding Areas which will need to be submitted before the due date of whichever Funding Area is due first.

DWR requests that proponents of projects overlapping multiple Funding Areas contact us as soon as possible to coordinate.

FUNDING AREA PRE-APPLICATION PROCESS QUESTIONS

7. Are Funding Area Pre-Application Workshops (Workshops) required or optional?

Workshops are optional, but strongly encouraged to ensure open and transparent communication amongst and between stakeholders in the regions (including traditionally underrepresented communities, DACs and Tribes), as well as DWR and other State funding agencies about proposed projects and how those projects meet the unique needs of the regions in the Funding Area.

8. Will Workshops affect scoring, either negatively or positively?

No. Convening a Workshop will not impact scoring.

9. If my Funding Area chooses not to convene a Workshop, am I still required to participate in the Pre-Application Process?

Yes. All applicants are required to submit Pre-Application Materials to DWR by the deadline established for their Funding Area. DWR (and other funding agencies as time allows) will provide feedback on all proposals as part of the Pre-Application Process, regardless of whether a Workshop is convened.

10. If my Funding Area decides to convene a Workshop, are all regions/Local Project Sponsors required to participate?

No. The workshops are intended to provide a service to potential applicants and can be structured in a way that best meets the needs of each Funding Area.

11. Are Workshops open to the public?

DWR encourages that Workshops be open to the public. Each Funding Area will be responsible for coordinating this effort.

12. How will DWR interact with applicants during the Pre-Application process? If I revise my Pre-Application Materials based on DWR feedback, will DWR review and provide additional feedback on my revised materials?

After receiving DWR's written feedback, the applicant can consult with DWR via email or phone for clarification as needed. However, DWR will not review revised Pre-Application Materials after providing initial feedback.

13. What is the role of the Funding Area Point of Contact (POC)?

Each Funding Area has been asked to designate a single point of contact to coordinate and schedule the Pre-Application Process. This includes establishing the deadline for submittal of Pre-Application Materials and the Workshop date and logistics (if applicable). The POC serves as a logistics and communications liaison between DWR and the IRWM regions within their Funding Area. Their role ends after each region has received feedback on their Pre-Application Materials from DWR.

14. What is the timeline for the Pre-Application Process?

Figure 1 (at the end of this document) shows a timeline for the Pre-Application Process. See [PSP](#) for full details.

CEQA COMPLIANCE/PERMITTING QUESTIONS

15. If a project is comprised of only planning, design and/or regulatory permitting components is it eligible for IRWM Implementation Grant Program funding?

No.

16. Does CEQA compliance/permitting need to be completed prior to application submission?

No. However, proposed projects must have all CEQA documentation adopted and any permits necessary to begin construction acquired within twelve (12) months after Final Awards are announced. Projects providing benefits to DACs, EDAs, or Tribes (minimum 75% of benefits – see [2019 Guidelines](#), Exhibits E and F for more information about identifying benefits to these communities) or projects implemented by Tribes will be exempt from this time requirement.

17. Are CEQA compliance/permitting expenses eligible for grant reimbursement?

Yes. Costs associated with CEQA compliance/permitting activities are eligible for grant reimbursement, provided activities meet all other eligibility requirements and occur within the timeframe for reimbursable costs.

18. Are CEQA compliance/permitting expenses eligible to count towards Local Cost Share?

Yes, provided activities meet all other eligibility requirements.

19. Which permits are required to “begin construction”?

Each Local Project Sponsor must determine exactly which permits are required to “begin construction,” as permits will vary depending on project type, location, etc.

DAC/EDA/TRIBAL QUESTIONS

20. How are projects that benefit DACs/EDAs/Tribes identified?

DACs, EDAs, and Tribes are defined in the [2019 Guidelines](#), Exhibit B. Generally, for this program projects must provide at least 75% of their benefits (by population or geography) to one of these communities to qualify as a DAC, EDA, or Tribal project. See [2019 Guidelines](#), Exhibits E and F for more information about identifying benefits to these communities.

21. If my project was developed through DWR’s Proposition 1 IRWM DAC Involvement Program, will it qualify for all the DAC preferences and exemptions in the Proposition 1 IRWM Implementation Program?

Not necessarily. Proposition 1, as well as other related legislation provided a variety of preferences or exemptions to help underrepresented communities participate in the IRWM Program. In turn, DWR’s DAC Involvement Program was developed to cast a wide net to identify and include these underrepresented communities, including those that don’t necessarily fall under the legislative definition of DAC (e.g., Tribes and homeless populations). There are different requirements to qualify for each of these preferences or exemptions. Table 1 below summarizes how different communities qualify for funding options, benefits and exemptions for the Proposition 1 IRWM Implementation Grant Program. See [2019 Guidelines](#) and [Final PSP](#) for full details.

22. What if my project provides only partial benefits to a DAC, EDA, or Tribe?

If a project does not provide at least 75% of its benefits to a DAC, EDA, or Tribe, then CEQA compliance and permitting must be completed within the twelve (12) month timeframe after final award. However, a project that provides less than 75% of its benefits to a DAC or EDA may be eligible for a local cost share waiver or reduction based on the percent of benefits provided

to DAC/EDAs. (Tribes are not eligible for a cost share waiver/reduction unless they meet the definition of DAC/EDA).

23. How would an applicant determine if a project is located in an Economically Distressed Area (EDA)?

First, navigate to DWR’s [Mapping Tools](#) link, find the Economically Distressed Areas tab, and then expand the “Instructions” option. Click on and read the [Proposition 1 Economically Distressed Area Instructions](#); Table 2 will provide the EDA criteria to assist in determination. Use the [EDA map](#) in conjunction with the instruction to assist in EDA determination. See [2019 Guidelines](#), Appendix F for additional information.

24. My project provides benefits to a community that was previously identified as a DAC on DWR’s mapping tool; however, in using the updated mapping tool this community is no longer identified as a DAC. What can I do?

DWR’s mapping tool is updated periodically as the census tract information is updated. This may change DAC status of communities. As described in the [2019 Guidelines](#), Appendix E, DWR will consider the use of alternate data to show a community is a DAC. Please contact DWR’s Financial Assistance Branch as soon as possible for further assistance.

Table 1: Funding Options and Benefits/Exemptions for Underrepresented Communities

Community Type	DAC Implementation Project Funding	Local Cost Share Wavier/ Reduction	Exempt from CEQA 12-month eligibility requirement
	Water Code §79742(d)	Water Code §79742(c)	Prop 1 IRWM Impl. PSP
Disadvantaged Community (DAC)	✓	✓	✓
Economically Distressed Area (EDA)		✓	✓
Tribe			✓

Table 1 provides a checklist of available funding options and benefits/exemptions for different community types under the Proposition 1 – Implementation Grant Program. See 2019 Guidelines and PSP for full details.

LOCAL COST SHARE REQUIREMENT QUESTIONS

25. Are federal funds that are distributed through state funding programs eligible as local cost share?

State Revolving Funds and American Recovery and Reinvestment Act funds are not considered “State funds” for the purpose of the Proposition 1 IRWM Implementation Grant Program and may be used as local cost share. For information on other specific funds sources, please reach out to DWR to discuss on a case-by case basis.

MISCELLANEOUS QUESTIONS

26. Will rebates be considered eligible projects under this solicitation?

Rebate projects can be eligible as long as the project proponent can self-certify that it will have an expected useful life of at least 15 years, as required by Government Code §16727.

27. Are application costs reimbursable?

Application costs for this solicitation are not reimbursable but may be claimed as local cost share. However, application costs for DAC projects may be funded through the Proposition 1 DACI Grant Program. Please refer to your Funding Area’s DAC Involvement Grant Agreement and contact your Grantee or DWR Project Manager for more information specific to your Funding Area.

28. Does an updated IRWM Plan need to be submitted to DWR prior to application submission?

Yes. IRWM Plans updated to the 2016 Plan Standards must be submitted to DWR for review prior to applying for grant funding. Please note, the IRWM Plan must be deemed consistent by DWR and adopted by the Grantee and all Local Project Sponsors prior to agreement execution. Additionally, all projects included in the grant agreement must be included in the adopted IRWM Plan. For more information on the Plan Review Process click [here](#).

29. Who needs to adopt an IRWM Plan?

All Local Project Sponsors must adopt their region’s IRWM Plan. See [2019 Guidelines](#), Section II.B for additional information.

30. Can a Joint Powers Authority (JPA) be an eligible applicant/Local Project Sponsor? If so, do all member agencies need to adopt the IRWM Plan?

As Public Agencies JPAs, including Groundwater Sustainability Agencies, can be eligible applicants. A JPA can adopt the IRWM Plan as the Grantee or Local Project Sponsor; not every member will need to adopt the IRWM Plan.

31. Is a cost-benefit analysis required?

No. A full scale economic evaluation or cost benefit analysis is not required; however, grant applicants will be required to describe how cost was considered/assessed during the project development and selection process. See the [PSP](#), Table 4 and [Project Information Form](#), Question D.4.

32. How will the grant administration cost-cap be applied?

Grant administration costs proposed to be reimbursed by grant funds cannot exceed 10% of the requested grant amount for the proposal. The 10% cap includes grant administration for the Grantee and each Local Project Sponsor for the life of the agreement.

33. Can shared costs such as rent, office supplies, benefits, etc. be reimbursed with grant funds?

The portion of shared costs that are directly attributable to the grant may be reimbursed provided they are documented and proportionately assessed. Please reach out to your DWR grant manager for more details.

34. Is there a mandatory timeframe for project completion?

While there is no specific required timeframe for project completion, DWR expects projects to be completed within 3-5 years of grant agreement execution.

35. Is travel an eligible reimbursable cost?

Travel is only an eligible reimbursable expense for projects providing at least 75% of benefits to DACs, EDAs, and/or Tribes (based on population or geographic area). Only ground transportation and lodging are eligible for grant reimbursement; per diem costs will not be eligible for grant reimbursement. DWR approval is required prior to travel outside of the IRWM region.

Figure 1. Pre-Application Process Timeline

