

SGMA Implementation Round 2

Frequently Asked Questions

Grant Eligibility

Question: What is the eligibility requirement for Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) Grant Round 2? Is it only agencies, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), and nonprofits?

Response: *The list of eligible applicants can be found on page 10 of the 2021 PSP on our program website: <https://water.ca.gov/sgmgrants>. Applicants for Round 2 must also be within a COD, medium, or high priority basin.*

Question: Who needs to fill out an Eligibility Criteria Self-Certification Form

Response: *The applicant and any entity that is submitting a component for the application.*

Question: On page 9 it states: “Priority will be given to applicants who have not previously received SGMA Implementation funding.” How exactly does this work? I notice it says ‘applicants’ and not Groundwater Basins. So, does this apply to groundwater basins or GSAs/agencies. For example, if a basin has 3 GSAs, and one has received funding in the past, would the other 2 GSAs be a lower priority since they are from a basin that received funding in the past?

Response: *That reference on page 9 means those that received funding in Round 1 will not be prioritized in Round 2. This would apply to basins and not individual GSAs since we are only allowing one application per basin. If the GSA in your example received funding in Round 1, the basin it serves is no longer given priority. Priority will come into play during the final development of the funding list. For example, if a COD basin and medium priority basin have equal points, priority will be given to the application from a medium priority basin. Funding is not automatically provided to medium and high priority basins. The applications from those basins still need to score/rank highly enough to be considered for funding.*

Question: Is there a map/guidance for what is considered “high priority”?

Response: *Please refer to the basin prioritization mapping tool at <https://qis.water.ca.gov/app/bp-dashboard/final/>.*

Question: If a GSA does not have an approved GSP or is probationary prior to the planned execution of the grant agreement will they still be eligible

Response: Yes.

Question: Does a GSA need a completed GSP to apply?

Response: No.

PSP & Templates

Question: Will DWR be providing a detailed list of changes from the PSP to this application cycle?

Response: *The only changes that have occurred is simplifying the scoring criteria and the start/end dates for the funding. The simplification of the scoring criteria was made possible due to the disclaimers found in the 2021 PSP. At the top of Page 18 before Table 3 – Grant Application Checklist, the following disclaimer is noted:*

*“...Please note that the application and/or review questions outlined in Tables 3 through 7 may be reworded, combined, or separated as the information is transferred into our online application tool. SGM Grant Program staff may make clarifying or editorial changes to the application following approval. SGM Grant Program staff may also make changes to Tables 3 through 7 depending upon language outlined in future appropriations and legislative requirements. **Tables 3 through 7 are subject to change depending on the final preparations of the review questionnaire.** No substantive changes will be made to the evaluation criteria and scoring scheme.*

Question: Is there a new 2022 PSP available?

Response: *There will not be a new PSP. The one provided online is the only PSP. Within the PSP, we mention details for Round 2 and subsequent grant solicitations if additional funding is provided.*

Question: I’m reaching out to see if an updated Application Evaluation Criteria Table for the SGM Grant Program Round 2 will be provided?

The “Possible Points” in Table 7 of the 2021 SGM Grant Program PSP does not match the Points described on the newly released Work Plan (Attachment 3) for Round 2.

Response: *We changed the scoring criteria slightly by removing a question that was asking for duplicative information already requested in Questions 1 and 2 and removed a question that was confusing to the applicants in the Round 1 grant solicitation. Applicants should always follow the information provided within GRanTS and the attachment templates provided by the SGM Grant Program.*

Question: Are there examples related to Scope of Work, tasks, and deliverables that will be available soon for SGMA Implementation Round 2. Is there a status on availability of these examples?

Response: *All examples and templates were posted to our website prior to the grant solicitation opening. All information necessary for the grant solicitation can be found under “Key Documents” on the SGM Grant Program website (www.water.ca.gov/sqmgrants).*

Question: I am confirming that the 2021 PSP - Final on the DWR website is the most recent version.

Response: *2021 PSP – Final is the most recent version; however, there have been some modification. Please see the updated Work Plan template, Eligibility Criteria Self-Certification, and Resolution on our website.*

Question: If I submit a project with only a single component, can that project be awarded partial funding?

Response: *For those applicants that have a single, larger Project without additional components, the application will NOT have components. You will write the application as a single Project. We typically do not partially fund a single Project. In those instances, the application will either be fully funded or not funded at all. Grant awards are provided with the expectation that, once completed, the funded Project will provide the benefits as outlined in the application and agreement. Partially funding a Project will not lead to a completed Project and, therefore, the benefits claimed will not be obtained.*

Resolution

Question: Is the resolution in the PSP the right one, or is there something else that will be coming out soon?

Response: *Please use the resolution included in the solicitation announcement email and the documents uploaded onto our website.*

Question: Do you have example resolution template for GSA to authorize member agency to apply on behalf of the GSA.

Response: *The example resolution language is solely for the entity who is applying for the grant funding. Subsequent entities who are submitting components within the overall application will need to provide a simple resolution stating that the applying entity has the authority to apply on their behalf. We recommend listing the component name and use the grant solicitation name within the resolution sample provided.*

Question: Our board only meets once a month, if an entity is unable to adopt a resolution prior to November 30th can a draft resolution be submitted?

Response: *Yes, please provide a date the final resolution is expected to be adopted with the draft.*

Question: We have multiple GSAs in our basin who are NOT submitting components, do they all have to submit resolutions?

Response: *No, only the GSA/agency that is applying and other GSA's/agencies submitting a component within the application needs to provide resolutions.*

Question: In this case, there is one GSA in the basin who will apply for grant funding. However, the application includes components from member organizations, who are not GSAs. Phrased slightly differently, do you need resolutions from organizations submitting a component to an application if they are not a GSA?

Response: *If the GSA is applying and there is only one GSA within the basin, then the applying GSA needs to submit a resolution using the example language provided. If cooperating entities within the same GSA are submitting components within the application and they are, in fact, a cooperating entity that makes up the GSA, then just the GSAs resolution is required because all components will be completed by the GSA. If there are other interested parties that are not involved in the GSA who are submitting components, those interested parties need to provide a resolution giving the GSA authority to apply on their behalf using the example provided above.*

Question: If a GSA (applicant) is applying with multiple components from member agencies within the GSA, is only one resolution needed for the SGMA Round 2 application?

Response: *Yes, since all applying entities make up the GSA who is applying.*

Underrepresented Community (URC)/Disadvantaged Community (DAC)

Question: What are examples of acceptable methods to identify disadvantaged communities?

Response: *Applicants can continue to use DWR's DAC and EDA mapping tools to determine if their component or Project lies within and benefits a DAC, Severely Disadvantaged Community (SDAC), or EDA. Applicants can also use the TA Program heat maps to identify the priority of each community (www.water.ca.gov/urctaprogram). Tribes should be outlined using the methods identified on the URC TA Program's website. And, finally, you can use the CalEnviroScreen 4.0 to identify if the component or Project lies within and benefits an Environmentally Impacted DAC (EnvDAC).*

Question: Are letters of support needed from DAC communities only? Is there a minimum needed? Do letters need to come from different DAC communities mapped or is different landowners for the whole region okay?

Response: *Letters of support are not required; however, we do encourage obtaining letters of support from interested parties and/or representatives of the URC(s). The maps applicants provide in Attachment 4 will be used to determine the points possible. As stated in the workshop on October 20, 2022, DWR staff will use the methodology outlined in the application to try and recreate the map(s) provided to verify the information. Please be sure to provide the methodology for us to duplicate. If we cannot duplicate your map(s), no points will be awarded for that question.*

Question: To whom and what address should support letters be addressed to?

Response: *Support letters can be addressed to the applicant and for them to include in Attachment 4. Or the letters can be addressed to the SGM Grant Program in general. Finally, the letters could also be addressed to Kelley List. LETTERS MUST BE INCLUDED IN ATTACHMENT 4 TO BE ACCEPTED. ANY LETTERS RECEIVED IN EMAILS OR MAIL WILL NOT BE INCLUDED WITHIN THE APPLICATION.*

Project Eligibility and Budgets

Question: Will there be a list or a unit of measurement for quantifiable benefits for each component?

Response: *The SGM Grant Program does not have a prescribed list of quantifiable benefits for applicants to use. To see what types of benefits tracked, please review the Groundwater Project Tool on the website at: www.water.ca.gov. That will provide the types of benefits other projects have claimed/achieved and some methods in which was used to obtain the actual benefits.*

Question: Does each component have to have quantifiable benefits?

Response: *Yes, each component must have quantifiable benefits.*

Question: Would design related to a groundwater recharge project be eligible?

Response: *Yes.*

Question: Does a component have to be listed in the GSP to be eligible for funding (if it is consistent with the goals outlined in the GSP)?

Response: *No, each component does not have to be specifically listed. It just needs to be consistent with the goals of the GSP*

Question: Are rate studies for a GSA an eligible cost?

Response: *Yes. The study and prepping for a vote for a fee increase are eligible costs. Once the fee increase is voted on, funding can no longer be provided. At this point, the fee is considered an ongoing program and is not eligible.*

Question: Can we use grant funds to pay for construction of a monitoring well that used previous grant funds for planning & design?

Response: *Yes, if there is no overlap of work/funds*

Question: Can you please confirm that the \$150,000 is only related to use of the grant funds for property purchases and not the use of local funds for property purchase?

Response: *Yes, \$150,000 in property refers to use of grant funds. \$150,000 is not a cap for property acquisition; however, the appraisal documentation will require the Department of General Services' review and approval if the total of all land purchases within the application is equal to or exceeds \$150,000.*

Question: Is water supply reliability planning such as well master planning be eligible?

Response: *Yes, so long as the activity is consistent with the GSP or Alternative.*

Question: Do budgets have to include costs for all budget categories/tasks listed in the workplan/budget table? Or are we allowed to only include costs for some categories/tasks? For example, if we wanted to limit a projects budget in the proposal to just construction, is that permitted?

Response: *Yes, applicants can only request funding for one aspect of a component if they choose to do so. Please see examples online.*

Question: The SGMA Implementation Round 2 grant workplan says that tasks must be grouped into the five categories identified in the example table (administration, planning/ design, implementation, monitoring, outreach) in the budget. I wanted to confirm that the scope of work can have more than these five tasks per component, they just must then be grouped into these five categories for the budget.

Response: *For each component, all tasks and deliverables must be separated into the 5 budget categories per component. There can be multiple tasks under each budget category.*

Question: It is not clear when costs can be claimed as cost share for the grant. The PSP seems to suggest that cost share can go back to December 2021, but we wanted to verify that.

Also, after what date can costs be eligible for reimbursement? Is it after the draft award list, final award list or after contracts are executed? Or would it be the date of the grant solicitation (October 2022).

Response: *Due to the funding coming to DWR in multiple phases and we are still awaiting funds from the 2023 Budget Act, the start and end dates are all different. There are/will be 7-8 different sources of funding for this grant solicitation. Each one has their own start and end dates. For ease of the application process and for the reviewers while scoring the application, DWR had to change the start date to October 4, 2022, which is the date the solicitation opened.*

Question: Is it possible some components will be funded and others not?

Response: *Yes, we may not fund all component within an application. This is also why we are requiring each application to provide us with a ranking list of the components included. You can provide us with your top priority components instead of us selecting for you.*

Question: Are multiple GSP Annual Reports eligible and do they have to be listed as separate components?

Response: *Annual Reports are eligible, and they can all be organized under a single component. A 5-year update can also be included with annual reports in a single component if desired. We do recommend combining all GSP and Alternative work (e.g., 5-year updates, annual reporting, data gaps, etc.) be listed as a single component with all activities described as tasks within that component. Each component requires its own invoicing, progress reports, and closeout reports. The more you have, the more requirements there will be. Think strategically while organizing your application.*

General Application Questions

Question: Will the deadline be extended?

Response: *No. The funds are not approved for time extensions. Therefore, the delay in getting the funding out will only delay your ability to expend the funds and construct/plan. Also, if extended, the solicitation will be opened through the holidays in December and January requiring the applicants to work during those holidays. DWR has repeatedly received feedback from applicants in previous funding solicitations strongly requesting our solicitations to NOT be opened during December/January. To avoid this, the solicitation needs to end before the beginning of December.*

Question: Should each component have its own outreach plan?

Response: *It depends on the component and what is being achieved. This is a case-by-case situation and dependent upon the type of work proposed and what is required to complete the component.*

Question: Can multiple Subbasins combine components into a single application?

Response: *Yes, multiple Subbasins can submit a combined application.*

Question: What is a component?

Response: *Components (aka projects) are individual smaller projects under the larger "Project". A Project consists of all work described within Attachment 3 – Work Plan. Components are combined to create the overall "Project".*

Question: As part of the application for SGMA Implementation Round 2 funding, we are looking to include partial funding for personnel including for GSA management, to support outreach activities, and for technicians to support the monitoring outlined in the GSP. How should this be included in the application? Should this be a separate task or included as part of task (i.e., outreach, monitoring, GSP updates).

Response: *It would be included as part of a task and their rates would be listed on the labor rate sheet. The hours charged should be by component number and budget category.*

Question: How is the Grant Administration budget supposed to be handled? There is a Budget Summary table that includes Grant Administration as Component 1 and then for each component budget table, there is a row that is titled Component Administration. Should we be including budget for Component Administration for each component in addition to the budget we propose for Grant Administration as Component 1?

Response: *How the grant or component administration is determined is purely up to the applicant except for not exceeding 10% of the overall grant fund requested reserved for Grant Administration. An application can have Grant Administration of 10% of the overall grant amount and Component Administration of 10% of the component grant amount. An application can have no Grant Administration or Component Administration. It could have just Grant Administration alone or just Component Administration alone. It purely depends on what the needs of the applicant will be. Grant Administration is reserved for compiling all invoice backup documentation and progress reports for all components quarterly, ensuring all deliverables for all components are submitted on time and within budget, overseeing the day-to-day management of the grant, and submitting the Grant Closeout Report. Component Administration is typically reserved for those cooperating entities who are submitting backup documentation for invoices and portions of the progress report quarterly, ensuring submittal of the deliverables to the Grantee in advance of the due date schedule, and the Component*

Closeout Report. It is up to the applicant as to whether they need grant funds to conduct those tasks or if they have those tasks covered with other funds.

Question: When did the application open?

Response: *October 4, 2022. An email was sent to our email subscriptions on October 4. A Press Release was sent out the following week alerting the public to several grant solicitations that DWR has opened at this current time.*

Question: Do we only have to include budgets for the 5 budget categories listed? Do you want specific budgets like how much drillers are charging?

Response: *We do not need detailed budgets for each task, only the budgets for each of the 5 budget categories.*

Question: I am confused on how questions 8 & 9 from the scoring criteria are included. How is the grant application being scored with the components?

Response: *Scores from questions 1-7 for each component will be scored separately. These scores will then be averaged. Then scores from questions 8 & 9 are then added to the average score giving one score for the application.*

Question: For applications with multiple project components (with different eligibilities), what else BESIDES budget and schedule will need to be submitted for each component?

Response: *Project description is also needed. Applicants are allotted 6 pages per component to answer questions 1-7 (4 pages for general questions and 2 pages for the Scope of Work and Deliverables portion). We highly recommend you utilize all allotted pages to be competitive.*

Question: In Table 7 - Application Evaluation Criteria, under Budget that 3 points will be awarded for a provided Local Cost Share. This seems contradictory to what was stated about Local Cost Share not affecting scoring. Please clarify this.

Response: *This section has been revised. Budget is now 1 point. Refer to the workshop PowerPoint PDF for reference, the video recording of the Workshop where they discussed the edit to the scoring criteria, and within the Attachment 3 – Work Plan template that was posted to the website on October 3, 2022 and included within the GRanTS application on October 4, 2022.*

Question: Will there be post-construction monitoring requirements?

Response: *Post-Performance Report are required for three years after the project complete. Grant funds cannot be used for post-performance do to the fact this typically occur after the grant funds expire. However, if monitoring wells or sampling locations*

Question: Will the PowerPoint Presentation be available after the workshop?

Response: *Yes, it will be posted on the SGM website. Slides were also emailed out from the SGWP email the morning of the workshop.*

Question: Can you explain what is meant by “current conditions” in Question 3 of the scoring criteria?

Response: *We want maps that show the communities, existing infrastructure, benefiting communities, new infrastructure, etc. Land Use maps is ideal with a small description of how the land is being utilized now.*

Question: Is the Table 2 ranking of Proposed Components to be done exclusively by GSAs or do other cooperating entities have to be included?

Response: *This is up to the applicant. The ranking is provided by the applicant and is the responsibility of those entities to provide.*

Question: Can we plan to have projects completed by June 20, 2027, in anticipation of possible additional funds with a later date?

Response: *Components (e.g., projects) that have the Work Completion Date after April 30, 2026, and final payment date after June 30, 2026, will not be awarded.*

Question: Cost share is listed in the scoring table as “not required, but necessary to obtain full points”. Can you clarify this?

Response: *Cost share is not required as shown in the updated scoring criteria. Please refer to the revised scoring criteria outlined in the October 10 workshop and provided online in the workshop PowerPoint and within Attachment 3 – Work Plan template.*

Question: What level of detail is needed in terms of knowing the location(s) of proposed monitoring wells? Is it okay to not know that information at time of submission?

Response: *General information should be fine if tentative locations are provided in the map. Applicants should be able to outline a generalized area where there are gaps in the monitoring network that justifies the addition of the monitoring locations.*

Question: Can you explain the Open and Transparent Water Data eligibility requirement

Response: Please refer to DWR's website at: <https://water.ca.gov/Programs/All-Programs/AB-1755> for more information.

Question: Does the Grant Administration component require a 6-page Work Plan with both Part A. General and Part B. Scope of Work/Deliverables?

Response: Grant admin is not reviewed or scored. You can list it in the scope of work, budget, and schedule. That is all that is needed.

Question: How does our prioritization of projects impact scoring?

Response: It does not. It has zero impact on the scoring and ranking of the grant. It will come into the final review and determining what can/cannot be funded.