

Regional Climate Collaboratives Program Draft Guidelines Release Memo

SGC is excited to release the Regional Climate Collaboratives (RCC) Draft Program Round 1 Guidelines (Draft Guidelines) for public review and feedback. The Draft Guidelines were developed based on extensive listening with stakeholders, coordination with State agencies with expertise to inform key components of the guidelines, and reflection on best practices from other capacity building programs.

To help facilitate public review of these Draft Guidelines, this memo includes a high-level overview of the guidelines as well as three key topics that are not addressed in the Draft Guidelines.

Overview

The Draft Guidelines include further background on the program and specificity around key elements that potential applicants will need to consider and respond to in applications to the grant program. These include eligible costs, workplan objectives, grant administration, collaborative structure, evaluation, and scoring criteria. Also included is an informational summary of SGC's engagement to inform these Draft Guidelines.

Not included for review at this time are the following topics outlined below. SGC is still in the process to develop these materials, which will be included with the final Guidelines.

Additional Application Materials and Resources

SGC will develop additional application materials, templates, and resources to support applicants in applying for and implementing the program. This will include:

- Required application materials, including the application narrative questions, work plan template, and budget template
- Templates for required documents, such as the Partnership Agreement and the Grant Agreement
- Additional resources that will support application development, such as documents on effective community engagement, governance and conflict mediation, State climate policies, and more

Staff is looking forward to hearing any additional detail on resources that potential applicants would find helpful for SGC to develop prior to release of the application.

Anticipated Application Process

SGC anticipates using a two-phase application process for the RCC Program. At the initial phase, or the concept application phase, applicants would provide a higher-level overview of their proposed collaborative and workplan to SGC.

SGC staff and technical assistance providers would provide feedback on concept applications and advise applicants on how to strengthen their proposal moving forward.

The second phase, or the final application, would require a fully developed project workplan, budget, and Collaborative Stakeholder Structure with a signed Partnership Agreement.

Incorporating Listening Session Feedback

Staff developed a summary of what we heard in our November 2021 Listening Sessions that we are sharing alongside the Draft Guidelines, to be transparent about the feedback we received.

The majority of the recommendations provided have been incorporated throughout the draft either directly or indirectly, and SGC looks forward to receiving reactions to how the document does or does not address the priorities that emerged from the listening sessions.

However, there were two topics brought up repeatedly in public feedback that are not addressed in the Draft Guidelines or may run counter to feedback received. These are items we are continuing to work internally with legal counsel and others on in order to fully understand the available options and develop appropriate language to address.

The primary topics we are continuing to work through include:

- Participation incentives for community residents to attend meetings and events hosted by Collaborative members
- Requirements for a limited waiver of sovereign immunity from Federally-recognized Tribes applying as the managing stakeholder for RCC project funds

While SGC may not ultimately be able to include all the elements heard as priorities in listening sessions, staff will continue to work to address what can be to the extent possible.