

Q&A for EJ4Climate Website

- **How does the CEC define environmental justice?**
 - “...Environmental justice broadly covers fair and inclusive engagements of all in the development, implementation and enforcement of environmental legislation. It, therefore, refers directly to access to environment-related goods, such as clean water and energy or safe urban areas, or to protection from negative environmental pressures, like air and water pollution or deforestation (distributional justice). It also translates into equal access to the decision-making process of environmental policies (procedural justice). Finally, it has been argued that environmental justice should also achieve a healthy environment for all (substantive justice).”¹
 - In Mexico, the concept of environmental equity (*equidad ambiental*) is embedded in the law.²
- **What do you mean by “vulnerable and underserved communities”?**
 - This program is targeted to underserved and vulnerable communities, including Indigenous communities, low-income communities, and communities with heightened risk and increased sensitivity to climate change and that have less capacity and fewer resources to cope with, adapt to, or recover from climate impacts. The degree of risk and sensitivity stems from physical (built and environmental), social, political, and/or economic factors, which interact with each other and are exacerbated by climate impacts. These factors include, but are not limited to, race, class, sexual orientation and identification, national origin, and income inequality.³
- **What types of projects are eligible for funding?**
 - Possible projects under the grant program could include addressing extreme weather impacts, transitioning to clean energy and/or transportation systems, or utilizing traditional ecological knowledge to address climate change impacts. Project types can include, but are not limited to, capacity building, pilot projects, transfer of innovative technologies, conducting outreach or education, sharing best practices, communication and preparedness/response process improvements, training environmental and community leaders, engaging youth on environmental activities, and reducing risks to the environment.
- **What is the difference between a grant and a cooperative agreement?**
 - A grant is funding given by the CEC to an organization to carry out a selected project. The organization is responsible for setting goals and carrying out activities to achieve them. The grantee is entirely responsible for administering the funds according to the

¹ OECD, “Session 7 Environmental justice and empowering women and youth,” p. 2, 2020 Global Forum on Environment <https://www.oecd.org/env/GFE-Gender-Issues-Note-Session-7.pdf> (internal citations omitted).

² General Law for Ecological Equilibrium and Environmental Protection (LGEEPA), Article 21 paragraph IV.

³ See US Executive Order 13985 <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2021/01/25/2021-01753/advancing-racial-equity-and-support-for-underserved-communities-through-the-federal-government>

workplan and reporting to the CEC at the end of the project on results and the use of resources. The legal instrument used for grants is a funding agreement.

- A cooperative agreement is a funding arrangement between the CEC and an organization under a different legal instrument. Although it includes financial assistance to undertake a project, it also includes substantial CEC involvement in terms of project oversight and delivery. A CEC project lead will be assigned to work with the community to support implementation of the project. This type of arrangement is particularly suited for communities that may need more institutional support to deliver their project, or for projects that have a direct link to a [CEC cooperative project](#).

- **What kinds of organizations and partnerships can apply?**

- Eligible applicants include nonprofit and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), civil society groups, environmental groups, community-based associations, tribal nations, and Indigenous Peoples and communities.
- Universities, and academic and public research institutions are eligible to apply by teaming up with community-based organizations.
- Applicants must be located in Canada, Mexico or the United States.
- If you are unsure whether your organization is eligible, please contact us.

- **What is a “community-based organization”?**

- A nongovernmental organization that has demonstrated effectiveness as a representative of a community or a significant segment of a community and that helps members of that community or segment obtain environmental, educational, or other social services.

- **What types of projects/efforts are NOT funded by this program?**

- Activities for which the local, state/provincial or federal government is responsible (e.g., construction of roads, bridges, sewage treatment plants);
- Purchase of motor vehicles, property, or land;
- Renovations;
- Pursuing legal action;
- Projects dedicated exclusively to planning of activities without tangible actions associated;
- Projects meant only to beautify an area (with the exception of projects that aim to restore habitat or enhance the ecosystem services of an area);
- Lobbying or advocacy;
- Annual or regular organizational events/campaigns/conferences;
- Expenses to attend general conferences or membership fees; and
- Projects implemented outside the territory of the three Environmental Cooperation Agreement member countries (Canada, Mexico, and the United States).