

Administration and Funding Guidelines

North American Partnership for Environmental Community Action (NAPECA) of the Commission for Environmental Cooperation (CEC)

2017–2018

Revised August 2017

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1. Background

The three countries in North America have had a rich history of cooperation on the environment, but with the prospect of increased trade due to the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), they negotiated the North American Agreement on Environmental Cooperation (NAAEC), which came into force at the same time as NAFTA. Together, the environmental provisions of both agreements mark the determination of the three Parties to ensure that economic growth and liberalization of trade would not displace ongoing cooperation and continuous improvement in the environmental performance of each country.

The provisions of the NAAEC mandated the establishment of the Commission for Environmental Cooperation (CEC) to support and facilitate the Parties' work on the conservation, protection, and enhancement of the North American environment. Recognizing that ecosystems do not follow political boundaries but rather often cross state, provincial and national borders, and that individual investments made by each country can achieve greater success if a shared sense of responsibility and stewardship for the environment across North America is developed, the Council, through the CEC, established a grant program, the North American Partnership for Environmental Community Action (NAPECA) in 2010. NAPECA is intended to support a flexible and diverse set of project types that will improve access to resources provided by the Parties through the CEC for small, more hands-on organizations and that build partnerships at the community level with a focus on sustainable communities and urban initiatives.

Project types can include, but are not limited to building capacity, sponsoring pilot projects, transfer of innovative technologies, conducting outreach or education, sharing best practices, training environmental leaders, engaging youth on environmental activities, reducing risks to the environment, and many other types of non-regulatory efforts.

The Council may direct support for specific topics in any given cycle. Selected topics will be outlined in the Call for Proposals.

2. Eligibility

The NAPECA program seeks to support efforts at the grassroots level. The objective is to empower and build the capacity of local peoples and organizations to improve their health and environmental quality. For this reason, priority will be given to action-driven projects with dynamic community involvement, implemented by local groups or organizations.

Eligible applicants include nonprofit and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), environmental groups, community-based associations, academic institutions, tribal nations, and indigenous peoples and communities. Grantees must be located in Canada, Mexico or the United States.

NAPECA does not support businesses, private individuals, municipal, provincial/state, territorial and federal governments. However, proposals from qualified organizations partnering with the private sector or local government are eligible. Additionally, NAPECA will not support potential applicants who are currently receiving or applying for funding from Environment and Climate Change Canada for their proposed projects.

The CEC cannot accept applications from an applicant who is, or whose immediate family member(s)¹ is/are:

- An official of a NAAEC Party (i.e., the Government of Canada, the Government of the United States of America, or the Government of the United Mexican States) or who served in that position within the past year;
- An official of the CEC Secretariat or who served in that position within the past year;
- A present or past member (within the past year) of the CEC Joint Public Advisory Committee (JPAC); or
- A present or past member (within the past year) of the domestic advisory committees

The following projects and activities are not eligible for funding:

- 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;
- Projects meant only to beautify an area;
- Lobbying or advocacy;
- Annual or regular organizational events/campaigns;
- Expenses to attend general conferences; and
- Projects implemented outside the territory of the three NAAEC countries.

3. Funding

Projects will be funded for a maximum duration of 12 (twelve) months.

The CEC encourages applicants to submit proposals up to a total of US\$53,000. Additional funds (where available) will be considered only for exceptional projects.

The CEC recognizes that a project can have a great impact at a low cost; therefore no minimum grant amount has been established.

4. Grant Selection Criteria

The NAPECA grant process is designed to support projects that:

- Address the focus area identified by Council: “Innovation and Partnerships for Green Growth” to encourage environmentally responsible economic development while decreasing pressure on natural resources as well as promoting more sustainable patterns of production and consumption.
- Include a sound implementation plan that identifies actors, actions, beneficiaries, goals, measurable objectives and results;

¹ “Immediate family” includes spouses, parents, siblings and children.

- Achieve measurable positive results for the environment at the community level within the timeframe of NAPECA support;
- Can be replicated in other regions or communities;
- Create formal or informal partnerships or linkages at the state, local or indigenous community level, within the North American region;
- Leverage or demonstrate opportunity to leverage other resources to achieve greater impact, replicability and sustainability of the project and its results; and
- Are presented on time and through the established process.

5. NAPECA Approval Process

NAPECA management will consist of staff from the CEC Secretariat and a Selection Committee. The Selection Committee will consist of five members: one General Standing Committee (GSC) representative from each country, the Chair of the Joint Public Advisory Committee (JPAC), and the CEC Executive Director.

Grant applicants will submit a proposal consisting of an executive summary and a more detailed breakdown of their proposed project, explaining how it meets each of the NAPECA grant selection criteria and will include a comprehensive description of how the requested funding will be expended. See Section 6.3 below for the proposal outline.

Applicants must submit their application by the posted due date. The CEC Secretariat will review the proposals and will make a first cut based on the NAPECA grant selection criteria included above (Section 4). Successful proposals retained after that first screening will then be reviewed by the NAPECA Selection Committee in a second grant selection round. The Secretariat will assist the Selection Committee in screening and reviewing proposals and will administer the grant funds.

The Selection Committee will approve or decline grant applications.

The final set of projects will be approved by the CEC Council or their Alternate Representatives.

5.1 Evaluation of NAPECA

A performance evaluation of NAPECA will be conducted annually. Grantees must demonstrate, through periodic reporting, that they are implementing the activities set forth in their workplan, meeting the stated goals, and achieving the expected results. In addition, a financial statement on NAPECA will be included in the annual external audit of the CEC.

5.2 Official Languages

The official languages of the CEC are English, French and Spanish, and proposals may be submitted in any of these languages. The proposals considered by the Selection Committee will be translated as appropriate and as requested by the Selection Committee.

6. Grant Application Timeline and Process

6.1. Summary of the Process

For 2017–2018, NAPECA will have one grant cycle that will allow a maximum period of twelve months for project implementation (30 November 2017 to 30 November 2018).

Once the Call for Proposals is issued, the deadline for submission of the proposals will be four weeks later. During this period, the CEC Secretariat may provide initial feedback to an applicant regarding the eligibility and completeness of the proposals. Proposals can be submitted electronically through the online application form available at < <http://www.cec.org/our-work/napeca>>. They can also be mailed or hand delivered to the CEC Secretariat offices in Montreal, Canada, or to the CEC's Mexico City Liaison office, but application online is encouraged. Only one application per organization per country will be considered. Once an application is submitted, the Secretariat will not provide oral or written feedback on its evaluation.

The first screening of proposals should be completed by the Secretariat, five weeks after the Call for Proposals closing date. The second review of proposals will be conducted by the Selection Committee. The final set of projects will be approved by the CEC Council or their Alternate Representatives.

6.2 Request for Proposals and Review Process

1. The CEC Secretariat will release a Call for Proposals (that outlines eligible applicants and the sorts of projects/activities that are not eligible for funding, provides information on how to apply, and supplies a decision timetable and the required outline for the project proposals. This document will be sent to the Parties, JPAC, and CEC stakeholders, and made publicly available.
2. The Secretariat will screen the proposals and prepare documentation for the Selection Committee. For each proposal submitted, the Secretariat will develop and manage a file. The Secretariat will review this documentation and select projects for which the detailed proposals will be reviewed by the Selection Committee.
3. The Selection Committee will evaluate the detailed proposals on how well they meet each of the NAPECA selection criteria (as specified in Section 4, above).
4. The Selection Committee will then approve or decline the grant applications.
5. The final set of projects will be approved by the CEC Council or their Alternate Representatives.
6. The Secretariat will administer the grant funds.

Upon completion of this stage, grants will be publicly announced, including the possibility of Council announcing individual projects in the respective countries. Announcements will include: the name of the organization and its location, the name of the project, the amount of the grant and an executive summary of the project goals, activities and expected results.

6.3 Proposal Format

Proposals must include the following information:

Contact information

1. Project lead contact information: First name, last name, telephone, e-mail.
2. Organization contact information: Name, address, country, e-mail, phone, website, twitter, Facebook, etc.

Section 1. Executive Summary

3. Project title
4. Budget requested²
5. Project duration. Project starting date; project end date (Project duration must be between the dates of 30 November 2017 to 30 November 2018).
6. Project topic. Explain *how* the project and project results address the topic identified in the Call for Proposals: Innovation and Partnerships for Green Growth to advance environmentally responsible economic development while decreasing pressure on natural resources and promoting more sustainable patterns of production and consumption. (Max. 100 words)
7. Geographic location of the project. Indicate the country or countries where the project will be implemented.
8. Beneficiaries. List the community/ies that will benefit directly from the project, including the target population and the number of individuals served. (Max. 50 words)
9. Project description. Provide a brief description of the goals and objectives of the project, including the problem the project proposes to address. (Max. 100 words)
10. Main activities and their approximate budget. Briefly describe the main activities to be undertaken during the implementation of the project. Template provided (Max. 15 words per activity)
11. Results. Briefly describe the expected results and how will they contribute to the overall goal of improving health and environmental quality. Results must be measurable (e.g., number of training workshops; number of hectares; number of schools engaged). Results must be achieved within the timeframe of NAPECA support. (Max. 70 words)
12. Partnerships. Please provide the names of any other organizations involved in the project, including partners and/or beneficiaries.
13. Other funding sources. List other funding sources and/or leveraging opportunities . (Max. 100 words)

Section 2. Proposal Details

² For more information on available funds, see Section 3 above.

14. Goals, Objectives and Performance Indicators. Provide a detailed statement of the project's goals and objectives. Provide details of the performance indicators to measure the objectives. Fill in the worksheet provided online.
15. Work Plan. Provide a detailed description of the specific activities to be undertaken and their associated timelines (work plan). Use the template provided online.
16. Budget breakdown. Use the worksheet template to provide details of the project budget (in US\$). Break this information into the following categories:
 - a) Salaries and benefits
 - b) Equipment and supplies
 - c) Travel³
 - d) Consultant services (if applicable)
 - e) Overhead (not to exceed 15 percent)⁴
 - f) Other costs
17. Innovation. Describe any innovative approach to be adopted in this project. (Max. 100 words)
18. Replicability. Explain how this project could be replicated in other North American communities. (Max. 100 words)
19. Sustainability. Explain if/how this project or its impacts could carry on successfully after the NAPECA funding and project implementation are concluded. (Max. 100 words.)
20. Mission of the lead organization / institution / group/community (Max. 30 words)
21. Applicant Organization. Please upload a certificate of non-profit status of the applicant organization.
22. Declaration of acceptance of impartiality and independence. Please print, sign and upload the Declaration of impartiality and independence.

6.4 Grant Distribution Process

Grants will be disbursed through quarterly installments to ensure that funded projects proceed in a realistic time frame.

Grantees are required to submit progress reports and financial statements to the Secretariat that demonstrate how the funding is being used to generate tangible, measurable results. These reports and statements should be submitted according to the Payment and Reporting Schedule of the NAPECA Funding Agreement. Payments are contingent on the receipt of satisfactory progress reports from the grantees and will be withheld if the conditions of the grant are not met. Approximately five percent of the grant will be held back until of a satisfactory final report is received.

Progress reports will be made publicly available.

³ The CEC will not fund expenses related to travel in excess of 15 percent of the total grant amount.

⁴ The CEC will not fund expenses related to overhead and administration (such as rent, telephone, fax, and photocopies) in excess of 15 percent of the total grant amount.

7. Revision of the NAPECA Administration and Funding Guidelines

Any modification to these Guidelines must be approved by the Council prior to its taking effect.