

# Hazardous Waste Management Grant Program for Tribes

## GRANT WRITING TIPS

The quality of a grant application is contingent upon how well it is written and adheres to the instructions that are provided in the Request for Applications.

### TIPS FOR SUCCESS:

1. A successful grant application is one that is well thought-out, clear, concise and compelling.
2. Prepare early – **do not rush!** Rushing may cause mistakes that impact the application score.
3. Carefully read the competitive announcement and follow the guidelines. **Note: Applicants must meet the Threshold Eligibility Criteria (see Section 3(C) of the Request for Applications) for your application to be considered.**
4. Submit full applications which must include the following mandatory documents: Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424); Budget Information for Non-Construction Programs (SF-424A); EPA Key Contacts Form 5700-54; EPA Form 4700-4 – Pre-award Compliance Review Report; and Narrative Proposal (Project Narrative Attachment Form) - prepared as described in *Section 4(D)* of the Request for Applications. To access these forms, visit: <https://www.epa.gov/grants/epa-grantee-forms>.
5. Ensure that the project develops and implements hazardous waste management activities as identified in the Request for Applications.
6. Applications should not exceed 15 pages.
7. Carefully review the evaluation criteria. Each criterion should be addressed (see Section 5(A) of the Request for Applications). Examples and/or details for addressing some of the criteria are provided below:

### **EPA's Perspective: Project Description (Sample Project: Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) Collection Event)**

Provide a clear statement of the problem and, when possible, provide enough data to support the problem.

***Pala Band's Perspective:*** Pala used this section to: (1) provide a short overview of our current HHW program (e.g., what we currently collect, how/where, and our program capabilities like staff, training, and/or current regulations that we follow); (2) a description of where our program is lacking, or needing more resources (e.g., based on our last Household Hazardous and Universal Waste (HHUW) characterization study, we are still seeing HHW end up in illegal dumpsites on the reservation and in curbside trash collection, therefore we need more education & opportunity for proper disposal for our community); and (3) outline any previous related HHW grants that we received, and examples of where we've helped share our experiences/knowledge with other tribes. Additionally, we include the next steps in our HHW program that we are applying for funds during this round, and how they will help address our current need.

## GRANT WRITING TIPS CONTINUATION

Identify milestones and attainable goals and objectives.

**Pala Band's Perspective:** *In order to identify grant milestones and goals/objectives for your HHW program, it is important to have a baseline of what your waste stream is made up of (based on a waste audit or HHUW characterization), and what your overall program goals are (based on the roadmap that you developed in your Household Hazardous and Universal Waste Management Plan (HHUMP) – unless you are just starting your hazardous waste program & still need to complete your baseline analysis.*

Describe the approach/actions proposed to transfer information or lessons learned during the project to other tribes.

**Pala Band's Perspective:** *Pala always tries to set up our grant projects from the start with outreach to other tribes in mind, and how we can share our lessons learned (so that others can benefit from & not duplicate our mistakes). Therefore, PED included information sharing in the grant in two separate areas: we consider our training, education, outreach task to be aimed both at educating our own tribal community about proper HHW disposal, as well as elevating our lessons learned, template documents, and resources to other tribes through presentations at conferences, workshops, and webinars; we also use our inter-tribal HHW collection events as an opportunity to reach other local tribes.*

Address how the project will be developed in compliance with applicable federal regulations (e.g., used oil collection – 40 CFR Part 279 or universal waste collection – 40 CFR Part 273).

Clearly define how the project will lead to a comprehensive and **sustainable** waste management program.

**Pala Band's Perspective:** *Pala specified that our grant objectives supported EPA's FY2018-2022 Strategic Plan, specifically EPA's Goal 1 (a cleaner, healthier environment), objective 1.3 (revitalize the land and prevent contamination), and Goal 2 (more effective partnerships), objective 2.1 (enhance shared accountability).*

*PED tries to build slowly on our past successes with our HHW program, making sure that we are always re-examining our roadmap documents/goals to keep us on track with larger hazardous waste goals. We utilize pilot programs, funded through these HHW Grants, to take an idea and try it out on a small-scale to see how effective it will be; once we see some project success, we can gradually build it out to our larger tribal community. If the original pilot wasn't originally successful, we review the project steps to see if we can modify it for greater success, or just end it with lessons learned. This approach has helped us to slowly create an HHW program that is manageable and sustainable.*

## GRANT WRITING TIPS CONTINUATION

### EPA's Perspective: Environmental Outcomes and Outputs

8. Clearly define environmental outcomes and outputs. An outcome is the result, effect or consequence that will occur from carrying out an environmental program or activity. An output is an environmental activity, effort, and/or associated work product.

#### Outcome:

A decrease in household health threats as demonstrated by an increase in the amount of household hazardous waste collected.

#### Output:

An inventory of the type and amount of household hazardous waste collected.

9. Clearly describe specific measures of success, including detailed and specific information. Define how success will be tracked and measured as well as any reports and/or other documentation that will be provided in support of the environmental outcomes and outputs.

***Pala Band's Perspective:*** *It is very important to have clear, demonstrable and measurable deliverables (or how you are planning on achieving and showing how you measure your project success) which are written into your project description from the start. Be consistent in your tracking - It is critical for you to know how you'll be tracking your program success at the start of the project so that you can actually track the correct information for the entire length of the project. You don't want to reach the end of the project only to realize that you have data holes, or that you measured different items during the different stages of your project and are not able to adequately compare 'apples' to 'oranges' at the end stage.*

*PED has found value in tracking projects in a number of different ways (even if you're only providing one - not all - tracking method for the original grant), that way you have many different ways that you can use (or compare) the data going forward for new/future projects that you haven't started yet. Some examples of this can be tracking your HHW collection items by all of the following metrics: overall weight, by an inventory of the various items (narrative), broken down by material type groups, broken down by source (e.g. community/curbside; dumpsites; collection events), etc. Tracking all of these various metrics can be a little time-consuming, however, PED has found this method invaluable for our overall hazardous waste program and overall program goals.*

*PED also tries to take as many photos as we can, at every opportunity since they can be valuable for showing project progress/successful for grant reporting, as well as showing long-term program growth or for use in future education/outreach campaigns.*

**Measures of Success:**

Amount of material collected from the community in pounds and/or gallons.

Number of people/households participating in the event.

Number of outreach events and level of participation.

***Pala Band's Perspective:*** *Pala has found that it's important to measure your success in both QUANTIFIABLE, concrete/demonstrable measurements (very useful for grant reporting/deliverables & for helping project officers demonstrate need/success to higher-ups who can push for additional funding for tribal programs), and in QUANTITATIVE ways like narrative reports, photos, community quotes/feedback, or other methods that can help tell an overall story of your project.*

10. Clearly describe a viable and proactive approach for providing technical assistance to other tribes, including how other tribal communities will benefit from the project, a methodology for transferring information and lessons learned during the project to other tribes, and a detailed plan that describes activities that will educate as well as assist other tribal communities in their efforts to develop and implement sustainable hazardous waste management programs.

**EPA's Perspective: Technical Assistance/Transferability (NOTE: **TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE/TRANSFERABILITY IS AS AN IMPORTANT COMPONENT OF THE APPLICATION!!!**)**

Implementing peer matching as a component of the proposed project is an excellent mechanism to use in support of technical assistance and transferability.

- ORCR, in collaboration with EPA Regions and the American Indian Environmental Office, manage the National Tribal Waste Management Peer Matching Program, which provides support for tribes, Alaska Native Villages, and tribal consortia to assist one another in addressing waste management issues by providing technical assistance through a peer-to-peer mechanism.
- Peer matching can be an effective mechanism for tribes to promote best waste management practices, as well as to build sustainable waste management programs consistent with the requirements of the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act. Depending on the need, technical assistance can be provided virtually, in-person, or a combination of the two. EPA provides facilitation (e.g., periodic conference calls and/or meetings), technical assistance, or other support to match mentors with mentees and work towards accomplishing project goals for tribes interested in learning from peer mentors.
- If technical assistance related to the grant recipients project is requested, the grant recipient may be asked to serve as a mentor and EPA will facilitate the mentee peer match and fund associated travel, lodging, and other direct costs to support the virtual or in-person trainings with mentees.

Establishing strategic partnerships to address hazardous waste.

Presenting on the EPA hosted RCRA Tribal Waste Management Program Webinar Series and/or partnering with EPA and other tribes to host webinars and trainings including sustainable materials management principles and practices such as green chemistry; and generating less waste from the start (prevention and source reduction) of hazardous materials.

**Pala Band's Perspective:** *Over the years, Pala has tried to share our insight on what has and has not worked with building our hazardous waste programs. We have presented at tribally-focused conferences, like the Region 9 Tribal-EPA Conference or the Institute of Tribal Environmental Professionals (ITEP) Tribal Lands and Environmental Forum (TLEF) Conference, and other related webinars/workshops. We have also partnered with ITEP to teach on various HHW related topics at their many different waste related trainings on tribal lands all over the country. One of the most valuable things for our own program growth has been to see/hear what other tribes are doing on their lands, to give us ideas or learn what pitfalls to avoid, and we try to perform the same service for other tribes.*

Developing outreach materials and other products that tribes share via social media, meetings or conferences. For example: Developing a Hazardous Waste Management Plan (HWMP) template that other tribes can use as a model for developing their own HWMP.

**Pala Band's Perspective:** *PEP has developed many different forms, templates, and resource guides for our own program, which we have shared with a number of other tribes so that they can use/modify those forms for their own programs. For many tribes that have too few staff/resources, it is critical to work smarter, not harder – why reinvent the wheel if you can instead learn lessons from other tribes that have already set up programs and can share their own successful building blocks (or stumbling blocks).*

*We have also partnered with the USEPA on various non-grant funding opportunities to provide waste audit training opportunities to other tribes, using our Transfer Station as a site, as well as a Community-Based Social Marketing (CBSM) outreach pilot to help us develop Pala-specific outreach materials, which can then be shared/used by other tribes.*

**EPA's Perspective: Budget**

11. Develop a budget that is realistic and appropriate for accomplishing the goals of the project.
12. Identify partnering organization(s), specify how the partnering organization(s) will assist with accomplishing the objectives of the project, and provide letters of support, joint statements, or principles of agreement signed by other parties which documents the relationship. **Note: Applicants that do not plan on working with partners will be evaluated based on the extent to which they demonstrate how they will be able to effectively perform and complete the project without working with partners.**

## **UNDERSTANDING DIFFERENCES**

**What is the difference between “leveraging” and “in-kind” goods and services?**

**Leveraging** is the coordination of all resources (federal and/or non-federal) that are used by the grantee to support grant activities and outcomes.

**For Example - Leveraging:**

Working with another federal agency to secure the funds to pay for disposal of waste that is collected during the household hazardous waste collection event.

**In-kind Goods and Services** may consist of charges for real property and equipment or the value goods and services directly benefitting the EPA funded project.

**For Example - In-kind:**

Office space, supplies, or administrative staff that is used to support the project at no cost to EPA.