



STATE OF CALIFORNIA

GOVERNOR'S OFFICE OF PLANNING & RESEARCH
STRATEGIC GROWTH COUNCIL



Gavin Newsom,
Governor

Lynn von Koch-Liebert,
Executive Director

May 22, 2023

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

Community Assistance for Climate Equity Tribal Capacity Building Pilot Program

Agency: California Strategic Growth Council (SGC)

Action: Request for Information (RFI)

Summary:

The California Strategic Growth Council will develop a [Tribal Capacity Building Pilot Program](#) to assist California Native American Tribes in developing long-term capacity to secure funding and implement tribal-led climate solutions. The pilot program will provide direct grants to tribes to fund a number of activities including planning, securing funding for, and implementing projects related to climate mitigation, adaptation, and resilience.

In addition to funding tribes, this new pilot program will provide technical assistance to grantees to advance the tribe's climate-related work. A Technical Assistance Provider (TA Provider) will work with 4-6 awarded tribes for a two-year grant period to evaluate capacity building needs and provide technical assistance that will be flexible and responsive to each tribe's needs under this grant. The TA Provider will work with each tribe to develop an action plan based on the tribe's priorities and goals.

This RFI offers the public the opportunity to provide information to inform both the development of the Tribal Capacity Building Pilot Program Grant Guidelines as well as the development of a solicitation to select the TA Provider, including the solicitation's scope of work, deliverables, and proposal requirements.

Based on a series of interviews, listening sessions, and other engagements with tribes, SGC has developed [Draft Grant Guidelines for the Tribal Capacity Building Pilot Program](#). The Draft Grant Guidelines outline the goals, processes, and requirements for tribes who apply to participate in the program. Below are questions posed to the public that will help SGC further develop and refine this pilot program.

SGC has not yet developed a draft RFP solicitation for the TA Provider(s) associated with this program. The questions posed to the public in this RFI will help SGC develop this solicitation.

Workshops:

SGC will host four workshops in June 2023 where participants will be able to provide verbal feedback on both the Draft Grant Guidelines as well as the questions in this RFI. SGC will prioritize input from tribes and tribal-serving organizations. The workshop dates and registration links are listed below:

RFI & Draft Grant Guidelines Tribal Workshop 1

Monday, June 5, 2023 | 1:00 p.m. - 2:30 p.m.

Register here: tinyurl.com/TCBP-TW1

RFI & Draft Grant Guidelines Tribal Workshop 2

Tuesday, June 13, 2023 | 1:00 p.m. - 2:30 p.m.

Register here: tinyurl.com/TCBP-TW2

RFI & Draft Grant Guidelines Tribal Workshop 3

Wednesday, June 21, 2023 | 1:00 p.m. - 2:30 p.m.

Register here: tinyurl.com/TCBP-TW3

RFI & Draft Grant Guidelines Tribal Workshop 4

Friday, June 30, 2023 | 1:00 p.m. - 2:30 p.m.

Register here: tinyurl.com/TCBP-TW

Tribal Consultation and RFI Submissions:

SGC respectfully requests tribal consultation on this RFI by August 22, 2023. To request a consultation, please contact Ena Lupine, Community Assistance for Climate Equity Program Manager at ena.lupine@sgc.ca.gov.

Written responses to this RFI and/or supplemental attachments must be received by **August 22, 2023** to be considered. Responses should be sent via email to CACE@sgc.ca.gov. Please include in the email subject line, "Tribal Capacity Building Pilot Program RFI."

This RFI is only for information and planning purposes and should not be construed as an obligation on the part of SGC. Comments received may be used to inform the Tribal Capacity Building Pilot Program Grant Guidelines and TA Provider solicitation. Respondents do not need to address every question and should focus on those for which they have views or relevant expertise. Please clearly indicate which questions are addressed in the response. Respondents may provide detailed responses and examples.

For further information:

Visit: <https://sgc.ca.gov/programs/tribal/capacity-building>

Email: CACE@sgc.ca.gov

RFI Disclaimer:

The purpose of this RFI solicitation is to seek information, suggestions, and best practices to develop the Tribal Capacity Building Pilot Program Grant Guidelines and the RFP needed

for selecting a TA Provider to support the pilot program. This RFI will not result in the award of a contract agreement.

Completion of this RFI shall be performed at no cost to the State of California. The intent of this RFI is solely for information and planning purposes. A contract will not be awarded as a result of this RFI.

All applications and submitted materials are subject to the California Public Records Act (GC § 6250) requirements and certain information may be publicly disclosed under those requirements. SGC encourages respondents to omit any sensitive information from responses to ensure confidentiality.

Background:

The Tribal Capacity Building Pilot Program expands on SGC's Community Assistance for Climate Equity program mission to support under-resourced communities in establishing long-term capacity to plan for and pursue funding to address climate change. Unique considerations, including California Native American Tribes' sovereign status and the historical relationship between the State of California and tribes, necessitate a dedicated program that is specifically tailored to tribes.

Tribes are eligible applicants for an increasing number of state funding programs, but some tribes may not have access to the resources needed to develop competitive applications and may rely on consultants to apply for and manage projects. Technical assistance programs like this can support tribes in applying for and implementing state funding while helping to build internal capacity for longer-term strategies. While tribal applicants to state grant programs may face many of the same barriers as other applicants, the unique status and needs of tribes require additional, specific considerations in the design and implementation of technical assistance. In working directly with tribes, the Tribal Capacity Building Pilot Program also advances the state's commitment to build relationships with tribes in California as mandated in Executive Orders B-10-11 (Brown, 2011) and N-15-19 (Newsom, 2019).

The Tribal Capacity Building Pilot Program aims to support tribes that have limited capacity to apply for grant funds and implement climate solutions, particularly due to barriers such as: limited staffing resources and capacity; reliance on costly contractors to apply for and implement grant funds; and challenges related to burdensome grant applications and reporting processes. Through this pilot program, SGC can address these barriers and support tribes by: providing funding to hire staff; helping tribal staff apply for and implement funds; building awareness of available funding opportunities; and bringing together and coordinating partners for grant application or administration.

The pilot program is exclusive to all California Native American Tribes listed on the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) Contact List, including federally recognized and non-federally recognized tribes. A non-federally recognized tribe is eligible to apply if they are registered as a nonprofit. An application review panel will select tribes to award grants to through a competitive process.

This pilot program will be administered by SGC's Community Assistance for Climate Equity Program (previously known as the California Climate Investments Technical Assistance Program), which has a history of providing technical assistance and capacity building resources to communities. Members of this team have also developed and implemented programs specific to tribes, including the joint SGC and California Energy Commission [Tribal Government Challenge Planning Grant Program](#). SGC's CACE program has received and implemented a total of \$13.5 million to carry out capacity building and technical assistance programs.

Purpose:

The purpose of this RFI is twofold:

1. **To seek input on the Draft Grant Guidelines for the Tribal Capacity Building Pilot Program**
2. **To seek input to develop a scope of work and proposal requirements for a solicitation for TA Providers to support grantees of the Tribal Capacity Building Pilot Program**

Request for Information: Key Questions

A. Tribal Capacity Building Pilot Program Draft Grant Guidelines

As a part of this RFI, SGC is soliciting feedback on the Tribal Capacity Building Pilot Program Draft Grant Guidelines, which outline the program requirements for tribal applicants who wish to participate in the program. The Draft Grant Guidelines are meant to be a step-by-step guide for grant applicants to learn more about, apply for, and participate in the SGC's Tribal Capacity Building Pilot Program. The final version of the Grant Guidelines will reflect state requirements on how to use and manage program funds. SGC anticipates that of the potential \$1M allotted to this pilot program, \$600K is available for grant awards.

SGC will present the Draft Grant Guidelines at public workshops to solicit public comments over 90 days. CACE staff will review and incorporate public workshop input and public comments on the RFI and Draft Grant Guidelines before SGC adopts the Tribal Capacity Building Pilot Program Final Grant Guidelines. In finalizing the Grant Guidelines, SGC will prioritize input from tribes and tribal-serving organizations.

Staff plan to present Tribal Capacity Building Pilot Program Final Grant Guidelines to the Strategic Growth Council for adoption in October 2023. Staff will develop and release the Tribal Capacity Building Pilot Program Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) in November 2023. Staff will host public application workshops to provide additional information and resources to interested applicants.

Request for Comment:

SGC welcomes input on any component of the [Tribal Capacity Building Pilot Program Draft Grant Guidelines](#), but would particularly appreciate feedback on the following sections:

1. **Program Timeline** (See **Section I.G.** of the Draft Grant Guidelines)
2. **Eligible Activities** (See **Section II.B.** of the Draft Grant Guidelines)
3. **Project Deliverables** (See **Section II.C.** of the Draft Grant Guidelines)
4. **Eligible Costs** (See **Section II.D.** of the Draft Grant Guidelines)
5. **Eligible Project Area** (See **Section II.E.** of the Draft Grant Guidelines)
6. **Threshold Criteria** (See **Section III.C.** of the Draft Grant Guidelines)
7. **Application Components** (See **Section III.D.** of the Draft Grant Guidelines)
8. **Scoring Criteria** (See **Section III.D.** of the Draft Grant Guidelines)
9. **Reporting Requirements** (See **Section V.B.** of the Draft Grant Guidelines)

B. TA Provider Request for Proposals Solicitation

SGC will utilize the information received through this RFI and the public engagement workshops to develop a Request for Proposals (RFP) solicitation including a scope of work, deliverables, and proposal requirements. SGC anticipates the total amount of the TA Provider contract will not exceed \$400K. SGC plans to release the final RFP in Fall 2023 and leave the window for bid submission open for approximately two (2) months.

After the RFP deadline, responses will be reviewed to ensure the minimum requirements are met. Eligible proposal responses will be reviewed by members of the SGC team to determine which response provides the best value, ensuring the needs and goals of the Tribal Capacity Building Pilot Program are effectively met. SGC anticipates selecting a TA Provider in Winter 2023. The term of this project should begin upon approval by the Strategic Growth Council and continue through Summer 2026.

Key Questions – Scope of Work:

The SGC team is seeking input on the tasks and deliverables needed to develop a scope of work for the TA Provider.

1. The TA Provider must support each of the 4-6 participating tribes that will be selected to receive grants through the Tribal Capacity Building Pilot Program. **Please provide feedback on the following list of potential activities that the TA Provider may conduct, including any additional activities and/or technical assistance services that should be provided to best support tribes that have limited capacity:**
 - Work with each participating tribe to assess needs and gaps and identify priorities and achievable objectives that align with program goals to accomplish through the program.
 - Provide services and gather necessary tools and resources to implement each participating tribe's Action Plan.

- Assist participating tribes in developing, applying for, and securing competitive funding proposals for statewide and federally targeted grant funding.
 - Connect participating tribes to technical assistance for grant applications and grant implementation related to climate mitigation, adaptation, and resiliency, and supplement technical assistance activities as appropriate.
 - Organize trainings for participating tribes' staff on leadership development, grants management, navigating state funding platforms, utilizing data tools, and/or other climate related topics as specified in each participating tribe's Action Plan.
 - Host workshops and convenings to build trust and inform tribes of opportunities, needs, and resources to access climate investments.
 - Assist participating tribes in developing systems and processes to streamline grant application, implementation, and reporting processes.
 - Regularly share information about grants, technical assistance, and trainings as well as opportunities to participate in public engagement processes at the state level.
 - Work with participating tribes to incorporate high road economic development and workforce development considerations into projects and planning as needed.
 - Facilitate connections to state agency staff, foundations, non-profits, and other key partners, as requested. Help participating tribes develop new collaborations with trusted partners and build capacity to achieve climate objectives, as requested.
 - Document and promote best practices and success stories.
2. The TA Provider will organize peer learning sessions to facilitate engagement across tribal grantees of the program. **Please provide input on considerations for developing a peer learning strategy that will be effective for tribes across the state.**
 3. A goal of the program is to develop tools and resources that support ongoing capacity building for tribes beyond the timeline associated with this program. This may include products like a best practices report, resource library, recorded trainings, etc. **Please provide feedback on these potential deliverables, including any additional deliverables that should be included to meet the pilot program's goal.**
 4. The TA Provider will communicate regularly with each of the 4-6 participating tribes to track progress and provide support. **Please provide input on how frequently TA Providers should engage directly with grantees and/or effective practices for providing support associated with this program, such as frequency of in-person versus virtual meetings.**

5. **How should SGC define success for this program and track the effectiveness of the technical assistance provided to grantees of the Tribal Capacity Building Pilot Program?**

Key Questions – Proposal Requirements:

The SGC team is also seeking input on the qualifications and materials needed to develop proposal requirements for the RFP.

1. The TA Provider will support each of the 4-6 participating tribes throughout the two-year grant term. Considering that participating tribes may vary widely when it comes to their capacity, needs, and goals, what minimum qualifications should the TA Provider possess? **Please provide feedback on the following list of potential *minimum* qualifications, including any additional *minimum* qualifications the TA Provider should possess and/or organizations that possess these qualifications, where applicable:**
 - Existing relationships and significant experience working with California Native American Tribes – either as a member of a tribe, a staff of a tribe, or having previously provided technical assistance to tribes
 - At least three (3) years of experience applying to or providing technical assistance for climate-related federal and state grants, including grant writing, grant management, grant planning, and/or grant implementation
 - At least three (3) years of experience developing projects and plans related to climate mitigation, adaptation, and resilience
 - At least three (3) years of experience working on land use related projects and plans
 - At least three (3) years of experience developing and delivering curriculum and trainings
 - At least three (3) years of experience developing and implementing programs that offer technical assistance, peer learning, and/or leadership development
 - Knowledge of history of and current practices in tribal governance as well as tribal laws, regulations, and policies at the state and federal levels
 - Knowledge of and experience integrating and protecting tribal data sovereignty and traditional ecological knowledge into work with tribes
2. SGC aims to select a TA Provider who can provide robust technical assistance for California Native American Tribes in a way that is flexible and responsive to each tribe's needs. **Please provide feedback on the following list of potential *desired* qualifications, including any additional *desired* qualifications the TA Provider should possess and/or organizations that possess these qualifications, where applicable:**
 - Experience managing cohorts made up of tribes or tribal-serving organizations
 - Knowledge of climate mitigation, adaptation, and resilience approaches and strategies

- Knowledge of climate change impacts on tribal communities and tribal approaches to environmental management and planning
 - Knowledge of CA Public Law 280 – Jurisdiction in California Indian Country
 - Ability and willingness to travel to meet with tribes in person
 - Ability to balance project expertise while respecting tribal knowledge, and the empathy, emotional intelligence, and ability to receive feedback and revise practices as needed
 - Commitment to relationship and trust building with tribes
3. SGC may require TA Providers to submit three (3) references with their proposal, with at least one (1) of the references being a letter of recommendation from a tribe attesting to experience supporting tribes with capacity building, technical assistance, or climate-related work. **Please provide feedback on this potential requirement, including any additional materials that should be required to better inform selection of a TA Provider through a competitive process.**

Other Recommendations:

In addition to the key questions above, we invite respondents to raise and suggest solutions to any potential limitations/barriers, additional approaches, and/or considerations to the Tribal Capacity Building Pilot Program not captured above.