

# Edwards Settlement Fund Distribution Request for Proposals

## Background

In 2013, the Sierra Club, Natural Resources Defense Council and Respiratory Health Association (represented by the Environmental Law & Policy Center) filed a lawsuit against the owners of the E.D. Edwards coal plant, located on the Illinois River south of Bartonville. The lawsuit alleged the plant had and continued to violate its opacity and particulate matter (soot) limits under the Clean Air Act.

The Edwards plant's air pollution is especially harmful to fenceline communities in Bartonville and directly across the river in Pekin. Prevailing winds and the geography of the Illinois River Valley mean that residents of Peoria's South Side, living in one of the state's poorest zip codes, are also exposed to lung-harming levels of particulate matter.

In August 2016, U.S. District Court judge Joe Billy McDade ruled in favor of the plaintiffs, finding that the Edwards plant had violated its opacity and particulate matter limits thousands of times. Soon afterward, the case continued to determine what the remedy should be for these violations.

On November 13, 2019, Judge McDade approved a settlement that requires the plant's current owner to close Edwards by the end of 2022 (subject to regulatory approvals) and to pay \$8.6 million into two funds to pay for certain community projects. (See the Consent Decree governing the settlement at [edwardscleanairsettlement.org](http://edwardscleanairsettlement.org) for full details.) The distribution of that \$8.6 million to community projects is the subject of this Request for Proposal (RFP).

## Eligible Applicants

- 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations (including those with annual budgets under \$50,000 who have already filed for, but not yet been granted, a 501(c)(3) status using the EZ application).
- Local government agencies serving Central Illinois residents.
- Universities, colleges, junior colleges and other schools in Central Illinois.
- **New in V2:** 501(c)(5) labor organizations serving Central Illinois residents are eligible to apply for funding for **Training** projects as described under **Types of Projects**.
- Preference will be given to applicants based in Central Illinois with a rich history of engagement with the impacted segments of the community.

## Communities of Concern

Our intent is to see benefits flow to displaced Edwards plant employees as well as segments of the community most harmed by the Edwards plant's air pollution, the changing climate and decades of socioeconomic and racial injustice. These **Communities of Concern** include fenceline communities in Bartonville, Pekin and adjacent areas and, due to prevailing winds and the topography of the Illinois River valley, the South Side of Peoria.

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## Types of Projects

- The RFP covers 5 types of projects: **Training, Lung Health, Electric Bus, Energy Efficiency** and **Solar**.
- \$1.72 million will be allocated to projects that provide job **Training** and wrap-around workforce services at Central Illinois schools, training hubs, community centers, and churches and are accessible to displaced Edwards plant employees and the **Communities of Concern**.
- \$6.88 million will be allocated to projects that benefit the **Communities of Concern** in the following categories:
  - Up to 50% can go to medical access/intervention programs, education, and home improvements that improve **Lung Health**.
  - Up to 50% can go to fund **Electric Buses** for public school or public transit fleets, including related infrastructure and training.
  - Up to 50% can go to **Energy Efficiency** improvements for low-income homes, both owner-occupied and rental.
  - Up to 25% can go to **Solar** projects for schools, government buildings, affordable housing projects and low-income owner-occupied homes.
- We intend that all funds will be committed in a single funding round.

## For More Information

Contact RFP administrator Joyce Harant at **888-201-9377** or [edwardsRFP@gmail.com](mailto:edwardsRFP@gmail.com). The full RFP is available online at [edwardscleanairsettlement.org](http://edwardscleanairsettlement.org) along with a list of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ). The FAQ will be updated as questions arise and clarification is needed through Jan 6, 2020.

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## Process Timeline

Wednesday Nov 13, 2019	U.S. District Court approves Consent Decree, including \$8.6 million in project funding.
Thursday Nov 21, 2019	Request for Proposals (RFP) opens.
Tuesday Dec 3, 2019	Public meetings to walk through the RFP process and the RFP itself with an opportunity for questions. Two identical sessions will be held at the Peoria Public Library (main branch at 107 NE Monroe) from 4-5PM and 6-7PM.
Monday Jan 13, 2020	Proposals due at 5PM CDT.
<b>Updated in V3:</b> Weeks of Jan 13-27, 2020	Applicants whose proposals pass all the screens outlined in <b>The Project Selection Process</b> later in this document will be contacted the week of January 13 and asked to give an up-to-15-minute in-person presentation and participate in an up-to-30-minute Q&A with the Advisory Team the week of January 27. The amount of time allotted for each presentation and Q&A will depend on the number of screened applicants.
Monday Feb 3, 2020	Final deadline for submitting any additional information requested by the Advisory Team.
<b>Added in V4:</b> Week of Feb 17, 2020	Selected projects notified and asked to prepare a letter of intent to the U.S. District Court and Department of Justice per the <b>Immediate Responsibilities of Funded Projects</b> section later in this document.
<b>Added in V4:</b> Week of Feb 17, 2020	Portfolio of selected projects and funding commitments presented to the public, the U.S. District Court and the Department of Justice.
<b>Added in V3:</b> Late winter-spring 2020	Grant agreements finalized for selected projects; funding disbursements begin.
Friday Mar 1, 2024	Last date for funding disbursements to selected projects.

## The Advisory Team

The Advisory Team includes representation from the three Plaintiff Groups—Sierra Club, Natural Resources Defense Council, Respiratory Health Association—and allied community partners Central Illinois Healthy Community Alliance, Illinois People’s Action and NAACP Peoria branch.

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The Advisory Team will read all proposals, attend all project presentations and identify any additional information needed to facilitate the decision-making process. The Advisory Team will develop a list of projects recommended for funding, with the goal of committing the entire \$8.6 million. The Plaintiff Groups will make the final decision on all projects and funding levels.

### The Project Selection Process

- Proposals submitted by applicants that do not meet **Eligible Applicant** criteria will not be considered. Nonprofit organizations that do not currently hold 501(c)(3) status, but have applied for it, should contact RFP Administrator Joyce Harant immediately at **888-201-9377** or [edwardsRFP@gmail.com](mailto:edwardsRFP@gmail.com).
- Submitted proposals will be screened to ensure they fall into one of the project areas described earlier under **Types of Projects**. Projects that fall into more than one project area should be submitted as multiple projects. Projects that do not fall into any of the project areas are not eligible for funding.
- Submitted proposals will be screened for completeness to ensure that they contain the elements described under **Structuring Your Proposal** and all documents listed in the **Required Applicant Attachments** section later in this document.
- Each project that passes the eligibility, project area and completeness screens will be reviewed by the Advisory Team and invited to give an up-to-15-minute presentation and participate in an up-to-30-minute Q&A.
- Following the presentation and Q&A, the Advisory Team may ask for additional information necessary to assess the project with submission no later than by February 3, 2020.
- Following the presentations and receipt of any additional information requested by the Advisory Team, proposals will be rated both qualitatively and quantitatively. Both parts will count equally toward the final score. The qualitative rating will be given based on factors such as—Does the project seem likely to succeed? Does it meet a clear need? Does it represent an innovative solution that can bring real relief to the segments of the community who have been harmed by the Edwards plant's air pollution, the changing climate and decades of socioeconomic and racial injustice? The quantitative rating will award points based on **Project Credibility**, **Applicant Credibility** and **Project Benefits** based on the **Scoring Criteria** later in this document.
- We intend to announce final project selections and funding commitments by the week of February 17, 2020.

### Structuring your Proposal

Although projects will differ somewhat by category, all project proposals should include:

- **Cover Sheet**  
A single sheet with:
  - Applicant name (organization, agency, educational institution, etc.).

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- Contact name, email and phone number.
- Project type—**Training, Lung Health, Electric Bus, Energy Efficiency** or **Solar**.
- Total funding requested.
- **Project Description**

Project overview of no more than a half page followed by a detailed project description. The description should paint a clear picture of what you intend to accomplish and how you intend to do it.

Projects will score favorably if they demonstrate best practices, contain robust metrics to measure progress and deliver outcomes that capture the overall benefit to displaced Edwards plant workers and the **Communities of Concern**.

Best practices for a **Training** project might include wrap-around workforce services that ensure that participants have the necessary soft skills, interim financial support and job placement assistance to successfully transition to a new career. Robust metrics for an **Energy Efficiency** project might include households reached with program eligibility information, candidate properties recruited, candidate properties retrofitted and average cost per retrofit. Outcomes for a **Solar** project might include total tons of carbon dioxide avoided, total electric bill savings and dollar value of assets transferred to the **Communities of Concern**.
- **Timeline**

Detailed timeline identifying how you will get the project up and running, when funding disbursements are required, when benefits will flow to displaced Edwards plant workers and the **Communities of Concern** and when the project will conclude.

The timeline should clearly set out when milestones, metrics and final outcomes will be reported. These should be closely tied to funding disbursement. Initial milestones and early start-up metrics are encouraged. After the project is up and running, quarterly or annual metrics are preferred. Initial outcomes should be reported no later than six weeks after the project concludes.

All disbursements must occur by March 1, 2024.
- **Budget**

Itemized budget accounting for the full amount of funding being requested. Both large and small projects are encouraged. We are hoping the funding commitments will encompass major initiatives such as new electric buses and solar projects that build wealth in our most challenged zip codes as well as projects from newer, smaller organizations that showcase our area's entrepreneurial spirit.

Budgets should include both sources of funding and expenses. Funding you as an applicant are willing to provide (outside of the funding requested by the proposal) and funding from other sources should be clearly identified. Multi-year budgets should be broken down year-by-year.

Projects will be most successful if they can distinguish fixed and scalable expenditures where scalable expenditures are directly proportional to the number of people or households being served. For example, **Lung Health** projects could be structured to

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purchase an asthma education curriculum (a fixed expenditure) and then conduct trainings in local schools and community organizations (a scalable expenditure based on the number of trainings). Similarly, an **Energy Efficiency** program could include basic startup and recruitment costs as a fixed expenditure and then provide energy efficiency upgrades for as many households as funding allows. Where possible, breaking this down into unit costs is encouraged.

- **Applicant Description**

Applicant overview in no more than a half page followed by details on your organizational history, leadership and qualifications. The description should clearly lay out why this opportunity is a good fit for your entity and how your leaders are specifically qualified to undertake this project. It should also affirm that you have the capacity to manage the project if selected. Projects will score favorably by demonstrating deep collaborative partnerships with a variety of community partners and past success in addressing environmental harms, spurring clean energy growth and working to resolve our area's many justice issues. Letters of support from community leaders and organizations are welcome. Additional credentials should be attached to your application as outlined in **Required Applicant Attachments**.

- **Population Served**

Clear geographic/zip code, income level and racial descriptions of the specific population being served. This population can be numbers of people or households. Successful projects will include a comprehensive strategy for candidate recruitment, clear rules for how project beneficiaries will be selected and steps to break down barriers to participation.

- **Benefits**

Benefits summary in no more than a half page followed by a complete benefits description. It should outline how candidate individuals or households will be selected for participation, how participation will translate into direct benefits for the participants and how the project will ultimately benefit displaced Edwards plant workers, the **Communities of Concern** and Central Illinois as a whole.

## Scoring Criteria

- Projects will be awarded up to 50 points based on the following criteria: **Project Credibility**, **Applicant Credibility** and **Project Benefits**.
- **Project Credibility** will be rated on a scale of 1-20. To receive the full 20 points, a project should:
  - Contain project-appropriate details.
  - Represent best practices for the project area. Examples include using award-winning curriculum materials and approaches for **Lung Health** projects or adhering to specific building codes in the case of an **Energy Efficiency** project.
  - Report milestones and metrics at regular intervals.

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- Include well-thought-out quantifiable metrics that ensure the project stays on track. Metrics that report recruitment and similar progress should identify what steps were taken to avoid counting individuals or households more than once.
- Identify desired outcomes upon completion.
- Include quantifiable outcomes that capture the overall benefit to displaced Edwards plant workers and the **Communities of Concern**.
- Contain a comprehensive project budget.
- Demonstrate cost-effective use of funds and leverage additional sources of funding wherever possible.
- Include a detailed schedule with milestone, metric and outcome reporting.
- Be simple to administer from a grant administration perspective—straightforward contractual terms to initiate the project, reasonable numbers of funding disbursements, regularly scheduled progress reporting and a clear conclusion.
- **Applicant Credibility** will be rated on a scale of 1-10. To receive the full 10 points, an applicant should:
  - Be based in Central Illinois.
  - Have strong community support.
  - Have skilled leadership that has demonstrated its ability to deliver bold, creative solutions to the systemic problems that plague Central Illinois.
  - Have organizational or leadership experience managing grants and projects of similar size and scope.
  - Have leadership from traditionally under-represented groups, with preference for leaders from the **Communities of Concern**.
  - Have current capacity to manage the project.
  - Demonstrate past success in addressing environmental harms, clean energy growth or economic or social justice.
- **Project Benefits** will be rated on a scale of 1-20. To receive the full 20 points, a project should:
  - Include a clear plan for recruiting potential project beneficiaries from the pool of displaced Edwards plant workers and the **Communities of Concern**.
  - Identify and break down potential barriers to project participation. For **Training** projects this could mean providing wrap-around services such as training on soft skills, making childcare available and providing comprehensive job placement services post-training. For **Energy Efficiency** projects, this could mean recruiting at neighborhood association meetings and churches in addition to regular notification channels.

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- Serve the geographies embedded in the **Communities of Concern**, especially those on the fenceline in Bartonville, Pekin and adjacent areas and those on Peoria's South Side.
- Provide details on the income levels and races of the population being served. Where appropriate, also provide details on how many children and seniors are being served.
- Clearly outline how project beneficiaries will be selected and benefits distribution will be prioritized.
- For **Solar** and **Energy Efficiency** projects, create jobs for displaced Edwards plant workers and the **Communities of Concern**. For **Training** projects, target displaced Edwards plant workers and the **Communities of Concern**.
- For **Solar** and **Energy Efficiency** projects, create prevailing wage jobs with economic mobility and agency. For **Training** projects, equip students with skills that translate into economic mobility, agency and long-term employment.
- For **Solar** and **Energy Efficiency** projects, encourage wealth-building through entrepreneurial opportunity and paths to community ownership of income-generating assets. For **Training** projects, equip students with entrepreneurial and business skills that translate into wealth-building opportunities.
- Offer bold, creative solutions that provide a replicable model for breaking down systemic problems of environmental, economic and social justice.
- Deliver benefits at the highest levels. Our intent is to see benefits flow to displaced Edwards plant employees as well as segments of the community most harmed by the Edwards plant's air pollution, the changing climate and decades of socioeconomic injustice. Examples of delivering benefits at the highest level include outcomes that directly address air pollution harms to the **Communities of Concern**, projects that reduce air pollution and global warming by reducing energy use or providing cleaner energy solutions and projects that level the playing field for health outcomes, employment levels and participating in the new energy economy.

## Required Applicant Attachments

- Financial Statements for the most recent fiscal year such as a Statement of Income and Expenses and a Balance Sheet.
- Current Year Summary Budget.
- **Updated V2:** For 501(c)(3) and 501(c)(5) organizations, Internal Revenue Service documentation confirming your Employer Identification Number (EIN), usually a 147c Verification Letter.
- **Updated V2:** For 501(c)(3) and 501(c)(5) organizations, your IRS Tax Determination Letter.
- **Updated V2:** For 501(c)(3) and 501(c)(5) organizations, your Form AG 990 IL, the Illinois Charitable Organization Annual Report.

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- Up to three references willing to be contacted by a member of the Advisory Team. If you have received grants in the past, include at least one reference that has provided you a grant.

## Project Submission Details

Submit projects in printable PDF format to [edwardsRFP@gmail.com](mailto:edwardsRFP@gmail.com). Submissions must be received by 5PM CST on Monday January 13. We will attempt to acknowledge all submissions via email, but feel free to call RFP administrator Joyce Harant at **888-201-9377** and verify that your proposal was received.

## Immediate Responsibilities of Selected Projects

Before receiving funds, selected recipients (for all project types except **Training**) must prepare a letter that Plaintiff Groups will submit to the U.S. District Court and Department of Justice. Plaintiff Groups will help those selected recipients prepare the letter, which should be prepared the week of February 17, 2020 and establish that the recipient:

- Is eligible to receive the funds.
- Has read the Consent Decree.
- Will spend monies only for the purposes specified in Appendix A of the Consent Decree.
- Will not use any monies received for political lobbying activities.
- Will submit a second letter, following expenditure of all monies, describing how the monies were spent.