

Questions and Answers for Request for Applications #2022-2206-WPD
Green Stormwater Infrastructure Signage Program

UPDATES:

- The Application Deadline has been changed from 5/6/2022 at 11:59 p.m., to 5/13/2022 at 11:59 p.m.
- DOEE's Guidelines for Publication and Sign Design document has been added to the attachments section of this RFA's webpage, for your reference.

Q1. What is the anticipated outcome of a stakeholder engagement process?

A1. There are two major components of the stakeholder engagement process: 1) to build awareness, support and stewardship of GSI with the public, and 2) to understand the different requirements, needs and constraints of our sister agencies when considering effective signage in the public realm.

Q2. Is DOEE open to or expecting other design engagement beyond the more traditional charrette style for the public awareness activities?

A2. DOEE is open to recommendations. The applicant should propose its recommended approach, within the limits of the budget and timeline.

Q3. Is signage the only anticipated output from the RFA? Or should we be thinking about this program beyond just signage and focus also on more general messaging for the brand for use in other applications (e.g., social media campaigns, pamphlets, holistic education on stormwater)?

A3. The focus of this RFA is the physical signage, and how it directly supports our asset management program. DOEE may elect to use the messaging developed for signage to support overall GSI messaging in other applications.

Q4. Does DOEE plan to reuse signage based on the type of practice – for example, bioretention practices will all have the same sign?

A4. Yes. DOEE's intent is to create basic signs for the practices that it has in high abundance. DOEE also expects applicant to identify opportunities for more meaningful customized interaction, interpretation, and education.

Q5. In Appendix 1, it states that "The Grantee shall follow DOEE Sign Design Guidelines and Publication Design Guidelines". Can you provide in advance?

A5. Yes. Please see the Guidelines for Publication and Sign Design document in the attachments section of this RFA's webpage.

Q6. Has any audience engagement/research (e.g., re stormwater awareness) been done with the public? Is there already an established partner network?

A6. Yes. Please see research documents 1-4 in the attachments section of this RFA's webpage.

Yes, DOEE has an established network of watershed partners that will be shared with grantee.

- Q7.** Does DOEE anticipate additional Spanish language content on signage going forward? Would engagement of Spanish speaking audiences be helpful?
- A7.** Yes, DOEE anticipates the need for some limited non-English content, including Spanish.
- Q8.** Is digital media a component of this program?
- A8.** The applicant may propose how physical signage can connect or interact with digital media.
- Q9.** Does DOEE have existing diagrams, renderings, images that we would want incorporated into visuals?
- A9.** DOEE has resources that can be shared with the awarded grantee. DOEE is open to utilizing new materials.
- Q10.** Has naming or branding been developed for this program? If not, would the grantee need to develop that?
- A10.** The program does not currently have a brand. The applicant may propose branding strategies.
- Q11.** Will property owners form an advisory committee that all meets together, or should we expect to meet with each property owner group individually?
- A11.** DOEE will form a committee or workgroup that would meet several times. The applicant should also propose its recommended approach.
- Q12.** For community outreach, what level of broad and/or individualized engagement is DOEE looking for? Door-to-door interviews? Booths at community events? Meeting with landlords, church leaders, and business owners? Presenting to groups such as neighborhood committees and business organizations?
- A12.** DOEE is open to recommendations. The applicant should propose its recommended approach, within the limits of the budget and timeline.
- Q13.** Do you have a sense of how many community groups and/or outreach sessions you'd like us to engage in? Should we expect to meet with some stakeholders/groups more than twice?
- A13.** The applicant should propose its recommended approach, within the limits of the budget and timeline.
- Q14.** Should the Community Engagement plan account for equitable community engagement?
- A14.** Yes.
- Q15.** Is there a desire to gauge the public's awareness and understanding of GSI before and after the signage is installed?
- A15.** While this is not part of the RFA requirement, the applicant should propose its recommended approach to achieve the goals of the RFA.

- Q16.** Is there a desire to include the formulation of ongoing programs or outreach to encourage stewardship of GSI projects beyond the term of this contract?
- A16.** All work funded under this RFA must be conducted within the grant’s period of performance. However, DOEE anticipates the activities and outputs of this grant will produce long term impact on community stewardship of GSI.
- Q17.** Is there a special consideration to outreach in District schools, or should our engagement efforts be focused on adults?
- A17.** Public schools are one of the typical location types where signs are to be installed, and DCPS is one of the sister agencies to be engaged as a stakeholder.
- Q18.** Do you have other non-signage GSI-related outreach and/or education initiatives completed, underway or planned?
- A18.** Yes. See the DOEE archived RFAs for GSI maintenance, hyperlinked [here](#) and [here](#). DOEE, through the District’s Procurement office, will hire contractors to maintain GSI. To some extent the contractors will interact with the public and DOEE facilities staff.
- Q19.** On page 24 of the RFA, under “Grant Element: Fabrication, Installation, Testing” it says “Identify DOEE opportunities for local sourcing and job creation.” What does the job creation refer to? GSI and/or sign maintenance?
- A19.** The referenced phrase “job creation” is specific to the fabrication, installation and maintenance of signage.
- Q20.** Is the National Park Service a stakeholder or entity we will be interacting with or getting approval from?
- A20.** No.
- Q21.** Do you have a map or list of where GSI in the District have been installed, and what type of GSI it is?
- A21.** Yes, please see map in this [link](#). Also, DOEE will provide the awarded grantee access to the GSI database.
- Q22.** Approximately how many distinct GSI technologies have been installed and/or should be interpreted? (i.e., rain gardens, tree trenches, bioswales, underground storage trenches, etc.)
- A22.** Approximately 4,000 GSI have been installed, including bioretention raingardens, green roofs, cisterns, and similar practices.
- Q23.** Regarding creating a brand/public identity for the District’s GSI—has a name been determined yet, or would naming be part of that effort?
- A23.** The program does not currently have branding. The applicant may propose branding strategies.

- Q24.** Does DOEE have existing diagrams/illustrations/renderings/images they would like to include on signage, or would the creation/sourcing of visuals be the responsibility of the design team?
- A24.** DOEE has resources that can be shared with the awarded grantee. DOEE is open to utilizing new materials.
- Q25.** Who will be responsible for ordering signs, and who is responsible for maintenance? DOEE or property owners?
- A25.** DOEE will be responsible for procurement, installation, maintenance, and replacement of the resulting signs.
- Q26.** Do the quarterly reporting requirements in Section 6 relate to the project only? (i.e., not the entire firm's quarterly statements)
- A26.** Reporting requirements pertain only to the grant activities.
- Q27.** Section 6–item A: We have an insurance rider under our umbrella for cyber protection up to \$10K; is this acceptable or is the \$2M insurance required? If the \$2M insurance is required, is it acceptable to purchase it after the project is awarded?
- A27.** Appendix 6 presents the insurance required. A rider adds coverage. If you buy a rider, the coverage must be that which Appendix 6 requires. If your rider only buys \$10,000 of coverage, that is inadequate.
- The insurance is a precondition to the grant, not to the application. You may apply for the grant without having the cyber coverage. But, if DOEE then offers you the grant, you must submit a certificate of insurance giving evidence of the required coverage. If you fail to do so, DOEE will withdraw its offer for the grant.
- Q28.** On page 4 of the RFA, it says “Each Applicant may submit more than one application with different projects.” What does this mean?
- A28.** An applicant may have different projects in response to this RFA. If an applicant does respond with more than one project, they must submit each project in a separate proposal with all corresponding required documents.
- Q29.** We are a business located outside of the District. Are we required to register as a foreign entity before we can request a certificate of good standing with DC?
- A29.** Yes. DOEE will not consider an application from an entity that has no formal legal presence in the District. Please inquire with the [District Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs](#) for information on the registration process.
- Q30.** The RFA requests the Applicant's current fiscal year budget. Is this referring to the project or to the business entity? Does it need to be on the appendix 4 template?
- A30.** The request refers to the applicant entity's own current fiscal budget; it does not need to be re-formatted per appendix 4.

- Q31.** Required documents section 3.4.(g) requests the applicant's most recent audited financial statements or reviews. Our most recent is from 2020, is that acceptable?
- A31.** Yes, your most recent audit is acceptable. The awarded grantee would be required to submit the 2021 audit when it becomes available.
- Q32.** Is invoicing completed on a FY basis instead of monthly?
- A32.** The grantee should submit invoices for grant related reimbursements during the grant period. Invoices are typically submitted on a monthly basis.
- Q33.** Can you list which items in our application must be limited to 10 pages, and which documents or elements can be outside of that limit? For example, does section D (Applicant) count toward the 10-page limit?
- A33.** The RFA's "Section 3. Application Content" addresses the format, content and placement of RFA elements in the application package. Section 3.1 (b) lists the documents that can be attached in addition to the 10-page application limit. Some aspects of Section 3.2(d) will be part of the project description, while others may be included as attachments (refer to each subsection for specific instructions).
- Q34.** Regarding "Indirect Costs Rate Documentation" (section (j) on page 18), can you clarify what the 10% pertains to?
- A34.** The indirect cost rate refers to the percentage of the project's total direct costs that is being requested towards indirect costs (also referred to as overhead costs). Your total requested amount would then be the sum of your direct and indirect costs. Please see Section 3.2(c)(4)iv for more on indirect cost calculation.
- Q35.** We understand that DOEE has some imagery that could be utilized, but that they may also want new imagery to create a consistent and branded appearance. Since we do not know at this point whether DOEE would want imagery to be created by the grantee (such as graphic representations/diagrams), commissioned imagery (such as 3D photorealistic renderings), commissioned photography, or purchasing stock photography/illustration, is it acceptable for us to establish an allowance for these items, without knowing exactly who (personnel or subconsultant) or what service would be used to create or obtain the imagery?
- A35.** Yes. Just explain why, as just above.
- Q36.** The language, number of languages, and quantity of content to be translated has yet to be determined by DOEE. Could we also list this as an allowance, without knowing at this time which personnel/subconsultant/service would be used to perform the service?
- A36.** Yes. Just explain why, as just above.
- Q37.** To ensure robust, effective engagement and interpretive planning, we are considering partnering with a for-profit community engagement firm in DC and a for-profit interpretive planner. Can firms offering these services and supporting the associated tasks

be considered contractors? Would they be eligible to use their standard rate structure, without any such restrictions on profitability that might apply to not-for-profit entities?

- A37.** An applicant may use a “partner” or a contractor to support the proposed project activities. How they determine their costs is not the issue for the grant application. The issue is the cost-effectiveness of the application. See scoring grid item 7.

An applicant should submit a budget that covers the cost of delivering the proposed project. The proposed costs should be reasonable, allowable, and allocable. Please refer to the RFA for a list of allowable and non-allowed expenditures.

- Q38.** Section 3.2(c)(4)iv Applicant’s indirect costs calculation mentions a “A new negotiated rate with DOEE”. As a for-profit, how would we negotiate a new rate with DOEE? Could we submit a budget with a suggested higher rate for indirect costs?
- A38.** The “indirect cost” applies only to a nonprofit organization. For a for profit applicant DOEE does not examine the details of cost rates. Rather, DOEE scores the application based on cost-effectiveness. See the scoring grid item 7. An applicant should submit a proposal with budget line items that show what the project will cost to implement, and a narrative explaining the budget.

A nonprofit applicant may submit documentation supporting their requested indirect cost rate. Negotiations with DOEE would occur if the applicant is selected by the review panel as a prospective grantee.

- Q39.** We are a for-profit entity applying for this grant. Will we be held to direct labor rates + fringe benefits + 10% indirect costs? Or can we apply for the grant using our billable rates?

- A39.** The indirect cost rate is a matter that applies only to the application of a nonprofit organization. As long as the for-profit firm’s costs are reasonable, allowable, and allocable the details of how it builds up its rates are not relevant to the evaluation of the application.

- Q40.** Is the indirect rate calculated as a percentage of grant funds available, (in this grant, it would be \$30,000) or is it calculated as a percentage of the sum of direct costs? If it is calculated as a percentage of the sum of direct costs, is it the sum of grantee direct labor costs only, or can it include grantee direct labor rates, grantee fringe benefits, travel, and subconsultant fees?

- A40.** For a nonprofit organization, and only for a nonprofit, the indirect cost is calculated as a percentage of the project’s allowable direct costs. The directs are typically personnel salaries, fringe benefits, travel and training, supplies and materials, and contractors/consultants. The reason for the attention to indirects: A statute requires certain fair treatment of nonprofit organizations’ indirects.

DOEE will evaluate the budget for cost-effectiveness. See the scoring grid item 7. Please see RFA pages 12 and 13 for more information on allowable and non-allowed expenditures.

Q41. Who will be responsible for the prototypes?

A41. The 3 prototypes that appear in the deliverables list will be designed, manufactured, paid for and installed by the grantee.

Q42. Does DOEE have preferred images that you can share for inclusion in our proposed visuals or are we to create the images?

A42. No. There are no images or visuals that DOEE has determined should be included in the signage. DOEE has no designs or design ideas right now. The RFA seeks applications to propose developing signage, including visuals. DOEE is looking for creative, effective ideas.