

## Questions and Answers for the 2014-15 ECO Net Capacity Building Block Grant Applications

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**Question:** The grant application mentions that three organizations must participate in this project. Can you explain more about this requirement?

**Answer:** This grant is meant to fund a collaborative effort of the ECO Net, and not fund efforts of an individual organization. Accordingly, a minimum of three ECO Net member organizations must actively participate in coordinating the project's activities, such as the membership analysis or the professional development activities. In your application, please state which member organizations will participate and define the role in which they will play. For example, if your ECO Net plans to form a sub-committee to implement this project, your application should include the members of the subcommittee and what specific tasks they will accomplish.

It is up to each ECO Net to determine how grant funds are distributed. Depending on the needs of the local ECO Net, participating organizations can be funded through the grant, or participate without receiving funding (for example in an advisory role or as matching funds).

**Question:** The grant application states there is \$10,000 available per ECO Net. Do these funds go to a single organization?

**Answer:** While the grant will be awarded to one organization as a fiscal sponsor, it is up to each ECO Net to determine how grant funds are distributed. Funds can be distributed to additional organizations via subcontracts with the fiscal sponsor. However, the intent of this funding is to build the membership of the local ECO Network. Funds cannot be used to build the membership of individual organizations.

**Question:** The grant is asking to position the ECO Net as a service provider for outreach and education for targeted community groups. What would success look like for this?

**Answer:** The grant is intended to position the ECO Net as the go-to source for environmental education and outreach services in their local area. By positioning the ECO Net as such, third party groups, such as the LIOs or other community groups, will look to the ECO Net first for these services rather than approaching individual members. This approach will assist ECO Net members in connecting with projects, funding and audiences and add value to their membership in the network.

There are several potential ways to demonstrate success for this grant requirement. It will be up to each ECO Net to determine these specific objectives within the Membership Development Plan, which is developed during the project period. One method to provide evidence of success would be to document the education/outreach activities (e.g., number and types of events, number of audience participants, results of participant surveys), between ECO

Net members and the target audience(s) that resulted from the grant's activities. Overall, we are looking for evidence of stronger interactions and activity levels between ECO Net members and the audiences served by the targeted community groups.

**Question:** For the grant activities involving ECO Net partnerships with other community groups, do these efforts need to connect the audience with ECO Net specifically, or with its member organizations?

**Answer:** These activities can highlight the ECO Net, specifically as a network of professionals, but this is not required. Instead, any outreach efforts that facilitate partnership between ECO Net members and other community groups (e.g., events, brochures, etc.) must be open to the entire ECO Net membership to participate. Similarly, the ECO Net membership as a whole must be given the opportunity to decide which community group(s) to target for these efforts, as part of creating the Membership Development Plan.

**Question:** How many hours do you estimate the membership analysis will take?

**Answer:** The time to complete the membership analysis will vary by ECO Net, as each ECO Net is starting from different baseline information and may choose different analysis criteria. The core idea of the membership analysis is for each ECO Net to define the make-up of its members (include their level of activity, and then to use this analysis, in part, to decide how to elevate member activities.

A rough estimate of 40 hours could include tasks such as modifying the analysis template provided by PSP, collecting data from members, data entry and analysis, and sharing results with the membership. Again, this time requirement will vary by ECO net, and may be either greater or less than 40 hours.