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Biden-Harris Administration selects Health Resources in Action to receive \$50,000,000 to fund environmental justice projects across New England as part of Investing in America agenda

Grantmakers selected to reduce barriers to federal funds and issue thousands of environmental justice grants over the next three years

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BOSTON (Dec. 20, 2023) – Today, as part of President Biden's Investing in America agenda, the Biden-Harris Administration announced Health Resources in Action has been selected to serve as Regional Grantmaker that will receive \$50,000,000 under EPA's Environmental Justice Thriving Communities Grantmaking program that was created by President Biden's Inflation Reduction Act, the largest investment in climate action in history. This new grant program, which will make it easier for small community-based organizations to access federal environmental justice funding, responds to community feedback about the need to reduce barriers to federal funds and improve the efficiency of the awards

process to ensure communities that have long faced underinvestment can access the benefits of the largest climate investment in history. Communities will be able to apply to Health Resources Action for a subgrant to fund a range of different environmental project activities, including (but not limited to) small local clean ups, local emergency preparedness and disaster resiliency programs, environmental workforce development programs for local jobs reducing greenhouse gas emissions, fence-line air quality and asthma related projects, healthy homes programs, and projects addressing illegal dumping.

President Biden is delivering the most ambitious environmental justice agenda in our nation's history. Vice President Kamala Harris and EPA Administrator Michael S. Regan were joined by Dr. Robert Bullard, a Distinguished Professor of Urban Planning and Environmental Policy at Texas Southern University to announce the historic Grantmaker awards.

"For years, community advocates have been calling for federal support and resources to help address our country's most pressing environmental justice concerns," **said EPA Administrator Michael S. Regan.** "Thanks to President Biden and Vice President Harris' leadership, we're responding to these calls by removing barriers that have traditionally held communities and applicants back from accessing these historic investments in America. Together, in partnership with these Grantmakers, we are taking a giant step toward a future where every person in America has equal opportunity to breathe clean air, drink clean water, and live a healthy, productive life."

"For too long, communities that have been historically overburdened by the stresses of environmental contaminants and pollution have lacked the funding and support to transform their neighborhoods into healthy and safe places to live and work. Now, thanks to the Biden-Harris Administration, we are bringing much-needed dollars to the communities that need them most," **said EPA Regional Administrator David Cash.** "We look forward to working with the Grantmakers to ensure that the benefits of this unprecedented climate and environmental justice investment reach communities across New England that most need it."

Health Resources in Action is joining with two core partners, Alternatives for Community and Environment and the New England Grassroots Environment Fund, to design and manage a comprehensive environmental justice grantmaking program to support community-based organizations, EJ organizations, nonprofit organizations, and other entities representing underserved, urban, rural, indigenous, remote, and capacity constrained communities in implementing projects to address local environmental and/or public health challenges in New England. Six environmental justice community-based organizations (referred to as "Anchor partners") will be engaged as collaborative pass-through partners and sub-awardees, to provide additional extensive outreach, via boots on the ground, and support prospective applicants within their respective states and tribal regions.

"Across the U.S. communities are facing disproportionate burdens of environmental injustices and climate disasters and are organizing to build healthier and more resilient communities. HRiA is thrilled to partner with Alternatives for Community and Environment and the New England Environmental Grassroots Fund to serve as "Grantmakers" for the EPA's Environmental Justice (EJ) Thriving Communities Program for New England. Together we aim to seed and build deeper capacity for a sustainable environmental justice movement to counter the historical disinvestment in organizations to address environmental hazards, climate resiliency, energy justice and build livable and healthy communities. Personally, I'm thrilled about

the opportunity to advance HRiA's vision of healthy people thriving in equitable and just communities," **said Steven Ridini, President + CEO, Health Resources in Action.**

"The Alternatives for Community & Environment, Inc. (ACE) is ready to partner with Health Resource in Action and the Grassroots Fund to lead in outreach and engagement strategies across the Region while building relationships and connecting prospective applicants and awarded subgrantees to the TCTAC and Environmental Protection Network services," **said Dwain Tyndal, Executive Director, Alternatives for Community and Environment.**

"The Grassroots Fund is ready to partner with HRiA and ACE to reduce traditional barriers communities have faced in applying for federal grants, and to co-create a process for making local environmental justice awards that honors the lived experiences of those most impacted," **said Bart Westdijk, Co-Director New England Grassroots Environment Fund.**

EPA Grantmakers will work in collaboration with [EPA's Office of Environmental Justice and External Civil Rights](#) to issue subgrants to community-based nonprofit organizations and other eligible organizations representing disadvantaged communities. As a Grantmaker, Health Resources in Action will design comprehensive application and submission processes, award environmental justice subgrants, implement tracking and reporting systems, and provide resources and support to communities. The subgrants are expected to become available by summer of 2024.

In addition, EPA has selected, the Institute for Sustainable Communities to receive \$50,000,000 as a National Environmental Justice Thriving Communities Grantmaker to provide additional support, coordination, and oversight to the subgrantees, applicants, and the Regional Grantmakers across the eastern part of the country. Institute for Sustainable Communities is a non-profit organization that was founded in 1991 with a mission to create equitable solutions through collaborative partnerships that support communities disproportionately affected by the global climate crisis. In 2023, ISC was selected as a National Environmental Justice Thriving Communities Technical Assistance Center (EJ TCTAC). For the Grantmaker program, they will leverage their expertise, experience, networks, and their five partners to provide equity-centered coordination services to the regional Grantmakers.

"ISC is thrilled to work with the Environmental Protection Agency to support its national Environmental Justice Grantmaking efforts along side our partners at the Emerald City Collaborative, Groundwork USA, the Urban Sustainability Directors Network, the Trust for Public Land, and the River Network. We welcome this opportunity to reduce the barriers communities face in applying for federal grants through a bottom up, community-centric approach, and recognize the important role of multi sectoral partnerships like the EJ TCGM program to mitigate cumulative impacts of the climate crisis in overburdened communities," **said ISC President Rebecca Kaduru.**

"For decades, the Institute for Sustainable Communities has been dedicated to improving the health of people and our environment by facilitating a long-term, equitable transition to a net-zero economy. I am delighted that this home-grown Vermont institute has been selected to become a 'Grantmaker' of EPA's Environmental Justice Thriving Communities Grantmaking Program, which will enable the institute to assist environmental justice-driven organizations in their crucial efforts to combat climate change through sustainable, equitable practices," **said Senator Welch.**

Grantmakers are expected to begin opening competitions and awarding subgrants by summer 2024. Community-based nonprofit organizations and other eligible organizations seeking subgrant funding will be able to apply for subgrants through three concurrent tiers offered by the Grantmakers. Tier One will consist of grants for \$150,000 for assessment, Tier Two will consist of grants for \$250,000 for planning, and Tier Three will consist of grants for \$350,000 for project development. In addition, \$75,000 will be available for capacity-constrained community-based organizations through a noncompetitive process under Tier One. Each Grantmaker will design and implement a distribution program best suited for their region and communities.

The Grantmakers program is part of the [Federal Interagency Thriving Communities Network](#) and delivers on the Biden-Harris Administration's [Justice40 Initiative](#) which set the goal that 40% of the overall benefits of certain federal investments flow to disadvantaged communities that are marginalized by underinvestment and overburdened by pollution. Grantmakers will work in collaboration with the [Environmental Justice Thriving Communities Technical Assistance Centers \(EJ TCTACs\)](#) to create a robust support network to assist eligible entities when applying.

[Learn more about the Environmental Justice Thriving Communities Grantmakers.](#)

Background

From day one of their administration, President Biden and Vice President Harris have made achieving environmental justice a top priority. In August 2022, President Biden signed the Inflation Reduction Act into law, creating the largest investment in environmental and climate justice in U.S. history. EPA received \$3 billion in total to award grants and fund related technical assistance to benefit disadvantaged communities.

EPA has since launched and expanded innovative programs to provide more support than ever before to communities that unjustly bear the burdens of environmental harm and pollution. This includes the \$177 million for the creation of [16 EJ TCTACs](#) in partnership with the U.S. Department of Energy to remove barriers to federal resources and help communities pursue funding opportunities like those made available through President Biden's Investing in America Agenda.

EPA [announced nearly \\$128 million](#) to fund 186 projects across the country that advance environmental justice as part of President Biden's Investing in America agenda. The organizations, which EPA has selected through its [Environmental Justice Collaborative Problem Solving Cooperative Agreement](#) and [Environmental Justice Government-to-Government](#) programs, will use the funds to ensure disadvantaged communities that have historically suffered from underinvestment have access to clean air and water and climate resilience solutions in alignment with the Biden-Harris Administration's Justice40 Initiative.

EPA also announced [approximately \\$2 billion in funding](#) available to support community-driven projects that deploy clean energy, strengthen climate resilience, and build capacity for communities to tackle environmental and climate justice challenges last month. The [Community Change Grants](#) are the single largest investment in environmental justice going directly to communities in history, and will advance collaborative efforts to achieve a healthier, safer, and more prosperous future for all.

[Learn more about environmental justice at EPA.](#)

For up-to-date information on when subgrants will be available, subscribe to the Office of Environmental Justice and External Civil Rights' listserv by sending a blank email to: join-epa-ej@lists.epa.gov. Follow OEJECR on X (formerly Twitter): [@EPAEnvJustice](https://twitter.com/EPAEnvJustice) [🔗](#).

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