

# Ideas to Action

**PARTICIPANT WORKBOOK**



**CENTER FOR ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH EQUITY**  
UNIVERSITY of WASHINGTON

# Acknowledgements and Gratitude

The University of Washington Center for Environmental Health Equity (UW CEHE) is located at the University of Washington's Seattle campus and we acknowledge the Coast Salish people of that land, the land that touches the shared waters of all Tribes and bands including the Duwamish, Suquamish, Tulalip, and Muckleshoot nations.

In acknowledgement of the unsuccessful attempts of erasure by the United States' Federal and State governments, including dispossession and forced removal of Indigenous people from their land, we strive to right this wrong in our partnerships with tribes and tribal communities to build capacity and access resources as they continuously restore their sovereign relationship with their land.



A huge thank you to the One Roof Foundation for their support for grant writers and our partners at the Department of Commerce and Hagerty Consulting. Lastly, a thank you to the communities and Tribes who have engaged with our center so far and whose work and curiosity has inspired the content of this workshop.

# About This Workshop and Workbook

This workshop's purpose is **to support you in building an outline for an environmental justice project for your community**, or, to move from ideas to action. During the workshop, we will guide you through a series of exercises and activities to help you think through what this project could look like and how to communicate it to an external audience.

We will use this workbook for the workshop. Completing the exercises and activities in the workbook is one way to help organize your thoughts and project ideas and begin to communicate your idea for a project proposal.

Each section of the workbook connects to a section of a typical grant application:

Workbook Section(s)	Common Grant Application Section
Getting to Know Your Organization	Organization Background Community Description
Connecting it to Environmental Justice	Community Description Description of Need or Problem Statement
Naming Your “What” and “Why”	Description of Need or Problem Statement
Logic Model	Project Description or Project Narrative Evaluation or Measuring Success

The workshop hosts will facilitate your work on each activity. This workbook provides prompts and guides to help gather your ideas together. Feel free to write in the workbook to organize your own thoughts, a corresponding digital template will also be provided to take typed notes

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# Workshop Agenda

**Tuesday, June 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2025**

8:30 – 9:00am	Light breakfast and a chance to settle in, mingle, and munch
9:00 – 10:00am	Welcome and Introductions, Setting Expectations, and Workshop Overview/Logistics
10:00 – 11:00am	Telling Your Story, Connecting it to Environmental Justice
11:00- 11:15am	Break
11:15am - 12:30pm	Naming Your “What” and “Why”
12:30 - 1:30pm	Lunch and Break
1:30 – 3:15pm	Logic Models
3 :15– 3:30pm	Break
3:30 - 4:00pm	Additional Resources, Upcoming Funding Opportunities
4:00 - 4:30pm	Reflections, Evaluation, and Closing (including a group photo!)

# Expectations for One Another

Please note, these are just a starting place for a conversation about how we'll work together. We will have an opportunity to discuss and update these, as needed.

- 1. W.A.I.T.: "why am I talking?" or "why am I not talking?"**
- 2. Stories stay, lessons leave**
- 3. "Ouch," "oops": trust intent, own impact**
- 4. Speak to be understood, listen to understand**
- 5. People are experts in their own experiences**

These expectations are rooted in and adapted from the Jemez Principles for Democratic Organizing and the Defend the Sacred Alaska Principles from the Alaska Just Transition Summit.

**Is anything missing from these expectations? Take notes in your digital workbook to share with the group.**

At the center of all of these expectations is respect for one another and the individual experiences and gifts we bring. If you feel that someone isn't following these expectations, whether they are a UW CEHE team member, volunteer, or workshop participant, please let one of the workshop facilitators know and we will make a plan together for how we want to address it.

# Telling Your Story

Often, grant proposals ask you to identify and name your individual and organizational strengths and experience. While many people have A LOT of experience and wisdom that they can share, this may feel intimidating or feel like bragging. To help you and your organization shine for the work you already have done and the expertise you bring, we will use a storytelling format to practice sharing our individual and organizational stories.

You will be asked a series of questions to help guide you in sharing about your work and vision. Some of the themes of this conversation will be experiences, fears, hopes, and histories that are important to you and why you do this work. As part of the workshop, these stories will be drafted and given back to you to use however you'd like – for example, on your website, social media, or adapted into a grant application.

Sharing your profile/description is totally optional and if you do not want us to share your photo and/or words, we will not do so without your consent.

At your table, answer the following introduction questions and at least one from each category in the question bank. Use your digital workbook to take notes.

## **Introduction Questions:**

1. Introduce your community – consider describing your community using the five senses (*ex. What does your community sound like? Look like? How does it feel to be in your community? What tastes or smells remind you of your community?*)
2. Introduce your organization or Tribe – what is your mission and vision? What does your organization do? Who do you serve?
3. Introduce yourself – who are you? What is your role? How long have you been doing it?

## **Question Bank (pick at least one from each category to answer!):**

*Questions About Your Community:*

1. What is a part of your community that you care deeply about?
2. What is the one thing that you most hope for your community right now?

*Questions About Your Organization or Tribe:*

1. What is a proud moment for your organization or Tribe?
2. Can you share a story of a time when your organization or Tribe felt the strongest or had a strong moment?

*Questions About You:*

1. What draws you to your work with the community?
2. What is your secret talent or a special skill that you bring to your work?
3. What are you most excited about?
4. Who in your life most inspires you to create a thriving community? Tell us about your hopes for them.



# Connecting it to Environmental Justice

How does your work connect with the larger environmental justice movement? We will take some time to unpack what environmental justice means to you and how you see your work supporting environmental justice for your community. Connecting these dots can help you bring others in, build momentum, and identify resources to support your work.

With the people at your table, use the prompts to guide a conversation. Feel free to take notes in your digital workbook, if needed.

- 1) What does environmental justice mean to you and your community?
- 2) What images come to mind when you hear the word environmental justice?
- 3) What has your family, community, or culture taught you about environmental justice?
- 4) What challenges does your community experience when it comes to environmental justice?
- 5) What would it look like for your community to achieve environmental justice?
- 6) How does your organization work towards this vision of environmental justice?
- 7) In what ways does your project work towards this vision of environmental justice?

# Naming Your “What” and “Why”

One of the most important skills for grant writing is to be able to explain the need you see in your community and to describe your proposed solution.

In this session, we will start to unpack **what** need or issue your project aims to address and **why** that need or issue exists. We will use a “but why” exercise to try to get to the root of the need. We will use a “so what” exercise to articulate why it is important to address it.

Your answers from this section of the template can be used for a “Description of Need” or “Problem Statement” section of a grant application.



### **“But Why” Activity:**

1. With your table, share the need you’ve identified in your community that your environmental justice project is trying to address. *Ex. “We have bad air quality in our neighborhood.”* Write it on a post-it note and place it at the top of the tree diagram. This is a “trunk” on your tree
2. Have a partner ask, “but why?” and try to answer. *Ex. “A highway runs through our neighborhood” or “there aren’t any trees in the neighborhood.”* For each answer, write it on a post-it note. These are roots of your tree. Be as explicit as possible – what may seem obvious to you might not be to somebody else!
3. Repeat this several times. For each answer, write it on a post-it note and place it on the tree. These are deeper roots branching off the main roots. Your answers might start to get bigger and broader.

*Ex. “Land use decisions” or “lack of public investment”*

4. Looking at the paper, what is your project trying to address? This can often be multiple points. Circle them on your tree diagram and discuss with a partner.

*Ex. Tackling a highway that’s already been constructed might be outside of your power right now. It is possible, however, to find ways to improve indoor air quality in homes and schools, while also building people power to advocate for your community in future environmental decisions.*

### **“So What” Activity:**

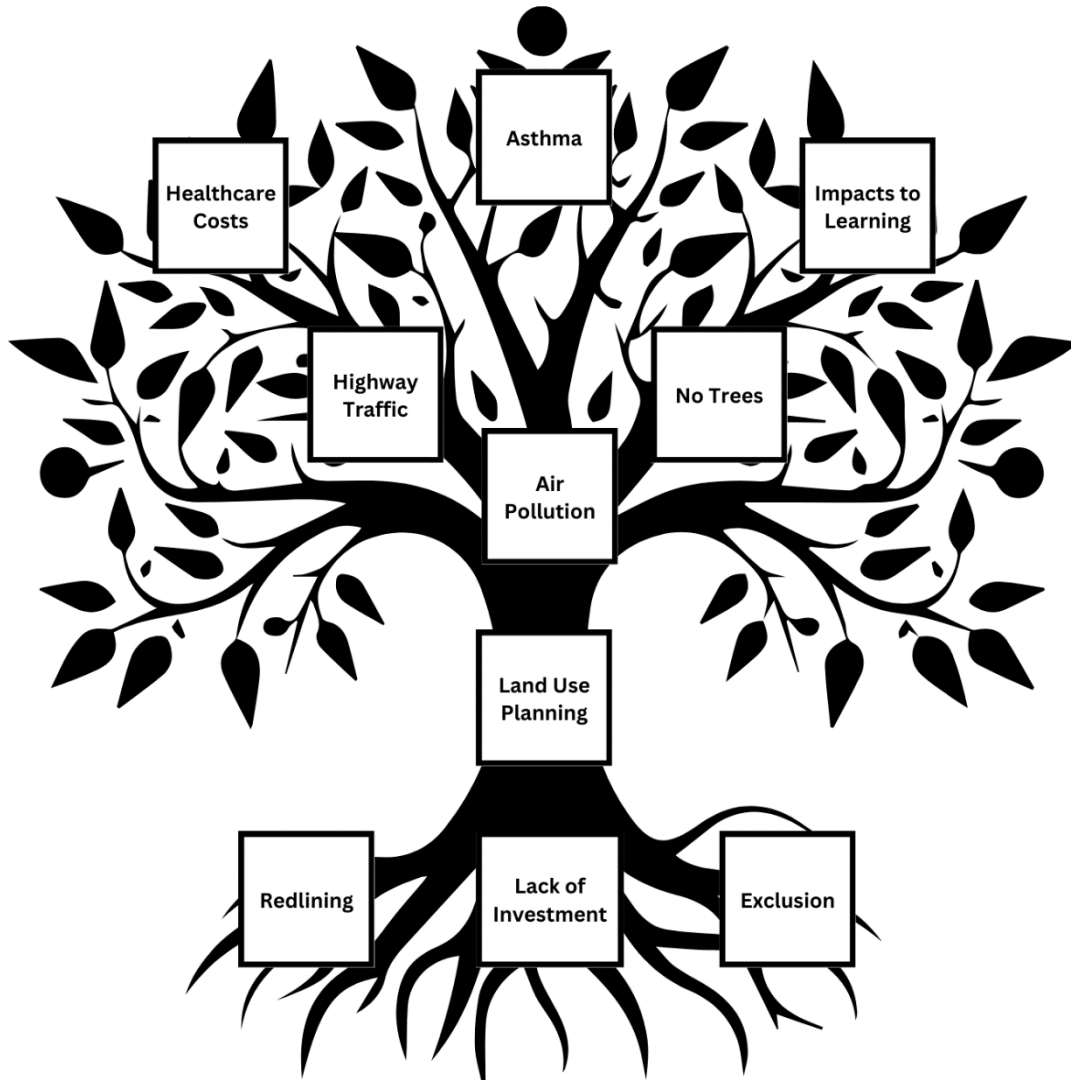
1. Look at the need you identified in the previous activity (#1). Now have a partner ask you “so what?” and try to answer. Be as explicit as possible – what may seem obvious to you might not be to somebody else! *Ex. “Compared to other neighborhoods, twice as many kids in our neighborhood suffer from asthma.”* For each answer, write it on a post-it note. These are the other branches of your tree.
2. Repeat this several times. Your paper should start to look like a web with many branches connected to one another. Your answers might start to get bigger and broader.

*Ex. “Asthma can cause additional health problems and, if severe, can lead to hospitalization or death” or “Kids with asthma miss more days of school than kids without asthma, impacting their learning.”*

3. Looking at the paper, what are the most important reasons to take action? This can often be multiple points. It might also depend on the audience you’re speaking to. Circle these and discuss with your partner.

*Ex. Public health audiences may be most concerned about the impacts to children’s health. School administrators, teachers, and other education audiences may be most concerned about missed days of school and impacts to learning. Parents are probably concerned about both.*

## Example: Air Pollution and Asthma




# Logic Model

Now let's revisit your "but why" and "so what". This will help you think about the changes you would like to see happen because of your work. What would you like to see made better in the short-term, the medium-term, and the long-term? Let's name those **outcomes**.


A logic model displays the flow of your project starting from a set of specific activities to the outcomes. It can also be used to create a discussion with your team and your community to make sure everyone has input on the project outcomes and activities. The table below will help us organize what we plan to do (activity) and what we plan to see improve (outcomes) because of our project. You can refer back to this to remind yourself of your big picture plans.

## LOGIC MODEL

Activities	Audience(s)	Short-Term Outcomes	Medium-Term Outcomes	Long-Term Outcomes



What the program does



What the program will accomplish

We begin at the right side of this table first (the outcomes). This is where we name the change we want to see. In this session, we'll be focusing just on outcomes, but we'll have a separate session later on the types of activities that will get us there.

Let's start with the **long-term outcome**. What is your ultimate goal? What is the change you want to see? This could mean 5 years or 10 years down the line. Look

back to your “but why” and “so what” to remind yourself of what you’d like to see improved or changed. *Ex. Improved attendance and reduced absenteeism associated with asthma.*

Next, what mid-term changes will you need to see in order to achieve that ultimate, long-term outcome? *What is the change you want to see in 1, 3, or 5 years?* These are the **medium-term outcomes**. *Ex. Reduced asthma, coughing, and other respiratory symptoms associated with exposure to air pollution.*

Finally, what are the more immediate outcomes – changes that might happen within 6 months or one year – that you will need to see in order to achieve the medium and long-term outcomes? These are called the **short-term outcomes**. *Ex. HVAC systems installed in schools.*

Once you have agreed on your short, medium, and long-term outcomes, you can begin to identify the types of **activities** that will help get you to those outcomes. Identify the activities, services, events or actions – and the groups that you hope to reach with these – during your project to achieve the outcomes. These can be based on activities that have worked in the past in your community or in other communities.

We’ll also explore the topic of **evaluation** – how to determine if the activities are moving you towards your intended outcomes.

**Evaluation:** After we have named the outcomes and the activities, we will want to think about how to determine whether the activities we identified are effective and whether we are reaching our outcomes. Basically, how do we know we did what we said we’d do? **If we evaluate early and often, we can find out what is and is not working and make changes to our Logic Model.**

Things you might want to ‘measure’ to assess progress:

- number of outreach activities or people participating in events
- increase in knowledge of an environmental issue among community members

### ***Example Logic Model***

<b>Activities</b>	<b>Audience(s)</b>	<b>Short-Term Outcomes</b>	<b>Medium-Term Outcomes</b>	<b>Long-Term Outcomes</b>
<i>Provide testimony to advocate for HVAC systems in schools during City Council meeting</i>	<i>City Council</i>	<i>HVAC systems installed in schools</i>	<i>Reduced asthma, coughing, and other respiratory symptoms associated with exposure to air pollution</i>	<i>Improved attendance and reduced absenteeism associated with asthma.</i>
<i>Outreach about air quality in their classrooms and the benefits of HVAC systems</i>	<i>Teachers at partners schools</i>			

Based on the above example, we might want to ‘measure’ the following things:

- number of City Council members reached
- number of teachers at partner schools reached
- number and percentage of schools with HVAC systems
- percent reduction in exposure to fine particulate from air pollution in schools
- number of students and staff who report asthma symptoms
- number of outreach events



# Resources for Next Steps

UW CEHE is always here as a resource for you. If you are interested in connecting with us on a one-on-one basis, please contact us at [cehe@uw.edu](mailto:cehe@uw.edu) or 206-543-0608.

## Links to free environmental justice funding databases:

- Northwest Environmental Justice Center (NWEJC): <https://nwejc.org/find-funding>
  - o This database includes private, state, tribal, and federal funding opportunities for environmental justice projects in AK, ID, OR, & WA
- FundHubWA: <https://fundhub.wa.gov/>
  - o This database is sponsored and administered by Washington State's Department of Commerce for state and federal funding opportunities in climate and clean energy
- National TCTAC Grant Database: <https://www.ejtctac.org/grants>
  - o This database includes federal funding opportunities for environmental justice projects across the country
- Tribal Funding Registry: <https://www.tribalfunding.org/>
  - o This database is from the Hozhonigo Insititute and is designed for Tribes and Native-led nonprofits

## Helpful email lists to join and resources for finding opportunities:

- For federal funding opportunities:
  - o Environmental Protection Network Federal Funding Opportunities and Guidance bi-weekly email: <https://www.environmentalprotectionnetwork.org/federal-funding-opportunities-guidance-updates/>
  - o Environmental Grantmakers Association's grant seekers resource page: <https://ega.org/grant-seekers>
- For Washington state funding opportunities:
  - o Department of Commerce Clean Energy Grants: sign up for email updates about funding opportunities and select "clean energy grants": <https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/WADOC/subscriber/new>

# Tool for Reviewing Funding Announcements

This tool was created to help you screen funding announcements to see if they may be a fit for your organization. Before you decide to apply for something, collect the information in the table below and ask yourself the questions on the next page. If you decide something may be a fit for your organization, be sure to read the Request for Applications or Notice of Funding Opportunity carefully before developing an application.

<b>Funding Opportunity Name</b>	<i>Ex. HEAL Act Community Capacity Grant</i>	
<b>Hyperlink</b>	<a href="https://doh.wa.gov/community-and-environment/health-equity/environmental-justice/grants/community-capacity">https://doh.wa.gov/community-and-environment/health-equity/environmental-justice/grants/community-capacity</a>	
<b>Amount</b>	<i>\$250,000-500,000</i>	
<b>Geographic Focus</b>	<i>Washington state</i>	
<b>Deadline</b>	<i>May 5, 2024 at 11:59pm</i>	
<b>Funding Period</b>	<i>Date of execution – June 30, 2025</i>	
<b>Type of Funding</b>	<i>State</i>	
<b>Eligible Applicants</b>	<i>Community based organizations with 501(c)3 status are eligible to apply for project funds as a sole or lead applicant, and may partner with organizations with fiscal sponsorship.</i>	
<b>Funding Priorities</b>	<i>This HEAL capacity grant program focuses on enhancing community-led decision making to advance environmental justice (EJ) and build climate resilience.</i>	
<b>Eligible Activities</b>	<i>Project grant funds may be used to build community capacity to</i>	

	<p><i>engage in HEAL Act activities. Funds may support activities that include, but are not limited to building capacity to provide guidance and input to:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>- agencies on implementation of the HEAL Act,</i></li> <li><i>- the Environmental Justice Council on implementation of the HEAL Act, and</i></li> <li><i>- the Department of Health on updates to the environmental health disparities map.</i></li> </ul>	
<b>Letter of Intent Required?</b>	No	
<b>Matching Funds Required?</b>	No	

After reviewing a funding announcement, ask yourself the following questions:

1. Is my organization **eligible to apply**?
2. Does my project idea fit the **funding priorities**?
3. Does my project idea fit the **eligible activities**?
4. How much time do I have to prepare an application or submit the letter of intent before the **deadline**?
5. Does my organization have the capacity to complete the project within the **funding period**?
6. Does my organization have the capacity to manage this **type of funding**?
7. If matching funds are required, does my organization have the **matching funds**?
8. Has my organization ever applied for this **type of funding**? Do I need to set up an account or register for anything? (ex. [Sam.gov](https://www.sam.gov) for federal, [Statewide Vendor Number](#) for Washington state, etc.)

If you answer **yes** to the above questions, it is likely a fit! From here, it's important to read the Request for Applications or Notice of Funding Opportunity carefully before submitting a letter of intent or application.

# About UW CEHE

The University of Washington Center for Environmental Health Equity (UW CEHE) is an environmental health technical assistance center that serves community-based organizations, tribal organizations, and Tribes in Washington State.

UW CEHE was launched on June 1, 2023 as a new Thriving Communities Technical Assistance Center (TCTAC) funded by the US EPA and DOE to provide environmental and energy justice technical assistance to groups in Alaska, Idaho, Oregon, and Washington. After serving over 400 technical assistance cases, helping community-based organizations raise over \$32 million in funding for their work, with more than half of funding serving rural and remote communities, funding for the TCTAC program was terminated abruptly and prematurely on May 2, 2025 due to changes in federal priorities. Due to these changes, our center will now be focusing on serving environmental health grant writing assistance for community-based organizations, tribal organizations, and Tribes that are based in Washington State.

Additionally, we work alongside the Northwest Environmental Justice Center, a fellow TCTAC based in Portland, OR. You can find out more information about their work and current status here: <https://nwejc.org>

To learn more about UW CEHE, visit our website at [deohs.washington.edu/cehe/](https://deohs.washington.edu/cehe/) or connect with us at [cehe@uw.edu](mailto:cehe@uw.edu) or 206-543-0608.