



Carbon Neutral Cities Alliance Innovation Fund Quick Turnaround Grants

Call for Applications *Issued 1 March 2017*

This year the CNCA Steering Committee and CNCA Innovation Fund Project Selection Committee have decided to set aside a small pool of funding to test “Quick Turnaround” grants.

The CNCA Innovation Fund has a history of piloting new grant opportunities in response to CNCA membership needs. A repeated comment from CNCA members highlights the need for “quick funds” to support projects that are ready to go and/or have a compelling opportunity in the off-season of the general CNCA Innovation Fund Request for Proposals (RFP). In keeping with the spirit of designing grant products that respond to stated membership needs, piloting this grant concept presents the opportunity to test the uptake and usefulness of quick funding for short-term, high impact needs of CNCA member cities. Member uptake and demand for funds will determine if the pilot is worth offering on a larger scale in future years.

Quick Turnaround grants are designed to allow CNCA cities to take advantage of opportunities that present themselves throughout the year that they were not able to foresee but that would help them advance towards carbon neutrality. These opportunities may not fit into the general CNCA Innovation Fund RFP process, but would provide high value in advancing a key element of the city’s deep carbon reduction strategy. When compared to the general CNCA Innovation Fund grant application process, Quick Turnaround grants are for smaller amounts, have a shorter application process, quicker implementation periods, and simplified reporting requirements.

Examples of Potential Quick Turnaround Grant Projects:¹

- To cover travel costs for a key staff person or decision-maker to attend a time-sensitive conference/ meeting/ study tour that will significantly advance a key element of the city’s deep carbon reduction strategy.
- To translate the city’s carbon neutrality plan update so it may be shared more widely
- To hire a short-term consultant to provide key consulting services on a time-sensitive topic.
- To convene two or more CNCA cities to discuss an urgent deep decarbonization topic/ strategy.

¹ This is not a comprehensive list; these examples are illustrative only.

Ineligible Requests:²

The following requests will NOT be considered:

- Requests for funding that should be or should have been covered in other grant budgets. For instance, a tack-on convening for an open CNCA grant project will not be considered.
- Requests for funding that can be obtained elsewhere, like from a city's operating budget.
- Any request that does not fit the spirit and intent of seizing an opportunity to provide high value in advancing a key element of the city's deep carbon reduction strategy.

Funding Amount

CNCA has set aside \$20,000 USD for Quick Turnaround Grants in 2017. Applications of up to \$2,500 USD will be considered per applicant. Up to \$5,000 will be awarded each quarter.

CNCA can award the Quick Turnaround grant funds in any of the following ways:

- As a grant to the City
- Directly to a contractor of the City's choice
- By reimbursing for travel (flights, hotels) or conference registration fees

Applicants should indicate which of the desired payment methods they are requesting in their application. All Quick Turnaround grants will have an associated award letter the city will sign, regardless of who is receiving the funds, so the purpose of the expenditure is clearly stated.

Evaluation Criteria

Applications will be evaluated on a rolling quarterly basis according to the following criteria:

- **Advancing Deep Decarbonization** – Degree to which the proposed use will provide high value in advancing a key element of the city's deep carbon reduction strategy.
- **Seizing an Opportunity** – Degree to which the proposed use is something the applicant was not able to foresee to fit into the formal CNCA Innovation Fund RFP process, some other grant program, or their own city operating budget.
- **Geographic Distribution** – CNCA intends to apply these funds equitably across regions.

How Funding Decisions Will Be Made

- Quick Turnaround grants will be evaluated by the CNCA Director based on the evaluation criteria and awarded at the CNCA Director's discretion. Up to \$5,000 USD will be awarded each quarter.
 - Prior to making decisions, the Director may set up a call with applicants to ask clarifying questions or to obtain additional information for the evaluation process.
 - If several qualifying proposals arrive within a quarter, precedence will be given in order of receipt.
- Funding decisions will be made within 3 weeks of receipt, and funds will be released as quickly as possible thereafter.

² This is not a comprehensive list; these examples are illustrative only.

- The CNCA Innovation Fund Selection Committee will review awards and outcomes with the Director on a quarterly basis to determine future direction of the Quick Turnaround grant program and whether the pilot is worth offering on a larger scale in the future.

Funding Requirements

- Quick Turnaround Grants may be used to conduct research, cover travel costs, convene participating cities/ teams, work with experts/ consultants/ facilitators, or to purchase any other service that is needed to advance a key element of the city's deep carbon reduction strategy.
- All funds must be expended and invoiced within 4 months of award notification.
- Only CNCA member cities are eligible to apply for and receive Quick Turnaround Grants.
 - The project must be managed by a CNCA core member.
 - *Note: A partner may be the recipient of the grant funds, but the lead CNCA member city must sign the award letter, and take responsibility for project success, use of the funds, invoice approvals, and reporting at the end of the grant period.*
- Any non-CNCA funding the project needs in addition to the Quick Turnaround grant must be in-hand or already obligated to the project at the time an application is submitted.
- The applicant must agree to submit a final grant report and share its final product(s) at the end of the grant term. See reporting requirements, below.

Application Deadlines

- Applications are accepted on a rolling basis. Up to \$5,000 USD will be awarded each quarter.
- Applicants are encouraged to submit their applications as soon after the start of a quarter as possible (1 January, 1 April, 1 August and 1 October).
- Any funds not allocated during the current quarter will roll over to the subsequent quarter.

Reporting Requirements

By the end of the grant period, the grantee will submit a 1 to 2-page report describing outcomes, impacts, and any lessons learned. The team also must submit any products produced and any relevant receipts.

To Apply

Email the completed application form (page 4 of this document) as a word document with at least 11-point font to [Johanna Partin \(johannapartin@usdn.org\)](mailto:johannapartin@usdn.org). Copy Susanna Sutherland (susanna@saenv.com). Applications should be no more than 2 pages. Applicants must put "QUICK TURNAROUND GRANT APPLICATION" in the subject line. Applicants are encouraged to submit their applications as soon after the start of a quarter as possible (1 January, 1 April, 1 August and 1 October).

CNCA Quick Turnaround Grant Application Form

No more than 2 pages with at least 11-point font

1. Name, title, address, email and phone number for the CNCA primary member
2. Consultant / partner to provide the services (if not the City): Name, title, address, email and phone number
3. If awarded, how would you like to receive the funds (select one):
 - As a grant to the City
 - Directly to a contractor of the City's choice
 - By reimbursing for travel (flights, hotels) or conference registration fees.
4. Instructions for Payment:
 - Can funds be received in USD? (yes/no)
 - Would you prefer to be paid via check (issued from U.S.-based bank), or via wire transfer?
 - For check: Please provide the following:
 - Make check payable to:
 - Mailing address:
 - Tax ID number:
 - For wire transfer:
 - Bank information
 - Other necessary information
5. A 1-paragraph description of what the Quick Turnaround grant funds will be used for.
6. Describe in 1 paragraph how the proposed use will provide high value in in advancing a key element of the city's deep carbon reduction strategy.
7. Describe in 1 paragraph how the proposed use is something the applicant was not able to foresee to fit into the formal CNCA Innovation Fund RFP process, some other grant program, and / or the City's operating budget.