I C A R P

INTEGRATED CLIMATE ADAPTATION & RESILIENCY PROGRAM

ICARP Adaptation Planning Grant Program Engagement Summary

Background

In 2021, the Governor's Office of Planning and Research, through the Integrated Climate Adaptation and Resilience Program, received $25M in the state budget to support local, regional, and tribal adaptation planning across California through the Adaptation Planning Grant Program (APGP).

As communities in California experience more frequent, prolonged, and severe impacts of climate change, state, regional, local, and tribal governments are developing a vision for a resilient future and undertaking adaptation planning. However, many jurisdictions lack the capacity, tools, guidance, and resources to effectively prepare for climate impacts. This capacity gap is likely to prevent communities from developing and implementing plans that build resilience and reduce future risk.

To meet this need, the APGP will provide funding to help communities identify climate resilience priorities and address planning needs, support the development of a pipeline of climate resilient infrastructure projects across the state.

Key priorities of ICARP's Adaptation Planning Grant Program include the following:

- Advance equitable outcomes,
- Support much-needed integrated infrastructure planning to achieve community resilience,
- Help communities plan for and respond to multiple climate risks, and
- Build community planning and capacity.

Key Feedback & Takeaways

During the spring of 2022, ICARP conducted a series of public workshops, described below, to receive feedback on the Adaptation Planning Grant Program's objectives, timeline, and overall design. Workshop participants from across the state identified the following key themes as areas where the APGP can build community planning and capacity, advance equitable outcomes, support much-needed integrated infrastructure planning, and help communities plan for and respond to multiple climate risks simultaneously:

1. Meet organizational needs through eligible costs and activities:

    a. The APGP can build overall organizational capacity for adaptation and resilience by directly funding staff time for planning activities.
    b. Dedicated funding set asides for climate vulnerable communities.[1]

2. Connect planning grant activities to implementation funding:

    a. Encourage cohesive planning to implementation phasing that includes the pre-planning and educational activities.

    b. Connect and coordinate with community, local, regional, and state-level partners, including entities that can provide a "bridge" to historically underrepresented communities and experts in public health, community engagement, etc.

    c. Clarify and integrate statewide policy with desired grant outcomes.

3. Increase the accessibility of the grant application process:

    a. Develop a pre-qualification process with a short list of criteria.

    b. Offer educational workshops, factsheets, and templates for prospective applicants to better understand climate adaptation and resiliency. Provide example projects and templates.

    c. Long and complicated grant applications create barriers for under-resourced communities. There is a need for a simple, streamlined application and ample request for proposal (RFP) notification periods and timelines.

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[1] For purposes of this summary, we define "climate vulnerable communities" as described in Section 71340 of the California Public Resources Code.

Engagement Schedule

On Friday, March 25, 2022, ICARP launched the APGP engagement with a workshop during the Technical Advisory Council meeting. This workshop focused on six key questions (see below). Following the workshop, the team held seven listening sessions and numerous key informant interviews to gather feedback and input that will inform the development of the guidelines for the APGP. During these sessions the team heard from a wide range of stakeholders, including community groups, local and regional government agencies, Tribal communities and governments, and state agencies.

Total registration across engagement opportunities was 734 with 331 total participants.

Event	Date	Participation
Technical Advisory Council Grant Workshop	Friday, March 25, 2022 | 1:00 p.m. - 2:30 p.m.	120 Registrants 40 Participants
General Listening Session	Thursday, April 7, 2022 | 3:00p.m. - 4:00p.m.	89 registrants 40 participants
Sacramento & San Joaquin Valley Regions Listening Session	Monday, April 11, 2022 | 3:00p.m. - 4:00p.m.	100 registrants 45 participants
Inland North, North Coast, & Sierra Regions Listening Session	Wednesday, April 13, 2022 | 11:00a.m. - 12:00p.m.	67 registrants 40 participants
General Listening Session	Wednesday, April 13, 2022 | 5:30p.m. - 6:30p.m.	53 registrants 20 participants
Bay Area & Central Coast Regions Listening Session	Friday, April 15, 2022 | 9:00a.m. - 10:00a.m.	149 Registrants 76 Participants
Los Angeles, San Diego, & Desert Regions Listening Session	Friday, April 15, 2022 | 1:00p.m. - 2:00p.m.	112 Registrants 50 Participants
Tribal Governments and Communities Listening Session	Tuesday, April 19, 2022 | 4:00p.m. - 5:00p.m.	44 Registrants 20 Participants

Technical Advisory Council Q1 Grant Workshop

The ICARP Technical Advisory Council grant workshop featured discussion among Technical Advisory Council Councilmembers and public participants in response to the following questions:

- What type of resilience and adaptation planning activities and needs could this program support?

- Where are there currently resilience and adaptation planning funding gaps and how might we structure the APG program to fill those gaps?

- Where are there opportunities to align with other state agencies to conduct more efficient stakeholder engagement?

- How can this funding work in coordination with other state investments? What opportunities exist to align this program so recipients can leverage other dollars?

- What should the program consider when evaluating the feasibility of funding set-asides for specific issues, geographics, etc.?

- Knowing this program seeks to support under-resourced communities', what are existing barriers to accessing similar funding programs? What do communities need to access the grant program?

Technical Advisory Council Grant Workshop Takeaways
Friday, March 25, 2022, | 1:00 p.m. – 2:30 pm

Participants shared that communities primarily lack access to funding support for regional adaptation planning to address the regional scale of climate impacts. The APGP could support community planning efforts by prioritizing equity throughout the program design, cohesively integrating with other state funding streams, encouraging flexible spending for local planning and capacity building activities, and establishing a responsive technical assistance component.

Specific feedback participants shared included:

Program Objectives & Vision
- The grant program should encourage a pipeline of local and regional projects that integrate with other state funding streams.
- Encourage cohesive planning to implementation phasing that includes the pre-planning and educational activities.
- Program staff should connect and coordinate with local, regional, and state-level partners, including:
    - experts in public health, equity, community engagement, etc.
    - provide a "bridge" to historically underrepresented communities (e.g. fiscal sponsors, grant insurance, liability)

- Engage and collaborate with public agencies who have not been historically involved in the planning process to help develop a vision for achieving climate resilience in their organization.
- While prioritizing equitable distribution of awards is important (i.e. funding based on need), it's also important to foster equitable program design.

Program Needs & Activities
- Communities need funding to compensate and engage communities, including full funding for community-based organizations (CBOs) and environmental justice (EJ) organizations and sub-granting options for underrepresented groups. Also consider funding youth, early career fellowship, and internship programs that could both educate and provide temporary support for these communities.
- Communities need short-term and long-term technical assistance throughout the duration of the program, including pre-planning to technical skill building.
- Communities recommend that the APGP program support a climate adaptation framework that supports plan alignment. For example, aligning SB 379 (Weiner, 2021; Gov. Code § 65302) and SB 1000 (Leyva, 2016; Gov. Code § 65302) requirements.

Project Evaluation & Deliverables
- The program should encourage applicants to identify end goals.
- Project evaluation metrics should include science-based metrics that align the program outcomes with local, regional, and state adaptation planning efforts.
- The APGP program should consider covering travel costs for community members to attend program events.
- The APGP should encourage integrated (mitigation and adaptation) projects that address multiple impacts.

Grant Administration
- Consolidate grant programs by promoting continuity across funding sources, directing applications to other compatible resources, and coordinating grant application requirements across programs. For example, align application components, deadlines, and scoring framework across similar grant programs.
- Communities prefer a simple application with ample time between the Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) notification and applicable deadlines.
- Gauge potential impact of funds and consider awarding based on historic vulnerability, geographic exposure and risk, and portion of state funding within the region.
- Program staff capacity is a concern. ICARP staffing should include a consistent point of contact for climate adaptation planning.

Listening Sessions

During April 2022 ICARP hosted seven public workshops, including two general audience listening sessions, one Tribal Government and Communities listening session, and four regional listening sessions to invite feedback on the following discussion questions:

- Where are there current resilience and adaptation planning funding gaps? What resilience and adaptation planning activities can the APGP fund to fill these gaps?

- What barriers and dynamics might communities face in applying to this program that we should be aware of?

- What program elements do you see as most important to ensuring planning grant activities can be translated into implementation projects? (e.g. structure, timeline, eligibility requirements, application process)

- What type of Technical Assistance, support, or guidance would be helpful during the grant term (from application to final reporting requirement)?

General Listening Session Discussion Takeaways

Thursday, April 7, 2022 | 3:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Participants shared that communities want to better understand their climate risk and how grassroots solutions support climate adaptation planning. Communities have also identified several funding gaps and barriers that inhibit local and regional efforts to collaborate and plan. ICARP funding could be used to meet these needs through supporting activities centered around place-based vulnerability assessments, strategically supporting and funding implementation activities, facilitating collaborative environments, and properly incentivizing community participation.

Specific feedback participants shared included:

Program Objectives & Vision
- Communities want to better understand climate impacts and climate projection data.
- Communities are interested in identifying the adaptation and resilience gaps in climate vulnerable communities.
- The APGP should support bottom-up solutions from CBOs to complement top-down strategies and build trust with communities for future adaptation work.
- For many communities, economic resilience is a core component of long-term stability and capacity-building for communities.

Program Needs and Activities
- Regions currently lack collaboration mechanisms to facilitate regional planning, experience great challenges engaging communities, and are reluctant to apply for grants that don't include funding support for implementation. The APGP should prioritize funding for regional planning, community engagement, and implementation.

- o The APGP should support a broad range of planning activities and prioritize funding for projects distinct from planning documents, such as pre-development costs, climate resilient public buildings, drinking water infrastructure, and land conservation efforts.
- o A narrower list of eligible activities will allow for more collaboration and knowledge sharing among grantees.

Project Evaluation and Deliverables
- Requiring an implementation plan will help align the planning grant program with an implementation program.
- The application evaluation process should follow a clear, public guideline process wherein unsuccessful applicants understand why they weren't selected. The evaluation process should include tracking tools for participants and provide grantees with long intervals between evaluations to ease the burden on local governments.
- Communities would benefit from localized vulnerability and cost-benefit assessments that highlight adaptation strategy options.
- Robust community engagement throughout the process is necessary to achieve equitable outcomes and achieve high-impact resiliency solutions.

Grant Administration
- Prospective applicants would benefit from a pre-qualification process that included an application workshop, application templates, factsheets, and worksheets with question prompts to help applicants get started.
- Many communities lack the local capacity to quickly coordinate among multiple departments to complete grant applications on time. Lengthened deadline periods and early notifications about grant requirements, award results, and program status help communities gather and coordinate resources internally and between external partners.
- The APGP should pay grantees directly instead of reimbursing grantees after they've spent funding. Direct funding can be more accessible, especially for small communities with less money to cover costs. Furthermore, the APGP should, to the extent possible, align funding with local government planning and budgeting processes to ease the burdens on staff time.

Sacramento & San Joaquin Valley Regions Takeaways
Monday, April 11, 2022 | 3:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Participants in the Sacramento and San Joaquin Valley shared that communities face time and organizational challenges when navigating grant programs and barriers to collaboration and developing partnerships. The APGP could also provide more hands-on technical assistance to guide applicants through the grant writing process, match prospective project activities to State funding sources and provide ongoing support for staffing and capacity building, including for non-profits and climate vulnerable communities. An equitable

application process is of utmost importance, as funding often goes to wealthier communities with larger budgets and more staff.

Specific feedback participants shared included:

Program Objectives & Vision
- The APGP should prioritize accessibility for climate vulnerable communities and address the knowledge and planning gap that exists in the climate adaptation space.
- Local communities need to better understand their unique needs and be encouraged to engage in long term planning rather than short term community meetings that focus on one plan.
- Communities recommend that APGP staff partner with CBOs early to ensure equitable funding reaches climate vulnerable communities.

Program Needs and Activities
- Communities need funding for extensive community engagement that prioritizes early communication, translation services & language accessibility.
- Preliminary research and engagement highlight the need for energy equity, emergency management and long-term disaster planning.
- Prioritize nature-based solutions, which can be very effective methods of combatting desertification.
- Communities need help translating broad climate adaptation plans into concrete prioritized projects. Furthermore, some communities would like to better understand what strategies are working for other cities and how they might replicate their efforts. The sooner these communities are aware of helpful resources the better their applications and overall climate adaptation efforts will be.
- Communities would like guidance on state grants that might best suit their needs. An online applicant/application portal would be a great advancement for accessibility. In addition, a universal application would greatly impact communities' abilities to apply for multiple grant programs.

Project Evaluation and Deliverables
- It's important that the APGP support communities in developing methods and criteria for prioritizing adaptation strategies.
- Communities would like to see flexible funding that can fit large regions or small, place-based projects.
- Communities would benefit from place-based vulnerability cost-benefit assessments that highlight adaptation strategy options.

Grant Administration
- Small communities face unique challenges due to limited staffing and technical expertise typically associated with successful proposals. With limited staff capacity, these communities often experience a lack of climate leadership, adaptation options, partners, and pre-existing climate resilience projects. Lengthened application deadline intervals, funding for staff time and community engagement, a straightforward RFP process or technical assistance in the grant writing process,

would all reduce barriers and enable these communities to effectively meet the grant requirements.
- The APGP should conduct outreach to elected officials, city managers, administrators, and CEOs to encourage cooperation.
- The APGP could provide hands-on technical assistance to help match planned activities to State funding sources, facilitate partnerships with universities and climate scientists to support effective adaptation planning, and connect a learning network of peers working to implement similar projects.
- ICARP staff should work with unsuccessful applicants from Round 1 to re-apply for Round 2 funding. Furthermore, applicants would appreciate grant writing resources and application feedback if not selected.

Inland North, North Coast, & Sierra Regions Takeaways
Wednesday, April 13, 2022 | 11:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Participants in Northern & Sierra communities shared that they face unique challenges and needs when attempting to apply for grant funding. Many rural communities are not designated as disadvantaged communities and therefore do not qualify for essential funding through some state programs. Furthermore, political dynamics of many rural communities make it difficult to use potentially polarizing climate change language. Northern & Sierra communities would benefit from program language that prioritizes the economic intersections of climate change. The APGP could also support activities centered around funding organizational administrative needs, communicating to politically diverse audiences the multi-sector impact of climate change, building trust and partnerships, and incentivizing community participation.

Specific feedback participants shared included:

Program Objectives & Vision
- The APGP should prioritize accessibility for climate vulnerable communities and address the knowledge and planning gap that exists in the climate adaptation space.
- The APGP should consider adding a rural set aside that would ensure more equity for rural communities who struggle to apply for, and secure, grants.
- Climate language needs to be accessible to better communicate the need for climate adaptation planning.
- Connecting program objectives with specific adaptation activities would be helpful.

Program Needs and Activities
- Climate vulnerability assessments can aid communities in identifying climate vulnerable communities and effectively identifying adaptation strategies.
- Clear and concise guidelines along with technical experts to help direct the planning process would be helpful.

Project Evaluation and Deliverables
- An economic lens to conversations around climate would be helpful in better understanding how economic and climate risks intersect.

- Action plans and memorandums of understanding (MOUs) that outline community commitments would help keep partners accountable.

Grant Administration
- Funding for, and coordination of, implementation funding streams per SB 379 (Gov. Code § 65302) requirements, is essential for successful climate resilience.
- A list of other state funding opportunities and their deadlines would be helpful for communities to understand where other and/or complementary funding opportunities might exist.

General Listening Session Discussion Takeaways

Wednesday, April 13, 2022 | 5:30 p.m. - 6:30 p.m.

Participants of the General Listening Session shared that communities want to better understand their climate risk and how grassroots solutions support climate adaptation planning. Communities have identified several funding gaps and barriers that inhibit local and regional efforts to collaborate and plan. The APGP could be used to meet these needs by supporting activities centered around funding organizational administrative needs, facilitating collaborative environments, and properly incentivizing community participation.

Specific feedback participants shared included:

Program Objectives & Vision
- The APGP could highlight the successful climate adaptation work completed to date and support local capacity building to respond to climate crises.
- Through significant funding allocations for community engagement, the APGP could empower climate vulnerable communities to engage in adaptation planning, particularly related to drinking water resilience.
- Program objectives should include specific actions that are identified through vulnerability analyses and adaptation planning frameworks. Community-driven and place-based actions should be prioritized.

Program Needs and Activities
- Nature-based solutions are popular, but more funding is needed to implement them.
- Schools and school districts need funding for climate adaptive infrastructure projects.
- Communities want funding support for conservation partnerships in the agricultural and natural resources sector.
- There is a need to improve drinking water resilience, especially for climate vulnerable communities.
- Communities need support with urban forest education, management, and planning.
- Communities face a funding gap for pre-development costs which inhibits projects from becoming "shovel ready" (at a stage where development can begin soon).

Project Evaluation and Deliverables
- Straightforward guidelines help smaller cities plan for the short and long term.

- One-on-one support to help communities advance their projects and obtain other funding opportunities will increase local impact.
- Grantees would benefit from an evaluation process that supports both the identification of key performance indicators and ongoing tracking.

Grant Administration
- Communities would like application support, including access to sample applications and lists of potential project types to use as a starting point in the planning process.
- The APGP could help facilitate joint use agreements for cross-jurisdictional plan development.
- The APGP could provide a database to support the management of monitoring data so that lessons learned can be summarized and shared more easily.

Bay Area & Central Coast Regions Takeaways
Friday, April 15, 2022 | 9:00 a.m. - 10:00 a.m.

Participants in the Bay Area and Central Coast shared that community-based organizations in the regions face a multitude of needs, ranging from funded staff time to training and educational opportunities for long-term capacity building skills. The Regional Climate Collaboratives Program (RCC) could be used to facilitate meeting these needs through supporting activities centered around funding organizational administrative needs, building trust and partnerships, and incentivizing community participation.

Specific feedback participants shared included:

Program Objectives & Vision
- The APGP should point communities to one singular source for climate data, analysis, and projections.
- The APGP should support communities with pre-proposal activities and grant writing, especially for CBOs who lack capacity.

Program Needs and Activities
- Jurisdictions need funding to support both short-term grant writing activities and long-term staff capacity.
- Allow sustained and sufficient funding for community groups and nonprofits to build community capacity to participate in adaptation planning.
- Communities need funding specifically meant for community engagement and designing pilot projects.
- Communities need funding to address SB 552 (Hertzberg, 2021; Water Code § 1609.50 et seq.), which requires countywide drought planning for individual wells and small systems with less than 15 connections.
- Coastal communities need funding to support coastal analysis, design, hazard mitigation, and planning related to coastal resources and wastewater treatment facilities.

Project Evaluation and Deliverables
- Prospective applicants would like to see the program evaluation framework published alongside the grant guidelines.
- Activities need to be monitored for effectiveness and re-evaluated on a regular basis to ensure compliance with program goals.
- Periodic sessions where awardees could coordinate and guide the evaluation and reporting process would be helpful.

Grant Administration
- The APGP should provide supplementary materials to the application, including an application checklist and "how-tos" with detailed guidance on how to align projects with funding priorities.
- Awardees would benefit from a library of resources, including live data updates on climate projections.

Los Angeles, San Diego, & Desert Regions Takeaways
Friday, April 15, 2022 | 1:00 p.m. - 2:00 p.m.

Participants in Los Angeles, San Diego, & Desert regions shared that their communities want flexible and simplified application qualification processes, support in obtaining and relating climate information, and a facilitated process wherein implementation funding is matched to planning activities. Participants also emphasized the need for an empowering and transparent reporting process that builds projects into implementable, scalable programs.

Specific feedback participants shared included:

Program Objectives & Vision
- There is a need for an abbreviated, pre- application process wherein communities can submit letters of intent for pre-qualification. This would help communities reduce the financial risks associated with failed grant applications.
- Communities have identified a need for a simplified grant program for specific applicant groups that may not be ready to meet full guideline requirements.

Program Needs and Activities
- Contracting language can be complicated and should not only be simplified, but also reflective of the intersectional nature of climate adaptation and resilience work.
- The APGP should share pre-existing climate science data, case studies, and other resources.
- Jurisdictions would like to see more clarity on state law interpretation, particularly SB 379 (Gov. Code § 65302) and SB 99 (Gov. Code § 65302).
- Funding gaps for implementation often hinder progress towards climate resilience goals. Jurisdictions and communities need funding alignment and coordination of complimentary state and federal funding sources.

- Jurisdictions and communities would like to see a flexible list of eligible activities, including energy infrastructure projects and community accessibility support.

Project Evaluation and Deliverables
- Project evaluation can serve the purposes of setting the tone of a program toward agreed upon end goals but can also be used as a way of bringing the community in. Evaluative activities are empowering when they encourage people to share significant breakthroughs in resilience (i.e. what resilience means to them or what it looks like; what it could look like).
- One of the most impactful possible deliverables is a clear implementation plan that includes sustainable funding, a designated management team, program metrics, and key partnerships to support implementation.

Grant Administration
- The APGP should prioritize first-time applicants to promote an equitable application process.
- Jurisdictions and communities need advanced payments rather than tedious reimbursement processes.
- The APGP should award credit to applications that demonstrate proof of concept in proposals, encouraging the expansion of present-day capabilities through the grant award process.
- Long term planning takes years to coordinate and execute, so APGP funding should also span several years.

Tribal Governments and Communities Listening Session Takeaways
Tuesday, April 19, 2022 | 4:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.

The APGP program team also hosted a Tribal Government and Communities Listening Session to hear from Tribal government and community leaders and organizations that work closely with Tribes and gather their input and feedback about the APGP program.

Participants shared that Tribal communities experience the heavy burden of responding to multiple crises at once, including climate crises, and grant applications being too cumbersome and largely ignorant of the diverse needs of tribal communities. Tribal communities need funding and guidance throughout the life cycle of the grant, from the pre-qualification process to the implementation phase.

Specific feedback participants shared included:

Program Objectives & Vision
- Tribal communities struggle to "fit" the general requirements of grant programs and therefore require tribal government-specific guidelines.
- Tribal communities would like to see braided, or "integrated", services where multiple agencies and departments streamline resources to address community-specific needs.

Program Needs and Activities

- Cost prohibitive activities are barriers to access for many tribal communities. The APGP should facilitate continual funding for projects and encourage cost-sharing activities.
- The COVID-19 pandemic hindered several healthcare development projects in tribal communities. The APGP should encourage projects that prioritize long-term health and wellness as a core component of climate resilience.
- The APGP should fund staff time for tribes to participate in collaboratives, hire grant writers and consultants for the application process, and further support outreach and partnership development.
- The program should encourage knowledge sharing between tribal communities by providing microgrants to support long-term engagement and collaboration.
- The APGP should provide stipends for community participation in projects.
- Tribal communities are interested in assessments of local climate conditions and how the data might help prioritize projects, from drought resilience projects to solar energy backups.
- The APGP should provide funding and capacity support for tribal communities to access implementation funding.

Project Evaluation and Deliverables

- The APGP should fund CEQA reviews, NEPA reviews, and additional costs associated with engineering, design, and permit costs during pre-development stages.
- Program deliverables should target and prioritize meaningful opportunities for tribal people.
- Funding for staffing not only helps throughout the application process, but is essential for effective project management, implementation, monitoring, evaluation, and real time adjustments.

Grant Administration

- Tribal communities are often understaffed and would appreciate an application checklist to streamline the application process.
- Tribal communities request a tiered application process with a pre-qualification phase before requesting full project proposals for the competitive application process.
- Often the availability of funds and the timeline of grants do not align with the urgency of tribal needs. Funding should be made available in advance, and not after reporting deadlines or reimbursement cycles.

Key Informant Interviews and Survey

Interview Takeaways

ICARP conducted one-on-one interviews with existing state funding programs to identify best practices, takeaways from past funding cycles, and opportunities to foster better coordination between funding programs for adaptation planning activities across the state.

Specific feedback participants shared included:

Program Objectives & Vision
- The APGP should point communities to one singular source for climate data, analysis, and projections.
- The grant program should encourage a pipeline of local and regional projects that integrate with other state funding streams.
- Encourage cohesive planning to implementation phasing that includes pre-planning and educational activities. The California Adaptation Planning Guide can be used as a resource for guiding these planning efforts.

Program Needs and Activities
- The APGP should share pre-existing climate science data, case studies, and other resources.
- Communities would appreciate technical assistance in the grant writing process. Technical support is essential for some communities, but a straightforward RFP process could reduce the amount of technical support needed.

Grant Administration
- Funding for and coordination of implementation funding streams, per SB 379 (Gov. Code § 65302) local government adaptation planning requirements, is essential for successful climate resilience.
- Hold periodic public input opportunities to continuously inform the program throughout its development and administration.

Survey Takeaways

ICARP shared an online survey with interview informants, listening session participants, and other state, local, and regional partners. Many communities face varying technical and capacity limitations, making it challenging to apply for grant funding opportunities if applications are difficult to navigate and complete. In addition, there is a significant need to provide tailored, one-on-one technical assistance to applicants to help communities navigate the grant application process. Reduced grant reporting requirements and flexible award timelines were also identified as priority issue areas.

Specific feedback survey participants shared included:

Program Objectives & Vision
- The APGP should direct communities to application best practices and resources to help applicants achieve the goals outlined in their grant application.
- Consider supporting applicants by identifying other state and federal funding opportunities to leverage.
- Consider including non-competitive options for grant application requirements to help incentivize applicants to connect planning grants to implementation activities.

Grant Administration
- The APGP should limit and streamline all grant reporting requirements.
- Provide clear, straightforward financial reporting and tracking requirements.
- The APGP should incorporate flexible grant reporting timelines.
- Do not require applicants to depend on executive-level staff to submit grant applications. This creates additional capacity constraints.

Technical Assistance
- Organize technical assistance events by applicant groups, rather than regions.
- Maintain culturally competent administrative and technical assistance by a point of contact throughout the application process. Examples could include, but are not limited to mentor-mentee relationship between prospective applicants and successful state grantees, consistent state agency point of contact, etc.
- Utilize software accessible and familiar to many for applications and reporting. Examples include but are not limited to using Microsoft Excel for budgets and reimbursements and Microsoft Word for grant applications.
- Conduct public outreach and trainings on connections to other funding sources.

Program Guidelines
- Reduce technical jargon and ensure all grant application materials are a 12th grade reading proficiency level.
- Consider "testing" language accessibility with CBO partners to ensure readability and accessibility across diverse audiences.
- Emphasize eligibility for non-traditional applicants.
- Consider consulting with public health experts to inform the development of grant guidelines and equitable application materials.

Next Steps and Contact Information

ICARP is incorporating the collective input described above into the Adaptation Planning Grant Program's draft guidelines. The ICARP team is grateful for the time, effort, and wisdom contributed by all those who have participated to date, and by those who will inform this new program in the future.

If you have any comments or questions, please reach out to the ICARP Adaptation Planning Grants Program team, icarp.grants@opr.ca.gov, or visit the ICARP Grant Programs web page for future updates on the Adaptation Planning Grant Program (https://opr.ca.gov/planning/icarp/grants/).