

and users to succeed in environmental innovation;

(3) Diffusion: Accelerate the diffusion of innovative technologies at home and abroad; and

(4) Environmental and Pollution Prevention Technologies: Strategically invest funds in the development and commercialization of promising new technologies.

This solicitation is focused on pollution prevention-related proposals that support the first three objectives.

Proposals relevant to the fourth objective are being sought jointly by the National Science Foundation (NSF) and EPA through a contemporaneous solicitation. Information about the joint solicitation can be obtained from either NSF (pfirth@nsf.gov; voice 703/306-1480) or EPA (202/260-7474).

The 1990 Pollution Prevention Act declares pollution prevention to be national policy and states that “* * * pollution should be prevented or reduced at the source whenever feasible.” Pollution prevention is now considered EPA’s preferred choice for environmental protection, and the Agency is seeking to integrate prevention as an ethic throughout all of its activities. Pollution prevention includes equipment or technology modifications, process or procedure modifications, reformulation or redesign of products, substitution of raw materials, and improvements in industrial housekeeping, operational maintenance, employee training, or inventory control.

On July 22, 1994, EPA Administrator Browner announced the new environmental policy Common Sense Initiative (CSI), which is designed to shift environmental protection from the current “pollutant-by-pollutant, end-of-pipe, command-and-control” approach to an “industry-by-industry, multi-media, prevention-oriented” approach. Six pilot industries were identified for CSI: auto manufacturing, computers and electronics, iron and steel, metal finishing and plating, petroleum refining, and printing. Proposals with relevance to these industries will receive priority consideration.

Program Scope

This EPA grant solicitation is intended to finance prevention-related projects supporting policy analysis (frameworks), institution building (innovation capacity), and domestic and international diffusion. Descriptions of the program areas that are addressed in this solicitation are provided below.

Policy framework topics of interest include: (1) Strengthening incentives for the development and use of innovative

prevention technologies; and (2) identifying and reducing barriers to innovation. Aspects to be addressed include regulations and implementation mechanisms (e.g., permitting and compliance policies and programs). This program area encompasses all environmental media (water, air, etc.) and emphasizes pilot projects not analytical studies. Policy framework proposals often address issues that have a broader focus than pollution prevention alone. Such proposals are welcomed so long as they are also applicable to pollution prevention technologies or issues.

Policy framework projects focus on environmental regulatory programs in the broadest sense, from regulation through compliance and enforcement. Projects selected in this areas will address regulatory programs in order to:

- Identify and enhance incentives for the development and use of prevention technologies;
- Minimize barriers to the development and use of such technologies; and
- Incorporate provisions into new and existing regulations and programs that maximize flexibility and widen the range of technologies accepted for use.

Special attention will be given to the use of market-based instruments for creating flexibility and incentives to innovate.

Innovation capacity proposals should be focused on how to assist, or catalyze, prevention technology development and commercialization efforts.

Examples of possible work in these areas are programs or projects to:

- Establish programs to standardize testing protocols and verify the cost and performance of innovative prevention technologies;
- Provide pollution prevention technology testing centers;
- Catalyze the efforts of many organizations to promote innovation by convening partnerships;
- Develop and communicate timely information about high priority prevention technology gaps; and
- Work jointly with organizations in the public and private sectors to identify and address non-regulatory sources of market inefficiency and failure in the environmental technology sector.

Proposals on diffusion of information should focus on new and improved means of fostering information networks, technical assistance, and outreach activities. Both domestic and international applications are encouraged. For example, there is a need to enhance the capacity of existing or newly created public and private sector diffusion activities to serve the

potential users of pollution prevention technologies both domestically and abroad. Proposals may include activities relating to market demand, availability, cost, performance, opportunities for business development, and regulatory requirements.

General Selection Criteria

The objective of this solicitation is to harness the capability of the nonprofit sector to help address the goals of the ETI. EPA will not accept proposals that are not directly related to one of the previously mentioned areas of ETI focus. Moreover, proposals must address barriers to the development and use of innovative pollution prevention approaches to be eligible unless they are addressing policy framework issues that will also benefit pollution prevention approaches as well as their target.

Each proposal will only be evaluated against one strategy objective based on the information provided above. Proposals with relevance to industries highlighted by the Common Sense Initiative and the Design for Environment Program will receive priority consideration. Special consideration will also be given to projects that support small businesses and/or small communities. This focus on a select few industries is intended to provide concentrated support for cleaner technology development and commercialization and sustainable economic growth and increased competitiveness.

Many barriers to development and application of pollution prevention exist because of the lack of flexibility in the policy infrastructure. Thus, proposals that seek to make the implementation of environmental policy a process that is more friendly to technology innovation will also receive additional attention. This is the one area in which projects may go beyond the pollution prevention domain.

The most significant problems and creative solutions most likely will be identified by nonprofit organizations and industrial investigators, working together on challenges posed by real problems. Projects must show appropriateness to current national concerns for pollution reduction or prevention; vague arguments that the proposed project may eventually be of value are not compelling.

This initiative particularly seeks innovative and high risk/high payoff ideas. It does not invite studies of “the problem” but rather specific approaches to possible solutions. Since the preparation of competitive proposals is very time consuming, it is also well to