



Clean Watering Indiana 2017 Competitive Grants Guidance

Executive Summary: The Clean Water Indiana (CWI) Grant Program (IC14-32-8-5) utilizes the Clean Water Indiana Fund to Support Indiana Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCDs) in efforts to improve water quality by reducing sediment and nutrients from nonpoint sources. The State Soil Conservation Board (SSCB) is accepting competitive proposals for targeted projects up to three years in length.

Application Process: The link to the online application is available on the Clean Water Indiana Page of the ISDA website. Applications are completely online and can be saved or updated in your browser. Applications will be submitted via a web portal. Districts should complete the online application and may attach up to five (5) additional pages if desired. Attachments will be accepted in word document or pdf format.

Application Deadline: The application must be submitted by **September 15, 2016 at 4 pm EDT**. By submitting the application, the lead SWCD certifies that each partnering district has agreed to the terms outlined in the application.

Eligible Applicants: Applications can be submitted by any SWCD in the State of Indiana. However, only one application is permitted per project and must be submitted by the lead SWCD. All districts must be current on SharePoint reporting for previous grants, including both financial and conservation practice tracking.

Please note: Clean Water Indiana funding to expand or extend CWI projects/initiatives is available to current grantees, provided the funding is at least 66% spent and reporting is up to date. Extension applications may include minor changes, but must stay within the scope of the original approved grant. All changes requested must be explained on the application. Lead Districts on an active CWI project may apply as the lead district in a new project; however, new lead districts are encouraged.

Ineligible Projects: Research projects, including water quality monitoring, are not eligible under the 2017 CWI grant program. IC 14-32 prohibits SWCDs from conducting research except in conjunction with Purdue University. Projects relating to urban practices that will reduce sediment and nutrient are eligible; however, no funding will be awarded for cost-share on rain barrels. Cost-sharing is also not allowed on specific practices that an entity is required to install to comply with a state or local rule or ordinance. *Example: CWI funds cannot be used to meet MS4 requirements unless the proposed use of funds goes above and beyond the requirement outlined in the MS4 permit's Storm Water Quality Management Plan.*

Proposal Guidance: A lead district must be selected to serve as the grantee to receive and administer the grant. However grant funds can be shared between districts through cooperative agreements locally. The grant proposal must document how the grant funds will address at least two of the State priority resource concerns referenced in the State Soil Conservation Board's (SSCB's) Business Plan adopted in 2016. Proposals that outline how CWI funds will leverage additional funding from other sources as well as engage other partners are strongly encouraged. CWI project proposals that will be in tandem with ongoing projects are encouraged. *Example: CWI funds might be used to add technical assistance to help implement sediment and nutrient reduction practices cost-shared through a LARE or 319 project.*

Project Dates: All 2017 Clean Water Indiana Grant projects shall take no longer than three full years to complete. Projects will start on January 1, 2017 and must be finished and all funds spent by December 31, 2019.

Project Description: The proposal must identify the current nonpoint source water quality concern(s) in the selected district(s). The proposal must also identify how addressing this resource concern pertains to both the SSCB business plan and SWCD business plan(s).

Partnerships: Each application must state clearly what each partner and participating district will be contributing to the proposed project (i.e. outreach, professional assistance, estimated funds, etc.) Partnering districts and organizations must be identified with a point of contact for the project and their contact information.

Conservation Practices: Conservation practices and structural measures shall follow NRCS Field Office Technical Guide where applicable. New technologies not currently in the technical guide may be implemented if reviewed and concurred in by a technical representative of the Conservation Implementation Teams (CIT) or their designee. For cost-share practices, CWI funds may be used to pay up to a maximum of 75% of the total conservation practice cost. At least 25% of the cost must be provided by the landowner or other non-federal source as match. However, cover crop cost share is limited to a maximum of \$20/acre. Cost share funding for cover crops shall be limited to three years per field for any CWI grants. *Example: A producer who has received cover crop cost share on a previous CWI grant for two year is only eligible to receive cost share for that field for one year on a new grant.* If applying for cost share, please describe the process you will implement to select grant recipients. Priority will be given to SWCDs who demonstrate a strategic process for managing cost share dollars.

Funds Available: This grant opportunity is competitive. The SSCB is looking for targeted proposals of up to 3 years in length. Proposals can be for any amount that would accomplish the project described. The SSCB will utilize a scoring sheet to aid in ranking the proposals. The SSCB may use discretion when awarding grant funds.

Funding Restrictions: Proposals must fall within the funding context allowed under the Clean Water Indiana Law (IC 14-32-8). The law prohibits funds to be used for food, food related paper products, office equipment or district self-promotional materials (i.e. mugs, t-shirts, pens, etc.)

Match Requirements: A 50 percent cash and/or in-kind match is required. Match contributions can be federal, state, and/or local sources including such things as landowner costs, staff time, supervisor time, equipment use, purchase, rental, etc. The match is applicable only if directly related to the purpose of the proposed project. Grant proposals should use the match standards outlined at the end of this document to develop their project budget.

Leveraging Funds: SWCDs are encouraged to partner with traditional and non-traditional organizations/agencies at the local, state, and federal level to leverage additional funds for their project/initiative. However, the SSCB will show preference to projects which do not add to the percent cost-share/incentive rate offered through another program. *Example: A project where CWI funds are used for cost share and 319 funds for technical assistance would be preferred over a project where CWI and 319 funds are both used to give producers a larger cost share amount.*

Process of Payments: Once the proposal is approved by the SSCB, the Indiana State Department of Agriculture (ISDA) will issue a contract to the designated lead SWCD. SWCDs should return their signed contract to ISDA within 30 days of receipt in order to receive their funds. Funds must be utilized in a timely manner. Districts will receive 50 percent of their grant funding up front and the remaining 50 percent at the end of the project upon receipt of the final report and claim voucher. *Please note that after the initial 50 percent of funds, all payments will be made as reimbursement to the lead district and require proof of payment by the lead district and a claim voucher.*

Reporting Requirements: Financial and project status reports through SharePoint will be required for the duration of the grant and a final report will be due at the end of the grant. This report must be completed semi-annually (every 6 months) and summarize the outcomes and achievements of the project. These reports will be due 30 days following the anniversary date of the grant and. *Example: grants that begin on January 1st will have reports due January 31st and July 31st.* The first report will be due on July 31st, 2017. Tracking of conservation practice implementation (following FOTG standards) must be reported through SharePoint's conservation tracking system on a (minimum) quarterly basis.

Grant Reviews: ISDA routinely visits with its grantees to ensure projects and grants are proceeding as intended and offer guidance and support if needed. Each year, ISDA will strategically select grants to review. These reviews can include open grants and grants that have been completed in the last three years. Upon completion of a review, ISDA will send a summary of results to all districts involved in the project and their board(s). If found during formal review or routine reporting checks, failure to make progress on the project or report progress as specified in the grant agreement will be noted in a project's file and may jeopardize a district's ability to receive competitive grant funds in future cycles.

Questions: Please contact the Grants Program Manager or your District Support Specialist. See DSS Map and contact information under documents on SWCD SharePoint.

Match Standards: (all figures are per hour of project work)

SWCD Administrative Staff: \$15

SWCD Technical Staff: \$20

SWCD Supervisor: \$15

ISDA/NRCS Technical Staff: \$25

Landowner Time: \$20

Professional Services: \$25

Student/Intern: \$10

Any landowner contribution toward the remaining portion of cost share practices should be counted as cash match.

In general, time spent working on the project should be considered in-kind match; whereas money would be considered cash match.

Deadlines that SWCDs must meet to be eligible for CWI 2017:

- Election Committee Report: November 1, 2015
- Recommendation for Supervisor Appointment: November 1, 2015
- Annual Financial Report entered into Gateway: February 29th, 2016
- Annual Meeting Held: March 31, 2016
- Election held at Annual Meeting: March 31, 2016
- Annual Financial Report and Audit Form/Page 2 of AFR: March 31, 2016
- Certification of Election of Supervisors: Within 7 days of election
- CWI Grant Reports and Conservation Project Tracking: Due dates established in grant agreements)
- Recommendation for Temporary or Vacant Appointment: Within 30 days of vacancy

The items are not specified in district law but are considered essential for district operations and could be used as a tiebreaker for CWI 2017:

- District Annual Meeting Information: January 1, 2016
- Updated SharePoint Directories: Within 30 days of changes
- District Success Story: Due date determined by ICP outreach committee
- The district has a current business plan.
- The district has had at least one supervisor attend the Supervisor Summit hosted by ISDA and IASWCD since 2013.
- The district has had at least one current supervisor attend a Leadership Institute workshop session since 2008.
- District Staff or supervisors participated in the 2015 spring tillage or cover crop transects.