

TURI COMMUNITY GRANT:

TURNING OFF THE TAP ON PFAS

The Toxics Use Reduction Institute (TURI) offers community grants to help support Massachusetts not-for-profit organizations, small businesses and municipalities implement projects that protect their communities and the environment by promoting the adoption of safer alternatives to toxic chemicals.

This Grant Opportunity

The present solicitation is for proposals to help **identify PFAS (also known as “forever chemicals”) in products used and sold in Massachusetts to protect human health and the environment.** We aim to support non-profit organizations, small businesses and municipalities to collect samples to evaluate for the possible presence of PFAS substances and providing information about safer alternatives where needed.

Per- and poly-fluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) represent a category of thousands of chemicals that are widely used in manufacturing and consumer products. PFAS are used in a wide range of products across almost every industrial sector to add water, stain, and oil repellency, chemical and temperature resistance, friction reduction, and surfactant properties. Products that may contain PFAS include food packaging, footwear and apparel, cookware, flooring, electronics, firefighting foam, cosmetics, among others. This class of chemicals is often described as “forever chemicals” because they never fully break down in the environment. PFAS have been detected in drinking water and are linked to myriad of adverse health effects.

We seek local partners to work with testing facilities at University of Massachusetts Lowell to help identify products that likely contain PFAS. Grantees will be responsible for collecting samples from communities in the Commonwealth, and University researchers will conduct the relevant testing of samples. Where products are believed to contain PFAS, grantees are expected to work with relevant companies and experts to encourage the adoption of safer alternatives.

If this request for proposals (RFP) is not a fit for your organization or small business, TURI plans to issue additional RFPs periodically for reducing the presence of toxic flame-retardant chemicals from child play spaces and working with disadvantaged communities on the adoption of safer alternatives, particularly with respect to PFAS and certain cleaning products, among other opportunities. In addition, unsolicited applications from Massachusetts non-profits, small businesses, and municipalities for funding under TURI’s community grants program are welcome and reviewed on a rolling basis. The general application form is available below.

Eligibility

TURI has grants funding available to any not-for-profit organization, small business, or municipality in Massachusetts that:

- Proposes process or product changes to reduce the presence or use of PFAS;
- Is considering a change that is relevant to other communities; and
- Will address toxic chemicals associated with TURI's strategic priority list (flame retardants, PFAS or "forever chemicals" and certain halogenated solvents). However, we will consider proposals that reduce other listed toxic chemicals.

Examples of projects that **are ineligible** include:

- Projects conducted solely by a consultant;
- Lobbying or environmental enforcement activities;
- Projects that do not have reduction of toxic chemicals as the primary focus; and
- Projects conducted outside Massachusetts.

Criteria for Success

Proposals will be scored using the following criteria. The maximum number of points is **100**.

Criteria	Points
Strategies for identifying products of concern that may contain PFAS in communities (approximately 50 samples can be tested per month) and the adoption of safer alternatives to products that test positive.	40
Feasibility/achievability	20
Expected benefits of the project in terms of reduction in PFAS use and/or exposure, particularly for environmental justice or for traditionally underserved communities	20
Level of collaboration with various stakeholders	10
Potential to transfer the end product(s) to others of similar mission OR Effective use of existing educational materials or proven techniques	10

A Review Committee including members from community organizations and other stakeholders will review the grant applications and recommend projects for funding. Final decisions are made by TURI.

How to Apply

The application process is intended to be simple yet competitive. It begins with the submission of a brief online application that requests basic information about the proposed project. Following receipt of the initial application, the Review Committee will evaluate proposals and may request additional information from potential awardees before making a final decision. We anticipate notifying awardees no later than October 15, 2023.

Deadline for submissions: September 15, 2023

To apply go to www.turi.org/grants

For more information please contact: info@turi.org

Demonstrating Success

Because the overarching goal of this program is to disseminate information about successful examples of toxics use reduction organizations and municipalities that receive a grant are required to share information about project elements that contributed to their success.

TURI will work with grantees to determine the optimal method of sharing information about the project and its success broadly. Typically, we will recommend one or more of the following methods:

- Crafting a case study that presents information about the project's goals, challenges, and outcomes. Case studies are designed by TURI, using company information gathered over the course of the project in collaboration with the grantee, and are published in downloadable format on our website (www.turi.org) and featured in social media posts.
- Creating a video that features relevant processes and interviews with key personnel to describe the changes implemented and the outcomes of that effort.
- Conducting an on-site demonstration of the changes made (for relevant projects). TURI will lead outreach to invite interested company personnel, consultants and, if appropriate, legislators, high-level environmental officials, journalists and other dignitaries to tour the grantee operation, learning about the implementation process in real time. Grantees will host the tour and answer questions about their experience.

Award Amounts

Typical community grants are within the range of **\$10,000 - \$20,000**. The typical award amount for regional or statewide projects is **\$20,000**, while local projects are typically around **\$10,000**. If your proposal falls outside this range, please feel free to contact us to discuss what options may be available.

Project Timeline

Deadline for proposals.....	Friday, September 15, 2023, NOON
Notification of awards	October 15, 2023
Grant kick-off meeting	October 2023
Project duration	October 2023 through September 2024

You are encouraged to review our previously funded projects to see the types of activities grantees have accomplished.

We strongly encourage applicants to arrange a pre-application conversation with TURI to discuss your ideas and help fine-tune your projects. Please contact TURI at info@turi.org at any time during your application process.

Milestones

Information about the following milestones will be coordinated with grantees once projects are under way.

- Complete initial contract
- Attend kick-off meeting (3-4 hours)
- Monthly or bi-monthly check-in calls with grant administrator
- Interim project meeting (3-4 hours, usually in February)
- Interim progress report, interim expense report, and interim invoice (February)
- Submission of final project materials and documentation (May or June)
- Final project report, final expense report, and final invoice

Grant Agreement and Grantee Requirements

Award recipients will be required to:

- Conduct the activities outlined in the proposal
- Attend all required meetings and events
- Prepare an interim and final progress report
- Submit all project materials for review throughout the grant project. The Institute must review any materials developed under the grant prior to their dissemination and all materials must contain language regarding the funding source
- Submit all final project materials

Failure to meet these requirements may result in a reduction in the final grant payment.

The final report and other information generated through the project become public documents and may be published without prior notice by the Toxics Use Reduction Institute and/or may be used by future grantees in their projects.