

Prop 4 US Mexico Border Funding Program Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

GUIDELINES

Program Overview

Q1. What is the Prop 4 US–Mexico Border Funding Program?

The program provides grants to projects that address **water quality problems in California–Mexico cross-border rivers and coastal waters**. It operates under guidelines adopted April 21, 2026 (Prop 4 US-Mexico Border Funding Program [Guidelines](#)) and uses a competitive, scored selection process.

Q2. How much total funding is available?

After allowable administrative and statewide bond costs, **\$46,151,000** is available to fund grants for eligible Prop 4 US–Mexico Border projects.

Grant Amounts & Project Types

Q3. What are the minimum and maximum grant amounts?

- **For Planning/Research Project: \$250,000** minimum; **\$750,000** maximum (and **no more than \$3 million** total program-wide will be used for planning/research projects).
- **For Implementation Projects: \$2,000,000** minimum; **\$10,000,000** maximum. The DFA Deputy Director may increase a project's maximum **by up to an additional \$10,000,000** after reviewing scored applications and determining the combination of projects that maximizes benefits.

Q4. What project types are eligible?

Projects must **directly address cross-border water quality problems**. Eligible projects will be categorized by the Resources or Impacts they address, including: water quality improvement, infrastructure improvement, restoration, and planning/research. Projects will also be categorized by their Purpose, which may be corrective, preventative, or improvement. Projects may be located in California or Mexico, but projects in Mexico must demonstrate a documented water quality benefit to California and its residents.

Match & Leveraging

Q5. Is match required?

- **Match is required only for bilateral financial institutions.** Bilateral financial institutions must provide a **50% federal match** on a **one-to-one** basis before state funds can be expended.
- **All other applicants are not required to provide a funding match.** While match is **optional** for other applicants, priority and scoring points are given to proposals that leverage private, federal, or local funding; **applicants providing $\geq 5\%$ match receive additional points.** (Bilateral institutions may only receive additional points for match **above** the 50% statutory requirement.)

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Location & Benefits to Disadvantaged Community (DAC)/Vulnerable Populations

Q6. Where can projects be located? Must they be in California?

Projects may be in **California** or in **Mexico**, **provided** they deliver a **documented water quality benefit to California and its residents**.

Q7. Are there requirements to benefit DACs or Severely Disadvantaged Communities (SDACs)?

Yes. **At least 40%** of Prop 4 funds must directly benefit **DACs or vulnerable populations**, and **at least 10%** must directly benefit **SDACs**. The **10% SDAC** requirement is **within** the **40% DAC** allocation (not in addition to it). Guidance on demonstrating **meaningful and direct benefits** is provided by California Natural Resources Agency (CNRA) in the following guidance document:

<https://resources.ca.gov/-/media/CNRA-Website/Files/Bonds/Prop-4/Prop4BenefitsAssessment.pdf>

Applicant Eligibility

Q8. Who is eligible to apply?

Eligible applicants include **public agencies, local agencies, 501(c)(3) nonprofits, special districts, Joint Powers Authorities (JPAs), public utilities, federally recognized Tribes, non-federally recognized California Tribes (NAHC list), local publicly owned utilities, and mutual water companies**. Funding may be awarded to **bilateral financial institutions** as a **state match** only **after** federally committed funds are secured.

Eligible & Ineligible Costs

Q9. What costs are eligible for reimbursement?

Eligible costs are listed in the [Guidelines](#), Section VI.A (p. 8). Eligible costs must be **directly related** to the project and incurred **within the Funding Agreement term** (start date **on or after Nov 5, 2024**), and include: administration, planning, design, permitting, California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)/environmental docs, land/easements (excluding eminent domain), implementation/construction, Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) elements, necessary traffic-calming features tied to benefits, monitoring, equipment/software for implementation/monitoring, personal protective equipment (PPE) and safety supplies, workforce development for vulnerable populations, and education/outreach directly linked to implementation.

Q10. What costs are ineligible?

Ineligible costs (i.e., costs that are not reimbursable with grant funds) are listed in the [Guidelines](#), Section VI.A (p.9). Examples include costs incurred outside the agreement

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term, operation and maintenance (O&M) beyond initial startup, outreach not directly related to implementation, equipment not integral to the project or not in the line-item budget, reserve funds, replacement of existing funding for ongoing programs, application preparation expenses, principal/interest on existing debt, and markup.

Technical Assistance (TA)

Q11. Is there TA under this program?

Although TA is not available, there are planning/research grants available. The majority of work that TA typically completes (e.g., preparation of engineering reports, feasibility studies, environmental documents, design, and public engagement) is eligible for reimbursement under a planning/research grant or an implementation grant.

APPLICATION PROCESS (FAAST)

Application Overview Questions – see Guidelines for more information

Q12. Where do I apply?

Apply online via the **Financial Assistance Application Submittal Tool (FAAST)** at <https://faast.waterboards.ca.gov/>. The solicitation notice (dates, instructions) will be emailed to the program mailing list and posted on the [Prop 4 - US Mexico Border Program](#). Once you are logged into FAAST, find the Prop 4 US Mexico Border Funding Program in the list of Requests for Proposals (RFP).

Q13. Where can I find the required documents and templates?

Required questions (FAAST tabs) and **Attachments** ([Workplan outline](#); [Budget template](#); [Scope of Work & Schedule](#) template; optional Memorandum of Understanding [MOU]/support; and technical documents) are detailed in **Appendix A** of the [Guidelines](#), with the full **Workplan Outline** in **Appendix B**. Applicants must rely on **the questions as they appear in FAAST** once the solicitation opens. To download all required Attachments please see the [Program Webpage](#) or the links below.

- [Attachment 1 – Workplan](#)
- [Attachment 2 – Budget](#)
- [Attachment 3 – Scope of Work and Schedule](#)

Q14. I'm having trouble logging into FAAST—where do I go for help?

Follow the instructions provided when the solicitation opens and use the links in the notice. For FAAST technical support, Call 1-866-434-1083 or Email faast_admin@waterboards.ca.gov.

There are videos available to help with creating a FAAST account and submittal of applications at the following location <https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/videos/faast.html>

Q15. If I need help with the application or required documents, what should I do?

Attend the **Applicant Assistance Workshop** scheduled for June 24, 2026 from 10 - 11:30 am. Registration for the webinar can be found on the [Program Webpage](#). Also,

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we recommend subscribing to the program **email list** for updates on the Program. To sign up for the email list got to the [Program Webpage](#) and the sign up is on the bottom left. If you still need help, please reach out to Jennifer Toney jennifer.toney@waterboards.ca.gov .

Q16. Which attachments are required to be uploaded in FAAST?

Attachments 1, 2, and 3 are required, and Attachments 4 and 5 are optional.

- **Attachment 1 (Required): Workplan** — structured per **Appendix B** of the Guidelines. **Attachment should be no more than 10 pages** excluding referenced attachments.
- **Attachment 2 (Required): Budget** — template provided. See more information in Budget Table FAQ below.
- **Attachment 3 (Required): Schedule & Scope of Work** — combined template with milestones (CEQA, permits, design % complete, access, bidding, implementation, monitoring). Fill in project-specific details in highlighted sections; non-highlighted sections are standard agreement text that may not be changed. Programmatic (“grouped”) proposals are allowed but must remain specific enough to score; **significant scope changes after award are generally not permitted.**
- **Attachment 4 (Optional): Agreements/MOUs/Letters of Support (Optional)** — binational coordination/support documents must be **uploaded** in the application to be considered in project scoring (mailed/emailed letters to staff/Board members are **not considered**).
- **Attachment 5 (Optional): Technical Documents** — These include geotech, hydrology, design reports/plans/specifications, and environmental documents.

Required attachments can be downloaded from the following links:

- [Attachment 1 – Workplan](#)
- [Attachment 2 – Budget](#)
- [Attachment 3 – Scope of Work and Schedule](#)

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Q17. In the FFAST application, are the latitude/longitude (General Information tab), UEID (Budget tab), and Cooperating Entities tab required?

- The latitude and longitude of the project is required if the project is located in the U.S. **If the Project is located in Mexico, the latitude/longitude should remain blank in FFAST fields because an error may occur for latitude/longitude locations outside of California.**
- The UEID is associated with projects that receive federal funding and is **NOT required** for this funding program. Please **only fill out the UEID** if the project includes a **U.S. federal funding** component. If the project is receiving only Prop 4 funds, the UEID field can remain blank.
- The Cooperating Entities tab is only for projects which involves cooperating agencies for implementation, property rights, or similar roles, you should enter the requested information in the Cooperating Entities tab. If your project does not have any cooperating entities for project implementation you may leave the tab blank.

Budget Table

Q18. Which budget items carry into the Funding Agreement if selected?

The Tasks shown in blue in the budget table template (not Subtasks) are used in the Grant Agreement. The six standard budget categories (shown in blue in the template: 1. Direct Project Administration Costs; 2. Planning/Design/Engineering/Environmental; 3. Construction/Implementation; 4. Equipment; 5. Monitoring/Performance; and 6. Education/Outreach) are fixed; applicants should organize Tasks/Subtasks within those categories to fit their proposal. Construction Management services can either be included in the construction line item or Planning/Design/Engineering line item. Please add it as a subtask under one of these line items.

Q19. Can I add rows to the Budget Table?

Yes. You may insert rows, but you must **update formulas** in the new row or **calculate manually** to keep totals accurate.

POST APPLICATION SUBMISSION

Funding Process

Q20. What happens after I submit my application?

Applications will undergo **Completeness** and **Eligibility** screening; incomplete or ineligible applications will **not be reviewed**. Applicants will be notified if their application is deemed incomplete or not eligible. Complete, eligible applications will receive a **technical review** using **Appendix C** scoring. The Deputy Director of the Division of Financial Assistance (DFA) will approve a **Final Funding List** based on the results of technical review. If needed, some projects may be **partially funded** to maximize

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program benefits. **Preliminary Funding Notifications** will be sent to the applications on the Funding List, with instructions to submit any **Required Supplemental Documentation** within **90 days**. Failure to submit on time may result in withdrawal and re-allocation to standby or existing projects.

Q21. What are the Required Supplemental Documents?

The required supplemental documents are described in Appendix D of the Guidelines. Once an Applicant's Preliminary Funding Notification is issued, the Applicant must submit the following documents within ninety (90) days in order to receive a Funding Agreement. They include:

- **Authorizing Resolution:** This resolution or ordinance designates the Authorized Representative(s) for the Project who have the authority to sign and submit Application materials, certify compliance with applicable state and federal laws, execute the Funding Agreement and any amendments thereto, and certify disbursement requests.
- **Certification of Compliance with Water Meter Form:** This is a self-certification form for Water Metering Compliance pursuant to Section V.D. of the Guidelines.
- **Certification for Water Conservation and Water Management:** All applicants must either certify that they are a water supplier and have complied with the California Water Code and all provisions of Division 6 of the Water Code (sections 10000 through 12999); or certify that they are not a water supplier, but that they have verified that any water suppliers in its service or Project Area have complied with the provisions of Division 6 of the Water Code (sections 10000 through 12999), and that any ordinances, rules, or regulations have been duly adopted and are in effect as of this date.
- **Payee Data Record (Form STD 204):** This form is required for any entity that receives funding from the State Water Board. Applicants must submit this form when the entity's name, tax status, or mailing address for receiving the Form 1099 changes. Form STD 204 is available at the following website:
<https://www.documents.dgs.ca.gov/dgs/fmc/pdf/std204.pdf>

Scoring

Q22. How are applications scored?

Scoring combines **Primary Score** (points for Resource/Impact & Purpose), **Secondary Score** (points for DAC/SDAC/vulnerable population benefits, binational coordination, public health mitigation, multi-benefit projects, and a project's presence in binational agreements or State Water Board strategic documents), **Cost-Effectiveness** (points for useful life, O&M funding, and match funding), and **Readiness** (points for CEQA/environmental documents status; and completeness of design documents). **Maximum score = 30**. Detailed criteria and point scales are in **Appendix C of the Guidelines**.

Funding Agreement & Compliance

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Q23. What should I expect in the Funding Agreement?

Agreements define specific terms and conditions, such as eligible costs, schedule, reporting (quarterly progress and final report), Project Assessment and Evaluation Plan (PAEP)/Monitoring requirements, signage/outreach expectations, and **reimbursement rules** (e.g., construction costs reimbursed **after CEQA and permits are complete**). Implementation projects (and some planning/research projects) may need a **legal opinion** from counsel. The funding agreement template will be posted on the [program website](#).

Q24. Are there CEQA or other compliance requirements?

Yes. **California projects must comply with CEQA, and no implementation/ construction work may proceed until the State Water Board completes its CEQA findings.** Projects outside California must comply with local environmental requirements (CEQA does not apply). Additional statutory compliance may be required prior to executing a funding agreement, including **prevailing wage requirements under the Labor Code, Urban Water Management Plans (UWMP)/ Agricultural Water Management Plan (AWMP)** eligibility conditions for certain suppliers, **surface water diversion reporting, and water metering certification.**

Q25. Are operations & maintenance (O&M) costs eligible for reimbursement?

Recipients **must maintain and operate** facilities for the project's **useful life**, but O&M costs are the **recipient's responsibility** and not reimbursable beyond startup.

Q26. Is advance payment available?

For projects benefiting **DAC/SDAC**, **Advance Pay up to 25%** of the total grant may be requested (subject to compliance with the program's **Advance Payment Guidelines**). The Advance Payment Guidelines are being updated so please look for the link on the following website.

https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/grants_loans/sustainable_water_solutions/safer.html

KEY DATES AND COMMUNICATIONS

Q27. How do I stay informed (workshops, solicitations, updates)?

Subscribe to the program email list and check the **Prop 4 - US Mexico Border Funding Program** page and the **State Water Board calendar** for workshop postings, solicitation notices, and updates.

- Program page: https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/grants_loans/swgp/prop4/us-mexico-border/
- State Water Resources Control Board Calendar: https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/board_info/calendar/
- Subscribe to email list: <http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/subscribe>
- CNRA Guidance Document: <https://resources.ca.gov/-/media/CNRA-Website/Files/Bonds/Prop-4/Prop4BenefitsAssessment.pdf>

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ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS

If you have any additional questions, please contact:

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