Ohio EPA invites applications for grants under its Diesel Mitigation Trust Fund (DMTF) program to help fund the installation of publicly available Level 2 Electric Vehicle (EV) charging stations in 26 Ohio priority counties.

This current offering is for Level 2 charging stations only. A separate funding opportunity will be made available in early 2021 for DC Fast Charging stations. The total funding under this Level 2 competitive grant offering is approximately $3,250,000 of which $250,000 is set aside for public charging in certain Ohio state parks and other state government facilities. Of the remaining funds, $115,000 is allocated for sites in each of the 26 eligible counties.

Applications are due in the form of a single pdf file via email to evcharging@epa.ohio.gov no later than 3:00 PM on September 30, 2020.

Two webinars were offered as Microsoft Teams Live events to provide an overview of the program and offer an opportunity for prospective applicants to ask questions. You can access the PowerPoint presentation and listen to the recorded webinar at https://epa.ohio.gov/oee/#131365122-vw-mitigation-grants.

Presentation slides and questions and answers from both sessions are also posted on the program website. Applicants may contact Ohio EPA staff members with questions throughout the grant cycle. Ohio EPA will continue to update the list of questions and answers regularly so that all applicants have access to the same information.

Questions or requests for clarification about this program may be submitted in writing via email to alauddin.alauddin@epa.ohio.gov or ryan.bourgart@epa.ohio.gov. Answers to questions received at these webinars are presented below along with answers to questions Ohio EPA staff are providing to email and telephone inquiries. Ohio EPA will continue to update this document throughout the application period.
Question 1: Is there a list of available contractors we could use to get quotes?

Response: Ohio EPA does not maintain a list of contractors. However, Ohio DAS does have signed state term service contracts with 7 vendors ready for public entities to use regardless of funding source. Applications using one of these contracts will receive a higher ranking during application review.

Details and contact information for the Ohio DAS contracts are below:

Contract Number: RS900320       Index Number: GDC169
Contact: Donna Davies, Donna.Davies@das.ohio.gov, (614) 728-3729

Question 2: Is it possible to apply for DCFC funds retroactively?

Response: Unfortunately, our program rules do not allow us to fund any activities that were started prior to an executed grant agreement between the Ohio EPA and the grantee. We anticipate executing grant agreements for Level 2 charging stations around December. With our DCFC application cycle opening around February 2021, the grant agreements for that program would likely be signed around August 2021.

Question 3: We are a company that works with state agencies on EV charging programs and would like to know if we could be a resource to this program.

Response: In order to make the maximum amount of funding available in the form of grants to Ohio businesses and communities, our VW program is structured in a way that, while program development and administration occurs in-house, activities like site acquisition, engineering, construction and management are left to the applicant. We are encouraging solution providers, planning agencies and electric utilities to reach out to potential site hosts to form high quality proposals for potential EV charging locations. There is a DriveOhio report, released on June 30, 2020 and available at drive.ohio.gov, about expanding EV access throughout Ohio. This study will help guide program decisions as we implement the EV charging infrastructure funding portion of the VW/DMTF program in Ohio. This report may help your company focus its outreach efforts to potential site hosts in the 26 VW/DMTF eligible counties.

Question 4: Is the DMTF EV charging infrastructure funding only available to entities within the 26 counties? Are there exceptions with the state parks?

Response: The VW/DMTF grant program (both vehicle replacement and EV charging components) is limited to the 26 priority counties. Funding for state parks is limited to those within these counties. When determining which projects to fund, applications will be separated by county first, then ranked according the ranking criteria. Based on applications received, should there be funds left over from one county and worthy unfunded applications in another, we reserve the right to reallocate funding as needed. We encourage applications for charging locations in all 26 counties.

Question 5: Are public libraries eligible to be funded?

Response: If a public library is within an eligible county and charging stations are publicly available, they are eligible under the program. Please note that any activities initiated ahead of a grant award will not be eligible for reimbursement under our program.
**Question 6:** Are the webinars for this program mandatory or optional?

**Response:** Attending the webinars is optional but attending one of them is strongly encouraged. Attending both is unnecessary.

**Question 7:** The RFA states that the map of EV chargers generated online should be emailed to administrators’ emails. Is this in addition to submission at evcharging@epa.ohio.gov, or should the map just be attached to this email address?

**Response:** The map generated must be inserted into the one combined application file and emailed as a pdf to evcharging@epa.ohio.gov.

**July 10 Update:**

**Question 8:** Could a charger at a business used for fleet vehicles overnight, and available to the public during the day be eligible for funding under this program?

**Response:** A charger at a business is eligible provided it is publicly accessible at least 16 hours a day during prime business or daylight hours. Preference will be given to locations that are available 24 hours a day and do not have limited access or availability (e.g. behind a fence, in a gated parking lot closed to the public after hours, etc.). Beyond the 16 hours required per day, if the business would like to charge its vehicles overnight during the remaining 8 hours, that is an allowable use of the charger.

**Question 9:** What are the criteria for being selected for an award and how are they weighed? Can you provide any further guidance on how applicants can assess their competitiveness when reviewing various possible locations for application?

**Response:** Projects will be assessed based on 9 criteria: 1) Cost-effectiveness, 2) Availability, 3) Relative location, 4) Traffic, 5) Amenities, 6) Multiple chargers, 7) Scalability/Future proofing, 8) State term contract for public entities, and 9) Destination charging. These criteria are explained in the RFA document on our website at https://epa.ohio.gov/Portals/42/documents/VW/DMTF-EVSE-Level2-RFA.pdf.

**Question 10:** Are rights-of-way and public streets considered government owned sites for chargers?

**Response:** Yes. However, please note that applications with street chargers will need to make a strong case for how they will be operated and maintained in a way that prevents vandalism or other damage and keeps them in service during the reporting period and beyond.

**Question 11:** There was an old incentive from Ohio EPA that discounted 15% of the cost of the purchase of EV charging stations. Is this a new program independent from that, or a replacement?

**Response:** We are not aware of such an incentive from the Ohio EPA. This is a standalone program offered by the Ohio EPA as it administers the VW settlement fund dollars in Ohio.
Question 12: Will the PowerPoint and recording of the webinar be available?

Response: Yes, the PowerPoint and webinar recording are available on our website at [https://epa.ohio.gov/oee/#1844010701-dmtf-2020-request-for-applications-for-level-2-electric-vehicle-charging-stations](https://epa.ohio.gov/oee/#1844010701-dmtf-2020-request-for-applications-for-level-2-electric-vehicle-charging-stations). We will update this document either every week or every other week while the grant application cycle is open.

Question 13: Are hotels eligible sites?

Response: Hotels are eligible sites. However, applications for chargers at hotels must demonstrate clearly how they will ensure that the chargers are publicly available and not limited to guests only.

Question 14: Are government office parking garages and municipal parking lots that have parking fees and are open to the public eligible?

Response: Yes, if the parking garages and lots are open to the public, they are eligible. This program doesn't make a distinction between sites that charge for parking and those that do not.

Question 15: Can we use other non-federal funds for project match?

Response: Yes, as this program is funded from state dollars, you can use federal, state, or local funds as project match.

Question 16: Do eligible costs for a dual port networked level 2 charger (outlined in Section 3.4) max out at $15,000?

Response: Yes, dual port level 2 chargers dollar amounts max out at $15,000 each. If a government organization is applying, the program can reimburse a maximum of $15,000 per dual port charger or 100% of the cost, whichever is lesser. If a non-government organization is applying, the program can reimburse a maximum of $15,000 per dual port charger or 80% of the eligible costs, whichever is the lesser.

Question 17: How many stations can be placed at one site? Is it restricted to one dual port station per site? Is there a limit for how many charging stations per location is requested?

Response: There are no restrictions on the number of chargers to be placed per site. On the contrary, applications with multiple chargers will receive a higher priority. However, to achieve program goals, we reserve the right to provide partial funding for an application.

Question 18: Can you replace an existing station? Many of the early stations placed in the state are not working properly and are not networked. The electrical make ready already exists and would be cost effective.

Response:

Yes. However, please note that proposals will need to make a strong case for how they will be operated and maintained in a way that prevents vandalism or other damage and keeps them in service during the reporting period and beyond.
Question 19: In a public private EV partnership in which a service provider seeks to collaborate with a city, who should apply to the program?

Response: The answer to this question is situation-dependent and should be decided by the organizations in the partnership. If one party is a vendor and they are working with several clients, then it would make sense for the vendor to be the applicant. On the other hand, public applicants benefit with the higher percentage of reimbursement and do not need to provide financial disclosure documentation. The decision is left to the partnering organizations.

Question 20: Does the State have vendors through Sourcewell? Can we select one of those as a vendor for our response to the RFA?

Response: Applicants can choose any vendor from Sourcewell or any other source. However, only applications using the DAS contracts will receive priority in the ranking of applications.

Question 21: Do you have to use the ODOT TIMS for determining the highest functional class road or can you download the GIS files from TIMS and create your own FC map?

Response: For consistency in our review process, we would prefer that the TIMS map be used by all applicants.

Question 22: Does applying for this program make us ineligible for the fast charging grant in 2021, especially if they might be on the same site?

Response: No, applying to this program doesn’t not impact your ability to apply for funding for DCFC chargers in 2021. You are encouraged to apply to both programs.

Question 23: What is the expected timing between submitting for reimbursement and the receipt of funds?

Response: Typically, once the required documentation (i.e. invoices, proof of payment, reimbursement request) is received, it takes about three to four weeks to receive a payment. Grant recipients are required to register as Suppliers through the Ohio Supplier Portal, and may request to receive payments via electronic funds transfer, which will expedite receipt of payments.

Question 24: If OEPA does not receive enough eligible applications from one or more of the 26 priority counties to meet the $115,000/county goal, what is OEPA’s plan for distributing any “leftover” funding?

Response: If Ohio EPA does not receive enough applications to use up all the available funding within an eligible county, we may reallocate the unused funds to the highest scoring projects in other eligible counties.

Question 25: Does the distribution of funds to eligible sites have a relationship with the priority sites identified in the DriveOhio report?

Response: The DriveOhio report is a statewide look at electric vehicle charging stations in Ohio and includes certain recommended locations, including the locations of proposed state government owned facilities and destination locations. Destination locations within the 26
eligible counties will receive a higher priority for funding. Beyond that, the DriveOhio report does not impact the eligibility or ranking of other applications received under this program. The report will play a bigger role in the DC fast charging stations program being released early next year.

Question 26: Do the DAS vendor contracts include installation or are those costs the responsibility of the applicant?

Response: For questions on the DAC vendor contracts, please contact Donna Davies (Donna.Davies@das.ohio.gov or 614-728-3729).

Question 27: Will charging infrastructure support be provided to vehicles in the diesel replacement program if this program is specific to public access only?

Response: No. This program provides grant funds to deploy publicly available charging stations to support light duty (passenger) electric vehicles, in keeping with the allowable uses of the VW funding. Ohio’s Beneficiary Mitigation Plan established that VW funds allocated for replacement of medium- and heavy-duty diesel vehicles and equipment will not be used to support fueling or charging infrastructure, in order to focus the available public dollars on uses that contribute more directly to emission reductions.

Question 28: Can we apply for this grant and other grants as well?

Response: Yes, you are encouraged to apply to as many grants to subsidize the funding as you can. Doing so could possibly lead to more chargers being installed or having a more competitive application by requesting a lower dollar amount from this program.

Question 29: Will Ohio EPA give a partial award for a project?

Response: Yes, we reserve the right to give partial awards to projects based on the number and substance of applications we receive.

Question 30: Is there any advantage or disadvantage to consolidating requests? If a vendor is serving 10 clients’ locations, should they submit 1 application or 10?

Response: Applicants are encouraged to combine multiple locations within one county into a single application especially if they have the same electric utility company or site host. Charging locations in different counties should be in separate applications even if it one or more of the entities involved are the same. Also, applications with multiple site locations should rank them by priority. We encourage applicants with multiple locations to contact us so together we can figure out the most expedient way to apply.

Question 31: Can you apply for a project that is planned to be under construction or is currently under construction (e.g. a new structure is going to be built with a new parking lot and charging stations could be built into the plan)?

Response: Yes, you can apply for a project that is in the planning stages or currently under construction. However, please note that this program will not fund activities or construction that was initiated before a grant agreement has been executed between the Ohio EPA and the grant recipient. Also, please note that the grant contract is typically based on a 24-month project
completion period, but applicants may request a project period of up to 36 months in their application.

**Question 32:** In 2 years, charger prices are likely to come down. Do you reimburse based on the price at the time of application, or as actually installed?

**Response:** The grant award amount is the maximum dollar amount that will be paid for the number of charger ports to be installed. The program then reimburses based on the actual costs incurred based on paid invoices that will be submitted to us. We may accommodate one scope change request during the implementation phase. If, at that time, lower costs allow for the deployment of more chargers, we would encourage grantees to reach out to us to discuss this option.

**Question 33:** What is the maximum funding per applicant?

**Response:** This program doesn't have a designated maximum funding per applicant. We want to encourage as many applicants to apply to this program to install as many chargers as can be utilized, operated and maintained effectively.

**Question 34:** Are single businesses/landlords with several businesses close by eligible?

**Response:** A single business/landlord location is eligible provided that the company explains in the application what measures they plan to implement to ensure the public availability of the charging spaces, such as signage, hours of availability, and time limits. The objective is to ensure that the stations are truly available to the public and not monopolized by the business/landlord's own employees.

**July 17, 2020 Updates**

**Question 35:** Do wages need to be prevailing?

**Response:** Whether a grant applicant elects to use prevailing wages is solely within their discretion.

**Question 36:** Could items 2 through 5 under Section 3.4 be characterized as applicant's match?

**Response:** Yes.

**Question 37:** Is there a time limit from when awards are given to when charging station begin operating? For example, if we want to use the funds for a future construction project, is there a timeline we'd be limited by?

**Response:** Typically, in the VW program, a 24-month project period is allowed, but applicants may request a 36-month project period. The project period starts when the contract has been signed by both Ohio EPA and the grantee. We expect that this period is enough for completing work of procuring and installing chargers and requesting the reimbursement funds. Please note that the chargers will need to remain operational and reports about the usage of the chargers need to be submitted semi-annually for five years after the project period.
Question 38: When determining the road with the highest functional class within 0.25 miles of the proposed site using the ODOT TIMS system, is it a quarter mile driving distance or as the crow flies?

Response: It is a quarter mile of driving distance. You can access the ODOT TIMS system at https://gis.dot.state.oh.us/tims. Specific instructions on generating the map is provided in Appendix B of the EV charging RFA at https://epa.ohio.gov/Portals/42/documents/VW/DMTF-EVSE-Level2-RFA.pdf.

Question 39: Is there only a limit in available funds for each port? Are other eligible costs available at 100% funding for government agencies?

Response: Ohio EPA will reimburse the lesser of (a) $7500 per single port charger or $15000 per dual port charger, OR (b) 100% of eligible project costs at government owned locations or 80% of eligible project costs at non-government owned locations.

Question 40: Can you estimate what additional cost the 5-year maintenance and networking costs will be? Estimates could vary widely from application to application and affect the grant amount requested.

Response: That will depend on the vendor selected.

Question 41: If all applicants request max funding, private sites will spend more efficiently than public. If all applicants request max funding, does that mean that all funds for a county would go to private sites?

Response: At the close of the application period, all applications will be divided by county, checked for completeness and then reviewed and ranked based on the 9 ranking criteria, one of which is cost-effectiveness. To score high on the cost-effectiveness criterion, we encourage all applicants to secure as much external funding as possible and limit their request to only what is needed.

Question 42: Are funds available for electric school buses?

Response: The current grant offering is for publicly available charging for light-duty (passenger) vehicles only and does not apply to school buses. Towards the end of this year, we will be releasing a separate RFA for an electric school bus pilot project. If you are interested in this program, please contact us and we will add you to our email notification list.

Question 43: Is county government eligible for 100% of eligible costs of Government Owned Property?

Response: For purposes of this grant, county government properties are considered government owned and would be eligible for the lesser of 100% of the eligible costs or $7500/$15000 per single/dual port charger installed.
Question 44: Does this grant include the DC charging stations?

Response: This offering is for Level 2 chargers only. We will be releasing a separate RFA for DCFCs around February 2021. Receiving a grant for Level 2 Charging will not impact the ability to apply again for DC charging grants in February.

Question 45: We would like to apply to several sites across multiple counties. Should we submit separate applications for each county or a single application with individual Section III. Site Information completed for each site?

Response: Please submit separate applications for each county. Please combine all locations within one county into one application with a separate Section III for each site location. Also, within each application, please remember to rank the site locations by priority.

Question 46: The DMTF map shows Delaware County as a first priority and to my understanding, the EV Charging Study shows that ODOT Dist. 6 is the proposed location for charging stations because that would extend the DCFC coverage range. Would that exclude added charging locations?

Response: The EV Charging study is a statewide look at the EV landscape in Ohio with some recommended charging locations. Parks in Delaware County are eligible locations under this program regardless of the presence (or absence) of ODOT garages.

Question 47: If we require a motor vehicle permit at our parks, does it affect the public availability (and thus our eligibility)?

Response: To be eligible for funding, locations must be open and accessible to the public at least 16 hours per day. We encourage applications from parks whose proposed chargers are located in a way that allows access to the general public.

Question 48: Is the warranty and service contract fees available to be added to the VW application or is that a separate application request in later years?

Response: Quotes with separate line items identifying the 5-year equipment warranty, the 5-year networking cost, and the 5-year maintenance contract must be submitted with the grant application.

Question 49: Can we use private sponsorship dollars as match and include their logo on the ports?

Response: There is no restriction on using private sponsorship dollars as a match. However, the Ohio EPA is looking into whether any display of sponsor logos or promotional materials on the charging equipment will be allowed. We will provide a response on this as soon as we can.

Question 50: Is section 4.1.4 saying that you are requiring an ADA spot per regular parking spot?

Response: Ohio EPA is looking into this question and will provide a response on this as soon as we can.