



Reach the Decision Makers Application Information

APPLICATIONS ARE DUE BY 12:00 pm PST, ON MONDAY, MARCH 11, 2024

Reach the Decision Makers (Reach) is a year-long program that increases the capacity of participants to understand and use the best environmental health science to promote science-based health standards and policy in California. Reach emphasizes the importance of learning by doing. Participants develop the tools and skills to effectively engage key offices and staff members within California Agencies and contribute to immediate and lasting changes in environmental health policy. We encourage both individuals and pre-formed teams to apply.

To Apply

Please complete the application at the following link: bit.ly/ReachApplication2024. The deadline for applications is **Monday, March 11, 2024**. Applicants must apply via the Google Form linked above. If you are applying as a pre-formed team, each person must submit an application and then select one person from your team to send an email to earth@ucsf.edu to provide the list of all members applying as part of your team. Applicants will be selected through a competitive application process. The selection committee will review all completed applications and will interview a selection of finalists. Applicants will be contacted by email on Wednesday, March 27, 2024 to inform them of the committee's final decision.

Who is Eligible?

- Participants must live in the San Francisco Bay Area, Modesto, Merced, or Fresno regions.
- Pre-formed team. This could be an existing coalition or any group of individuals who want to form a team of four to six individuals. However, teams must include a diverse mix of community-based leaders, researchers, health care professionals, and public health professionals.
- Individuals. Researchers, community-based leaders, public health professionals, and health care professionals with experience in public health, environmental health, and/or medicine are encouraged to apply and will be assigned to a multidisciplinary team.

Informational Webinar

We will hold an informational webinar via Zoom to briefly review the Reach program and will allow plenty of time for questions and answers. Please join us:

Wednesday, February 21, 2024 from 4:00pm – 5:00pm PST

Please RSVP for this webinar at the following link: bit.ly/ReachWebinar2024.

Program Overview

Participants in the program should expect to commit roughly 150 hours (including in-person travel) over the course of the coming year. The program has the following components:

1. Initial In-Person Training and Subsequent Zoom Educational Seminars

Participants will meet in San Francisco, CA at the beginning of the program. This in-person meeting is required. Participants will then participate via Zoom throughout the duration of the program for interactive learning sessions. The trainings will address issues related to environmental health science and public policy, including how to work with the state government, understanding the role of science in public health decision-making, team building and leadership, and how communities can use science to improve community health and well-being.

2. Mentored Team-Learning Groups

Teams will work together, with support from a mentor and program staff to research and develop a policy project that addresses a pressing environmental or reproductive health issue that is under the jurisdiction of the California State Government.

3. Team Policy Project

Each team will choose their own policy project as the basis of their engagement with the California State Government at an in-person Sacramento, CA meeting or other location as appropriate on a date chosen by the team within the months of September – November 2024. Examples of possible team projects (but not limited to the following):

- **[Make recommendations for the Community Air Protection Program Blueprint 2.0]:** The California Air Resources Board (CARB) recently released a Community Air Protection Program Blueprint 2.0 that aims to reduce air pollution risks in environmental justice communities. Fellows will make recommendations to CARB that strengthen the implementation of this program and ensure stronger health protections for communities with high exposure burden.
- **[Make a recommendation regarding ethylene oxide use in the UC System]:** Ethylene oxide, a potent carcinogen and petrochemical, is commonly used as a sterilizing agent in the manufacturing of medical equipment. Ethylene oxide releases to the environment often disproportionately impact low income and communities of color. Recent evidence suggests that ethylene oxide is being used by the UC System. Fellows will recommend that CARB evaluate and provide potential mitigation strategies for ethylene oxide use and potential environmental releases by the UC system. Fellows will also recommend that the California State Government to convene an expert panel to assess chemical hazards in hospitals and determine: the most prevalent chemicals, chemicals posing the greatest health and economic costs, exposure sources, patients and hospital units at greatest risk, and regulatory and policy options for CalEPA to address these risks. See: <https://capitalandmain.com/california-grapples-with-regulation-of-known-carcinogen-ethylene-oxide>
- **[Work with WPS to protect agricultural communities]:** The California State Government's Worker Protection Standard (WPS) aims to protect the health and safety of workers in the agricultural sector. Fellows will meet with WPS to ensure the reproductive health and safety of workers in the agricultural sector, including advocating for statewide reporting of all pesticides applied by professional applicators in schools of all levels of education, including day care centers.

- **[Meet with OEHHA to advocate for farmworkers]:** Organophosphate pesticides (OPs), a toxic class of chemicals linked to acute poisoning and neurodevelopmental harm, are widely used across the State of California. Farmworkers often experience dangerous levels of exposure to multiple OPs, and worker protections are poorly enforced. Fellows will meet with the California Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA) and farmworker rights advocacy groups to recommend a cumulative human health risk assessment for evaluating the risk to farmworkers from exposure to multiple organophosphate pesticides.
- **[Meet with DTSC on microplastic regulation]:** Microplastics, or small plastic particles that are generated from the degradation of plastics in the environment, have contaminated virtually every environmental compartment, including air, water, soil, and living organisms. A recent systematic review found that exposure to microplastics is linked to reproductive and digestive health harms, including certain types of cancers. The Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) recently proposed to list microplastics to their Candidate Chemicals List, which would trigger downstream regulation. Fellows would meet with DTSC to advance this proposed regulation around microplastics in the State of California.
- **[Make recommendations regarding CO2 pipelines]:** “Circular Economy” companies are receiving permits for CO2 pipelines and storing CO2 underground. One current controversy around *potential* permitting for CO2 pipelines in the Sacramento Delta is around growing concerns over leaks and other environmental impacts. In 2022, the State of California passed legislation that instructed CARB to create a carbon capture program, and a decision by the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA) on whether that program can permit carbon capture pipelines is expected to be released in 2024. Participants will work with academic and NGO scientific partners to make recommendations to CARB and PHMSA on policy strategies to reduce potentially harmful exposures from CO2 pipelines. See: <https://sacramento.newsreview.com/2023/08/23/smud-sutter-county-officials-grapple-with-the-controversial-possibilities-of-carbon-capture-near-yuba-city/>
- **[Conduct a drought analysis of domestic wells]:** The drought threats for low-income rural households are significant, with implications for Environmental Justice, and worse, contamination exposures in the drinking water of these communities. Work with a Water Equity Science Shop ([WESS](#)) doctoral student to conduct a drought analysis of domestic wells in California. The goal is to influence policy discussions about Strategic Groundwater Management Agencies around groundwater sustainability plans.

Cost of Participation

This project is made possible through a NIEHS-funded P30 Environmental Health Sciences Core Center grant. Out-of-pocket costs to participants are expected to be minimal beyond the time commitment required for participation.

- Travel, housing, and meals for the in-person meeting with policy makers in Sacramento, CA will be covered by the program.
- Participants will receive a \$500 stipend at the completion of all program requirements to offset costs of participation.
- Participants will be required to have time during the workday (paid time or time off) to participate in the program.

- Some incidental costs should be expected (computer time, internet, etc.)
- Travel to and from the in-person orientation in San Francisco is not covered by this program. Meals will be provided for the San Francisco orientation. Travel scholarships are available for participants located >50 miles from San Francisco Bay Area.
- Webinars will be held via Zoom.

Reach Program Dates

Applicants should **check their availability** for the following planned program dates. All Webinar sessions are held on Wednesdays from 9:00 – 11:00 am PST:

February 21, 2024	Information calls for Applicants
March 11, 2024	Application deadline
March 27, 2024	Send acceptance emails
April 17, 2024	Welcome to the Program, introductory webinar #1
April, 2024	Team calls with Kristin Shiplet*
May 7-8, 2024	In-person orientation & dinner at UCSF Mission Bay
May 22, 2024	Webinar #2
June 5, 2024	Webinar #3
June 26, 2024	Webinar #4
July 10, 2024	Webinar #5
July 24, 2024	Webinar #6
August 7, 2024	Webinar #7
August 21, 2024	Webinar #8
September, 2024	Team meetings to arrange in-person, Sacramento meeting date*
Sept. - Nov., 2024	Practicum (teams meet in-person with CA government)*
December 11, 2024	Webinar #9
January 8, 2025	Webinar #10
February 5, 2025	Webinar #11
March 5, 2025	Webinar #12
April 2, 2025	Webinar #13

**meetings to be scheduled directly by teams*

Program Eligibility

Individuals and pre-formed teams will be chosen for the Reach program based on the following criteria:

- Previous experience in or knowledge of environmental health
- Interest in environmental health and science policy, with emphasis on vulnerable populations (e.g. pregnant people, children, etc.)
- Commitment to participant requirements (see below)
- Organizational support/agreement for participation (if employed)
- Match with program model, especially history of working well in collaborations

Additionally, participant selection will be made to ensure that each cohort meets the following criteria:

- Balanced mix of community-based leaders, researchers, health care professionals, public health experts
- Range of experience (from none to high) in public policy

- Diversity of people who serve and/or represent populations impacted by California State Government decision-making in the field of environmental health
- Diversity of experience (from students to seasoned professionals)
- Mix of emerging vs. established community organizations

Participant Requirements:

1. Be a community member, researcher/scientist, public health expert, or health care professional with experience and interest in environmental health and a desire to advance public policy at the California State Government in the field of environmental health.
2. If representing an organization, you should have the full support of the organization, including the board of directors, to participate in Reach and spend staff time working on a policy project.
3. Be committed and available to attend all webinars and in-person meetings, including the team meeting with the California State Government, for the full time of each training/meeting, including during daytime and evening hours.
4. Be willing to work on a team with others who have similar interests, collectively develop a policy project, and actively work on the project *even if* it is not completely within you or your organization's priorities.
5. Be comfortable working with others through telephone and conference calls, webinars, and email.
6. Be willing to share the workload with the rest of your team and commit the amount of time necessary to accomplish your chosen project.
7. Be comfortable communicating in English (reading, writing, & speaking) with team members, policy makers, and other external stakeholders.
8. Be willing to bridge differences in personalities and styles to collaborate successfully as a team.
9. Have an e-mail account that you can check daily, access to a computer with internet and video conferencing capabilities. If you have trouble accessing these resources, please reach out to the Reach program coordinator.
10. Be willing to communicate with EaRTH if barriers to participation exist.
11. Practice professional conduct at all times while participating in Reach the Decision Makers and while engaging with government employees and other participants.
12. Be willing to provide feedback to EaRTH on your experiences with Reach the Decision Makers through periodic evaluations during and after the close of the program.
13. Be willing and prepared to engage after your participation in the network of Reach participants and alums to continue advancing science-based environmental policies.
14. Be able to attend at least 80% of all the webinars (i.e. miss no more than 2) and attend the team meeting in Sacramento, CA to receive the stipend at the end of the program.

Questions

If you have any questions about the program or eligibility requirements, please email earth@ucsf.edu.

Reach the Decision Makers Preview of the Application Questions

Below you will find a preview of the application questions. Applications must be submitted directly here: bit.ly/ReachApplication2024.

Note: Pre-formed teams must be 4-6 members, **but all members of the team must submit an individual application, and the team must choose a single contact person to list on each of their applications.*

Participant requirements:

Please review the participant requirements (listed on the previous page) and affirm that you can commit to meet all of the requirements if selected as a participant in Reach.

Yes, I affirm.

Applicant information:

1. Full Name:
2. Full Name you would like to use in the program, if different then Full Name above:
3. Primary Affiliation (Organization):
4. Position:
5. Other Affiliations (Organization) – Please list any other orgs that you are associated with, e.g. secondary work affiliation, etc.:
6. Email:
7. Primary phone number:
8. Your location (City, State):
9. Primary identification:
 - Community-based leader
 - Researcher/scientist
 - Health care professional
 - Public health professional
 - Other: _____
10. List degrees (if any) or type “N/A”
11. List specialty (if any) or type “N/A”

Application type:

How are you applying?

- I am applying as an individual
- I am applying as a member of a pre-formed team*, contact person and email for the pre-formed team:

* Pre-formed teams must be four to six members, all members of the team must submit an individual application, and the team must choose a single contact person to list on each of their applications.

Questions for pre-formed teams only:

1. Primary contact name (Teams must choose a single contact person to list on each of their applications):

2. Please discuss how your team has come together, if your team has had experience working together and on what (200 words max):

Short essay questions:

Introduce yourself:

(Please supply a brief bio of no more than 250 words. This information will be used in public materials announcing the class.)

Please answer the following questions. For all questions, limit each answer to 200 words.

1. Describe your experience in environmental health:
2. Describe your personal experience (if any) working with local, state or federal policymakers and administrative staff:
3. Describe an experience you have had working as part of a team to accomplish a project or goal. What made the experience work well? What was challenging?
4. What is your motivation for establishing a public policy relationship with California?
5. What communities do you serve now or hope to serve by your participation in this program? (Please tell us whether or not this includes susceptible, vulnerable, and/or under-served communities.)
6. Describe work that you've done related to diversity, equity, justice, and inclusion, either within your organization or in the communities your work serves:

Policy project proposals:

Individual applicants and members of pre-formed teams can suggest their own environmental health project or select projects in topic areas or examples suggested by your group. To gauge your topic areas of interest, please rank your top 3 choices for projects you would like to work on in this program or suggest **up to 1** new project.

1. See team policy project ideas beginning on page 2
2. Considering the policy projects ranked above, please describe in more detail your interest and experience in these areas. (Limit to 250 words)

References:

Please list two academic or professional references who can attest to your experience in public health, environmental health, and/or medicine (Name, Affiliation, Email, Phone):

Optional self-identification questions:

1. Race/Ethnicity:
2. Sexual Orientation:
3. Gender Identity:
4. Physical or Other Disability:
5. Age:
6. In what languages do you feel most comfortable communicating? Please list all that apply: