

# Frequently Asked Questions: Request for Information Material Impact Reduction and Reuse Program

On March 6, 2026, DEQ published a [Request for Information](#) to solicit input from interested parties on a proposed funding area under consideration for the first round of [Material Impact Reduction and Reuse Program](#) (MIRROR) funding.

## **Question: Who is DEQ wanting to hear from?**

**Answer:** DEQ welcomes responses from a broad range of experiences and perspectives, including school districts, administrators, staff, service providers, researchers, community-based organizations, private sector firms, and others with relevant experience.

A joint submission from multiple organizations who have collaborated on a response is also welcome. Be sure to clearly identify each participating entity.

## **Question: Will preference be given to RFI respondents in any future requests for applications or proposals?**

**Answer:** No. Responding to this RFI does not provide any advantage or preference in any future funding opportunity or procurement process. The RFI is strictly for information-gathering to help inform program design.

## **Question: Does DEQ anticipate issuing a Request for Proposals after the RFI closes? What is the timeline?**

**Answer:** DEQ will use the information received through the RFI to inform the design of a future funding opportunity. The timing and structure will be determined after reviewing the responses. Sign-up for the MIRROR [GovDelivery](#) for future updates.

## **Question: Do we need to respond to each question?**

**Answer:** No, respondents do not need to answer every question. We welcome responses that focus on the areas where respondents have relevant experience or insight.

**Question: In consideration of the budgetary issues facing schools across the state, has DEQ considered broadening the scope of projects eligible for funding?**

**Answer:** DEQ recognizes the budget constraints many schools are facing and is actively considering how funding opportunities can be designed to best respond to current challenges. Feedback received through the RFI, including on the barriers schools are experiencing and what conditions are needed for reuse systems to succeed, will inform the scope and design of any future project

**Question: Why has the available funding amount changed for the first cycle?**

**Answer:** The available funding for this cycle is different than initial estimates because the initial calculations were informed by estimates that were made before the Recycling Modernization Act was fully operational. MIRROR funding is calculated based on a three-year average of PRO annual expenditures and is subject to adjustment over time as actual spending data becomes available.

The Producer Responsibility Organization, Circular Action Alliance, had substantial savings in the 2025 program year compared with what was initially budgeted. Initial estimates of the disbursement also erroneously included reserves, which should be excluded from calculation if they are not spent.

**Question: When does DEQ expect to begin accepting applications for funding requests?**

**Answer:** DEQ will use feedback from the RFI to inform the design of future funding opportunities. We plan to share additional details, including on anticipated application timelines, following the review of RFI responses.

**Question: Should responses be organized by school or district?**

**Answer:** Responses may be organized by either school or district, depending on what is most relevant for your experience. If you reference both individual schools and district-wide efforts, we ask that you clearly distinguish between them to help us best interpret your input.

**Question: Will DEQ share a summary of findings from the RFI?**

**Answer:** Yes. A summary of the themes from the responses will be posted to the MIRROR website after DEQ has reviewed RFI responses. Sign-up for the MIRROR [GovDelivery](#) to receive updates.

## **Question: When will the money be available?**

**Answer:** A timeline for funding has not been finalized yet. DEQ will determine next steps, including a timeline for funding projects, after reviewing the responses received from the RFI.

## **Question: How was this focus on reusables in schools determined?**

**Answer:** Reusables in schools was identified as a potential focus area for MIRROR funding during the second Recycling Modernization Act rulemaking. Schools use high volumes of covered products, particularly food serviceware, which creates an opportunity for meaningful impact reduction and additional co-benefits.

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