AGENCY: ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY (EPA)

TITLE: Support for the International Network for Environmental Compliance and Enforcement (INECE)

ACTION: Request for Applications (RFA)

RFA NUMBER: EPA-OECA-INECE-2023-01

Assistance Listing No: 66.313

IMPORTANT DATES

November 29, 2022	RFA OPENS
January 28, 2023	RFA CLOSES – APPLICATIONS DUE
February 28, 2023	ANTICIPATED NOTIFICATION OF SELECTION
March 30, 2023	ANTICIPATED AWARD

Application packages must be submitted electronically to EPA through Grants.gov (www.grants.gov) no later than **January 28, 2023, at 11:59 p.m. (ET)** in order to be considered for funding.

COVID-19 UPDATE

EPA is providing flexibilities to applicants experiencing challenges related to COVID-19. Please see the Flexibilities Available to Organizations Impacted by COVID-19 clause in Section IV of EPA's Solicitation Clauses.

NOTE: If you intend to name a contractor (including an individual consultant) or a subrecipient as a project partner or otherwise in your application, EPA recommends that you carefully review, and comply with, the directions contained in the "Contracts and Subawards" clause that can be accessed under the Section IV.E clause for "Additional Provisions for Applicants Incorporated Into the Solicitation."

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I. FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION

SUMMARY: This notice announces the availability of funds and solicits applications from eligible entities to serve as the Secretariat for the International Network for Environmental Compliance and Enforcement (INECE). INECE promotes capacity building for compliance and enforcement of domestic and international environmental laws through information sharing, networking, and cooperation. INECE is not part of the United States Government. INECE is comprised of regional environmental enforcement and compliance assurance networks, practitioners from governmental agencies, international organizations, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and academia across the globe and is dedicated to promoting cooperation among these stakeholders on environmental compliance and enforcement.

A. Background

The Office of Enforcement and Compliance Assurance (OECA) at the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is requesting applications for a cooperative agreement in support of the International Network of Environmental Compliance and Enforcement (INECE). INECE (www.inece.org) is an informal international partnership founded in 1989 promoting capacity building for compliance and enforcement of domestic and international environmental laws through information sharing, networking, and cooperation. INECE is not part of the United States Government. Currently, INECE is not a legal entity. Comprised of regional environmental enforcement and compliance assurance networks, practitioners from governmental agencies, international organizations, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and academia, INECE is dedicated to promoting cooperation among these stakeholders on environmental compliance and enforcement. Officials from customs, law enforcement, non-governmental organizations, intergovernmental organizations, academia, and the private sector can also participate.

Both financial and in-kind support may be provided by governments and other stakeholders from around the world. INECE is the only global entity focused exclusively on capacity building for environmental enforcement and compliance assurance.

INECE's primary goal is to build global capacity for environmental enforcement and compliance assurance by providing a platform to bring regional networks, practitioners, and other stakeholders together to share information and expertise and build on existing best practices... The network will support capacity building, through information exchanges and networking. INECE does this through:

1. Serving as a knowledge and innovation center for environmental compliance and enforcement issues;
2. Raising awareness of the importance of environmental compliance and enforcement;
3. Collaborating with existing global and regional networks focused on environmental compliance and enforcement activities;

4. Providing participants with opportunities to collaborate; and
5. Responding to participants' needs and interests.

The INECE Secretariat provides strategic direction, technical, managerial, administrative, and communications support for INECE and develops and implements a Strategic Plan and Annual Work Plans in coordination with the Executive Committee. The Secretariat coordinates financial and in-kind support from INECE partners and ensures that INECE participants communicate effectively on cooperative compliance and enforcement activities.

INECE is guided by an Executive Committee (EC) currently co-chaired by EPA's OECA and the INECE Secretariat. Additional co-chairs are possible. Participation and engagement are focused on regional enforcement networks but include other interested groups, officials, and individuals. International organizations such as the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) participate in INECE as part of their capacity building programs and in support of their mission. Other governments, intergovernmental organizations, and NGOs are active in providing expertise and networking to leverage assistance for their enforcement programs.

INECE also engages with regional environmental enforcement networks worldwide that operate independently from, but in close cooperation with the INECE Secretariat. Representatives from regional networks together with selected government officials participate in INECE quarterly meetings to inform EC decisions, implement and guide INECE projects, and conduct their own activities in response to the needs of their regions or country.

EPA is seeking proposals from U.S. Territories and possessions, State, Local (includes State-designated Indian Tribes, excludes institutions of higher education and hospitals, Public nonprofit institution/organization (includes institutions of higher education and hospitals), Federally Recognized Indian Tribal Governments, U.S. Territories and possessions (includes institutions of higher education and hospitals), Non-Government - General, Minority group, Specialized group (e.g. health professionals, students, veterans), Private nonprofit institution/organization (includes institutions of higher education and hospitals), Quasi-public nonprofit institution/organization, Native American Organizations (includes lndian groups, cooperatives, corporations, partnerships, associations), who are interested and able to serve as the Secretariat for INECE. For-profit organizations and individuals are not eligible recipients under this funding opportunity.

B. Scope of Work

The list below suggests the types of activities and initiatives that may be supported under this cooperative agreement. This is not intended to be a complete list, nor is it meant to suggest that the INECE Secretariat will have interest and involvement in all listed areas at any particular time, although certain core topics may remain of ongoing critical concern. It is expected that the INECE Executive Committee and other stakeholders will identify and prioritize areas for Secretariat completion, including newly emerging issues that may

not be included in this preliminary listing.
The elements in the list below are considered to be critical to the successful establishment and functioning of the INECE Secretariat and all elements should be addressed in proposals. It is hoped that underpinnings for elements that are critical to basic program success will be established within the first one year period of performance under this cooperative agreement. However, exercises involving framing, evaluation and prioritization of project elements are expected to be an ongoing part of Secretariat business. Applicants may identify additional project elements that may not be included in this list but that may contribute to overall program success in their proposals. In addition, applicants should articulate their approach to making the Secretariat self-sustaining through other sources of funding or contributions from partners.

1. Serve as INECE Secretariat. The recipient will support the INECE Executive Committee (EC) regional networks and other participants by organizing and facilitating virtual meetings at least quarterly), developing and preparing meeting agendas, inviting and coordinating participants, coordinating meetings, and reporting on outcomes including minutes and key decisions. They will help design and implement the INECE Strategic Plan and Annual Work Plans in cooperation with the Executive Committee and regional networks. They will also design, produce, collect and/or distribute promotional materials, presentations, academic papers, proceedings, newsletters, press releases, and other material to help promote the INECE goals. The recipient will propose options for a governance structure to the EC within the first year of award to be approved by the EC.

2. **Strengthen capacity for environmental governance, compliance and enforcement.** This cooperative agreement will support on-going capacity building for other countries to bolster the effective enforcement their domestic environmental laws. Such capacity building can be supported through regular engagement of the regional networks and participants through meetings, information exchanges, access to resources (website, webinars, online training, etc.). In some cases, the recipient will independently find experts either within their own organization or outside experts to support the development and delivery of the content. At other times, the recipient will work with EPA experts or other outside experts as a delivery partner. In those cases, the recipient may choose to utilize expert facilitators from EPA for the course deliveries and the recipient, with appropriate permissions, may use some or all material that EPA has already developed.

Capacity building efforts should be focused on no more than two strategic focus areas at a time, chosen in coordination with the Executive Committee and in response to participants needs. The Secretariat should coordinate the development and implementation of 12-18 month strategies (that can be extended as needed) to build capacity through information sharing (webinars, compliance dialogues, virtual convenings, forums, website content dedicated to the topic including articles, events, training), collaboration (partnering on implementation in the focus area such as policy development, joint investigations, etc.). Strategies should include problem statement/goals, measures, specific activities and projects, timelines, roles, and responsibilities.

2. Update and maintain INECE website. The recipient will take over the existing INECE website at www.inece.org and associated social media pages and will be responsible for adding new material the recipient believes is appropriate, relevant to INECE priorities and activities. They should keep the existing material current, ensure its continual accessibility, and integrate new technological features as they become available as the recipient determines best serves the needs of the international enforcement community. The recipient will be responsible for ensuring the transfer of all web content to EPA at the end of the award period.

3. Support regional and topical networks, practice groups, and working groups. A central goal of the INECE partnership is to support interlocking country, regional and global, and topical peer support networks, practice groups, and working groups. INECE has successfully fostered networks within several regions, particularly Europe, East Africa, Asia, Australia/New Zealand and Central and South America, some of which are thriving independently, and others that need improvement and continued support. Under this opportunity, EPA expects to support efforts to organize regular communications among regional and topical networks and exchange of work-programs and results of cooperation and exchange, strengthening existing networks and establishing new ones where they do not currently exist.

C. Implementation of the program

This program is to be implemented in close collaboration with EPA. EPA, through its already established contacts with the INECE Executive Committee and regional networks, will work with the recipient in establishing or strengthening relationships/network with/of stakeholders, and ensure that these stakeholders are appropriately involved in the activities under this program. The Secretariat, in conjunction with EPA, shall make the final decision on which stakeholders are involved in the activities under this program. These stakeholders could include ministries of environment, justice, health, transportation, education and energy; universities; international organizations such as the Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD); financial international organizations such as the Inter-American Development Bank and World Bank; Non-Government Organizations; other donors; and the private sector.

D. EPA Strategic Plan Linkage, Anticipated Outputs/Outcomes and Performance Measures

Pursuant to Section 6.a. of EPA Order 5700.7A1, "Environmental Results under EPA Assistance Agreements," EPA must link proposed assistance agreements with the Agency's Strategic Plan. EPA also requires that grant applicants and recipients adequately describe environmental outputs and outcomes to be achieved under assistance agreements (see EPA Order 5700.7A1, Environmental Results under Assistance Agreements).

1. **Linkage to EPA Strategic Plan:** The activities to be funded under this announcement support EPA's Fiscal Year (FY) 2022-2026 Strategic Plan. Awards made under this announcement will support both objectives under Goal 3, "Enforce Environmental Laws and Ensure Compliance," and may also support other strategic goals as appropriate. Applications must be for projects that support this goal. For more information see: EPA's FY 2022-202 Strategic Plan.

   EPA also **requires that grant applicants adequately describe environmental outputs and outcomes to be achieved under assistance agreements** (see EPA Order 5700.7A1, Environmental Results under Assistance Agreements). Applicants must include specific statements describing the environmental results of the proposed project in terms of well- defined outputs and, to the maximum extent practicable, well-defined outcomes that will demonstrate how the project will contribute to the priorities described above.

2. **Outputs:** The term "output" means an environmental activity, effort, and/or associated work product related to an environmental goal and objective that will be produced or provided over a period of time or by a specified date. Outputs may be quantitative or qualitative but must be measurable during an assistance agreement funding period.

   Expected outputs from the projects to be funded under this announcement include, but are not limited to:

   1) Number of INECE developed or hosted capacity building (information sharing and networking) events such as webinars, compliance dialogues, etc.

   2) Number of enforcement and compliance assurance activities resulting from an INECE capacity building effort (e.g. assistance, monitoring, inspections, training, enforcement actions, etc.) ,number of people attending, receiving assistance, training, communications, etc.;

   3) Number of countries developing/amending/enforcing environmental policies including but not limited to: drinking water, wastewater management, solid waste, management, and air pollution management. This can also be expressed qualitatively;

   4) Number of internet users measured by hits, followers on social media, pages visited, diversity of user's countries, etc.; and

   5) Participation in regional and topical networks, practice groups, or work groups (e.g. number of participants and/or countries or networks).

Progress reports and a final report will also be required outputs, as specified in Section VI.C. "Reporting Requirement," of this RFA.

3. **Outcomes:** The term "outcome" means the result, effect, or consequence that will occur from carrying out an environmental program or activity that is related to an environmental or programmatic goal or objective. Outcomes may be environmental, behavioral, health-related or programmatic in nature, but must also be quantitative. They may not necessarily be achievable within an assistance agreement funding period.

   Expected outcomes from the projects to be funded under this announcement may include, but are not limited to:

   1) Reductions in pollution, pollution prevented, or related improvements to human health and the environment from enforcement and compliance assurance activities;

   2) Increased technical capacity to investigate and prosecute environmental violations;

   3) Enhanced environmental governance, compliance promotion and enforcement (e.g. increase awareness, policy development, update and/or implementation of regulations, behavioral change) in the areas of: drinking water, wastewater management, solid waste management, and air pollution management, or crosscutting issues such as environmental justice and climate change adaptation or mitigation;

   4) Improved capacity in case preparation and review and/or prosecution;

   5) Increased capacity within regulatory institutions for environmental enforcement and compliance assurance;

   6) Enhanced compliance monitoring capabilities; and

   7) Increased public awareness in environmental compliance and enforcement.

4. **Performance Measures.** The applicant should also develop performance measures they expect to achieve through the proposed activities and describe them in their application. These performance measures will help gather insights and will be the mechanism to track progress concerning successful processes and output and outcome strategies and will provide the basis for developing lessons to inform future recipients. Additional details on reporting requirements are included in Section VI.C. It is expected that the description of performance measures will directly relate to the project outcomes and outputs. The description of the performance measures will directly relate to the project's outcomes and outputs, including but not limited to:
   a. Tracking and reporting project progress on expenditures and purchases;
   b. Tracking, measuring, and reporting accomplishments and proposed timelines/milestones; and

c. Overseeing subrecipients, and/or contractors and vendors.

The following are questions to consider when developing output and outcome measures of quantitative and qualitative results:

d. What are the measurable short term and longer term results the project will achieve?

e. How does the plan measure progress in achieving the expected results (including outputs and outcomes) and how will the approach use resources effectively and efficiently?

E. Statutory Authority

EPA expects to award this grant under the Clean Water Act, Section 104, 33 U.S.C. 1254; Solid Waste Disposal Act, Section 8001, 42 U.S.C. 6981; Clean Air Act, Section 103, 42 U.S.C. 7403; Toxic Substances Control Act, Section 10, 15 U.S.C. 2609; Safe Drinking Water Act, Section 1442 (a) and (c), 42 U.S.C. 300j-1 (a)(1), in conjunction with NEPA 102(2)(F).

F. Additional Provisions For Applicants Incorporated Into The Solicitation

Additional provisions that apply to sections III, IV, V, and VI of this solicitation and/or awards made under this solicitation, can be found at EPA Solicitation Clauses. These provisions are important for applying to this solicitation and applicants must review them when preparing applications for this solicitation. If you are unable to access these provisions electronically at the website above, please contact the EPA point of contact listed in this solicitation (usually in Section VII) to obtain the provisions**.**

II. AWARD INFORMATION

A. What is the amount of funding available?

The total estimated funding expected to be available for awards under this competitive opportunity is up to $350,000. Annual award amounts are expected to range from $25,000 to $50,000. Funding is dependent upon agency appropriations, funding availability, agency priorities, and other applicable considerations.

The amount of federal funding requested by an applicant must not exceed $350,000.

B. Partial Funding

In appropriate circumstances, EPA reserves the right to partially fund applications by funding discrete portions of proposed projects. If EPA decides to partially fund an application, it will do so in a manner that does not prejudice any applicants or affect the basis upon which the application was evaluated and selected for award, thereby maintaining the integrity of the competition and selection process.

C. How many agreements will EPA award in this competition?

EPA anticipates awarding a total of up to $350,000 to one cooperative agreement under this announcement, subject to the availability of funds, the quantity and quality of applications received, agency priorities, and other applicable considerations.

EPA reserves the right to make additional awards under this announcement, consistent with Agency policy and other applicable considerations, if additional funding becomes available after the original selections. Any additional selections for awards will be made no later than six months from the date of the original selections.

In addition, EPA reserves the right to reject all applications and make no awards under this announcement or to make fewer awards than anticipated.

D. What is the project period for awards resulting from this solicitation?

The estimated project period for awards resulting from this solicitation is expected to begin on March 30, 2023, with an estimated completion date of March 29, 2028

E. Funding Type

The funding for selected projects will be in the form of a cooperative agreement.

Cooperative agreements provide for substantial involvement between the EPA project officer and the selected applicant in the performance of the work supported. Although EPA will negotiate precise terms and conditions relating to substantial involvement as part of the award process, the anticipated substantial federal involvement for these projects may include:

- Close monitoring of the successful applicant's performance to verify the results proposed by the applicant;
- Collaboration during performance of the scope of work;
- EPA prior review or approval of project phases or the substantive provisions of proposed contracts found within the scope of the cooperative agreement;
- Approving qualifications of key personnel (EPA will not select employees or contractors employed by the award recipient); and
- Review and comment on reports prepared under the cooperative agreement (the final decision on the content of reports rests with the recipient).

EPA does not have the authority to select employees or contractors employed by the recipient. The final decision on the content of reports rests with the recipient.

III. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

Note: Additional provisions that apply to this section can be found at EPA Solicitation Clauses.

A. Eligible Entities

In accordance with Assistance Listing 66.313, applications will be accepted from states (including the District of Columbia); local governments; U.S. territories and possessions; Indian tribes; Federally Recognized Indian Tribal Governments; international organizations; public and private universities and colleges, hospitals, and laboratories; and other public or private non-profit institutions.

Consistent with the definition of Nonprofit organization at 2 CFR § 200.1, the term nonprofit organization means any corporation, trust, association, cooperative, or other organization that is operated mainly for scientific, educational, service, charitable, or similar purpose in the public interest and is not organized primarily for profit; and uses net proceeds to maintain, improve, or expand the operation of the organization. The term includes tax-exempt nonprofit neighborhood and labor organizations. Note that 2 CFR 200.1 specifically excludes Institutions of Higher Education from the definition of non-profit organization because they are separately defined in the regulation. While not considered to be a nonprofit organization(s) as defined by 2 CFR 200.1, public or nonprofit Institutions of Higher Education are, nevertheless, eligible to submit applications under this RFA. Hospitals operated by state, tribal, or local governments or that meet the definition of nonprofit at 2 CFR 200.1 are also eligible to apply as nonprofits or as instrumentalities of the unit of government depending on the applicable law. For-profit colleges, universities, trade schools, and hospitals are ineligible.

Nonprofit organizations that are not exempt from taxation under section 501 of the Internal Revenue Code must submit other forms of documentation of nonprofit status; such as certificates of incorporation as nonprofit under state or tribal law. Nonprofit organizations exempt from taxation under section 501(c)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code that lobby are not eligible for EPA funding as provided in the Lobbying Disclosure Act, 2 U.S.C. 1611.

B. Voluntary Cost Sharing/Matching Funds and Leveraged Resources

No cost sharing/matching funds or leveraged resources are required as a condition of eligibility under this competition.

Although cost sharing/matching is not required as a condition of eligibility under this

competition, under Section V. of this announcement EPA will evaluate applications based on a leveraging criterion.

1. Voluntary Cost Sharing/Matching Funds

Voluntary cost sharing is when an applicant voluntarily proposes to legally commit to provide costs or contributions to support the project when a cost share is not required. Applicants who propose to use a voluntary cost share *must* include the costs or contributions for the voluntary cost share in the project budget on the SF-424 and SF-424A. If an applicant proposes a voluntary cost share, the following apply:

a. A voluntary cost share is subject to the applicable provisions of 2 CFR Part 200.306, *Cost sharing or matching*.
b. A voluntary cost share may only be met with eligible and allowable costs.
c. The recipient may not use other sources of federal funds to meet a voluntary cost share unless the statute authorizing the other federal funding provides that the federal funds may be used to meet a cost share requirement on a federal grant or cooperative agreement.

The recipient is legally obligated to meet any proposed voluntary cost share that is included in the approved project budget. If the proposed voluntary cost share does not materialize during the performance period of the grant or cooperative agreement, EPA may reconsider the legitimacy of the award and/or take other appropriate action as authorized by 2 CFR Part 200.

2. Leveraged Resources

Leveraged resources or "leveraging" is when an applicant provides additional resources to support or complement the proposed project which are above and beyond the EPA grant funds they are requesting. These resources do not need to be eligible or allowable costs under the program. Additionally, these resources should only be described in the applicant's project narrative and should not be included in the project budget on the SF-424 or SF-424A. If applicants propose to leverage funds, EPA expects them to secure the leveraged resources described in their applications. If the proposed leveraging does not materialize during the performance period of the grant or cooperative agreement, EPA may reconsider the legitimacy of the award and/or take other appropriate action authorized under 2 CFR Part 200.

C. Threshold Eligibility Criteria

These are requirements that if not met by the time of application submission, will result in elimination of the application from consideration for funding. Only applications from eligible applicants (see Section III.A. of this RFA) that meet all of these criteria will be evaluated against the ranking criteria in Section V. of this RFA. If necessary, EPA may contact applicants to clarify threshold eligibility questions prior to making an eligibility determination. Applicants deemed ineligible for funding

consideration due to the threshold eligibility review will be notified within 15 calendar days of the ineligibility determination.

1. Application Content and Submission
   a. Applications must substantially comply with the application submission instructions and application content requirements set forth in Section IV. and Appendices A and B or else they will be rejected.
   b. Applications must be submitted through Grants.gov as stated in Section IV.A. of this announcement (except in the limited circumstances where another mode of submission is specifically allowed for as explained in Section IV.) on or before the application submission deadline published in Section IV.D. of this announcement. Applicants are responsible for following the submission instructions in Section IV. of this announcement to ensure that their application is timely and properly submitted.

      Applications submitted after the submission deadline will be considered late and deemed ineligible without further consideration unless the applicant can clearly demonstrate that it was late due to EPA mishandling or because of technical problems associated with Grants.gov or relevant SAM.gov system issues. An applicant's failure to timely submit their application through Grants.gov because they did not timely or properly register in SAM.gov or Grants.gov will not be considered an acceptable reason to consider a late submission.

2. Applications must support Goal 3 "Enforce Environmental Laws and Ensure Compliance" of EPA's Strategic Plan described in Section I.C.1.

3. Applications which request EPA assistance funds in excess of $350,000 as specified in Section II.A of this RFA, are not eligible to be reviewed.

D. Ineligible Costs or Activities and Other Considerations

Any of the following may lead to a portion or all of the application not being reviewed:

1. **Ineligible Costs or Activities.** If an application is submitted that has ineligible items, tasks, or activities, that portion of the application will not be reviewed and will be ineligible for funding and may, depending on the extent to which it affects the application, render the entire application ineligible for funding. Activities must meet the following requirements from Section I.C. to be eligible for funding:

   a. **Applications cannot include any costs that are included as a cost or used to meet cost sharing or matching requirements of any other federally financed grant, as required under 2 CFR 200.403(f). If these costs are included in an application, the activities associated with these costs will not be reviewed or selected for funding.**

2. **Other Considerations:**
   a. Where a page limit is expressed in Section IV.C. with respect to the project narrative, pages in excess of the page limitation will not be reviewed. The page limit of the project narrative is 15 pages.

   b. Applicants can submit no more than the total number of applications listed in Section I.B. If an applicant submits more applications than what is listed, EPA will contact the applicant to determine which application(s) to withdraw.

IV. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

Note: Additional provisions that apply to this section can be found at EPA Solicitation Clauses.

A. Requirement to Submit Through Grants.gov and Limited Exception Procedures

Applicants must apply electronically through Grants.gov under this funding opportunity based on the Grants.gov instructions in this announcement. If your organization has no access to the internet or access is very limited, you may request an exception for the remainder of this calendar year by following the procedures outlined here. Please note that your request must be received at least 15 calendar days before the application due date to allow enough time to negotiate alternative submission methods. Issues with submissions with respect to this opportunity only are addressed in section Appendix A. under *Technical Issues with Submission*.

B. Grants.gov Application Submission Instructions (see Appendix A)

Your organization's authorized official representative (AOR) must submit your complete application electronically to EPA through Grants.gov no later than **January 28, 2023**, **11:59 PM Eastern Time**.

See Appendix A for full Grants.gov submission instructions.

C. Content of Application Submission

The application package ***must*** include all of the following materials, except those listed under 3. Optional Attachments:

1. **Grant Application Forms** (All Required). Please complete the forms as appropriate.

   a. Standard Form 424, *Application for Federal Assistance*..
   b. Standard Form 424A, *Budget Information for Non-Construction Programs*
   c. EPA Form 4700-4, *Pre-Award Compliance Review Report for All*

Applicants Requesting Federal Financial Assistance

d. EPA Form 5700-54, *Key Contacts Form*
e. Project Narrative Attachment Form (See Section IV.C.2. below for additional information)
f. Biographical Sketch

2. **Project Narrative Attachment Form – see Appendix B.** Applicants must use the Project Narrative Attachment form in Grants.gov. The project narrative must explicitly describe how the proposed project meets the threshold eligibility criteria in Section III.C., the requirements in Section I, and address the evaluation criteria set forth in Section V.A. The project narrative cannot exceed a maximum of 15 single-spaced typewritten pages, including the summary page, workplan, and budget table and detail. Excess pages will not be reviewed. Supporting materials identified below can be submitted as attachments and are not included in the 15page limit. The project narrative must substantially comply with the specific instructions, format and content as defined in Appendix B.

3. **Optional Attachments**. These are optional and are not included in the 15 page limit. Use the Other Attachments form in Grants.gov.

   a. Biographical Sketch. Provide resumes or curriculum vitae for all Principal Investigators and any other key personnel.

D. Submission Date and Times

The closing date and time for submission of applications is **January 28, 2023**, **11:59 p.m., Eastern Time (ET)**. Applications submitted after the closing date and time will not be considered for funding.

V. APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

Note: Additional provisions that apply to this section can be found at EPA Solicitation Clauses.
Only eligible entities whose applications meet the threshold criteria in Section III.C. of this RFA will be evaluated according to the criteria set forth below. **Applicants should explicitly address these criteria as part of their application package submittal in the project narrative, following the content requirements set forth in Appendix B.** Each application will be rated using a point system. Applications will be evaluated based on a total of 100 points possible.

A. Evaluation Criteria

Criteria	Points
Total Possible Points	**100**
1. Project Summary and Approach: Under this criterion, EPA will evaluate applications based on the extent and quality of the applicant's project summary and overall approach. Specifically, EPA will evaluate the extent and quality of: **A. (15 points)** The overall proposed project, consistent with **Section I.B.**; and **B. (10 points)** How the proposed project will support or benefit the public or advance scientific knowledge and the relationship of the proposed project to the seriousness, extent, and urgency of the environmental problems toward which the project is directed. **C. (10 points)** How the application demonstrates the anticipated public benefits to be derived from the project and describe the degree to which the project can be expected to produce results that will have general application to capacity building to support enforcement of environmental laws.	**35**
2. Environmental Results – Outputs, Outcomes and Performance Measures: Under this criterion, EPA will evaluate: **A. (10 points)** The extent and quality to which the applicant identifies and proposes outputs and outcomes, as described in Section I.C.2. and 3. **B. (5 points)** The effectiveness of the applicant's plan for tracking and measuring its progress toward achieving the expected project outputs and outcomes, including those identified in Section I.C. of this announcement. **C. (5 points)** The reasonableness of the proposed timeline including key milestones for specific tasks and the likelihood of completion of the project's goals and objectives by project end.	**20**
3. Programmatic Capability and Past Performance: Under this criterion, EPA will evaluate applicants based on their ability to successfully complete and manage the proposed project considering their: **A. (5 points)** Past performance in successfully completing and managing the assistance agreements identified in the project narrative as described in Section IV.C of the announcement **B. (5 points)** History of meeting the reporting requirements under the assistance agreements identified in the project narrative as described in Section IV.C. of the announcement, including whether the applicant submitted acceptable final technical reports under those agreements and the extent to which the applicant adequately and timely reported on their	**20**

progress towards achieving the expected outputs and outcomes under those agreements and if such progress was not being made whether the applicant adequately reported why not; **C. (10 points)** Staff expertise and qualifications, staff knowledge, and resources or the ability to obtain them, to successfully achieve the goals of the proposed project. Note: In evaluating applicants under items A. and B. of this criterion, EPA will consider the information provided by the applicant and may also consider relevant information from other sources including agency files and prior/current grantors (e.g., to verify and/or supplement the information supplied by the applicant). If the applicant does not have any relevant or available past performance or reporting information, please indicate this in the application and you will receive a neutral score for sub-criteria A. and B. (a neutral score is half of the total points available in a subset of possible points). If the applicant does not provide any response for these items, you may receive a score of 0 for these sub-criteria.	
4. <u>Budget</u>: Under this criterion, EPA will evaluate applicants based on the extent and quality to which: **A. (5 points)** The proposed budget provides a detailed breakout by funding type in the proper budget category for each activity the applicant is requesting funding. **B. (10 points)** Costs are reasonable to accomplish the proposed goals, objectives, and measurable environmental outcomes; and **C. (5 points)** The applicants approach, procedures, and controls will ensure that awarded grant funds will be expended in a timely and efficient manner. An applicant's SF-424, SF-424A and budget detail must account for both federal funds and any non-federal funds (see Section III.B.). Applicants must precisely describe in their budget detail how they will account for any required or voluntary cost share/match, if applicable. Leveraged resources should not be included in the budget forms but should be discussed in the narrative portion of the budget detail; see Appendix B.	**20**
5. <u>Leveraging</u>: Under this criterion, EPA will evaluate applicants based on the extent they demonstrate that they will leverage additional funds/ resources, beyond the grant funds awarded, to support the proposed project activities, specifically networking conferences) and how these funds/resources will be used to contribute to the performance and success of the proposed project. This includes but is not limited to funds and other resources leveraged from businesses, labor organizations, non-profit organizations, education and training providers, and/or Federal, state, tribal, and local governments, as appropriate. Applicants will also be evaluated based on the amount and type of leveraged resources to be provided, how they will obtain the leveraged resources, the likelihood the leveraging will materialize during grant performance, the strength of the leveraging commitment, and the role the leveraged funds/resources will play to support the proposed project activities. Selected applicants are expected to abide by their proposed leveraging commitments during grant performance and the failure to do so may affect the legitimacy of the award.	**5**

B. Review and Selection Process

Applications will first be evaluated against the threshold eligibility criteria listed in Section III.C. of this RFA. Only those applications which meet all of the threshold eligibility criteria will be evaluated using the evaluation criteria listed above by an EPA evaluation team. Each application will be given a numerical score and will be rank-ordered by the review panel. Preliminary funding recommendations will be provided to the EPA selection official based on these reviews and rankings. Final funding decisions will be made by the EPA headquarters selection official based on the rankings and preliminary recommendations of the EPA evaluation team and the other factors listed in Section V.C. below.

C. Other Factors

In making the final funding decisions, the selection official may also consider programmatic priorities and geographic diversity of funds. Once final decisions have been made, a funding recommendation will be developed and forwarded to the EPA award official.

VI. AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

Note: Additional provisions that apply to this section can be found at EPA Solicitation Clauses

A. Award Notices

Following evaluation of applications, all applicants will be notified regarding their status.

1. Successful Applicants: EPA anticipates notification to successful applicants will be made via electronic or postal mail within **60** days of the closing date of this RFA. The notification will be sent to the original signer of the application or the project contact listed in the application. This notification, which informs the applicant that its application has been selected and is being recommended forward is not an authorization to begin work. The official notification of an award will be made by the Grants & Interagency Management Division (GIAMD).

Applicants are cautioned that only a grants officer is authorized to bind the government to the expenditure of funds; selection does not guarantee an award will be made. For example, statutory authorization, funding or other issues discovered during the award process may affect the ability of EPA to make an award to the applicant. The award notice, signed by the EPA grants officer, is the authorizing document and will be provided through electronic or postal mail. The successful applicant may need to prepare and submit additional documents and forms (e.g. work plan), which must be approved by EPA, before the grant can officially be awarded. The time between notification of selection and award of a grant can take up to 90 days or longer.

2. **Unsuccessful Applicants**: EPA anticipates notification to unsuccessful applicant(s) will be made via electronic or postal mail within 60 days of the closing date of this RFA. The notification will be sent to the original signer of the SF-424, Application for Federal Assistance.

B. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

A listing and description of general EPA Regulations applicable to the award of assistance agreements may be viewed at: www.epa.gov/grants/policy-regulations-and-guidance-epa-grants.

C. Reporting Requirement

Quarterly progress reports and a detailed final report will be required. Quarterly reports summarizing technical progress including status on outputs and outcomes achieved, funds leveraged, planned activities for the next quarter and a detailed summary of expenditures are required. The final report shall be submitted to EPA within 120 calendar days of the completion of the period of performance. The final report must include: summary of the project or activity, advances achieved, final outputs and outcomes achieved, funds leveraged, and costs of all projects or activities completed. In addition, the final report shall discuss the problems, successes, and lessons learned from the project or activity that could help overcome structural, organizational or technical obstacles to implementing a similar project elsewhere. The schedule for submission of quarterly reports will be established by EPA, after the grants are awarded. Award recipients may be provided with additional information and guidance on reporting performance measures and project progress after award.

D. Disputes

Assistance agreement competition-related disputes will be resolved in accordance with the dispute resolution procedures published in 70 FR (Federal Register) 3629, 3630 (January 26, 2005) which can be found at Grant Competition Dispute Resolution Procedures. Copies of these procedures may also be requested by contacting the person listed in Section VII. of the announcement. Note that the Federal Register notice references regulations at 40 CFR Parts 30 and 31 that have been superseded by regulations in 2 CFR parts 200 and 1500. Notwithstanding the regulatory changes, the procedures for competition-related disputes remains unchanged from the procedures described at 70 FR 3629, 3630, as indicated in 2 CFR Part 1500, Subpart E.

VII. AGENCY CONTACTS

For further information, contact:

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
ATTN: Matthew Cookie
OECA/OC/MAMPD/CPS
WJC Building South, Room #6144G
1200 Pennsylvania Ave, NW
Washington, DC 20460
cooke.matthew@epa.gov

All questions or comments must be communicated in writing via postal mail or email to the contact person listed above. Questions and answers will be posted until the closing date of this announcement at the OGD Grants/Funding webpage: https://www.epa.gov/grants/specific-epa-grant-programs.

APPENDIX A – Grants.gov Application Submission Instructions

1. SAM.gov (System for Award Management) Registration Instructions

Organizations applying to this funding opportunity must have an active SAM.gov registration. If you have never done business with the Federal Government, you will need to register your organization in SAM.gov. If you do not have a SAM.gov account, then you will create an account using login.gov to complete your SAM.gov registration. SAM.gov registration is FREE. The process for entity registrations includes obtaining Unique Entity ID (UEI), a 12-character alphanumeric ID assigned an entity by SAM.gov, and requires assertions, representations and certifications, and other information about your organization. Please review the Entity Registration Checklist for details on this process.

If you have done business with the Federal Government previously, you can check your entity status using your government issued UEI to determine if your registration is active. SAM.gov requires you renew your registration every 365 days to keep it active.

Please note that SAM.gov registration is different than obtaining a UEI only. Obtaining an UEI only validates your organization's legal business name and address. Please review the Frequently Asked Question on the difference for additional details.

Organizations should ensure that their SAM.gov registration includes a current e-Business (EBiz) point of contact name and email address. The EBiz point of contact is critical for Grants.gov Registration and system functionality.

Contact the Federal Service Desk for help with your SAM.gov account, to resolve technical issues or chat with a help desk agent: (866) 606-8220. The Federal Service desk hours of operation are Monday - Friday 8am - 8pm ET.

2. Grants.gov Registration Instructions

Once your SAM.gov account is active, you must register in Grants.gov. Grants.gov will electronically receive your organization information, such as e-Business (EBiz) point of contact email address and UEI. Organizations applying to this funding opportunity must have an active Grants.gov registration. Grants.gov registration is FREE. If you have never applied for a federal grant before, please review the Grants.gov Applicant Registration instructions. As part of the Grants.gov registration process, the EBiz point of contact is the only person that can affiliate and assign applicant roles to members of an organization. In addition, at least one person must be assigned as an Authorized Organization Representative (AOR). Only person(s) with the AOR role can submit applications in Grants.gov. Please review the Intro to Grants.gov-Understanding User Roles and Learning Workspace - User Roles and Workspace Actions for details on this important process.

Please note that this process can take a month or more for new registrants. Applicants must ensure that all registration requirements are met in order to apply for this opportunity through Grants.gov and should ensure that all such requirements have been met well in advance of the application submission deadline.

Contact Grants.gov for assistance at 1-800-518-4726 or support@grants.gov to resolve technical issues with Grants.gov. Applicants who are outside the U.S. at the time of submittal and are not able to access the toll-free number may reach a Grants.gov representative by calling 606-545-5035. The Grants.gov Support Center is available 24 hours a day 7 days a week, excluding federal holidays.

3. Application Submission Process
To begin the application process under this grant announcement, go to Grants.gov and click the red "Apply" button at the top of the view grant opportunity page associated with this opportunity.

The electronic submission of your application to this funding opportunity must be made by an official representative of your organization who is registered with Grants.gov and is authorized to sign applications for Federal financial assistance. If the submit button is grayed out, it may be because you do not have the appropriate role to submit in your organization. Contact your organization's EBiz point of contact or contact Grants.gov for assistance at 1-800-518-4726 or support@grants.gov

Applicants need to ensure that the Authorized Organization Representative (AOR) who submits the application through Grants.gov and whose UEI is listed on the application is an AOR for the applicant listed on the application. Additionally, the UEI listed on the application must be registered to the applicant organization's SAM.gov account. If not, the application may be deemed ineligible.

4. Application Submission Deadline
Your organization's AOR must submit your complete application package electronically to EPA through Grants.gov no later than January 28, 2023 at 11:59 PM ET. Please allow for enough time to successfully submit your application and allow for unexpected errors that may require you to resubmit.

Applications submitted through Grants.gov will be time and date stamped electronically. Please note that successful submission of your application through Grants.gov does not necessarily mean your application is eligible for award. Any application submitted after the application deadline time and date deadline will be deemed ineligible and not be considered.

c. Technical Issues with Submission
If applicants experience technical issues during the submission of an application that they are unable to resolve, follow these procedures **before** the application deadline date:

1. Contact Grants.gov Support Center **before** the application deadline date.

2. Document the Grants.gov ticket/case number.

3.Send an email with the 66.313 in the subject line to cooke.matthew@epa.gov **before** the application deadline time and date and **must** include the following:
a. Grants.gov ticket/case number(s)
b. Description of the issue

c. The entire application package in PDF format.
Without this information, EPA may not be able to consider applications submitted outside of Grants.gov. Any application submitted after the application deadline time and date deadline will be deemed ineligible and **not** be considered.

Please note that successful submission through Grants.gov or email does not necessarily mean your application is eligible for award.

EPA will make decisions concerning acceptance of each application submitted outside of Grants.gov on a case-by-case basis. EPA will only consider accepting applications that were unable to submit through Grants.gov due to Grants.gov or relevant SAM.gov system issues or for unforeseen exigent circumstances, such as extreme weather interfering with internet access. Failure of an applicant to submit prior to the application submission deadline date because they did not properly or timely register in SAM.gov or Grants.gov is not an acceptable reason to justify acceptance of an application outside of Grants.gov.

d. Application Materials

The following forms and documents are required under this announcement:

Mandatory Documents:

1. Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424)
2. Budget Information for Non-Construction Programs (SF-424A)
3. EPA Key Contacts Form 5700-54
4. EPA Form 4700-4 Preaward Compliance Review Report
5. Project Narrative Attachment Form: Use this to submit your Project Narrative, prepared as described in Appendix B.

Optional Documents:

6. Other Attachments Form: Use this to submit other attachments, if applicable

APPENDIX B – Project Narrative Instructions, Format, and Content

Instructions: The project narrative must substantially comply with the instructions, format, and content described below. It must also address the evaluation criteria in Section V.A. of the RFA. The project narrative, including the cover page, workplan, and budget table and detail, must not exceed a maximum of 15 single-spaced typewritten pages. Pages in excess of the 15-page limit will not be reviewed.

Supporting materials, such as project team biographies, partnership letters, and negotiated indirect cost rate agreements can be submitted as attachments and are not included in the 15-page limit. Supporting materials should also be submitted using the Optional Attachments form.

Applicants should ensure that their project narratives are written clearly using understandable terms. Doing so will help ensure that the evaluation team members understand the purpose, outputs, and outcomes of the proposed project.

Applicants are not required, but are highly encouraged, to use the project narrative, including cover page, format below.

I. Cover Page:

The cover page should not exceed one page. The cover page should include the following information:

- **Project Title** – one descriptive sentence only
- **Project Location**: List the primary location(s) where the benefits of the project will be realized.
- **Applicant Information**
  - Applicant organization
  - Address
  - Primary contact name, phone number, and e-mail address
  - UEI number
- **Budget Summary:** Include the following table:

EPA Funding Requested	Voluntary Cost Share, if Applicable	Total Project Cost
TBD	TBD	TBD

  As noted in Section II.A. of the RFA, while each application can request up to the full funding amount of $350,000 the total amount of requested funding needs to be commensurate with the applicant's proposed activities.
- **Project Period:** Provide beginning and ending dates.
- **Short Project Description:** Briefly describe your project in one to three sentences only, especially noting the expected outputs and outcomes.

II. Workplan:

Applicants must ensure that the workplan addresses the evaluation criteria in Section V.A. of the RFA. Applicants should use the section and subsection numbers and headings below which correspond with the evaluation criteria in Section V.A. of the RFA. The workplan should be written clearly using understandable terms.

Section 1- Project Summary and Approach (35 total possible points from Section V.A. of the RFA)

This section should contain a detailed project description of the following information:

a. Overall Project (15 possible points)

Provide a detailed project summary and description of the proposed activities to be undertaken, consistent with Section I.B. (Scope of Work) of the RFA. Include details of every activity for which the applicant is seeking funding. This section should include details about how the activities will meet the goal of the program.

Applications should only include information in Section 1.a. of their workplan that will not be covered by another section of their workplan.

b. Project Significance (10 possible points)

Describe the extent of the environmental problem the proposed project will address. Provide details of how the proposed project will address these problems.

c. Anticipated Public Benefits (10 possible points)

Qualitatively describe the anticipated public benefits from the proposed project. Note that the expected outputs and outcomes will be included in Section 2 – Environmental Results.

Section 2 - Environmental Results—Outcomes, Outputs and Performance Measures (20 total possible points from Section V.A. of the RFA)

a. Expected Project Outputs and Outcomes (10 possible points)

Identify the expected quantitative and qualitative outcomes and outputs of the project as defined in Section I.D. of the RFA. Specific outputs and outcomes should be provided and may include short- and longer-term activities. In addition to a narrative discussion of the outputs and outcomes, the applicant is encouraged to include a table such as the following:

Example of Outputs and Outcome Table

Anticipated Outputs and Outcomes	
Outputs	***Outcomes***

b. Performance Measures and Plan (5 possible points)

Applicants should describe the proposed performance measures, which will be the mechanism to track, measure, and report progress towards achieving the expected outputs and outcomes. Applicants should describe their plan for tracking and measuring progress

toward achieving the expected project outputs and outcomes and how the results of the project will be evaluated, as described in Section I.D. of the RFA and Section.3.a. of this appendix.

c. Timeline and Milestones (5 possible points)

The applicant should include a detailed timeline for the project including milestones for specific tasks, such as bidding, procurement, installation, and reports, along with estimated dates. Applicant should include scheduled time for quarterly and final report preparation into the project timeline.

Section 3- Programmatic Capability and Past Performance (20 total possible points from Section V.A. of the RFA)

a. Past Performance (5 possible points)

Submit a list of up to three federally-funded assistance agreements that the applicant is performing or has performed within the last three years. Assistance agreements include federal grants and cooperative agreements but not federal contracts. EPA assistance agreements are preferred. These assistance agreements should be awards directly to the applicant. For each of the agreements, include:

- Project title
- Assistance agreement number
- Federal funding agency and assistance listing number (formally known as the CFDA number)
- Brief description of the agreement – no more than two sentences

Include a discussion of whether, and if so how, the applicant was able to successfully complete and manage the listed agreements.

b. Reporting Requirements (5 possible points)

For each of the assistance agreements listed, the applicant should describe their history of meeting the reporting requirements under the agreement(s). This should include: whether the applicant submitted acceptable final reports under those agreements; the extent to which the applicant adequately and timely reported on its progress towards achieving the expected outputs and outcomes under those agreements and if progress was not being made, whether the applicant adequately reported why not.

Note: In evaluating applicants under the past performance factors in Section V of the RFA, EPA will consider the information provided by the applicant and may also consider relevant information from other sources, including information from EPA files and from current/prior grantors (e.g., to verify and/or supplement the information provided by the applicant). If you do not have any relevant or available past performance or past reporting information, please indicate this in the application and you will receive a neutral score for these factors, which is half of the total points available for these sub-criteria in Section V.A. of the RFA. If the applicant does not provide any response for these items, a score of 0 for these factors may be received.

c. **Staff Expertise** (10 possible points)

Include information on the applicant's organization, including a description of the staff's knowledge, expertise, qualifications, and resources and/or the ability to obtain them, to successfully achieve the proposed project's goals. Biographical sketches, including resumes or curriculum vitae for key staff, managers and any other key personnel can be included as an optional project team biography attachment, as listed in Section IV.C.6. of the RFA; the optional attachment does not count towards the 15-page limit of the project narrative.

Section 5- Budget (20 total possible points from Section V.A. of the RFA)

This section of the project narrative is a detailed description of the budget found in the SF-424A and must include a discussion of the applicant's approach to ensuring proper management of grant/cooperative agreement funds, a detailed budget narrative, as well as the itemized budget table below. An applicant's budget table and budget narrative must account for both federal funds and any non-federal voluntary cost share, if applicable. Selected applicant(s) will need to submit a copy of their current indirect cost rate that has been negotiated with a federal cognizant agency prior to award. Additional guidance for developing the applicant's budget is available in RAIN-2019-G02, "Interim General Budget Development Guidance for Applicants and Recipients of EPA Financial Assistance."

Voluntary Cost Sharing/Matching Funds and Leveraged: Applicants should be aware that voluntary cost sharing/matching and leveraged resources are not required under this RFA and will not be evaluated. However, applicants may propose to provide voluntary cost share or leveraged resources. Applicants should be aware of the differences between proposed voluntary cost sharing/matching and leveraged resources as described under Section III.B. of the RFA.

Applicants who propose to use a voluntary cost share must include the costs or contributions for the voluntary cost share in the project budget on the SF-424, SF-424A, and budget detail described later in this section. If a proposed voluntary cost share is to be provided by a named third-party/parties and not the applicant, a Voluntary Cost Share Commitment Letter(s) must be attached to the application as described in Section IV.C. of the RFA, which does not count towards the 15-page project narrative page limit. The budget detail described under this section of this appendix must clearly specify the amount of federal funding and the cost share amount for each category of total project costs. The recipient is legally obligated to meet any proposed voluntary cost share that is included in the approved project budget.

If an applicant proposes to provide leveraged resources, such resources should not be included in the project budget on the SF-424 or SF-424A. Leveraged resources should only be described in the applicant's project narrative. The applicant should demonstrate how it will leverage additional funds/resources beyond the federal grant funds awarded to support the proposed project activities and how these funds/resources will be used to contribute to the performance and success of the proposed project. This includes but is not limited to funds and other resources leveraged from businesses, labor organizations, non-profit organizations, education and training

providers, and/or federal, state, tribal, and local governments, as appropriate.

If the proposed voluntary cost sharing/matching or leveraging does not materialize during grant performance, EPA may reconsider the legitimacy of the award and/or take other appropriate action authorized under 2 CFR Part 200.

a. Budget Detail (5 possible points)
Whether the proposed budget provides a detailed breakout by funding type included in the proper budget category for each activity requesting funds.

> Applicants should provide a detailed breakout by funding type included in the proper budget category for each activity requesting funds. Applicants should use the instructions, budget object class descriptions, and example table below to complete the detailed budget section of the project narrative. The budget detail and the budget table should be included in the project narrative and count towards the maximum 15-page limit. Additional budget documents, excluding the SF-424 and SF-424A forms, or project narratives pages in excess of the page limitation will not be reviewed, as listed in Section III.D. of the RFA. Applicants should include applicable rows of costs for each budget category in their budget table to accurately reflect the proposed project budget. Applicants must itemize costs related to personnel, fringe benefits, travel, equipment, installation or labor supplies, contractual costs, other direct costs (i.e., subawards, participant support costs), indirect costs, and total costs. If providing a voluntary cost share, the budget detail must clearly specify the amount of federal funding and the cost share amount for each category. For applicants proposing to implement a participant support cost or rebate program, the rebates are appropriately listed under the Other budget category as "Participant Support Costs." See Appendix C for more information on participant support costs and RAIN-2018-G05, "EPA Guidance on Participant Support Costs."
>
> - **Personnel - List all staff positions by title. Give annual salary, percentage of time assigned to the project, and total cost for the budget period.** This category includes only direct costs for the salaries of those individuals who will perform work directly for the project (paid employees of the applicant organization as reflected in payroll tax records). If the applicant organization is including staff time (in-kind services) as a cost-share, this should be included as Personnel costs. Personnel costs do not include: (1) costs for services of contractors (including individual consultants), which are included in the "Contractual" category; (2) costs for employees of subrecipients under subawards or non-employee program participants (e.g., interns or volunteers), which are included in the "Other" category; or (3) effort that is not directly in support of the proposed project, which may be covered by the organization's negotiated indirect cost rate. The budget detail must identify the personnel category type by Full Time Equivalent (FTE), including percentage of FTE for part-time employees, number of personnel proposed for each category, and the estimated funding amounts.
>
> - **Fringe Benefits - Identify the percentage used, the basis for its computation,**

and the types of benefits included. Fringe benefits are allowances and services provided by employers to their employees as compensation in addition to regular salaries and wages. Fringe benefits may include, but are not limited to the cost of leave, employee insurance, pensions and unemployment benefit plans. If the applicant's fringe rate does not include the cost of leave, and the applicant intends to charge leave to the agreement, it must provide supplemental information describing its proposed method(s) for determining and equitably distributing these costs.

- **Travel - Specify the mileage, per diem, estimated number of trips in-state and out-of-state, number of travelers, and other costs for each type of travel.** Travel may be: integral to the purpose of the proposed project (e.g., inspections); related to proposed project activities (e.g., attendance at meetings); or to a technical training or workshop that supports effective implementation of the project activities. Only include travel costs for employees in the travel category. Travel costs do not include: (1) costs for travel of contractors (including consultants), which are included in the "Contractual" category; (2) travel costs for employees of subrecipients under subawards and non-employee program participants (e.g., trainees), which are included in the "Other" category. Further, travel does not include bus rentals for group trips, which would be covered under the contractual category. Finally, if the applicant intends to use any funds for travel outside the United States, it must be specifically identified. All proposed foreign travel must be approved by EPA's Office of International and Tribal Affairs prior to being taken.

- **Equipment - Identify each item to be purchased which has an estimated acquisition cost of $5,000 or more per unit and a useful life of more than one year.** Equipment also includes accessories necessary to make the equipment operational. Equipment does not include: (1) equipment planned to be leased/rented, including lease/purchase agreement; or (2) equipment service or maintenance contracts that are not included in the purchase price for the equipment. These types of proposed costs should be included in the "Other" category. Items with a unit cost of less than $5,000 should be categorized as supplies, pursuant to 2 CFR 200.1, "Equipment." The budget detail must include an itemized listing of all equipment proposed under the project. If installation costs are included in the equipment costs, labor expenses shall be itemized with the detailed number of hours charged and the hourly wage. If the applicant has written procurement procedures that define a threshold for equipment costs that is lower than $5,000, then that threshold takes precedence.

- **Supplies - "Supplies" means all tangible personal property other than "equipment."** The budget detail should identify categories of supplies to be procured (e.g., laboratory supplies or office supplies). Non-tangible goods and services associated with supplies, such as printing service, photocopy services, and rental costs should be included in the "Other" category.

- **Contractual - Identify each proposed contract and specify its purpose and estimated cost.** Contractual services (including consultant services) are those

services to be carried out by an individual or organization, other than the applicant, in the form of a procurement relationship. EPA's Subaward Policy and supplemental Frequent Questions has detailed guidance available for differentiating between contractors and subrecipients. Leased or rented goods (equipment or supplies) should be included in the "Other" category. EPA does not require applicants to identify specific contractors. The applicant should list the proposed contract activities along with a brief description of the anticipated scope of work or services to be provided, proposed duration, and proposed procurement method (competitive or non-competitive), if known. Any proposed non-competed/sole-source contracts in excess of $3,500 must include a justification. Note that it is unlikely that EPA will accept proposed sole source contracts for goods and services (e.g., consulting) that are widely available in the commercial market. Refer to EPA's Best Practice Guide for Procuring Services, Supplies, and Equipment Under EPA Assistance Agreements for EPA's policies on competitive procurements and encouraging the use of small and disadvantaged business enterprises.

- **Other - List each item in sufficient detail for EPA to determine the reasonableness and allowability of its cost.** This category should include only those types of direct costs that do not fit in any of the other budget categories. Examples of costs that may be in this category are: insurance; rental/lease of equipment or supplies; equipment service or maintenance contracts; printing or photocopying; participant support costs such as non-employee training stipends and travel, subsidies or rebates for purchases of pollution control equipment (such as a specified amount of funding for residential woodstove changeouts or truck owners to purchase cleaner trucks); and subaward costs. Applicants should describe the items included in the "Other" category and include the estimated amount of participant support costs in a separate line item. Additional information about participant support costs is contained in RAIN-2018-G05, "EPA Guidance on Participant Support Costs."

  Subawards (e.g., subgrants) and participant support costs are a distinct type of cost under this category. The term "subaward" means an award of financial assistance (money or property) by any legal agreement made by the recipient to an eligible subrecipient even if the agreement is referred to as a contract. Rebates, subsidies, and similar one-time, lump-sum payments to program beneficiaries for purchase of eligible emission control technologies are considered participant support costs. Please refer to Appendix C for detailed guidance on funding projects and partnerships and how to correctly categorize these costs in the workplan budget. "Other" does not include procurement purchases, technical assistance in the form of services instead of money, or other assistance in the form of revenue sharing, loans, loan guarantees, interest subsidies, insurance, or direct appropriations. Subcontracts are not subawards and belong in the contractual category. Applicants must provide the aggregate amount they propose to issue as subaward work as a separate line item in the "Other" category, and a description of the types of activities to be supported. Refer to EPA's Subaward Policy and supplemental Frequent Questions for additional guidance.

- **Indirect Charges - If indirect charges are budgeted, indicate the approved rate and base.** Indirect costs are those incurred by the grantee for a common or joint purpose that benefit more than one cost objective or project and are not readily assignable to specific cost objectives or projects as a direct cost. Examples of Indirect Cost Rate calculations are shown below:
    - Personnel (Indirect Rate x Personnel = Indirect Costs)
    - Personnel and Fringe (Indirect Rate x Personnel & Fringe = Indirect Costs)
    - Total Direct Costs (Indirect Rate x Total direct costs = Indirect Costs)
    - Direct Costs, less distorting or other factors such as contracts and equipment (Indirect Rate x (total direct cost – distorting factors) = Indirect Costs)

  Additional indirect cost guidance is available in RAIN-2018-G02, "Indirect Cost Guidance for Recipients of EPA Assistance Agreements."

Example Budget Table (Required, part of the 15-page limit)

Line Item & Itemized Cost	EPA Funding[1]	Non-Federal Cost Share[2]
Personnel	-	-
(1) Project Manager @ $40/hr x 10 hrs/wk x 208 wks	$83,200	
(2) Project Staff @ $30/hr x 40 hrs/wk x 208 wks	$249,600	
TOTAL PERSONNEL	$332,800	
Fringe Benefits		
20% of Salary and Wages @ 20% x Total Personnel - Retirement, Health Benefits, FICA, SUI	$66,560	
TOTAL FRINGE BENEFITS	$66,560	
Travel		
Mileage for PM: 25 miles/wk @ $.17/mi x 208 wks	$884	
Mileage for Staff: 50 mi/wk @ $.17/mi x 208 wks	$1,768	
TOTAL TRAVEL	$2,652	
Equipment		
10 Electric Trucks and Charging Equipment Owned by the Applicant @ $360,000/unit	$3,600,000	
TOTAL EQUIPMENT	$3,600,000	
Supplies		
Outreach Materials and Supplies	$10,000	
TOTAL SUPPLIES	$10,000	

1 EPA Funding amount must be included on the SF-424 in Section 18.a and SF-424A in: cell 5(e) under Section A – Budget Summary; and Column (1) under Section B – Budget Categories.

2 Non-Federal Cost Share funding amount must be included on the SF-424 in Section 18.b-e and SF424A in: cell 5(f) under Section A – Budget Summary; columns (2) and (3) under Section B – Budget Categories; and Section C – Non-Federal Resources.

Line Item & Itemized Cost	EPA Funding[1]	Non-Federal Cost Share[2]
Contractual		
Charging Equipment Installation	$55,000	
TOTAL CONTRACTUAL	$55,000	
Other		
Subaward/subgrant to School District for 50% of 10 Electric Type C Buses @ $420,000/unit plus $32,000 in personnel costs	$2,100,000	$2,100,000
	$32,000	
Participant Support Costs/Rebates for 50% 100 Woodstove Changeouts ($4,400 per Pellet Stove @ 50% x 100)	$220,000	
TOTAL OTHER	$2,352,000	$2,100,000
Indirect Charges		
(Federal Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate = 20%)		
Federal Indirect Cost Rate x Personnel = Indirect Costs	$66,560	
TOTAL INDIRECT	$66,560	
TOTAL FUNDING	**$6,485,572**	**$2,100,000**
TOTAL PROJECT COST[3]		**$8,585,572**
Leveraged Resources[4] Rebate Program Participant's Share of Stoves ($4,400 per Pellet Stove @ 50% x 100)		$220,000

Note on Management Fees: When formulating budgets for applications, applicants must not include management fees or similar charges in excess of the direct costs and indirect costs at the rate approved by the applicant's cognizant federal audit agency, or at the rate provided for by the terms of the agreement negotiated with EPA. The term "management fees or similar charges" refers to expenses added to the direct costs in order to accumulate and reserve funds for ongoing business expenses, unforeseen liabilities, or for other similar costs that are not allowable under EPA assistance agreements. Management fees or similar charges cannot be used to improve or expand the project funded under this agreement, except to the extent authorized as a direct cost of carrying out the work plan**.**

b. Expenditure of Awarded Funds (5 possible points)

Applicants should provide a detailed written description of the applicant's approach, procedures, and controls for ensuring that awarded grant funds will be expended in a timely and efficient manner.

c. Reasonableness of Costs (5 possible points)

3 Total Project Cost must be included on the SF-424 in Section 18.g and SF-424A in: cell 5(g) under Section A – Budget Summary; and column (5), Row k under Section B – Budget Categories.

4 Other leveraged resources should be included in the Budget Detail if the applicant is proposing to implement a rebate program/participant support costs for equipment purchases. The program participant's share of the equipment that is not covered by the rebate is not part of the total project cost under the grant award; the program participant's share of the equipment that is not covered by the rebate is considered "other leveraged funds." Other Leveraged Resources should NOT be included in the SF-424 and SF-424A.

EPA will evaluate the reasonableness of the applicant's budget based on the applicant's narrative description of the budget and detailed breakout of requested funding for each work component or task. Provide a detailed description of every itemized cost, including how every cost relates to the project narrative and specific emission reduction activities. Instructions for what to include in the Budget Detail are described in Section 5.a. of this Appendix above.

Applicants must itemize the cost categories as listed below and the SF-424A form: personnel, fringe benefits, contractual costs, travel, equipment, supplies, contractional costs, other direct costs (subawards, participant support costs), indirect costs, and total costs. Round up to the nearest dollar and do not use any cents.

For applicants that provide a voluntary cost share/match or leveraged resources as described in Section III.B. of the RFA and Section 5 of this appendix, the budget narrative must include a detailed description of how the applicant will obtain the cost share and leveraged resources and how the cost share funding and leveraged resources will be used. Proposed voluntary cost share included in the budget detail must also be included on the SF-424 and SF-424A. Leveraged resources should not be included in the SF-424 or SF-424A.

Recipients may issue subawards, contracts, or participant support costs to implement projects. Please refer to Appendix C for detailed guidance on these funding options and how to correctly categorize these costs in the workplan budget.

Section 5 - Attachments (As listed in Section IV.C. of the RFA; this information does not count towards the project narrative 15-page limit):

Voluntary Cost Share Commitment Letter(s): If applicable, project partners who are providing in-kind or monetary assistance must demonstrate their specific commitment to meet the proposed cost share or leveraged funds. Letters should be addressed to the applicant organization and included as attachments to the application. Please do not ask partners to submit letters directly to EPA. This should be referenced under Section 6 of the workplan.

Project Team Biographies: Optional. Provide resumes or curriculum vitae for key staff, managers, and any other key personnel. If submitted, this should be referenced under Section 5.C. of the workplan.

Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement: Optional. The applicant will be required to submit this agreement if their application is selected for funding.

Partnership Letters: If applicable, letters of support that demonstrate strong, long-term involvement throughout the project from a variety of project partners are encouraged. Letters should specifically indicate how project partners and supporting organizations will participate in or directly assist in the design and performance of the project, or how obtaining support from project partners will allow the applicant to more effectively perform the project.

Letters should be addressed to the applicant organization and included as attachments to the application. Please do not ask partners to submit letters directly to EPA.