AGENCY: **ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY (EPA)**

TITLE: **Community-Scale Air Toxics Ambient Monitoring**

ACTION: **Request for Applications (RFA)**

RFA NUMBER: **EPA-OAR-OAQPS-20-05**

CATALOG OF FEDERAL DOMESTIC ASSISTANCE (CFDA) NO: 66.034

IMPORTANT DATES

February 13, 2020	RFA OPENS
May 1, 2020	RFA CLOSES – APPLICATIONS DUE
July 1, 2020	ANTICIPATED NOTIFICATION OF SELECTION
September 30, 2020	ANTICIPATED AWARD

The closing date and time for receipt of applications is **May 1, 2020, at 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time (ET)** in order to be considered for funding. Application packages must be submitted electronically to EPA through Grants.gov (www.grants.gov/) no later than **May 1, 2020, at 11:59 p.m. (ET)** in order to be considered for funding.

SUMMARY: This notice announces the availability of funds and solicits applications for proposals for projects designed to assist state, local, and tribal air agencies in identifying and characterizing air toxics, also known as hazardous air pollutants (HAPs), through work that falls into one of four categories. Those categories are: 1) characterizing the impacts of air toxics in a community (community-scale monitoring); 2) assessing impacts of toxics emissions from specific sources (near-source monitoring); 3) evaluating new and emerging testing methods for air toxics; and, 4) analyzing existing air toxics data and developing or enhancing analytical, modeling, and/or implementation tools. Air toxics of particular interest to EPA in this solicitation include ethylene oxide, chloroprene, benzene, 1,3-butadiene, and metals such as hexavalent chromium, nickel, and arsenic.

To allow for efficient management of the competitive process, EPA requests submittal of an informal notice of an Intent to Apply by March 4, 2020, to watkins.nealson@epa.gov. While submitting an Intent to Apply is optional, doing so will assist EPA in anticipating the total staff time required for efficient review, evaluation, and selection of submitted applications.

FUNDING/AWARDS: The total estimated funding for this competitive opportunity is approximately $5,000,000. EPA anticipates awarding approximately 10 to 20 assistance agreements from this announcement, subject to the availability of funds, the quality of applications received, and other applicable considerations.

WHO MAY APPLY:
Projects resulting from this competition will be awarded exclusively with State and Tribal Assistance Grant (STAG) funds. Therefore, the only entities eligible to submit applications under this announcement are air pollution control agencies, as defined by Section 302(b) of the Clean Air Act (CAA), that are also eligible to receive grants under Section 105 of the Clean Air Act. Under this competition, selected applicants may provide subawards to other entities, including to entities that are not eligible to submit an application under this competition, consistent with EPA's Subaward Policy (https://www.epa.gov/grants/grants-policy-issuance-gpi-16-01-epa-subaward-policy-epa-assistance-agreement-recipients).

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

A. Background

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is soliciting grant applications for the ambient monitoring of community-scale air toxics compounds as a key component of its overarching air toxics program. Stemming from the National Ambient Air Monitoring Strategy (http://www.epa.gov/ttn/amtic/monstratdoc.html) and the Agency's Urban Air Toxics Strategy (https://www.epa.gov/urban-air-toxics/integrated-urban-air-toxics-strategy), EPA is addressing a common set of needs on behalf of the ambient air monitoring community. The National Ambient Air Monitoring Strategy has provided a basic framework under which the air toxics program is integrated. The linkage to the national strategy is illustrated by two dominant principles. The first key principle is to have an appropriate balance between national measurements (i.e. trends) and the flexibility to address local issues that are not well handled through a national design, given the diversity of toxics issues across the nation. The balance between having a national network and more localized community monitoring assessments reflects adherence to this principle. The second key principle is establishing multiple measurements across numerous pollutant groups at common locations, recognizing the fact that most air pollution issues are well integrated (meaning there are multiple interactive factors and influences) from a scientific perspective, and economies of scale are realized from integrating program management efforts across pollutant groups and geographic locations.

Stemming from the strategies noted above, the EPA ambient air toxics monitoring program goals and objectives are to discern trends and account for program progress by measuring key air toxics in representative locations to provide a basic measure of air quality differences across cities and regions and over time in specific areas; support exposure assessments by providing ambient concentration levels for comparison with personal measurements; and provide basic grounding for models used for exposure assessments, control strategy assessments, and related assessments of program effectiveness. Currently, EPA supports these goals in the ambient monitoring arena by facilitating the National Air Toxics Trends Station (NATTS), supporting community-scale projects to assess conditions at the local level, and supporting existing state and local program monitoring. This request for application is the embodiment of supporting community-scale projects.

A primary objective of this solicitation is to identify and more accurately define the extent of local-scale HAP impacts. To aid in meeting this objective, EPA suggests consideration of the National Air Toxics Assessment (NATA), at least as a starting point, in planning and executing prospective projects. NATA (https://www.epa.gov/national-air-toxics-assessment) is a valuable screening tool for identifying those air toxics which are of greatest potential concern in a localized area. The assessment includes compiling a national emissions inventory of air toxics from outdoor sources, estimating population exposures across the contiguous United States, and characterizing potential cancer and noncancer risks to public health due to the inhalation of air toxics. A review of NATA can initially assist in the identification of particular pollutants that may be of interest in an area or community. Although NATA is not exhaustive in and of itself and would not be an exclusive tool for use in the grant proposal review process, it is a highly useful screening tool that can be used across all pollutant source categories. It can be used in a variety of approaches, either alone or leveraged in combination with multiple types and sources

of other data. For example, in an investigation of mobile sources, NATA may be best suited for use as an initial screen and, as feasible, could be supplemented by specific local indicators such as traffic intensity (e.g., motor vehicles per day, aircraft landings and takeoffs per year, etc.), proximity of receptors (e.g., residential areas, schools, etc.) to sources (e.g., major roads, airports, rail yards, etc.), and other similar relevant factors. EPA also finds merit in and encourages the additional use of other sources of toxics data, characterizations, and estimates of risk to support work carried out under this solicitation.

Finally, applicants can find additional information on the EPA ambient air toxics monitoring program efforts, including NATTS and information from prior community-scale air toxics ambient monitoring grant solicitations, on the Ambient Monitoring Technical Information Center (AMTIC) websitehttps://www3.epa.gov/ttn/amtic/airtoxpg.html. The link to the community-scale air toxics page is https://www.epa.gov/amtic/community-scale-air-toxics-ambient-monitoring-csatam.

B. Scope of Work

EPA is soliciting applications for projects designed to assist state, local, and tribal air agencies in identifying and characterizing air toxics, also known as hazardous air pollutants (HAPs), through work that falls into one of four categories. These categories are:

1) characterizing the impact of air toxics in a community (community-scale monitoring);
2) assessing impacts of toxics emissions from specific sources (near-source monitoring);
3) evaluating new and emerging testing methods for air toxics; and,
4) analyzing existing air toxics data and developing or enhancing analytical, modeling, or implementation tools.

Air toxics of particular interest to EPA in this solicitation include ethylene oxide, chloroprene, benzene, 1,3-butadiene, and metals such as hexavalent chromium, nickel, and arsenic.

To be considered for funding under this RFA, each application must address one of the four listed scope of work categories. Although applications could address issues pertaining to several scope of work categories, the application must identify only one category as its primary objective. An applicant may submit separate applications in more than one category. Applications that do not clearly identify one, single primary category will be rejected.

Applicants can positively impact their potential application score if they are able to engage communities in the planning and/or execution of their project. This could include the engagement or inclusion of community-based organizations, demonstrating community support for the proposed project, and building or supporting partnerships across multiple stakeholder groups. Further, the specific effort to address the needs and concerns of communities or populations that have faced or are facing environmental justice concerns can positively impact application scores. These communities or populations are those that have been adversely, disproportionately and/or historically impacted by environmental issues and problems than other communities because of race, color, national origin, or income, including tribal and indigenous communities. Factors potentially indicating disproportionate impacts to communities with environmental justice concerns include, but are not limited to: differential proximity and

exposure to environmental hazards; greater susceptibility to adverse effects from environmental hazards due to genetic predisposition, age, chronic medical conditions, lack of health care access, or poor nutrition; unique environmental exposures because of practices linked to cultural background or socioeconomic status (*e.g.*, subsistence fishing or farming); cumulative effects from multiple stressors; reduced ability to effectively participate in decision-making processes due to language barriers, inability to access traditional communication channels, or limited capacity to access technical and legal resources; and degraded physical infrastructure, such as poor housing, poorly maintained public buildings (*e.g.*, schools), or lack of access to transportation. Applicants should consider partnering with impacted communities in planning activities to ensure that communities are meaningfully involved in the proposed project.

1. **Community-Scale Monitoring**
   This category is intended to assist state, local and tribal agencies in assessing the degree and extent to which air toxics impact their respective communities. Successful applications will demonstrate a clear and compelling need or justification, examples of which may include, but are not limited to:

   a. Identifying and characterizing local HAP concentrations, either for a certain set of compounds or a more comprehensive assessment, that are unique to certain communities. Characterization could include identification of the presence or absence of a wide range of HAP compounds, temporal and spatial evaluations, gradient delineation across the area, among other concepts.

   b. Supporting health effects assessments. Air toxics ambient air monitoring data can, in some situations, provide a valuable database for health scientists to investigate the relationship between ambient air toxics concentrations and health impacts. While direct linkage to a health study is not a precondition for project selection, in some instances, opportunities may arise for health studies to be conducted in conjunction with such ambient monitoring efforts. If a linkage to an ongoing or upcoming health study exists, it would be beneficial for an applicant to highlight any such linkage.

   c. Developing an air quality data set to support estimates of community exposure and provide the baseline for long term measurement of progress related to a planned emissions reduction strategy program. An example could be the characterization of base concentration levels to inform the Residual Risk assessment process (https://www.epa.gov/fera/residual-risk-report-congress-1999) and provide a basis for measuring improvements for promulgated Residual Risk standards. This could also cover the evaluation of potentially increased exposure to air toxics from a new facility, expanded facility capacity, or other increase or change in local-scale air toxics emissions.

2. **Near-Source Monitoring**
   This category is intended to assist state, local, and tribal air agencies in assessing the degree and extent to which air toxics from specific sources impact the communities and areas in which they are situated. Examples efforts could be characterization of fence-line pollutant levels, concentration gradients, pollutant transport patterns, the assessment

of emissions reduction measures (e.g., accountability), and collecting data that could enhance the understanding of risk on nearby populations due to a source or sources. Examples of sources include transportation facilities, refineries, oil and gas facilities, chemical facilities, or other industrial or agricultural facilities and areas. Efforts to obtain information regarding substantially elevated ambient concentrations of toxics relevant to the source(s) being investigated, or pollutant profiles/source signatures would be highly valuable. These data could assist regulators in efforts to assess emissions, better understand and potentially assess the impact of emission reduction measures (i.e., accountability), and to characterize risk and its causes for the most highly impacted populations. Successful applications will demonstrate a clear and compelling need or justification, and projects in this category are required to identify a specific source, set of sources, or source sector. Several examples of near-source characterization efforts are, but are not limited to:

a. Conducting monitoring to delineate local scale HAP concentration gradients and characterizing concentration dependency on proximity to a target source or set of sources. An example could be focused on concentration gradients around transportation facilities (e.g., near roads, airports, sea ports, railyards, or other transportation facilities or corridors). While source specific gradient delineation may be a purpose unto itself, its usefulness is enhanced if it is in support of a larger purpose such as conducting an exposure assessment, or it has potential to support the assessment of nearby community impacts.

b. Measurements that are optimized for characterizing a specific source or set of sources in support of increasing the understanding of localized health effects assessments. Ambient air toxics monitoring data can in some situations provide a valuable database for health scientists to investigate the relationship of ambient toxic concentrations and health impacts. Although direct linkage to an ongoing health study is not a precondition for project selection, in some instances, opportunities may arise for health studies to be conducted in conjunction with such ambient monitoring efforts. However, if a linkage to an ongoing or upcoming health study exists, it is in the applicant's best interest to highlight any such linkage.

3. Evaluating New and Emerging Testing Methods for Air Toxics

This category is intended to assist state, local, and tribal agencies in evaluating emerging alternative sampling and analysis and/or monitoring methodologies that could be used in near-source and wide scale applications that are of potential applicability to their interests, as well as to regional and/or national issues. Successful applications will demonstrate a clear and compelling need or justification, examples of which may include, but are not limited to:

a. Assessing new methods for sampling and analysis of select priority HAPs (i.e., those that emerged as national or regional drivers as a result of the 2014 National Air Toxics Assessment [released in August 2018]). HAPs for which methods development work is most critical are those which (1) account for a significant contribution to risk, and (2) often have, (a) measurement limitations due to sensitivity being less than that needed to

confidently determine concentrations at the associated risk-based screening levels; (b) uncertainties exceeding commonly accepted data quality limits; or (c) onerous and/or unduly expensive sampling or analysis methodologies.

b. Evaluate available advanced speciated HAP monitoring technologies that can operate in an automated and continuous fashion and generate improved ambient air toxics measurement data as compared to standard ambient monitoring methods. The target result of such projects could be to ascertain the cost-effectiveness (i.e., practical value) of existing innovative monitors, samplers, sensors, or analytical methods in comparison to standard air toxic measurement methods. Improvements in measurement techniques may include the capability to generate higher time-resolution data, improved sensitivity or detection limits, greater cost-effectiveness, improved data quality (e.g., accuracy, precision) or more comprehensive air toxic speciation.

4. Analyzing Existing Air Toxics Data and Developing or Enhancing Analytical, Modeling, and/or Implementation Tools

This category is aimed at state, local and tribal air agencies that have already collected a significant amount of air toxics monitoring data and that need support to analyze and interpret their results via existing tools, by improving those tools, or by developing new tools. It is intended that the grant recipients working under this category will increase their knowledge of air toxics data analysis, thus empowering them to become more proficient with tools and procedures needed to conduct viable statistical and trends analysis which meet the needs of their agency. It is likewise intended that, where possible, the analysis may be useful to other state, local, or tribal agencies, and may become an integral part of EPA's national data analysis effort. Successful applications will demonstrate a clear and compelling need or justification, examples of which may include, but are not limited to:

a. Example objectives of a data analysis project could utilize data collected under pretenses consistent with those examples listed under the community-scale or near-source monitoring categories but have not been previously analyzed.

b. Data analysis project quantifying multi-year trends in HAP concentrations. Efforts could relate changes to trends in local emissions and contributions to potential transport of these pollutants. Analysis of monitoring data can be used as a measure of air program progress and accountability. Alternately, data analysis may help identify problem emissions sources that remain to be addressed. HAP sources can be identified using source apportionment techniques including meteorological analysis and receptor modeling.

c. Developing or improving air quality models used for exposure assessments. In this example, it is noted that air quality models utilize supporting observations to improve confidence in model results or to direct needed improvement in the underlying model formulations or related emission inventories. Efforts intended to support air quality model evaluation or improvements should include underlying data and associated metrics to that effect.

Any tools that are improved or developed under this program, and the associated analyzed data, shall be made available for other agencies to use for their data analysis needs. For this category, applicants should also attempt to address the following topics described below so that the relevance and potential utility of the data analysis with existing tools, or the development of new data analysis tools, can be assessed. When utilizing existing data for projects in this category, applicants should consider fulfilling the following:

1. Describing the of the origin of the data to be analyzed and the connection to and current project objectives (trends study, local scale screening or risk assessment, source characterization, source apportionment, etc.).

2. Provide details regarding the HAP data including, but not limited to:

a) Target analytes (what HAPs were measured) and the reason they were chosen (sources of concern, etc.).

b) Associated sampling and analysis methodologies employed. Note any issues observed with either or both the sampling and/or analysis equipment.

c) Sample frequency and duration; for the latter, provide both per sample (i.e., two-minute grab samples versus 24-hour integrated samples) as well as monitoring record dates and length (e.g., one month, six months, one year, three years, etc.).

d) Number of samples collected and any data quality issues (i.e., flagged or voided), etc.

e) Associated detection limits and data reporting practices (e.g., whether zeros or some fraction of the Method Detection Limit (MDL) were substituted for values below the MDL).

3. Indication of whether a Quality Assurance Project Plan was developed and approved for the collection of these data.

4. Detailed description of modeling protocols, if used, and source(s) of supporting meteorological data.

5. Explanation of why the data have not been analyzed prior to this application.

6. Discussion of how results will be used to address original monitoring study goals.

Note: Prior CSATAM awardees may not use this grant mechanism to perform the data analysis that should have been completed under a previous award.

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

Pursuant to Section 6a of EPA Order 5700.7A1, "Environmental Results under EPA Assistance Agreements," EPA must align 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, www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2015-03/documents/epa_order_5700_7a1.pdf).

1. **Linkage to EPA Strategic Plan:** The activities to be funded under this announcement support EPA's FY 2018-22 Strategic Plan. Awards made under this announcement will support Goal 1, "A Cleaner, Healthier Environment," Objective 1.1, "Improve Air Quality." Under this objective, EPA will "work with states and tribes to accurately measure air quality and ensure that more Americans are living and working in areas that meet high air quality standards." Applicants must explain in their application how their project will further this objective.

   Please see EPA's FY 2018-2022 Strategic Plan (www.epa.gov/planandbudget/strategicplan) for more information.

   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, www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2015-03/documents/epa_order_5700_7a1.pdf). 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 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:

   - Publicly available HAP data that can be uploaded into a central repository (such as EPA's Air Quality System database)
   - Source profiles associated with transportation, refineries, and other industry facilities or sectors, particularly those related to areas identified in the latest NATA release (released August 2018) as potentially having elevated risk from air toxics (See https://www.epa.gov/national-air-toxis-assessment)
   - Community-specific assessments of air toxics problems
   - Identification of select new ambient HAP sampling and analysis methods

- Risk or health assessments
- Community involvement activities and information (e.g., website or outreach materials)
- New or improved analysis, modeling, or implementation tools

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. It is understood that in some cases, the outcomes may not necessarily be achievable within an assistance agreement funding period.

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

   - Short-term outcomes
     - Problem identification
     - Increase community awareness (to include responsible parties/industry)
     - Improve measurement techniques
     - Evaluate and/or improve air quality models
   - Mid-term outcomes
     - State or local policy action(s)
     - Responsible parties/industry mitigation action(s)
     - Wide-scale deployment of new measurement technique
     - Community action to mitigate HAP emissions
   - Long-term outcomes
     - Reduce HAP emissions
     - Reduce ambient HAP concentrations
     - Reduce human exposure to HAPs
     - Support reduction in adverse health effects from HAPs
     - Improved understanding of select new ambient HAP sampling and analysis methods

   Each project application must carefully consider and list explicit, project-specific anticipated outcomes, particularly for short- and mid-term outcomes. Further, explicit links between the short-, mid-, and long-term outcome(s) should be considered, developed and clearly articulated.

NOTE: Each grant arising from this competition will be required to submit an interim final report and a final report, the latter to be submitted within 90 days of the end of the grant. The interim final report must be provided by the grant recipient at the conclusion of the project output phase and must include documentation regarding the degree to which the project output goals and objectives were met as well as a description of, or prognosis for, achieving

the short- and mid-term project outcomes. The final report[1] will include the material from the interim final and include documentation regarding the degree to which the short- and mid-term project outcomes were achieved as well as a description of, or/ prognosis for, achieving the mid- and long-term outcomes.

4. **Performance Measures.** Applicants should also develop performance measures they expect to achieve through the proposed activities and describe them in their application. These performance measures 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. The description of performance measures must directly relate to the project outcomes and outputs. The following are questions to consider when developing output and outcome measures of quantitative and qualitative results:

   - What are the measurable short-term and long-term results that the project will achieve?

   - 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?

D. Statutory Authority

The statutory authority for this action is the Clean Air Act, §103(b)(3), which authorizes the award of grants for research, investigations, experiments, demonstrations, surveys, and studies related to the causes, effects, (including health and welfare effects), extent, prevention, and control of air pollution

Ambient air monitoring, specifically local-scale efforts to better characterize the distribution and sources of HAPs, as well as improved ambient air monitoring methods to achieve characterization and human exposure assessment goals, is consistent with this authority.

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 approximately $5,000,000. The amount of federal funding requested by an applicant must not exceed $750,000. Funding is dependent upon agency appropriations, funding availability, and other applicable considerations.

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

[1] Final reports must be a 508 compliant PDF file suitable for posting on the Agency's web site.

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 10 to 20 grants under this announcement, which is subject to the availability of funds, the quantity and quality of applications received, 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 September 30, 2020, with a project period up to 3 years.

E. Funding Type

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

III. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

A. Eligible Entities

Consistent with the Applicant Eligibility Section of CFDA 66.034, "Surveys, Studies, Research, Investigations, Demonstrations, and Special Purpose Activities Relating to the Clean Air Act" and EPA's Assistance Agreement Competition Policy (EPA Order 5700.5A1), competition under this announcement is being limited to a subset of eligible applicants. Specifically, as projects resulting from this competition will be awarded exclusively with State and Tribal Assistance Grant (STAG) funds, the only entities eligible to submit applications under this announcement are air pollution control agencies, as defined by Section 302(b) of the Clean Air Act (CAA), that are also eligible to receive grants under section 105 of the Clean Air Act, and/or federally recognized tribes.

Under this competition, selected applicants may partner with and provide subawards to other entities, including to entities that are not eligible to submit an application under this competition, consistent with EPA's Subaward Policy (https://www.epa.gov/grants/grants-policy-issuance-gpi-16-01-epa-subaward-policy-epa-assistance-agreement-recipients).

B. Cost Sharing or Matching

No matching funds are required 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.

Leveraging is generally when an applicant proposes to provide its own additional funds/resources or those from third-party sources to support or complement the project they are awarded under the competition which are above and beyond the EPA grant funds awarded. Any leveraged funds/resources, and their source, must be identified in the application (See Section IV of the announcement). Leveraged funds and resources may take various forms as noted below.

Voluntary cost share is a form of leveraging. 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. If an applicant proposes a voluntary cost share, the following apply:

- A voluntary cost share is subject to the match provisions in the grant regulations 2 CFR Part 200 as applicable.
- A voluntary cost share may only be met with eligible and allowable costs.
- 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.
- 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 grant performance, then EPA may reconsider the legitimacy of the award and/or take other appropriate action as authorized by 2 CFR Part 200 as applicable.

Other leveraged funding/resources that are not identified as a voluntary cost share. This form of leveraging may be met by funding from another federal grant, from an applicant's own resources, or resources from other third-party sources. This form of leveraging should not be included in the budget, and the costs do not need to be "eligible and allowable" project costs under the EPA assistance agreement. While this form of leveraging should not be included in the budget, the grant workplan should include a statement indicating that the applicant is expected to produce the proposed leveraging consistent with the terms of the announcement and the applicant's application. If applicants propose to provide this form of leveraging, EPA expects them to make the effort to secure the leveraged resources described in their applications. If the proposed leveraging does not materialize during grant performance, then EPA may reconsider the legitimacy of the award and/or take other appropriate action as authorized by 2 CFR Part 200 as applicable.

C. Threshold Eligibility Criteria

These are requirements that must be met by the time of application submission to be considered for funding. Only applications from eligible applicants (see Section III.A. of this RFA) that meet all these threshold eligibility 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 as a result of 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 of this RFA or else they will be rejected.
- **b.** Where a page limit is expressed in Section IV of this RFA 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 10 pages.
- **c.** Applications must be submitted through the Grants.gov website as stated in Section IV of this announcement (except in the limited circumstances where another mode of submission is specifically allowed, as explained in Section IV) on or before the application submission deadline published in Section IV 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 System for Award Management (SAM) system (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 further EPA's current priorities for improving air quality, which focus on improving air quality to ensure more Americans are living and working in areas that meet high air quality standards. (See Section I.C)

3. Ineligible activities: If an application is submitted that includes any ineligible tasks or activities, that portion of the application will be ineligible for funding and may, depending on the extent to which it affects the application, render the entire application ineligible for funding.

4. Applications that do not clearly identify one, single primary category from Section 1.B will be rejected.

5. Applications which request EPA assistance funds in excess of $750,000, as specified in Section II.A of this RFA, are not eligible and will not be reviewed.

6. Applications must include a statement on quality assurance, as specified in Section IV.C.3 of this RFA. Applications that do not include a statement on quality assurance are not eligible and will not be reviewed.

IV. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

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

Applicants, except as noted below, must apply electronically through Grants.gov under this funding opportunity based on the Grants.gov instructions in this announcement and Appendix A. If an applicant does not have the technical capability to apply electronically through Grants.gov because of limited or no internet access which prevents them from being able to upload the required application materials to Grants.gov, the applicant must contact OMS-ARM-OGDWaivers@epa.gov or the address listed below in writing (e.g., by hard copy, email) *at least 15 calendar days prior to the submission deadline under this announcement* to request approval to submit their application materials through an alternate method.

Mailing Address:
OGD Waivers
c/o Jessica Durand
USEPA Headquarters
William Jefferson Clinton Building
1200 Pennsylvania Ave., N. W.
Mail Code: 3903R
Washington, DC 20460

Courier Address:
OGD Waivers
c/o Jessica Durand
Ronald Reagan Building
1300 Pennsylvania Ave., N.W.
Rm # 51278
Washington, DC 20004

In the request, the applicant must include the following information:

- Funding Opportunity Number (FON)
- Organization Name and Unique Entity Identifier (e.g., DUNS)
- Organization's Contact Information (email address and phone number)
- Explanation of how the applicant lacks the technical capability to apply electronically through Grants.gov because of 1) limited internet access or 2) no internet access which prevents them from being able to upload the required application materials through Grants.gov.

EPA will only consider alternate submission exception requests that are based on the two reasons stated above and will timely respond to such requests. All other requests for alternate submission will be denied. If an alternate submission method is approved, the applicant will receive documentation of this approval and further instructions on how to apply under this announcement. Applicants will be required to submit the documentation of approval with any initial application submitted under the alternative method. In addition, any submittal through an alternative method must comply with all applicable requirements and deadlines in the announcement including the submission deadline and requirements regarding application content and page limits. The documentation of approval of an alternate submission method will not count against any page limits.

If an exception is granted, it is valid for any competitive or non-competitive application submission to EPA for the remainder of the entire calendar year in which the exception was approved. For example, if the exception was approved on March 1, 2020, it is valid for any competitive or non-competitive application submission to EPA through December 31, 2020. Applicants need only request an exception once in a calendar year and all exceptions will expire on December 31 of that calendar year. Applicants must request a new exception from required electronic submission through grants.gov for submissions for any succeeding calendar year. For example, if there were a competitive opportunity issued on December 1, 2019, with a submission deadline of January 15, 2020, the applicant would need a new exception to submit through alternative methods beginning January 1, 2020.

Please note that the process described in this section is only for requesting alternate submission methods. All other inquiries about this announcement must be directed to the Agency contact listed in Section VII of the announcement. Queries or requests submitted to the email address identified above for any reason other than to request an alternate submission method will not be acknowledged or answered.

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 **May 1, 2020, 11:59 PM Eastern Time**.

C. Content of Application Submission

The application package ***must*** include all of the following materials, except Number 4, Optional Attachments:

1. **Grant Application Forms** (All required).

    a. Standard Form 424, *Application for Federal Assistance*. Please note that the organizational Dun and Bradstreet (D&B) Data Universal Number System (DUNS) number must be included on the SF-424. Organizations may obtain a DUNS number at no cost by calling the toll-free DUNS number request line at 1-866-705-5711.
    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

2. Project Narrative (Required, 10-page limit)**.** The project narrative must explicitly describe how the proposed project meets the guidelines established in Sections I-III of this announcement (including the threshold eligibility criteria in Section III.C) and **must address each of the evaluation criteria set forth in Section V**. The project narrative (a through g below) must not exceed a maximum of 10 single-spaced typewritten pages, including the summary page, as excess pages will not be reviewed. Supporting materials, such as resumes and letters of support, can be submitted as attachments and are not included in the 10-page limit.

a. Summary Information Page (recommended not to exceed one page).

i. Project Title
ii. Applicant Information. Include applicant (organization) name, address, contact person, phone number, fax and e-mail address.
iii. Funding Requested. Specify the amount you are requesting from EPA.
iv. Total Project Cost. Specify total cost of the project. Identify funding from other sources, including cost share or in-kind resources.
v. Project Period. Provide beginning and ending dates. (Projects are anticipated to begin by date and end no later than date.)
vi. DUNS Number

b. Project Summary/Approach. The summary shall contain the following components:

i. Detailed project summary, description of specific actions and methods to be undertaken and the responsible institutions, including estimated time line for each task.
ii. Description of the associated work products to be developed.
iii. Explanation of project benefits to the public, and specifically the potential audience(s) served.
iv. Description of the roles of the applicant and partners, if any.
v. Description of the applicant's organization and experience related to the proposed project.
vi. Description of staff expertise/qualifications, staff knowledge, and resources or the ability to obtain them, to successfully achieve the goals of the proposed project.
vii. Discussion of how the project promotes community benefits, engagement, and partnerships.

c. Environmental Results—Outcomes, Outputs and Performance Measures. Identify the expected quantitative and qualitative outcomes and outputs of the project **(See Section I.C.)**, including what performance measurements, timeline of milestones, or other means will be used to track and measure your progress towards

achieving the expected outcomes and outputs and how the results of the project will be evaluated.

d. Programmatic Capability and Past Performance. Submit a list of federally funded assistance agreements (assistance agreements include federal grants and cooperative agreements but not federal contracts) that are similar in size, scope and relevance to the proposed project that your organization performed within the last three years (no more than five agreements, and preferably EPA agreements). Describe (1) whether, and how, you were able to successfully complete and manage those agreements, and (2) your history of meeting the reporting requirements under those agreements including whether you adequately and timely reported on your progress towards achieving the expected outputs and outcomes of those agreements (if not, explain why not) and whether you submitted acceptable final technical reports under the agreements. In evaluating applicants under these factors in Section V, 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 reporting information, please indicate this in the application, and you will receive a neutral score for these factors (a neutral score is half of the total points available in a subset of possible points). If you do not provide any response for these items, you may receive a score of 0 for these factors.

e. Voluntary cost share/match and leveraged funds (See Section III.B also). Demonstrate how you will leverage additional funds/resources beyond the 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, nonprofit organizations, education and training providers, and/or Federal, state, tribal, and local governments, as appropriate. Describe the amount and type of leveraged resources to be provided, how you 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 resources will play to support the proposed project activities. Selected applicants are expected to abide by their proposed leveraging commitments during grant performance; failure to do so may affect the legitimacy of the award.

f. Detailed Budget Narrative (See Appendix B, Budget Sample).
This section provides an opportunity for a narrative description of the budget found in form SF-424A. Clearly explain how EPA funds will be used. 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

i. Description of the budget and estimated funding amounts for each work component/task.

ii. Description of the applicant's approach, procedures, and controls for ensuring that awarded grant funds will be expended in a timely and efficient manner.
iii. Applicants must itemize costs related to personnel, fringe benefits, contractual costs, travel, equipment, supplies, other direct costs, indirect costs, and total costs. 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.
iv. For applicants that provide a voluntary cost share/match, the budget narrative must clearly specify the amount of federal funding and the cost share amount for each category of total project costs for each category. Include an explanation of how the voluntary match will be met. All matching funds are subject to the regulations governing matching fund requirements at 2 CFR Part 200.

g. Community Benefit, Engagement, and Partnerships

The applicant should discuss how the project promotes community benefits through engagement and possible partnerships (see Section I.B). The project narrative should include a discussion of how the proposed project will address the needs and concerns of affected communities, including any communities or populations that have faced or are facing environmental justice concerns, and/or other interested parties, groups or populations that have been adversely affected by environmental burdens, as described in Section I.B. A description of the current environmental impacts or burdens located around the proposed project should be included, explaining how the affected communities are potentially vulnerable to these environmental burdens.

3. **Statement on Quality Assurance** (Required, can be included in the 10-page project narrative, or can be submitted as an attachment via the optional attachments form in Grants.gov).

The applicant shall state their understanding and intent to carry out work under this potential agreement within a quality assurance system commensurate with the degree of confidence needed for the environmentally related data operations. This is required prior to receiving a grant under this announcement and detailed in 2 CFR §1500.11. Further, prior to performing any work, the grantee will be required to demonstrate its competency, as required in the associated competency policy, per https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2015-03/documents/competency-policy-aaia-new.pdf.

4. **Optional Attachments** (Not Required, not part of 10-page limit). Use the Optional Attachments form in Grants.gov.

- Biographical Sketch(es): Provide resumes or curriculum vitae for key staff, managers, and any other key personnel.
- Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement.
- Partnership Letter(s): If applicable, letters 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, including their specific role, or how obtaining support from project partners will allow the applicant to more effectively perform the project.

- Approval Letter: If applicable, to use alternate means to submit initial application.

D. Submission Date and Times

The closing date and time for submission of applications is **May 1, 2020, 11:59 p.m., Eastern Time (ET)**. Applications submitted after the closing date and time will not be considered for funding.

E. Additional Provisions for Applicants Incorporated into the Solicitation

Additional provisions that apply to this solicitation and/or awards made under this solicitation, including but not limited to those related to confidential business information, contracts and subawards under grants, and application assistance and communications, can be found at www.epa.gov/grants/epa-solicitation-clauses. These, and the other provisions that can be found at the website link, are important, 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 communicate with the EPA contact listed in this solicitation to obtain the provisions.

V. APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

Only applications from eligible entities that meet the threshold criteria in Section III. 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. <u>Project Summary and Approach:</u> 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 to which the project narrative: **A. (22 points)** Includes a well-conceived strategy for addressing the requirements in **Section I, Parts B (Scope of Work), and C (EPA Strategic Plan Linkage and Anticipated Outcomes/Outputs)**; and **B. (13 points)** Sets forth a reasonable time schedule for the execution of the tasks associated with the project and for achieving the project goals and objectives by project end.	**35**

2. <u>Environmental Results – Outputs, Outcomes and Performance Measures</u>: Under this criterion, EPA will evaluate: **A. (7 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** of this announcement. **B. (8 points)** The performance measures proposed by the applicant and how they will be used to help track and measure the applicant's progress toward achieving the expected outputs and outcomes.	**15**
3. <u>Programmatic Capability and Past Performance:</u> 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 progress toward 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. (5 points)** Organizational experience and plan for timely and successfully achieving the objectives of the proposed project; and **D. (5 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, the Agency 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 you do 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 these sub-factors (items A and B above-a neutral score is half of the total points available in a subset of possible points). If you do not provide any response for these items, you may receive a score of 0 for these sub-factors.	**20**
4. <u>Budget</u>: Under this criterion, EPA will evaluate applicants based on: **A. (5 points)** The extent and quality to which costs are reasonable to accomplish the proposed goals, objectives, and measurable environmental outcomes; and	**10**

B. (5 points) The extent and quality to which the proposed budget provides a detailed breakout of the approximate funding used for each major activity. An applicant's budget and Budget Narrative must account for both federal funds and any non-federal funds (e.g., any required or voluntary cost share/match if applicable). Applicants must precisely describe in their Budget Narrative how they will account for any required or voluntary cost share/match, if applicable, and what role EPA funding will play in the overall project.	
5. <u>Expenditure of Awarded Grant Funds</u>: Under this criterion, EPA will evaluate applicants based on their approach, procedures, and controls for ensuring that awarded grant funds will be expended in a timely and efficient manner.	**5**
6. <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 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, nonprofit 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.	**5**
7. <u>Community Benefits, Engagement, and Partnerships</u>: Under this criterion and as described in Section I.B, EPA will evaluate applicants on the extent to which the proposed project: **A. (5 points)** Addresses the needs and concerns of affected communities, especially those that have faced or are facing environmental justice concerns. **B. (5 points)** Includes previous, current and/or future efforts and plans for engaging affected communities, which may include: engaging community-based organizations; demonstrating community support for the proposed project; planning for ongoing community engagement; and/or building and supporting partnerships across multiple stakeholder groups.	**10**

B. Review and Selection Process

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

C. Other Factors

Final funding decisions will be made by the selection official based on the rankings and preliminary recommendations of the EPA evaluation team. In making the final funding decisions, the selection official may also consider programmatic priorities and geographic diversity of funds. EPA also reserves the right to select up to two of the highest scoring applications per scope of work category (of which there are four in this RFA, listed in Section I.B) contingent on the quality of the applications and funding availability, notwithstanding its ranking overall among all applications.

D. Additional Provisions for Applicants Incorporated into the Solicitation

Additional provisions that apply to this solicitation and/or awards made under this solicitation including the clause on Reporting and Use of Information Concerning Recipient Integrity and Performance can be found at EPA Solicitation Clauses (https://www.epa.gov/grants/eap-solicitation-clauses). These, and the other provisions that can be found at the website link, are important, 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 communicate with the EPA contact listed in this solicitation to obtain the provisions.

VI. AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

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 approximately 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 for award is not an authorization to begin work. The official notification of an award will be made by EPA's Grants and Interagency Agreements Management Division.

   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. Prior to performing any work, the grantee will be required to demonstrate its competency, as required in the associated competency policy, per https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2015-03/documents/competency-policy-aaia-new.pdf, and the applicant shall state their understanding and intent to carry out work under this potential agreement within a quality assurance system commensurate with the degree of confidence needed for the environmentally related data operations. This is required and detailed in 2 CFR §1500.11. 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 approximately 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

Award recipients will be required to submit quarterly progress reports and a final closeout report. Quarterly reports summarizing technical progress, planned activities for the next quarter and a summary of expenditures are required. The final report shall be submitted to EPA within 90 calendar days of the completion of the period of performance. The final report must include: summary of the project or activity; advances achieved; and costs of the project or activity. 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 (https://www.epa.gov/grants/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, 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.

E. Additional Provisions for Applicants Incorporated into the Solicitation

Additional provisions that apply to this solicitation and/or awards made under this solicitation, including but not limited to those related to DUNS, SAM, copyrights, disputes, and administrative capability, subrecipients and contractors (including individual consultants) can be found at: www.epa.gov/grants/epa-solicitation-clauses. These, and the other provisions that can be found at the website link, are important, 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 communicate with the EPA contact listed in this solicitation to obtain the provisions.

VII. AGENCY CONTACTS

For further information, contact:

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
ATTN: Nealson Watkins
AQAD/AAMG (MC C304-06)
Research Triangle Park, NC 27711
watkins.nealson@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 OAR Grants/Funding webpage: http://www.epa.gov/grants/air-grants-and-funding.

APPENDIX A - Grants.gov Application Submission Instructions

The electronic submission of your application must be made by an official representative of your institution who is registered with Grants.gov and is authorized to sign applications for federal assistance. For more information on the registration requirements that must be completed in order to submit an application through grants.gov, go to https://www.grants.gov and click on "Applicants" on the top of the page and then go to the "Get Registered" link on the page. If your organization is not currently registered with Grants.gov, please encourage your office to designate an Authorized Organization Representative (AOR) and ask that individual to begin the registration process as soon as possible. Please note that the registration process also requires that your organization have a Unique Entity Identifier (e.g. DUNS number) and a current registration with the SAM and the process of obtaining both could take a month or more. 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 submission deadline. Registration on grants.gov, SAM.gov, and acquiring a DUNS number assignment is FREE.

Applicants need to ensure that the AOR who submits the application through Grants.gov and whose Unique Entity Identifier (e.g., DUNS number) is listed on the application is an AOR for the applicant listed on the application. Additionally, the DUNS number listed on the application must be registered to the applicant organization's SAM account. If not, the application may be deemed ineligible.

To begin the application process under this grant announcement, go to Grants.gov and click on "Applicants" on the top of the page and then "Apply for Grants" from the dropdown menu and then follow the instructions accordingly. Please note: To apply through Grants.gov, you must use Adobe Reader software and download the compatible Adobe Reader version. For more information about Adobe Reader, to verify compatibility, or to download the free software, please visit Adobe Reader Compatibility Information on Grants.gov

You may also be able to access the application package for this announcement by searching for the opportunity on Grants.gov. Go to https://www.grants.gov and then click on "Search Grants" at the top of the page and enter the Funding Opportunity Number, EPA-OAR-OAQPS-20-05, or the CFDA number, CFDA 66.034, in the appropriate field and click the Search button.

Please Note: All applications must now be submitted through Grants.gov using the "Workspace" feature. Information on the Workspace feature can be found at the Grants.gov Workspace Overview Page (https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/workspace-overview.html).

Application Submission Deadline: Your organization's AOR must submit your complete application package electronically to EPA through Grants.gov no later than **May 1, 2020, by 11:59 p.m. ET**. Please allow for enough time to successfully submit your application process and allow for unexpected errors that may require you to resubmit.

Please submit *all* the application materials described below using the Grants.gov application package accessed using the instructions above.

Application Materials

The following forms and documents are required under this announcement, as described in Section IV.C. of the RFA:

Mandatory Documents:

- Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424), *Application for Federal Assistance*.
- Budget Information for Non-Construction Programs (SF-424A), *Budget Information for Non-Construction Programs*
- EPA Key Contacts Form 5700-54
- EPA 4700-4, *Pre-award Compliance Review Report*
- Project Narrative Attachment Form, *Project Narrative* (See Section IV.C.2. for additional information)
- Other Attachment Form – Statement on Quality Assurance

Optional Attachment Documents. Use the "*Other Attachments*" form identified under the Mandatory Documents tab to submit the following:

- Biographical Sketch(s)
- Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement
- Quality Assurance Narrative Statement
- Leveraged Funds Commitment Letter(s)
- Partnership Letter(s)
- Approval Letter, if applicable to use alternate means to submit initial application

Applications submitted through grants.gov will be time and date stamped electronically.

If you have not received a confirmation of receipt from EPA (not from grants.gov*)* within 30 days of the application deadline, please contact Nealson Watkins at watkins.nealson@epa.gov failure to do so may result in your application not being reviewed.

Technical Issues with Submission

1. Once the application package has been completed, the "Submit" button should be enabled. If the "Submit" button is not active, please call the Grants.gov office for assistance at 1-800-518-4726. 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. Applicants should save the completed application package with two different file names before providing it to the AOR to avoid having to re-create the package should submission problems be experienced, or a revised application needs to be submitted.

2. Submitting the application. The application package must be transferred to Grants.gov by an AOR. The AOR should close all other software before attempting to submit the application package. Click the "submit" button of the application package. Your internet browser will launch, and a sign-in page will appear. **Note: Minor problems are not uncommon with transfers to Grants.gov. It is essential to allow sufficient time to ensure that your application is submitted to Grants.gov BEFORE the due date identified in Section IV of**

the solicitation. The support desk operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week, except Federal Holidays.

A successful transfer will end with an on-screen acknowledgement. **For documentation purposes, print or screen capture this acknowledgement.** If a submission problem occurs, reboot the computer – turning the power off may be necessary – and re-attempt the submission.
Note: Grants.gov issues a "case number" upon a request for assistance.

3. Transmission Difficulties. If transmission difficulties that result in a late transmission, no transmission, or rejection of the transmitted application are experienced, and following the above instructions do not resolve the problem so that the application is submitted to Grants.gov by the deadline date and time, follow the guidance below. The Agency will make a decision concerning acceptance of each late submission on a case-by-case basis. All emails, as described below, are to be sent to Nealson Watkins at watkins.nealson@epa.gov with the FON in the subject line. If you are unable to email, contact Nealson Watkins at 919-541-5522. Be aware that EPA will only consider accepting applications that were unable to transmit due to Grants.gov or relevant www.SAM.gov system issues or for unforeseen exigent circumstances, such as extreme weather interfering with internet access. Failure of an applicant to submit timely because they did not properly or timely register in SAM.gov or Grants.gov is not an acceptable reason to justify acceptance of a late submittal.

a. If you are experiencing problems resulting in an inability to upload the application to Grants.gov, it is essential to call Grants.gov for assistance at 1-800-518-4726 before the application deadline. 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. **Be *sure* to obtain a case number from Grants.gov**. If the problems stem from unforeseen exigent circumstances unrelated to Grants.gov, such as extreme weather interfering with internet access, contact Nealson Watkins at watkins.nealson@epa.gov.

b. Unsuccessful transfer of the application package: If a successful transfer of the application cannot be accomplished even with assistance from Grants.gov due to electronic submission system issues or unforeseen exigent circumstances, and you have already attempted to resolve the issue by contacting Grants.gov, send an email message to watkins.nealson@epa.gov prior to the application deadline. **The email message must document the problem and include the Grants.gov case number as well as the entire application package in PDF format as an attachment.**

c. Grants.gov rejection of the application package: If a notification is received from Grants.gov stating that the application has been rejected for reasons other than late submittal promptly send an email to watkins.nealson@epa.gov with the FON in the subject line within one business day of the closing date of this solicitation. The email should include any materials provided by Grants.gov and attach the entire application in PDF format.

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

APPENDIX B – Budget Detail Sample

This section of the project narrative is a detailed description of the budget found in the SF-424A and must include a detailed discussion of how EPA funds will be used. Applicants must **itemize** costs related to personnel, fringe benefits, travel, equipment, supplies, contractual costs, other direct costs, indirect costs, and total costs. 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" at https://www.epa.gov/grants/rain-2019-g2.

If the project budget includes any voluntary cost share, the budget detail portion of the project narrative must include a detailed description of how the applicant will obtain the cost share and how the cost share funding will be used. If EPA accepts an offer for a voluntary cost share, applicants must meet their sharing commitment as a legal condition of receiving EPA funding. If the proposed cost share is to be provided by a third-party, a letter of commitment is required. Any form of cost share included in the budget detail must also be include on the SF-424 and SF-424A. Please see Section III.B if this RFA for more detailed information on cost share.

Applicants should use the following instructions, budget object class descriptions, and example table to complete the budget detail section of the work-plan.

- **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 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) or related to proposed project activities (e.g. attendance at meetings). Only include travel costs for employees in the travel category. Travel costs do not include: (1) costs for travel of contractors (including individual 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 200.94. The budget detail must include an itemized listing of all equipment proposed under the project.
  Note: If your organization 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 type of proposed contract and specify its purpose and estimated cost.** Contractual services (including consulting 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; 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, "Interim EPA Guidance on Participant Support Costs."

  Subawards (e.g., subgrants) 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 event if the agreement is referred to as a contract. This term does not include procurement purchases, technical assistance in the form of services instead of money, or other assistance in the form of revenue sharing, 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. In order for indirect costs to be allowable, the applicant must have a federal or state negotiated indirect cost rate (e.g., fixed, predetermined, final or provisional), or must have submitted an application to the cognizant federal or state agency. 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)
  - Modified Total Direct Costs (Indirect Rate x Modified Total direct costs = Indirect Costs)
  - Direct Costs minus 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

	EPA Funding	**Cost Share
Personnel		
(1) Project Manager @ $40/hr x 10 hrs/week x 52 wks		$20,800
(3) Project Staff @ $25/hr x 40 hrs/week x 40 wks	$120,000	
TOTAL PERSONNEL	$120,000	$20,800
Fringe Benefits		
20% of Salary and Wages	20% (120,000)	20% (20,800)
- Retirement, Health Benefits, FICA, SUI	$24,000	$4,160
TOTAL FRINGE BENEFITS	$24,000	$4,160
Travel		
Travel for Project Manager and staff: 500 mi/mo. @ $0.55/mi x 12 mos.	$3,480	
TOTAL TRAVEL	$3,480	
Equipment		
TOTAL EQUIPMENT	0	
Supplies		
Office and related supplies to support training	$12,000	
TOTAL SUPPLIES	$12,000	
Contractual		
Support Services Contract	$20,000	
TOTAL CONTRACTUAL	$20,000	
Other		
Subawards Costs	$150,000	
Participant Support Costs	$0	
Additional Other Costs	$0	
TOTAL OTHER	$0	
Indirect Charges		
Federal Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate = 10% with personnel costs as base (Indirect Rate x Personnel = Indirect Costs)	$12,000	
TOTAL INDIRECT	$12,000	
TOTAL FUNDING	(fed) $341,480	(non-fed) $24,960
TOTAL PROJECT COST (federal and non-federal)	**$366,440**	

** Cost Share funds, while not required under this RFA, must also be included on the SF-424 as

detailed in Section III.B of this RFA.

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**.**