OVERVIEW SECTION

AGENCY: ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY (EPA)

TITLE: OFFICE OF LAND AND EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT (OLEM) TRIBAL PROGRAM SUPPORT COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS

ACTION: NOTICE OF FUNDING OPPORTUNITY (NOFO) - INITIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

NOFO NO: EPA-OLEM-OCPA-24-03

ASSISTANCE LISTING NOS.: 66.808; 66.813; 66.814; 66.816

DATES: The closing date and time for receipt of application submissions is **October 10, 2024**, 11:59 p.m. (ET). Applications must be submitted electronically through https://www.grants.gov by 11:59 p.m. (ET) on **October 10, 2024,** to receive consideration. Applications received after 11:59 p.m. (ET) on **October 10, 2024**, will not be considered. Please refer to Section 4 for further details.

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SECTION 1 - FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION

1.A. Program Goals and Objectives

Federally recognized Tribes work with the Office of Land and Emergency Management (OLEM) and the EPA regions on OLEM-related programs as co-regulators and/or co-implementors of federal and Tribal programs to protect human health and the environment. This includes collaborative efforts between sovereign governments to safely manage solid and hazardous wastes; develop and operate underground storage tank programs; oversee Resource Conservation and Recovery Act facilities; prepare for, prevent and respond to chemical and oil spills, accidents, and emergencies; respond to contamination on sites; assess, clean up and revitalize brownfields; coordinate cleanup of Superfund sites affecting Tribes and Tribal lands; and work on new and emerging issues, including responding to a changing climate, covered by statutes under which this cooperative agreement is issued (see Section 1.H.*)*. Seven program offices within OLEM regularly work with Tribes on these programs. The program offices are Office of Brownfields and Land Revitalization; Office of Emergency Management; Office of Mountains, Deserts and Plains; Office of Resource Conservation and Recovery; Office of Superfund Remediation and Technology Innovation; Office of Underground Storage Tanks; and Federal Facilities Restoration and Reuse Office.

This notice announces the availability of funds and solicits applications for two separate projects to provide training, technical assistance, research, and tools to Tribal environmental staff to build Tribal capacity to develop sustainable waste management programs and implement cleanup, prevention, and response programs in Indian country. The recipient will also conduct activities under the two cooperative agreements that promote discussion, collaboration, engagement, and partnership among Tribes and federal agency representatives.

OLEM's primary goal under this funding opportunity is to help Tribes build capacity – through training, technical assistance, research, and tools – to develop their own OLEM-related programs and participate in cleanup, prevention, and response programs. OLEM works to support Tribal sovereign authority and promote compliance with federal and Tribal environmental statutes and regulations in Indian country while upholding EPA's Indian Policy principles. The activities under this cooperative agreement help make the OLEM Tribal Program more responsive to Tribal needs by ensuring that Tribes have opportunities to provide their input and perspectives on policy and regulatory actions planned or taken by OLEM.

Project One. Under this project, the recipient will provide trainings and support to Tribal environmental professionals to build Tribal capacity and promote preservation and restoration of lands in Indian country.

A primary deliverable under this project is to host the annual Tribal Lands and Environment Forum (TLEF). The TLEF is a large, national conference that brings together Tribal, EPA, federal/state/local government, academic, nonprofits, consultants, and other professionals from across the country to provide Tribal environmental professionals with the tools and resources needed to build capacity and to implement successful environmental programs in their communities. The TLEF provides training and technical assistance to Tribal representatives and partners on topics related to cleanup, prevention, and response programs. Sessions cover solid and hazardous waste

management, underground storage tanks, brownfields and Superfund site assessment and cleanup, federal facilities, emergency response and management, as well as new and emerging issues in these areas including climate change impacts, resiliency, adaptation, and mitigation.

Project One also supports Tribal members of the Tribal Waste and Response Steering Committee (TWAR SC). The TWAR SC is a Tribal partnership group made up of 10 Tribal environmental professionals with experience in OLEM program areas. Members of the TWAR SC share Tribal perspectives on OLEM policies and programs with EPA, discuss policy and technical issues with EPA at the national level, and influence the development of OLEM-related policies and programs that impact Tribal lands. The TWAR SC has a charter and is comprised of members who meet regularly and play a substantive role in many of the activities under this cooperative agreement. For example, TWAR SC members actively participate in the planning of the TLEF, assist the cooperative agreement recipient with organizing and delivering training, and serve as mentors to other Tribal environmental professionals.

Project One also supports building Tribal capacity to implement cleanup and prevention programs in Indian country by providing in-person and/or virtual trainings, online resources, and networking and engagement opportunities for Tribal environmental staff.

Project Two. Under this project, the recipient will identify Superfund issues of importance to Tribes, conduct research on those issues, and disseminate the results of the research to Tribes through reports, webinars, information, and tools to help Tribes more fully participate in the Superfund program.

Project Two includes support for Tribal participants in the Tribal Superfund Working Group (TSFWG), facilitation of inter-Tribal networking opportunities, coordination of meetings between EPA and Tribal environmental staff to discuss policy issues and technical matters relating to site assessment and remediation (site cleanup) of sites contaminated with hazardous substances. For the purposes of this funding opportunity, meetings are defined as gatherings designed to provide opportunities to engage and share information between Tribal attendees and between Tribes and EPA. Meetings can be virtual, in-person, phone calls, etc.

The goal of this project is to foster the participation of Tribes in the Superfund process, support members of the Tribal Superfund Working Group (TSFWG), build Tribes' capacity to manage and respond to emergencies, and increase engagement with Tribal partners on legacy hard-rock mining response actions. The TSFWG is a network of Tribal, federal, and other professionals with an interest in and expertise with contaminated sites, especially Superfund sites. The TSFWG Advisory Council (TSFWG AC) is a group of Tribal experts in the Superfund process. The recipient will provide opportunities for the Tribes in the TSFWG to explore and gain from cross-programmatic discussions and inter-Tribal information sharing and optimize different approaches to address their sites and improve their environmental programs. The TSFWG AC also works with the TWAR SC to provide feedback and engage with OLEM on Superfund policy issues.

Project Two also supports building Tribal capacity to implement cleanup and response programs in Indian country by providing sessions on Superfund and emergency response topics at the TLEF, online resources, and networking and engagement opportunities for Tribal environmental staff.

Overall. The OLEM Tribal Program Manager and other key personnel from OLEM program offices will collaborate with the successful applicant as part of EPA's substantial involvement in the cooperative agreements that will be awarded under this funding opportunity.

EPA will ensure that the current recipient of the cooperative agreements provides the successful applicant under this funding opportunity with data, charters, documents, and other materials developed with Agency funds related to the TWAR SC, TSFWG/TSFWG AC, Tribal Lands Assistance Center, and TLEF as provided in 2 CFR 200.315 and the terms and conditions of the current recipient's cooperative agreement with EPA.

For more information on EPA's OLEM-related Tribal programs. For more information on the Tribal Lands and Environment Forum. For more information on the Tribal Waste and Response Steering Committee. For more information on the Tribal Superfund Working Group. For more information on the Tribal Lands Assistance Center.

1.B. Scope of Work

Applicants must address each of the following elements in Project One and Project Two and provide a detailed description of how they will accomplish the elements and meet each element's goals and objectives. Applicants may also include in their applications additional elements to those listed below. Under this funding opportunity, **all applicants must submit applications for both projects (Project One and Project Two)** described more fully below. Applicants must develop and submit separate applications for each project. **EPA will not consider combined applications, single applications for both project areas, and applications for one project area only.**

PROJECT ONE (Funds awarded under Project One are limited to non-Superfund-related activities):

Element 1: Develop, plan, and implement annual Tribal training conference - Tribal Lands and Environment Forum (TLEF):

The activities eligible for funding under this funding opportunity are planning, developing, and implementing five annually held, in-person Tribal Lands and Environment Forums (TLEF) from 2025-2029, provided EPA funds are available. The training plan should include a need-based travel scholarship program (including selection criteria) for Tribal attendees. EPA will be a co-sponsor of the TLEF with the recipient.

The annual conference brings together Tribes, EPA, federal, and other partners to provide trainings, receive technical assistance, promote discussion, share lessons learned and best practices, and learn about relevant research projects and studies to build Tribal capacity. Prior TLEFs have included panels, presentations, trainings, hands-on activities, and field trips led by Tribal, EPA, and other experts. These sessions can be program-specific or cross-programmatic in nature. The topics have historically been covered in five or more session tracks covering solid and hazardous waste management, revitalization of brownfields, leaking underground storage tanks and other RCRA facilities, and other OLEM-related program areas. Applicants can propose additional focus areas, including but not limited to climate change impacts, resiliency, adaptation, and mitigation; indigenous knowledge; environmental justice; etc.

For planning purposes, EPA anticipates that annual TLEF will attract approximately 300-500 in-person participants.

EPA encourages applicants to propose alternative approaches if the applicant can demonstrate that a different format would be more cost efficient and/or deliver training and technical assistance more effectively. Applicants are invited to suggest additional elements to this scope of work that could enhance the objectives of the TLEF. Please note that paying for travel for federal employees is not an eligible cost under the cooperative agreement.

If an applicant proposes a hybrid conference, with both in-person and virtual participants, the applicant must describe their plan to ensure that virtual attendees are engaged and active participants and that the virtual component is as successful as possible. This could include information on a specific type of virtual platform that provides effective engagement opportunities, dedicated moderators to support virtual attendees, audio-visual equipment to improve the virtual experience, etc. Virtual participation is not a required aspect of this element. The applicant must demonstrate that any additional costs and resources for virtual participation provide benefits to Tribes and will be implemented effectively.

Element 2: Provide technical and administrative support to the Tribal Waste and Response Steering Committee (TWAR SC):

The TWAR SC is made up of 10 environmental staff and managers working for a federally recognized Tribe (or intertribal consortium in Alaska). As provided in Section 204 of the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act, Tribal members of the TWAR SC must be elected Tribal officials or Tribal employees designated by the Tribe's elected leaders to represent their Tribe on the TWAR SC. Meetings and interactions between the TWAR SC and EPA help facilitate a national dialogue and information exchange between Tribes and EPA on OLEM-related activities such as waste management, land revitalization, cleanup, waste prevention, and emergency management issues. Members have an opportunity to provide input on and respond to policy or regulatory actions planned or taken by OLEM and can influence policy and regulatory actions through regular communication and coordination with OLEM.

TWAR SC Membership Selection
Members of the TWAR SC must be selected competitively by the recipient through an application process designed by the recipient and serve a term, as defined in the charter. Members of the TWAR SC should collectively represent as many EPA regions as possible and should collectively have expertise in as many OLEM program areas as possible. OLEM program areas include solid and hazardous waste, underground storage tanks, Superfund (including federal facilities), emergency response, brownfields, and legacy hard-rock mines.

Applicants must propose a process and criteria for selecting qualified Tribal TWAR SC members who are elected Tribal officials or designated to represent their Tribe. The application should also include a plan to promote participation in the TWAR SC, to build and maintain a geographically diverse roster of TWAR SC members who can provide feedback on as many OLEM program areas as possible, and to orient new TWAR SC members when they join. Applicants should provide a plan for recruiting new members and filling vacancies in the TWAR SC membership.

Support for TWAR SC Members
The applicant should also provide a plan for logistical and administrative support to facilitate effective participation of Tribal representatives on the TWAR SC. Examples of support include:

- Funding travel (airfare, lodging, per diem) to enable Tribal members to attend TWAR SC meetings and other events.
- Preparing agendas that are responsive to the interests of Tribal members.
- Facilitating and moderating meetings to accomplish TWAR SC goals in an efficient manner.
- Recording minutes, preparing meeting summaries, and managing TWAR SC action items.
- Assisting TWAR SC members prepare responses to EPA on policy and technical topics,
- Providing a web presence.
- Recruiting new members and maintaining the TWAR SC at full capacity (10 members).
- Reviewing and updating the TWAR SC Charter under the direction of the Tribal members.

Applicants should also describe their approach to supporting the TWAR SC's efforts to disseminate OLEM-related information to additional Tribal partners, including Regional Tribal Operations Committees and other Tribal partnership groups, and to seek input from Tribes across the country. Applicants may also propose other activities necessary for providing logistical and administrative support to Tribal members of the TWAR SC.

Meetings and Travel
EPA's substantial involvement will include, among other things, collaborating with the successful cooperative agreement applicant in establishing the schedule and venues for co-sponsored TWAR SC meetings. In 2023 of the current cooperative agreement, the full TWAR SC participated in five virtual meetings and two, multi-day in-person meetings (one in Washington D.C. and one at another location). Smaller groups of TWAR SC members met twelve times for media-specific virtual meetings related to the Priorities Document. Applicants may propose alternate schedules, venues, and types of TWAR SC meetings, although EPA will evaluate applications based on cost-effectiveness in minimizing expenditures of travel expenses for OLEM senior officials and agency staff as well as Tribal members of the TWAR SC.

Applicants should provide a cost-effective plan to provide travel support for additional, non-TWAR SC in-person events such as conferences, meetings, etc. These events must provide opportunities for TWAR SC members to engage with other Tribes, Tribal partnership groups, the National Tribal Caucus, EPA, and other stakeholders; promote information exchange relevant to OLEM program areas; and align with the mission of the TWAR SC and the goals of this cooperative agreement.

Additionally, EPA encourages applicants to propose a cost-effective approach to provide support to Tribal members of the TWAR SC outside of the context of meetings with EPA. Examples include periodic and ad-hoc conference calls, assistance in drafting responses or otherwise supporting the development of TWAR SC input to EPA on policy and technical issues, etc.

The successful applicant will work in collaboration with the TWAR SC, OLEM, and the Office of International and Tribal Affairs to connect Tribal partnership groups, including the National Tribal Caucus, as appropriate.

For more information on the current Tribal Waste and Response Steering Committee.

Element 3: Develop and deliver at least 10 training courses for Tribal environmental professionals to address OLEM-related programs:

During the five-year cooperative agreement, the successful applicant will hold at least 10 trainings for Tribal environmental staff. Training should provide special and practical knowledge of a specialized subject area through a variety of cost-effective methods as specified in the application. For example, the courses may feature instructors from Tribal programs, federal agencies, state and local governments, stakeholders, and partners, and use formats which include a mix of lectures, small group activities, hands-on trainings, and Tribal case studies/best practices. Trainings should cover topics of relevance to Tribal environmental professionals relating to responsible solid and hazardous waste management practices, Tribal cleanup codes/regulations, underground storage tanks (UST), brownfields, and other topics that meet Tribal needs related to OLEM's programs. EPA encourages applicants to consider virtual and in-person trainings as well as utilizing a combination of those techniques to deliver the trainings.

If the applicant proposes in-person trainings for this element, the applicant should work with OLEM to determine locations in the lower 48 states and Alaska. The training plan should include a need-based travel scholarship program (including selection criteria) for Tribal trainees for any in-person trainings. In-person trainings are not a required aspect of this element.

If the applicant proposes virtual trainings for this element, the applicant must describe their plan to engage attendees and ensure that the virtual experience is as successful as possible. This could include information on a specific type of virtual platform that provides effective engagement opportunities, proven practices that keep participants focused and active, etc. Virtual trainings are not a required aspect of this element. The applicant must demonstrate that costs and resources for virtual participation provide benefits to Tribes and will be implemented effectively.

Applicants should also describe how they will work with OLEM to identify and choose training topics, including soliciting Tribal input on topic ideas. Applicants should also describe how they will evaluate the success of each training and adjust trainings to incorporate lessons learned and best practices over the course of the five-year cooperative agreement.

EPA will evaluate applications on the cost-effectiveness of the proposed approach to delivering training, including criteria for awarding full or partial travel scholarships and ensuring active virtual participation.

Element 4: Create online resources to help Tribes access and share OLEM-related information and policies affecting Tribal communities:

The successful applicant will develop and maintain a website for the activities of the cooperative agreements. Applicants should describe how this website will provide Tribal environmental professionals with access to research, studies, training materials, information, and other resources.

Funds under this agreement may also be used to support electronic newsletters, peer-to-peer mentoring activities, and other resources that provide OLEM-related information to Tribes. A mentoring program could include face-to-face interactions, site visits, video chats, phone calls, online resources, etc.

PROJECT TWO (Funds awarded under Project Two are limited to supporting Superfund-related, emergency management-related, and legacy hard-rock mining-related activities.)

Element 1: Include Superfund-related and emergency management-related sessions and activities in the annual Tribal training conference - Tribal Lands and Environment Forum (TLEF):

Applicants should describe their approach to developing and implementing a Superfund track and a Superfund-related field trip (at conference location, if possible) at the annual TLEF, including the role the TSFWG will play. This plan should address how the Superfund track and field trip will increase understanding of and involvement in the Superfund remedial program and provide a forum for presentations relating to research (including health effects) into hazardous substance issues that impact Tribal lands, and research results and products developed under *Project Two: Element 3* (described below). The plan should include opportunities for information sharing, exchange, and networking among Tribal representatives and between Tribes and EPA staff at the TLEF. For example, sessions may provide opportunities for Tribes to share lessons learned and experiences related to their involvement in the Superfund process and to build capacity to help Tribes meaningfully engage in the process and with EPA.

Applicants should describe their approach to developing and implementing emergency response and emergency management sessions at the annual TLEF. Sessions can cover information and technical assistance designed to educate Tribes, build Tribal capacity, and assist Tribes as they prepare for emergency responses to releases of hazardous substances, pollutants, or contaminants, including chemical, oil, radiological, biological, or hazardous materials. Applicants can also consider including emergency response-management long form trainings, field trips, scenarios, table-top exercises, or other activities.

Applicants should describe their approach to identifying topics (including examples) and speakers, as well as their approach to developing a need-based travel scholarship program that includes selection criteria. Please see *Project One: Element 1* (above) for specific information on the TLEF. Applicants may also propose other activities that would enhance the Superfund track and emergency management sessions and activities at the annual TLEF.

Element 2: Support Tribal members of the Tribal Superfund Working Group and the Tribal Superfund Working Group Advisory Council

Applicants should describe their plan to provide administrative and logistical support for the TSFWG and the TSFWG Advisory Council (TSFWG AC). For example, support may include maintaining the network's list serve and web presence, as well as assisting with coordination between the TWAR SC and the TSFWG AC and between the TSFWG and EPA. The plan should discuss the applicant's approach to developing a mechanism for tracking TSFWG areas of expertise and interest, where and how Tribal members are engaged in the Superfund pipeline at Superfund sites of Tribal interest, and future topics for meetings, conference calls, research areas, etc. (see *Project Two, Elements 1, 3 and 4).* The application should include a plan to promote participation in the TSFWG, to build and maintain a geographically diverse network, and to engage Tribes who have not yet been involved in the TSFWG, but who have an interest in cleaning up sites contaminated with hazardous substances. Applicants may also propose other activities to support TSFWG and TSFWG AC.

Applicants should describe their plan to co-host four (quarterly) meetings per year between the TSFWG, EPA, and other Tribal environmental professionals, as appropriate. One of those four meetings per year should be dedicated to sharing research products developed under this cooperative agreement or seeking Tribal input on future research areas (see *Project Two: Element 3* below). The applicant should work with OLEM on topics, speakers, and agendas for the other three meetings per year.

Element 3: Build Tribal capacity to meaningfully engage in the Superfund process, conduct research, develop research products, and disseminate results to Tribal members of the Tribal Superfund Working Group (TSFWG):

EPA works closely with Tribes to address contaminated sites and Tribes play a critical role in the Superfund process in the identification of contaminated sites, the remedial investigation / feasibility study (RI/FS) process, cleanup decisions, and remedy implementation.

Applicants should describe their approach to collaborating with members of the TSFWG to conduct research to identify and foster resolution of current and emerging Superfund-related issues that are important to Tribes, that help EPA and Tribes work more effectively to manage Superfund sites, and that support meaningful Tribal participation in the Superfund process. Applicants should provide a plan for developing, in collaboration with EPA and the Tribes, a prioritized list of topics or areas for more in-depth investigation in Year 1 of the cooperative agreement, followed by a detailed analysis of at least one topic area per year for the remaining four years of the cooperative agreement (Years 2-5).

Applicants should describe how they will ensure that the results of this research will be provided to Tribes in a format that is most useful and beneficial to them, that fosters dialogue among Tribes and between Tribes and EPA, and that, when implemented, builds Tribal capacity and supports meaningful Tribal participation throughout the Superfund process. The research plan should result in the development and production of research products that achieve this goal.

Applicants should describe their approach to developing and implementing a cost-effective plan to conduct research, develop research products that reflect research conclusions, and disseminate results.

Research – Phase 1: Identify and prioritize research topics (Year 1)
Applicants should describe a robust plan for identifying, analyzing, and prioritizing a list of topics in Year 1 to pursue researching over the 5-year period. The plan should include a description of the process for involving Tribes in developing the priority list, including whether the applicant intends to use surveys, focus groups, or needs assessments.

Examples of potential areas for additional research include, but are not limited to:

- Building technical and/or program capacity related to identifying, assessing, and evaluating hazardous substances risks and employing innovative or alternative treatment technologies to address those risks.
- Identifying best practices for sharing and integrating indigenous knowledge in the remedial process.

- Communicating risk related to the detection, assessment, and evaluation of the effects of hazardous substances on Tribal lands.
- Understanding roles and responsibilities among participants in the Superfund process.
- Promoting coordination and partnership with co-regulators (e.g., EPA, local and state government, etc.) and other stakeholders to provide for more effective remedies for sites on Tribal lands.
- Investigating and reducing barriers – institutional, technological, regulatory, administrative, financial, policy-related, etc. – that prevent effective implementation of the Superfund cleanup program or that inhibit meaningful Tribal engagement in the process.
- Developing community involvement tools and resources for engaging Tribal communities or citizens under the National Contingency Plan.
- Building administrative capacity to manage grants and other financial vehicles to support Tribal engagement in the Superfund process.
- Identifying and incorporating new and emerging science, including contaminants of emerging concern, into cleanup activities.
- Identifying specific areas within the cleanup enforcement program to improve program and site-specific coordination and data sharing, promote innovation, and maximize efficiencies.
- Increasing Tribal staff knowledge and experience with evaluating climate adaptation issues and environmental justice concerns.
- Disseminating information about EPA guidance and initiatives applicable to Tribal participation in remediation of Superfund sites.
- Researching Tribal Superfund programs to identify best practices/case examples.
- Developing materials to showcase replicable examples of how Tribes have engaged in discrete phases of the Superfund pipeline, including tools and resources (checklists, guides, etc) to build Tribal capacity to engage in the process.

Superfund issues are constantly evolving, and research topics are not limited to the above activities. EPA encourages applicants to propose additional areas of research based on their analysis of Tribal interests and seeks applications that show an ability to identify and adapt to new issues facing Tribes as they engage in the Superfund program.

Research – Phase 2: Conduct research, develop research products, and disseminate results (Years 2-5)

Applicants should describe their approach to working with EPA and Tribes to conduct an in-depth investigation of at least four topic areas (approximately one topic area per year of the cooperative agreement after the initial prioritization effort in Year 1).

Applicants should describe a plan that includes an approach to develop a variety of resources and tools that incorporate and address research results conducted under this cooperative agreement. The plan should include information on how the applicant intends to work in collaboration with the TSFWG to identify and develop content, as well as examples and formats for this information that would be the most useful for Tribes.

The successful applicant should describe how research results and information will be shared with Tribes in the TSFWG. Examples of information-sharing mechanisms could include, but are not limited to:

- Online information (website).

- Webinars.
- Tools and resources (checklists, templates, model documents, etc).
- Case studies.
- Sessions at the TLEF.
- Conference calls.
- In-person meetings.

The applicant's plan should include spending at least one TSFWG quarterly meeting each year (for a total of 5 meetings over the cooperative agreement period of performance) discussing research and/or research results. See *Project Two: Element 2* (above) for more information.

Applicants are invited to suggest additional research areas, information-sharing mechanisms, research products and features that could enhance Tribal capacity-building. For example, funds under this agreement may be used to support peer-to-peer mentoring activities. A mentoring program could include face-to-face interactions, site visits, video chats, phone calls, online resources, etc.

Element 4: Develop and deliver at least three in-person site visits for Tribal members of the TSFWG:

In-person site visits
Applicants should describe a cost-effective plan describing how they will work in collaboration with EPA and the TSFWG to develop and implement at least three multiple-day meetings, co-sponsored by EPA. These site visits should be focused around a tour or visit to a Superfund site or other contaminated site of interest to a Tribe or where a Tribe is engaged in the Superfund process or cleanup activities at the site. The meeting should include opportunities for the Tribe to describe their interest and involvement at the site and share with attendees information, lessons learned, and best practices about their engagement at the site. The plan should include a description of how the applicant will choose the meeting location each year in collaboration with members of the TSFWG and EPA.

Examples of activities that may be part of the plan include how the applicant intends to develop an agenda, including site tours and information sessions. The visit should also include activities that further the research plan described in *Project Two: Element 3* (above), including gathering research and/or sharing research results and products. The plan should describe how the applicant will foster Tribal capacity building and information sharing, identify key content, share research results, and facilitate and moderate sessions during the event. Applicants should describe how they will collaborate with the TSFWG and EPA on these activities and may propose additional activities that enhance the in-person site visit.

This plan should include a need-based travel scholarship program (including selection criteria) for travel support for Tribal attendees.

Applicants should describe a plan to evaluate the success of the site visit to increase Tribal capacity and explore opportunities for improvement.

Element 5: Host at least four virtual Tribal legacy hard-rock mining meetings:

Applicants should describe a plan to co-host at least four virtual meetings over the duration of the cooperative agreement for Tribal representatives interested in issues related to legacy hard-rock mining response actions, starting in Year 2 of the cooperative agreement. The goal of these meetings is to create a forum for networking, information sharing and discussions among Tribes and between Tribes and EPA. The focus of these meetings should be on response actions and related activities addressing legacy hard-rock mining sites. Meetings may include topics involving critical minerals, site reuse, inventory, or risk communication but will not focus on current or future mining or permitting issues nor the National Environmental Policy Act.

The applicant should describe a plan to work with OLEM and the Office of Mountains, Deserts and Plains (OMDP) to identify, recruit, and build a network of Tribal representatives interested in mining issues in Year 1 of the cooperative agreement and deliver four virtual meetings (one meeting per year) over the remaining four years of the cooperative agreement (Years 2-5). Tribal representatives may include Tribal staff, as well as members and leaders from Tribal communities impacted by legacy mining. Additional participants may include other federal agencies, state representatives, and other stakeholders, as needed. The plan should describe how the applicant will host the meeting and how they will work with EPA to recruit attendees, identify key content, develop an agenda, select guest speakers, and facilitate and moderate sessions during the meeting.

The applicant must also describe their plan to engage virtual attendees and ensure that the virtual experience is as successful as possible. This could include information on a specific type of virtual platform that provides effective engagement opportunities, proven practices that keep participants focused and active, etc.

Element 6: Maintain and enhance the Tribal Lands Assistance Center website for Project Two activities:

Applicants should describe a plan to maintain and enhance the Tribal Lands Assistance Center, a website that houses information related to Project 2 of this cooperative agreement. The plan should explain how the applicant intends to continue to provide Tribal environmental professionals with access to Superfund, emergency management, and legacy hard-rock mining-related subject matter, including research results and products created under *Project Two: Element 3* (described above); information; and other useful resources for Tribes interested in building capacity and engaging in the Superfund process and emergency management activities. Applicants may propose additional activities that would provide cost-effective enhancements for the web site.

1.C. Eligible Use of Funds

Project One:

Eligible uses of grant funds include direct costs necessary to conduct research, training and technical assistance identified in the approved workplan. This includes costs for personnel, technical experts, materials, supplies, facilities rentals, audio visual equipment, registration, managing conference logistics, travel expenses, and conference event transportation expenses. Travel expenses for trainees may include transportation, lodging and per diem only provided the

trainee does not charge another federal grant for the same expenses. Stipends to compensate trainees for time spent in training are not allowable costs.

Project Two:

Funds awarded under §311(c) of CERCLA must be used for research with respect to the detection, assessment, and evaluation of the effects on and risks to human health of hazardous substances and detection of hazardous substances in the environment. As provided at 2 CFR 200.87 "Research" means all research activities, both basic and applied. "Research" is defined as a systematic study directed toward fuller scientific knowledge or understanding of the subject studied. The term research also includes activities involving the training of individuals in research techniques where such activities utilize the same facilities as other research and development activities and where such activities are not included in the instruction function. EPA has interpreted "research" under CERCLA §311(c) to include study and dissemination of information that extends to socioeconomic, institutional, and public policy issues, as well as the natural sciences. *Research activities as described under this cooperative agreement should not be considered academic in nature nor including any need for a laboratory.* Rather, funding is available to provide research assistance to help Tribes better understand, evaluate, and respond to risks from hazardous substances in Indian country.

Funding under this cooperative agreement may support a recipient's eligible and allowable direct costs incurred under an approved work plan plus allowable indirect costs, in accordance with established EPA and OMB policies and regulations.

Eligible uses of grant funds under this funding opportunity include direct costs necessary to provide research support, including training in research techniques. Costs for disseminating research results through conference calls, meetings, and electronic formats are allowable as are site visits. This includes costs for personnel, technical experts, materials, supplies, room rentals, travel, and transportation expenses**.** Travel expenses for trainees may include transportation, lodging and per diem only provided the trainee does not charge another federal grant for the same expenses. Stipends to compensate trainees for time spent in training are not allowable costs. Travel expenses for federal employees is not an eligible cost under the cooperative agreement.

1.D. Funding Restrictions

As required by CERCLA §104(k)(5)(E)(a), EPA will reduce the amount of allowable indirect costs for the cooperative agreement for Project One due to the 5% limit on administrative costs for brownfields work funded under CERCLA §104(k)(7). This reduction will reflect the proportion of brownfields appropriations that will be used to finance Project One. EPA will negotiate the reduced indirect cost rate with the successful applicant following selection.

There are no restrictions on indirect costs for the cooperative agreement for Project Two.

1.E. Prohibited Use of Funds

Project One and Two –General Prohibitions

The recipient may not use EPA financial assistance for costs that are unallowable under 2 CFR Part 200, Subpart E and EPA's Guidance on Selected Items of Cost.

Project One

Funds awarded under Section 104(k)(7) of CERCLA are intended for research, training and technical assistance activities set forth in the cooperative agreement. These funds may **not** be used for:

1. Projects that duplicate grants awarded under other EPA brownfields grant programs described in CFDA Nos. 66.818, Brownfields Assessment, Revolving Loan Funds, and Cleanup Grants and 66.815, Brownfields Job Training Grant or other federally funded environmental training, research, or technical assistance programs in their target community(ies). Please see the EPA's Brownfields website for more details.
2. Conducting site assessments or actual cleanups.
3. Construction and land acquisition.
4. Federal cost-share requirement (for example, a cost share required by other federal funds) unless authorized by statute.
5. Management fees or similar charges in excess of the direct costs in the budget for the cooperative agreement. The term "management fees" or similar charges refers to expenses added to the direct costs to accumulate a reserve fund for ongoing business expenses, unforeseen liabilities, or for other similar costs that are not allowable as direct costs.
6. Stipends to compensate trainees for time spent in training are not allowable costs. Travel expenses for trainees may include transportation, lodging, and per diem only.
7. A penalty or fine.

Project Two

Funding awarded under CERCLA 311(c) is only available for hazardous substance-related research. For the purposes of Project Two, the term "hazardous substances" does not include petroleum as provided in CERCLA 101(14).

Funds awarded under this agreement may not be commingled with other funding sources including funds EPA awards for the cooperative agreement to carry out Project One.

1.F. EPA Strategic Plan Linkage

The activities to be funded under this funding opportunity support EPA's FY 2022-2026 EPA Strategic Plan. Awards made under this funding opportunity will support Goal 6: Safeguard and Revitalize Communities, Objective 6.1: Clean Up and Restore Land for Productive Uses and Healthy Communities, Objective 6.2: Reduce Waste and Prevent Environmental Contamination, and Objective 6.3: Prepare for and Respond to Environmental Emergencies. This work also supports Strategy 4: Strengthen Tribal, State, and Local Partnerships and Enhance Engagement. Specifically, the activities to be funded under this funding opportunity will be linked to EPA's

Strategic Plan consistent with EPA's current priorities for cleaning up contaminated sites and returning land back to communities, preparing for and responding to emergencies, preventing contamination, managing waste, strengthening partnerships with Tribal governments, and engaging the public. Applicants must explain in their application how their project will further these current priorities.

1.G. Measuring Environmental Results: Anticipated Outcomes/Outputs

Pursuant to EPA Order 5700.7A1 *"*Environmental Results under EPA Assistance Agreements*,"* EPA requires that all grant applicants and recipients adequately address environmental outputs and outcomes. Outputs and outcomes differ both in their nature and in how they are measured. Applicants must discuss environmental outputs and outcomes in their proposed workplan.

1. ***Outcomes.*** The term "outcome" refers to 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, must be quantitative, and may not necessarily be achievable within an assistance agreement funding period.

EPA anticipates outcomes from the project expected to be awarded under this funding opportunity will include, but are not limited to the following:

a. **Project One:**

   i. Improved communication, relationships, collaboration, and coordination among Tribal environmental professionals and between Tribes and EPA in OLEM program areas.
   ii. Increased capacity and technical knowledge of Tribal environmental professionals on a wide variety of existing and emerging issues related to OLEM programs.
   iii. Increased participation in and implementation of OLEM programs by federally recognized Tribes.
   iv. Improved implementation of OLEM programs by Tribal environmental professionals and increased compliance at OLEM-related facilities in Indian country.
   v. Enhanced understanding by EPA staff, management and leadership of the unique needs and circumstances of Tribes related to OLEM programs through engagement with Tribal environmental professionals.

b. **Project Two:**

   i. Improved communication, relationships, collaboration, and coordination among all Superfund site stakeholders and participants (Tribal, state, responsible party, EPA, etc.) working through the cleanup process at a site in Indian country or of interest to a Tribe.

ii. Improved communication, relationships, collaboration, and coordination among Tribal environmental professionals and between Tribes and EPA in Superfund, emergency management, and mining program areas.
iii. Increased capacity and technical knowledge of Tribal environmental professionals related to the Superfund remedial and removal programs, emergency management, and legacy hard-rock mining sites.
iv. Increased participation of Tribes in all phases of the Superfund pipeline.
v. Increased participation in and implementation of emergency management programs by Tribal environmental professionals.
vi. Enhanced understanding by EPA staff, management and leadership of the unique needs and circumstances of Tribes related to Superfund, emergency management and mining programs through engagement with Tribal environmental professionals.

2. ***Outputs.*** The term "output" means an environmental activity, effort, and/or associated work products related to an environmental goal or 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 funding opportunity may include the following:

   a. **Project One:**

      i. Delivered five successful Tribal Lands and Environment Forum training conferences.
      ii. Delivered at least 6 successful TWAR SC meetings per year and provided technical, organizational, administrative, and logistical support for the TWAR SC.
      iii. Delivered at least 10 successful trainings to Tribal environmental professionals on OLEM-related topics of interest to Tribes.
      iv. Maintained the website and provided other useful online resources to assist and support Tribal environmental professionals to build their capacity in OLEM program areas.
      v. Provided successful opportunities for effective engagement, communication, relationship-building, and information exchange among Tribes, and between Tribes and EPA, on OLEM- program issues.

   b. **Project Two:**

      i. Delivered a successful Superfund track, sessions, and field trips and emergency management-related sessions and activities at five TLEF conferences.
      ii. Delivered four (quarterly) TSFWG meetings per year and provided technical, organizational, administrative, and logistical support for the TSFWG.
      iii. Delivered at least three successful in-person TSFWG site visits for Tribal members of the TSFWG.
      iv. Expanded and diversified Tribal membership in the TSFWG.

v. Identified and prioritized research areas related to increasing Tribes' capacity to meaningfully engage in the Superfund remedial program, conducted in-depth research on four topics, and created and disseminated research products to the TSFWG and other Tribal environmental professionals.
vi. Built a network of Tribal representatives interested in response actions at legacy hard-rock mining sites and delivered at least four virtual meetings between Tribes, EPA, and other partners and stakeholders to discuss topics related to response actions at legacy hard-rock mining sites.
vii. Maintained and enhanced the Tribal Lands Assistance Center website to provide online materials, information, tools, and research products developed under this cooperative agreement.
viii. Provided successful opportunities for effective engagement, communication, relationship-building, and information exchange among Tribes, and between Tribes and EPA, on Superfund, emergency management and hard-rock mining program issues.

1.H. Statutory Authorities

The statutory authorities for assistance agreements awarded by EPA under this funding opportunity are as follows:

Project One**:**
Solid Waste Disposal Act of 1976, Section 8001(a) and (b) as amended by the Hazardous and Solid Waste Amendments of 1984 (P.L. 98-616); Appropriations Act Public Law 105-276; Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act (CERCLA) of 1980, Section 104(k)(7) as amended by the Small Business Liability Relief and Brownfields Revitalization Act (Brownfields Law) and the Brownfields Utilization, Investment, and Local Development Act (BUILD Act) of 2018.

Project Two:
CERCLA Section 311(c), as amended.

1.I. Minority Serving Institutions

EPA recognizes that it is important to engage all available minds to address the environmental challenges the nation faces. At the same time, EPA seeks to expand the environmental conversation by including members of communities which may have not previously participated in such dialogues to participate in EPA programs. For this reason, EPA strongly encourages all eligible applicants identified in Section 3, including minority serving institutions (MSIs), to apply under this funding opportunity.

For purposes of this funding opportunity, the following are considered MSIs:
1. Historically Black Colleges and Universities, as defined by the Higher Education Act (20 U.S.C. §1061(2)). A list of these schools can be found at Historically Black Colleges and Universities.

2. Tribal College or University (TCU), as defined by the Higher Education Act (20 U.S.C. §1059c(b)(3) and (d)(1)). A list of these schools can be found at Tribal College or University.
3. Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs), as defined by the Higher Education Act (20 U.S.C. §1101a(a)(5)). A list of these schools can be found at Hispanic-Serving Institutions .
4. Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander-Serving Institutions; (AANAPISIs), as defined by the Higher Education Act (20 U.S.C. §1059g(b)(2)). A list of these schools can be found at Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander-Serving Institutions.
5. Predominately Black Institutions (PBIs), as defined by the Higher Education Act of 2008, 20 U.S.C. §1059e(b)(6). A list of these schools can be found at Predominately Black Institutions.

SECTION 2 - AWARD INFORMATION

2.A. Amount of Funding

The total estimated funding available under this competitive funding opportunity is **$3,480,000** subject to the availability of funds, quality of applications received, and other applicable considerations. The total estimated funding for Project One is **$1,565,000**. In FY25, the Project One maximum value shall not exceed **$313,000**. The total estimated funding for Project Two is **$1,915,000**. In FY25, the Project Two maximum value shall not exceed **$383,000**.

In appropriate circumstances, EPA reserves the right to partially fund applications by funding discrete portions or phases 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 or portion thereof, was evaluated and selected for award and therefore maintains the integrity of the competition and selection process.

EPA reserves the right to make additional awards under this competition, consistent with Agency policy and guidance if additional funding becomes available. Any additional selections for awards will be made no later than six months from the date of original selection decisions. EPA reserves the right to make no awards under this funding opportunity.

2.B. Type of Funding

EPA anticipates awarding **two separate cooperative agreements to one successful applicant** resulting from this competitive funding opportunity. Cooperative agreements awarded under this competition will be funded incrementally subject to the availability of funds, satisfactory performance, and other applicable considerations.

Cooperative agreements permit 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 this project will include:

1. Close monitoring of the recipient's performance to verify the results.
2. Collaborating during performance of the scope of work.
3. In accordance with 2 CFR 200.318, as appropriate, reviewing of proposed procurements.

4. Reviewing qualifications of key personnel. (EPA will not select employees or contractors employed by the award recipient).
5. Reviewing and commenting on reports prepared under the cooperative agreement. (The final decision on the content of reports rests with the recipient.)
6. Reviewing outputs and outcomes to ensure substantial progress has been made in accordance with the cooperative agreement terms and conditions.

2.C. Project Period

The estimated start date for projects resulting from this funding opportunity is January 1, 2025, through December 31, 2029. All project activities must be completed within the negotiated project performance period of five years.

SECTION 3 - ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

Note: Additional provisions that apply to this section can be found at EPA Solicitation Clauses. These provisions are important for applying to this funding opportunity and applicants must review them when preparing applications for this funding opportunity. If you are unable to access these provisions electronically at the website above, please contact the EPA point of contact listed in this funding opportunity (see Section 7) to obtain the provisions.

3.A. Eligible Entities

Consistent with Assistance Listing No. 66.808, 66.813, 66.814, 66.816, and the EPA's Assistance Agreement Competition Policy (EPA Order 5700.5A1), competition under this funding opportunity is being limited to a subset of eligible applicants. Applications will be accepted from federally recognized Tribes and inter-Tribal consortia, public and private non-profit universities and colleges, and other public or private non-profit organizations[1].

For-profit firms are not eligible.

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.

3.B. Cost Sharing or Matching

Cost-sharing or matching is not required as a condition of eligibility for this competition.

[1] 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 non-profit organization(s) as defined by 2 CFR 200.1, public or nonprofit Institutions of Higher Education are, nevertheless, eligible to submit applications under this NOFO. 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.

3.C. Threshold Eligibility Criteria

Applications must meet the following threshold eligibility criteria, **by the time of application submission**. Threshold eligibility criteria are evaluated on a pass or fail basis. Only those applications that **specifically address and pass Items 1-7 below** will be evaluated against the evaluation criteria in Section 5.A. of this funding opportunity. 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.

The threshold eligibility criteria are:

1. Provide information that demonstrates how you are an eligible entity as described above in Section 3.A. You must provide documentation, as an attachment to the application, indicating nonprofit status. Failure to do so may render your application ineligible for review.
2. Applications must address all elements under both Projects as described in Section 1.B. of this funding opportunity. Applicants must submit separate application packages for each project.
3. As provided in Section 204 of the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act, applicants must propose a process and criteria for selecting Tribal TWAR SC members that ensures that they are elected Tribal officials or Tribal employees designated by the Tribe's elected leaders to represent their Tribe on the TWAR SC.
4. The federal share of the proposed Project One total budget may not exceed the maximum value of **$1,565,000.** Applications requesting assistance funding in excess of this value will not be considered.
5. The federal share of the proposed Project Two total budget may not exceed **$1,915,000**. Applications requesting assistance funding in excess of this amount will not be considered.
6. Applications must substantially comply with the application submission instructions and requirements set forth in Section 4 of this funding opportunity or they will be rejected. Pages exceeding the page limit described in Section 4 for the Narrative Proposal, and attachments not specifically required, will not be reviewed. Applicants are advised that readability is of paramount importance and should take precedence in application format, including selecting a legible font type and size for use in the application.
7. In addition, initial applications must be submitted through Grants.gov as specified in Section 4 of this funding opportunity (except in the limited circumstances where another mode of submission is specifically allowed as explained in Section 4) on or before the application submission deadline published in Section 4 of this funding opportunity. Applications received through Grants.gov 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 issues 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 as acceptable reason to consider a submission outside of Grants.gov. Applications submitted through Grants.gov will be time and date stamped electronically. If you have not received a confirmation of receipt from EPA (not Grants.gov) within 30 days of the application deadline, please contact **Erika Wilson** at **wilson.erika@epa.gov**. Failure to do so may result in your application not being reviewed.

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.

SECTION 4 - APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

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

4.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 the Technical Issues with Submission section below.

4.B. Grants.gov Submission Instructions for Applicants

SAM.gov 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.

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.

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.

Application Submission Deadline
Your organization's AOR must submit your complete application package electronically to EPA through Grants.gov no later than 11:59 PM ET on **October 10, 2024**. 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 time and date deadline will be deemed ineligible and not be considered.

Application Materials
The following forms and documents are required for applications under this funding opportunity. A separate application package consisting of the documents listed below must be submitted for each project.

Mandatory Documents:

- Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424) – See *4.D.1*, below.
- Budget Information for Non-Construction Programs (SF-424A).
- Assurances for Non-Construction Programs (SF-424B).
- EPA Key Contacts Form 5700-54.
- EPA Form 4700-4 – Preaward Compliance Review Report.
- Narrative Proposal (Project Narrative Attachment Form as stated in grants.gov) – 15-page limit. See *4.D.6*, below.

4.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 **EPA-OLEM-OCPA-24-03** in the subject line to wilson.erika@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.

4.D. Content of Application Submission

1. SF-424.

2. Budget Information for Non-Construction Programs (SF-424A).

3. Assurances for Non-Construction Programs (SF-424B).

4. EPA Key Contacts Form 5700-54.

5. EPA Form 4700-4 – Preaward Compliance Review Report.

6. Narrative Proposal (Includes a and b, below. There is a 15-page, single-spaced, page limit for the narrative proposal. Excess pages will not be reviewed.)

    a. **Cover Letter.** The cover letter must identify the applicant and provide a contact for communication with EPA. The cover letter must be written on your organization's official letterhead and be signed by an official with the authority to commit your organization to the proposed project. The cover letter must include:

        i. Project Title: Indicate whether the application package is for Project One or Project Two.

        ii. Applicant Name.

        iii. Eligible Entity Type: Identify applicant's organization type from Section 3.A.

        iv. UEI Number: List the organization's UEI number.

        v. Contacts: Include name, title, address, email address, phone number. You can list both a primary and an administrative contact.

        vi. Project Period: Length of proposed project period (must not exceed five years).

        vii. EPA Funding Requested: Specify the total amount you are requesting from EPA. The total funding requested for Project One may not exceed maximum value of $1,565,000, **excluding any in-kind contribution or match**. The total funding requested for Project Two may not exceed maximum value of $1,915,000, **excluding any in-kind contribution or match**. Applications requesting federal assistance funding in excess of these values will not be considered.

        viii. Strategic Plan Elements: State the goals and objectives from the EPA's FY 2022-2026 Strategic Plan identified above in Section 1.F.

ix. Cooperative Partners**:** Provide names and phone numbers of individuals and organizations that have agreed to participate in the implementation of the project, if any.

b. **Narrative Proposal.** Provide the information below on how the applicant will implement and conduct its project by addressing each of the evaluation criteria in Section 5 of this funding opportunity. The Narrative Proposal must include:
   i Project Description.
   ii Programmatic Capability and Past Performance.
   iii Performance Measurement: Anticipated Outcomes and Outputs.
   iv Budget/Resources.

Project Description

The project description should provide information on how the applicant will implement and conduct its project as described in Section 1 of this funding opportunity and discuss how the application cost-effectively addresses each of the evaluation criteria in Section 5 of this funding opportunity (Project One submissions must address the Project One criteria and Project Two submissions must address the Project Two criteria.). Provide concrete examples of specific work to be completed (i.e., issue topics and the types of training, facilitation and products that will be provided), including milestones. The description should summarize the applicant's overall vision for the project as well as their experience and expertise in meeting each of the elements.

Programmatic Capability and Past Performance

Applications should demonstrate the following for Projects One and Two.

Organizational Knowledge, Experience and Expertise

1. Summarize your organization's knowledge about Tribal land cleanup, prevention, and response issues and challenges. Include your organization's experience with working with Tribes and engaging them to successfully deal with these challenges.
2. Provide information on your organization's experience and plan for successfully achieving the objectives of the proposed project.
3. Describe your staff expertise/qualifications, staff knowledge and resources (or the ability to obtain them) to successfully achieve the goals and objectives of the proposed project.
4. Identify all proposed partnerships and stakeholder groups that will be involved in the project. Describe what each group's role will be in the project staffing, funding, design, and implementation.
5. Summarize your organization's experience and expertise in planning and implementing a large national conference of similar size, scale and topics as the Tribal Lands and Environment Forum (as described in Section 1.B.). Applicants should provide a list of the conferences, of similar size and scope, that the applicant managed in the past five years. The list should include a short summary of the applicant's contributions to the management of each conference.

Past Performance

Submit a list of federally and/or non-federally funded assistance agreements (assistance agreements include Federal grants and cooperative agreements but not Federal contracts) that your organization

performed within the last three years (no more than 5 agreements, and preferably EPA agreements) and describe:

1. Whether, and how, you were able to successfully complete and manage those agreements.
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 (and if not, explain why not) and whether you submitted acceptable final technical reports under the agreements.
3. Your organizational experience and plan for timely and successfully achieving the objectives of the proposed project, staff expertise/qualifications, staff knowledge, and the resources (or the ability to obtain them) to successfully achieve the goals of the proposed project.

In evaluating applicants under these factors in Section 5, 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 (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 will receive a score of 0 for these factors.

Performance Measurement: Anticipated Outcomes and Outputs

Anticipated Outcomes. Specify the expected environmental outcomes from the project, including those described in Section 1.G. of this funding opportunity. Discuss how you propose to track and measure your progress in achieving the project outcomes and results.

Anticipated Outputs. Identify the expected project outputs, including those described in Section 1.G. of this funding opportunity and describe how you will track and measure your progress in achieving the expected project outputs. Outputs, quantitative or qualitative, must be measurable during the project performance period.

Budget/Resources

Provide detailed and itemized budget applications. A separate budget for Project One and Project Two should be submitted that clearly explains how funds will be used for each budget category and how it relates to the project objective. Indicate what portion of the cost EPA will pay, and what portion the applicant or other partners will pay. Refer to funding restrictions in Section 1.D. and Section 1.E. of this funding opportunity and EPA's Interim General Budget Development Guidance for Applicants and Recipients of EPA Financial Assistance for more information.

1. Include a cost estimate for each Element Number.
2. Sample budget table: the table format below can be used to present how you plan to allocate EPA grant funds to the specific tasks described above. Specify the costs by budget category. Include only EPA grant funds in this table. Activities not supported by the grant (e.g. in-kind contributions) **should not** be included in the budget table.
3. Provide information on your approach, procedures, and controls for ensuring that awarded grant funds will be expended in a timely and efficient manner.

4. 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 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 may not 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 scope of work.
5. Include estimates of annual Program Income from conference registration fees or other sources.

EPA encourages the use of the sample table format below and replacing the element number outlined in the table with the actual title of the element.

Sample Format for Budget

Budget Categories	**Element 1**	**Element 2**	**Element 3**	**Element 4**	**Element 5**	**Total**
Personnel						
Fringe Benefits						
Contractual Costs						
Travel						
Supplies						
Other (specify including subawards and participant support costs for travel scholarships for Tribal employees and trainees)						
Non-EPA Project Funding, including Program Income (identify funding from other sources, including in-kind resources)						
Total Direct Costs						
Total Allowable Indirect Costs (must include Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement as documentation of federally approved indirect cost rate* [percentage])						
Total federal funding (Total Direct + Total Indirect Costs)						

*Note: When preparing proposed budgets, applicants should depict the full amount of allowable indirect costs under their current Federally approved indirect cost rate and the distribution base for

that rate. EPA will reduce the actual amount of allowable indirect cost during final negotiations for a revised final budget with the successful applicant in order to comply with the 5% limit on administrative costs under CERCLA 104(k)(5)(E)(i). The recipient may apply the unallowable indirect costs to direct costs such that the total amount of the award will not be affected in the revised final budget.

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 **Erika Wilson at wilson.erika@epa.gov**. Failure to do so may result in your application not being reviewed.

4.E. Pre-Application Assistance

In accordance with EPA's Assistance Agreement Competition Policy (EPA Order 5700.5A1), EPA staff will not meet with individual applicants to discuss draft applications, provide informal comments on draft applications, or provide advice to applicants on how to respond to ranking criteria. Applicants are responsible for the contents of their applications/applications. However, consistent with the provisions in the funding opportunity, the EPA will respond to questions from individual applicants regarding threshold eligibility criteria, administrative issues related to the submission of the application, and requests for clarification about any of the language or provisions in the funding opportunity. Please note that applicants should raise any questions they may have about the funding opportunity language to the contact identified in Section 7 as soon as possible, so that any questions about the funding opportunity language may be resolved prior to submitting an application.

In addition, if necessary, the EPA may clarify threshold eligibility issues with applicants prior to making an eligibility determination.

OLEM will host one virtual webinar to assist potential applicants under this competitive funding opportunity. The webinar will be held on **September 11, 2024, at 3:00 pm ET**. The webinar will review the funding opportunity, key sections of the application, and the application process. Potential applicants seeking funding under this competitive funding opportunity are encouraged to participate.

To access the virtual webinar, you must register online. After registration, you will receive a link with instructions on how to attend the webinar. For those unable to attend, the webinar will be recorded and made available upon request.

SECTION 5 - APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

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

5.A. Evaluation Criteria

Each eligible application will be evaluated according to the criteria set forth below. Applicants must directly and explicitly address these criteria as part of their "Narrative Proposal." There are separate criteria for Projects One and Two. Each application will be rated under a points system, with a total

of 100 points possible for each of Projects One and Project Two.

Project One:

Criterion	Maximum Points per Criterion
Project Description. Under this criterion, EPA will evaluate the extent and quality to which the narrative proposal effectively addresses the scope of work activities described in Section 1.B. of this funding opportunity. a. Element 1: Develop, plan, and implement annual Tribal training conference - Tribal Lands and Environment Forum (TLEF). The Agency will evaluate the extent and quality to which the applicant's narrative proposal describes a cost-effective plan to carry out Element 1 as stated in Section 1.B. **(17 points)** b. Element 2: Provide technical and administrative support to the Tribal Waste and Response Steering Committee (TWAR SC): The Agency will evaluate the extent and quality to which the applicant's narrative proposal describes a cost-effective plan to carry out Element 2 as stated in Section 1.B. **(12 points)** c. Element 3: Develop and deliver at least 10 training courses for Tribal environmental professionals to address OLEM-related programs: The Agency will evaluate the extent and quality to which the applicant's narrative proposal describes a cost-effective plan to carry out Element 3 as stated in Section 1.B. **(12 points)** d. Element 4: Create online resources to help Tribes access and share OLEM-related information and policies affecting Tribal communities: The Agency will evaluate the extent and quality to which the applicant's narrative proposal describes a cost-effective plan to carry out Element 4 as stated in Section 1.B. **(9 points)**	50
Programmatic Capability and Past Performance. Under this criterion, applicants will be evaluated based on their ability to successfully complete and manage the proposed project considering their: a. Past performance in successfully completing and managing the assistance agreements identified in response to Section 4.D. of the funding opportunity. **(8 points)** b. Staff expertise/qualifications, staff knowledge, and resources (or the ability to obtain them) to successfully achieve the goals of the proposed project. **(8 points)**	25

c. Organizational experience and plan for timely and successfully achieving the objectives of the proposed project. **(6 points)** d. History of meeting the reporting requirements under the assistance agreements identified in response to Section 4.D. of the funding opportunity, 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 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. **(3 points)** *Note: In evaluating applicants under items a and d 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 past reporting information, please indicate this in the application and you will receive a neutral score for these subfactors (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 will receive a score of 0 for these factors.*	
Performance Measurement: Anticipated Outcomes and Outputs. Under this criterion, EPA will evaluate the extent to which the "Narrative Proposal" realistically describes how the project will lead to measurable environmental results (i.e., amount of pollution prevented; waste reduced, reused, recycled, etc.) and whether it: a. Clearly specifies anticipated environmental outcomes and outputs as described in Section 1.G. **(6 points)** b. Clearly describes the measures of success for the project. Measure of success should be either measures of environmental improvement or should be directly linked to such measures. EPA will look for quantitative and qualitative measurability. **(5 points)** c. Describes how progress towards achieving project outcomes and outputs will be evaluated and measured including a description of any planned reports or other deliverables that measure and track the project success and document achievement of expected outputs identified in Section 1.G. **(4 points)**	15
Budget/Resources. This criterion refers to the proposed budget, in-kind goods and services, and other resources that the applicant outlines to carry out the proposed project. The application will be evaluated based on the extent that:	10

a. The budget is clearly stated, detailed, and appropriate to achieve the project's objectives including how the proposed budget effectively sustains the proposed project and the plan for managing the budget. The budget should include cost estimates for each of the proposed project activities to be conducted using EPA funds. **(5 points)** b. The application clearly states the approach, procedures, and controls for ensuring that awarded grant funds will be expended in a timely and efficient manner. **(3 points)** c. The application identifies partnering organization(s) and documents the relationship with the applicant, for example, through letters of support, joint statements, or principles of agreement signed by other parties. Note that any agreements involving transferring EPA funds to a partner are subject to the regulatory requirements for competition for contracts and EPA's Subaward Policy described in the solicitation clause "contracts and subawards" which is available through the link in Section 6. **(2 points)**	

Project Two:

Criterion	Maximum Points per Criterion
Project Description. Under this criterion, EPA will evaluate the extent and quality to which the narrative proposal effectively addresses the scope of work activities described in Section 1.B. of this funding opportunity. a. Element 1: Include Superfund-related and emergency management-related sessions and activities in the annual Tribal training conference - Tribal Lands and Environment Forum (TLEF). The Agency will evaluate the extent and quality to which the applicant's narrative proposal describes a cost-effective plan to carry out Element 1 as stated in Section 1.B. **(15 points)** b. Element 2: Support Tribal members of the Tribal Superfund Working Group and the Tribal Superfund Working Group Advisory Council: The Agency will evaluate the extent and quality to which the applicant's narrative proposal describes a cost-effective plan to carry out Element 2 as stated in Section 1.B. **(8 points)** *c.* Element 3: Build Tribal capacity to meaningfully engage in the Superfund process, conduct research, develop research products, and disseminate results to Tribal members of the Tribal Superfund Working Group: The Agency will evaluate the extent and quality to which the applicant's narrative proposal demonstrates a plan to incorporate all the requirements of Element 3 as stated in Section 1.B. **(8 points)**	50

d. Element 4: Develop and deliver at least three in-person site visits for Tribal members of the TSFWG: The Agency will evaluate the extent and quality to which the applicant's narrative proposal demonstrates a plan to incorporate all the requirements of Element 4 as stated in Section 1.B. **(8 points)** e. Element 5: Host at least four virtual Tribal legacy hard-rock mining meetings: The Agency will evaluate the extent and quality to which the applicant's narrative proposal demonstrates a plan to incorporate all the requirements of Element 5 as stated in Section 1.B. **(8 points)** f. Element 6: Maintain and enhance the Tribal Lands Assistance Center website for Project Two activities: The Agency will evaluate the extent and quality to which the applicant's narrative proposal demonstrates a plan to incorporate all the requirements of Element 6 as stated in Section 1.B. **(3 points)**	
Programmatic Capability and Past Performance. Under this criterion, applicants will be evaluated based on their ability to successfully complete and manage the proposed project considering their: a. Past performance in successfully completing and managing the assistance agreements identified in response to Section 4.D. of the funding opportunity. **(8 points)** b. Staff expertise/qualifications, staff knowledge, and resources (or the ability to obtain them) to successfully achieve the goals of the proposed project. **(8 points)** c. Organizational experience and plan for timely and successfully achieving the objectives of the proposed project. **(6 points)** d. History of meeting the reporting requirements under the assistance agreements identified in response to Section 4.D. of the funding opportunity 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 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. **(3 points)** *Note: In evaluating applicants under items a and d 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 past reporting information, please indicate this in the application and you will receive a neutral score for these subfactors (a neutral score is half of the total points available in a subset of possible points). If you*	25

do not provide any response for these items, you will receive a score of 0 for these factors.	
Performance Measurement: Anticipated Outcomes and Outputs. Under this criterion, EPA will evaluate the extent to which the "Narrative Proposal" realistically describes how the project will lead to measurable environmental results (i.e., amount of pollution prevented; waste reduced, reused, recycled, etc.) and whether it: a. Clearly specifies anticipated environmental outcomes and outputs as described in Section 1.G. **(6 points)** b. Clearly describes the measures of success for the project. Measure of success should be either measures of environmental improvement or should be directly linked to such measures. EPA will look for quantitative and qualitative measurability. **(5 points)** c. Describes how progress towards achieving project outcomes and outputs will be evaluated and measured including a description of any planned reports or other deliverables that measure and track the project success and, document achievement of expected outputs identified in Section 1.G. **(4 points)**	15
Budget/Resources. This criterion refers to the proposed budget, in-kind goods and services, and other resources that the applicant outlines to carry out the proposed project. The application will be evaluated based on the extent that: a. The budget is clearly stated, detailed, and appropriate to achieve the project's objectives including how the proposed budget effectively sustains the proposed project and the plan for managing the budget. The budget should include cost estimates for each of the proposed project activities to be conducted using EPA funds. **(5 points)** b. The application clearly states the approach, procedures, and controls for ensuring that awarded grant funds will be expended in a timely and efficient manner. **(3 points)** c. The application identifies partnering organization(s) and documents the relationship with the applicant, for example, through letters of support, joint statements, or principles of agreement signed by other parties. Note that any agreements involving transferring EPA funds to a partner are subject to the regulatory requirements for competition for contracts and EPA's Subaward Policy described in the solicitation clause "contracts and subawards" which is available through the link in Section 6. **(2 points)**	10

5.B. Review and Selection Process

All applications for Projects One and Two received by the closing date and time for the submission are first reviewed by EPA staff to determine eligibility for funding based upon compliance with Section 3.C. Only applications determined eligible will be evaluated for technical merit. Each eligible application will be evaluated by a review panel of EPA staff for technical merit, based on the evaluation criteria detailed in Section 5.A. of this funding opportunity. Applications for Projects One and Two will be evaluated separately.

EPA HQ and regions may provide information to the review panel on an applicant's response to the *Programmatic Capability and Past Performance* ranking criterion. This information may take into account the regional and HQ office's experience, if any, with the applicant's performance on grants managed by the region and HQ respectively.

Upon completion of the technical merit evaluation, each application for Projects One and Two will be given an evaluated numerical score, with a total of 100 points possible for each project. The evaluated numerical scores from applications for both projects will be combined for a total of 200 points possible and will be placed in rank order. The review panel will recommend the application with the highest combined evaluated numerical score to the EPA Selection Official for award.

SECTION 6 - AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

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

6.A. Award Notices

EPA anticipates notification to both successful and unsuccessful applicants will be made via electronic mail within 90 days from the application submission deadline.

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 the Grants Management Branch (GMD). 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 an applicant. The award notice, signed by an 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.

6.B. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

1. For a listing and description of general EPA Regulations applicable to the award of assistance agreements.

2. Funding will be awarded as a cooperative agreement. The applicants whose applications are selected will be asked to submit a cooperative agreement application package to EPA. This package will include the application (Standard Form 424), a proposed work plan, a proposed budget, and other required forms. An EPA Project Officer will work with selected grantees to finalize the budget and work plan.

3. Approved cooperative agreements will include terms and conditions that will be binding on the grant recipient. Terms and conditions specify what grantees must do to ensure that grant-related and program-related requirements are met. Terms and conditions may be viewed at: Grant Terms and Conditions.

4. An applicant that receives an award under this funding opportunity is expected to manage assistance agreement funds efficiently and effectively and make sufficient progress towards completing the project activities described in the work plan in a timely manner. The assistance agreement will include terms and conditions implementing this requirement.

5. Reimbursement Limitation. If the recipient expends more than the amount of funding in its EPA approved budget in anticipation of receiving additional funds from EPA, it does so at its own risk. EPA is not legally obligated to reimburse the recipient for costs incurred in excess of the EPA approved budget.

6.C. Reporting Requirement

Semi-annual progress reports and a detailed final report will be required. The semi-annual progress reports will be submitted to the EPA Project Officer within thirty days after each reporting period. These reports shall cover work status, work progress, difficulties encountered, preliminary data results, anticipated activities, and any changes of key personnel involved with the project. In addition, a discussion of expenditures along with a comparison of project milestones completed to the project schedule and an explanation of significant discrepancies shall be included in the report. The report shall include program income generated by conference registration or other fees. The report shall also include a table(s) with expenditures broken down by element and by budget category showing overall, planned, actual, and remaining amounts.

At the close of the cooperative agreements, the successful applicant will submit a final technical report to the EPA Project Officer within 90 calendar days of completion of the period of performance. The final technical report shall include a summary of accomplishments, expenditures, outcomes, outputs, lessons learned, any other resources leveraged during the project, and how they were used.

6.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 7 of the funding opportunity. Note, the FR 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.

SECTION 7 - AGENCY CONTACT

Erika Wilson, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Office of Land and Emergency Management (MC 5101T), 1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W., Washington, DC 20460; e-mail: wilson.erika@epa.gov.

EPA staff will respond to questions regarding threshold eligibility criteria, administrative issues related to the submission of the application, and requests for clarification about this funding opportunity. To maintain the integrity of the competition process, EPA staff cannot meet with individual applicants to discuss draft applications, provide informal comments on draft applications, or provide advice to applicants on how to respond to ranking criteria. EPA's limitations on staff involvement with grant applicants are described in EPA's Assistance Agreement Competition Policy (EPA Order 5700.5A1).

SECTION 8 - OTHER INFORMATION

8.A. Grants Resource Information

For additional information on how to apply for, manage, and complete an EPA grant, please visit EPA Grants.