United States Environmental Protection Agency Region 9

San Francisco Bay Water Quality Improvement Fund

Request for Applications
October 5, 2018

Agency Name: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Region 9 (EPA)
Funding Opportunity Name: San Francisco Bay Water Quality Improvement Fund, FY2018
Announcement Type: Request for Applications
Funding Opportunity Number: EPA-R9-SFBWQIF-18-01
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SUMMARY

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Region 9 (EPA) is soliciting proposals from eligible entities under this announcement to improve water quality and restore aquatic habitat (i.e. wetlands) in San Francisco Bay and its watersheds. Proposals must fully describe the scope of the project, budget, and environmental results. EPA will use the criteria described in Section V to evaluate eligible proposals. Applicants should consider the information provided for each evaluation criterion. Please note that for evaluation criterion number 6. in Section V. A. of this Request for Proposals, applicants may choose to address either the partnerships criterion **OR** the disadvantaged communities criterion. Applicants may not address both.

The total amount anticipated to be awarded under this announcement is approximately $4 million of fiscal year 2018 funds under the authority of Section 320 of the Clean Water Act. Awards will range from approximately $500,000 to $2,000,000 with a typical project period of four years. **Applicants must provide a non-federal match of 50% of the total cost of the project.** A broad range of entities, as described in Section III.A, are eligible to submit proposals under this announcement for projects that protect and restore the San Francisco Bay and its watersheds within the nine Bay Area counties (Marin, Napa, Sonoma, Solano, Contra Costa, Alameda, Santa Clara, San Mateo, and San Francisco.)

Important Dates:

December 5, 2018	Proposals must be received by EPA via Grants.gov by 8:59pm Pacific Time (11:59 pm Eastern Time).
January 31, 2019	Selected applicants notified.
March 30, 2019	Final application packages submitted to EPA.
May 2019	Awards made.

The above dates (other than the December 5, 2018 proposal submission date) are anticipated dates and may be subject to change.

Contact: Luisa Valiela
Phone: (415) 972-3400
Email: valiela.luisa@epa.gov

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I. Funding Opportunity Description

A. Background. Since 2008, EPA has administered the San Francisco Bay Water Quality Improvement Fund (SFBWQIF) competitive grant program. The purpose of these grants is to fund projects that demonstrate significant environmental results for water quality and aquatic habitat (e.g. wetlands). To date, EPA has awarded over $49 million through 41 grant awards. The funded projects have leveraged an additional $157 million to restore wetlands, restore water quality, and implement green development practices that use natural hydrologic processes to treat polluted runoff. Completed SFBWQIF projects, along with application assistance for current funding opportunities, can be found on our website (https://www.epa.gov/sfbay-delta/sf-bay-water-quality-improvement-fund).

B. Program Elements. EPA is seeking technically sound proposals to improve water quality and restore aquatic habitat (i.e. wetlands) in the San Francisco Bay and its watersheds within the nine Bay Area counties consisting of Marin, Napa, Sonoma, Solano, Contra Costa, Alameda, Santa Clara, San Mateo, and San Francisco. Proposals should focus on achieving measurable water quality and aquatic habitat improvement, quantitatively define the project's environmental results (also known as outcomes) and provide timeframes for achieving those results. Applicants are encouraged to develop projects utilizing an "outcome framework" to maximize the likelihood of achieving the most significant environmental results (see Section I.C.2. "Environmental Outputs and Outcomes").

EPA is seeking multi-objective environmental projects (for example, re-using dredged material to build wetland habitat, using wastewater effluent to expand and nourish wetland habitat that can provide flood protection, etc.). Proposals should demonstrate broad support and partnerships that will contribute to project success. Emphasis on the diversity of organizational support and partnerships (e.g., environmental, business, and social organizations) and on historically underserved communities (i.e. economically disadvantaged or other populations with disproportionate exposure to environmental harm) are important considerations for proposals (See Section V.A., Evaluation Criterion 6). A project that benefits a disadvantaged community could, for example, include implementation of green infrastructure to improve water quality and reduce a community's vulnerability to flooding from aging infrastructure.

Please note that for evaluation criterion number 6. in Section V. A., points will be awarded for addressing partnerships or disadvantaged communities, but not both. Applicants who choose to address the disadvantaged community criteria should refer to the map on page 5 (Figure 1) to ensure their project is located within (or immediately adjacent to) an applicable community that will directly benefit from the project.

EPA anticipates that most proposals will encompass implementation projects. However, planning and assessment projects may be considered for funding, but such proposals should include a strong and specific commitment to future implementation. Implementation projects should be based on existing plans, such as a restoration plan, a Total Maximum Daily Load Implementation Plan, a watershed plan or a stormwater/green infrastructure plan. All project proposals must be consistent with the San Francisco Estuary Partnership's (SFEP) Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan (CCMP) and must indicate the CCMP objective(s) and action(s) to be

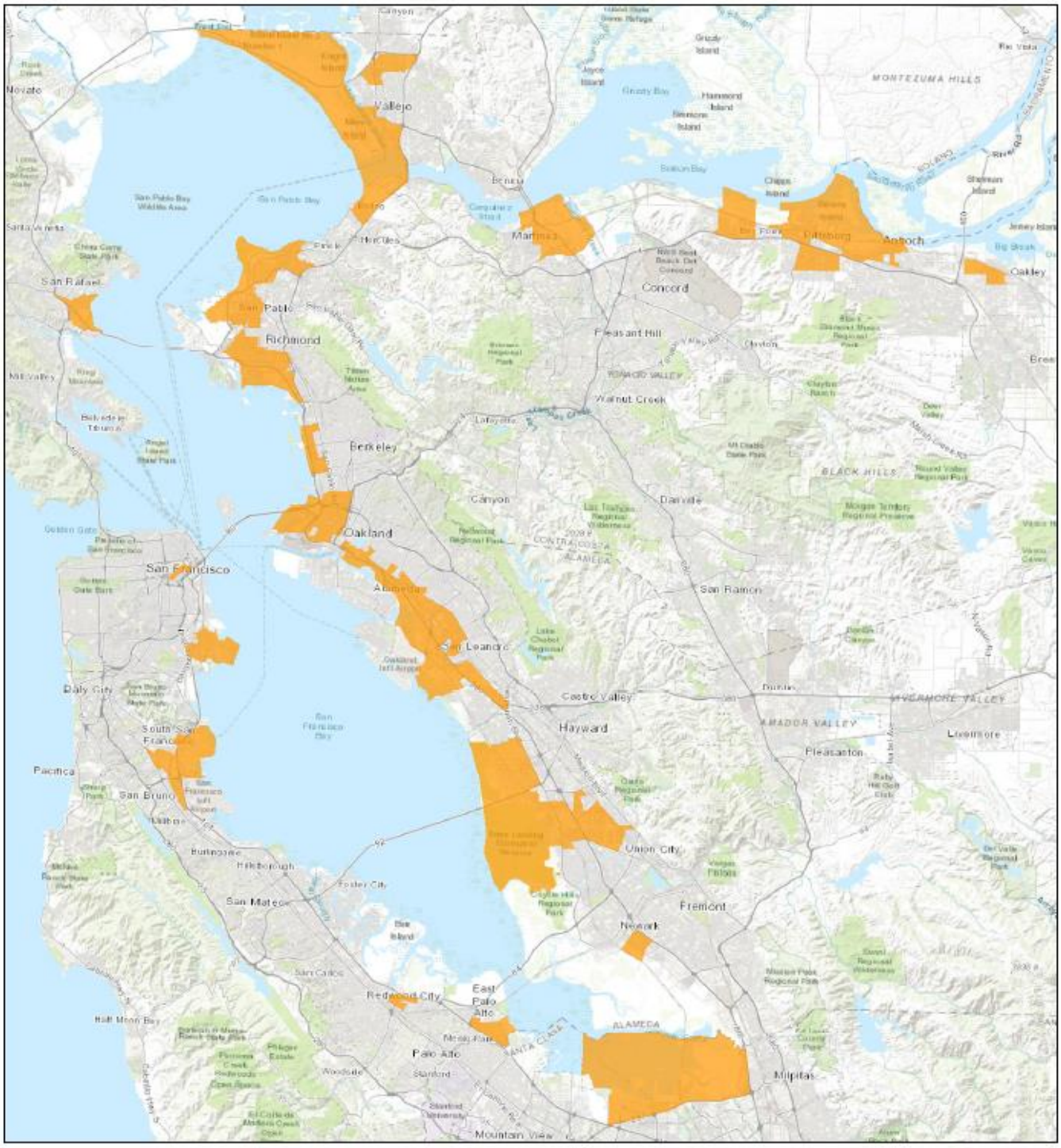
implemented under the project. Attachment A identifies a list of the CCMP objectives and actions that address program priorities and should be used as a basis to provide this information in the proposal narrative. For additional information on the CCMP refer to the website link in Section VIII.C.

Proposals should describe how sea level rise and changes in rainfall patterns are considered in the design and implementation of the projects. Furthermore, applicants are encouraged to address to the fullest extent possible the habitat restoration goals established by the *Baylands Ecosystem Habitat Goals Project*, including the recommended strategies which emphasize restoring habitat connectivity, rebuilding natural hydrology, incorporating low-impact development to reduce stormwater runoff, and increasing the multiple benefits in restoration projects by piloting new technology (see link provided in Section VIII.C.).

All projects that include a monitoring component should be compatible with the California Surface Water Ambient Monitoring Program (SWAMP), the California Wetland and Riparian Area Monitoring Program, and/or the San Francisco Bay Regional Monitoring Program (RMP) (see links in Section VIII.C.).

Finally, the elements described above are reflected in the evaluation criteria (Section V. A.) against which proposals will be evaluated. Proposals must address the evaluation criteria. Proposals that more completely address the program elements and evaluation criteria will likely be more competitive than those that do not. In preparing your proposal, EPA encourages applicants to carefully review these elements and the evaluation criteria to inform project and proposal development.

FIGURE 1: Disadvantaged Communities Identification Map



Disadvantaged Communities Identification Map

for the San Francisco Bay Water Quality Improvement Fund.

The map's highlighted areas have been derived from a combination of census tract areas identified by EJSCREEN and indicators for pollution burden and population characteristics identified by CalEnviroScreen v3.0.

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C. EPA's Strategic Plan Linkage and Environmental Results. Pursuant to Section 6a of EPA Order 5700.7, "Environmental Results under EPA Assistance Agreements," EPA must link proposed assistance agreements to its Strategic Plan. EPA also requires that applicants and recipients adequately describe environmental outputs and outcomes to be achieved under assistance agreements.

1. Linkage to EPA Strategic Plan. The activities to be funded under this announcement support EPA's FY 2018-22 Strategic Plan. Awards made under this announcement will support Goal 1 (Core Mission: Deliver real results to provide Americans with clean air, land, and water, and ensure chemical safety.), Objective 1.2 (Provide for Clean and Safe Water) of the EPA Strategic Plan. All applications must be for projects that support the goals and objectives identified above to improve and restore impaired water quality on a watershed basis and facilitate ecosystem-scale protection and restoration.

2. Environmental Outputs and Outcomes. EPA will consider the significance of expected environmental outputs and outcomes during the selection process (See Sections IV. and V.)

a. Outputs. The term "output" means an activity, effort, and/or work product that will be produced or provided over a specific period of time or by a specific date. Outputs (or project deliverables) may be quantitative or qualitative but must be measurable during an assistance agreement funding period. Proposals must include a description of project outputs and the way in which recipients will track project milestones throughout the grant period. Project output examples may include, but are not limited to, number of presentations made, number of participants at an event, and draft and final reports produced. EPA requires progress reports and a final report as specified in Section VI.C. "Reporting Requirements."

b. Outcomes. The term "outcome" means an environmental result, effect or consequence that will occur from carrying out project activities and/or completing outputs related to an environmental goal. Outcomes may be environmental, behavioral, health-related, or programmatic in nature, but must be quantitative. Proposals must include a description of project outcomes resulting from the project outputs, even if the outcome to be achieved is beyond the assistance agreement funding period. For projects that are implementing activities called for in a plan such as a Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) or a restoration plan with an extended (e.g. 20-50 year time horizon) timeframe, applicants should explain the degree to which the activities move towards the stated long-term goal or outcome. Outcomes expected as a result of the awards under this announcement may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Acres of wetlands/other aquatic habitat restored
- Pollutant load reductions, attainment of water quality objectives, or other numeric indicators of water quality improvement
- Percentage of land area where Low Impact Development has been or will be implemented to achieve water quality improvements and/or other habitat enhancements

Additional information regarding EPA's definition of environmental results in terms of "outputs" and "outcomes" can be found at: https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2015-

03/documents/epa_order_5700_7a1.pdf and https://www.epa.gov/sfbay-delta/application-assistance#results.

D. Statutory Authority. Congress appropriated funds for this grant program under the "Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2018" (Public Law 115-141). EPA will award such funds under Section 320 of the Clean Water Act (National Estuary Program), 33 U.S.C. §1330 to successful applicants.

II. Award Information

A. Available Funding. The estimated amount available under this announcement is approximately $4 million of federal Fiscal Year (FY) 2018 funds. The amount of federal funding per award is estimated to range from approximately $500,000 to $2,000,000. EPA anticipates awarding 3 to 5 grants or cooperative agreements under this solicitation.

EPA also reserves the right to make additional awards under this announcement, consistent with Agency policy and guidance, if additional funding (e.g., FY 2019) becomes available after the original selection decisions. Any additional selections for awards will be made no later than six months after the original selection decisions.

Funding for the projects is not guaranteed and is subject to the availability of funds, the evaluation of proposals based on the criteria in this announcement, and other applicable considerations. In addition, EPA reserves the right to make no awards, or fewer awards than expected, under this announcement. Further, award of funding through this competition is not a guarantee of future funding.

B. Project Period for Awards. EPA anticipates making awards resulting from this solicitation in May 2019. Previously funded projects have typically had project periods of 4 years.

C. Partial Funding. In appropriate circumstances, EPA reserves the right to partially fund proposals/applications under this announcement by funding discrete activities, portions, or phases of proposed projects. If EPA decides to partially fund a proposal, it will do so in a manner that does not prejudice any applicants or affect the basis upon which the proposal/application, or portion(s) thereof, was evaluated and selected for award, and that maintains the integrity of the competition and selection process.

D. Funding Type. Successful applicants will be issued a grant or cooperative agreement as appropriate. A cooperative agreement is an assistance agreement that is used when there is substantial federal involvement with the recipient during the performance of an activity or project. EPA awards cooperative agreements for those projects in which it expects to have substantial interaction with the recipient throughout the performance of the project. EPA will negotiate the precise terms and conditions of "substantial involvement" as part of the award process. Federal involvement may include close monitoring of the recipient's performance; collaboration during the performance of the scope of work; in accordance with 2 CFR 200.317 and 2 CFR 200.318, as appropriate, review of proposed procurements; reviewing qualifications of key personnel; and/or review and comment on the content of printed or electronic publications

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

III. Eligibility Information

A. Eligible Applicants. The following entities are eligible to apply for funding under this announcement: State, local government agencies, districts, and councils; regional water pollution control agencies and entities; State coastal zone management agencies; public and private universities and colleges; and public or private non-governmental, non-profit institutions. Non-profit organizations must have documentation of non-profit status from the U.S. Internal Revenue Service or their state of incorporation. Non-profit organizations as defined in Section 501(c)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code that engage in lobbying as defined in Section 3 of the Lobbying Disclosure Act 1995 or superseding legislation are ineligible.

B. Cost Sharing/Match Requirement. Matching funds of 50% of the total project cost are required under this competition based on the requirements of Section 320 of the CWA, 33 U.S.C. §1330. Accordingly, EPA is requiring applicants to identify the non-federal match of 50% on Form 424(A). A 50% match means EPA will fund a maximum of 50% of the total project cost, which is essentially an equal cost share of the total project cost with the applicant. Matching funds can come in the form of cash and in-kind contributions, such as the use of volunteers and/or donated time, equipment, etc., consistent with the regulations governing matching fund requirements (2 CFR §200.306) from your own organization and/or your project partners. Federal funds may not be used to meet the match requirement for this grant program unless authorized by the statute governing their use.

C. Ineligible Activities. If a proposal is submitted that includes any ineligible tasks or activities, that portion of the proposal will be ineligible for funding and may, depending on the extent to which it affects the proposal, render the entire proposal ineligible for funding.

D. Threshold Eligibility Criteria. These are requirements which if not met by the time of proposal submission will result in elimination of the proposal from further consideration for funding. Only proposals that meet all of these criteria will be ranked against the evaluation criteria (see Section V) of this announcement. Applicants deemed ineligible for funding consideration as a result of the threshold eligibility review will be notified within 15 calendar days of the ineligibility determination.

1. Applicant Eligibility: Applicants must meet the applicant eligibility requirements described in Section III. A.
2. Program Relevance: Proposals must demonstrate that the project(s) improves water quality and/or restores wetlands in San Francisco Bay and its watersheds.
3. EPA Strategic Plan: Proposals must support Strategic Plan Goal 1 of EPA's Strategic Plan as specified in Section I. C. 1.
4. Fifty (50) % Match: Proposals must demonstrate how applicants will provide a 50% match of the total project cost as described in Section III. B.

5. CCMP Consistency: Proposals must describe how the proposed activities are consistent with SFEP's CCMP (see Attachment A) and identify relevant CCMP objective(s) and action(s) to be implemented by the project.
6. Substantial Compliance: Proposals must substantially comply with the proposal submission instructions and requirements set forth in Section IV or else they will be rejected. However, where a page limit is expressed in Section IV with respect to the proposal narrative, pages in excess of the page limitation will not be reviewed.
7. Proposal Submission: Proposals must be submitted through **Grants.gov** as stated in Section IV. of this announcement (except in the limited circumstances where another mode of submission is specifically allowed for as explained in Section IV.) on or before the proposal submission deadline of **8:59 pm Pacific Time** (11:59 pm Eastern Time) **on December 5, 2018.** Applicants are responsible for following the submission instructions in Section IV. of this announcement to ensure that their proposal is timely submitted.
8. Late Proposals: Proposals submitted after the submission deadline will be considered late and deemed ineligible without further consideration unless the applicant can clearly demonstrate that it was late due to EPA mishandling or because of technical problems associated with Grants.gov or relevant SAM.gov system issues. An applicant's failure to timely submit their proposal/application through Grants.gov because they did not timely or properly register in SAM.gov or Grants.gov will not be considered an acceptable reason to consider a late submission. Applicants should confirm receipt of their proposal with Luisa Valiela at 415-972-3400 as soon as possible after the submission deadline—failure to do so may result in your proposal not being reviewed.
9. Project Location: Projects must occur within one or more of the nine Bay Area counties (Marin, Napa, Sonoma, Solano, Contra Costa, Alameda, Santa Clara, San Mateo, and San Francisco).

IV. Proposal and Submission Information

A. Requirement to Submit Through Grants.gov and Limited Exception Procedures.
Complete proposal packages must be submitted electronically through Grants.gov by **8:59 pm Pacific Time** (11:59 pm Eastern Time) **on December 5, 2018.** Grants.gov allows an applicant to download an application package template and complete the package offline based on agency instructions. After an applicant completes the required package, they can submit the package electronically to Grants.gov, which transmits the package to EPA. Complete instructions for submitting applications via Grants.gov are included as **Attachment B** to this announcement.

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

Mailing Address:
OGD Waivers

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

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

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

Funding Opportunity Number (FON)
Organization Name and Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number
Organization's Contact Information (email address and phone number)
Explanation of how they lack the technical capability to apply electronically through Grants.gov because of 1) limited internet access or 2) no internet access which prevents them from being able to upload the required application materials through Grants.gov.

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

If an exception is granted, it is valid for submissions to EPA for the remainder of the entire calendar year in which the exception was approved and can be used to justify alternative submission methods for application submissions made through December 31 of the calendar year in which the exception was approved (e.g., if the exception was approved on March 1, 2018, it is valid for any competitive or non-competitive application submission to EPA through December 31, 2018). Applicants need only request an exception once in a calendar year and all exceptions will expire on December 31 of that calendar year. Applicants must request a new exception from required electronic submission through Grants.gov for submissions for any succeeding calendar year. For example, if there is a competitive opportunity issued on December 1, 2017 with a submission deadline of January 15, 2018, the applicant would need a new exception to submit through alternative methods beginning January 1, 2018.

Please note that the process described in this section is only for requesting alternate submission methods. All other inquiries about this announcement must be directed to the Agency Contact

listed in Section VII of the announcement. Queries or requests submitted to the email address identified above for any reason other than to request an alternate submission method will not be acknowledged or answered.

B. Content of Proposal Submission. Applicants must include the information outlined below in their proposals. The proposal narrative section as described below must be no longer than **fifteen (15) pages in total** (8 ½ x 11 inches, single spaced); pages in excess of this page limitation will not be reviewed. Applicants must also ensure that the proposal narrative provides information addressing all of the proposal evaluation criteria identified in Section V. A. and the threshold eligibility criteria identified in III. C. Forms 424, 424(A), maps, letters of support and forms required by grants.gov in Attachment B DO NOT count toward the 15-page limit.

Proposal Submission Content	
Applicant Information on Federal Assistance Standard Form 424	Include applicant (organization) name, address, contact person, phone number, fax and e-mail address. This form also requires a registration in the System for Award Management (SAM.gov), a Dun and Bradstreet (D&B), and Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number (see Section VI.F. for more information). http://www.epa.gov/ogd/AppKit/application.htm
Budget Summary on Federal Assistance Standard Form 424(A)	Provide overall budget information on the form's tabular format including the specific amount being requested from EPA, the required match, and the total project cost. http://www.epa.gov/ogd/AppKit/application.htm
Map	Provide a map of the watershed and the proposed work areas related to the project or, if more appropriate, provide a schematic that helps explain the proposed project activities.
Proposal Narrative (subject to the 15-page limit)	
• Abstract- Summarize (approximately 200 words) your project's environmental significance, major activities, timeframes, and measurable outcomes. • Water quality improvement and/or wetlands restoration- Discuss the specific improvement that will be achieved by the project activities and linkage to EPA's Strategic Plan. Identify the watersheds and/or waterbodies to be addressed. • Project activities- Describe the proposed activities and highlight the plans and assessments that form the basis for the activities and expected results. • Resiliency- Describe how resiliency is factored into the proposed activities to address sea level rise and changes in rainfall patterns • Timeframe- Identify the timeframe for activities and environmental results. If planning and assessment activities are proposed, describe the likelihood of implementation, including key next steps, funding and timeframe for environmental results. • CCMP- Provide the list of relevant CCMP objectives and actions to be implemented by the project. A list of the CCMP objectives and actions is included as Attachment A and should be used as a basis to provide this information in the proposal narrative. For additional information on the CCMP refer to the website link in Section VIII.C.	

- Outputs and Outcomes- Describe the project outputs (Section I.C.2.a.) and outcomes (Section I.C.2.b.). The "Outputs and Outcomes Summary Table"* below is a suggested format to provide the required information.
- Metrics- Outputs may be quantitative or qualitative but must be measurable during an assistance agreement funding period; outcomes must be quantitative and may be achieved beyond the assistance agreement funding period.
    - Context- Discuss the extent, magnitude and significance of the anticipated outcomes. For example, identify pollutant load reductions to be achieved in terms of the overall reductions and timeframe necessary to achieve water quality standards.
    - Timeframe- Include outputs and outcomes achievable beyond the assistance agreement funding period should be included.
    - Tracking- Identify how progress towards achieving the outputs and outcomes will be tracked and measured over the expected project time period. For some projects, this may include monitoring and the production of a Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP).
- Geographic Location- Identify the geographic area by watershed and/or more specific location of the project(s).
- Budget Detail- Using a table format, clearly explain how EPA funds will be used. This section also provides an opportunity for a narrative description of the budget found in the SF 424(A). Applicants must itemize costs related to personnel, fringe benefits, contractual costs, travel, equipment, supplies, other direct costs, indirect costs, and total costs. Explanations of the costs associated with each project task, including match amounts in full or in part from project partners, should be provided. Description of costs should correspond to figures presented in the SF 424(A). A table highlighting key tasks and/or outputs for the length of the project with the associated budget breakdown is required. Discuss whether the overall project costs and the various components are cost-effective in furthering future implementation.
- Programmatic Capability and Past Performance history- Submit a list of federally and/or non-federally funded assistance agreements (assistance agreements include federal grants and cooperative agreements but not federal contracts) similar in size, scope and relevance to the proposed project that your organization received within the last three years (no more than 5 agreements and preferably EPA agreements), and describe how you were technically able to successfully complete and manage those agreements. For the grants listed above, also describe your history of meeting the reporting requirements under those agreements, including whether you timely reported progress towards achieving the expected outputs and outcomes of those agreements (and if not, explain why) and whether you submitted acceptable final technical reports. In evaluating applicants under these factors in Section V, EPA will consider the information provided by the applicant and may also consider relevant information from other sources, including information from EPA files and from current/prior grantors (e.g., to verify and/or supplement the information provided by the applicant). If you do not have any relevant or available past performance or past reporting information, please indicate this in the proposal and you will receive a neutral score for these factors (a neutral score is half of the total points available in a

subset of possible points). If you do not provide any response for these items, you may receive a score of 0 for these factors.

- Organizational experience- Provide information on your organizational experience and plan for timely and successfully achieving the objectives of the proposed project.
- Staff experience- Provide information on your staff expertise/qualifications, staff knowledge, and resources or the ability to obtain them, to successfully achieve the goals of the proposed project.

- Expenditure of Awarded Grant Funds- Provide information on the approach, procedures, and controls for ensuring that awarded grant funds will be expended in a timely and efficient manner.
- CHOOSE ONE OPTION BELOW: In your proposal, describe EITHER your project's partnership activities OR its potential benefits for disadvantaged communities. **EPA will not evaluate both criteria.** Applicants who mistakenly address both criteria will be contacted by EPA to determine which criteria will be used.

• Partnerships- Describe your project partners and community involvement in carrying out the project. To the extent applicable, identify unique and new partnerships that will contribute to project success and ongoing implementation beyond the grant period. Provide specifics as to each partner's activities. Provide letters of support (which do not count towards the page limit) from partners to document their role. Describe how project partners will contribute to the project's stated environmental outcomes.	• Disadvantaged Communities- Describe the location of the project in relation to the Map (Figure 1 in Section I) in this solicitation. Provide details on the ways in which the disadvantaged community(ies) will benefit from the project and provide letters of support (which do not count towards the page limit) from them as applicable. Describe the project's expected environmental outcomes that will make a measurable difference to an economically disadvantaged community and/or other population that experiences disproportionate environmental harm and health risks.

***EXAMPLE: Outputs & Outcomes Summary Table**		
OUTPUTS (activity, effort, and/or work product during project period)	**OUTCOMES** (quantitative environmental results)	
	SHORT-TERM (1-5 YRS)	***LONG-TERM (5-20+ YRS)***

C. Contracts and Subawards. EPA awards funds to one eligible applicant as the recipient even if other eligible applicants are named as partners or co-applicants or members of a coalition or consortium. The recipient is accountable to EPA for the proper expenditure of funds.

Funding may be used to provide subawards of financial assistance, which includes using subawards to fund partnerships, provided the recipient complies with applicable requirements for subawards including those contained in 2 CFR Part 200. Applicants must compete contracts for services and products, including consultant contracts, and conduct cost and price analyses, to the extent required by the procurement provisions of the regulations at 2 CFR Part 200. Applicants are not required to identify subrecipients and/or contractors (including consultants) in their proposal/application. However, if they do, the fact that an applicant selected for award has named a specific subrecipient, contractor, or consultant in the proposal/application EPA selects for funding does not relieve the applicant of its obligations to comply with subaward and/or competitive procurement requirements as appropriate. Please note that applicants may not award sole source contracts to consulting, engineering or other firms assisting applicants with the proposal solely based on the firm's role in preparing the proposal/application.

Successful applicants cannot use subawards to avoid requirements in EPA grant regulations for competitive procurement by using these instruments to acquire commercial services or products from for-profit organizations to carry out its assistance agreement. The nature of the transaction between the recipient and the subrecipient must be consistent with the standards for distinguishing between vendor transactions and subrecipient assistance found at 2 CFR §200.330, and the definitions of subaward at 2 CFR §200.92 and subrecipient at 2 CFR §200.93. EPA will not be a party to these transactions. Applicants acquiring commercial goods or services must comply with the competitive procurement standards in 2 CFR §§200.317-326 and cannot use a subaward as the funding mechanism

Section V. of the announcement describes the evaluation criteria and evaluation process that will be used by EPA to make selections under this announcement. During this evaluation, except for those criteria that relate to the applicant's own qualifications, past performance, and reporting history, the review panel will consider, as appropriate and relevant, the qualifications, expertise, and experience of:

> (i) an applicant's named subrecipients identified in the proposal/application if the applicant demonstrates in the proposal/application that if it receives an award that the subaward will be properly awarded consistent with the applicable regulations in 2 CFR Part 200. For example, applicants must not use subawards to obtain commercial services or products from for profit firms or individual consultants.
> (ii) an applicant's named contractor(s), including consultants, identified in the proposal/application if the applicant demonstrates in its proposal/application that the contractor(s) was selected in compliance with the competitive procurement standards in 2 CFR §§200.317-326. For example, an applicant must demonstrate that it selected the contractor(s) competitively or that a proper non-competitive sole-source award consistent with the regulations will be made to the contractor(s), that efforts were made to provide small and disadvantaged businesses with opportunities to compete, and that some form of

cost or price analysis was conducted. EPA may not accept sole source justifications for contracts for services or products that are otherwise readily available in the commercial marketplace.

EPA will not consider the qualifications, experience, and expertise of named subrecipients and/or named contractor(s) during the proposal/application evaluation process unless the applicant complies with these requirements.

D. Additional Provisions for Applicants under this Solicitation. Additional provisions that apply to this solicitation and/or awards made under this solicitation, including those related to confidential business information, proposal assistance and communications, management fees, and others can be found at: https://www.epa.gov/grants/epa-solicitation-clauses

These provisions are important and applicants must review them when preparing proposals for this solicitation. If you are unable to access these provisions electronically at the website above, please communicate with the EPA contact listed in this solicitation to obtain the provisions.

V. Proposal Review Information

A. Evaluation Criteria.

Proposals will be evaluated and scored by reviewers using the criteria listed below. Each proposal may receive up to 100 points. Applicants should fully address these criteria as part of their proposal submittals.

Proposal Evaluation Criteria (100 points total)

Points	Proposal Evaluation Criteria
20	**1. Scope/Approach:** Under this criterion, proposals will be evaluated based on the quality and degree to which they present the key program elements discussed in Section I. including: • a technically/scientifically sound approach for addressing water quality improvement and/or wetlands restoration through the proposed activities. **(8 pts)** • activities based on existing plans and assessments, such as watershed plans, TMDLs and/or associated analysis, or stormwater/green infrastructure plans; or for proposed planning and assessment activities, the likelihood of subsequent implementation. **(6 pts)** • a description of the environmental significance of the project and its contribution to local or regional resiliency. **(6 pts)**
25	**2. Environmental Results—Outputs and Outcomes:** Under this criterion, proposals will be evaluated based on how well they demonstrate: • well defined outputs throughout the project timeframe. **(5 pts)** • clearly described water quality and/or wetlands results that are specific, quantified and significant and link to EPA's Strategic Plan. **(15 pts)**

	• an effective plan for tracking and measuring progress toward achieving expected project outputs and outcomes, including those identified in Section I.C.2.a. and Section I.C.2.b.** **(5 pts)** *** EPA will consider the quality and scope of the monitoring component to measure environmental results under this criterion. If monitoring is not an appropriate project activity necessary to achieve and document results, proposals will not receive a lower rating under this criterion.*
18	**3. <u>Budget Detail</u>:** Under this criterion, proposals will be evaluated based on: • the level of detailed budget information provided in a table format which should include an approximation of the cost allocated for each major activity over the project's expected timeline. Budget resources necessary for completing a Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP), if applicable, sharing project information broadly, and reporting progress, are expected to be included. **(13 pts)** • whether the overall project costs and the various components are cost-effective and reasonable in furthering future implementation of similar activities. **(5 pts)**
12	**4. <u>Programmatic Capability and Past Performance</u>:** Under this criterion, proposals will be evaluated based on the applicant's: • past performance in successfully completing and managing the assistance agreements identified in the proposal narrative as described in Section IV. C. of the announcement. **(3 pts)** • history of meeting the reporting requirements under the assistance agreements identified in the proposal narrative as described in Section IV. C. of the announcement including: whether the applicant submitted acceptable final technical reports under those agreements,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 pts)** • organizational experience and plan for timely and successfully achieving the objectives of the proposed project. **(3 pts)** • staff expertise/qualifications, staff knowledge, and resources (or the ability to obtain them) to successfully achieve the goals of the proposed project. **(3 pts)** *Note: In evaluating applicants under the first two items of this criterion, EPA will consider the information provided by the applicant and may also consider relevant information from other sources including agency files and/or prior/current grantors (e.g., to verify and/or supplement the information supplied by the applicant). If you do not have any relevant or available past performance or reporting information, please indicate this in the proposal and you will receive a neutral score for these subfactors (the first two items above-a neutral score is half of the total points available in a subset of possible points). If you do not provide any response for these items, you may receive a score of 0 for these factors.*
5	**5. <u>Expenditure of Awarded Grant Funds:</u>** Under this criterion, proposals will be evaluated based on their approach, procedures, and controls for ensuring that awarded grant funds will be expended in a timely and efficient manner. **(5 pts)**
	6. APPLICANTS WILL BE EVALUATED UNDER EITHER 6a. for Partnerships OR 6b. for Disadvantaged Communities. Applicants must address either 6a. or 6b. in their

	proposals but not both of them. Applicants should not address both criteria in their proposal—those that mistakenly do so will be contacted by EPA to determine which criterion will be used.		
20	**6a. Partnerships** Under this criterion, proposals will be evaluated based on the quality and extent to which they demonstrate: • diverse and unique partnerships and community involvement in the project, particularly those that contribute to expected environmental results and ongoing implementation, such as partnerships or involvement with agencies that have purview over water quality and land use decisions. **(10 pts)** • specifics as to the roles the partners will play to support the proposed project activities. Letters of support provided by partners to substantiate their role will be reviewed. **(10 pts)**	**20**	**6b. Disadvantaged Communities** Under this criterion, proposals will be evaluated based on the quality and extent to which they demonstrate: • the project's ability to benefit disadvantaged communities in Figure 1 such as through reducing cumulative and legacy contamination or increasing access to natural habitat and "greener" infrastructure. **(10 pts)** • partnerships with the disadvantaged community(ies) the project will affect. Letters of support provided by such partners to substantiate their role will be reviewed. **(10 pts)**

B. Review and Selection Process.

1. Proposals. Eligible proposals will be evaluated by the EPA Region 9 Review Committee which will score and rank the proposals using the evaluation criteria identified above in Section V.A. The Review Committee will consist of EPA staff and may also include representatives from other state or Federal agencies.
2. Final Selections and Awards. The Review Committee will provide rankings and funding recommendations based on the proposal scores to the selection official (EPA Region 9 Water Division Director.) Final funding decisions will be made by the selection official. In making the final funding decisions, the selection official may also take into account the following factors: geographic distribution of funds, diversity of projects, availability of funds and the considerations listed in Section V.B.3 below. Applicants selected for funding will be asked to submit a final application package in order to award funds.
3. In addition to the decision-making process in V.B.1 and V.B.2, information pertaining to proposed recommendations may be shared with the San Francisco Bay Restoration Authority (SFBRA) before selections are made in order to determine whether potential selections (a) are expected to be funded by another funding department or agency or any other known funding source, such as the SFBRA, or (b) could be affected by permitting or regulatory issues.

C. Additional Provisions for Applicants under this Solicitation.

Additional provisions that apply to this solicitation and/or awards made under this solicitation including the clause on Reporting and Use of Information Concerning Recipient Integrity and

Performance can be found at: https://www.epa.gov/grants/epa-solicitation-clauses. These, and the other provisions that can be found at the website link, are important, and applicants must review them when preparing proposals for this solicitation. If you are unable to access these provisions electronically at the website above, please communicate with the EPA contact listed in this solicitation to obtain the provisions.

VI. Award Administration Information

A. Award Notification. EPA anticipates notification to successful applicants will be made via electronic and/or postal mail by approximately January 2019. The notification will be sent to the original signer of the proposal or the project contact listed in the proposal. This notification, which informs the applicant that its proposal has been selected and is being recommended for award, is not an authorization to begin work. The official notification of an award will be made by EPA's Grants Management Office. Applicants are cautioned that only the Award Official 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 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.

Unsuccessful applicants will receive notification by email within 15 days of the final selections.

EPA reserves the right to negotiate and/or adjust the final grant amount and work plan content prior to award, as appropriate and consistent with Agency policy including the Assistance Agreement Competition Policy, EPA Order 5700.5A1. An approvable work plan is required to include:

1. Work plan components to be funded under the grant;
2. Estimated funding amounts for each work plan component;
3. Work plan commitments/outputs for each work plan component and a timeframe for their accomplishment;
4. Performance evaluation process and reporting schedule; and
5. Roles and responsibilities of the recipient and EPA in carrying out the work plan commitments.

In addition, successful applicants will be required to certify that they have not been Debarred or Suspended from participation in federal assistance awards in accordance with 2 CFR Part 180.

B. Administrative and National Policy Requirements. The general award and administration process for all San Francisco Bay Water Quality Improvement Funds is governed by regulations at 2 CFR Part 200, 2 CFR Part 1500, 2 CFR Part 180, and 40 CFR Part 33, and other applicable EPA policies. All costs incurred under this program must be allowable under 2 CFR Part 200, Subpart E. Any recipient of funding must agree not to use assistance funds for lobbying, fund-

raising, or political activities (i.e., lobbying members of Congress or lobbying for other Federal grants, cooperative agreements, or contracts).

C. Reporting Requirements. Project monitoring and reporting requirements can be found in 2 CFR Part 200. In general, recipients are responsible for managing the day-to-day operations and activities supported by the grant or cooperative agreement to assure compliance with applicable federal requirements, and for ensuring that established milestones and performance goals are being achieved. Performance reports and financial reports must be submitted quarterly and are due 30 days after the reporting period. The content for these reports will be identified during the grant application time frame, and will include reporting on established performance measures indicated in the project description (i.e., goals, outputs and outcomes). The final report is due 90 days after the assistance agreement has expired.

D. Pre-award Costs. Under this solicitation, EPA may consider the selected applicant's request to be reimbursed for costs incurred prior to the grant award. However, such costs must comply with the cost principles of 2 CFR Part 200, Subpart E. Therefore, if costs are incurred before the award, they are incurred at the applicant's own risk. In addition, pre-award costs do not include any direct costs associated with responding to a solicitation or in finalizing the application package.

E. Compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act and other applicable environmental laws. Projects funded by the SFBWQIF are authorized under Section 320 of the Clean Water Act (CWA) also referred to as the National Estuary Program (NEP). The NEP does not require compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) pursuant to section 511 (c) (1) of the CWA, 33 U.S.C. §1371(c) (1). However, compliance with other Federal environmental laws, such as the Endangered Species Act and the National Historic Preservation Act, and state laws and regulations may be required.

F. Additional Provisions for Applicants under this Solicitation. Additional provisions that apply to this solicitation and/or awards made under this solicitation, including but not limited to those related to human subjects, DUNS, registration in the System of Award Management (SAM), copyrights, disputes, and administrative capability, can be found at: https://www.epa.gov/grants/epa-solicitation-clauses.
These, and the other provisions that can be found at the website link, are important, and applicants must review them when preparing proposals for this solicitation. If you are unable to access these provisions electronically at the website above, please communicate with the EPA contact listed in this solicitation to obtain the provisions.

VII. Agency Contact

For additional information, please contact:

Luisa Valiela
EPA Region 9, Watersheds Office (WTR-2-2)
75 Hawthorne Street
San Francisco, CA 94105
415-972-3400, valiela.luisa@epa.gov

VIII. Other Information

A. Quality Assurance and Quality Control (QA/QC). Certain quality assurance and/or quality control (QA/QC) and peer review requirements are applicable to the collection of environmental data. Environmental data are any measurements or information that describe environmental processes, location, or condition; ecological or health effects and consequences; or the performance of environmental technology. Environmental data also include information collected directly from measurements, produced from models, and obtained from other sources such as data bases or published literature. Regulations pertaining to QA/QC requirements can be found in 2 CFR Part 200. Additional guidance can be found at: http://www.epa.gov/QUALITY/qa_docs.html.

Applicants should allow sufficient time and resources for this process in their proposed projects. If your organization does not have a Quality Management System in place, one must be developed. A project specific Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP) must be submitted and approved by EPA if your project includes sampling of any kind. If your proposal is selected and a QAPP required, you are encouraged to contact the EPA's QA Office at 415-972-3411 as soon as possible to discuss the process and set up a schedule for review. Allow 3-4 months in your timeline for approval of these plans.

B. Assistance Agreement Terms and Conditions. Recipients will be required to institute standardized reporting requirements into their work plans and include such costs in their budgets. All environmental data generated as part of the project should be comparable to the state's Surface Water Ambient Monitoring Program (SWAMP).

C. Useful References. This information is for reference purposes only. See Section VI.F. above for EPA's website guidelines.

- **S.F. Bay Area TMDLs and 303(d) List of Impaired Water Bodies**
  http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/sanfranciscobay/water_issues/programs/TMDLs/

- **California Surface Water Ambient Monitoring Program (SWAMP)**
  http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/swamp/

- **S.F. Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board Basin Plan**
  http://www.swrcb.ca.gov/sanfranciscobay/basin_planning.shtml

- **Bay Area's Baylands Ecosystem Habitat Goals**
  http://baylandsgoals.org/

- **San Francisco Bay Area Wetlands Regional Monitoring Program**
  http://wrmp.org/protocols.html#protocols

- **SF Bay Regional Monitoring Program (RMP)**
  http://www.sfei.org/rmp/

- **San Francisco Bay Delta Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan**
  http://www.sfestuary.org/ccmp/

Attachment A: SFEP CCMP/Estuary Blueprint Objectives and Actions
San Francisco Bay Water Quality Improvement Fund

2018 Request for Applications

Review this list to select which San Francisco Estuary Partnership's Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan (CCMP) Objective(s) and Action(s) (revised in 2016, referred to as the Estuary Blueprint) will be addressed by the project's proposed activities. Proposals must demonstrate consistency with the SFEP CCMP by indicating the CCMP objective(s) and action(s) to be implemented. Provide this information in the proposal narrative section.

OBJECTIVES	
A	Protect, restore, and enhance ecological conditions and processes that support self-sustaining natural communities
B	Eliminate or reduce threats to natural communities
C	Conduct scientific research and monitoring to measure the status of natural communities, develop and refine management actions, and track progress towards management targets
D	Increase resilience of communities at risk from climate change impacts while promoting and protecting natural resources
E	Promote integrated, coordinated, multi-benefit approaches to increasing resiliency
F	Increase drought resistance and water efficiency and reduce reliance on imported water
G	Improve freshwater flow patterns, quantity, and timing to better support natural resources
H	Reduce contaminants entering the system and improve water quality
I	Build public support for the protection and restoration of the Estuary
J	Strengthen regional leadership in support of Estuary health
K	Promote efficient and coordinated regional governance

ACTIONS	
1	Develop and implement a comprehensive, watershed-based approach to aquatic resource protection
2	Establish a regional wetland and stream monitoring program
3	Protect, restore, and enhance tidal marsh and tidal flat habitat
4	Identify, protect, and create transition zones around the Estuary
5	Protect, restore, and enhance intertidal and subtidal habitats
6	Maximize habitat benefits of managed wetlands and ponds
7	Conserve and enhance riparian and in-stream habitats throughout the Estuary's watersheds
8	Protect, restore, and enhance seasonal wetlands
9	Minimize the impact of invasive species
10	Increase the efficacy of terrestrial predator management
11	Develop processes for increasing carbon sequestration through wetland restoration, creation, and management

12	Restore watershed connections to the Estuary to improve habitat, flood protection, and water quality
13	Manage sediment on a regional scale and advance beneficial reuse
14	Demonstrate how natural habitats and nature-based shoreline infrastructure can provide increased resiliency to changes in the Estuary environment
15	Advance natural resource protection while increasing resiliency of shoreline communities in the Bay Area
16	Integrate natural resource protection into state and local government hazard mitigation, response and recovery planning
17	Improve regulatory review, permitting, and monitoring processes for multi-benefit climate adaptation projects
18	Improve the timing, amount, and duration of freshwater flows critical to Estuary health
19	Develop long-term drought plans
20	Increase regional agricultural water use efficiency
21	Reduce water use for landscaping around the Estuary
22	Expand the use of recycled water
23	Integrate water into the updated *Plan Bay Area* and other regional planning efforts
24	Manage stormwater with low impact development and green infrastructure
25	Address emerging contaminants
26	Decrease raw sewage discharges into the Estuary
27	Implement Total Maximum Daily Load projects in the Estuary, including projects to reduce mercury, methylmercury, pesticides, and areas of low dissolved oxygen
28	Advance nutrient management in the Estuary
29	Engage the scientific community in efforts to improve baseline monitoring of ocean acidification and hypoxia effects in the Estuary
30	Reduce trash input into the Estuary
31	Foster support for resource protection and restoration by providing Estuary-oriented public access and recreational opportunities compatible with wildlife
32	Champion and implement the CCMP

Attachment B
GRANTS.GOV SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS
San Francisco Bay Water Quality Improvement Fund
2018 Request for Applications

Grants.gov Submission Instructions

The electronic submission of your application must be made by an official representative of your institution who is registered with Grants.gov and is authorized to sign applications for Federal assistance. For more information on the registration requirements that must be completed in order to submit an application through grants.gov, go to Grants.gov and click on "Applicants" on the top of the page and then go to the "Get Registered" link on the page. If your organization is not currently registered with Grants.gov, please encourage your office to designate an Authorized Organization Representative (AOR) and ask that individual to begin the registration process as soon as possible. Please note that the registration process also requires that your organization have a unique entity identifier (e.g. DUNS number) and a current registration with the System for Award Management (SAM) and the process of obtaining both could take a month or more. Applicants must ensure that all registration requirements are met in order to apply for this opportunity through grants.gov and should ensure that all such requirements have been met well in advance of the submission deadline. Registration on grants.gov, SAM.gov, and DUNS number assignment is FREE.

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

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

You may also be able to access the application package for this announcement by searching for the opportunity on Grants.gov. Go to Grants.gov and then click on "Search Grants" at the top of the page and enter the Funding Opportunity Number, EPA-R9-SFBWQIF-18-01, or the CFDA number that applies to the announcement (CFDA 66.126), in the appropriate field and click the Search button.

Please Note: All applications must now be submitted through Grants.gov using the "Workspace" feature. Information on the Workspace feature can be found at the Grants.gov Workspace Overview Page.

Application Submission Deadline: Your organization's AOR must submit your complete application package electronically to EPA through Grants.gov no later than December 5, 2018 (8:59pm Pacific Time, 11:59pm Eastern Time). Please allow for enough time to successfully submit your application process and allow for unexpected errors that may require you to resubmit. Please submit all of the application materials described below using the Grants.gov application package accessed using instructions above.

Application Materials

The following forms and documents are required under this announcement:

Mandatory Documents:

1. Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424)

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

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

4. Grants.gov Lobbying Form

5. EPA Key Contacts Form 5700-54

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

7. Proposal Narrative (Project Narrative Attachment Form)-prepared as described in Section IV.B of the announcement

8. Project Area Map (submit under the "Other Attachments" accessed under the Optional documents" in Grants.gov)

Optional/Other Documents:

1. Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (SF-LLL), if applicable

2. Other Attachments (e.g. letters of support, map as noted above), if applicable

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 Luisa Valiela at (415) 972-3400. Failure to do so may result in your application not being reviewed.

Technical Issues with Submission

1. Once the application package has been completed, the "Submit" button should be enabled. If the "Submit" button is not active, please call Grants.gov for assistance at 1-800-518-4726. Applicants who are outside the U.S. at the time of submittal and are not able to access the toll-free number may reach a Grants.gov representative by calling 606-545-5035. Applicants should save the completed application package with two different file names before providing it to the AOR to avoid having to re-create the package should submission problems be experienced or a revised application needs to be submitted.
2. Submitting the application. The application package must be transferred to Grants.gov by

an AOR. The AOR should close all other software before attempting to submit the application package. Click the "submit" button of the application package. Your Internet browser will launch and a sign-in page will appear. **Note: Minor problems are not uncommon with transfers to Grants.gov. It is essential to allow sufficient time to ensure that your application is submitted to Grants.gov BEFORE the due date identified in Section IV of the solicitation.** The Grants.gov support desk operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week, except Federal Holidays. A successful transfer will end with an on-screen acknowledgement. For documentation purposes, print or screen capture this acknowledgement. If a submission problem occurs, reboot the computer – turning the power off may be necessary – and re-attempt the submission. Note: Grants.gov issues a "case number" upon a request for assistance.

3. Transmission Difficulties. If transmission difficulties that result in a late transmission, no transmission, or rejection of the transmitted application are experienced, and following the above instructions do not resolve the problem so that the application is submitted to Grants.gov by the deadline date and time, follow the guidance below. The Agency will make a decision concerning acceptance of each late submission on a case-by-case basis. All emails, as described below, are to be sent to Luisa Valiela with the FON in the subject line. If you are unable to email, contact Luisa Valiela at 415-972-3400. Be aware that EPA will only consider accepting applications that were unable to transmit due to Grants.gov or relevant www.Sam.gov system issues or for unforeseen exigent circumstances, such as extreme weather interfering with internet access. Failure of an applicant to submit timely because they did not properly or timely register in SAM.gov or Grants.gov is not an acceptable reason to justify acceptance of a late submittal.

a. If you are experiencing problems resulting in an inability to upload the application to Grants.gov, it is essential to call Grants.gov for assistance at 1-800-518-4726 before the application deadline. Applicants who are outside the U.S. at the time of submittal and are not able to access the toll-free number may reach a Grants.gov representative by calling 606-545-5035. Be sure to obtain a case number from Grants.gov. If the problems stem from unforeseen exigent circumstances unrelated to Grants.gov, such as extreme weather interfering with internet access, contact Luisa Valiela at 415-972-3400.

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

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

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