

Notice of Funding Opportunity

Applications Due: **Monday, April 27, 2026**



Environmental Education and Stewardship Division

National Environmental Education and Training Program

Funding Opportunity Number: EPA-OA-NEETP-26



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1. Basic Information

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Environmental Education and Stewardship Division

National Environmental Education and Training Program

[EPA National Environmental Education Training Program](#)

A. Executive Summary

The National Environmental Education and Training Program is authorized under Section 5 of the National Environmental Education Act of 1990 (Public Law 101-619). The purpose of this program is to deliver environmental education (EE) training and long-term support to formal and non-formal education professionals across the U.S. in the development and delivery of environmental education and training programs and studies, bolstering their ability to effectively teach about environmental issues. Eligibility for funding is open to U.S. institutions of higher education, not-for-profit institutions as described in Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 which are exempt from taxation pursuant to provisions of section 501(a) of such Code, or a consortium of such institutions may apply to operate this program.

C. Key Dates:

April 27, 2026 11:59 pm ET	Application Submission Deadline
July 2026	Anticipated Notification of Selection
September 2026	Anticipated Award Notification

D. Funding Details:

It is anticipated that **one award** will be made under this announcement. The amount of funding is expected to be **approximately \$4,740,000, which will be incrementally funded up to \$2,370,000 annually for two years**, depending on Agency funding levels, the quality of applications received, agency priorities, and other applicable considerations. Awards funded under this opportunity are expected to have a **two-year** project period.

E. Agency Contact Information:

Further information, if needed, may be obtained from the EPA contact(s) indicated below.

Technical Contact:	Michael Band; EEGrants@epa.gov
Eligibility Contact:	Michael Band; EEGrants@epa.gov

B. Key Information:

Opportunity Number:

EPA-OA-NEETP-26

Assistance Listing:

66.950

Announcement Type:

Initial

Funding Available:

\$4,740,000

Number of Awards:

One

Electronic Submissions Contact: **Michael Band;** EEGrants@epa.gov

F. Other Funding Considerations

EPA will award funding incrementally on an annual basis. Funding availability is not guaranteed beyond year 1. EPA’s financial obligations to the recipient are limited by the amount of federal funding awarded to date as reflected in the award document. If the recipient incurs costs in anticipation of receiving additional funds from EPA, it does so at its own risk. The table below summarizes the estimated funding available throughout the two-year project period. These funding levels are intended as estimates only based on the expected scope of work throughout the life of the award. Recipients may propose different funding levels for each project year so long as the annual federal funding request is no greater than \$2,370,000 and the overall funding request does not exceed \$4,740,000.

Year 1	Year 2	TOTAL
\$2,370,000	\$2,370,000	\$4,740,000

2. Eligibility

A. Eligible Applicants

Only these types of organizations may apply:

- [Institutions of Higher Education \(IHEs\)](#)
- [Nonprofit organizations](#)
- Consortium of IHEs, nonprofit organizations, or a combination of both, per [Section 4.D](#)

EPA encourages eligible applicants to form a consortium to operate this program. Eligible applicants may be a member of a consortium in more than one application. However, such applicants may not apply as the sole applicant or as the applicant for a consortium in more than one application.

The following entities are **INELIGIBLE** to receive an award:

- For-profit organizations
- Individual teachers, educators, faculty members, students, or community members
- Nonprofit organizations described in Section 501(c)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code that engage in lobbying activities as defined in Section 3 of the Lobbying Disclosure Act of 1995

(1) Other Eligibility Requirements

Applications must meet the following threshold criteria to be considered eligible:

1. **Applicant Organization Location:** Applicant organizations must be located within the United States or a U.S. territory.
2. **Project Location:** Applications must include activities taking place within the United States or a U.S. territory.
3. **Funding:** Applications must not request more than \$4,740,000 in federal funding (\$2,370,000 annually for two years).

4. **Cost Share:** Applications must demonstrate how the cost share (non-federal match) requirement will be met, as described in [Section 2.B](#).

EPA may contact applicants to clarify issues relating to threshold criteria compliance prior to making an eligibility determination. Applicants are encouraged to email the Agency Contact listed in [Section 1.E](#) with eligibility related questions prior to the application deadline. Please see [Section 6](#) for additional threshold criteria.

(2) Ineligible Costs and Activities

1. Technical training of environmental management professionals
2. Environmental “information” and/or “outreach” projects that have no additional educational component, as described in [Section 9.B](#);
3. Advocacy promoting a particular point of view or course of action;
4. Lobbying or political activities as defined in 2 CFR Part 200.450;
5. Non-educational research and development; or
6. Construction projects—EPA will not fund construction activities such as the acquisition of real property (e.g., buildings) or the construction or modification of any building.

B. Cost Sharing

There is a cost share (non-federal match) requirement that all applicants must meet, for a minimum of 25% of the total project amount (total project amount = EPA Funding Request + Non-Federal Match). Applicants must demonstrate in their proposal how it will meet the cost share requirement to be considered eligible.

The source of cost share funds must be identified in the application and may be provided in cash or by in-kind contributions. In-kind contributions often include salaries and other verifiable costs such as volunteer time and/or supplies/materials. All in-kind contributions must be allowable and verifiable costs and carefully documented in the application. In the case of salaries or volunteer time, applicants may use fair market value for the locale. If the cost share is provided by a partner organization, the applicant is still responsible for proper accountability and documentation. All cooperative agreements are subject to federal audit.

The proposed cost share must be clearly documented in the application’s SF-424, SF-424A, and the Detailed Budget and Narrative. Applicants must demonstrate in their proposal how it will meet the cost share requirement to be considered eligible. Selected recipients must comply with [2 CFR 200.306](#) when meeting a cost share requirement. Applications that do not include the required cost share in their application will not be considered for funding.

Minimum Cost Share Requirement Formula

Minimum Cost Share = (1/3) x EPA Funding Request

3. Program Description

A. Purpose, Priorities, and Activities

(1) Purpose

The purpose of this program is to provide and build the national capacity of environmental education training for education professionals across the U.S., enabling them to effectively teach about environmental issues. Training may be provided for both formal (e.g., classroom teachers and faculty at colleges and universities) and non-formal educators (e.g., educators in museums, nature centers and other non-formal venues). It also may be provided in both pre-service (e.g., for students in teacher education programs and/or colleges of education and faculty) and in-service settings (e.g., for classroom teachers and other practicing educators).

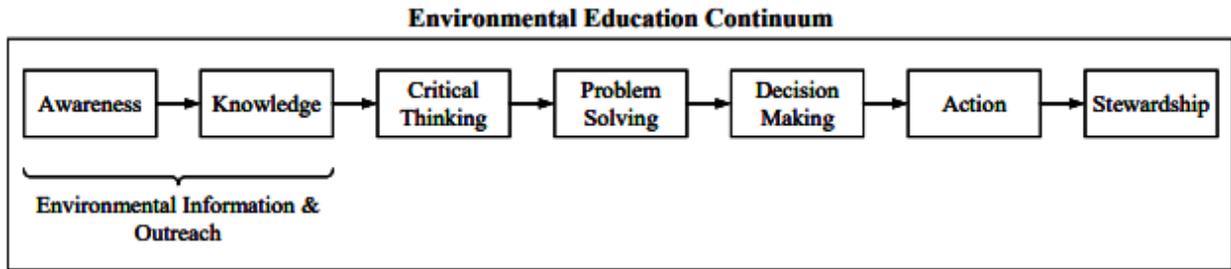
Environmental education training refers to professional learning activities such as classes, online courses, workshops, communities of practice, seminars, and conferences which are designed to prepare education professionals to effectively teach about environmental issues. Building national capacity of environmental education training includes, but is not limited to, developing and disseminating environmental education guidelines, developing and implementing state educator certification programs, and providing access to information about high-quality programs and resources.

Environmental education is a process that allows individuals to explore environmental issues, engage in problem solving, and take action to improve the environment. As a result, individuals develop a deeper understanding of environmental issues and have the skills to make informed and responsible decisions. Environmental education enables communities and individuals to engage in environmental problem-solving, identify cause and effect relationships, build an understanding of the implications of their actions and promote economic well-being, now and long into the future, through environmental stewardship (see environmental education continuum below). Key characteristics include the importance of the relationships among ecosystem health, community well-being, and long-term resource efficiency, which can include reflection on risks to health, safety, and the environment.

In alignment with [EO 14313](#): *Establishing the President's Make America Beautiful Again Commission*, environmental education supports the following policies:

- Promote responsible stewardship of natural resources while driving economic growth.
- Encourage responsible, voluntary conservation efforts that expand outdoor recreation, hunting, and fishing opportunities for future generations.
- Recover America's fish and wildlife populations through proactive, voluntary, on-the-ground collaborative conservation efforts.

Environmental education supports EO 14313 as it sparks awareness and supports knowledge building around environmental topics. Environmental education also teaches individuals how to assess and analyze environmental topics through critical thinking and enhances problem-solving and decision-making skills, enabling individuals to participate in informed action and stewardship experiences.



The Environmental Education and Stewardship Division (EESD) encourages applicants to address and leverage the following funding priorities in their proposed projects in support of **EO 14313, *Establishing the President's Make America Beautiful Again Commission***:

- Environmental Stewardship
- Outdoor Education
- Environmental Risk Issue Investigations
- AI-Enhanced Environmental Education

(2) Priorities

In alignment with EPA's mission and **EO 14313, *Establishing the President's Make America Beautiful Again Commission***, applicants are strongly encouraged to describe how their proposed project will address and leverage the funding priorities described below. The priorities listed below are not in order of importance or preference. See [Section 6.B](#) for additional information on how applicants will be evaluated on their proposal to address and leverage these funding priorities.

- 1) **Environmental Stewardship:** Is a voluntary commitment, behavior, and action that results in environmental protection or improvement. Stewardship refers to an acceptance of personal responsibility for actions to improve environmental quality and to achieve sustainable outcomes. Stewardship involves lifestyle and business practices, initiatives and actions that enhance the state of the environment and natural resources. Some examples include habitat restoration, restoring aquatic ecosystems to improve water quality and availability, expanding access to clean drinking water, conserving fish and wildlife populations, living or conducting business in such a way as to minimize or eliminate pollution at its source, using natural resources efficiently, planting native trees and removing invasive plant species, and conserving or restoring soil, forests, prairies, wetlands, rivers, and parks. Stewardship can be practiced by individuals, groups, schools, organizations, companies, communities, and state and local governments with a goal of fostering a sense of collective responsibility and action.

Applicants are encouraged to describe how they plan to actively engage pre-service/in-service teachers and local communities in environmental stewardship efforts, decision-making processes, as well as pedagogy and practices around designing and facilitating environmental stewardship efforts in their proposed projects.

- 2) **Outdoor Education:** Engages individuals and communities directly with the environment, making environmental topics and concepts more tangible through real-world experiences and fostering a sense of responsibility for local, national, and global environments. In accordance with EO 14313, *Establishing the President's Make America Beautiful Again Commission*, emphasis is placed on kindling our Nation's spirit of exploration through exposure to responsible conservation, restoring our lands and waters, and protecting our Nation's outdoor heritage. The

United States' varied landscapes, natural resources, and multifaceted ecosystems create opportunities for access to practical, hands-on learning environments to engage in meaningful outdoor education experiences.

Applicants are encouraged to describe how they plan to actively engage pre-service/in-service teachers and local communities in outdoor education experiences, pedagogy and practices around designing and facilitating outdoor learning experiences as well as the development of partnerships with outdoor recreation and learning organizations to support outdoor education in their proposed projects.

- 3) **Environmental Risk Issue Investigation (ERII):** Through emphasis on developing a deeper understanding of environmental issues and having the skills to make informed and responsible decisions, this competition promotes ERII as a systematic approach to understanding, analyzing, and addressing environmental, economic, and/or human health impacts. ERII allows individuals to identify the influencing factors, causes, and impacts of environmental issues while engaging in critical thinking and problem-solving for effective action and stewardship. ERIIs are interdisciplinary, inquiry-based learning experiences that support and enhance environmental education by providing real-world context through engaging learners in investigating causes, impacts, and possible solutions for environmental issues. Recommended inquiry-based practices include the following, which have been modified from *The National Project for Excellence in Environmental Education*, an EPA funded grant awarded to the North American Association for Environmental Education:

- Provide opportunities for authentic, experiential exploration of the environment, environmental issues, and possible environmental solutions. For example, provide opportunities for learners to collect, analyze, and evaluate data to draw conclusions.
- Facilitate activities that build personal and community connections to the environment, including with people directly affected by environmental issues. For example, consider key factors in connecting, collaborating and communicating about environmental hazards and the relationships among the impacted individuals and communities.
- Provide opportunities for relevant and responsive inquiry and investigation, especially when considering risks to health, safety, and the environment that require learners to reflect on their own and others' perspectives.

Applicants are encouraged to describe how they plan to investigate key environmental risks that have environmental, economic, and public health impacts such as air quality, water quality & safety, emergency response planning, ecosystem health, habitat biodiversity and degradation, and land revitalization in their proposed projects. See [Section 9.B](#) for more information on EESD's Environmental Risk Issue Investigation Process.

- 4) **AI-Enhanced Environmental Education:** Projects should explore how AI tools can be used to enhance environmental education and support educator training projects through applications such as data collection, analysis, and visualization, development of immersive and/or adaptive learning experiences/platforms, development of predictive environmental models, and/or support of environmental stewardship efforts. Defined in [15 U.S.C. 9401\(3\)](#), the term "artificial intelligence" means a machine-based system that can, for a given set of human-defined objectives, make predictions, recommendations or decisions influencing real or virtual environments. Artificial intelligence systems use machine and human-based inputs to:

- a) Perceive real and virtual environments;
- b) Abstract such perceptions into models through analysis in an automated manner; and
- c) Use model inference to formulate options for information or action.

AI is a powerful tool, but not a replacement for human judgment and community values. AI can augment capacity, automate tasks, support the visualization of complex environmental topics as well as support decision-making, but human judgment and community values must remain central. Opportunities must be balanced with caution as challenges like data privacy, cultural relevance, and technology access need continuous attention to maintain security and ethical use. EPA recommends critical reflection on the value of AI-enhanced environmental education, the impact of AI models and infrastructure, and the responsible use of AI practices to promote human flourishing, economic competitiveness, and national security.

In accordance with [EO 14179](#), *Removing Barriers to American Leadership in Artificial Intelligence*, applicants are encouraged to describe how they plan to leverage AI to enhance environmental education in their project proposals.

(3) Activities

Applicants are required to describe how funding will help EPA achieve outputs and outcomes that support Environmental Stewardship, Outdoor Education, Environmental Risk Issue Investigations, and AI-enhanced Environmental Education in their responses to the criteria in [Section 6](#).

Outputs and outcomes specific to each project will be identified as deliverables in the negotiated workplan if the application is selected for award. Recipients will be expected to report progress toward the attainment of expected project outputs and outcomes during the project performance period.

Outputs are an environmental education activity, effort, and/or associated work product related to an environmental goal or objective that will be produced or provided over time or by a specified date. Outputs may be quantitative or qualitative but must be measurable during the project period.

The expected outputs for cooperative agreements awarded under these guidelines may include but are not limited to the examples listed below. Applicants are strongly encouraged to expand or refine these expected outputs to better align with the funding priorities described in [Section 3.A\(2\)](#).

- Deliver in-service educator training that builds on existing quality environmental education programs.
- Deliver pre-service educator training that enables students in teacher education programs/education departments at colleges and universities to effectively include environmental education in their teaching.
- Deliver faculty training in education departments at colleges/universities to effectively include environmental education in courses and teacher education programming.
- Support state “infrastructure” that enables educators to effectively teach about environmental issues (referred to as “state capacity building”).
- Develop a materials review process that identifies, evaluates, and promotes high-quality environmental education materials.
- Support accreditation efforts to include environmental education in college and university teacher preparation programs.
- Support state educator certification efforts by assisting states that are developing their own certification programs.

- Facilitate access to environmental education information and materials by building on existing internet sites that provide broad electronic access.
- Develop and/or improve program evaluation methodologies within environmental education for broad use.

Outcomes are the result, effect, or consequence that will occur from carrying out the activities under the grant. Outcomes may be environmental, behavioral, health-related, or programmatic; must be qualitative or quantitative; and may not necessarily be achievable during the project period.

EPA anticipates the outcomes from the project awarded under this announcement may be an increase in the capacity to achieve the results described below. Applicants are strongly encouraged to expand or refine these anticipated outcomes to better align with the funding priorities described in [Section 3.A\(2\)](#).

- Equip educators with the knowledge and skills to deliver high-quality environmental education as a result of in-service and pre-service training.
- Expand access to timely, relevant, and personalized environmental education training and instructional resources through tools that adapt content to educators with varying instructional needs.
- Strengthen state and organizational infrastructure to support environmental education through improved planning, technical assistance, and decision-making.
- Improve the availability and use of high-quality environmental education materials by increasing the consistency, efficiency, and effectiveness of materials review processes.
- Advance the integration of environmental education into pre-service educator programs at postsecondary institutions.
- Develop and/or enhance the quality of state educator certification programs.
- Increasing capacity for environmental risk communication within environmental education to effectively inform the public of concerns with human health or the environment.
- Increase public access to environmental education information and materials.
- Improve educators' ability to communicate environmental and health risks clearly and effectively using tools that help interpret, translate, and explain complex data to various audiences.
- Strengthen environmental education program evaluation by increasing accuracy, consistency, and analytical capacity through data analysis, visualization, and trend identification.
- Build long-term national capacity to deliver environmental education training by broadening participation, streamlining delivery systems, and supporting sustained educator professional development across the country.

See [EPA Order 5700.7A1: EPA's Policy for Environmental Results under EPA Assistance Agreements](#) for more information about outputs and outcomes.

B. Program Goals and Objectives

The activities to be funded under this funding announcement support Pillar 3: Permitting Reform, Cooperative Federalism, and Cross-Agency Partnership of [Administrator Zeldin's Five Pillars](#).

Section 5 of the National Environmental Education Act of 1990 authorizes funding projects that foster partnerships to train educational professionals in the development and delivery of environmental education and training programs and studies. Under this program, expected outputs may include supporting state infrastructure that enables educators to effectively teach about environmental issues and supporting state educator certification efforts by assisting states that are developing their own certification programs. This partnership and collaboration support cooperative federalism.

C. Statutory Authority

Section 5 of the National Environmental Education Act of 1990 (Public Law 101-619) authorizes the activities described in this NOFO.

D. Funding Type

It is anticipated that cooperative agreements will be funded under this funding opportunity.

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

- Close monitoring of the successful applicant's performance to verify the results proposed by the applicant.
- Collaboration during performance of the scope of work.
- In accordance with [2 CFR 200.317](#) and [2 CFR 200.318](#), review of proposed procurement;
- Approving qualifications of key personnel (the EPA will not select employees or contractors employed by the award recipient); and
- Review and comment on reports prepared under the cooperative agreement (the final decision on the content of reports rests with the recipient).

The 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.

4. Application Contents and Format

A. Application Forms

The following forms and documents are required under this announcement:

Mandatory Documents:

1. Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424)
2. Budget Information for Non-Construction Programs (SF-424A)
3. EPA Key Contacts Form 5700-54
4. EPA Form 4700-4 Preaward Compliance Review Report
5. Project Narrative Attachment Form: use this to submit your Work Plan, which consists of:
 - a. Executive Summary
 - b. Detailed Project Description
6. Other Attachments Form: Use this to submit the following documents:
 - a. Detailed Budget and Narrative
 - b. Timeline
 - c. Logic Model
 - d. Programmatic Capability and Past Performance
 - e. Partnership Letters of Commitment

Optional Documents:

7. Other Attachments Form: Use this form to submit other attachments, if applicable. These optional documents are encouraged, but not required, and will **not** count toward the Work Plan's 20-page limit.
 - a. Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement, if applicable
 - b. References/Works Cited

The Work Plan shall not exceed 20 single-spaced pages. Pages over this limit will not be reviewed. One page refers to one side of a single-spaced typed page. The pages must be letter-sized (8 ½ X 11 inches); 12-point Times New Roman, Arial, or Calibri font, with one column per page with 1-inch margins on all sides. The Work Plan **must include** the Executive Summary and Detailed Project Description. Applicants must ensure that the Work Plan addresses the evaluation criteria in [Section 6.B](#).

Applicants are also required to submit a Detailed Budget and Narrative, Timeline, Logic Model, Programmatic Capability and Past Performance, and Partnership Letters of Commitment in their application. These forms must meet the same formatting requirements as the Work Plan (i.e., font, font size, margins, paper size), but **do not count** toward the Work Plan's 20-page limit.

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.

B. Project Narrative Description

All applications must include a **Work Plan** and **Attachments A-E** (i.e., Detailed Budget and Narrative, Timeline, Logic Model, Programmatic Capability and Past Performance, and Partnership Letters of Commitment) as part of their Project Narrative, following the mandatory documents listed in [Section 4.A](#). The Project Narrative should cover the requirements from [Section 3](#) of this funding opportunity, meet any threshold eligibility requirements in [Section 2](#), and address each evaluation criterion in [Section 6.B](#). Applicants are strongly encouraged to organize their applications in the order given below and use simple terms to explain the purpose and expected outcomes of your project, ensuring that someone unfamiliar with it can understand it without extra research. The Project Narrative will be scored based on the ranking factors in [Section 6.B](#).

a. **Work Plan:** The work plan consists of the Executive Summary and Detailed Project Description and must **not exceed 20 single-spaced pages total**; excess pages will not be reviewed. Please carefully review [Section 4.A](#) for all other formatting requirements. Applicants must ensure that the Work Plan addresses the evaluation criteria in [Section 6.B](#). **Each Work Plan should be organized in the order and with the headings and information requested below.**

Note: Applicants can cite studies or sources in the Work Plan. Citations and lists of sources should be submitted by using the "Other Attachments Form" on grants.gov and will not be counted in the Work Plan's 20-page limit.

i. **Executive Summary** (Recommended 1-2 pages): Provide a concise overview of your application in the following format. The purpose of this part of the Work Plan is to provide a high-level overview of the project and to help determine the eligibility of the applicant/application. Detailed explanations should be provided in the Detailed Project Description, not in the Executive Summary.

1. **Applicant Name** – Identify the name of the organization submitting the application.
2. **Project Title**
3. **Eligible Entity Type** – Identify your organization's eligibility type from [Section 2.A](#).

Project Location - Include a list of where all project activities will be taking place (city and state/territory).

4. **Contact Information** - Include name, title, email address, and phone number. You can list both a primary project contact and an administrative contact.
5. **The Project Period** - Provide the anticipated beginning and end dates for the proposed project. Periods of performance can be up to two years. Applicants should plan for projects to start no earlier than November 1, 2026.
6. **Costs** - List the following information in dollar amounts only (round up to the nearest dollar, do not use cents).
 - a. Annual federal funding requests for each year of the proposed project as well as the total funding request across the entire project period.
 - b. The annual proposed cost share for each year of the proposed project as well as the total cost share amount across the entire project period. See [Section 2.B](#) for additional information on the cost share requirement.
 - c. The total dollar amount of your budget (EPA Funding Request + Cost Share).
7. **Brief Project Description** – In 500 words or less, describe the project mission, major project activities and outputs (including those that leverage the funding priorities described in [Section 3.A\(2\)](#)), the anticipated outcomes/deliverables, and the specific need for these activities within the context of this program. Identify the target audience by type (e.g., education professionals, students, community members, etc.) and include the anticipated number of individuals reached by audience type. You may also include any unique, noteworthy, or relevant information that helps explain the project’s significance.
 - Brief Project Descriptions of the application that receives funding may be posted on program-related websites and/or included in notices that EPA may send to members of Congress.

ii. Detailed Project Description: Under the headings *Vision and Significance*, *Project Design*, and *Environmental and Educational Results*, describe in detail what your project will achieve, especially how it will serve to deliver environmental education training and long-term support to formal and non-formal education professionals across the U.S. in the development and delivery of environmental education and training programs and studies, bolstering their ability to effectively teach about environmental issues; how the priorities described in [Section 3.A\(2\)](#) align with the project goals; how it will achieve its goals, and who it will reach. **It is highly recommended that you explain each aspect of your application clearly and address each topic by following the format below, include the headings as given, and do not reorder the paragraphs.**

Section 1 – Vision and Significance – The description should include:

- a. **Vision Statement:** Provide a clear description of your project’s short-term (first year) and long-term (up to two years) vision. Explain how your project activities and goals support both visions. Also describe how your overall vision aligns with and supports the purpose and funding priorities described in [Section 3](#).
- b. **Significance:** Describe the currently pressing needs in the field of environmental education and education communities. Explain how your project aims to meet these needs, advance the field of environmental education by building upon existing national efforts and programs, generate meaningful educational and environmental benefits, and how it will leverage the funding priorities described in [Section 3.A\(2\)](#) to do so.

Section 2 – Project Design – This description should include:

a. **Project Goals and Objectives:** Describe your project’s specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, time-based (i.e., within project period) goals and objectives. Explain how the project will serve as a model for advancing and strengthening the field of environmental education.

b. **Project Activities:** Describe the activities, methods, materials, and other specific actions you will undertake to achieve your project’s goals and objectives, specifying who will lead each activity (i.e., prime recipient, consortium member, partner organization, or subrecipient). Also include details on how you will leverage the funding priorities described in [Section 3.A\(2\)](#) to achieve your project goals and objectives.

c. **Target Audience:** Describe in detail your target audience, such as education professionals (formal and non-formal), students, community members, etc. Also provide the specific number of individuals within each target audience group your project anticipates reaching.

d. **Recruitment Plan:** Explain your recruitment plan to attract your target audience and identify incentives that will be used to facilitate recruitment. Examples include, but are not limited to, stipends, continuing education credits, or partnerships.

Section 3 - Environmental and Educational Results – This description should include:

a. **Anticipated Outputs and Outcomes:** A narrative explanation of how your project’s anticipated outputs and outcomes will help you meet your stated goals and objectives. See [Section 3.A\(3\)](#) for additional information on outputs and outcomes. The information provided in this subsection should directly feed into the Logic Model you create.

b. **Project Evaluation Plan:** Detailed plans for incorporating program evaluation activities from project initiation through completion to meaningfully document and measure progress, both for your organization and any project partners, toward achieving expected project outputs and outcomes. Evaluation should utilize appropriate tools, methods, and qualified personnel or organizations with experience in assessing project progress and success. The evaluation of the program must be conducted by an institution that has appropriate credentials and expertise in evaluating education programs and is independent of the applicant and key partners when applying as a consortium.

b. **Attachments:** The attachments listed below must be included as part of the Project Narrative and do **NOT** count toward the Work Plan’s 20-page limit. Please submit separate files for each attachment below.

- Attachment A: Detailed Budget and Narrative
- Attachment B: Timeline
- Attachment C: Logic Model
- Attachment D: Programmatic Capability and Past Performance
- Attachment E: Partnership Letters of Commitment

Attachment A: Detailed Budget and Narrative – Make sure you:

1. Create a detailed budget table and narrative, using the same order and headings listed on the Budget Form 424A, that clearly explains how the funds will be used.
 - Across the top, create three columns titled “EPA Funds”, “Cost Share/Matching Funds” and “Total Project Cost” to show how the total estimated EPA funds and cost share funds will be used each year of the project period.
- 5) The line items or cost categories that should be listed along the left side of the table are (as appropriate, since not all applicants will use every cost category): personnel; fringe benefits;

travel; equipment (over \$10,000); supplies; contractual; other costs (which include subawards); indirect costs; and program income.

2. Demonstrate how you will meet the cost share requirement (a minimum of 25% of the total project amount) described in [Section 2.B.](#)
3. Factor in the costs for all proposed activities; clarify which will be paid with EPA funds and which will be paid with cost share funds.
4. In a narrative within or below the table, provide details for each expense, such as personnel (number of staff, title or role in project, hourly wage, and percentage of time spent on project), travel (reasons for travel, costs and locations of trips, and costs per mile for travel and per diem per person), supplies (provide categories and detailed listings according to the project tasks in which they will be used), and “other” expenses. “Other” expenses may include costs such as stipends for teachers, expenses for field trips, entrance fees to parks and science centers, printing, postage, conference fees for booths, and other costs that do not fall under the categories listed above for each year of the two-year project period.
5. If you anticipate earning program income as a result of your EPA award, show the estimated amount, explain how it is to be earned (the source of income – e.g., workshop or conference fees), and how it will be used to enhance your project. When you do use program income on your project, it is important that you include the amount in your detailed budget.
6. Funds for salaries and fringe benefits may be requested only for those personnel who are directly involved in implementing the proposed project and whose salaries and fringe benefits are directly related to specific products or outcomes of the proposed project. EPA strongly encourages each applicant to request reasonable amounts of funding for salaries and fringe benefits to ensure that the application is competitive.
7. Describe your approach, procedures, and controls for ensuring that grant funds will be expended in a timely and effective manner.

Note: Prior to developing your Detailed Budget Table and Narrative please review [EPA’s Interim General Budget Development Guidance for Applicants and Recipients of EPA Financial Assistance](#) and EPA’s [How to Develop a Budget](#) online training course designed to introduce EPA grant applicants and recipients to key aspects of grant budget development.

Please note the following funding restrictions:

Indirect Costs: Indirect costs (IDCs) may be budgeted and charged by recipients of Federal assistance agreements in accordance with [2 CFR Part 200. EPA’s Indirect Cost Policy for Recipients of EPA Assistance Agreements](#) (IDC Policy) implements the Federal regulations, and the following applies to all EPA assistance agreements, unless there are [statutory or regulatory limits on IDCs](#).

In order for an assistance agreement recipient to use EPA funding for indirect costs, the IDC category of the recipient’s assistance agreement award budget must include an amount for IDCs and at least one of the following must apply:

- With the exception of “exempt” agencies and Institutions of Higher Education as noted below, all recipients must have one of the following current (not expired) IDC rates, including IDC rates that have been extended by the cognizant agency
 - Provisional;
 - Final;
 - Fixed rate with carry-forward;
 - Predetermined;
 - 15% de minimis rate authorized by 2 CFR 200.414(f)

- EPA-approved use of one of the following:
 - 15% de minimis as detailed in section 6.3 of the IDC Policy; or
 - Expired fixed rate with carry-forward as detailed in section 6.4.a. of the IDC Policy.
- “Exempt” state or local governmental departments or agencies are agencies that receive up to and including \$35,000,000 in Federal funding per the department or agency’s fiscal year, and must have an IDC rate proposal developed in accordance with [2 CFR 200 Appendix VII](#), with documentation maintained and available for audit.
- Institutions of Higher Education must use the approved rate(s) on the IDC rate agreement in place at the time of award for the life of the assistance agreement (unless the rate was provisional at time of award, in which case the rate will change once it becomes final). As provided by [2 CFR Part 200, Appendix III\(C\)\(7\)](#), the term “life of the assistance agreement”, means each competitive segment of the project. Additional information is available in the regulation.”

IDCs incurred during any period of the assistance agreement that are not covered by the provisions above are not allowable costs and must not be drawn down by the recipient.

Recipients may budget for IDCs pending approval of their IDC rate by the cognizant Federal agency or an exception granted by EPA under section 6.3 or 6.4 of the IDC Policy. **However, recipients may not draw down IDCs until their rate is approved or EPA grants an exception.**

The IDC Policy does not govern indirect rates for subrecipients or recipient procurement contractors under EPA assistance agreements. Pass-through entities are required to comply with [2 CFR 200.331\(a\)\(4\)](#) when establishing indirect cost rates for subawards.

See the [Indirect Cost Rate Policy and Guidance for Recipients of EPA Assistance Agreement](#) for additional information on Indirect Costs.

Construction and Acquisition of Property: This grant program will not fund the acquisition of real property (including buildings) or the construction or modification of any building. EPA may, however, fund activities such as creating a nature trail with educational signs or building a bird watching station, or installing small-scale water-related educational features (e.g., a demonstration rain garden or permeable pavement test plot) as long as these items are an integral part of the environmental education project, and the cost is a relatively small percentage of the total amount of federal funds requested.

Salaries and Fringe Benefits: Funds for salaries and fringe benefits may be requested only for those personnel who are directly involved in implementing the proposed project and whose salaries and fringe benefits are directly related to specific products or outcomes of the proposed project.

Cost Share (Non-Federal Match) Explanation: The cost share (non-federal match) must be at least 25% of the total cost of the project. Cost share funds must be for allowable costs and may be provided by the applicant or a partner organization or institution. The cost share may be provided in cash or by in-kind contributions and other non-monetary support. In-kind contributions often include salaries and/or other verifiable costs such as volunteer time and/or supplies/materials, and this value must be carefully documented in the Detailed Budget Table and Narrative. In the case of salaries or volunteer time, applicants may use fair market value for the locale. If the match is provided by a partner organization, the applicant is still responsible for proper accountability and documentation. All grants are subject to federal audit. See [Section 2.B](#) for additional information on this competition’s cost share requirement. The table below provides the minimum cost share amount for a project requesting the full \$4,740,000 over two years.

<u>Project Year</u>	<u>EPA Funding Request</u>	<u>Minimum Cost Share</u>	<u>Total Project Cost</u>
Year 1	\$2,370,000	\$790,000	\$3,160,000
Year 2	\$2,370,000	\$790,000	\$3,160,000
TOTAL (2 years)	\$4,740,000	\$1,580,000	\$6,320,000

Other Federal Funds: You may not use any federal funds to meet any part of the required 25% cost share described above, unless it is specifically authorized by statute. If you have already been awarded federal funds for a project for which you are seeking additional support from this grant program, you must indicate those funds in the budget section of the work plan and ensure that none of those funds are used as cost share funds for this project. You must also identify the project officer, agency, office, address, phone number, and the amount of the federal funds.

Attachment B: Timeline - Provide a detailed timeline for the entire project period that links your project activities to a clear project schedule. Your timeline must indicate at what point over the months and years of your project period each action, event, milestone, product development and evaluation activity will occur. The timeline should also include activities that are to be carried out by partners, if applicable.

Note: Applicants should plan for projects to start no earlier than November 1, 2026.

Attachment C: Logic Model – Provide a graphic display identifying all key activities, outputs, and outcomes associated with the project goals and objectives. Applicants are encouraged to expand or refine the expected outputs and outcomes listed in [Section 3.A\(3\)](#) to better align with the funding priorities described in [Section 3.A\(2\)](#). See [Section 3.A\(3\)](#) for additional information on anticipated outputs and outcomes.

Attachment D: Programmatic Capability and 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; and
2. Your history of meeting the reporting requirements under those agreements including whether you adequately and timely reported on your progress towards achieving the expected outputs and outcomes of those agreements (and if not, explain why not) and whether you submitted acceptable final technical reports under the agreements; and
3. Your organizational experience and plan for timely and successfully achieving the objectives of the proposed project, and your staff expertise/qualifications, staff knowledge, and resources or the ability to obtain them, to successfully achieve the goals of the proposed project.

In evaluating applicants under these factors in [Section 6.B](#), 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 may receive a score of 0 for these factors.

Attachment E: Partnership Letters of Commitment - Partnerships are not mandatory, and therefore partnership letters of commitment are not mandatory either. However, if the applicant organization has partners, such as commercial (for-profit) enterprises, nonprofit organizations, schools or school districts, federal, state or local agencies, or other entities, letters of commitment should be included from partners. Letters of Commitment must explain the partners role in and/or funding of the proposed

project. If no letters are included, it will be assumed the applicant has no partners. Applicants must be aware, however, that regardless of whether it is their partners or their own organization that proposes providing cost share funds, the applicant itself is responsible for ensuring that the cost share requirement described in [Section 2.B](#) is met. If an applicant does not have partners for this project, the applicant should demonstrate in this attachment how the project will be completed effectively without partners. Applications will be evaluated on their use of partnerships to develop, design, and implement their project, as described in [Section 6.B](#), or their explanation of how they will develop, design, and implement the project without partners.

C. Applicants Using Contractors

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.

Do not name a procurement contractor (including a consultant) as a “partner” or otherwise in your application unless the contractor has been selected in compliance with competitive procurement requirements. If an applicant selected for award has named a specific subrecipient, contractor, or consultant in the application, it does not relieve the applicant of its obligations to comply with subaward and/or competitive procurement requirements.

The EPA will not consider the qualifications, experience, and expertise of named subrecipients and/or named contractor(s) during the application evaluation process unless the applicant provides documentation that it has complied with these requirements.

For additional guidance, applicants should review [EPA’s Best Practice Guide for Procuring Services, Supplies, and Equipment Under EPA Assistance Agreements](#), [EPA’s Subaward Policy](#), and [EPA’s Subaward Policy Frequent Questions](#). The EPA expects recipients of funding to comply with competitive procurement contracting requirements in 2 CFR Parts 200 and 1500, as well as the requirements in 2 CFR Part 200.321 and 40 CFR Part 33 Subpart C.

D. Consortia Coverage

A consortium is formed when two or more eligible applicants coordinate to submit a single application. Consortia must identify which single eligible organization will be the recipient of the grant and which eligible organization(s) will receive subawards from the recipient (the “pass-through entity”). The pass-through entity that administers the grant and subawards will be accountable to the EPA for proper expenditure of the funds and reporting and will be the point of contact for the consortium. Subawards must be consistent with the definition of that term in [2 CFR 200.1](#) and comply with the [EPA’s Subaward Policy](#).

5. Submission Requirements and Deadlines

A. Submission Dates and Times

April 27, 2026 11:59 pm ET Application Submission Deadline

Grants.gov creates a date and time record when it receives the application. If you submit the same application more than once, we will accept the last on-time submission.

B. Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) and System for Award Management (SAM.gov)

SAM.gov

You must have an active account with SAM.gov. SAM.gov will provide a UEI for your organization, which is required to apply for grants using Grants.gov. To register, go to [SAM.gov Entity Registration](#) and click Get Started. From the same page, you can also click on the [Entity Registration Checklist](#) for the information you will need to register. Make sure you are current with SAM.gov and UEI requirements before applying for the award.

SAM.gov registration can take several weeks. [Begin that process today.](#)

Grants.gov

You must also have an active account with [Grants.gov](#). You can see step-by-step instructions at the Grants.gov [Quick Start Guide for Applicants](#).

Please visit [How to Register to Apply for Grants](#) for additional information.

C. Submission Instructions

You must submit your application through Grants.gov. See Section 5.B. above for information on getting registered.

Important tips:

- 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.
- See the Quick Start Guide for Applicants for instructions on how to submit.
- Make sure your application passes the Grants.gov validation checks.
- Do not encrypt, zip, or password protect any files.
- Your application must be submitted by an official representative of your organization who is registered with Grants.gov and is authorized to sign applications for Federal financial assistance.
- If you receive an error or the 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.
- See Grants.gov Errors for information on other Grants.gov errors.
- 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.

D. 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:

- Contact Grants.gov Support Center before the application deadline date.
- Document the Grants.gov ticket/case number.
- Send an email with Funding Opportunity Number (FON): EPA-OA-NEETP-26 in the subject line to EEGrants@epa.gov before the application deadline time and date and must include the following:

- Grants.gov ticket/case number(s)
- Description of the issue
- The entire application package in PDF format.

Without this information, the 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.

Applicants with limited or no access to the internet may request an exception by following the procedures outlined [here](#). The request must be received at least 15 calendar days before the application due date to allow enough time to negotiate alternative submission methods.

E. Intergovernmental Review

The application is not subject to Intergovernmental Review.

6. Application Review Information

A. Responsiveness Review

Applications must meet the eligibility requirements described in [Section 2](#) to be evaluated. Applicants not meeting these requirements will be deemed ineligible and will be notified within 15 calendar days of the determination.

- Applications must adhere to the page limit requirements. Any pages over the limit(s) in [Section 4](#) will not be reviewed.
- Initial applications must be submitted *on or before* the application deadline through Grants.gov or through limited circumstances as expressed in [Section 5](#). The EPA will not evaluate applications that are not submitted on time.
- *Technical difficulties applying:* Applicants having technical difficulties applying must contact the Grants.gov hotline at 1-800-518-4726 *and* then must email a PDF of the full application to the EPA contact listed in [Section 1](#). The submission must be received prior to the application deadline for consideration.

B. Review Criteria

Criteria Name and Description	Points
Work Plan (Executive Summary and Detailed Project Description)	53
i. Executive Summary - Under this criterion, EPA will evaluate the extent and quality to which the application clearly and completely addresses the content described in Section 4.B(i) .	2
ii. Detailed Project Description	

<p>Section 1 – Vision and Significance - Under this criterion, EPA will evaluate the extent and quality to which the application:</p> <p><u>Vision Statement</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describes a clear and actionable vision statement that describes the purpose and primary activities as they relate to the proposed short-term and long-term vision of the project. EPA will also evaluate the degree to which the project’s vision statement supports the purpose and priorities described in Section 3. (3 points) <p><u>Significance</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates that the proposed project addresses pressing needs in the environmental education field and relevant education communities; advances the field by building upon existing national efforts and programs; and is likely to generate meaningful educational and environmental benefits. Applications will also be evaluated on the extent to which the applicant integrates the project priorities, described in Section 3.A(2), to meet these needs, enhance project outcomes, and produce results that address the identified pressing needs in the field of environmental education. (7 points) 	<p>10</p>
<p>Section 2 – Project Design - Under this criterion, EPA will evaluate the extent and quality to which the application:</p> <p><u>Project Goals and Objectives</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Includes specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-based goals and objectives that can be accomplished within the project period, the degree to which the proposed goals and objectives support the purpose and priorities described in Section 3, and the likelihood of the project to serve as a strong model for advancing and strengthening the field of environmental education. (7 points) <p><u>Project Activities</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describes a clear, feasible, and technically sound set of activities, methods, materials, and actions for achieving the project’s goals and objectives, specifying who will lead each activity (i.e., prime recipient, partner organization, subrecipient); the degree to which the proposed technical approach is well-developed, realistic, and aligned with the program purpose and activities described in Section 3; and the extent to which the project effectively integrates the priorities (described in Section 3.A(2)) to enhance the approach, improve outcomes, and support successful project performance. (10 points) <p><u>Target Audience</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describes in detail the target audiences (e.g., K-12 educators, faculty at postsecondary schools, non-formal educators, pre-service teachers, etc.) and demonstrate that the number and types of individuals they anticipate reaching are appropriate, well- 	<p>27</p>

<p>defined, and aligned with the project’s goals. (5 points)</p> <p><u>Recruitment Plan</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presents a clear, feasible, and well-developed recruitment plan to attract your target audience, effectively identifies strategies and incentives (e.g., teacher stipends, continuing education credits, and partnerships) that will be used to recruit your target audience, and demonstrates that the proposed methods are appropriate and likely to support successful participation and achievement of project goals. (5 points) 	
<p>Section 3 - Environmental and Educational Results - Under this criterion, EPA will evaluate the extent and quality to which the application:</p> <p><u>Anticipated Outputs and Outcomes</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describes the project’s anticipated outputs and outcomes, including quantitative targets as appropriate. Applications will also be evaluated on the extent to which applicants demonstrate the anticipated outputs and outcomes are linked to the funding priorities described in Section 3.A(2) and how they will lead to the project meeting the stated goals and objectives. Applicants that expand or refine expected outputs and outcomes listed in Section 3.A(3) to better align with the funding priorities described in Section 3.A(2) may be evaluated more favorably than others. (8 points) <p><u>Project Evaluation Plan</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates a well-developed and feasible evaluation plan that meaningfully documents and measures progress toward achieving expected project outputs and outcomes throughout the entire project period. Considerations will include the appropriateness of the evaluation design, methods, and tools; the qualifications and experience of the personnel or organizations conducting the evaluation. The evaluation must be conducted by an independent organization with appropriate credentials and expertise in evaluating education programs. (6 points) 	<p>14</p>
<p>Attachments (A – E)</p>	
<p>Attachment A: Detailed Budget and Narrative - Under this criterion, EPA will evaluate the extent and quality to which the application:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Includes a budget table and narrative (which can either be within or below the table), broken down by project year and total project cost, that clearly, consistently, and accurately demonstrates how funds will be used, that costs are categorized in the proper budget line item for each activity for which the application is requesting funding, and the applicant’s plan to meet the cost share requirement. Applications will also be evaluated on the reasonableness, cost-effectiveness, and adequacy of the proposed 	<p>14</p>

<p>budget to accomplish the proposed project goals and objectives over the two-year project period. (10 points)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Under this criterion, applicants 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. This information can be included as part of the budget narrative. (4 points) 	
<p>Attachment B: Timeline - Under this criterion, EPA will evaluate the extent and quality to which the application presents a clear and logically sequenced project schedule that aligns proposed activities, milestones, product development, and evaluation efforts during the proposed project period. EPA will also evaluate the overall feasibility of the schedule, including whether the timing and sequencing of key tasks are realistic and sufficient to support completion of the project’s goals and objectives within the proposed two-year project period.</p>	<p>6</p>
<p>Attachment C: Logic Model – Under this criterion, EPA will evaluate the extent and quality to which the application’s Logic Model clearly connects project goals and objectives with key activities, anticipated outputs, and expected outcomes. Evaluation will consider how well the model demonstrates a logical and realistic pathway from activities to results. Logic Models that expand or refine expected outputs and outcomes listed in Section 3.A(3) to better align with the funding priorities described in Section 3.A(2) may be evaluated more favorably than others.</p>	<p>6</p>
<p>Attachment D: Programmatic Capability and Past Performance - Each applicant will be evaluated based on their ability to successfully complete and manage the proposed program plan considering their past performance and programmatic capability. Applicants should 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:</p> <p><u>Past Performance</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whether, and how, you were able to successfully complete and manage those agreement. (4 points) <p><u>History of Meeting the Reporting Requirements</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. (2 points) <p><u>Organizational Experience</u></p>	<p>15</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Your organizational experience and plan for timely and successfully achieving the objectives of the proposed project, and your staff expertise/qualifications, staff knowledge, and resources or the ability to obtain them, to successfully achieve the goals of the proposed project. (9 points) <p>Note: In evaluating applicants under the first two sub-factors (bullet points) of this criterion, 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 may receive a score of 0 for these factors.</p>	
<p>Attachment E: Partnership Letters of Commitment - Under this criterion, EPA will evaluate the extent and quality to which the applicant demonstrates an effective approach to project implementation either through clearly defined strategic partnerships or, if no partners are proposed, through demonstrated capacity to complete the project independently.</p> <p>For applicants with partners, EPA will evaluate the strength and specificity of the commitments provided in the Partnership Letters of Commitment, including the clarity of each partner’s role, responsibilities, and contributions—such as any contributions to the cost share requirement—and the extent to which partner involvement provides meaningful and sustained support that enhances the project’s technical approach and likelihood of success. Applications with letters of commitment that demonstrate strong, long-term involvement throughout the project from a variety of project partners may also be evaluated more favorably than others.</p> <p>Partnerships are not mandatory, and therefore partnership letters of commitment are not mandatory either. If no letters of commitment are provided, it will be assumed the applicant has no partners for the project. For applicants without partners, EPA will evaluate the extent and quality to which the applicant demonstrates adequate capacity, resources, and a feasible approach to effectively perform and complete the full scope of the project without partner collaboration.</p>	6
<p>Total</p>	100

Applicants will be evaluated based on the extent and quality to which they demonstrate that they have the capability to successfully perform the project as described in [Section 3](#) of this funding opportunity.

Only eligible entities whose applications meet the threshold criteria in [Section 2](#) of this announcement will be evaluated. **Applicants should explicitly address these criteria as part of their application**

package submittal in the project narrative. Each application will be rated using a point system. Applications will be evaluated based on a total of 100 possible points.

C. Review and Selection Process

Applications will be reviewed and scored under the following process:

1. **Threshold Eligibility Review Process** - All applications will be evaluated to determine eligibility based on the threshold eligibility criteria described in [Section 2](#).
2. **Panel Review and Evaluation Process** – Review panel(s) will evaluate and rank all eligible applications using the evaluation criteria in [Section 6.B](#). Review panels will be comprised of EPA staff and/or external reviewers who are free from any actual or apparent conflicts of interest.
3. **Final Selection Process** – Following the evaluation of all eligible applications, the EPA staff will present final rankings and selection recommendations to the Selection Official. Prior to making the final selections, EPA staff will brief the Selection Official on the EPA’s program priorities, geographic areas, and audiences that are addressed in the highest ranked applications. Final funding selection decisions will be made by the Selection Official. In making the final selection decision, the Selection Official will consider the review panel rankings and recommendations. The Selection Official may also consider the “Other Evaluation Factors” described below.

(1) Other Evaluation Factors

Final funding decisions will be made by the Selection Official. In making the final funding decisions, the Selection Official may also consider the following factors: programmatic priorities, geographic distribution of funding, and types and locations of audiences reached.

D. Risk Review

The EPA will consider any comments by the applicant, along with information available in the responsibility/qualification records in SAM.gov., when doing the risk review as required by [2 CFR 200.206](#).

7. Award Notices

The EPA anticipates notification to successful applicants will be made by Michael Band, Environmental Education and Stewardship Division. The notification will be sent to the original signer of the application or the project contact listed in the application. This notification is not an authorization to begin work. The official notification of an award will be made by the Grants Management Branch. Selection does not guarantee an award will be made. Statutory authorization, funding, or other issues during the award process may affect the ability of the EPA to make an award. 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, which must be approved by the 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.

8. Post-Award Requirements and Administration

A. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

The recipient and any sub-recipient must comply with the applicable [General Terms and Conditions](#). These terms and conditions are in addition to the assurances and certifications made as part of the award, terms and conditions, and restrictions reflected on the official assistance award document.

Awards issued as a result of this funding opportunity are subject to the requirements of the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards; Title [2 CFR Part 200](#) and [2 CFR Part 1500](#).

B. Reporting

[EPA's General Terms and Conditions](#) in the Notice of Award will have information on performance and financial reports, including:

- How often you will report.
- Any required form or formatting.
- How to submit them.

C. Subaward and Executive Compensation Reporting

The Federal Financial Accountability and Transparency Act (FFATA) requires:

- Data entry at SAM.gov for all subawards and subcontracts issued for \$30,000 or more.
- Reporting executive compensation for both recipient and subaward organizations.

D. Quality Assurance Requirements

In accordance with [2 CFR Part 1500.12](#) and the Agency Quality Directives, all assistance agreements that include environmental information operations must submit a Quality Management Plan (QMP) for EPA approval. A QMP describes and documents the organization's Quality Program, including the program's organizational structure, quality policies and procedures, criteria and areas of application, and roles, responsibilities and authorities. It describes an organization's overall quality program and provides a framework for implementing quality assurance across all projects and operations within the organization. The QMP documents all technical activities to be performed under the Quality Program and describes how the program will integrate quality assurance and quality control policies and procedures, and Quality Assurance Project Plans (QAPPs) into all environmental information operations. The QMP must comply with the requirements of the [EPA Quality Directives](#).

EPA Project Officers will work with all selected recipients on quality assurance requirements, which will be documented in the grant Quality Assurance Terms and Conditions. Once the award is made, if a QMP is required for the grant, the applicant will develop a QMP in accordance with the current version of the [EPA QMP Standard CIO 2105 S-01](#), and submit for EPA approval in accordance with the awarding EPA Office's QMP. Selected applicants cannot begin environmental information operations until EPA approves the applicant's QMP.

Projects falling under the assistance agreement that include environmental information operations are required to submit a QAPP consistent with the requirements of the current version of the [EPA QAPP Standard CIO 2105-S-02](#). A QAPP is specific to individual projects and outlines the procedures and

processes necessary to ensure the quality of data or information generated during the project. It details the project's objectives, the type and quality of environmental information required, and how it will be collected, analyzed, and used.

9. Other Information

A. Additional Provisions for Applicants

Additional provisions that apply this funding opportunity and/or awards made under this funding opportunity, can be found at [EPA NOFO Clauses](#). If you are unable to access these provisions electronically at the website above, please contact the EPA point of contact to obtain the provisions.

B. Key Definitions and Frameworks

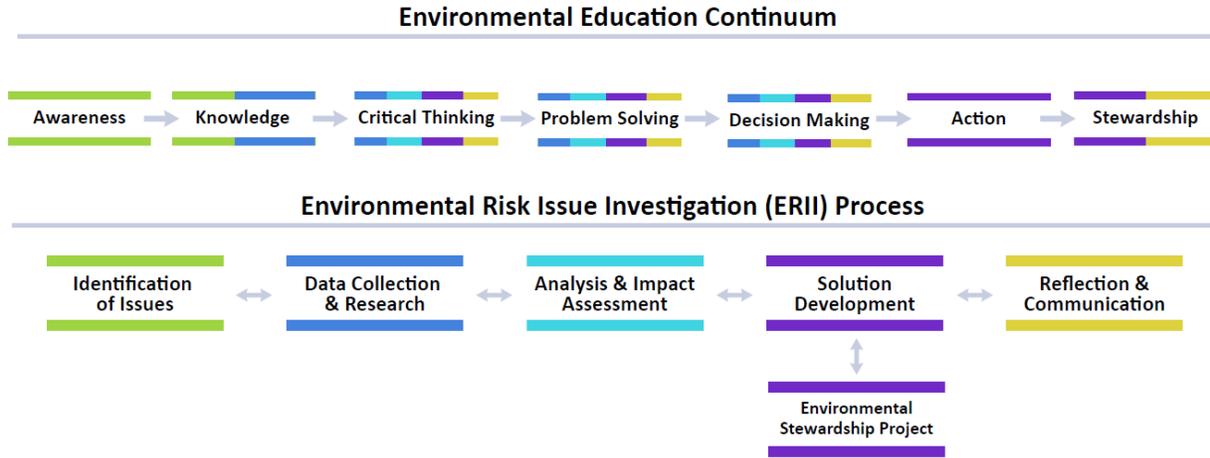
Environmental Education (EE): is defined in the Act as: “educational activities and training activities involving elementary, secondary, and postsecondary students, as such terms are defined in the State in which they reside, and environmental education personnel, but does not include technical training activities directed toward environmental management professionals or activities primarily directed toward the support of non-educational research and development.” The Act also states that “The Office of Environmental Education shall...support development and the widest possible dissemination of model curricula, educational materials, and training programs for elementary and secondary students and other interested groups, including senior Americans.” EPA further clarifies that environmental information and outreach may be important elements of EE projects, but these activities by themselves are not EE. By itself, environmental information only addresses awareness and knowledge, usually about a particular environmental issue. Outreach involves information dissemination and requests or suggestions for action on a particular issue (often without the critical thinking, problem solving and 3 decision-making steps in between). EE teaches individuals how to weigh various sides of an issue through critical thinking, problem solving and decision-making skills on environmental topics. EE is a continuum that covers the range of steps and activities from awareness to action with an ultimate goal of environmental stewardship. EE increases public awareness and knowledge about environmental issues and provides the participants in its programs the skills necessary to make informed environmental decisions and to take responsible actions. EE is based on objective and scientifically-sound information and does not advocate a particular viewpoint or a particular course of action. EE involves lifelong learning; its audiences are of all age groups, from very young children through senior citizens. EE can include both outdoor and in-classroom education, in both formal and non-formal settings.

Environmental Education Training and Long-Term Support: Environmental education training refers to activities such as classes, on-line courses, workshops, seminars, and conferences which are designed to prepare education professionals to effectively teach about environmental issues. Long-term support refers to activities that support the actual training such as: the development and dissemination of environmental education guidelines; development and implementation of state educator certification programs; and access to information about quality programs and resources.

Environmental Risk Issue Investigation Process: Environmental Risk Issue Investigations (ERII) are a systematic approach to understanding, analyzing, and addressing environmental, economic, and/or human health impacts. The ERII process can be used to identify, research, and evaluate environmental issues, problem-solve strategies to mitigate environmental risks, and communicate potential risks to relevant stakeholders. The five steps to the ERII process are:

1. Identification of issues
2. Data collection & research
3. Analysis & impact assessment
4. Solution development
5. Reflection & communication

The ERII visuals below provide additional details on alignment with the environmental education continuum and the five steps in the ERII process.



**** NOTES:**

- The Environmental Risk Issue Investigation (ERII) Process is a dynamic system where stages may overlap, repeat, or occur simultaneously, reflecting the complexity of real-world environments.
- When investigating environmental risk, EPA recommends leveraging Risk Communication strategies such as the EPA SALT Framework

The **Environmental Risk Issue Investigation (ERII)** is a systematic approach to understanding, analyzing, and addressing environmental, economic, and human health impacts. This process involves dynamic systems where steps may overlap, repeat, or occur simultaneously reflecting the complexity of real-world environments.

REFLECTION & COMMUNICATION

This step involves reflection on the process and outcomes, considering successes, challenges, and how knowledge can be applied in the future. Reflection and communication create feedback loops that enhance stewardship efforts and raise awareness about environmental issues.

Communication of findings and proposed solutions to peers, educators, community members and relevant stakeholders highlights the importance of individual and collective action as a means to guide future decisions around the protection of human health and the environment.

SOLUTION DEVELOPMENT

This step involves problem-solving by reflecting on mitigation strategies and/or solutions for the identified environmental risk issues. It encourages creativity, innovation, and decision-making around action plans, sustainable practices and long-term planning around ecological, economic, and social factors.

The integration of action/stewardship projects based on solution development transforms theoretical knowledge into practical, real-world applications. In turn, promoting a sense of ownership and community-based engagement.

ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP - Stewardship involves lifestyles and business practices, initiatives and actions that enhance the state of the environment and natural resources.

IDENTIFICATION OF ISSUES

This step involves identifying and defining environmental risk issues that are relevant to the learners' local, national and/or global community. It encourages individuals to observe their surroundings, ask questions, and identify issues that have an impact on the environment, human health, and/or economic impacts.

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) defines environmental risk in the context of identifying, assessing, and evaluating the potential adverse effects that environmental hazards may have. These may include environmental, human health, and/or economic factors.

DATA COLLECTION & RESEARCH

This step involves gathering data (qualitative and/or quantitative) through various sources such as field observations, experiments, surveys, literature reviews and reliable data sources such as the EPA and other federal agencies.

This encourages individuals to form a comprehensive view of the environmental issue and reflect on the risks to individuals, communities, health, safety, and the environment.

ANALYSIS & IMPACT ASSESSMENT

This step involves the analysis of the collected data to interpret, identify trends, and assess the environmental, social, and economic impacts of the identified issues. It encourages interdisciplinary approaches to understand complex systems through critical thinking and analytical skills, enabling individuals to build knowledge on the environmental risk issue to make informed decisions.



When investigating environmental risk, EPA recommends [Risk Communication strategies](#) such as the [EPA SALT Framework](#).