OVERVIEW SECTION

AGENCY: ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY (EPA)

TITLE: IMPLEMENTATION OF STATE COORDINATION IN SUPPORT OF THE FEDERAL FACILTY HAZARDOUS WASTE CLEANUP PROGRAM

ACTION: Request for Proposals (RFP)

RFP NO: EPA-OLEM-FFRRO-18-02

CATALOG OF FEDERAL DOMESTIC ASSISTANCE (CFDA) NO.: 66.813

DATES: The closing date and time for receipt of proposal submissions is June 25, 2018, 11:59 p.m. ET. Proposals must be submitted electronically through www.grants.gov by 11:59 p.m. ET on June 25, 2018 to receive consideration. Proposals submitted after 11:59 P.M. on June 25, 2018 will not be considered.

SUMMARY: This request for proposals (RFP) solicits proposals from eligible entities to promote and stimulate research for use by state environmental officials to address Federal Facility Hazardous Waste Cleanup Program policy and implementation issues of importance to states. The project will provide support for state participation in developing tools, procedures and guidance to promote efficient cleanup work by states under CERCLA Section 120.

FUNDING/AWARDS: The estimated funding available under this competitive opportunity is approximately $750,000, subject to the availability of funds and quality of proposals received. EPA anticipates award of one cooperative agreement resulting from this announcement. *(Refer to Section 2, Award Information)*

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Section 1 – Funding Opportunity Description

A. Background

The Federal Facilities Restoration and Reuse Office (FFRRO) works with federal entities and states to ensure protective and efficient cleanup and reuse of federally-owned Superfund sites as mandated by Congress. The federally-owned Superfund sites are among the largest in the Superfund program and encompass some of the most complex and unique environmental contaminants including munitions, radiological waste and emerging contaminants.

Section 120 of the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA), also known as Superfund, discusses CERCLA's applicability to federally-owned or federally-operated facilities. Section 120 states the general principle that federal agencies must comply with substantive and procedural CERCLA requirements to the same extent as private entities. Under Executive Order 12580, federal agencies such as the Department of Defense and Department of Energy have the lead cleanup authority at their sites. EPA has oversight authority at sites which are on the National Priorities List (NPL) and states have similar authority at non-NPL sites.

States play a significant role in the implementation of the Federal Facility Cleanup Program. In addition to their oversight at non-NPL facilities, most states are signatories on tri-party Federal Facility Agreements (FFAs) at NPL sites. The FFAs set cleanup milestones and include provisions for enforcement. The assistance agreement to be awarded under this competition will assist states in playing an effective role in resolving current issues related to the assessment, cleanup and post-cleanup issues that are important to state co-regulators. It will also assist in identifying and resolving emerging issues at state and federal levels which are important to state agencies responsible for the cleanup of contaminated federal facilities. The assistance agreement will provide research and training support to states in a manner that fosters interaction, information sharing and collaboration among state agencies. States, as referenced throughout this document, also include territories as described in the definition of "state" in CERCLA Section 101 (27).

For more information on EPA's federal facility cleanup program, please go to www.epa.gov/fedfac

B. Project Description

EPA's FFRRO is soliciting proposals for research projects and training in research techniques related to various aspects of the Federal Facility Cleanup Program which facilitate the information exchange and coordination among state agencies responsible for the cleanup of contaminated federal facilities. The activities identified below provide examples of areas in which EPA believes states will benefit from state-focused research during the proposed five-year cooperative agreement period. Because the cleanup program is likely to evolve and new issues arise, support areas are not limited to these activities. EPA seeks proposals that show an ability to adapt to new issues facing states as they implement the Federal Facility Cleanup Program.

1. Research

In order to provide for meaningful consideration of projects that can help to improve cleanup efforts, the recipient will convene focus groups to research priority issues of interest to the states in the context of the federal-state partnership. These projects will promote state participation in issues related to assessment, cleanup and post-cleanup which will aid in improving the implementation of the Federal Facility Cleanup Program. Examples of potential activities include, but are not limited to, assisting state response programs with:

- Incorporating new and emerging science into cleanup program activities;
- Supporting efforts to build capacity for the planning, implementation, management and enforcement of institutional controls;
- Promoting coordination and partnership among state and tribal co-regulators with a goal of selecting remedies which are protective of human health and the environment, and
- Investigating barriers – institutional, technological, regulatory and policy – as they pertain to the state and tribal roles in the Federal Facility Cleanup Program.

EPA encourages applicants to propose additional activities that reflect state interests in their proposal. Applicants should also propose cost-effective ways of sharing research information and reports with states and, secondarily, with EPA. Focus groups may be an effective way to organize proposed research. Examples of potential focus groups include the following

- Remediation
- Property Reuse
- State – Federal Coordination
- Emerging Issues in Technology and Policy
- Munitions and Explosives Compounds
- Innovative Treatment Technologies

2. Coordination of research results and other information

For this assistance agreement to be the most beneficial and successful, research should be shared with states and potentially other non-Federal stakeholders. This agreement will support a variety of efforts to share information developed by the focus groups and engage in dialogue on issues of importance to the Federal Facility Cleanup Program.

Examples of research information sharing mechanisms include the following:
- sharing information online or through webinars
- sponsoring face-to-face meetings
- supporting state travel to share information resulting from research projects

In addition, EPA encourages applicants to propose the use of innovative means of information dissemination.

3. Travel to Meetings

Funding under this assistance agreement will assist state travel in support of the research focus groups to meetings that further the federal-state Federal Facility Cleanup partnership and enable state personnel to conduct research or disseminate the results of research. Funding is also available for travel for technical support, meetings to coordinate information, and training in research techniques. The recipient will make decisions as to which state personnel receive travel assistance and will consult with the EPA Project Officer about overall priorities for expending travel funds. Travel for state personnel are participant support costs under 2 CFR 200.75 and applicants should anticipate making appropriate adjustments to their indirect cost rate distribution.

C. EPA Strategic Plan Linkage

The projects selected for award through this competition will support progress towards EPA's FY 2018-22 Strategic Plan Goal 1 (Core Mission: Deliver real results to provide Americans with clean air, land, and water, and ensure chemical safety), Objective 1.3 (Revitalize Land and Prevent Contamination).

(View EPA's Strategic Plan online at: http://www.epa.gov/planandbudget/strategicplan.html.)

D. Measuring Environmental Results: Anticipated Outcomes/Outputs

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

1. ***Outcomes*:** The term "outcomes" refer to the result, effect, or consequence that will occur from carrying out an environmental program or activity that is related to an environmental or programmatic goal or objective. Outcomes may be environmental, behavioral, health-related or programmatic in nature, and may not necessarily be achievable during the project period.

   The EPA anticipates that outcomes from projects awarded under this announcement will enable:

   - Increased efficiency of state Federal Facility Cleanup programs as a result of the information and knowledge shared by the recipient.
   - Improved state technical expertise to address Federal Facility Cleanup Program challenges through usage of the research products developed by the recipient.
   - Increased state knowledge of key Federal Facility Cleanup Program initiatives, and implementation best practices.
   - Incorporation of state perspectives into national Federal Facility Cleanup Program consideration of technological, regulatory or policy barriers to effective Federal Facility Cleanup Program implementation.

- Improved cleanup program coordination and collaboration among the states, and between states and Federal agencies (both regionally and nationally) to improve implementation of the Federal Facility Cleanup Program.

2. ***Outputs:*** The term "output" refers to an environmental activity, effort, and/or associated work products related to an environmental goal or objective, that will be produced or provided over a period of time or by a specified date. Outputs must be measurable during the project period.

   The EPA anticipates outputs from projects awarded under this competitive opportunity will include, but not be limited to:

   - Development and dissemination of resource documents and tools to assist states in enhancing and improving their Federal Facility Cleanup Programs.
   - State feedback on federal regulations and policies under development; and
   - Increased opportunities for dialogue between states, territories, and federal agencies to address Federal Facility Cleanup Program implementation concerns.

E. Supplementary Information

The statutory authority for this action is the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA), Section 311 (b) and Section 311(c).

Section 2 – Award Information

A. What is the amount of available funding?

The total estimated funding available under this competitive opportunity is $750,000, with approximately $150,000 available each year for up to 5 years, subject to the availability of funds, quality of proposals received, EPA discretion and other applicable considerations.

B. How many grants will EPA award through this competition?

EPA anticipates award of one cooperative agreement under this competitive opportunity.

A cooperative agreement is an assistance agreement that is used when there is substantial federal involvement throughout the performance of the 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.

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

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

C. What is the project period for award(s) resulting from this solicitation?

The estimated start date for projects resulting from this solicitation is October 1, 2018. All project activities must be completed within the maximum negotiated project performance period of five years from the date of award.

D. Will proposals be partially funded?

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

Section 3 – Eligibility Information and Threshold Criteria

A. Eligible Entities

Assistance under this program is generally available to States, territories, Indian Tribes, and possessions of the U.S., including the District of Columbia, public and private universities and colleges, hospitals, laboratories, other public or private nonprofit institutions, and individuals. In some instances, EPA will consider applications from profit makers, proposing projects with significant technical merit and relevance to EPA's Office of Solid Waste and Emergency Response. 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 are not eligible to apply. For certain competitive funding opportunities under this CFDA description, the Agency may limit eligibility to compete to a number or subset of eligible applicants consistent with the Agency's Assistance Agreement Competition Policy.

B. Cost Sharing or Matching

CERCLA 311(b)(3) requires EPA to enter into appropriate cost sharing arrangements to the maximum extent possible. The Agency has determined that applicants must agree to share a minimum of 5 percent of total project costs to be eligible to submit a proposal under this RFP. The

successful applicant must meet this requirement with eligible and allowable training costs under CERCLA 311(b)(3) and (9) or research costs under CERCLA 311(c).

C. Threshold Eligibility Criteria

Proposals must meet the following "threshold criteria," **by the time of proposal submission. Proposals that fail to meet any one of the threshold criteria will not be considered further.**

EPA will notify applicants who do not meet the threshold criteria within 15 calendar days of the "fail" determination. Proposals that meet the threshold criteria will then be evaluated based on the factors disclosed in *Section 5.A), Evaluation Criteria*. The threshold criteria are:

1. Proposals must address an acceptable project as described in *Section 1.B), Project Description* of this announcement.

2. Proposals must specifically demonstrate how the applicant has an established organizational structure to meaningfully engage state cleanup program experts in the proposed research, and an ability to widely disseminate information across all states and territories.

3. Federal funds requested may not exceed **$750,**000 over five years, or $150,000 per year. **This excludes any leveraging or cost share.** Proposals requesting assistance funding in excess of these values will not be considered. Applications which do not provide the required 5 percent non-federal cost share/match will be deemed ineligible.

4. Proposals must substantially comply with the proposal submission instructions and requirements set forth in *Section 4.B.* of this announcement or else they will be rejected. However, where a page limit is expressed in *Section 4.D.* with respect to the proposal, pages in excess of the page limitation will not be reviewed.

   In addition, initial proposals must be submitted through www.grants.gov as specified in *Section 4.B.* of this announcement (except in the limited circumstances where another mode of submission is specifically allowed for as explained in *Section 4.A.)*, on or before the proposal submission deadline published in *Section 4.B.* of this announcement. Applicants are responsible for following the submission instructions in *Section 4.B.* of this announcement to ensure that their proposal is timely submitted.

   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 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. 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 proposal deadline, please contact **Dianna**

Young at **(202) 564-0542** or young.dianna@epa.gov. Failure to do so may result in your proposal not being reviewed.

5. 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.

Section 4 – Proposal Submission Information

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

Applicants, except as noted below, must apply electronically through Grants.gov under this funding opportunity based on the grants.gov instructions in this announcement. 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 Unique Entity Identifier (e.g., DUNS)
- 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, 2018 with a submission deadline of January 15, 2019, the applicant would need a new exception to submit through alternative methods beginning January 1, 2019.

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 7* 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. 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-OLEM-FFRRO-18-02, or the CFDA number that applies to the announcement (CFDA 66.813), 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 June 25, 2018, 11:59 PM (ET). Please allow for enough time to successfully submit your application and allow for unexpected errors that may require you to resubmit.

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

Application Materials

The following forms and documents are required under this announcement:

Mandatory Documents:

1. Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424)
2. Narrative Proposal (See Section 4.D. for details on the content of the Narrative Proposal and the associated page limits)

3. Other Attachments Form – Use for required attachments Budget and Milestones. (See Section 4.D)

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 **Dianna Young at (202) 564-0542 or young.dianna@epa.gov**. Failure to do so may result in your application not being reviewed.

C. 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 4 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 **Dianna Young at young.dianna@epa.gov** with the FON in the subject line. If you are unable to email, contact **Dianna Young at (202) 564-0542**. 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 **Dianna Young at (202) 564-0542**.

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 **Dianna Young at young.dianna@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 Dianna Young at young.dianna@epa.gov with the FON in the subject line within one business day of the closing date of this solicitation. The email should include any materials provided by Grants.gov and attach the entire application in PDF format.

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

D. Content and Form of Proposal

The following documents are required for all proposal packages. Please note that the "Narrative Proposal," a maximum of 15 pages in length.

1. Standard Form 424, Application for Federal Assistance

2. **Narrative Proposal. (15-page limit)**

   Narrative Proposals must be concise, well organized, and not exceed 15 typed, single-line spaced, 8 1/2 x 11" pages. The Narrative Proposal must provide the information detailed in this section and, **include responses to all *Section 3.C., Threshold Criteria, Section 5.A., Evaluation Criteria*, as well as the information identified in *Section 1, Funding Opportunity Description*.** Factual information about your proposed project must be provided. Do not include discussions of broad principles that are not specific to the proposed work or project covered by your proposal. **Responses to evaluation criteria should include**

the criteria number and title but need not restate the entire text of the criteria. Sufficient detail must be provided to allow for an evaluation of the merits of the proposal. Vague descriptions, redundancy, and failure to address the selection criteria will result in a lower ranking.

The Narrative Proposal *(Sections "a" and "b" below)* must substantially conform to the following outline and content:

a. **Cover Letter.** The cover letter must include a brief description of your project, be written on your organization's official letterhead, and signed by an official with the authority to commit your organization to the proposed project. The cover letter must also include:

   i. **Applicant Information.** Provide the name and full address of the tribe or consortium applying for funds. This is the agency or organization that will be receiving the grant and will be accountable to the EPA;

   ii. **Contacts.** Provide phone/fax numbers, e-mail address, and mailing address of the project director and head of organization/executive director responsible for the project proposal. These individuals may be contacted if other information is needed;

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

   iv. **Funding Requested.** Specify the amount you are requesting from EPA**. The total funding requested amount may not exceed $750,000, excluding any in-kind contribution or match.**

b. **Detailed Project Description.** The project description should provide the information below on how the applicant will implement and conduct its project and discuss how the proposal addresses each of the evaluation criteria in *Section 5* of this announcement.

   The detailed project description must substantially conform to the following outline and content:

   i. **Project Description.** Provide a description of the proposed project, as referenced in *Section 1.B, Project Description*, and program objectives. The project description should 1) outline how the proposed project will select and conduct research on national Federal Facility Cleanup Program implementation issues of wide state concern; 2) discuss how the recipient will support efforts to share information developed through this agreement; and 3) promote dialogue between Federal agencies and the states on issues of importance to the Federal Facility Cleanup Program.

ii. **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) similar in size, scope and relevance to the proposed project that your organization performed within the last three years (no more than five agreements, and preferably EPA agreements) and describe (i) whether, and how, you were able to successfully complete and manage those agreements and (ii) 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. In evaluating applicants under these factors in *Section 5*, EPA will consider the information provided by the applicant and may also consider relevant information from other sources, including information from EPA files and from current/prior grantors (e.g., to verify and/or supplement the information provided by the applicant). If you do not have any relevant or available past performance or past reporting information, please indicate this in the 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 zero for these factors**.**

iii. **Performance Measurement: Anticipated Outcomes and Outputs.**

Anticipated Outcomes: Identify the expected environmental outcomes as described in *Section 1.E., Measuring Environmental Results: Anticipated Outcomes/Outputs* of this announcement. Discuss how you propose to track and measure your progress in achieving the project outcomes and results. *(Refer to Section 5.A., Evaluation Criteria, Performance Measurement.)*

Anticipated Outputs. Identify the expected project outputs, including those described in *Section 1.E, Measuring Environmental Results: Anticipated Outcomes/Outputs* of this announcement and how you will track and measure your expected project outputs. Outputs, quantitative or qualitative, must be measurable during the project performance period. *(Refer to Section 5.A, Evaluation Criteria, Performance Measurement.)*

iv. **Cost share/match and leveraged funds.** Demonstrate how you will provide the required cost share listed in Section 3.B. and support the proposed project activities and how these funds/resources will be used to contribute to the performance and success of the proposed project. Selected applicants are required to provide the required cost share. Failure to do so may affect the legitimacy of the award.

v. **Expenditure of Awarded Grant Funds.** Describe your organization's procedures, and controls for ensuring that awarded grant funds will be expended in a timely and efficient manner.

3. Required **Attachments.** The following documents shall be included as attachments to the work plan. These documents will not count as part of the 15-page limit and do not have an individual page limitation. Attachments beyond the required attachments below will not be considered. Please provide a list of all attachments to the proposal.

   a. **Budget.** Provide a detailed itemized budget proposal that clearly explains how funds will be used for each of the following categories and how it relates to the project objective. Indicate what portion of the cost EPA will pay, and what portion the applicant or other partners will pay, if applicable:

      i. Personnel;
      ii. Fringe Benefits;
      iii. Contractual Costs;
      iv. Travel;
      v. Supplies;
      vi. Other Costs (be specific);
      vii. Administrative Costs (other than Indirect Costs);
      viii. Non-EPA Project Funding. Identify funding from other sources including in-kind resources;
      ix. Total Direct Costs;
      x. Total Indirect Costs (must include Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement as documentation of federally-approved indirect cost rate (percentage); and
      xi. Total Project Cost (Total Direct + Indirect Costs). Costs proposed in the budget must be linked directly to the narrative proposal.

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

   b. **Milestones.** Schedule indicating start times and completion dates of significant tasks under your Program.

E. Additional Provisions for Applicants Incorporated into the Solicitation

Additional provisions that apply to this solicitation and/or awards made under this solicitation, including but not limited to those related to confidential business information, contracts and sub-awards under grants, and proposal assistance and communications, 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.

SECTION 5 – PROPOSAL REVIEW INFORMATION

All proposals received by the closing date and time for the submission will first be reviewed to determine eligibility for funding based upon compliance with the Threshold Eligibility Criteria in *Section 3.C.* Only proposals determined eligible will be evaluated for technical merit. Proposals that do not meet the Threshold Eligibility Criteria will not be reviewed according to the evaluation criteria set forth below. **You must directly and explicitly address these criteria** as part of your proposal package. EPA will rate your proposal using a points system, with a total of 100 points possible.

A. Evaluation Criteria

Criterion	Maximum Points per Criterion
Technical Approach. Under this criterion, EPA will evaluate the quality and extent to which the proposal effectively addresses the project description in *Section I.B.* of this announcement. The proposal will be evaluated based on the quality and extent to which the proposed project description: • Clearly and concisely provides a description of the proposed project goals, activities, budget, and project milestones that can realistically be achieved; (15 pts.) • Is technically sound and structured to accomplish the proposal requirements; (10 pts.) • Includes measures for demonstrating success. (10 pts.)	35
Programmatic Capability and Environmental Results Past Performance. Under this criterion, the proposal will be evaluated based on your ability to successfully complete and manage the proposed project taking into account your: a) Past performance in successfully completing and managing the assistance agreements identified in response to this section. (10 points) b) Organizational experience and plan for timely and successfully achieving	30

the objectives of the proposed project (5 points) c) Staff expertise and qualifications, staff knowledge, and resources or the ability to obtain them, to successfully achieve the goals of the proposed project (5 points) d) History of meeting the reporting requirements under the assistance agreements identified in response to this section including whether you submitted acceptable final technical reports under those agreements and the extent to which you adequately and timely reported on your progress towards achieving the expected outputs and outcomes under those agreements, and if such progress was not being made whether you adequately reported and why not. (10 points) *NOTE: In evaluating you under items "a" and "d" of this criterion, EPA will consider the information provided by you and may also consider relevant information from other sources including EPA files and prior/current grantors (e.g., to verify and/or supplement the information supplied by the applicant). If you do not have any relevant or available past performance or past reporting information, please indicate this in the proposal and you will receive a neutral score for these subfactors (items a and d 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*	
Performance Measurement: Anticipated Outcomes and Outputs. Under this criterion, EPA will evaluate the extent to which the "Narrative Proposal" realistically describes how the project will lead to measurable environmental results (i.e., amount of pollution prevented; waste reduced, reused, recycled or, resources conserved). The proposals will be evaluated on the quality and extent to which they: • Clearly specify anticipated environmental outcomes and outputs as described in *Section 1.E., Measuring Environmental Results: Anticipated Outcomes/Outputs*. (6 pts.) • Clearly describe the measures of success for the project. Measure of success should be either measures of environmental improvement or should be directly linked to such measures. EPA will look for quantitative and qualitative measurability. (5 pts.) • Describe how progress towards achieving project outcomes and outputs will be evaluated and measured. Include a description of any planned reports or other deliverables that measure and track the project success and, document achievement of expected outputs identified in *Section 1.E., Measuring Environmental Results: Anticipated Outcomes/Outputs*). (4 pts.)	15
Budget/Resources. This criterion refers to the proposed budget, in-kind goods and services, and other resources that the applicant outlines to carry out the proposed project. The proposal will be evaluated based on the extent to which the	10

budget is clearly stated, detailed, and appropriate to achieve the project's objectives. How will your proposed budget effectively sustain your proposed project? How will you plan on managing this budget? This should include cost estimates for each of the proposed project activities to be conducted using EPA funds.	
Expenditure of Awarded Grant Funds. 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. (10 pts.)	10

B. Other Factors

Final funding decisions will be made by the EPA Headquarters Selection Official based on the rankings and preliminary recommendations of the EPA evaluation team. In making the final funding decisions, the EPA Headquarters Selection Official may also consider programmatic priorities.

C. Review and Selection Process

Each eligible proposal will be evaluated by a review panel of EPA Headquarters staff for technical merit, based on the evaluation factors detailed in *Section 5.A.* of this announcement.

Upon completion of the technical merit evaluation, each proposal will be given an evaluated numerical score with a total of 100 points possible. The evaluated numerical scores will be rank ordered. Preliminary funding recommendations will be provided to the EPA Headquarters Selection Official based on this ranking, who will make the final selection.

D. Additional Provisions for Applicants Incorporated into the Solicitation

Additional provisions that apply to this solicitation and/or awards made under this solicitation including the clause on Reporting and Use of Information Concerning Recipient Integrity and Performance can be found at EPA Solicitation Clauses (https://www.epa.gov/grants/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.

Section 6 – Award Administration Information

A. Award Notices

EPA anticipates notification to successful applicants will be made via telephone or electronic or postal mail by September 30, 2018. 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 and Interagency Agreement Management Division. Applicants are cautioned that only a grants officer is authorized to bind the Government to the expenditure of funds; selection does not guarantee an award will be made. For example, statutory authorization, funding, or other issues discovered during the award process may affect the ability of EPA to make an award to an applicant.

The award notice, signed by an EPA grants officer, is the authorizing document and will be provided through electronic or postal mail. The successful applicant may need to prepare and submit additional documents and forms (e.g., work plan), which must be approved by EPA, before the grant can officially be awarded. The time between notification of selection and award of a grant can take up to 90 days or longer.

B. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

1. Funding will be awarded as a cooperative agreement. Successful applicants will be asked to submit additional required forms. An EPA project officer will work with the successful applicant to finalize the budget and work plan.

2. Approved cooperative agreements will include terms and conditions that will be binding on the grant recipient. Terms and conditions specify what grantees must do to ensure that grant-related and program-related requirements are met. You may view a listing and description of general EPA regulations applicable to the award of assistance agreements at https://www2.epa.gov/grants/grant-terms-and-conditions.

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

C. Reporting Requirements

Quarterly progress reports and a detailed final report will be required. The successful applicant will submit quarterly progress reports to the EPA Project Officer within thirty days after the end of each reporting period. These reports shall cover work status, work progress, difficulties encountered, preliminary data results, and planned activities for the next quarter. In addition, a discussion and summary of expenditures along with a comparison of the percentage of the project completed to the project schedule and an explanation of significant discrepancies shall be included in the report. The report shall also include any changes of key personnel involved with the project. EPA will establish a schedule of submission of quarterly reports after award.

At the close of the grant, the successful applicant will submit a final technical report to the EPA Project Officer within 90 calendar days of completion of the period of performance. The final technical report shall include a summary of the project or activity, advances or goals achieved, and costs of the project or activity. In addition, the final technical report should discuss the problems,

successes, and lessons learned from the project or activity that could help overcome structural, organizational, or technical obstacles to implementing a similar project elsewhere.

D. Use of Funds

An applicant that receives an award under this announcement is expected to manage cooperative agreement funds efficiently and effectively and make sufficient progress towards completing the project activities described in the work plan in a timely manner. The cooperative agreement will include terms/conditions implementing this requirement. The Agency expects timely drawdown of funds and a yearly financial report. In addition to quarterly reports, other required financial reports will provide the Agency with information regarding progress being made.

E. Additional Provisions for Applicants Incorporated into the Solicitation

Additional provisions that apply to this solicitation and/or awards made under this solicitation, including but not limited to those related to DUNS, SAM, copyrights, disputes, and administrative capability, can be found at http://www2.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 Section 7.B. to obtain the provisions.

F. Disputes

Assistance agreement competition-related disputes will be resolved in accordance with the dispute resolution procedures published in 70 FR (Federal Register) 3629, 3630 (January 26, 2005) which can be found at Grant Competition Dispute Resolution Procedures (https://www.epa.gov/grants/grant-competition-dispute-resolution-procedures). Copies of these procedures may also be requested by contacting the person listed in Section 7 of the announcement.

Section 7 – Contacts

EPA Headquarters Contact Information

Dianna Young, U.S. EPA, Federal Facilities Restoration and Reuse Office (MC 5106-R), 1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20460; Phone 202-564-0542 or email: young.dianna@epa.gov.

Section 8 – Other Information

A. National Environmental Information Exchange Network

The Environmental Information Exchange Network (Exchange Network, Network or EN) is a partner-inspired, developed, implemented and governed information network. It facilitates environmental data sharing among EPA, states, tribes and territories. The EN uses a standards-

based approach that allows partners to exchange data over the Internet regardless of the specific information technology used. This replaces the need to perform complex and expensive data transformations to move data between systems or to share data on paper, discs or other media or via email. Partners share electronic data more easily and at a lower cost, and environmental decision makers are able to use the data to make timely decisions. States, tribes and territories exchanging data with each other or with EPA, should make the Exchange Network and the agency's connection to it, the Central Data Exchange (CDX), the standard way they exchange data and should phase out any legacy methods they have been using. More information available on the Exchange Network.

B. Grants Resource Information

For additional information on how to apply for, manage, and complete an EPA grant, please visit: http://www2.epa.gov/grants/epa-grants-101-tutorial