

FEDERAL AGENCY: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Office of Chemical Safety and Pollution Prevention (OCSPP), Office of Pollution Prevention and Toxics (OPPT)

FUNDING OPPORTUNITY TITLTE: National Tribal Toxics Council (NTTC) Technical Support

ACTION: Request for Applications (RFA)

CATALOG of FEDERAL DOMESTIC ASSISTANCE (CFDA) Number: 66.716

FUNDING OPPORTUNITY NUMBER: EPA-HQ-OPPT-2015-003

STATUTORY AUTHORITY: Toxic Substances Control Act, Section 10(a) as supplemented by P.L. 106-74 (1999); 12-22.

SUBMISSION DATE: The closing date and time for receipt of application submissions is **June 15, 2015 by 11:59 p.m., Eastern Time (ET)** in order to be considered for funding. Application packages must be submitted electronically through Grants.gov (<http://www.grants.gov>) on or before **June 15, 2015 by 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time (ET)**.

However, 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 www.grants.gov, they are to request an alternative submission method. *Alternative submission requests are to be submitted at least 15 calendar days prior to the submission deadline under this announcement.* For additional information on submitting an application refer to **Section IV**.

SUMMARY: EPA's Office of Pollution Prevention and Toxics (OPPT) is soliciting applications from eligible applicants (see Section III A.) to provide technical support to the National Tribal Toxics Council (NTTC) in order to: 1) Represent tribal interests in the development and implementation of chemical risk assessment, risk management and pollution prevention programs; and, 2) Facilitate tribal cooperation with EPA in resolving associated issues.

The successful applicant will: 1) Assist federally-recognized tribes, Native Alaskan Villages and intertribal organizations in selecting and maintaining, a geographically diverse membership with a diversity of relevant and technical expertise in the NTTC; 2) Assist the NTTC in maintaining a viable charter that covers activities eligible for EPA funding; and, 3) Provide professional support and participant support costs to the NTTC in the conduct of its meetings and other activities.

The National Tribal Toxics Council is intended to:

- raise and assess tribal chemical risk management and pollution prevention program development and implementation issues with OPPT;
- assess national chemical risk management policy and pollution prevention initiatives that affect tribes and Native Alaskan Villages;

- offer a network for tribal chemical risk management officials to share information and represent tribal interests on chemical risk assessment, risk management policy and pollution prevention initiatives that impact tribes; and,
- promote and enhance tribal chemical risk management and pollution prevention program development

FUNDING AWARD: EPA's Office of Pollution Prevention and Toxics (OPPT) anticipates awarding one cooperative agreement from this announcement, subject to availability of funds and the quality of applications received for the performance period of October 1, 2015 through September 30, 2020. The total estimated funding for the cooperative agreement is up to \$750,000 for the five-year period. Approximately \$150,000 is expected to be available in fiscal year (FY) 2016. FY2016 represents the period from October 1, 2015 through September 30, 2016. Incremental funding of up to \$150,000 may be made available each year for the remaining four years, depending on funding availability, satisfactory performance, and other applicable considerations, allowing the project to continue for a total of five years.

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I. FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION

A. History

The Forum on State and Tribal Toxics Action (FOSTTA) was formed in September 1991 and funded under several cooperative agreements with the Environmental Council of the States (ECOS) in cooperation with the National Tribal Environmental Council (NTEC) and the National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL). Under these cooperative agreements, FOSTTA convened state and tribal leaders twice each year to examine the nature and direction of the federal/state/tribal system for managing chemical risks and pollution prevention programs. However, in FY2007, the FOSTTA cooperative agreement was not renewed. In 2010, OPPT convened another opportunity for tribes and established the National Tribal Toxics Council (NTTC). The NTTC and EPA has developed into a successful partnership and the agency is looking forward to continuing the effort by way of a new cooperative agreement.

B. Program Description

1. Purpose and Scope

The cooperative agreement awarded under this program is intended to provide technical support to the NTTC. In turn, the NTTC will advance chemicals management and pollution prevention policies and programs consistent with the needs, interests and unique legal status of American Indian Tribes, Native Alaskan Villages and intertribal organizations, by funding an organization to conduct research, studies and demonstration projects; provide expertise and training to assist tribes; and provide financial assistance (i.e. travel scholarships) to support tribal participation in NTTC activities as it:

- raises and assesses tribal chemical risk management and pollution prevention program development and implementation issues with OPPT;
- assesses national chemical risk management policy and pollution prevention initiatives that affect tribes and Native Alaskan Villages;
- offers a network for tribal chemical risk management officials to share information between tribes, federal parties and other organizations and represent tribal interests on chemical risk assessment, risk management policy and pollution prevention initiatives that impact tribes; and,
- promotes and enhances tribal chemical risk management and pollution prevention program development.

2. Goals and Objectives

The goal of this project is to improve tribal and EPA collaboration in improving environmental conditions and human health for tribal populations through chemical risk assessment, risk management, reduction and pollution prevention.

The objectives of this project are to:

- strengthen tribal chemical risk management and pollution prevention programs where they already exist;
- assist tribes and Native Alaskan Villages that do not have chemical risk management and pollution prevention programs in assessing whether they need such programs and, if so, in developing and implementing such programs;
- facilitate communications between tribes, Native Alaskan Villages and intertribal organizations and other interested partners on chemical risk management and pollution prevention issues;
- increase tribal capacity to understand, assess and manage chemical risks and pollution prevention opportunities;
- enhance tribal consultation and coordination on national chemical risk assessment, risk management policy and pollution prevention initiatives;

- raise any chemical risk management and pollution prevention concerns, interests, inquiries and information communicated to the NTTC by tribes, Native Alaskan Villages, and intertribal organizations to EPA; and,
- promote chemical risk management education and pollution prevention awareness and assist in the establishment, development, and implementation of comprehensive chemical risk assessment, risk management and pollution prevention programs in Indian country.

3. Activities to be Funded

Funds to administer and support the NTTC under this cooperative agreement may be used, where provided to:

- Recruit new NTTC members as needed;

Maintain NTTC membership of approximately 12–16 geographically and technically diverse members, filling vacancies pursuant to the adopted charter with members capable of representing the interests of tribes, Native Alaskan Villages and intertribal organizations on chemical risk management and pollution prevention issues. The recipient will carry out the selection process in consultation with EPA’s project officer and with existing NTTC members.

- Maintain the NTTC Charter http://www4.nau.edu/itep/nttc/about/docs/NTTC_Charter2013.pdf by revising as needed to ensure effectiveness in achieving NTTC goals and objectives:

While NTTC will have authority in determining the content of its Charter, EPA’s ability to provide financial support to the NTTC is governed by federal law. For example, the organization supporting the NTTC may not use EPA funds to conduct a study that has a principal purpose of evaluating EPA pollution prevention programs. EPA’s Project Officer will provide the recipient with an inventory of such restrictions for consideration by the NTTC for the purposes of revisions.

- Supporting the NTTC:

- Assist NTTC with identifying the need for research, studies, demonstration projects, training, planning meetings, developing meeting agendas, and communicating meeting dates and agendas.
- Make all logistical arrangements for NTTC representatives for the biannual NTTC meetings, NTTC Executive Committee, and Working Group meetings. In lieu of some in-person meetings, the recipient may also conduct web-based meetings, conference calls and employ other training mechanisms to facilitate full and effective participation of NTTC members and other meeting attendees.
- Provide funding for necessary travel-related expenses, such as travel, airfare, hotel and per-diem to enable tribal members to participate in the NTTC meetings. The recipient will decide which NTTC members receive travel assistance.

- Provide summaries of NTTC meetings and calls to NTTC members. Assist in completing action items working with NTTC members and EPA staff as necessary.
- Develop agendas for in person meetings and conference calls with input from the NTTC chair and NTTC members and host/facilitate regular conference calls.
- Develop and maintain a website where members and the public can access information about the NTTC, including research reports, studies, training course announcements and the results of NTTC meetings.
- Maintain up-to-date NTTC databases, mailing lists and files, as well as up-to-date chemical risk management and pollution prevention contacts with all tribes, Native Alaskan Villages and intertribal organizations.
- Serve as a clearinghouse for tribal chemical risk assessment, risk management and pollution prevention codes, laws, regulations, programs and policies, as well as related education and training materials.
- Convey publicly available information about funding opportunities for chemical risk management and pollution prevention programs to tribes, Native Alaskan Villages and intertribal organizations.
- Draft letters, comments, documents for and in cooperation with NTTC members on programmatic issues including general correspondence.
- Facilitate tribal and intertribal consortia participation in the development and implementation of federal chemical risk assessment, risk management and pollution prevention policies and programs that will be carried out on tribal lands.
- Enhance tribal engagement with consultation and coordination on national chemical risk assessment, risk management policy and pollution prevention initiatives by increasing tribal understanding, participation, and input on regulatory issues and decisions.
- Ensure that annual budget requests for incremental funding are submitted to EPA.
- Assist the NTTC in defining training and demonstration project needs and obtaining technical assistance where the Council requests such assistance.

C. Alignment with EPA's Strategic Plan and Expected Outcomes and Outputs

1. Alignment with EPA's Strategic Plan

The award to be made under this announcement is expected to support EPA Strategic Plan Goal 4: Ensuring the Safety of Chemicals and Preventing Pollution, Objective 4.1: Ensure Chemical Safety and Objective 4.2: Promote Pollution Prevention. To see EPA's 2014-2018 Strategic Plan, visit <http://www2.epa.gov/planandbudget/fy-2014-2018-strategic-plan>. Specifically, the NTTC will inform tribes, Native Alaskan Villages and intertribal organizations of chemical risk

assessment, risk management and pollution prevention issues, promote chemical risk assessment, risk management and pollution prevention education and awareness among tribal populations, and assist in the establishment, development, and implementation, where practicable, of chemical risk assessment, risk management and pollution prevention programs in Indian country.

2. Outputs

The term “output” means an environmental activity, effort, and/or associated work products related to an environmental goal and objective, that will be produced or provided over a period of time or by a specified date. Outputs may be quantitative or qualitative, but must be measurable during an assistance agreement funding period.

If environmental data is collected as an anticipated output, quality assurance documentation is needed and must be approved by EPA before the conduct of environmental data operations begins.

The anticipated outputs of this cooperative agreement are research reports, studies, demonstration projects, correspondence, and training leading to the operation of the NTTC.

3. Outcomes

The term “outcome” means the result, effect or consequence that will occur from carrying out an environmental program or activity that is related to an environmental or programmatic goal or objective. Outcomes may be environmental, behavioral, health-related or programmatic in nature, but must be quantitative and correlate with the objectives of the National Toxics Tribal Council (NTTC) technical support grantee. They may not necessarily be achievable within an assistance agreement funding period.

Expected outcomes from this cooperative agreement include, but are not limited to:

- a. increased communication and cooperation between EPA, tribes and Native Alaskan Villages involved in various aspects of chemical risk assessment, risk management and pollution prevention programs;
- b. improved tribal understanding of chemical risk assessment, risk management and pollution prevention concerns to more effectively protect human health and the environment in Indian country; and,
- c. enhanced capabilities of tribal participants through increased knowledge of how to implement quality chemical risk assessment, risk management regulatory and pollution prevention programs, leading to better protection of human health and the environment in Indian country.

D. Authority

EPA expects to make one award under the authority provided in Section 10 of the Toxic Substances Control Act to fund studies, research, demonstration projects and training which address chemical risk assessment, risk management and prevention of pollution.

Regulations governing these agreement are found at 2 CFR Parts 200 and 1500. All costs identified in the budget must conform to applicable Federal Cost Principles contained in 2 CFR 200.400 Uniform Administrative requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards, Subpart E and Appendices III-VIII: Cost Principles.

II. AWARD INFORMATION

A. Amount of Funding Available

The total estimated funding expected to be available for award under this announcement is approximately \$750,000, depending on availability of funds. EPA expects that approximately \$150,000 will be available in FY 2016. At the conclusion of the first one-year period of performance, incremental funding of approximately \$150,000 may be made available for each year, depending on the Agency's budget and the recipient's performance, allowing the project to potentially continue for a total of five years.

B. Partial Funding

In appropriate circumstances, EPA reserves the right to partially fund applications by funding discrete portions or phases of proposed projects. If EPA decides to partially fund an application, it will do so in a manner that does not prejudice any applicants or affect the basis upon which the application, or portion thereof, was evaluated and selected for award, and therefore maintains the integrity of the competition and selection process.

C. Total Number of Awards

EPA anticipates awarding one cooperative agreement under this announcement subject to availability of funds and quality of evaluated applications, and other applicable considerations.

D. Start Date/Project Duration

The estimated project period for this award resulting from this cooperative agreement will begin October 1, 2015. The proposed project period may be up to five years.

E. Funding Type

Successful applicants will be issued a cooperative agreement. A cooperative agreement is an assistance agreement that is used when there is substantial federal involvement with the recipient during the performance of an activity or project. EPA awards cooperative agreements for those projects in which it expects to have substantial interaction with the recipient throughout the performance of the project. EPA will negotiate the precise terms and conditions of "substantial involvement" as part of the award process. Federal involvement for this project 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.

F. Additional Awards

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

G. Disclaimer

EPA reserves the right to reject all applications and make no award under this announcement.

III. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

A. Eligible Applicants

Consistent with the Applicant Eligibility Section of CFDA 66.716 - Research, Development, Monitoring, Public Education, Training, Demonstrations, and Studies, and the EPA's Assistance Agreement Competition Policy (EPA Order 5700.5A1), competition under this announcement is being limited to a subset of eligible applicants. Under this competition, EPA will accept applications from the following eligible applicants: States, U.S. territories or possessions, federally recognized Indian tribal governments and Native American Organizations, public and private universities and colleges, hospitals, laboratories, other public or private nonprofit institutions and local governments.

For profit organizations are not eligible. Non-profit 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.

B. Cost Sharing/Matching

No matching funds are required under this competition. Although cost sharing/matching is not required as a condition of eligibility under this competition, under Section V of this announcement EPA will evaluate proposals based on a leveraging criterion.

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

Voluntary cost share is a form of leveraging. Voluntary cost sharing is when an applicant voluntarily proposes to legally commit to provide costs or contributions to support the project when a cost share is not required. Applicants who propose to use a voluntary cost share must include the costs or contributions for the voluntary cost share in the project budget on the SF-424. If an applicant proposes a voluntary cost share, the following apply:

- A voluntary cost share is subject to the match provisions in the grant regulations (2 CFR 200.306).
- A voluntary cost share may only be met with eligible and allowable costs.
- The recipient may not use other sources of federal funds to meet a voluntary cost share unless the statute authorizing the other federal funding provides that the federal funds may be used to meet a cost share requirement on a federal grant.
- The recipient is legally obligated to meet any proposed voluntary cost share that is included in the approved project budget. If the proposed voluntary cost share does not materialize during grant performance, then EPA may reconsider the legitimacy of the award and/or take other appropriate action as authorized by 2 CFR 200.

Other leveraged funding/resources that are not identified as a voluntary cost share. This form of leveraging may be met by funding from another federal grant, from an applicant's own resources, or resources from other third party sources. This form of leveraging should not be included in the budget and the costs need not be eligible and allowable project costs under the EPA assistance agreement. While this form of leveraging should not be included in the budget, the grant workplan should include a statement indicating that the applicant is expected to produce the proposed leveraging consistent with the terms of the announcement and the applicant's proposal. If applicants propose to provide this form of leveraging, EPA expects them to make the effort to secure the leveraged resources described in their proposals. If the proposed leveraging does not materialize during grant performance, then EPA may reconsider the legitimacy of the award and/or take other appropriate action as authorized by 2 CFR Parts 200 or 1500.

C. Threshold Eligibility Criteria

Proposals must meet the threshold eligibility criteria provided below at the time of submission in order to be considered for funding. If applicants are found ineligible, emails or letters will be sent within 15 calendar days of the ineligibility determination.

- 1. Threshold program requirements: This section addresses what to include in the application.**
 - a. The proposal must address all of the activities to be funded. The activities to be funded are listed under Section I.B.3.
 - b. Proposals must substantially comply with the grant requirements in Section I.C., including alignment with EPA's strategic plan, outputs and outcomes.
 - c. Proposals must be from an eligible applicant. Only one application may be submitted per applicant. Additional applications will be rejected.
 - d. 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.

2. Threshold submission requirements:

- a. Applications must substantially comply with the application submission instructions and requirements set forth in Section IV and Appendix A of this announcement or else they will be rejected.
- b. In addition, initial applications must be submitted through www.grants.gov as stated in Section IV of this announcement on or before the application submission deadline published in Section IV.B. of this announcement. Applicants are responsible for following the submission instructions in Section IV of this announcement to ensure their application is timely submitted.
- c. Applications received 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 application through Grants.gov because they did not timely or properly register in SAM.gov or Grants.gov will not be considered an acceptable reason to consider a late submission. Applicants should confirm receipt of their application with Irina Myers as soon as possible after the submission deadline -failure to do so may result in your application not being reviewed.

IV. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

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

Applicants, except as noted below, must apply electronically through www.grants.gov for 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 www.grants.gov, the applicant must contact OGDWaivers@epa.gov or the address listed below in writing (e.g., 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 Barbara Perkins

USEPA Headquarters

William Jefferson Clinton Building

1200 Pennsylvania Ave., N. W.

Mail Code: 3903R

Washington, DC 20460

Courier Address:
OGD Waivers
c/o Barbara Perkins
Ronald Reagan Building
1300 Pennsylvania Ave., N.W.
Rm # 51267
Washington, DC 20004

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

Funding Opportunity Number (FON)

Organization Name and 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 www.grants.gov.

EPA will only consider such alternate submission exception requests based on the two reasons stated above and will timely respond to the request - all others will be denied. If an alternate submission method is approved, the applicant will receive documentation of the approval of the alternate submission method 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 limitations (although the documentation of approval will not count towards 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, 2015, it is valid for any competitive or non-competitive application submission to EPA through December 31, 2015). 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 to Grants.gov for any succeeding calendar year. For example, if there is a competitive opportunity issued on December 1, 2015 with a submission deadline of January 15, 2016, the applicant would need to submit a new exception through alternative methods beginning January 1, 2016.

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

B. Grants.gov Submission Instructions (see Appendix A)

Your organization's Authorized Organization Representative (AOR) must submit your complete application package electronically to EPA through Grants.gov (www.grants.gov) no later than **June 15, 2015 at 11:59 pm ET.**

C. Content of Application Package Submission

All application submissions must contain completed and signed grant application forms, as well as a Narrative Proposal, as described below.

Grant Application Forms. Please be sure to include the organization fax number and email address in Block 5 of the Standard Form SF 424, Application for Federal Assistance. The forms are available at www.epa.gov/ogd/AppKit/application.htm.

- Standard Form 424, *Application for Federal Assistance*
- Standard Form 424A, *Budget Information – Non-Construction Programs*
- Standard Form 424B, *Non-Construction Programs*
- Standard Form 6600-06, *Certification Regarding Lobbying*
- EPA Form 4700-4, *Pre-Award Compliance Review Report for All Applicants Requesting Federal Financial Assistance*
- EPA Form 5700-54, *Key Contacts Form*
- Narrative Proposal (**as described below**)

Narrative Proposal

The Narrative Proposal (**sections 1-3 below**) cannot exceed a maximum of 12 single-spaced typewritten pages, including the Summary Page. Supporting materials, such as resumes and letters of support, can be submitted as attachments and are not included in the 12 page limit.

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

- a. Project Title
- b. Applicant Information. Include applicant (organization) name, address, contact person, phone number, fax and e-mail address.
- c. First Year Funding Requested. Specify the amount you are requesting from EPA.
- d. Subsequent Years Funding Requested.
- d. Total Project Cost. Specify total cost of the project. Identify funding from other sources, including cost share or in-kind resources.
- e. Project period. Provide beginning and ending dates. (Projects are anticipated to begin date and end no later than date.)
- f. DUNS number

Project Application

NOTE: In developing a work plan, applicants should provide discussion on how activities and resources would be prioritized for a smaller budget allocation.

2. Application Narrative Workplan

The narrative proposal work-plan must explicitly describe how the proposed project meets the guidelines established in Sections I-III of this announcement (including the threshold eligibility criteria in Section III.C) and must address each of the evaluation criteria set forth in Section V.

a. Project Summary: The summary shall contain the following components:

- i. Detailed project summary, description of specific actions and methods to be undertaken and the responsible institutions, including estimated time line for each task.
- ii. Describe how the project goals and objectives will meet the goal and objectives listed in Section I.B.2, “Program Description,” and the outcomes and outputs identified in Section C.1 under “EPA Strategic Plan Linkage.”
- iii. Describe the human resources, potential collaborators, partnerships, coalitions and/or existing networks you offer to increase possibility of project success. State the roles these people or organizations will play in the project.

b. Approach and Methods. Describe in detail how the project will be carried out. Describe as well how the administrative activities will be carried out. Include a well-conceived work plan that is realistic and appropriate to achieving the identified objective. Include a financial management plan addressing: 1) An accounting system that meets generally accepted accounting principles; 2) A system of cost management and controls that ensures proper cost allocation and that complies with cost management requirements by the funding source; 3) A reporting system that fairly and accurately documents the spending of the grant funds; and, 4) How/when financial examination of grants receipt and expenditures as a compliance review to determine whether the grants terms and conditions are been met.

c. Environmental Results – Outcomes, Outputs and Performance Measures. State how you will evaluate, track, and measure the success of the project in terms of measurable environmental results (see Section I.C.). You should include performance measures that demonstrate the progress or environmental benefits of the project. At a minimum, all applications should include the following elements for the reporting of project measures: A plan for tracking and measuring your progress toward achieving the expected project outcomes and outputs identified in Section I.C.

d. Programmatic Capability Past Performance. Explain your current state of knowledge and experience related to the purposes and objectives stated in Section I.B.

Submit a list of 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 5 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 V, the 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 here in the application and you will receive a neutral score for these factors under Section V (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 in this section, you may receive a score of 0 for these factors.

e. Voluntary cost share/match and leveraged funds (See Section III.B also)

Demonstrate how you will leverage additional funds/resources beyond the grant funds awarded to support the proposed project activities and how these funds/resources will be used to contribute to the performance and success of the proposed project. This includes but is not limited to funds and other resources leveraged from businesses, labor organizations, non-profit organizations, education and training providers, and/or Federal, state, tribal, and local governments, as appropriate. Describe the amount and type of leveraged resources to be provided, how you will obtain the leveraged resources, the likelihood the leveraging will materialize during grant performance, the strength of the leveraging commitment, and the role the leveraged resources will play to support the proposed project activities. Selected applicants are expected to abide by their proposed leveraging commitments during grant performance and the failure to do so may affect the legitimacy of the award.

3. Detailed Budget Narrative (See Appendix B, Budget Sample)

This section provides an opportunity for a narrative description of the budget found in the SF-424A. Clearly explain how EPA funds will be used. Selected applicant will need to submit a copy of their current indirect cost rate that has been negotiated with a federal cognizant agency prior to award.

- a. Description of the budget and estimated funding amounts for each work component/task.
- b. Description of the applicant's approach, procedures, and controls for ensuring that awarded grant funds will be expended in a timely and efficient manner.
- c. Applicants must itemize costs related to personnel, fringe benefits, contractual costs, travel, equipment, supplies, other direct costs, indirect costs, and total costs. *Selected applicant(s) will need to submit a copy of their current indirect cost rate that has been negotiated with a federal cognizant agency prior to award.

d. For applicants that provide a voluntary cost share/match, the budget narrative must clearly specify the amount of federal funding and the cost-share amount for each category of total project costs for each category. Include an explanation of how the voluntary match will be met. All matching funds are subject to the regulations governing matching fund requirements at 2 CFR Part 200.

4. SF-LLL, Disclosure of Lobbying Activities, if applicable

If your organization is involved in lobbying activities, complete the form available at <http://www.epa.gov/ogd/forms/forms.htm>.

D. Submission Dates and Times

The closing date and time for submission of applications is June 15, 2015 11:59 p.m., Eastern Time (ET). Applications submitted after the closing date and time will not be considered for funding.

E. Additional Provisions for Applicants Incorporated into the Solicitation

Additional provisions that apply to this solicitation and/or awards made under this solicitation, including, but not limited to, those related to confidential business information, management fees, contracts and subawards under grants, and duplicate funding, can be found at http://www.epa.gov/ogd/competition/solicitation_provisions.htm. 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.

V. APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

Only eligible entities whose application(s) meet the threshold criteria in Section III of this announcement will be reviewed according to the evaluation criterion set forth below. Applicants should explicitly address these criteria as part of their application package submittal. Each application will be rated under a points system, with a total of 150 points possible.

The Agency Contact listed in Section VII will send an e-mail acknowledgment to each applicant upon receipt of their application. All applications will first be reviewed for threshold eligibility purposes (see Section III) by the Agency Contact listed in Section VII. Each application that meets the threshold eligibility requirements set forth in Section III.C. will be subjected to a technical and programmatic review by a panel of EPA staff using the evaluation criteria listed below.

A. Evaluation Criteria

1. Project Goals and Objectives (10 points): Under this criterion, applicants will be evaluated based on their ability to clearly and concisely describe the goals and objectives of the RFA and how they will address the Goals and Objectives stated in Section I.B.2.

2. Proposed Approach to Supporting the NTTC (50 points): Under this criterion, applicants will be evaluated based on their ability to successfully demonstrate:

- i. previous successful experience conducting research, studies, and demonstration and training projects with tribes, tribal organizations and their peoples, and awareness of cultural differences among tribal populations **(15 points)**;
- ii. previous successful experience in forming and supporting stakeholder and co-regulator associations, councils or other forms of collaborative and consultative organizations **(15 points)**;
- iii. the ability to help build and maintain effective partnerships through networking by way of databases and contact lists to advance tribal issues and target solutions to specific situations **(15 points)**; and,
- iv. the use of technology, including development and/or support of web pages, to foster communication and understanding and to achieve the administrative, budgetary, project-management and communication activities necessary to meet the project goals objective **(5 points)**.

3. Environmental Results—Outcomes, Outputs and Performance Measures (10 points): Under this criterion, the Agency will evaluate the effectiveness of the applicant's plan for tracking and measuring its progress toward achieving the expected project outputs and outcomes, including those identified in Section I.C. of this announcement. In addition, the Agency will evaluate the performance measures proposed by the applicant and how they will be used to help track, measure and report the Applicant's progress towards achieving the expected outputs and outcomes.

4. Programmatic Capability and Past Performance (60 points): Under this criterion, applicants will be evaluated based on their ability to successfully complete and manage the proposed project taking into account their:

- i. **(15 points)** past performance in successfully completing and managing the assistance agreements identified in the narrative proposal as described in Section IV.C of the announcement,
- ii. **(5 points)** history of meeting the reporting requirements under the assistance agreements identified in the narrative proposal as described in Section IV.C of the announcement including whether the applicant submitted acceptable final technical reports under those agreements and the extent to which the applicant adequately and timely reported on their progress towards achieving the expected outputs and outcomes under those agreements

and if such progress was not being made whether the applicant adequately reported why not,

- iii. **(15 points)** organizational experience and plan for timely and successfully achieving the objectives of the proposed project,
- iv. **(15 points)** staff expertise and qualifications, staff knowledge, and resources or the ability to obtain them, to successfully achieve the goals of the proposed project.

Note: In evaluating applicants under items I and II of this criterion, the Agency will consider the information provided by the applicant and may also consider relevant information from other sources including agency files and prior/current grantors (e.g., to verify and/or supplement the information supplied by the applicant). If you do not have any relevant or available past performance or reporting information, please indicate this in the proposal and you will receive a neutral score for these sub-factors (items I and II above-a neutral score is half of the total points available in a subset of possible points). If you do not provide any response for these items, you may receive a score of 0 for these factors.

5. Budget (10 points): Under this criterion, the Agency will evaluate the proposed project budget to determine whether:

- i. **(5 points)** costs are reasonable to accomplish the proposed goals, objectives, and measurable environmental outcomes and
- ii. **(5 points)** the proposed budget provides a detailed breakout of the approximate funding used for each major activity.

An applicant's budget and budget narrative must account for both federal funds and any non-federal funds (e.g., any voluntary cost share/match if applicable). Applicants must precisely describe in their budget narrative how they will account for any voluntary cost share/match and what role EPA funding will play in the overall project

6. Leveraging/Voluntary Cost-Share (5 points): Under this criterion, applicants will be evaluated based on the extent they demonstrate that they will leverage additional funds/resources, beyond the grant funds awarded, to support the proposed project activities and how these funds/resources will be used to contribute to the performance and success of the proposed project. This includes but is not limited to funds and other resources leveraged from businesses, labor organizations, non-profit organizations, education and training providers, and/or Federal, state, tribal, and local governments, as appropriate. Applicants will also be evaluated based on the amount and type of leveraged resources to be provided, how they will obtain the leveraged resources, the likelihood the leveraging will materialize during grant performance, the strength of the leveraging commitment, and the role the leveraged funds/resources will play to support the proposed project activities.

7. Expenditure of Awarded Grant Funds (5 points): 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.

B. Review and Selection Process

Applications will first be evaluated against the threshold eligibility criteria listed in Section III. Only those applications which meet all of the threshold eligibility criteria will be evaluated using the evaluation criteria listed above by an EPA evaluation team. Each application will be given a numerical score and will be rank-ordered according to the numerical score. Preliminary funding recommendations will be provided to the Selection Official based on the ranking.

C. Other Factors

Final funding decisions will be made by the Selection Official based on the rankings and preliminary recommendations of the EPA evaluation team. In making the final funding decisions, the Selection Official may also consider programmatic priorities and geographic diversity of funds. Once final decisions have been made, a funding recommendation will be developed and forwarded to the EPA Award Official.

VI. AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

A. Award Notices

Following evaluation of applications, all applicants will be notified regarding their status.

1. EPA anticipates notification to the successful applicant will be made via telephone, email or postal mail by September 30, 2015. 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 proposed project has been selected and is being recommended for award, is not an authorization to begin work. The official notification of an award will be made by the Grants and Interagency Management Division (GIAMD).

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

2. EPA anticipates notification to unsuccessful applicant(s) will be made via email or postal mail by September 30, 2015. The notification will be sent to the original signer of the Standard Form (SF) 424, Application for Federal Assistance.

The grantee information for the successful application will be posted on the EPA website at <http://www.epa.gov/oppt/tribal> at the conclusion of the competition. As previously noted, EPA reserves the right to reject all applications and make no award under this announcement.

B. Administrative and National Policy Requirement

A listing and description of general EPA Regulations applicable to the award of assistance agreements may be viewed at:

www.epa.gov/ogd/AppKit/applicable_epa_regulations_and_description.htm.

Executive Order 12372, Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs may be applicable to awards, resulting from this announcement. Applicants selected for funding may be required to provide a copy of their application to their State Point of Contact (SPOC) for review, pursuant to Executive Order 12372, Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs. This review is not required with the Initial Application and not all states require such a review. A listing of State Point of Contacts (SPOC) may be viewed at: www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants/spoc.html

C. Reporting Requirements

The successful applicant will be required to submit quarterly progress reports throughout the duration of the project. Progress reports are due 30 days post each quarter of the project period. Reports should include a description of project activities including accomplishments, successes and lessons learned along with any problems and/or delays. Data on performance measures should be reported in table format whenever possible. Quarterly Financial Status Reports (FSRs) will also be required. A final project report is also required 90 days following the end of the project period according to the same format. All reports should be submitted electronically.

D. Disputes

Assistance agreement competition-related disputes will be resolved in accordance with the dispute resolution procedures published in 70 FR (Federal Register) 3629, 3630 (January 26, 2005) which can be found at <http://www.epa.gov/ogd/competition/resolution.htm>. Copies of these procedures may also be requested by contacting Irina Myers at myers.irina@epa.gov.

E. Additional provisions that apply to this solicitation and/or awards made under this solicitation, including, but not limited to, those related to human subjects, data access and information release, DUNS, SAM, copyrights, disputes, and administrative capability, can be found at http://www.epa.gov/ogd/competition/solicitation_provisions.htm. These, and the other provisions that can be found at the website link, are important, and applicants must review them when preparing proposals for this solicitation. If you are unable to access these provisions electronically at the website above, please communicate with the EPA contact listed in this solicitation to obtain the provisions.

VII. AGENCY CONTACT

If you have questions or need additional information regarding this announcement, please contact:

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

ATTN: Irina Myers (Mail Code 7408)
Office of Pollution Prevention and Toxics
1201 Constitution Ave. NW
EPA-East Building, Room 4218H
Washington, DC 20004
Phone: 202-564-8822
e-mail: myers.irina@epa.gov

All questions or comments must be communicated in writing via postal mail, fax or e-mail to the contact person listed above. Questions and answers will be posted until the closing date of this announcement at <http://www.epa.gov/oppt/tribal>.

VIII. OTHER INFORMATION

Appendix A. Grants.gov Submission Instructions

The electronic submission of your proposal 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 www.grants.gov and click on “Applicants” on the top of the page and then go to the “Get Registered” link on the page.

If your organization is not currently registered with Grants.gov, please encourage your office to designate an Authorized Organization Representative (AOR) and ask that individual to begin the registration process as soon as possible. Please note that the registration process also requires that your organization have a 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.

To begin the application process under this grant announcement, go to www.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 <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/support/technical-support/software/adobe-reader-compatibility.html>.

You may also be able to access the application package for this announcement by searching for the opportunity on www.grants.gov. Go to www.grants.gov and then click on “Search Grants” at the top of the page and enter the Funding Opportunity Number, EPA- HQ-OPPT-2015-003, or the CFDA number that applies to the announcement (CFDA 66.716), in the appropriate field and click the Search button. Alternatively, you may be able to access the application package by

clicking on the Application Package button at the top right of the synopsis page for the announcement on <http://www.grants.gov>. To find the synopsis page, go to www.grants.gov and click “Browse Agencies” in the middle of the page and then go to “Environmental Protection Agency” to find the EPA funding opportunities.

Application Submission Deadline: Your organization’s AOR must submit your complete application package electronically to EPA through Grants.gov (www.grants.gov) no later than **June 15, 2015 11:59 pm (ET)**. Please allow for enough time to successfully submit your application process and allow for unexpected errors that may require you to resubmit.

Please submit all of the application materials described below using the Grants.gov application package that you downloaded using the instructions above. For additional instructions on completing and submitting the electronic application package, click on the “Show Instructions” tab that is accessible within the application package itself.

Proposal Materials: The following forms and documents are required under this announcement and are described in greater detail in Section IV of the announcement.

Mandatory Documents:

1. Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424)
2. Budget Information for Non-Construction Programs (SF-424A)
3. Assurances for Non-Construction Programs (SF-424B)
4. Grants.gov Lobbying Form
5. EPA Key Contacts Form 5700-54
6. Project Narrative - prepared as described in Section IV of the announcement.
7. Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (SF-LLL), if applicable

Applications submitted through Grants.gov will be time and date stamped electronically. If you have not received a confirmation of receipt from EPA (not from Grants.gov) within 30 days of the application deadline, please contact Beth Anderson at (202) 564-8833. Failure to do so may result in your application not being reviewed.

Technical Issues with Submission

1. Once the application package has been completed, the “Submit” button should be enabled. If the “Submit” button is not active, please call Grants.gov for assistance at 1-800-518-4726.

Applicants who are outside the U.S. at the time of submittal and are not able to access the toll-free number may reach a Grants.gov representative by calling 606-545-5035. Applicants should save the completed application package with two different file names before providing it to the AOR to avoid having to re-create the package should submission problems be experienced or a revised application needs to be submitted.

2. Submitting the application. The application package must be transferred to Grants.gov by an AOR. The AOR should close all other software before attempting to submit the application package. Click the “submit” button of the application package. Your Internet browser will launch and a sign-in page will appear.

Note: Minor problems are not uncommon with transfers to Grants.gov. It is essential to allow sufficient time to ensure that your application is submitted to Grants.gov BEFORE the due date identified in Section IV of the solicitation. The Grants.gov support desk operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week, except Federal Holidays. A successful transfer will end with an on-screen acknowledgement. For documentation purposes, print or screen capture this acknowledgement. If a submission problem occurs, reboot the computer – turning the power off may be necessary – and re-attempt the submission. Note: Grants.gov issues a “case number” upon a request for assistance.

3. Transmission Difficulties. If transmission difficulties that result in a late transmission, no transmission, or rejection of the transmitted application are experienced, and following the above instructions do not resolve the problem so that the application is submitted to www.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 Irina Myers (myers.irina@epa.gov) with the FON in the subject line. Be aware that EPA will only consider accepting applications that were unable to transmit due to www.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 Irina Myers at 202-564-8822.

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, send an email message to Irina Myers (myers.irina@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 promptly send an email to Irina Myers (myers.irina@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.

Appendix B. Budget Narrative Sample

Budget Detail

This section of the work plan is a detailed description of the budget found in the SF-424A, and must include a detailed discussion of how EPA funds will be used. Applicants must **itemize** costs related to personnel, fringe benefits, travel, equipment, supplies, contractual costs, other direct costs, indirect costs, and total costs.

Applicants must include sufficient detail for EPA to determine if the costs are eligible, allocable, reasonable, and allowable. For more information, see <http://www.epa.gov/ogd/recipient/tips.htm>. For guidelines and a sample budget, see http://www.epa.gov/ogd/recipient/ogd_budget_detail_guidance.pdf.

Applicants should use the following instructions and budget object class descriptions to complete the Budget Detail section of the work plan.

Personnel - List all staff positions by title. Give annual salary, percentage of time assigned to the project, and total cost for the budget period. This category includes only direct costs for the salaries of those individuals who will perform work directly for the project (generally, paid employees of the applicant organization). If the applicant organization is including staff time (in-kind services) as a cost share, this should be included as Personnel costs. Personnel costs do not include: (1) costs for services of consultants, contractors, consortia members, or other partner organizations, which are included in the “Contractual” category; (2) costs for employees of subrecipients under subawards, which are included in the “Other” category; or (3) effort that is not directly in support of the proposed project, which may be covered by the organization’s negotiated indirect cost rate. The budget detail must identify the personnel category type by Full Time Equivalent (FTE), including percentage of FTE for part-time employees, number of personnel proposed for each category, and the estimated funding amounts.

Fringe Benefits - Identify the percentage used, the basis for its computation, and the types of benefits included. Fringe benefits are allowances and services provided by employers to their employees as compensation in addition to regular salaries and wages. Fringe benefits include, but are not limited to the cost of leave, employee insurance, pensions and unemployment benefit plans.

Travel - Specify the mileage, per diem, estimated number of trips in-State and out-of-State, number of travelers, and other costs for each type of travel. Travel may be integral to the purpose of the proposed project (e.g. inspections) or related to proposed project activities (e.g. attendance at meetings). Travel costs do not include: (1) costs for travel of consultants, contractors, consortia members, or other partner organizations, which are included in the “Contractual” category; (2) travel costs for employees of subrecipients under subawards, which are included in the “Other” category.

Equipment - Identify each item to be purchased which has an estimated acquisition cost of \$5,000 or more per unit and a useful life of more than one year. Equipment also includes

accessories necessary to make the equipment operational. Equipment does not include: (1) equipment planned to be leased/rented, including lease/purchase agreement; or (2) equipment service or maintenance contracts. These types of proposed costs should be included in the “Other” category. Items with a unit cost of less than \$5,000 should be categorized as supplies, pursuant to 2 CFR Part 200. The budget detail must include an itemized listing of all equipment proposed under the project.

Supplies - “Supplies” means all tangible personal property other than “equipment”. The budget detail should identify categories of supplies to be procured (e.g., laboratory supplies or office supplies). Non-tangible goods and services associated with supplies, such as printing service, photocopy services, and rental costs should be included in the “Other” category.

Contractual - Identify each proposed contract and specify its purpose and estimated cost. Contractual/consultant services are those services to be carried out by an individual or organization, other than the applicant, in the form of a procurement relationship. Leased or rented goods (equipment or supplies) should be included in the “Other” category. The applicant should list the proposed contract activities along with a brief description of the scope of work or services to be provided, proposed duration, and proposed procurement method (competitive or non-competitive), if known.

Other - List each item in sufficient detail for EPA to determine the reasonableness and allowability of its cost. This category should include only those types of direct costs that do not fit in any of the other budget categories. Examples of costs that may be in this category are: insurance, rental/lease of equipment or supplies, equipment service or maintenance contracts, printing or photocopying, rebates, and subaward costs. Subawards (e.g., subgrants) are a distinct type of cost under this category. The term “subaward” means an award of financial assistance (money or property) by any legal agreement made by the recipient to an eligible subrecipient. This term does not include procurement purchases, technical assistance in the form of services instead of money, or other assistance in the form of revenue sharing, loans, loan guarantees, interest subsidies, insurance, or direct appropriations. Subcontracts are not subawards and belong in the contractual category. Applicants must provide the aggregate amount they propose to issue as subaward work and a description of the types of activities to be supported.

Indirect Charges - If indirect charges are budgeted, indicate the approved rate and base. Indirect costs are those incurred by the grantee for a common or joint purpose that benefit more than one cost objective or project, and are not readily assignable to specific cost objectives or projects as a direct cost. In order for indirect costs to be allowable, the applicant must have a federal or state negotiated indirect cost rate (e.g., fixed, predetermined, final or provisional), or must have submitted a proposal to the cognizant Federal or State agency.

Note on Management Fees: When formulating budgets for proposals, applicants must not include management fees or similar charges in excess of the direct costs and indirect costs at the rate approved by the applicant’s cognizant Federal audit agency, or at the rate provided for by the terms of the agreement negotiated with EPA. The term “management fees or similar charges” refers to expenses added to the direct costs in order to accumulate and reserve funds for ongoing business expenses, unforeseen liabilities, or for other similar costs that are not allowable under

EPA assistance agreements. Management fees or similar charges cannot be used to improve or expand the project funded under this agreement, except to the extent authorized as a direct cost of carrying out the work plan.