OVERVIEW

AGENCY: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)

TITLE: Chesapeake Bay Program Office Fiscal Year 2021 Request for Applications for: CBP 2025 Tidal Water Model for the Assessment of 2035 Climate Change Risk to the Chesapeake TMDL

ANNOUNCEMENT TYPE: Request for Applications (RFA)

RFA NUMBER: EPA-R3-CBP-21-08

ASSISTANCE LISTING NUMBER: 66.466

IMPORTANT DATES

August 05, 2021	Issuance of RFA
September 20, 2021	Application Submission Deadline (see Section IV for more information)
October 18, 2021	Approximate date for EPA to notify applicants of results
October 31, 2021	Approximate date for applicant to submit revised federal cooperative agreement application
December 05, 2021	Approximate date of award

EPA will consider all eligible applications that are submitted via Grants.gov by 11:59 pm ET on **September 20, 2021** and consider any applications submitted after the due date as ineligible. EPA will only accept applications submitted via Grants.gov, except in limited circumstances where applicants have no or very limited Internet access (see section IV.).

COVID-19 Update: EPA is providing flexibilities to applicants experiencing challenges related to COVID-19. Please see the **Flexibilities Available to Organizations Impacted by COVID-19** clause in Section IV of EPA's Solicitation Clauses.

SUMMARY

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Chesapeake Bay Program Office (CBPO) is announcing a Request for Applications (RFA) for supporting Chesapeake Bay Program (CBP) goals related to the CBP requirement of a state-of-the-science model of the Chesapeake Bay tidal waters using an unstructured grid to be completed and fully operational by 2025. The new 2025 tidal Bay Model is required for the assessment of the Chesapeake TMDL water quality standards under 2035 climate change conditions. Specific support requested is for an overall main stem Bay and tributary TMDL simulation framework of model development and application to support the 2025 assessment of 2035 climate change risks and challenges to the Chesapeake TMDL water quality standards. The work includes the development and calibration of a fully-operational model by December 2024 for the tidal waters of the Chesapeake using the CBP ICM

water quality code (FORTRAN or equivalent).

CBP Modeling Workgroup

The mainstem TMDL Bay Model described above will be under the technical guidance of the CBP Modeling Workgroup. The Modeling Workgroup is charged with the responsibility to provide state-of-the-art decision-support modeling tools to the Chesapeake Bay Program Partnership that are developed and applied through community and participatory principles. Modeling Workgroup members are comprised of scientists, engineers, and technical managers from throughout the Chesapeake Bay Partnership.

The responsible planning and management of resources to provide the best available decision-support modeling tools requires the Modeling Workgroup members and participants to adhere to the core values of:

Integration - Integration of the most recent science and knowledge in air, watershed, and coastal waters to support ecosystem modeling for restoration decision-making.

Innovation - Embracing creativity and encouraging improvement in the development and support of transparent and robust modeling tools.

Independence – Making modeling decisions on the basis of the best available evidence and using the most appropriate methods to produce, run, and interpret models, independent of policy considerations.

Inclusiveness - Commitment to an open and transparent process and the engagement of relevant partners that results in strengthening the Partnership's decision-making tools.

FUNDING/AWARDS: This RFA will cover the project period up to and including six years from an expected start date of **December 05, 2021**. CBPO plans to award a cooperative agreement under this RFA. The total estimated funding for six years is approximately $1,650,000 with an estimated $250,000 available for the first year and $250,000 - $300,00 available in subsequent years. Higher-budget years are for the model development period of 2022 – 2024. Total estimated funding will not exceed $1,650,000. There is no guarantee of funding throughout this period or beyond. The final aggregate amount is dependent on the availability of federal funds.

FULL TEXT OF ANNOUNCEMENT

I. Funding Opportunity Description
II. Award Information
III. Eligibility Information
IV. Application and Submission Information
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VI. Award Administration Information
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I: FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION

A. Background

1. About the Chesapeake Bay Program

The Chesapeake Bay is North America's largest and most biologically diverse estuary. A resource of extraordinary productivity, it is worthy of the highest levels of protection and restoration. Authorized by Section 117 of the Clean Water Act, CBP is responsible for supporting the Executive Council through a number of actions, including the coordination of federal, state, and local efforts to restore and protect living resources and water quality of the Chesapeake Bay and its watershed. Section 117 also authorizes EPA to provide assistance grants to support the goals of the program.

The Chesapeake Bay Program (CBP) is a unique regional partnership that has led and directed the restoration of the Chesapeake Bay since 1983. Today, the CBP partners include the states of Delaware, Maryland, New York, Pennsylvania, Virginia, and West Virginia; the District of Columbia; the Chesapeake Bay Commission, a tri-state legislative body; and EPA, representing the federal government.

The CBP partnership is guided at the direction of the Executive Council (EC), which, through its leadership, establishes the policy direction for the restoration and protection of the Chesapeake Bay and exerts its leadership to rally public support for the Bay effort and signs directives, agreements, and amendments that set goals and guide policy for Chesapeake Bay restoration.

The Principals' Staff Committee (PSC) works on behalf of the EC to translate the restoration vision into policy and implementation actions. In addition, the PSC acts as the senior policy advisors to the Executive Council, accepting items for their consideration and approval and setting agendas for Executive Council meetings. The PSC also provides policy and program direction to the Management Board.

The Management Board (MB) provides strategic planning, priority setting, and operational guidance through implementation of a comprehensive, coordinated, accountable implementation strategy for the CBP. It directs and coordinates all of the Goal Implementation Teams (GITs) and workgroups under it.

The GITs include federal and non-federal experts from throughout the watershed. Thus, academic experts, advocacy organizations, and others become active members of the broad restoration partnership.

As described above, the CBP partners include federal agencies, seven watershed jurisdictions, and many non-federal organizations; however, work funded under this RFA will support the seven watershed jurisdictions and other non-federal partners.

Pursuant to Section 117(b)(2) of the Clean Water Act, 33 USC Section 1267(b)(2), CBPO is the office within EPA charged with providing support to the Council in the restoration and protection of the Chesapeake Bay. The CBPO and CBP, mentioned above, are two distinct entities.

2. 2014 Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement and Executive Order 13508
In support of, and in augmentation to, the historic 2010 Chesapeake TMDL, on June 16, 2014, the Chesapeake Executive Council, CBP's governing body, signed a new voluntary *Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement* that will guide the CBP partnership's work into the future. For the first time, Delaware, New York, and West Virginia signed the agreement as full CBP partners in the overall effort. The agreement is one of the most comprehensive restoration plans developed for the Chesapeake region, providing greater transparency and accountability of all CBP partners. With 10 interrelated goals and 31 outcomes, this watershed-wide accord advances the restoration, conservation, and protection of all the lands and waters within the 64,000-square-mile watershed by addressing climate change, promoting sound land use, and enhancing the protection and restoration the Chesapeake Bay's living resources, water quality, and vital habitats.

President Obama's Executive Order (EO) 13508, issued in May 2009, called for a new strategy and a "new era of shared federal leadership" for restoring and protecting the Chesapeake Bay. When it was issued, the EO strategy built upon existing CBP goals and identified a set of goals and outcome measures. Since that time, federal and CBP jurisdictional partners worked collaboratively to better align the EO and CBP partnership's goals, the results of which are reflected in the new *Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement*.

This cooperative agreement will help fulfill the *Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement* commitments of President Obama's Executive Order (EO) 13508 by "achieving the most essential priorities for a healthy Chesapeake ecosystem: Restore Clean Water, Recover Habitats" as well as the "supporting strategies to Respond to Climate Change, and Strengthen Science". https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2010/05/11/2010-11143/executive-order-13508-chesapeake-bay-protection-and-restoration-section-203-final-coordinated

3. Background on Chesapeake Bay Modeling:
Climate change was recognized in the historic 2010 TMDL as a challenge to be addressed by the Chesapeake 2017 Midpoint Assessment (2017 MPA). During the 2017 MPA, a comprehensive airshed, watershed and estuarine modeling system was successfully developed and applied to address climate change conditions over the 30 years between the base year (1995) and 2025. As a consequence, nutrient and sediment target loads were lowered to offset the nonachievement of the Chesapeake's living-resource-based water quality standards that resulted from the 30 years of climate change.

The CBP leadership of the PSC and the EC have now directed the CBP Partnership to prepare to address 2035 climate change conditions with a suite of updated airshed, watershed, and estuarine models to be completed and fully operational in January 2025.

The CBP Partnership's technical experts on the Modeling Workgroup and CBPO supporting staff have recognized limitations in the CBP Partnership's current CH3D-ICM hydrodynamic-water quality models to simulate physical, chemical, and biological processes in the shallowest, most productive depths of the Chesapeake Bay and its tidal tributaries and embayments at scales and levels of confidence required to support management decision-making under 2035 and future climate change conditions. The current 2017 MPA version of the CH3D hydrodynamic model employed by the CBP Partnership has reached its limit of spatial resolution in the Chesapeake tidal waters at approximately 57,000 cells. A more detailed unstructured grid model is needed to accurately represent dissolved oxygen (DO), particularly Open Water DO, chlorophyll, clarity, and submerged aquatic vegetation (SAV) water quality standards throughout the Bay.

The DO, chlorophyll, SAV, and water clarity are included as TMDL water quality criteria in Delaware's, the District of Columbia's, Maryland's, and Virginia's water quality standards regulations. Because these four jurisdictions must achieve each of these water quality criteria to delist their Bay tidal waters, currently listed as impaired, the CBP Partnership's Modeling Workgroup recommended that a state-of-the-science hydrodynamic model, based on an unstructured model grid, coupled to the ICM water quality code, continually refined and improved by the CBP for three decades, be considered for the 2025 estuarine model that will assess 2035 climate change risk to the Chesapeake TMDL water quality standards.

The CBP Partnership's principal objective is to improve model simulation of Chesapeake Bay DO, chlorophyll, submerged aquatic vegetation, and water clarity conditions in order to better understand the impacts of alternative management strategies to achieve the living-resource-based water quality standards in the Chesapeake Bay, its tidal tributaries, and embayments under future climate change conditions.

Obtaining Additional Information

For additional background information on the CBP achievements and commitments, see the CBP Partnership's website located at http://www.chesapeakebay.net/

B. Scope of Work

This RFA is seeking cost-effective applications from eligible applicants to apply a state-of-the-science unstructured grid model to the tidal waters of the Chesapeake Bay and its tidal tributaries and embayments (hereafter called the Main Bay Model or MBM). The management purpose of the MBM is to assess the Chesapeake Bay TMDL water quality standards of dissolved oxygen, chlorophyll *a*, suspended solids, water clarity, and SAV under conditions of climate change in 2035 and beyond. The MBM scenarios, as directed by Chesapeake Bay decision-makers, will provide support for management strategies to achieve living, resource-based water quality standards in the tidal Chesapeake Bay. Over the course of the six-year project, the three years (2022-2024) will be for model development and the final two years (2025-2026) will be for model application, scenario development and analysis as directed by CBP decision-makers, and model documentation. Over the course of the project, the Multiple Tributary Model (MTM) teams (under a separate RFA) will develop and apply fine-scale tributary models using common forcing conditions, model state variables, and decision rules as the MBM in order to better represent Bay tributaries and shallow-water processes under future climate change conditions.

The MBM team will collaborate and coordinate with the MTM teams on a regular basis over the project period.

While the CBP partnership is comprised of federal and non-federal organizations, any activities funded under this RFA will not directly benefit the federal partners. The recipient of the cooperative agreement awarded under this RFA may work directly with federal agencies, but the nature of that work will result only in direct, significant benefits to the non-federal agencies, partners, and the general public. Any indirect and incidental benefits to EPA are not the purpose of the RFA.

EPA is issuing this RFA to support the CBP Partnership's continuing mission of evaluating the effectiveness of management actions taken to reduce nutrient and sediment pollutant loads and to improve Chesapeake Bay water quality through the seven watershed jurisdictions' watershed implementation plans (WIPs). The mission includes enhancing and maintaining the accountability of systems dependent on tracking, verifying, reporting, and quantifying the estimated pollutant load reduction potential of practices, treatments, and technologies implemented throughout the watershed and assessing their collective influence on Chesapeake Bay tidal water quality. The resultant data are used by the CBP Partnership's seven watershed jurisdictions to:

- Assess achievement of their two-year milestones;
- Assess progress towards implementing their WIPs;
- Determine management effectiveness of locally-implemented nutrient and sediment pollutant load reduction and prevention practices, treatments, and technologies;
- Report Bay and watershed restoration actions to the public;
- Project Chesapeake Bay water quality conditions based on implemented and planned pollutant load reduction actions;
- Support meeting the objectives of the 2017 Midpoint Assessment of the 2010 Chesapeake Bay TMDL;
- Support establishment of target pollutant loads for future WIPs addressing 2035 climate change risk to the Chesapeake TMDL's living-resource-based water quality standards;
- Support adaptive management by the CBP partnership; and
- Support Executive Council directives, e.g., those related to environmental justice and climate change.

The applications should be oriented towards:

- Development, calibration, validation, and scientific and management applications of complex, linked environmental models;
- Working with multi-institutional and multi-agency teams on collaborative development, calibration, validation, and scientific and management application of complex linked environmental models;
- Active model research and model development programs focused on the productive littoral areas of estuarine and coastal ecosystems;
- Full, detailed, and accurate simulation of the effects of nitrogen, phosphorus, sediment, and climate change related factors in the assessment of the dissolved oxygen, chlorophyll, clarity, and submerged aquatic vegetation water quality standards in all the Chesapeake Bay TMDL's designated uses;

- Ensuring complete web-accessibility of the resultant supporting data, model code, and documentation to the partnership-oriented, implementation-focused structure of the CBP Partnership through open source and public domain products and
- As appropriate and to the extent practicable, working with underserved communities and seeking partnership with Tribal communities.
- Note: In addition to the examples of tasks listed above, applicants may propose additional tasks that they believe are important to accomplishing the activities.

EPA plans to award one cooperative agreement under this RFA. The total funding for six years is approximately $1,650,000, with an estimated $250,000 available for the first year.

If your organization has an interest in this project, has the skills to accomplish all RFA's tasks, and is eligible to receive a federal assistance agreement as described in Section III of this announcement, we encourage you to submit an application. Each eligible application will be evaluated using the criteria described in Section V. The activities are multi-year projects (up to six years), and the application should have a work plan and budget for the first year and a projected work plan and estimated budget detail for each of the subsequent five years.

C. EPA Strategic Plan Linkage & Anticipated Outcomes and Outputs

Pursuant to Section 6a of EPA Order 5700.7, "Environmental Results under EPA Assistance Agreements," EPA must link proposed assistance agreements to the Agency's Strategic Plan. EPA also requires that grant applicants and recipients adequately describe environmental outputs and outcomes to be achieved under assistance agreements (see EPA Order 5700.7A1, Environmental Results under Assistance Agreements, accessible at https://www.epa.gov/grants/epa-order-57007a1-epas-policy-environmental-results-under-epa-assistance-agreements).

1. Linkage to EPA's Strategic Plan

The overall objective of this cooperative agreement is to protect and restore the Chesapeake Bay ecosystem through continued technical support to address water-quality restoration goals and maintain public awareness of Chesapeake Bay restoration. The activity to be funded under this announcement supports EPA's FY 2018-22 Strategic Plan. The award made under this announcement will support *Goal 1: A Cleaner, Healthier Environment; Objective 1.2: Provide for Clean and Safe Water* of the EPA Strategic Plan. All applications must be for projects that support the goals and objectives identified above.

EPA Order 5700.7A1 also requires that grant applicants adequately describe environmental outputs and outcomes to be achieved under assistance agreements. Applicants must include specific statements describing the environmental results of the proposed project in terms of well-defined outputs and, to the maximum extent practicable, well-defined outcomes that will demonstrate how the project will contribute to the priorities described above.

2. Outputs

The term "output" means an environmental activity, effort, and/or associated work product 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. Expected outputs include the following:

- Support the Modeling Workgroup, WQGIT, and other technical and management/policy CBP groups as needed.
- Provide estuarine models, analysis tools, scenarios, and other materials to support Chesapeake protection and restoration efforts and address the needs and requirements of CBP decision makers and managers for responding to climate change in the Chesapeake.
- Improvement of the Bay estuarine model and of management decisions through the successful application of the applicant's skill, knowledge, and experience in developing quantitative assessments of climate change in Chesapeake tidal waters providing CBP managers with essential information about how to respond to the climate change challenge.
- Demonstration of feasibility and utility of using a state of the science unstructured grid model to better estimate Chesapeake water quality standards in shallow open waters under 2035 and future climate change conditions.

Progress reports and a final report will also be required outputs as specified in Section VI(C) of this announcement, "Reporting Requirement."

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 qualitative and environmental, behavioral, health-related, or programmatic in nature but must also be quantitative. They may not necessarily be achievable within an assistance agreement funding period. Examples of potential outcomes under the Scope of Work of this announcement may include but are not limited to the following:

- Reduced nitrogen, phosphorus, sediment delivered to tidal Bay waters appropriate to respond to 2035 and future climate change in order to achieve Bay water quality standards.
- Amount of habitat restored as represented by achievement of the Chesapeake living-resource-based water quality standards.
- Increased knowledge and strategies to improve local economic, human health, and environmental goals through a restored Chesapeake Bay.
- Improved knowledge about the critical load of nutrients that the Chesapeake Bay would have under 2035 and future climate change.
- Improved CBP decision making and leadership in responding to future climate change conditions.

Progress reports and a final report will also be required outputs as specified in Section VI(C) of this announcement, "Reporting Requirement."

D. Authorizing Statutes and Regulations

This grant is made pursuant to Clean Water Act Section 117(d), 33 U.S.C. Section 1267(d), which authorizes EPA to issue grants and cooperative agreements for the purposes of protecting and restoring the Chesapeake Bay's ecosystem. This project is subject to the Office of Management and Budget's (OMB) Uniform Grants Guidance (2 C.F.R. Part 200) and EPA-specific provisions of the Uniform Grants Guidance (2 C.F.R. Part 1500).

E. Minority Serving Institutions:

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

For purposes of this solicitation, the following are considered MSIs:

1. Historically Black Colleges and Universities, as defined by the Higher Education Act (20 U.S.C. § 1061). A list of these schools can be found at Historically Black Colleges and Universities at: https://sites.ed.gov/whhbcu/one-hundred-and-five-historically-black-colleges-and-universities/;

2. Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs), as defined by the Higher Education Act (20 U.S.C. § 1059c(b)(3) and (d)(1)). A list of these schools can be found at American Indian Tribally Controlled Colleges and Universities at https://sites.ed.gov/whiaiane/tribes-tcus/tribal-colleges-and-universities/;

3. Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs), as defined by the Higher Education Act (20 U.S.C. § 1101a(a)(5)). A list of these schools can be found at Hispanic-Serving Institutions at https://sites.ed.gov/hispanic-initiative/hispanic-serving-institutions-hsis/;

4. Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander-Serving Institutions; (AANAPISIs), as defined by the Higher Education Act (20 U.S.C. § 1059g(b)(2)). A list of these schools can be found at Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander-Serving Institutions and this associated link, and

5. Predominately Black Institutions (PBIs), as defined by the Higher Education Act of 2008, 20 U.S.C. 1059e(b)(6). A list of these schools can be found at Predominately Black Institutions and this associated link, https://www.google.com/maps/d/viewer?mid=1wlIi3j7gtlNq_w-0NKAb2bF2VmY&ie=UTF&msa=0&ll=37.35160769312532%2C-96.17229800000001&z=4.

II: AWARD INFORMATION

A. Funding Amount and Expected Number of Awards

CBPO plans to award one cooperative agreement under this RFA. Funding for the activity listed in Section I is approximately $250,000 to $350,000 annually for six years, depending on funding availability, satisfactory performance, Agency priorities, and other applicable considerations. The total estimated funding for the activity for six years is approximately $1,650,000.

EPA reserves the right to reject all applications and make no award under this announcement or award less than the estimated funding amounts above. Funding for the activity depends on funding availability, satisfactory performance, Agency priorities, and other applicable considerations. EPA makes no commitment of annual funding amounts for any fiscal year(s), as funds may be limited based on these applicable considerations.

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 selection is made. Any additional selection for awards will be made no later than six months after the original selection decision.

B. Award Type

EPA has determined that a cooperative agreement is the appropriate funding vehicle for this project. Cooperative agreements are used under circumstances where substantial involvement is anticipated between EPA and the recipient during performance of the activity. 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 C.F.R. 200.317 and 2 C.F.R. 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.

For this project, federal involvement would typically be in the form of participation with other CBP partners and stakeholders in an advisory capacity to the grantee. The participation is expected to include involvement through the Modeling Workgroup, various CBP Goal Implementation Teams, and related committees and workgroups (on which EPA also participates to ensure that all the recommendations for technical work support the CBP partners). All work conducted is to support the Chesapeake TMDL and to restore the Chesapeake Bay ecosystem.

C. 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 a project, it will do so in a manner that does not prejudice the applicant 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.

D. Expected Project Period

The expected project period for the cooperative agreement is six years, with funding provided on an annual basis. No commitment of funding can be made beyond the first year. The expected start date for the award resulting from this RFA is **December 05, 2021**.

E. Pre-Award Costs

Recipients may incur otherwise eligible and allowable pre-award costs up to 90 days prior to award at their own risk without prior approval of EPA's award official. Pre-award costs must comply with 2 C.F.R. 200.458 and 2 C.F.R. 1500.9. If EPA determines that the requested pre-award costs comply with the relevant authorities, and that the costs are justified as allocable to the project, then these costs may be included as allowable expenditures at the time that the assistance award document is prepared.

However, if for any reason EPA does not fund the application or the amount of the award is less than the applicant anticipated, then EPA is under no obligation to reimburse the applicant for these costs incurred. Thus, applicants incur pre-award costs at their own risk. Costs incurred more than 90 days prior to award require the approval of EPA Region 3's grant official.

III: ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

A. Eligible Applicants

Nonprofit organizations, state and local governments, federally recognized tribes, colleges, universities, and interstate agencies are eligible to submit applications in response to this RFA. For-profit organizations are not eligible to submit applications in response to this RFA.

B. Cost-Share or Matching Requirements

Pursuant to Clean Water Act 117(d)(2)(A), 33 U.S.C. Section 1267(d)(2)(A), the agency shall determine the cost-share requirements for awards. The Assistance Listing Number, 66.466, states that assistance agreement applicants must commit to a cost-share ranging from 5 percent to 50 percent of eligible project costs as determined at the sole discretion of EPA. For this RFA, EPA has determined that an applicant must provide a minimum of 5 percent of the total cost of the project as the non-federal cost-share.

Cost-share may be in the form of cash or in-kind contributions. Involvement from foundations, watershed groups, private sector, eligible governmental, as well as non-conventional partners can help with the match. The match must be met by eligible and allowable costs and is subject to the match provisions in grant regulations. Applications that do not demonstrate how the 5 percent match will be met will be rejected.

C. Threshold Eligibility Criteria

Only applications from eligible entities (see Section III.A above) that meet the following threshold eligibility criteria will be evaluated against the criteria in Section V.B. Applicants must

meet the following threshold criteria to be considered for funding. Applicants deemed ineligible for funding consideration as a result of the threshold eligibility review will be notified in writing within 15 calendar days of the ineligibility determination.

1. **Applications must substantially comply with the application submission instructions and requirements set forth in Section IV of this announcement, or else they will be rejected. Where a page limit is expressed in Section IV with respect to the project narrative, pages in excess of the page limitation will not be reviewed.**

2. In addition, initial applications must be submitted through Grants.gov as stated in Section IV of this announcement (except in the limited circumstances where another mode of submission is specifically allowed for as explained in Section IV) on or before the application submission deadline published in Section IV of this announcement. Applicants are responsible for following the submission instructions in Section IV of this announcement to ensure that their application is timely submitted.

   Applications 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 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 James Hargett at hargett.james@epa.gov (see Section VII, Agency Contact) as soon as possible after the submission deadline—failure to do so may result in your application(s) not being reviewed.

3. Applications must be for projects linked to the strategic goal outlined in Section I.C.1.

4. For an application to be considered eligible for funding, project-related work included in the application must take place within the Chesapeake Bay watershed, which includes portions of Delaware, Maryland, New York, Pennsylvania, Virginia, and West Virginia, and all of the District of Columbia.

5. Applications must show how they will meet the 5 percent cost-share requirement of Section III.B.

6. Applications requesting funding for more than the maximum of the cumulative funding range for the RFA will be rejected.

7. If an application is submitted that includes any ineligible tasks or activities, that portion of the application will be ineligible for funding and may, depending on the extent to which it affects the entire application, render the entire application ineligible for funding.

8. Applicants must address this RFA's activity described in Section I.B. to be considered eligible.

IV: APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

A. How to Obtain an Application Package

Applicants can download individual grant application forms from the application package associated with this opportunity on Grants.gov.

B. Content and Form of Application Submission

Each application will be evaluated using the criteria referenced in Section V.B. of this announcement. You must submit all the documents listed below including single-spaced project narrative of up to 15 pages in length by the date and time specified in Section IV.C below excess pages will not review. The format for the project narrative is contained in Appendix A of this RFA.

The application package **must** include all the following materials:

1. **Standard Form (SF)-424, Application for Federal Assistance –** Complete the form. There are no attachments. Please be sure to include organization fax number and email address in Block 8 of SF-424. Please note that the organizational Dunn and Bradstreet (D&B) Data Universal Number System (DUNS) number must be included on the SF-424. Organizations may obtain a DUNS number at no cost by calling the toll-free DUNS number request line at 1-866-705-5711 or visiting their website at http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform.

2. **SF-424A's Budget Information** – Complete the form. There are no attachments. The total amount of federal funding requested for the project period should be shown on line 5(e) and on line 6(k) of SF-424A, the amount of indirect costs should be entered on line 6(j). The indirect cost rate (i.e., a percentage), the base (e.g., personnel costs and fringe benefits), and the amount should also be indicated on line 22.

3. **EPA Form 4700-4, Pre award Compliance Review Report for All Applicants and Recipients Requesting EPA Financial Assistance**

4. **EPA Key Contacts Form**

5. **Project Narrative Attachment Form –** The format for the project narrative and the Budget detail are contained in Appendix A of this announcement.

Requirements for Project Narrative — See Appendix A
All application review criteria in Section V must be addressed in the project narrative. The project narrative shall not exceed **15** pages in length. Pages refer to one side of a single-spaced, typed page. Font size should be no smaller than 10 and the application must be submitted on 8 ½" x 11" paper. Note that the **15** pages include all supporting materials, including resumes or curriculum vitae and letters of support. The 15 page limit does not include documentation of

non-profit status, cost-share letters of commitment, the SF-424, SF-424A, budget detail, Key Contacts Form and 4700-4 form. If you submit more than 15 pages for the project narrative, the additional pages will be discarded and will not be reviewed. See Appendix A for additional instructions.

C. Intergovernmental Review

Please review the Intergovernmental Review clause included as part of the EPA Solicitation Clauses. This program is eligible for coverage under Executive Order (EO) 12372, An Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs. See this link for information and instructions: https://www.epa.gov/grants/epa-region-3-grants-and-audit-management-branch-intergovernmental-review-process-and-single. Further information regarding this requirement will be provided if your application is selected for funding.

D. Funding Restrictions

Administrative Cost Cap Requirement under Statutory Authority
Grantees applying for CBP assistance agreements must adhere to the requirements for "Administrative Costs" under the Section 117 (d)(4) of the Clean Water Act, 33 U.S.C. Section 1267 (d)(4), which states that administrative costs shall not exceed 10 percent of the annual grant award (annual grant award = federal share plus cost-share). **Appendix B: Administrative Cost Cap Worksheet** is provided as an example of a method to calculate the 10-percent limitation. You are not required to submit Appendix B with your application.

Allowable Costs
EPA assistance agreement funds may only be used for the purposes set forth in the grant and must be consistent with the statutory authority for the award. Federal funds may not be used for cost sharing for other federal grants (except where authorized by statute), lobbying, or intervention in federal regulatory or adjudicatory proceedings. In addition, federal funds may not be used to sue the federal government or any other government entity. All costs identified in the budget must conform to the provisions of 2 C.F.R. Part 200, Subpart E, Cost Principles. During the grant negotiation, any ineligible costs outlined in the application (i.e. lobbying activities) will be excluded in the final grant award.

E. Submission Instructions

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

Applicants must apply electronically through Grants.gov under this funding opportunity based on the Grants.gov instructions in this announcement. If your organization has no access to the internet or access is very limited, you may request an exception for the remainder of this calendar year by following the procedures outlined here. Please note that your request must be received at least 15 calendar days before the application due date to allow enough time to negotiate alternative submission methods. Issues with submissions with respect to this opportunity only are addressed in section 3. Technical Issues with Submission below.

2. 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 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. Please see RAIN-2021-G01 for information about EPA's implementation of the upcoming Government-wide transition from DUNS to Unique Entity Identifier (UEI).

Applicants need to ensure that the AOR who submits the application through Grants.gov and whose DUNS is listed on the application is an AOR for the applicant listed on the application. Additionally, the DUNS 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-R3-CBP-21-08 or the Assistance Listing number that applies to the announcement, 66.466, 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 **September 20, 2021 at 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 accessed using the instructions above.

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 James Hargett, at hargett.james@epa.gov. Failure to do so may result in your application not being reviewed.

The application package **must** include all of the following materials:

1. **Standard Form (SF)-424, Application for Federal Assistance –** Complete the form. There are no attachments. Please be sure to include organization fax number and email address in Block 8 of SF-424. Please note that the organizational Dunn and Bradstreet (D&B) Data Universal Number System (DUNS) number must be included on the SF-424. Organizations may obtain a DUNS number at no cost by calling the toll-free DUNS number request line at 1-866-705-5711 or visiting their website at http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform.

2. **SF-424A, Budget Information** – Complete the form. There are no attachments. The total amount of federal funding requested for the project period should be shown on line 5(e) and on line 6(k) of SF-424A, the amount of indirect costs should be entered on line 6(j). The indirect cost rate (i.e., a percentage), the base (e.g., personnel costs and fringe benefits), and the amount should also be indicated on line 22.

3. **EPA Form 4700-4, Pre award Compliance Review Report for All Applicants and Recipients Requesting EPA Financial Assistance**

4. **EPA Key Contacts Form**

5. **Project Narrative Attachment Form –** The format for the project narrative including the budget detail are contained in Appendix A to the RFA.

3. Technical Issues with Submission

a. 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.

b. 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.

c. 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 James Hargett with the FON in the subject line. Be aware that EPA will only consider accepting applications that were unable to transmit due to Grants.gov or relevant https://www.sam.gov/SAM/ 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.

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.

d. 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 hargett.james@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.

e. 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 James Hargett 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.

V: APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

A. Evaluation Process

After EPA reviews applications for threshold eligibility purposes as described in Section III, CBPO will conduct a merit evaluation of each eligible application per the criteria below. Reviews will be performed by a team of professionals from EPA and other CBP partner organizations with a working knowledge of the technical analysis and programmatic evaluation needs of CBP partnership. All reviewers will sign a conflict of interest statement indicating they have no conflict of interest.

B. Evaluation Criteria: Maximum score: 100 points

The evaluation criteria below apply to the review of applications under this RFA.

Criteria	Points
1. Organizational Capability and Program Description: Under this criterion, reviewers will evaluate the application based on: a. The quality of the application and how it demonstrates the organization's ability to timely and successfully achieve the relevant activity to support the CBP partners as described in Section I.B. **(18 points)** b. How well the applicant demonstrates the organizational capability, resources, and relevant skills, experiences, and knowledge for supporting the: i. development of the MBM as a state-of-the-science unstructured grid model of the tidal Bay for successful achievement of the objectives of the proposed project as demonstrated by the applicant's expertise, qualifications, staff knowledge, and resources. **(13 points)** ii. incorporation of the CBP's legacy ICM water quality code into an unstructured grid model along with its calibration and validation to observed data. **(5 points)** iii. application of the MBM through multiple scenario development and analysis while maintaining workflow from hundreds of scenarios over a one- to two-year (2025-2026) model application period. **(8 points)**	44
2. Programmatic Capability and Environmental Results Past Performance: Under this criterion, reviewers will evaluate the applicant based on their programmatic capability to successfully perform the proposed activity taking into account the applicant's:	22

a. Past performance in successfully completing federally- and non-federally- funded assistance agreements (assistance agreements include federal grants and cooperative agreements but not federal contracts) similar in size, scope, complexity, and relevance to the proposed project within the last three years (no more than five, and preferably EPA agreements). Successful completion of federally-funded assistance agreements also includes your organization's history of meeting reporting requirements and submission of acceptable final technical reports under those agreements. **(8 points)** b. Extent and quality to which applicant adequately documented and/or reported on their progress in achieving the expected results (e.g., outcomes and outputs) under federal agency assistance agreements performed within the last three years, and if such progress was not being made, whether the applicant adequately documented and/or reported why not. **(2 points)** c. Demonstrated programmatic skill and experience, through citation of specific examples relevant to the complexity of work described here, in: i. Developing, calibrating, validating, and assessing performance of technically sound estuarine hydrodynamic and water quality models using an unstructured grid. **(5 points)** ii. Synthesizing and effectively applying model input data and information from a wide array of sources. **(1 point)** iii. Experience with model simulation tools that have the capability to support the production of CBP management-oriented products that support the assessment of the states' Chesapeake Bay water quality standards. **(6 points)** Note: In evaluating applicants under Items a. and b., 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, please indicate this in the application and you will receive a neutral score for these subfactors; a neutral score is half of the total points available in a subset of possiblepoints. If you do not provide any response for these items, you may receive a score of zero for these subfactors.	
3. Cost-effectiveness: Under this criterion, reviewers will evaluate the application based on the degree to which the application is cost-effective, considering the following factors: organizational overhead (indirect costs), ability to perform the duties within the operational range of budgets provided by EPA, and the budget detail that includes a spreadsheet that shows each year's cost for the salaries, fringe benefits, total salaries/wages, travel expenses, equipment, supplies, contractual expenses, other cost, and indirect cost. Please refer to EPA's Office of Grants and Debarment's budget detail	6

guidance and IDC guidance located at: https://www.epa.gov/grants/rain-2019-g02 and https://www.epa.gov/grants/rain-2018-g02, respectively. **(6 points)**	
4. Transferability of Results to Similar Projects and/or Dissemination to the Public: Under this criterion, reviewers will evaluate the application based on the degree to which the application includes an adequate plan to: a. Gather and share information learned from scenarios, analyses, and other model applications with the larger CBP Partnership. **(4 points)** b. Transfer the documentation/information/data/results/recommendations to CBP partners and stakeholders in the Chesapeake Bay watershed in a timely manner. **(3 points)** c. Document and distribute results to the appropriate audience or summarize information so that EPA can disseminate in a timely manner. **(3 points)**	10
5. Modernization of Methods over Time: Under this criterion, reviewers will evaluate the application based on the extent the application addresses the development of recommendations for future changes to the existing recommendations within the CBP Partnership Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee's 2019 workshop report entitled *Chesapeake Bay Program Modeling in 2025 and Beyond: A Proactive Visioning Workshop* (http://www.chesapeake.org/pubs/401_Hood2019.pdf) **(12 points)**	12
6. Timely Expenditure of Grant Funds: Under this criterion, reviewers will evaluate the application based on the approach, procedures, and controls for ensuring that awarded grant funds will be expended in a timely and efficient manner **(2 points)**.	2
7. Environmental Results: Applications will be evaluated based on their plan and approach for tracking and measuring their progress towards achieving the environmental outputs and outcomes identified in Section I.C of the RFA. **(4 points)**.	4

C. Review and Selection Process

Eligible applications will be evaluated and ranked using the criteria stated in Section V.B. above by a panel of reviewers from EPA and other CBP partner organizations with a working knowledge of the technical analysis and programmatic evaluation needs of the CBP partnership. The review team will then forward the highest-ranked applications to the director or deputy director of CBPO for final selection. In making the final funding decisions, the selection official may also consider programmatic goals and priorities, including those described in the 2014 *Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement*> at https://www.chesapeakebay.net/what/what_guides_us/watershed_agreement.

D. Additional Provisions

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

VI: AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

A. Award Notices and Instructions for Submission of Final Application

It is expected that the applicant will be notified in writing of funding decisions on or around **October 18, 2021** either via email or U.S. Postal Service. This notification, which informs the applicant that its application has been selected and is being recommended for award, is not an authorization to begin work. The official notification of an award will be made by the EPA Region 3 grants office. Applicants are cautioned that only a grant award official is authorized to bind the government to the expenditure of funds; selection does not guarantee an award will be made. For example, statutory authorization, funding, or other issues discovered during the award process may affect the ability of EPA to make an award to an applicant. The award notice, signed by an EPA grant award official, is the authorizing document and will be provided either via email or U.S. Postal Service.

Notification of selection does not indicate that the applicant can start work on the project. The selected applicant will be asked to submit a full federal assistance agreement application package. A federal project officer provides assistance in the application process and negotiates a work plan, budget, and starting date. Processing for this particular cooperative agreement award is expected to take 60 days.

B. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

If your application is selected for funding, the following information will be helpful in preparing your cooperative agreement application. A listing and description of general EPA regulations applicable to the award of assistance agreements may be viewed at: https://www.epa.gov/grants/

Incurred Costs
Funding eligibility ends on the date specified in the award. The time expended, and costs incurred in either the development of the application or the final assistance application, or in any subsequent discussions or negotiations prior to the award, are neither reimbursable nor recognizable as part of the recipient's cost share.

Allowable Costs
EPA project officers and grant specialists have been provided guidance on determining the allowability and reasonableness of certain cost items under assistance agreements. The guidance indicates that the use of EPA grant funds for evening banquets, evening receptions or for light

refreshments and meals at meetings, conferences, training workshops, and outreach activities (events) must be justified by the assistance recipient, identified in the budget detail, must be allowable under the OMB Cost Principles, and approved by the EPA Award Official. Further, EPA will not approve the use of grant funds for any portion of an event where alcohol is served, purchased, or otherwise available even if grant funds are not used to purchase the alcohol.

EPA Requirements for Quality Management Plans and Quality Assurance Plans
In accordance with 2 C.F.R. Section 1500.11, projects that include the generation or use of environmental data are required to submit a Quality Management Plan (QMP) and Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP).

The QMP must document quality assurance policies and practices that are sufficient to produce data of adequate quality to meet program objectives. The QMP should be prepared in accordance with EPA QA/R-2: EPA Requirements for Quality Management Plans (refer to https://www.epa.gov/quality/epa-qar-2-epa-requirements-quality-management-plans, Chapter 2). The recipient's QMP should be reviewed and updated annually as needed. The QMP must be submitted to the EPA project officer at least 45 days prior to the initiation of data collection or data compilation.

The recipient must develop and implement quality assurance and quality control procedures, specifications and documentation that are sufficient to produce data of adequate quality to meet project objectives. The Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP) is the document that provides comprehensive details about the quality assurance/quality control requirements and technical activities that must be implemented to ensure that project objectives are met. The QAPP should be prepared in accordance with EPA QA/R-5: EPA Requirements for Quality Assurance Project Plans. The QAPP must be submitted to the EPA project officer at least 30 days prior to the initiation of data collection or data compilation. Requirements for QAPPs can be found at https://www.epa.gov/quality/template-developing-generic-quality-assurance-project-plan-or-plan-elements-model.

Deliverables
The awarded applicant will be required to provide a chart or list of deliverables, providing items and due dates.

C. Reporting

Quarterly or semiannual progress reports, as determined by the federal project officer, will be required as a condition of this award.

D. 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 subawards 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 applications 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.

E. Disputes

Assistance agreement competition-related disputes will be resolved in accordance with the dispute resolution procedures published in 70 FR (Federal Register) 3629, 3630 (January 26, 2005) which can be found at Grant Competition Dispute Resolution Procedures. Copies of these procedures may also be requested by contacting the person listed in Section VII of the announcement. Note, that the FR notice references regulations at 40 CFR Parts 30 and 31 that have been superseded by regulations in 2 CFR parts 200 and 1500. Notwithstanding the regulatory changes, the procedures for competition-related disputes remains unchanged from the procedures described at 70 FR 3629, 3630, as indicated in 2 CFR Part 1500, Subpart E.

F. Mandatory Disclosures

As required by 2 CFR § 200.113, non-federal entities or applicants for a Federal award must disclose, in a timely manner, in writing to the Federal awarding agency or pass-through entity all violations of Federal criminal law involving fraud, bribery, or gratuity violations potentially affecting the Federal award. Failure to make required disclosures can result in any of the remedies described in 2 CFR § 200.338 including suspension and debarment.

VII: AGENCY CONTACT

For administrative and technical issues regarding this RFA, please contact James Hargett via email at hargett.james@epa.gov. All questions must be received in writing via with the reference line referring to this RFA (Re: RFA EPA-R3-CBP-21-08). All questions and answers will be posted on https://www.epa.gov/grants/grants-your-region-information-specific-epa-region-3.

VIII: OTHER INFORMATION

In developing your application, you may find the following documents helpful. Websites for guidance documents are listed here. If you prefer a paper copy, please call 1-800-YOUR BAY.

Boundaries of the Chesapeake Bay Watershed
http://www.chesapeakebay.net/maps

Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement
https://www.chesapeakebay.net/what/what_guides_us/watershed_agreement

Electronic copy of the *CBP Guidance for Data Management*
https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/201601/documents/attachment8cimsgrant_guidance.pdf

Electronic copy of the *2014 Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement*
http://www.chesapeakebay.net/chesapeakebaywatershedagreement/page

EPA grantee forms
http://www.epa.gov/ogd/forms/forms.htm

Electronic copy of the *Chesapeake Bay Program Office Grant and Cooperative Agreement Guidance*
https://www.epa.gov/restoration-chesapeake-bay/chesapeake-bay-program-grant-guidance

EPA Requirements for Quality Management Plans and Quality Assurance Plans
https://www.epa.gov/grants/implementation-quality-assurance-requirements-organizations-receiving-epa-financial

Please visit the EPA Grants website (https://www.epa.gov/grants), the EPA Region 3 Grants website (https://www.epa.gov/grants/grants-your-region-information-specific-epa-region-3) or the Chesapeake Bay Program website (https://www.epa.gov/restoration-chesapeake-bay/chesapeake-bay-program-grant-guidance) if you have questions about grant issues such as costs or eligibility.

Further information on CBP committees is located at:
https://www.chesapeakebay.net/who/how_we_are_organized.

Appendix A
Application Format
U. S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY, Region III
CBP 2025 Tidal Water Model for the Assessment of 2035 Climate Change Risk to the Chesapeake TMDL
EPA-R3-CBP-21-08

The following information must be provided, or the application may not be considered complete and may not be evaluated.

A. **Project Narrative Format:** Use the Project Narrative Attachment Form (see Section IV.F.) to submit this document. Project narratives as described below shall not exceed 15 single-spaced pages. The project narrative must be submitted on 8 ½" x 11" paper, and font size should be no smaller than 10. Note that the 15-page limit includes all supporting materials, resumes or *curriculum vitae*, and letters of support but **excludes** the budget detail, documentation of non-profit status, and other forms as listed in Section IV. F. Applicants must ensure that the project narrative clearly identifies the activity number. Applicant's responses should be numbered and submitted according to the format listed below.

1. Name, address (street and email), and contact information of the applicant

2. Background - Include the following in this section:

i) Project title.
ii) Brief description of your organization.
iii) Documentation of non-profit status, if applicable.
iv) Brief biographies of applicant lead(s) including resumes and/or curriculum vitae.
v) Funding requested. Specify total cost of the project. Identify funding from other sources, including cost-share or in-kind resources.
vi) DUNS number — See Section VI of RFA.

3. Work plan - Include the following in this section:

i) A clear and concise discussion of how your organization will meet the objectives and requirements of the Program as described in Section I of the announcement.

ii) Budget detail: Use the budget detail Attachment Form (see Section IV.F.) to submit this document. For the first year and each of the subsequent years, provide a budget detail breakdown by the major budget categories (i.e. personnel, fringe benefits, travel, equipment, supplies, contractual, construction, other, and indirect). In each of the budgets, include the cost-share amount (a minimum of 5 percent for each of the total project costs) and demonstrate how the cost-share will be met, including, if applicable, letters of commitment from any third-party contributors. Please note that subaward costs must be itemized under a separate sub-line item within the "Other" budget cost category.

In addition, grantees applying for CBP assistance agreements must adhere to the requirement

for "Administrative Costs" under the Clean Water Act Section 117 (d)(4), 33 U.S.C. Section 1267 (d)(4), which states that administrative costs shall not exceed 10 percent of the annual grant award. Information on how to calculate the 10 percent administration cost cap is located in Appendix B: Administrative Cost Cap Worksheet. To calculate the specific cost-share amount, follow these two-steps:

1) EPA amount (including any in-kind) ÷ 95% = 100% of Total Grant Amount
2) 100% of Total Grant Amount × 5% = Applicant's Cost-Share Amount

iii) Environmental Results – Outputs and Outcomes: Address how the application will meet the expected outputs and outcomes of this project.

1. Output: An output is an environmental activity, effort, or work product related to an environmental goal or objective that will be produced within the assistance agreement period. Examples of potential outputs for the activity include:
   - Support the Modeling Workgroup, WQGIT, and other technical and management/policy CBP groups as needed.
   - Provide estuarine models, analysis tools, scenarios, and other materials to support to Chesapeake protection and restoration efforts and address the needs and requirements of CBP decision makers and managers for responding to climate change in the Chesapeake.
   - Improvement of the Bay estuarine model and of management decisions through the successful application of the applicant's skill, knowledge, and experience in developing quantitative assessments of climate change in Chesapeake tidal waters providing CBP managers with essential information about how to respond to the climate change challenge.
   - Demonstration of feasibility and utility of using a state of the science unstructured grid model to better estimate Chesapeake water quality standards in shallow open waters under 2035 and future climate change conditions.
2. Outcome: An outcome is a result, effect, or consequence that will result from carrying out an environmental program or activity that is related to an environmental programmatic goal or objective. Outcomes are quantitative measures that may not necessarily be achievable within the assistance agreement period. Examples of potential outcomes of the activity (Item I.B.) of this announcement may include, but are not limited to, the following:
   - Reduced nitrogen, phosphorus, sediment delivered to tidal Bay waters appropriate to respond to 2035 and future climate change in order to achieve Bay water quality standards.
   - Amount of habitat restored as represented by achievement of the Chesapeake living-resource-based water quality standards.
   - Increased knowledge and strategies to improve local economic, human health, and environmental goals through a restored Chesapeake Bay.

- Improved knowledge about the critical load of nutrients that the Chesapeake Bay would have under 2035 and future climate change.
- Improved CBP decision making and leadership in responding to future climate change conditions.

iv) Review Criteria**:**

Address in narrative form each of the review criteria identified in Section V.B of the RFA. Identify by the review criteria number and title followed by your narrative.

With specific respect to the Programmatic Capability Past Performance factor in V.B: 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 five 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.

Appendix B
EPA-R3-CBP-21-08

SAMPLE
(DO NOT SUBMIT WORKSHEET WITH APPLICATION)

CHESAPEAKE BAY PROGRAM ADMINISTRATIVE COST CAP WORKSHEET

INSTRUCTIONS: In accordance with Section 117(d)(4) and 117(e)(6) of the Clean Water Act (CWA), the costs of salaries and fringe benefits incurred in administering a grant under Section 117(d) or 117(e) of the CWA shall not exceed 10 percent of the annual grant award. The annual grant award is the total costs including Federal and cost share amounts. The worksheet below is provided to assist you in calculating allowable administrative costs. The Budget Detail of your Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424) should reflect how your administrative costs will comply with the cap. For specific guidance refer to page 2 of this sample "Compliance with CWA Section 117 Requirements Restricting Administrative Costs."

Total Costs	$ _____
Cap %	X .10
Limit on Administrative Costs	$ (a) _____
List Administrative Costs: (Budgeted costs for application)	
_____	$ _____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
Total	$ (b) _____

Line (b) cannot exceed Line (a).

COMPLIANCE WITH CWA SECTION 117
RESTRICTING ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS

Statutory Authority

Under statutory authority, grantees applying for Chesapeake Bay Program grants/cooperative agreements under Section117 (d) or (e) must adhere to the requirement on administrative costs as follows:

Under Section 117(a)(1) Administrative Cost - The term "administrative cost" means the cost of salaries and fringe benefits incurred in administering a grant under this section.

Under Section 117(d)(4) - Administrative Costs. - Administrative costs shall not exceed 10 percent of the annual grant award.

Under Section 117(e)(6) - Administrative Costs. -Administrative costs shall not exceed 10 percent of the annual grant award.

Guidance for Determining Administrative Costs

As determined by EPA/CBPO, the following provides guidance in determining administrative costs for grants/cooperative agreements under Section 117 (d) and (e) of the Clean Water Act.

1. Administrative Costs

Salaries and fringe benefits charged against the project or program element for the sole purpose of administering the grant/cooperative agreements shall not exceed 10% of the annual grant **award (Federal and cost share)**. One hundred percent of the salaries and fringe benefits related to these functions are considered administrative costs. Examples of administrative costs include, but are not limited to:

- preparation and submission of grant applications
- fiscal tracking of grants funds
- maintaining project files
- collection and submission of deliverables

2. Non-administrative Costs

Salaries and fringe benefits related to the implementation of the project or program element of the grant/cooperative agreement are not considered administrative costs. None of the salaries and fringe benefit costs related to these functions shall be considered administrative costs. Example:

- the salaries and fringe benefits for technical staff to conduct work to accomplish specific Bay Program goals as outlined in the program or project elements are not administrative costs.

3. Calculation of Administrative Costs

In order to ensure compliance with this requirement, use the format above or a similar format to calculate the costs and include in the Budget Detail of your Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424).

4. Questions Regarding Administrative Costs

The grantees shall direct questions to the EPA Project Officer who will determine what costs should be included as administrative costs on a case-by-case basis.