

**Notice of Funding Opportunity**

Applications Due: **Friday, April 24, 2026**



**Region 3, Chesapeake Bay Program Office**

# Advisory Committee Coordination Support for the Chesapeake Bay Program Partnership

Funding Opportunity Number: EPA-R3-CBP-26-01



# Contents

1.	Basic Information .....	1
	A. Executive Summary .....	1
	B. Key Information: .....	1
	C. Key Dates: .....	1
	D. Funding Details: .....	1
	E. Agency Contact Information: .....	1
	F. Other Funding Considerations.....	2
2.	Eligibility.....	2
	A. Eligible Applicants.....	2
	(1) Other Eligibility Requirements.....	2
	B. Cost Sharing .....	3
3.	Program Description .....	3
	A. Purpose, Priorities, and Activities.....	3
	B. Program Goals and Objectives.....	8
	C. Statutory Authority.....	8
	D. Funding Type.....	8
4.	Application Contents and Format .....	9
	A. Application Forms .....	9
	B. Project and Budget Narrative Requirements.....	9
	C. Applicants Using Contractors.....	11
	D. Coalition Coverage.....	11
	E. Other Program Specific Application Information.....	11
5.	Submission Requirements and Deadlines.....	12
	A. Submission Dates and Times .....	12
	B. Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) and System for Award Management (SAM.gov) .....	12
	C. Submission Instructions .....	12
	D. Technical Issues with Submission .....	13
	E. Intergovernmental Review .....	13
6.	Application Review Information.....	14
	A. Responsiveness Review .....	14
	B. Review Criteria.....	14
	C. Review and Selection Process.....	17
	D. Risk Review .....	17
7.	Award Notices.....	17
8.	Post-Award Requirements and Administration .....	17
	A. Administrative and National Policy Requirements .....	17
	B. Reporting .....	17
	C. Subaward and Executive Compensation Reporting.....	18

9. Other Information.....	18
A. Additional Provisions for Applicants.....	18

# 1. Basic Information

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

## Region 3, Chesapeake Bay Program Office

### Advisory Committee Coordination Support for the Chesapeake Bay Program Partnership

<https://www.epa.gov/grants/grants-your-region-information-specific-epa-region-3>

#### A. Executive Summary

The Chesapeake Bay Program (CBP) partnership’s four Advisory Committees (Stakeholders’ Advisory Committee; Local Government Advisory Committee; Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee; and Agricultural Advisory Committee) are comprised of appointed and/or elected volunteers who serve as independent advisors to the various CBP partnership committees and teams. These committees serve as liaisons between the CBP partnership and four critical groups: watershed stakeholders, local government leaders, the agricultural industry, and the scientific community. The recipient of this award will coordinate and support the four Advisory Committees to increase representation and engagement of these sectors in the CBP partnership’s restoration and conservation efforts. The targeted audience for this funding opportunity is eligible entities listed below capable of providing logistical, coordination, and programmatic support to these four Advisory Committees.

#### C. Key Dates:

April 24, 2026 11:59 pm ET	Application Submission Deadline
May 2026	Anticipated Notification of Selection
July 2026	Anticipated Award Notification

#### D. Funding Details:

It is anticipated that up to **1 award** will be made under this announcement. The amount of funding is expected to be **up to \$2,450,000**, depending on Agency funding levels, the quality of applications received, agency priorities, and other applicable considerations. Awards funded under this opportunity are expected to have a **5-year** project period.

#### E. Agency Contact Information:

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

Technical Contact: **Autumn Rose, 410-267-5765, [R3\\_CBPO\\_Grants@epa.gov](mailto:R3_CBPO_Grants@epa.gov)**

#### B. Key Information:

**Opportunity Number:**

EPA-R3-CBP-26-01

**Assistance Listing:**

66.466

**Announcement Type:**

Initial

**Funding Available:**

\$2,450,000

**Number of Awards:**

1 Cooperative Agreement

## F. Other Funding Considerations

EPA will award funding incrementally on an annual basis. Funding is not guaranteed beyond year 1. The table below summarizes the estimated funding available for this award throughout the 5-year project period. These annual funding levels are intended as estimates only and include adjustments for cost increases throughout the life of the award. Recipients may propose different funding levels for each project year so long as overall funding request does not exceed the maximum limit of \$2,450,000, which includes up to \$2,175,000 for Activity 1 and \$275,000 for Activity 2.

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Total
Activity 1	\$405,000	\$420,000	\$435,000	\$450,000	\$465,000	\$2,175,000
Activity 2	\$45,000	\$50,000	\$55,000	\$60,000	\$65,000	\$275,000
TOTAL	\$450,000	\$470,000	\$490,000	\$510,000	\$530,000	\$2,450,000

In addition to the funding detailed above in [Section 1.D.](#), EPA may elect to provide in-kind assistance to the selected recipient in the form of workspace at the Chesapeake Bay Program Office in Annapolis, Maryland. EPA in-kind assistance would be in addition to the \$2,450,000 referenced above and would be subject to the match requirements detailed in [Section 2.B.](#) of this NOFO. **Applicants should not budget for EPA in-kind assistance in their application.** EPA will notify the selected applicant of the availability of in-kind workspace in the selection notice and, if requested by the selected applicant, negotiate the level of EPA in-kind assistance to be provided as part of the pre-award process.

## 2. Eligibility

### A. Eligible Applicants

Only these types of organizations may apply:

- [Indian Tribe.](#)
- [State & Local Governments.](#)
- [Institutions of Higher Education \(IHEs\).](#)
- [Nonprofit organizations.](#)

Under Clean Water Act Section 117(d), 33 U.S. Code § 1267(d)(1), funds are available for technical and general assistance grants to nonprofit organizations, State, tribal (federally-recognized) and local governments, colleges, universities, and interstate agencies. "For profit" organizations, federal agencies, and individuals are not eligible applicants.

#### (1) Other Eligibility Requirements

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

All proposed activities included in the application must directly support the Chesapeake Bay watershed, which includes portions of Delaware, Maryland, New York, Pennsylvania, Virginia, and West Virginia, and all of the District of Columbia. Applications may not exclude any portion of the Chesapeake Bay watershed from the service area.

Applications must address Activities 1 and 2, as described in [Section 3](#) below. Applications that do not address both activities will be deemed ineligible.

Applications must not request more than **\$2,450,000**. Of this amount, applications must not request more than \$2,175,000 for Activity 1 and \$275,000 for Activity 2.

Applications must include a minimum **5 percent cost share**.

Applicants may only submit **1 application** under this opportunity. Applicants that submit more than 1 application will be contacted to determine which application to evaluate. The remaining application(s) will be deemed ineligible.

Please see [Section 6](#) for additional threshold criteria.

## **B. Cost Sharing**

Applicants must demonstrate in their proposal how it will meet the cost share requirement to be considered eligible. Selected recipients must comply with [2 CFR 200.306](#) when meeting a cost share requirement. For this NOFO, 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.

The proposed cost share must clearly be documented in the application SF-424, SF-424A, and budget detail. Applicants that fail to meet the minimum 5 percent cost share will be rejected.

Applicants must use the following formula to calculate the minimum cost-share requirement:

1. Amount of EPA funding requested ÷ 95% = 100% of Total Award Budget
2. 100% of Total Award Budget × 5% = Applicant's Minimum Cost Share Amount (must be rounded upward to the next whole dollar)

For example:

$\$2,450,000$  (EPA funding request) ÷ 95% =  $\$2,578,947.37$   
 $\$2,578,947.37 \times 5\% = \$128,947.37$ , which rounds upward to **\$128,948 (minimum cost share)**

For the purposes of this NOFO, EPA has determined that the hours contributed by members of the Chesapeake Bay Program partnership's advisory committees is not an acceptable source of cost share. Although the advisory committees are voluntary in nature, they are a continuous component of the partnership structure that would operate regardless of the entity selected to perform the activities outlined within this NOFO.

## **3. Program Description**

### **A. Purpose, Priorities, and Activities**

The general purpose of the cooperative agreement awarded under this announcement is to provide coordination support for the Chesapeake Bay Program (CBP) partnership's four Advisory Committees.

The [Chesapeake Bay Program](#) (CBP) is a unique regional, state, federal, and local partnership that has directed the restoration and protection of the Chesapeake Bay since 1983. CBP is responsible for supporting the Chesapeake Bay Executive Council (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. The partnership's work is guided by the [Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement](#), which establishes the plan for collaboration across the Bay's political boundaries and establishes goals and outcomes for the restoration of the Bay, its tributaries, and the lands that surround them. Additional information on the partnership's structure, achievements, and commitments can be found at <https://www.chesapeakebay.net/>.

The role of the Advisory Committees is to provide objective, informed, and impartial advice - free from conflicts of interest - on specific issues, policies, or strategies pertaining to the CBP partnership. Advisory Committees are expected to offer knowledge, experience, and insights from diverse fields and fill gaps in knowledge or perspectives that the CBP partnership may lack internally. Advisory Committees are not expected to serve as members of other CBP partnership groups, given their unique role in providing this independent advice to the partnership at the executive levels.

- The [Stakeholders' Advisory Committee](#) (SAC) is charged with responsibility for representing stakeholders of the Chesapeake Bay watershed in the restoration effort, advising the CBP partnership on all aspects of Chesapeake Bay restoration, and advising the CBP partnership, as needed, in the implementation of any agreements signed by the Executive Council. Since 1984, this group has provided a non-governmental perspective on the Chesapeake Bay cleanup effort and on how CBP partnership policies and programs affect residents who live and work in the Chesapeake Bay watershed.
- The [Local Government Advisory Committee](#) (LGAC) was created by the Executive Council through the 1987 Chesapeake Bay Agreement. The LGAC's mission is to share the views and insights of local elected officials with state and federal decision-makers and to enhance the flow of information among local governments about the health and restoration of the Chesapeake Bay watershed. The LGAC, which consists of local elected government officials, advises the CBP partnership as it relates to increasing local government involvement in the implementation of actions to restore and protect the Chesapeake Bay and meet the outcomes of the *Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement*.
- The [Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee](#) (STAC) provides scientific and technical guidance to the CBP partnership on measures to restore and protect the Chesapeake Bay. Since its creation in December 1984, STAC has worked to enhance scientific communication and outreach throughout the Chesapeake Bay watershed and beyond. STAC provides independent scientific and technical advice in various ways, including (1) technical reports and position papers, (2) discussion groups, (3) assistance in organizing merit reviews of CBP partnership programs and projects, and (4) technical workshops.
- The [Agricultural Advisory Committee](#) (AAC) was created by the Executive Council through a directive signed on December 10, 2024. The AAC advises the CBP partnership committees and teams on strategies and opportunities for agricultural operations to more effectively meet the Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement's restoration and conservation goals. Consisting of rural and urban farmers, agribusiness representatives, and technical professionals who help farmers fund and implement conservation practices, the AAC is a voice for producers and industry. The AAC focuses on high-level policy issues, ensuring its scope complements, but does not overlap, the technical work conducted by other groups within the CBP partnership.

While the CBP partnership is comprised of federal and non-federal organizations, any activities funded under this NOFO shall only directly support the non-federal partners. The recipient of the cooperative agreement awarded under this NOFO may work directly with federal agencies, but the nature of that work will result only in direct benefits to the non-federal agencies, partners, and the public.

### **Program Priorities and Activities**

Applicants must propose a plan for supporting the needs and priorities of the CBP partnership's four advisory committees through the following activities:

- Provide high-quality coordination support to the four advisory committees; and
- Provide logistical support for STAC's scientific research priorities.

If your organization has an interest and the experience to accomplish the activities described below and is eligible to receive a federal assistance agreement as described in [Section 2](#) of this NOFO, we encourage you to apply. Each eligible application will be evaluated using the criteria described in [Section 6](#). Applicants must address each activity below in their application to be considered eligible.

#### **Activity 1: Provide high-quality coordination support to the four advisory committees**

**Funding:** Up to \$405,000 for year one and \$2,175,000 for the five-year project period.

Each Advisory Committee convenes regularly to discuss restoration and conservation priorities, policies, and initiatives that are relevant to both the CBP partnership as well as to their respective programmatic areas. Advisory Committees provide a critical service as independent advisors to the partnership through the development and submission of their annual recommendations to the Chesapeake Executive Council, as well as leading scientific and technical analyses, workshops, and peer reviews. Providing coordination, administrative management, and logistical support for these four Committees is essential for these activities to occur.

EPA will work with signatories and other CBP partners to establish an annual charge that identifies partnership priorities to which each Advisory Committee should focus activities. Each year, Advisory Committees will issue an annual report to the executive levels of the CBP partnership that details advice and recommendations based on the charge. The successful applicant will be expected to work in close collaboration with the EPA project officer to implement and ensure alignment of funding to the annual charge.

Advisory committee members are expected to be free of conflicts of interest. The successful applicant will coordinate with the EPA project officer to review all potential discretionary advisory committee members to ensure suitability and avoid potential conflicts of interest.

Examples of activities applicants may propose to fulfill the requirements of this activity include, but are not limited to:

- Serving as the administrator(s) for the four Advisory Committees, which includes arranging quarterly meetings (one of which will be an annual in-person meeting per Advisory Committee), facilitating information-sharing amongst members and their constituencies, and coordinating efforts with the CBP partnership committees and teams. Organizing quarterly meetings for each of the four Advisory Committees that address strategic policy topics that relate to implementation of Chesapeake Bay restoration and conservation goals and their respective annual charges. Convening ad-hoc meetings as needed.

- Developing reports and talking points for the chairs of the Advisory Committees to advise the Executive Council at their annual meeting.
- Responding to requests for support from the Executive Council and PSC.
- Advising the CBP partnership committees and teams to help the CBP partnership meet its goals, mandates, and agreements.
- Working with governors' offices (or mayor's office for the District of Columbia) to develop and maintain an active and engaged membership who represent communities in the Chesapeake Bay watershed.
- Reviewing and recommending updates of Advisory Committees' bylaws, in coordination with the EPA project officer, as needed and as determined by the committees and/or based on revisions that may be required because of changing circumstances.
- Assisting each Advisory Committee with development of an annual report detailing advice and recommendations based on their respective annual charges.

Funding for Activity 1 is subject to the following limitations:

- Applicants may budget personnel and fringe up to \$250,000 for year 1 for two coordinator positions to support the four Advisory Committees. Applicants may budget cost of living increases for the two coordinator positions for years 2-5 so long as overall funding for Activity 1 is within allowable limits.
- Additional administrative support will be provided through the staffer program, which is currently administered by the Chesapeake Research Consortium. Applicants should not budget additional personnel costs for this staffer support.
- Funding for annual, in-person Advisory Council meetings may not exceed \$20,000 per Advisory Committee per year (\$80,000 total per year). In addition to the \$20,000, funding for each annual, in-person meeting may include per diem costs for up to 18 discretionary members per Advisory Committee not to exceed federal per diem rates.

**Activity 2: Provide logistical support for STAC's scientific research priorities**

**Funding:** Up to \$45,000 for year 1 and \$275,000 for the five-year project period.

STAC provides independent, scientific insights and recommendations to the CBP partnership that often drives the establishment of scientific research priorities and policies. Additionally, STAC conducts technical analyses and leads peer reviews of CBP partnership procedures and products (e.g., modeling tools) and convenes workshops on scientific issues pertinent to advancing the goals and outcomes under the *Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement*. Providing coordination, administrative management, and logistical support for this work is essential for these activities to occur.

Examples of activities applicants may propose to fulfill the requirements of this activity include, but are not limited to:

- Providing a full range of administrative and logistical support to STAC in scheduling and conducting up to three technical workshops (per year), scientific and technical conferences, workgroups, task forces, evaluations, and independent scientific peer reviews. This includes assisting in the development, review, and publication of proceedings of each of these forums.
- Supporting STAC's preparation of scientific and technical reports, papers, and syntheses of scientific literature on management-relevant topics.

- Helping organize and provide administrative oversight and logistical support requested by the CBP partnership regarding independent, scientific peer reviews of reports, models, and monitoring programs following established STAC-peer-review procedures.
- Assisting in the identification and dissemination of scientific research priorities for supporting implementation of the goals and outcomes of the *Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement* and the supporting management strategies and work plans.

Funding for this activity is estimated to include \$30,000 in support of STAC workshops and \$15,000 for technical reviews for year 1. The priorities and activities to which funding is directed are expected to vary each year based on STAC priorities and the annual charge from the executive levels of the CBP partnership. The EPA project officer will work in close coordination with the award recipient to ensure funding for Activity 2 is directed to meet key priorities each year.

### **Results**

Applicants are required to describe how funding will help the CBP partnership achieve outputs and outcomes in their responses to the criteria in [Section 6](#). Outputs and outcomes specific to each project will be identified as deliverables in the negotiated workplan if the application is selected for award. Recipients will be expected to report progress toward the attainment of expected project outputs and outcomes during the project performance period. Outputs and outcomes are defined as follows:

Outputs are an environmental activity, effort, and/or associated work product related to an environmental goal or objective that will be produced or provided over time or by a specified date. Outputs may be quantitative or qualitative but must be measurable during the project period. The expected outputs for the grant awarded under these guidelines may include but are not limited to:

- # of advisory committee meetings coordinated annually.
- # of annual recommendations reports prepared and submitted to the Executive Council in advance of their annual meeting.
- # of annual recommendations as part of the annual report that result in implemented policy or process by the executive levels of the CBP partnership.
- # of advisory committee members applicants reviewed for suitability.
- # of STAC-sponsored workshop and conference proceedings published within six months of the original date of the workshop/conference.
- # of STAC-sponsored independent scientific peer review reports published within two months of the original date of the conclusion of the peer review panel.

Outcomes are the result, effect, or consequence that will occur from carrying out the activities under the grant. Outcomes may be environmental, behavioral, health-related, or programmatic; must be qualitative or quantitative; and may not necessarily be achievable during the project period. EPA anticipates the outcomes of this award may include but are not limited to:

- Supporting the executive levels of the CBP partnership with a structured annual advisory committee charge, as well as reports and recommendations that support the policy and science needs of partnership signatories.
- Increased ability of the CBP partnership to make collaborative decisions needed to carry out the work required to meet the goals and outcomes of the *Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement*.
- Increased knowledge and strategies to improve local economic, human health, and environmental goals.

- Increased interaction and information transfer between local government officials and other stakeholders leading to greater engagement in Chesapeake Bay restoration efforts.

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

## **B. Program Goals and Objectives**

The activities to be funded under this funding announcement support *Pillar 1: Clean Air, Land, and Water for Every American* and *Pillar 3: Permitting Reform, Cooperative Federalism, and Cross-Agency Partnership* of [Administrator Zeldin's Five Pillars](#).

This Notice of Funding Opportunity is being offered under Assistance Listing 66.466.

The goal of the CBP partnership is to protect and restore the Chesapeake Bay ecosystem and its living resources. This funding is intended to support achievement of the goals and outcomes of the *Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement* through coordination of the partnership's four Advisory Committees, which serve as critical liaisons between the partnership and stakeholder groups throughout the watershed.

## **C. Statutory Authority**

EPA has authority to award grants and cooperative agreements for the purposes of carrying out the Chesapeake Bay Program and its efforts to restore and protect the Chesapeake Bay ecosystem and its living resources. The statutory authority that authorizes the activities under the NOFO is contained in Clean Water Act Section 117(d), 33 U.S. Code § 1267 (d).

## **D. Funding Type**

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

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

- Reviewing and commenting on the programmatic progress reports.
- Semi-annual meetings between the recipient and the EPA Project Officer or their delegate to discuss project progress.
- Monitoring of the project expenditures to ensure cost effectiveness and that funding is best directed to meet priorities as partnership needs change over time.
- Close monitoring of the successful applicant's performance to verify the results proposed by the applicant.
- In accordance with [2 CFR 200.317](#) and [2 CFR 200.318](#), review of proposed procurement;
- Collaboration during performance of the scope of work.
- Review and comment on reports prepared under the cooperative agreement (the final decision on the content of reports rests with the recipient).

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

## 4. Application Contents and Format

### A. Application Forms

The following forms and documents are required under this announcement:

***Mandatory Documents:***

1. Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424)
2. Budget Information for Non-Construction Programs (SF-424A)
3. EPA Key Contacts Form 5700-54
4. EPA Form 4700-4 Preaward Compliance Review Report: [Tips for Completing EPA Form 4700-4](#), Preaward Compliance Review Report for All Applicants and Recipients Requesting Federal Financial Assistance
5. Project Narrative Attachment Form: See requirements below
6. Budget Narrative Attachment Form: See requirements below

***Optional Documents:***

7. Indirect Cost Rate Agreement, if applicable. For more information, see [Indirect Cost Policy and Guidance for Recipients of EPA Assistance Agreements](#).

### B. Project and Budget Narrative Requirements

**Project Narrative Attachment**

The project narrative must not exceed **20 single-spaced pages** and be on letter size pages (8 ½ X 11 inches) with margins of no less than 1-inch. Font size may be no smaller than 10. Applicants are advised that readability is of paramount importance and should take precedence in application format, including selecting a legible font type and size for use in the application. Excess pages will not be reviewed. Applicants are encouraged to be concise and do not need to use all the pages within the page limit.

The project narrative must follow the below format. All contents of the project narrative (Sections 1-3) must be submitted as one attachment. Please do not zip the file or use a zip extension for your attachment because it will not be accepted. Any additional attachments submitted with the application will not be reviewed.

**Section 1: Executive Summary**

The Executive Summary must include the below elements:

- Funding Opportunity Number: The NOFO number is EPA-R3-CBP-26-01.
- Project Title: Please limit to 60 characters. EPA reserves the right to change the project title for its administrative convenience.
- Application Contact Information: Include the name, title, email, and phone number for the primary contact for the application.
- Amount of EPA Funds Requested: Identify the total dollar amount requested from EPA.
- Proposed Cost Share: Identify the total proposed cost share.
- Organization Description: Briefly describe your organization and how your organization meets the eligibility requirements detailed in [Section 2.A.](#).

- Brief Project Description: In 200 words or less, summarize the proposed project plan in a clear, succinct manner using plain language.

## **Section 2: Project Plan**

The project plan must explicitly describe how the project meets the guidelines established in Section 1-3 of this NOFO and must address each evaluation criteria set forth in [Section 6](#). The structure must follow the format below. Details for how EPA will score each application, including associated point values, are described in [Section 6.B.](#) of the NOFO.

- a. Project Scope and Approach
  - Project Summary and Design
  - Collaboration and Coordination
  - Seamless Transition
- b. Results
  - Outputs and Outcomes
  - Transferability of Results
- c. Programmatic Capability and Past Performance
  - Past Performance Managing Agreements
  - Staff Expertise
- d. Budget and Internal Controls
  - Reasonability of Proposed Budget
  - Timely Expenditure of Grant Funds

## **Section 3: Supplemental Information and Support Documentation (*optional*)**

This section should include any supplemental information and/or documentation the recipient elects to provide to support their application, including but not limited to:

- maps, diagrams, and other figures;
- curriculum vitae for the Principal Investigator and other project staff;
- references;
- letters of support; and
- letters of commitment to the project or to contribute to cost sharing.

All supplemental information and documentation must be fully incorporated into the Project Narrative Attachment submitted with the application. EPA will not review supplemental information and support documents submitted as a separate attachment.

## **Budget Narrative Attachment**

For each year of the project, provide a budget breakdown that details proposed costs for each of the major budget categories presented in the application SF-424A:

- Personnel
- Fringe benefits
- Travel
- Equipment
- Supplies
- Contractual costs
- Construction
- Other costs

- Indirect costs

The budget narrative must address the total estimated project funding, including both the federal share and cost share. All budget information must be presented in **whole dollar format** (no cents). The contents of the budget narrative may be organized in a spreadsheet or presented as a written narrative, at the applicant's discretion, so long as the budget narrative, when printed, does not exceed **5 pages**.

Additional guidance regarding budget development, including a sample Budget Narrative, is available at [Interim General Budget Development Guidance for Applicants and Recipients of EPA Financial Assistance](#). The Chesapeake Bay Program also provides an optional multi-year budget detail template in its [Chesapeake Bay Program Grant Guidance](#).

## C. Applicants Using Contractors

Applicants must compete contracts for services and products, including consultant contracts, and conduct cost and price analyses, to the extent required by the [procurement provisions](#) of the regulations at 2 CFR Part 200.

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

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

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

## D. Coalition Coverage

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

## E. Other Program Specific Application Information

### Administrative Cost Cap

Recipients of Chesapeake Bay Program assistance agreements must adhere to the requirement for "Administrative Costs" under CWA 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. Administrative costs are

distinct from and should not be confused with indirect costs. Under CWA Section 117(a)(1), the term “administrative cost” means the cost of salaries and fringe benefits incurred in administering a grant under this section.

Salaries and fringe benefits charged against the project or program element for the sole purpose of administering the grant/cooperative agreement shall not exceed 10% of the annual grant award (federal and cost share). 100% 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, and collection and submission of deliverables.

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

## 5. Submission Requirements and Deadlines

### A. Submission Dates and Times

April 24, 2026 11:59 pm ET                      Application Submission Deadline

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

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

#### SAM.gov

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

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

#### Grants.gov

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

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

### C. Submission Instructions

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

Important tips:

- To begin the application process under this grant announcement, go to Grants.gov and click the red “Apply” button at the top of the view grant opportunity page associated with this opportunity.
- See the Quick Start Guide for Applicants for instructions on how to submit.
- Make sure your application passes the Grants.gov validation checks.
- Do not encrypt, zip, or password protect any files.
- Your application must be submitted by an official representative of your organization who is registered with Grants.gov and is authorized to sign applications for Federal financial assistance.
- If you receive an error or the button is grayed out, it may be because you do not have the appropriate role to submit in your organization. Contact your organization’s EBiz point of contact or contact Grants.gov for assistance at 1-800-518-4726 or [support@grants.gov](mailto:support@grants.gov).
- See Grants.gov Errors for information on other Grants.gov errors.
- The UEI listed on the application must be registered to the applicant organization's SAM.gov account. If not, the application may be deemed ineligible.

## D. Technical Issues with Submission

If applicants experience technical issues during the submission of an application that they are unable to resolve, follow these procedures **before** the application deadline date:

- Contact Grants.gov Support Center before the application deadline date.
- Document the Grants.gov ticket/case number.
- Send an email with Funding Opportunity Number (FON):EPA-R3-CBP-26-01 in the subject line to [R3\\_CBPO\\_Grants@epa.gov](mailto:R3_CBPO_Grants@epa.gov) before the application deadline time and date and must include the following:
  - Grants.gov ticket/case number(s)
  - Description of the issue
  - The entire application package in PDF format.

Without this information, the EPA may not be able to consider applications submitted outside of Grants.gov. Any application submitted after the application deadline time and date deadline will be deemed ineligible and **not** be considered.

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

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

## E. Intergovernmental Review

The application is not subject to Intergovernmental Review.

## 6. Application Review Information

### A. Responsiveness Review

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

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

### B. Review Criteria

Criteria Name and Description	Points
<p><b>a) Project Scope and Approach</b></p> <p><b>i. Project Summary and Design (20 points)</b>            Applicants will be evaluated based on the effectiveness of the project design to meet partnership needs and project milestones over the 5-year project period and achieve the expected results.</p> <p>Within the Project Narrative, applicants should provide:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A clear description of what work will be done, by whom, how, and when it will be accomplished; and</li> <li>• A milestones table with significant achievements, expected deliverables, and dates.</li> </ul> <p><b>ii. Collaboration and Coordination (10 points)</b>            Applicants will be evaluated based on the demonstrated ability to successfully organize, coordinate, and facilitate meetings, conferences, workgroups, and other forums that require multi-partner participation and engagement; to synthesize scientific literature and reports; and to provide administrative oversight and logistical support to management teams. Applicants will also be evaluated on the plan for coordinating and collaborating with CBP partners to ensure the project is effectively meeting needs as they change over time.</p> <p><b>iii. Seamless Transition (10 points)</b></p>	<p><b>40</b></p>

<p>Applicants will be evaluated based on how well they can become fully functional in the roles described in the announcement once a cooperative agreement is awarded and how the applicant will bring about a “seamless” transition in the provision of the described support to the CBP partnership and its management structure. This may include description of a transition plan, outlining specific steps, timelines, and responsible parties to ensure a seamless transition.</p>	
<p><b>b) Results</b></p> <p><b>i. Outputs and Outcomes (7 points)</b>  Applicants will be evaluated on the extent to which the application includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• clearly defined, measurable outputs and outcomes,</li> <li>• a reasonable timeline for achieving results, and</li> <li>• an effective plan for tracking progress toward achieving the expected outputs and outcomes.</li> </ul> <p><b>ii. Transferability of Results (8 points)</b>  Applicants will be evaluated based upon the degree to which the application includes an adequate plan to gather information and lessons learned from the project <u>and</u> transfer the results (documentation, information, data, and recommendations) to CBP partners and stakeholders across the Chesapeake Bay watershed in a timely manner.</p>	<p><b>15</b></p>
<p><b>c) Programmatic Capability and Past Performance</b></p> <p>Applicants should submit a list of no more than 5 assistance agreements (including but not limited to previous awards from EPA or other federal sources) similar in size, scope, and relevance to the proposed project that the applicant and the applicant’s institution have previously performed. Information provided will be evaluated according to the criteria listed within this section.</p> <p>The EPA will consider the information provided by the applicant under items (i) and (ii) of this criterion and may 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 past reporting information, 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 possible points). If you do not provide any response for these items, you may receive a score of 0 for these factors.</p> <p><b>i. Past Performance Managing Agreements (8 points)</b>  Applicants will be evaluated based on past performance in completing and managing the identified assistance agreements in accordance</p>	<p><b>20</b></p>

<p>with the initial project schedule, including whether the applicant successfully achieved the project objectives.</p> <p><b>ii. Staff Expertise (12 points)</b>  Applicants will be evaluated based on staff expertise/qualifications, staff knowledge, and resources or the ability to obtain them, to successfully achieve the goals of the proposed project. This will include consideration for how well the applicant demonstrates expertise in meeting coordination and facilitation, strategic written and verbal communications, scientific and technical analyses and syntheses, and stakeholder management and engagement.</p>	
<p><b>d) Budget and Internal Controls</b></p> <p><b>i. Reasonability of Proposed Budget (20 points)</b>  Applicants will be evaluated based on the effectiveness of the proposed budget to meet project milestones over the five-year project period and achieve the expected results, as well as the reasonableness, necessity and allowability of proposed costs. In evaluating these factors, reviewers will consider the overall budget breakdown, including overhead costs, and the applicant’s responses to the below Project Narrative elements.</p> <p>Within the Project Narrative, applicants should provide:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A summary of the applicant’s strategy for budgeting costs (federal and cost share) to meet project milestones over the five-year project period and achieve expected results.</li> <li>• A description of the applicant’s approach to continual monitoring of project costs and controls that are in place to ensure cost-effectiveness.</li> <li>• To the extent possible, a description of the sources of funding that will be used to meet the minimum 5 percent cost share requirement.</li> </ul> <p><b>ii. Timely Expenditure of Grant Funds (5 points)</b>  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.</p>	<p><b>25</b></p>

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

Only eligible entities whose applications meet the threshold criteria in [Section 2](#) of this announcement will be evaluated. **Applicants should explicitly address these criteria as part of their application package submittal in the project narrative.** Each application will be rated using a point system. Applications will be evaluated based on a total of 100 possible points.

## C. Review and Selection Process

Following close of the application deadline, applications received will be evaluated against the threshold eligibility criteria listed in [Section 2](#). Those applications that fully meet the threshold eligibility criteria will then be evaluated and scored by a review panel consisting of subject matter experts with relevant technical expertise and an understanding of the operational needs of Chesapeake Bay Program partnership against the evaluation criteria listed above. Following scoring, the review team will forward the highest-ranked applications and recommendations to the selection official for final selection. In making the final funding decision, the selection official will consider the review panel ranking results and recommendations, as well as program and agency goals and priorities.

## D. Risk Review

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

# 7. Award Notices

The EPA anticipates notification to successful applicants will be made by Autumn Rose, CBPO Grants Team Lead. The notification will be sent to the original signer of the application or the project contact listed in the application. This notification is not an authorization to begin work. The official notification of an award will be made by the EPA Region 3 Grants Management Office. Selection does not guarantee an award will be made. Statutory authorization, funding, or other issues during the award process may affect the ability of the EPA to make an award. The award notice, signed by an EPA grants officer, is the authorizing document and will be provided through electronic or postal mail. The successful applicant may need to prepare and submit additional documents and forms, which must be approved by the EPA, before the grant can officially be awarded. The time between notification of selection and award of a grant can take up to 90 days or longer.

# 8. Post-Award Requirements and Administration

## A. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

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

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

## B. Reporting

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

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

- How to submit them.

### **C. Subaward and Executive Compensation Reporting**

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

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

## **9. Other Information**

### **A. Additional Provisions for Applicants**

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