

United States Geological Survey

Groundwater and Streamflow Information Program, National Ground-Water Monitoring
Network

<https://cida.usgs.gov/ngwmn/cooperativeagreements.jsp>



Notice of Funding Opportunity - Fiscal Year 2025
Funding Opportunity Number (FON) G25AS00001

Closing Date: 01/16/2025

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A. Program Description

A1. Authority

The Groundwater and Streamflow Information Program of the USGS is offering a cooperative agreement funding opportunity to state or local water-resources agencies that collect groundwater data to participate in the National Ground-Water Monitoring Network. The USGS is working to develop and administer the National Ground-Water Monitoring Network (NGWMN). This funding opportunity is to support data providers for the National Ground-Water Monitoring Network.

Legal authority for this opportunity is provided under Public Law 111-11, Subtitle F—Secure Water: Section 9507 “Water Data Enhancement by the United States Geological Survey.” Funds will be used to support connecting new data providers to the Network and to support existing data providers to maintain persistent data service and to enhance the NGWMN.

The funding available for this Program Announcement is expected to be up to \$1,700,000 for Federal FY2025. This estimate does not bind the USGS to a specific number of awards or to the amount of any individual award. Congress has not yet authorized FY2025 funds for the National Ground-Water Monitoring Network, so awards cannot be made until this funding is appropriated. Work performance under these awards must be completed within the two-year cycle from the start date. The timing of funds availability and the signing of the award will determine the start date. Individual applications are restricted to a funding level of \$150,000 for a one-year project or \$300,000 for a two-year project. Funding for routine work under Objective 2A to maintain persistent data services is limited to \$20,000 per year. However, agencies serving more than 500 sites can apply for up to \$40,000 per year for Objective 2A work. Substantial involvement of the USGS is anticipated to provide support to new data providers during the site selection and classification process and to establish web services that interact with the NGWMN Data Portal. The USGS also will provide guidance to existing data providers on techniques for collection of site information, on well maintenance activities, and on well drilling to support development of the NGWMN. Therefore, these awards will be in the form of cooperative agreements.

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number
15.980

A2. Background, Purpose and Program Requirements

Background

The National Ground-Water Monitoring Network (NGWMN) is designed to be a compilation of selected wells and springs from existing monitoring efforts to create a network to assess long-term water-level and water-quality trends at a national scale. The National Ground-Water Monitoring Network is presented in the document ‘A National Framework for Ground-Water Monitoring in the United States’ and is available at:

https://cida.usgs.gov/ngwmn/doc/ngwmn_framework_report_july2013.pdf. The Network focuses on monitoring groundwater in the Nation’s most productive aquifers. The Network is designed primarily to help answer questions of groundwater availability at a principal or major aquifer scale. The NGWMN focuses on serving data at actively monitored sites to help answer current groundwater availability questions. To create a unified network, field and data management techniques need to be as consistent as possible and sites need to be selected and classified in a common manner. In addition, site density in the Network should be consistent at the [principal and major aquifer](#) scale. This [spreadsheet](#) has the recommended well densities for each state and principal aquifer.

The NGWMN serves data from the data providers’ databases. To accomplish this, the data providers must set up and maintain persistent web services for their databases. The data elements from these web services are mapped to the Portal elements so that data can be retrieved to answer questions at a regional scale that crosses data provider boundaries.

The focus of the Network is on long-term data collected at a sufficient frequency to determine seasonal and long-term effects. Water-level and water-quality data from both wells and springs are included in the NGWMN. The NGWMN allows water managers to share their water-level and water-quality monitoring data to help monitor current conditions and avoid future water conflicts that may result from changes in the environment.

Network Policies, Standards and Procedures

The requirements for the National Ground-Water Monitoring Network are described in the National Ground-Water Management Framework Document, which is available online at: https://cida.usgs.gov/ngwmn/doc/ngwmn_framework_report_july2013.pdf.

“Tip Sheets” are available to provide guidance related to the NGWMN and can be found at: <https://cida.usgs.gov/ngwmn/learnmore.jsp> under the ‘Data Provider’ tab. The tip sheets are a quick reference for data providers on the following topics:

[Well Selection Criteria for Water Levels](#)

[Well Selection Criteria for Water Quality](#)

[Defining the Subnetwork](#)

[Defining Monitoring Categories](#)

[Populating the NGWMN Monitoring Location Registry](#)

[Minimum Data Requirements for Candidate sites](#)

[Web Service Development](#)

Water-Quality Web Services

These tip sheets should be used as guidance during all projects. For new data provider projects, they contain information on well selection and classification, minimum requirements for NGWMN sites, adding sites to the NGWMN, and guidelines on web services. For projects with existing data providers, they contain information on density guidelines and criteria for NGWMN sites.

Both Well Selection tip sheets reference a spreadsheet that lists well densities for the NGWMN by Principal Aquifer and State. Applicants should consult this [spreadsheet](#) before they propose adding new wells to the NGWMN or drilling new wells to enhance the Network.

Objectives

The NGWMN is providing financial support for six objectives described in this section. The type of work supported under each objective is described in this section. The requirements that need to be included in the proposal for each objective are described in section D2 of this program announcement. Proposed work outside these objectives will not be funded.

If an agency is applying as a new data provider, then the ‘Support to become a new data provider’ objective must be completed before work can begin on any other objectives. During the second year of a new data provider project, the applicant can propose work under Objectives 2 and 3 that begins once the Objective 1 work is planned to be completed. New data provider proposals may not propose work under Objectives 4, 5, or 6.

Water-level monitoring or water-quality data collection is not supported under any objective. Purchase of monitoring equipment or supplies is limited to continuous water-level monitoring equipment under Objectives 5 or 6. Purchase of downhole cameras, geophysical logging equipment, or GPS equipment is not supported under any objective. However, reasonable costs for renting equipment while it is used for work on NGWMN sites is allowed. Costs to purchase these items may be used as agency in-kind services.

In-kind services are not required for work proposed under Objectives 1, 2, or 3. Work under Objectives 1 and 2 is designated as work to support the NGWMN. Work under Objectives 3-6 is designated as work to enhance the NGWMN. Applicants applying for work to enhance the network under Objectives 3-6 are encouraged to either have an active Persistent Data Services project or apply for one as part of the proposal. Work under Objectives 3-6 can only be funded if data is flowing to the NGWMN.

Objective 1: Support to become a new data provider

This objective provides funding to perform work necessary to become a data provider to the NGWMN. The agency will select and classify sites from their existing networks for inclusion in the NGWMN. They will provide data from agency databases to the NGWMN Portal by creating new web services or repurposing existing web services. They will document field and data

management practices specific to their agency so that users of the NGWMN data have information on the quality of data from the varied sources. A brief report summarizing the work to become a new data provider is required.

Ideally, work to become a new data provider would be completed in year one of a two-year project but may continue into a second year if necessary. Note that no other objectives may be initiated on the project until the ‘Support to become a new data provider’ objective is complete.

Web services established in this objective are how agency data are shared with the NGWMN Data Portal. Guidance for setting up the web services is available in the [Web Service Development](#) tip sheet. The web services must return the minimum data elements as described in the [Minimum Data Elements Tip Sheet](#). The service must return the data in XML format. We encourage, but do not require the use of data standards for the XML web services that are established. These include: [WaterML2](#) for water-levels, [GWML2](#) for lithology and construction information, and [WQX](#) for water quality data.

For water-level network sites, separate web services are required to serve water-level, well-construction, and lithology data.

For water-quality network sites, water-quality data can be provided by either setting up new web services or by making the data available through the [USEPA's Water Quality Exchange](#). New data providers are encouraged to provide data through the Water Quality Exchange as this makes the data available to the NWQMC [Water-Quality Data Portal](#), which can be used to provide the data to the NGWMN. If web services are used to serve the water-quality data instead, they should follow the guidelines in the [Water-Quality Web Services Tip Sheet](#) and use of the WQX standard is encouraged. In either case, separate web services are required for water-level, well construction, lithology, and water-quality data (if not provided through the USEPA Water Quality Exchange).

If using USEPA's Water Quality Exchange, data providers would need to regularly upload their data to ensure that recent data are available.

During the site selection and classification portion of the project, providers may identify sites that would be beneficial to the NGWMN but are missing some required data elements. These sites can be added to the NGWMN Monitoring Location Registry but should not yet be displayed on the Portal (Display Flag set to ‘N’). These sites will then be eligible for funding under Objective 3 to fill the site information gaps. If all sites have missing data elements, work to fill those gaps for selected wells may be proposed under Objective 3 in a project to become a new data provider. This gap filling work would be done in year two of a new data provider project.

Software purchases or license fees to support delivery of NGWMN data via web services are supported. However, software purchases or license fees related to storage of agency data, routine processing, and/or quality assurance of data are not supported.

Travel costs are not supported for work under Objective 1.

Objective 2: Support persistent data service from existing data providers

This objective provides funding to perform activities necessary to maintain persistent data services from agency databases to the NGWMN Portal and to support work to add new sites to the network and upgrade or improve web services. Work under this objective can consist of two parts that will require separate budgets and workplans and will be evaluated separately.

Part 2A: Work under Part 2A is to support data providers to keep the sites and information in the NGWMN current and to maintain the database connections (web services) to the NGWMN Data Portal. In most cases, support for this work is limited to a maximum of \$20,000 per year. Agencies that serve more than 500 sites to the NGWMN may request additional funding above this level to accommodate the additional sites. This additional funding must be explained and justified in the work plan and cannot exceed \$40,000 per year.

Activities supported under Objective 2A are:

- Maintain web services that provide data to the portal
- Fix issues with the services so that data continues to flow to the NGWMN Data Portal
- Verify that data is flowing to the NGWMN Data Portal at least once every three months
- Keep the list of sites in the NGWMN Monitoring Location Registry up to date
 - Remove sites that are no longer active
 - Add new replacement sites to the NGWMN
 - Resolve issues with duplication of NGWMN sites
- Expand the number of sites in the NGWMN. This may include selecting sites for a Principal Aquifer that was not part of the data provider's original project. This can support selecting and classifying the new sites and adding the sites to the NGWMN Monitoring Location Registry. Adding less than 20 new sites to the NGWMN must be done under Objective 2A. Expansion of sites under Objective 2B should be for 20 or more new sites
- Keep metadata for NGWMN sites in the NGWMN Monitoring Location Registry up to date
- Provide updates to the NGWMN Data Provider page

Part 2B: Work supported under Part 2B allows agencies to apply for funding to support additional work described below. There is no funding limit on this additional work beyond the annual and project limits (\$150,000 for a one-year project or \$300,000 for a two-year project). This additional work may include:

- Upgrade web services in conjunction with major agency database upgrades
- Add new fields to existing services that have recently been requested by the NGWMN Portal staff
- Upgrade existing services to provide data using established XML data standards (WaterML2, GWML, or WQX)
- Modify existing water-quality services to meet guidelines in the [Water-Quality Web Services](#) Tip Sheet

- Modify existing databases to store fields required as Minimum Data Elements by the NGWMN and modify existing web services to serve these new fields
- Expand web services. This can include adding new web services that were not originally set up when the agency became a data provider. For example, an agency that currently provides only water-level data could use this objective to add a web service to serve water-quality data
- Expand the number of sites in the NGWMN. This may include selecting sites for a Principal Aquifer that was not part of the data provider's original project. This can support selecting and classifying the new sites and adding the sites to the NGWMN Monitoring Location Registry. Adding less than 20 new sites to the NGWMN must be done under Objective 2A. Expansion of sites under Objective 2B should be for 20 or more new sites

Software purchases and license fees to support delivery of NGWMN data via web services are supported. However, software purchases or license fees related to storage of agency data or routine processing of data are not supported. Quality assurance of routinely collected data is not supported.

Travel costs are not supported for work under Objective 2.

Objective 3: Filling gaps in information at NGWMN sites

This objective provides funding to perform work necessary to fill metadata gaps in the required data elements listed in the NGWMN [Minimum Data Requirements](#) tip sheet. The work may include data entry from available sources or field data collection efforts that fill metadata gaps.

For existing data providers, work to fill site information gaps can only be proposed for sites that are in the NGWMN Monitoring Location Registry on the closing date of the funding opportunity. A table of sites for which work is proposed must be included in the proposal and should include the NGWMN ID for each site.

New data providers can propose work for year two of a two-year proposal that they know will need to be done at all sites prior to entry into the NGWMN. The specific sites do not need to be listed, since they have not been selected yet.

Examples of supported site information gap-filling activities include:

- Data collection to fill metadata gaps
 - Sounding wells to determine depth
 - Well logging to determine well construction details including screen intervals, casing diameter and depth, etc. Logging can include downhole camera surveys
 - Well logging to determine lithology
 - GPS or leveling of land surface altitude and/or measuring points at wells or springs
 - GPS update of latitude/longitude at wells or springs

- Entry of all applicable data collected under this objective into agency databases and the NGWMN Monitoring Location Registry
- Data entry to fill metadata or NGWMN data gaps
 - Entry of lithologic data from paper files
 - Entry of well construction data from paper files
 - Entry of historical water-level or water-quality data for NGWMN sites into current agency databases

Data collection techniques and quality assurance methods for data collected under this objective should be described in the Data Management Plan submitted with the proposal.

Reasonable equipment rental and travel costs are allowed. Software purchases to analyze data collected during the project are supported.

Objective 4: Site maintenance

This objective provides funding to perform maintenance work on wells or springs in the NGWMN to ensure that data are of high quality. The work may include well redevelopment, well rehabilitation or repair, periodic pumping to ensure connection to the aquifer, or aquifer/slug testing of the well to quantify aquifer connection. Other maintenance activities can include replacing shelters, installing protective casing, or installing fencing to protect the site. Work that helps ensure the quality of the data or helps protect the site so that data may be collected will be considered under this objective.

Site maintenance tasks can only be done at sites that are in the NGWMN Monitoring Location Registry on the closing date of the funding opportunity. A table and map of sites for which work is proposed must be included in the proposal.

Landscaping or brush clearing to improve site access is not supported under this objective. Construction of pathways to improve site access is also not allowed.

Examples of supported site maintenance activities include:

- Well redevelopment
- Periodic pumping of observation wells to assess/maintain connection to aquifer
- Well-integrity testing
- Borehole camera investigations to determine site status
- Well rehabilitation or repair
- Well shelter replacement or repair
- Installation of protective surface casing at wells
- Fencing or other measures to secure the site

Data collection techniques and quality assurance methods for data collected under this objective should be described in the Data Management Plan submitted with the proposal.

Reasonable equipment rental and travel costs are allowed. Software purchases to analyze data collected during the project are supported.

Objective 5: Well drilling

This objective provides funding to install wells to enhance or maintain the NGWMN. Well installation may include replacement wells for existing NGWMN sites or installation of wells at new locations that fill spatial gaps in the NGWMN Network.

Sites that are to be replaced under this objective must be an existing data collection site in the NGWMN Monitoring Location Registry. A table and map of sites for which work is proposed must be included in the proposal and should include the NGWMN ID for each well. Sites that are to be drilled to fill new gaps in the NGWMN do not need to be in the NGWMN Monitoring Location Registry.

Drilling shall be done by qualified and licensed agency staff or by using a licensed contract driller. All state drilling requirements must be met. Well drilling activities cannot be contracted to the USGS. In addition, USGS staff cannot be contracted to serve in any role in the drilling operations using NGWMN cooperative agreement funds.

Data collection at new wells to obtain minimum data elements for the NGWMN is allowed under this objective. This can include geophysical logging, GPS surveys, and well integrity testing. Purchase and installation of continuous water level monitoring equipment (as outlined under Objective 6) can also be done under Objective 5 for the new wells constructed under this objective.

New or replacement wells that will be added to the Water-Level Subnetwork must be equipped with continuous water-level monitoring equipment and put into the 'Trend' Monitoring Frequency category.

For replacement of NGWMN sites that are owned by the agency, proper abandonment of the well being replaced is encouraged to be included as part of the project. Work to abandon the wells being replaced is eligible for funding under Objective 5. All state requirements for proper well closure and abandonment must be met.

Data collection and quality assurance techniques for data collected under this objective should be described in the Data Management Plan submitted with the proposal.

Reasonable costs for cultural surveys, supplies, equipment rental, and travel costs needed for well drilling may be included under this objective. Software purchases needed to analyze data collected during drilling are supported.

Objective 6: Purchase equipment to support continuous water-level data collection

This objective supports the purchase and installation of water-level monitoring equipment for NGWMN continuous water-level sites. Once every five years, replacement equipment may be purchased at current NGWMN sites with continuous data collection. Equipment may also be purchased under Objective 6 to upgrade the water-level monitoring frequency at existing NGWMN sites from discrete to continuous data collection. This could be for NGWMN Trend sites with only quarterly or monthly discrete data collected or to equip an existing NGWMN Surveillance site to be a Trend monitoring site.

Equipment that is at least 5 years old at the time of the proposed project start date qualifies for equipment replacement funding. Sites where equipment is to be replaced under this objective must be in the NGWMN Monitoring Location Registry on the closing date of the funding opportunity

Equipment purchases can include data loggers, pressure transducers, cables, and other equipment required to collect continuous water-level data. Vented cables may be purchased for each well. Alternatively, barologging equipment may be installed at select sites to provide the barometric data needed to correct the data when using non-vented transducers. Ideally, barologgers should be installed in locations where they can be used to do corrections on multiple wells located nearby.

Funding for this Objective is subject to per well limits on equipment purchases. These limits cover the total cost of the pressure transducer, datalogger, related equipment, and installation costs. For sites without telemetry equipment, this limit is set at \$2,000 per well. For sites adding telemetry (either satellite or cell telemetry) the purchases can also include the telemetry equipment and related equipment and the limit is set at \$4,000 per well. Cables for continuous data collection can be purchased beyond the limits stated above. Costs for equipment (other than cables) that exceeds the limits above can be used as in-kind services match. Actual costs for equipment must be justified. Any proposed equipment purchase that equals or exceeds \$5,000 must include a manufacturer's quote showing the description of the item and the cost.

This objective can be used to cover equipment purchase costs, salary, and travel to install the equipment, and salary needed for documentation of equipment purchases in the project final report. Water-level monitoring operations and maintenance or field visit costs are not supported under this objective but can be used as in-kind services. Funding for cell service or satellite service fees to obtain telemetered data are not eligible under this objective but can be included as in-kind services under this objective.

B. Federal Award Information

B1. Total Funding

Estimated Total Funding

\$1,700,000

B2. Award Amount

Maximum Award

\$300,000

Minimum Award

\$5,000

B3. Anticipated Award Funding and Dates

Anticipated Award Date

July 01, 2025

Individual applications are restricted to a funding level of \$150,000 for a one-year project or \$300,000 for a two-year project. Funding for routine work under Objective 2A to maintain persistent data services is limited to \$20,000 per year. However, agencies serving more than 500 sites can apply for up to \$40,000 per year for Objective 2A work. Substantial involvement of the USGS is anticipated to provide support to new data providers during the site selection and classification process and to establish web services that interact with the NGWMN Data Portal.

All projects should propose start dates between July 1, 2025 and September 30, 2025.

B4. Number of Awards

Expected Number of Awards

30

Based on past years, about 20-30 awards are expected.

B5. Type of Award

Funding Instrument Type

CA - Cooperative Agreement

Substantial involvement of the USGS is anticipated to provide support to new data providers during the site selection and classification process and to establish web services that interact with the NGWMN Data Portal. USGS also will provide guidance to existing data providers on techniques for collection of site information, on well maintenance activities, and on well drilling to support development of the NGWMN.

C. Eligibility Information

C1. Eligible Applicants

Eligible Applicants

00 – State governments

01 – County governments

02 – City or township governments

25 – Others (see text field entitled “Additional Information on Eligibility” for clarification)

Additional Information on Eligibility

Applicants can be state or local water-resource agencies which collect groundwater data.

C2. Cost Sharing or Matching

Cost Sharing / Matching Requirement

No

In-kind services cost-share guidelines

In-kind services cost sharing is used to create partnerships to meet the goals of building and enhancing the NGWMN. This allows agencies to contribute work they are doing at NGWMN sites to match the Federal funding provided for the NGWMN. Only work performed at NGWMN sites or potential new NGWMN sites (well drilling) can be used as in-kind services. This can include the costs of collecting water-level or water-quality data at sites that are part of the NGWMN.

In-kind services are not required for work proposed under Objectives 1, 2 or 3 because work done under these objectives is of benefit primarily to the NGWMN.

While no specific match rate is required, a 25% match of agency in-kind services to USGS funding is suggested. The formula for calculating the match percent is: $((\text{match costs}) / (\text{match costs} + \text{USGS Funding})) * 100$. **Proposed work on Objectives 4-6 that does not provide at least 25% match will be scored lower during proposal evaluation.**

Since each objective is scored independently during review, in-kind services cost sharing must be provided separately for each objective. Include in-kind services cost sharing in the detailed budget for each objective and provide details similar to that required for work to be funded by the USGS. List the individuals or contractors who will be doing the work and each individual task they will be doing.

Examples of in-kind resource match are salaries, contracts for work supported under this proposal, contractual support, travel expenses, software purchase, equipment or supplies used for the project, and indirect costs or overhead charges. **Agency activities related to operation and maintenance of NGWMN sites that are a part of their current (local agency) network can be used as in-kind services match. This can be either the collection of water-level data for a NGWMN site or water-quality sampling of a NGWMN site.** Work to perform quality assurance of data at NGWMN sites can also be used as in-kind services match. Drilling work used as match can only be for wells that will be added to the NGWMN. The need for these wells should be described in the same detail required for other NGWMN sites. Their benefit to the

NGWMN needs to be demonstrated. All in-kind service activities must occur during the performance period of the project.

All contributions, including cash and third-party in-kind, will be accepted as part of the recipient's in-kind match when such contributions meet all the following criteria:

- Verifiable from the recipient's records
- Not included as contributions for any other federally assisted project or program
- Necessary and reasonable for proper and efficient accomplishment of project or program objectives
- Allowable under the applicable cost principles
- Not paid by the Federal Government under another award, except where authorized by Federal statute to be used for cost matching
- Provided for in the approved budget when required by the Federal awarding agency
- Conform to the provision of the appropriate OMB Circular, as applicable

Volunteer services furnished by professional and technical personnel, consultants, and other skilled and unskilled labor may be counted as in-kind match if the service is an integral and necessary part of the project. Rates for volunteer services shall be consistent with those paid for similar work in the recipient's organization. In those instances, in which the required skills are not found in the recipient organization, rates shall be consistent with those paid for similar work in the labor market in which the recipient competes for the kind of services involved. In either case, paid fringe benefits that are reasonable, allowable, and allocable may be included in the valuation.

Third-party in-kind services can include work done by another state or local agency in support of your project provided it meets the same limitations listed for applicant in-kind services.

The applicant must document the amount and type of in-kind resource that will be contributed to the fulfillment of the project and include this information in the detailed budget breakdown.

C3. Other

Agencies cannot propose work under Objectives 4, 5, or 6 in a proposal to become a new data provider (Objective 1).

Proposal eligibility:

The following items will result in a proposal or work under the related objective being deemed ineligible:

- Objectives that are missing the detailed budgets
- Proposals from data providers working with a local USGS Cooperative Matching Funds project to collect groundwater data that are missing a letter of support from the local USGS Water Science Center
- Proposals with a funding request that exceeds award limits

- Objectives that contract with U.S. Government agencies to perform work

Excluded Parties: USGS conducts a review of the SAM.gov Exclusions database for all applicant entities and their key project personnel prior to award. USGS cannot award funds to entities or their key project personnel identified in the SAM.gov Exclusions database as ineligible, prohibited/restricted or otherwise excluded from receiving Federal contracts, certain subcontracts, and certain Federal assistance and benefits, as their ineligibility condition applies to this Federal program.

The following proposals are ineligible for consideration under this Announcement:

- Proposals from U.S. Government agencies or U.S. Government employees
- Proposals from Federally Funded Research and Development Centers (FFRDC)
- Proposals principally involving the direct procurement of a product, equipment, or service not used for data collection

D. Application and Submission Information

Grants.gov Application Submission and Receipt Procedures

Grants.gov Application Submission and Receipt Procedures

This section provides the application submission and receipt instructions for U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) program applications. Please read the following instructions carefully and completely.

1. Electronic Delivery

USGS is participating in the Grants.gov initiative to provide the grant community with a single site to find and apply for grant funding opportunities. USGS encourages applicants to submit their applications online through Grants.gov.

2. How to Register to Apply through Grants.gov

a. *Instructions:* Read the instructions below about registering to apply for USGS funds. Applicants should read the registration instructions carefully and prepare the information requested before beginning the registration process. Reviewing and assembling the required information before beginning the registration process will alleviate last-minute searches for required information.

Organizations must have an active System for Award Management (SAM) registration, and Grants.gov account to apply for grants. If individual applicants are eligible to apply for this funding opportunity, then you may begin with step 3, Create a Grants.gov Account, listed below.

Creating a Grants.gov account can be completed online in minutes, but SAM registration may take several weeks. Therefore, an organization's registration should be done in sufficient time to ensure it does not impact the entity's ability to meet required application submission deadlines.

Note: An entity will be assigned a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) by SAM. No Dun and Bradstreet (DUNS) number is required after April 4, 2022.

Complete organization instructions can be found on Grants.gov here:
<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/organization-registration.html>

1) *Register with SAM*: All organizations applying online through Grants.gov must register with the System for Award Management (SAM). Failure to register with SAM will prevent your organization from applying through Grants.gov. SAM registration must be renewed annually. For more detailed instructions for registering with SAM, refer to:
<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/organization-registration/step-2-register-with-sam.html>

2) *Create a Grants.gov Account*: The next step is to register an account with Grants.gov. Follow the on-screen instructions or refer to the detailed instructions here:
<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/registration.html>

3) *Add a Profile to a Grants.gov Account*: A profile in Grants.gov corresponds to a single applicant organization the user represents (i.e., an applicant) or an individual applicant. If you work for or consult with multiple organizations and have a profile for each, you may log in to one Grants.gov account to access all your grant applications. To add an organizational profile to your Grants.gov account, enter UEI assigned by SAM in the UEI field while adding a profile. For more detailed instructions about creating a profile on Grants.gov, refer to: <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/registration/add-profile.html>

4) *EBiz POC Authorized Profile Roles*: After you register with Grants.gov and create an Organization Applicant Profile, the organization applicant's request for Grants.gov roles and access are sent to the EBiz POC. The EBiz POC will then log in to Grants.gov and authorize the appropriate roles, which may include the AOR role, thereby giving you permission to complete and submit applications on behalf of the organization. You will be able to submit your application online any time after you have been assigned the AOR role. For more detailed instructions about creating a profile on Grants.gov, refer to:
<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/registration/authorize-roles.html>

5) *Track Role Status*: To track your role request, refer to:
<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/registration/track-role-status.html>

b. *Electronic Signature*: When applications are submitted through Grants.gov, the name of the organization applicant with the AOR role that submitted the application is inserted into the signature line of the application, serving as the electronic signature. The EBiz POC **must** authorize people who are able to make legally binding commitments on behalf of the organization as a user with the AOR role; **this step is often missed, and it is crucial for valid and timely submissions.**

3. How to Submit an Application to USGS via Grants.gov

Grants.gov applicants can apply online using Workspace. Workspace is a shared, online environment where members of a grant team may simultaneously access and edit different webforms within an application. For each funding opportunity announcement (FOA), you can create individual instances of a workspace.

Below is an overview of applying on Grants.gov. For access to complete instructions on how to apply for opportunities, refer to:

<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/workspace-overview.html>

- 1) *Create a Workspace*: Creating a workspace allows you to complete it online and route it through your organization for review before submitting.
- 2) *Complete a Workspace*: Add participants to the workspace to work on the application together, complete all the required forms online or by downloading PDF versions, and check for errors before submission. The Workspace progress bar will display the state of your application process as you apply. As you apply using Workspace, you may click the blue question mark icon near the upper-right corner of each page to access context-sensitive help.

a. *Adobe Reader*: If you decide not to apply by filling out webforms you can download individual PDF forms in Workspace. The individual PDF forms can be downloaded and saved to your local device storage, network drive(s), or external drives, then accessed through Adobe Reader.

NOTE: Visit the Adobe Software Compatibility page on Grants.gov to download the appropriate version of the software at:

<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/adobe-software-compatibility.html>

b. *Mandatory Fields in Forms*: In the forms, you will note fields marked with an asterisk and a different background color. These fields are mandatory fields that must be completed to successfully submit your application.

c. *Complete SF-424 Fields First*: The forms are designed to fill in common required fields across other forms, such as the applicant's name, address, and UEI Number. Once it is completed, the information will transfer to the other forms.

- 3) *Submit a Workspace*: An application may be submitted through workspace by clicking the Sign and Submit button on the Manage Workspace page, under the Forms tab. Grants.gov recommends submitting your application package at least 24-48 hours prior to the close date to provide you with time to correct any potential technical issues that may disrupt the application submission.

- 4) *Track a Workspace Submission*: After successfully submitting a workspace application, a Grants.gov Tracking Number (GRANTXXXXXXXX) is automatically assigned to the application. The number will be listed on the Confirmation page that is generated after submission. Using the tracking number, access the Track My Application page under the Applicants tab or the Details tab in the submitted workspace.

For additional training resources, including video tutorials, refer to:

<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/applicant-training.html>

Applicant Support: Grants.gov provides applicants 24/7 support via the toll-free number 1-800-518-4726 and email at support@grants.gov. For questions related to the specific grant opportunity, contact the number listed in the application package of the grant you are applying for.

If you are experiencing difficulties with your submission, it is best to call the Grants.gov Support Center and get a ticket number. The Support Center ticket number will assist the USGS with tracking your issue and understanding background information on the issue.

4. Timely Receipt Requirements and Proof of Timely Submission

a. *Online Submission.* All applications must be received by the due date established for each program. Proof of timely submission is automatically recorded by Grants.gov. An electronic date/time stamp is generated within the system when the application is successfully received by Grants.gov. The applicant with the AOR role who submitted the application will receive an acknowledgement of receipt and a tracking number (GRANTXXXXXXXX) from Grants.gov with the successful transmission of their application. This applicant with the AOR role will also receive the official date/time stamp and Grants.gov Tracking number in an email serving as proof of their timely submission.

When USGS successfully retrieves the application from Grants.gov, and acknowledges the download of submissions, Grants.gov will provide an electronic acknowledgment of receipt of the application to the email address of the applicant with the AOR role who submitted the application. Again, proof of timely submission shall be the official date and time that Grants.gov receives your application. Applications received by Grants.gov after the established due date for the program will be considered late and will not be considered for funding by USGS.

Applicants using slow internet, such as dial-up connections, should be aware that transmission can take some time before Grants.gov receives your application. Again, Grants.gov will provide either an error or a successfully received transmission in the form of an email sent to the applicant with the AOR role attempting to submit the application. The Grants.gov Support Center reports that some applicants end the transmission because they think that nothing is occurring during the transmission process. Please be patient and give the system time to process the application.

D1. Address to Request Application Package

Program Website Link

<https://cida.usgs.gov/ngwmn/cooperativeagreements.jsp>

D2. Content and Form of Application Submission

1. SF-424, Application for Federal Assistance

Applicants must submit the appropriate Standard Form (SF)-424, Application for Federal Assistance. The required application forms are available with this announcement on Grants.gov. The SF-424, Application for Federal Assistance must be complete, signed, and dated. Do not include any proprietary or personally identifiable information. Please note: Enter only the amount requested from this Federal program in the “Federal” funding box on the SF-424 Application form. Include any other Federal sources of funding in the “Other” box and provide details on those Federal source(s) and funding amount(s) in the required Budget Narrative (see the “Budget Narrative” section below).

The electronic submission shall consist of forms SF-424, SF-424A, and SF-424B, and a Project Narrative Attachment Form.

Any applicant organization that has not completed the financial assistance certifications and representations within their SAM.gov registration must submit the appropriate signed and dated

Assurances form. All required application forms are available with this announcement on Grants.gov.

Well drilling work is considered construction. Proposals including work under Objective 5 (Well Drilling) will also need to submit form SF-424D, 'Assurances for Construction Programs'.

Project Narrative

The items described below in items A through I should be included in the application package as the 'Project Narrative Attachment Form'. Failure to comply with the required application components listed below may result in the proposal being rejected.

The proposal (item B below) shall not exceed 20 single-spaced pages and the type size shall not be smaller than 12 points. All pages of the application shall be numbered. All text, figures, and tables shall be sized to fit on 8½" by 11" paper with 1-inch margins. Items A through I as described below shall be **combined in one document, in the order noted below**, and submitted through Grants.gov in Adobe PDF format. **The figures, tables, required maps, overall project budget, detailed budgets for objectives, timelines for objectives, data management plan, staff qualifications, letters of support, the NGWMN proposal checklist, and the negotiated rate agreement (if required) should also be included in the combined document but do not count toward the page limit.** Figures and tables should have numbers and captions.

The items described below in items A through I below should be included in the application package as the 'Project Narrative Attachment Form'.

- A. Proposal Information Summary
- B. Proposal
- C. Overall Project Budget
- D. Detailed Budget for each objective
- E. Timeline for each objective
- F. Data Management Plan
- G. Staff Qualifications
- H. Supporting Letters
- I. NGWMN Proposal Checklist

A. Proposal Information Summary

Provide a summary for the proposal using the format shown in Attachment A, 'Proposal Information Summary Format'. The project title should not exceed 80 characters. The project title should be the same as that used in the title box of Form SF-424. List a single Technical Contact/Principal Investigator for the proposed work. Provide a start date for the proposed work sometime in the period from July 1st, 2025 through September 30th, 2025.

B. Proposal

The proposal should include background information about your agency and network, a summary of your planned project, and a detailed description of the project with a separate section for each objective that is part of the project (see guidance below).

The page limit for the proposal section is 20 pages. Maps and tables in proposal should be numbered and referenced in the text. Tables and figures can appear in the proposal, at the end of the proposal, or in an appendix. Maps and tables do not count towards the page limit.

Tables of sites at which fieldwork is proposed must be included and should include the NGWMN site number, the Principal Aquifer, and the well depth. A listing of specific work proposed at each well and the estimated cost is recommended.

Maps of sites where specific work is proposed need to be included. If maps do not show the entire state, include an inset map. All maps should include a north arrow, scale bar, explanation, and figure caption. Label the sites on the map using NGWMN site number or index number if possible. Include [USGS Principal Aquifers](#) on the map(s). Data layers with the Principal Aquifers and Aquifers of Alluvial and Glacial Origin are available at:

[Principal Aquifers of the United States](#)

[Aquifers of Alluvial and Glacial Origin](#)

Do not include links to data or information on a website as part of your proposal. If the content is important, include it in the proposal. We will not consider any information from referenced websites as part of the proposal evaluation process. The only exception to this is that you may include links to references for methods you propose to use as part of your proposal.

Include references for methods used to perform work on NGWMN sites or describe the methods you will be using in detail. You may include links to the references for the methods used.

There should be a consistency between the workplan, detailed budget, and timeline for each objective. Tasks described in the workplan should be included in the detailed budget and the timeline for each objective.

The proposal should be thoroughly proofread and reviewed by a staff member other than the author to ensure the proposal is free of errors and is complete.

a. Background information

Provide supporting information about your agency, monitoring networks, and your database and IT infrastructure. Because membership on the NGWMN Program Board that evaluates the proposals may change from year to year, all proposals should have this information included so that it is available during proposal review. Describe your network and your involvement with the NGWMN in enough detail so that new Board members have the necessary background to evaluate your current proposal. Each proposal should stand on its own and not rely on background information included in previous proposals. The following items should be addressed:

- Description of Agency primary purpose. Give a brief description (1-2 paragraphs) of your agency and its primary purpose.
- Description of the Agency's existing monitoring networks. Provide a detailed description of existing monitoring networks relevant to the needs of the NGWMN. Describe how the

data are used to support your agency monitoring goals. Identify the USGS principal or major aquifers that are monitored.

- Describe projects with the NGWMN. Describe current projects with the NGWMN, if any. Summarize your involvement with the Network. Indicate the number of sites your agency is currently providing to the NGWMN. Provide a table listing funding for recent (past 5 years) projects and projects that will occur during the performance period of the proposed work.
- Information Technology (IT) Infrastructure. Describe the databases used to store data at your agency and the web server infrastructure if applicable. Briefly describe current data sharing applications, services, or websites. Discuss security requirements or limitations.
- Data provided through another agency. Agencies that provide data to the NGWMN by supplying it through another agency for delivery should provide details on: What data is collected, the agreement for how data is shared, how the data is collected and quality assured by the providing agency, how the data is supplied to the delivering agency, and contact information for the agency providing the data. A letter of support from the providing agency is required and should include the elements listed above. **Format for Recent Projects table**

Year	Award Number	Objectives							Completed (Yes/No)	Other Relevant Information	Funding Amount
		1	2A	2B	3	4	5	6			

b. Project Summary

Provide a concise summary of the project that includes the following:

- Statement of the overall purpose of the project. List the objectives that are included as part of the project.
- Briefly list the work to be performed under each objective (1-2 sentences per objective)
- Briefly describe the project deliverables and expected outcomes (one paragraph)
- Describe work that will be done by contractors or performed by another agency

c. Project Description

Provide a workplan with details on each objective for which you are applying. Describe the need for the proposed work and the benefits to the NGWMN. List all tasks required to complete the work. For each task, justify the need for the work, the methods that will be used to do the work, and the staff that will be doing the work. Include either detailed descriptions of the methods that are proposed or provide references for the methods you will be using. For field work, indicate the number of staff that will be in the field each day for each task.

- Describe the need for the work
- State the benefits of the work to the NGWMN
- Provide a detailed list of tasks needed to complete the work
 - Describe the need for each task

- Describe the work that needs to be done
- Provide methods/approach to complete the work (if applicable), provide references if possible
- Indicate who will be doing the work
- The list of tasks should be the same as that shown in the detailed budget and timeline for the objective
- Task descriptions should include details on staffing, travel, contracts, etc. to explain or support items in the detailed budget

The workplan should include the items listed below for each applicable objective.

Objective 1: Support to become a new data provider

Include a map of the potential sites that new NGWMN sites will be selected from. This map should include existing sites in the NGWMN (those contributed by other agencies) and the Principal Aquifers of the United States. If some of the wells are in glacial aquifers, include the 'Aquifer of Alluvial and Glacial Origin' as well.

The following tasks should be included in the workplan for this objective for a new data provider. For each task indicate who will be doing the work:

- Select sites for the NGWMN. Describe the available sites and why they are appropriate for the NGWMN. Select appropriate sites for the NGWMN according to criteria in the NGWMN Framework document, the [Well Selection Criteria for Water Levels](#) and [Well Selection Criteria for Water Quality](#) tip sheets, the [Minimum Data Requirements](#) tip sheet, and the [Well Density Spreadsheet](#)
- Classify sites into Subnetworks and Monitoring Categories: Classify sites as described in the NGWMN Framework document and [Defining the Subnetwork](#) and [Defining Monitoring Categories](#) tip sheets
- Provide required data elements for selected sites. Data are provided either in the NGWMN Monitoring Location Registry or through web services. The required data elements are listed and the source of data for each element is described in the [Minimum Data Requirements](#) tip sheet
- Identify gaps in required data elements for sites that are selected
- Populate the NGWMN Monitoring Location Registry with site and network information. See the [Populating the NGWMN Monitoring Location Registry](#) tip sheet. This can be done interactively in the NGWMN Monitoring Location Registry or by populating the site and network data in a NGMWN provided template spreadsheet and uploading that spreadsheet into the NGWMN Monitoring Location Registry
- Connect agency databases to the NGWMN Portal using web services. Separate web services will be required for water-level data, well construction data, and lithology data. If water-quality data are to be served, a water-quality data web service will also be needed unless otherwise available from the USEPA Water Quality Exchange (<http://www.waterqualitydata.us/>). Guidance for setting up the web services is available in the [Web Service Development](#) tip sheet. Specific guidance for water-quality web services is given in the [Water-Quality Services tip sheet](#)

- Document data collection and data management protocols. This is needed so that the NGWMN can provide users of the NGWMN data an understanding of the quality of the data. Our goal is to provide water-level and water-quality data of known quality
- Prepare a brief report. Document the work done for the tasks above. This should include: the criteria used to select and classify wells, a description of web services set up for the project and the underlying supporting IT infrastructure, a description of the field data collection, and a description of data management practices. This report will be used to populate a Data Provider page that includes information on site selection, classification, data collection, data management, and general information about the data provider and their networks. Examples of Data Provider pages are available at:
 - <https://cida.usgs.gov/ngwmn/provider/KSGS>
 - <https://cida.usgs.gov/ngwmn/provider/SCDNR>
 - <https://cida.usgs.gov/ngwmn/provider/OWRB>

Agencies proposing to become a new data provider may not include work under Objectives 4, 5, or 6 in their initial proposal.

Work under this objective does not require agency in-kind services match.

Objective 2: Support persistent data service from existing data providers

Work under Objective 2 can consist of two parts. Part 2A is basic work to provide persistent data service to the NGWMN. Work allowable under Part 2A is described in Section A2 under Objective 2. Work under Objective 2A can be funded at a maximum of \$20,000 per year for agencies serving less than 500 sites. However, agencies serving more than 500 sites may apply for up to \$40,000 for work under Objective 2A. Part 2B consists of special tasks that occasionally will be needed to upgrade the sites or connection to the NGWMN Data Portal. Work allowable under Part 2B is described in Section A2 under Objective 2. There is no set funding limit for this work other than the per project limit that applies to all projects.

Purchase of software or software maintenance license fees that are used for database storage or routine processing of water-level or water-quality data are not supported. Work to upgrade databases or transfer data to a new database are not supported.

Prepare a separate workplan and budget for work proposed under Part 2A and Part 2B. Work proposed under Part 2A and Part 2B will be evaluated and scored separately.

Part 2A: The following tasks should be included in the workplan for work under Part 2A for this objective. For each task, indicate who will be doing the work.

- Keep the list of sites in NGWMN Monitoring Location Registry up to date. See the [Populating the NGWMN Monitoring Location Registry](#) tip sheet. Add new qualified sites to the NGWMN Monitoring Location Registry and remove sites that are no longer active
- Classify new sites according to Subnetwork and Monitoring Categories as described in the NGWMN Framework document and the [Defining the Subnetwork](#) and [Defining Monitoring Categories](#) tip sheets. Review classification of existing sites to see if they are still appropriate

- Populate data elements for new sites in agency databases and the NGWMN Monitoring Location Registry. See the [Populating the NGWMN Monitoring Location Registry](#) tip sheet
- Keep site information on existing sites updated in the NGWMN Monitoring Location Registry as new data becomes available
- Maintain web services connections to the NGWMN Portal. NGWMN Portal staff will be in communication with the agency staff if the web services are not providing data for several days
- Verify that data is flowing from your agency database to the NGWMN properly at least once every 3 months
- In conjunction with the NGWMN Portal staff, update web services to serve new required elements. New required elements will be occasionally added to the [Minimum Data Requirements](#) tip sheet
- Review NGWMN Data Portal Data Provider pages for your agency and provide updates to the NGWMN, as needed
- Document persistent data services activities in final report for the project

Part 2B: The following tasks should be included in the workplan for work underpart 2B for this objective. For each task indicate who will be doing the work.

The following tasks should be included in the workplan for this objective for a data provider who will be adding twenty or more new sites:

- Select sites for the NGWMN. Describe the new sites to be added and why they would benefit the NGWMN. Select appropriate sites for the NGWMN according to criteria in the NGWMN Framework document, the [Well Selection Criteria for Water Levels](#) and [Well Selection Criteria for Water Quality](#) tip sheets, the [Minimum Data Requirements](#) tip sheet, and the [Well Density Spreadsheet](#)
- Provide a map showing potential new sites, active NGWMN sites (including those from other agencies) and the Principal Aquifer
- Classify sites into Subnetworks and Monitoring Categories: Classify sites as described in the NGWMN Framework document and [Defining the Subnetwork](#) and [Defining Monitoring Categories](#) tip sheets
- Provide required data elements for selected sites. Data are provided either in the NGWMN Monitoring Location Registry or through web services. The required data elements are listed and the source of data for each element is described in the [Minimum Data Requirements](#) tip sheet
- Populate the NGWMN Monitoring Location Registry with site and network information. See the [Populating the NGWMN Monitoring Location Registry](#) tip sheet. This can be done by populating the site and network data in a NGWMN provided template spreadsheet and uploading that spreadsheet into the NGWMN Monitoring Location Registry
- Prepare a brief report. Document the work done for the tasks above. This should include the criteria used to select and classify wells

The following tasks should be included in the workplan for this objective for a data provider who will adding web services:

- Connect agency databases to the NGWMN Portal using web services. Describe the new web services that are to be added to the NGWMN. Explain why they were not included in the original project and why they would benefit the network now. Guidance for setting up the web services is available in the [Web Service Development](#) tip sheet
- If applicable, set up the Water-quality web services using guidance given in the [Water-Quality Services tip sheet](#)
- Prepare a brief report. Document the work done for the tasks above. This should include a description of web services set up for the project

Other work can also be included in this objective. This can include updates to existing services, adding new fields to existing services, and upgrading existing services to XML standards. This can also cover modifications to existing databases to store fields required as Minimum Data Elements by the NGWMN and the modifications to existing web services to serve these new fields. For each work item proposed, include the following:

- Describe the need for the work, the planned approach, and the benefit to the NGWMN
- Describe the tasks needed to accomplish the work
- Document work in the final report for the project

If you have work proposed for both Part 2A and Part 2B in the same proposal, provide separate workplans and budgets for Part 2A and 2B.

Work under this objective does not require agency in-kind services match.

Objective 3: Filling gaps in information at NGWMN sites

Multiple site information gaps can be addressed as part of this objective. Make sure to provide background information, specific work needed, and the cost for each gap.

Include a timeline that shows all the site information gaps and a planned time frame for all tasks required for each gap.

A Data Management Plan is required for data collected or added to agency databases. All projects that are proposing work under Objective 3 should include this work in their Data Management Plan.

The following information should be provided for each proposed site information gap filling activity:

- Describe the information gap and how filling the gap will benefit the NGWMN. Refer to the [Minimum Data Requirements](#) tip sheet as needed
- Describe your planned approach to fill the gap
- Describe field techniques and equipment you will be using to collect data. Provide references for methods or describe your methods in the proposal
- Provide a table of the proposed data-collection activities at each site including the NGWMN site number and the approximate cost of the work
- Include a map of sites where work is proposed. The map should include the Principal Aquifer

- Describe your plan to perform quality assurance on new data as it is collected and entered into databases
- If GPS work is proposed, specify the equipment and methods to be used and the expected vertical and horizontal accuracy
- Document gap filling activities in the final report for the project

Work under Objective 3 can be done under a New Data Provider Project. If all potential sites have missing data, work can be proposed to correct this for the approximate number of sites that are expected to be selected. If only some potential sites are missing required elements, propose work for the approximate number of sites. In this case, a table of sites for which work is to be done is not required.

Work under this objective does not require agency in-kind services match.

Objective 4: Site maintenance

Multiple maintenance activities can be addressed as part of this objective. Make sure to provide background information, specific work needed, and the cost for each activity. Include a timeline that shows all the well maintenance activities and a planned time frame for all tasks required for each activity. Photographs of wells needing maintenance can be helpful.

A table of sites showing proposed maintenance is required. Specific maintenance activities to be performed at each site must be listed. Show the cost of work to be conducted at each site. Include a map of the sites for proposed maintenance activities in relation to existing NGWMN sites.

A Data Management Plan is required for data collected or added to agency databases. Data collected as part of these maintenance activities should be entered into agency databases and included in the Data Management Plan.

The following information should be provided for each proposed maintenance activity: Describe the need for the maintenance activity and how the work will benefit the NGWMN:

- Describe the approach that will be used for the activity. Provide references or describe your methods in the proposal
- Provide a table of the proposed maintenance activities at each site that includes the NGWMN site number and the approximate cost of the work. This table should be included as an appendix to the proposal and will not count against the page limit for the proposal. All sites for which maintenance work is proposed need to be in the NGWMN Monitoring Location Registry by the closing date of the funding opportunity
- Include a map of sites where work is proposed. The map should include the Principal Aquifer
- Summarize the total cost of the proposed maintenance work
- For well rehabilitation/repair or redevelopment activities include a paragraph for each site for which work is proposed that includes:
 - Background and history of the site
 - The benefit of the site to the NGWMN
 - Evidence of impairment

- Explanation of how the planned approach will resolve the impairment. Describe experience with the method
- For repairs, provide details on the current construction and describe the proposed construction after the repair
- Cost of the proposed work
- For periodic pumping of wells to maintain connection to the aquifer, specify the planned pumping frequency (e.g., every 5 years). Well pumping work should be as quantitative as possible so that results through time can be used to assess changes in the connection to the aquifer. At a minimum, drawdown measurement and calculation of specific capacity is suggested
- For more detailed well integrity testing a quantitative method such as a slug test or aquifer test is preferred. These allow determination of properties that can help assess changes in the well integrity after repeated measurement. Include references for slug or aquifer test methods and planned analysis techniques
- For periodic pumping or well integrity testing, include a paragraph describing the need for the work and the planned approach for collection and analysis. A separate paragraph for each well is not required for well integrity testing or periodic pumping of wells. For slug tests include details on the slug testing work. This should include the type of slug test (physical slug or air slug), the diameter of the slug, data recording interval, and the proposed method for data analysis

The following tasks should be included in the workplan for this objective. Indicate who will be doing the work and their qualifications:

- For each maintenance activity, describe the tasks needed to complete the work
- Describe plans to enter and perform quality assurance on data collected during site maintenance in your database
- Document maintenance work in the final project report

Work is not allowed under Objective 4 in a proposal for a new data provider project.

Because of uncertainties related to contracting work, a maximum of 10% contingency cost may be incorporated into the Objective 4 budget for contracted work to account for inflation.

Objective 5: Well drilling

Provide a summary of the proposed well drilling work. Indicate if the proposed well to be drilled is a new well or a replacement well. Justify new monitoring wells and describe how they fill NGWMN data gaps. Reference NGWMN well density guidelines when proposing new wells.

Provide a table of all proposed new or replacement wells. Include the proposed depth, Principal Aquifer, and approximate cost of each well. If the well is to be a replacement for an existing NGWMN site, list the existing site name, NGWMN number, and the period of record.

Include a map showing proposed new or replacement wells. The map should include existing NGWMN sites (including sites from other agencies) and the Principal Aquifer.

All new wells that will be entered into the Water-Level Monitoring Network must be equipped with continuous water-level monitoring equipment.

Provide the following information on your well drilling plans:

- Describe proposed drilling methods and the reason for their use. Justify the use of advanced drilling methods such as sonic drilling
- A well construction diagram is beneficial. For proposals with multiple wells, a generic construction diagram is acceptable. However, detailed well construction diagrams that indicate the expected stratigraphy and well construction details are appreciated
- Explain how you will meet state drilling requirements
- Describe who you plan to have drill the wells. If the wells are to be drilled by agency staff, they must possess required permits or licenses
- Ensure that all wells drilled for the NGWMN are entered in the NGWMN Monitoring Location Registry. This includes wells drilled as in-kind services. When a replacement well is proposed, the original well can remain in the NGWMN Data Portal to provide historic data but no longer needs to be measured
- **Include a signed copy of SF-424D** (Assurances – Construction Programs) when submitting the proposal through Grants.gov
- Total cost of each well should include well drilling costs (either in-house or contracted), supplies, equipment, travel, and salaries of agency staff for planning and installing the well. This allows partial funding of select wells, if necessary
- If a well is a replacement well, describe how you will be abandoning the existing well

The following information should be provided for each proposed new well or replacement well. Wells drilled as part of in-kind services should be described with the same level of detail.

- For proposed new NGWMN wells, include a paragraph for each well that clearly describes the need for the well in the NGWMN. Describe the NGWMN data gap in terms of the NGWMN Well Density guidelines and the [Well Density Spreadsheet](#). Demonstrate to the greatest extent possible, that no other existing wells are available to fill the gap. Describe reconnaissance work that you have done on the site and efforts made to obtain landowner permission to drill the well. Describe the Principal Aquifer which will be monitored and what gaps will be filled by the well. Include the estimated depth of the well and proposed well construction plans. Provide the estimated cost to drill the well.
- For proposed replacement wells include a paragraph for each well. Provide the history of the well. Explain how the well fills a gap in the NGWMN. Explain why the well is unsuitable. Explain why rehabilitation of the existing NGWMN well is not possible or cost-effective. Explain why the replacement well is needed for the NGWMN. Provide the construction details for the well to be replaced and for the proposed well. This should show that the proposed well will monitor the same aquifer as the well it is replacing. Provide the estimated cost to drill the well. Describe efforts to establish a correlation between the water levels in the exiting and replacement well.

The following items are examples of what might be included in the workplan for this objective:

- Planning and preparation for well drilling
- Site reconnaissance

- Obtaining landowner permission for drilling and access
- Well drilling
- Abandonment of existing well when drilling a replacement NGWMN well. This should be done according to state requirements for proper well closure and abandonment
- Data collection at the new well to obtain minimum data elements for the NGWMN. This can include geophysical logging, GPS surveys, and well integrity testing
- Purchase and installation of continuous water-level monitoring equipment according to the guidelines listed under Objective 6
- Classifying new wells according to Tip Sheets
- Entry of well-construction details on new well into agency database and NGWMN Monitoring Location Registry
- Documenting well-drilling activities in the final report for the project. All data collected on the new well must be publicly available either through the portal, in the project report, or online

Work is not allowed under Objective 5 in a proposal for a new data provider project. Funding cannot be used to purchase land or obtain easements for drilling.

Because of uncertainties related to contracting work, a maximum of 10% contingency cost may be incorporated into the Objective 5 budget for contracted work to account for inflation.

Objective 6: Purchase equipment to support continuous water-level data collection

Provide a narrative on the need for the equipment purchase. Describe if the equipment will be used to replace equipment at current NGWMN sites or to upgrade current NGWMN sites to continuous water-level data collection. Describe how the equipment will help fill gaps in the NGWMN Trend Monitoring Network. Describe equipment that will be purchased under this objective. Include the manufacturer, model, per unit cost, per foot cost for transducer cable, and your reason for selecting the equipment. If you are replacing existing equipment, make sure to demonstrate that the equipment will be at least 5 years old by the proposed start date of the project.

Include a table showing each well for which equipment will be purchased. This table should include: the NGWMN Site Number, the Principal Aquifer, the current monitoring frequency of the site (continuous, monthly, quarterly, annually, etc.), the current monitoring category of the site (Trend, Surveillance), the well depth, age of equipment (of replacement sites), datalogger model, transducer model, cable per foot costs, and the length of cable required.

The workplan must contain a description of the equipment to be purchased and a detailed breakdown of costs. This should include the manufacturer name, equipment model number, and a justification for the selection of the equipment.

Equipment purchase limits are placed on all proposed wells. These limits include the cost of pressure transducers, data loggers, and other equipment (other than cables), required to install the equipment. The purchase limit for non-telemetered sites is \$2,000 per well.

The purchase limit for cell modem or satellite telemetry sites is \$4,000 per well. Equipment costs above these limits should be documented and can be used as in-kind services.

Cost for cables required for each well are not included in these limits. Therefore, the cable cost for each well should be included in the detailed budget for the Objective separate from other costs for the well.

The final report should provide a summary of the equipment purchases and a list of each well showing the equipment purchased and the date the equipment was installed.

C. Overall Project Budget

An overall summary budget for the entire project should be provided using the following format. Example budget summaries are included in Attachment B, 'Example Budgets'. Proposals that do not use the format shown in the example budgets will be scored lower during proposal evaluation.

Format for Budget Summary

Indirect cost rate: xx%

Category	Federal Funding	Agency In-Kind Funding	Total Funding
1a. Salary			
1b. Fringe			
2. Supplies			
3. Equipment			
4. Travel			
5. Contracts			
6. Total Direct (sum of items 1-5)			
7. Indirect Cost			
8. Total Cost (sum of items 6-7)			

D. Detailed Budget for Each Objective

A detailed budget for each objective in the proposal must be provided. Detailed budgets must follow the guidelines presented in the section entitled 'Detailed Budget Narrative' below and shown in the example budget summaries in Attachment B, 'Example Budgets'. Objectives that do not have a detailed budget included will not be considered for funding. Proposals that do not use the format shown in the example budgets will be scored lower during proposal evaluation.

- Provide a detailed budget for each Objective in the proposal
- Make sure to include the Objective summary information as show in the example budgets. This includes the overhead/indirect rate and the Federal, Match, and Total funding for each Objective

- Do not include budget details for categories that are not a part of the Objective in the detailed budget for any Objective
- Make sure the items in the budget match the tasks listed in the proposal for the Objective and those shown in the timeline
- For salary work, do not group tasks under a single staff person. Each staff member should have a separate entry in the budget for each task to which they are assigned
- The workplan corresponding to each detail budget should provide details explaining need for high staff hours, large mileage or travel estimates, equipment costs, and large expenses. Provide adequate justification for high-cost items
- Detailed budgets need to be included as text in the proposal. Budgets provided separately as spreadsheets are not acceptable

E. Timeline for Each Objective

Provide a separate timeline for each objective showing the planned timing of all tasks. This is required for most Objectives that include multiple tasks. Timelines should include all tasks for the Objective and should include preparation and delivery of both the annual progress report (if needed) and the final project report.

Timelines are especially critical for Objectives involving contracted work. These timelines should include the time required for the contracting process.

The example below shows an example timeline for a new data provider project. Objective 1 to become a new data provider is completed in the first year of the project. Objective 2A to provide persistent data service is planned for the second year of the project. Provide a timeline for each objective in a similar format.

Example timeline for Objective 1, Year 1

Task	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun
Select wells	X	X										
Classify wells			X	X	X							
Add sites to NGWMN Monitoring Location Registry						X	X					
Establish web services								X	X	X		
Progress Report											X	X

Example timeline for Objective 2A, Year 2 (optional)

Task	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun
Review network sites	X	X										
Add sites to NGWMN Monitoring Location Registry			X									
Maintain web services	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Final Report											X	X

F. Data Management Plan

Proposals submitted to USGS must include a supplementary document labeled "Data Management Plan". This supplementary document should describe how the proposal will conform to USGS policy on the dissemination and sharing of research results and associated data. The plan should also document the data collection and data quality assurance used on data collected for the NGWMN. Data Management Plans should include all water-level and/or water-quality data collected by the agency and supplied to the NGWMN. The Data Management Plan should also describe data collection and quality assurance for other data collected as part of the project. Details on the data management plan are described in the section 'Data Management Plan Requirements'

Note: The Data Management Plan does not count toward the 20-page limit.

G. Staff Qualifications

Provide a short paragraph describing the qualifications of each staff member who will be working on the project. The qualifications should include the position name, and a brief background focused on education and experience related to the tasks they will be working on. The staff qualifications should be no more than 300 words for each staff member listed.

H. Supporting Letters

Proposals that include work done by another agency as part of the project or that require cooperation with another agency must include a letter of support/concurrence from the

cooperating agency. The letter does not need to be detailed but should indicate that the agency is aware of the project and the letter should briefly describe their part of the proposed work, if any. If part of the project is to enter data into a cooperating agency's database, the letter of support should indicate the agency's awareness of and willingness to do the proposed work and supply the data to the NGWMN. Agencies that are data providers through a Cooperative Matching Funds project with the local USGS Water Science Center must include a letter of concurrence from a Water Science Center representative (Specialist, Data Chief, or Center Director) that they are aware of the work. If part of the project is to enter data into the USGS NWIS database, the letter should indicate the Center's awareness of and willingness to do the proposed work.

Letters of support from other agencies that demonstrate the value of the work to their agency are also appreciated.

Letters of support do not count towards the page limit.

I. NGWMN Proposal Checklist

A proposal checklist should be submitted along with the proposal. This checklist contains items that should be verified prior to submission of the proposal. The checklist must be completed by the Principal Investigator listed for the proposal. The checklist should be included in the project proposal. The Proposal Checklist is included in Attachment C.

Light grey boxes in the checklist indicate items that must be marked. Appropriate responses for green boxes are 'Y' or 'NA'.

Dark grey boxes do not need to be completed.

The Overall Proposal column indicates items that must be completed (items in light grey) for all proposals. The Objectives columns list items that must be completed (items in light grey) for any objectives that are included in the proposal.

Detailed Budget Requirements

Applicants must submit the appropriate SF-424 Budget Information form and Budget Narrative. For non-construction programs or projects, applicants must complete and submit the SF-424A, "Budget Information for Non-Construction Programs" form. All the required application forms are available with this announcement on Grants.gov. Federal award recipients and subrecipients are subject to Federal award cost principles in 2 CFR 200.

Detailed Budget Narrative

The project budget shall include detailed information on all cost categories and must clearly identify all estimated project costs. Unit costs shall be provided for all budget items including the cost of work to be provided by contractors or sub-recipients. In addition, applicants shall include a narrative description of the items included in the project budget, including the value of in-kind contributions of goods and services provided to complete the project when cost share is identified to be included (reference section C of this announcement). Cost categories can include, but are not limited to, those costs items included on the SF424A or SF424C.

Budget format and detail

Format for Detailed Budgets for each Objective

A detailed budget is required for each proposed objective. Separate budgets will allow the NGWMN to fund objectives in proposals independently based on NGWMN priorities. The cost for the objective should include the work to be funded by the USGS and agency in-kind services. The in-kind services can include agency work to collect and maintain their sites that are part of the NGWMN if the work takes place during the performance period of the project. The in-kind services work to collect data at NGWMN sites should be included in the detailed budget for the objective and should include details on the number of sites for which data is collected. This data collection work can include both salaries and travel to collect NGWMN data. Examples of a detailed budget for each objective are provided in Attachment B, 'Example Budgets'. Provide a detailed budget for each objective in a similar format.

1. Objective name and type
2. Overall budget summary

Provide the cost of the federally funded portion cost of the objective, the cost of in-kind services provided as match, and the total cost of the objective.

Provide the overhead rate used to calculate the indirect costs (See note on indirect costs in section below budget).

3. Budget

Definitions of the columns in each budget category of the example budget tables are described below. Use the format specified in Attachment B for the detailed project budgets.

a. Salary: Provide a table with the following items for each staff member that will provide services on the objective. Include work that will be done as in-kind services.

1. Employee name,
2. Task,
3. Hourly rate of compensation,
4. Hourly rate of fringe benefit,
5. Total hourly rate (a3+a4),
6. Number of hours,
7. Salary cost (a5 x a6),
8. Indirect cost (a7 x indirect rate),
9. Total cost (a7 + a8),
10. Federal funds,
11. Agency in-kind funds.

b. Supplies: For each major type of supply, enter a description and the cost of supplies. Include supplies that will be purchased as in-kind services.

1. Type,
2. Cost per unit,
3. Number,
4. Cost of supplies (b2 x b3),
5. Indirect cost (b4 x indirect rate),
6. Total cost (b4 + b5),
7. Federal funds,

8. Agency in-kind funds.

c. Equipment: Enter a description and the cost for each piece of equipment needed. List computer purchases separately. If possible, computer purchases should be as in-kind services to avoid property ownership issues. Equipment should be described in detail in the workplan. Include equipment that will be purchased as in-kind services. If equipment purchases will not be exclusively used on the project or at NGWMN sites, the cost of the equipment should be pro-rated based on how much the equipment will be used for the NGWMN during the performance period of the project. Equipment with a single item cost of \$5,000 or more will need a quote submitted with the proposal.

1. Type,
2. Cost per unit,
3. Number,
4. Cost of equipment (b2 x b3),
5. Indirect cost (b4 x indirect rate),
6. Total cost (b4 + b5),
7. Federal funds,
8. Agency in-kind funds.

d. Travel: Provide detailed information on proposed travel (i.e., where to, why, how many, how long, per diem, and lodging rates, etc.). Include travel costs that will be used as in-kind services.

1. Traveler name/reason for travel,
2. Number of nights of lodging,
3. Lodging cost per night,
4. Number of days of meals,
5. Meal cost per day,
6. Meal and lodging cost ((d2 x d3) + (d4 x d5)),
7. Miles traveled,
8. Cost per mile,
9. Mileage cost (d7 x d8),
10. Travel cost (d6 + d9),
11. Indirect cost (d10 x indirect rate),
12. Total cost (d10 + d11),
13. Federal funds,
14. Agency in-kind funds.

e. Contracts: Describe contractual activity planned to accomplish the work. Include contracting work that will be done as in-kind services. A maximum 10% contingency can be added for contract work under Objectives 4 or 5. List any contingency as a separate item under 'Contract-Well Drilling' or 'Contract- Well Maintenance' for each well for which work is proposed. Contingencies can include contracted costs for salary, supplies, equipment, travel, and well drilling or well maintenance.

Contracts- Salary

1. Description of work,
2. Hourly rate of compensation,
3. Hourly rate of fringe benefit,

4. Total hourly rate (col 2 + col 3),
5. Number of hours,
6. Salary cost (col 4 x col 5),
7. Federal funds,
8. Agency in-kind funds.

Contracts- Supplies

1. Type,
2. Unit type,
3. Cost per unit,
4. Number,
5. Cost of supplies (col 3 x col 4)
6. Federal funds,
7. Agency in-kind funds.

Contracts- Equipment

1. Description,
2. Unit Type (each or per day, etc.),
3. Cost per unit,
4. Number
5. Cost of equipment (col 3 x col 4),
6. Federal funds,
7. Agency in-kind funds,

Contracts- Travel

1. Traveler name/reason for travel,
2. Number of nights of lodging,
3. Lodging cost per night,
4. Number of days of meals,
5. Meal cost per day,
6. Meal and lodging cost ((col 2 x col 3) + (col 4 x col 5)),
7. Miles traveled,
8. Cost per mile,
9. Mileage cost (col 7 x col 8),
10. Travel cost (col 6 + col 9),
11. Federal funds,
12. Agency in-kind funds.

Contracts- Well Drilling or Well Maintenance

1. Description,
2. Unit type (per foot or each),
3. Cost per unit,
4. Number,
5. Cost (col 3 x col 4),

6. Federal funds,
7. Agency in-kind funds

Indirect Cost/General and Administrative (G&A) Cost: Show the proposed rate, cost base, and proposed amount for allowable indirect costs based on the cost principles applicable to the Applicant's organization. If the Applicant has separate rates for recovery of labor overhead and G&A costs, each charge should be shown. Explain the distinction between items included in the two cost pools. The Applicant should propose rates for evaluation purposes, which they are also willing to establish as fixed or ceiling rates in any resulting award. **NOTE: A copy of the indirect negotiated cost agreement with the Federal Government must be provided with the application package as an appendix** (this will not count towards the page limit on the proposal). Pursuant to the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards, Section 200.414, in the absence of a negotiated rate agreement non-Federal entities may use a de minimis rate of 15% of modified total direct costs (MTDC), which should be applied to items a-d above (Salary, Supplies, Equipment, and Travel).

Data Management Plan Requirements

Proposals submitted to USGS must include a supplementary document of no more than four pages labeled "Data Management Plan" (DMP). This supplementary document should describe how the proposal will conform to USGS policy on the dissemination and sharing of research results and associated data. A valid DMP may include only the statement that no detailed plan is needed (e.g. "No data are expected to be produced from this project"), as long as the statement is accompanied by a clear justification. This supplementary document may include:

- the types of data, samples, physical collections, software, curriculum materials, and other materials to be produced in the course of the project;
- the standards to be used for data and metadata format and content (where existing standards are absent or deemed inadequate, this should be documented along with any proposed solutions or remedies);
- policies for access and sharing including provisions for appropriate protection of privacy, confidentiality, security, intellectual property, or other rights or requirements;
- provisions for re-use, re-distribution, and the production of derivatives; and
- plans for archiving data, samples, and other research products, and for preservation of free public access to them.

Additional guidance on data management plans is available from the USGS Data Management web site here: <https://www.usgs.gov/products/data-and-tools/data-management/data-management-plans> Simultaneously submitted collaborative proposals and proposals that include subawards are a single unified project and should include only one supplemental combined DMP by the lead PI that also addresses all subaward data management needs, regardless of the number of non-lead collaborative proposals or subawards included.

The Data Management Plan should include the following elements:

Type of Data: Describe the types of data to be produced during the project. This should include any water-level or water-quality data that is provided to the NGWMN. This should also include any data collection proposed under Objectives 3-5. Methods used to collect and quality assure the data should be briefly described.

Data and Metadata Standards: Describe the standards to be used for data and metadata format and content (where existing standards are absent or deemed inadequate, this should be documented along with any proposed solutions or remedies).

Policies for Access and Sharing: Describe policies for access and sharing of data including provisions for appropriate protection of privacy, confidentiality, security, intellectual property, or other rights or requirements. Data collected should be available through the NGWMN Data Portal.

Provisions for Re-use and Re-distribution: Discuss how the data can be re-used or re-distributed. Note that NGWMN data must be available to the public without restriction through the NGWMN Data Portal.

Plans for Archiving and Preservation of Access: Discuss plans to archive and preserve any data, samples, and other research products and provide free public access to them.

Additional guidance on data management plans is available from the USGS Data Management website: <https://www.usgs.gov/data-management/data-management-plans>. An example Data Management Plan for a data provider with both water-level and water-quality data is available [here](#).

The Data Management Plan should include methods used to collect data proposed in the project. These can be references or links to a document that describe the methods. It should also describe the quality assurance processes that will be used on data collected for the project.

Conflict of Interest Disclosure

Per the Financial Assistance Interior Regulation (FAIR), [2 CFR §1402.112](#), applicants must state in their application if any actual or potential conflict of interest exists at the time of submission.

(a) Applicability.

(1) This section intends to ensure that non-Federal entities and their employees take appropriate steps to avoid conflicts of interest in their responsibilities under or with respect to Federal financial assistance agreements.

(2) In the procurement of supplies, equipment, construction, and services by recipients and by subrecipients, the conflict of interest provisions in 2 CFR 200.318 apply.

(b) Notification.

(1) Non-Federal entities, including applicants for financial assistance awards, must disclose in writing any conflict of interest to the DOI awarding agency or pass-through entity in accordance with 2 CFR 200.112.

(2) Recipients must establish internal controls that include, at a minimum, procedures to identify, disclose, and mitigate or eliminate identified conflicts of interest. The recipient is responsible for notifying the Financial Assistance Officer in writing of any conflicts of interest that may arise during the life of the award, including those that have been reported by subrecipients.

(c) *Restrictions on lobbying.* Non-Federal entities are strictly prohibited from using funds under a grant or cooperative agreement for lobbying activities and must provide the required certifications and disclosures pursuant to 43 CFR part 18 and 31 U.S.C. 1352.

(d) *Review procedures.* The Financial Assistance Officer will examine each conflict of interest disclosure on the basis of its particular facts and the nature of the proposed grant or cooperative agreement, and will determine whether a significant potential conflict exists and, if it does, develop an appropriate means for resolving it.

(e) *Enforcement.* Failure to resolve conflicts of interest in a manner that satisfies the government may be cause for termination of the award. Failure to make required disclosures may result in any of the remedies described in 2 CFR 200.338, Remedies for noncompliance, including suspension or debarment (see also 2 CFR part 180).

Single Audit Reporting Statement

All U.S. states, local governments, federally recognized Indian tribal governments, and non-profit organizations expending \$750,000 USD or more in Federal award funds in the applicant's fiscal year must submit a Single Audit report for that year through the [Federal Audit Clearinghouse's Internet Data Entry System](#). U.S. state, local government, federally recognized Indian tribal government, and non-profit applicants must state if your organization was or was not required to submit a Single Audit report for the most recently closed fiscal year. If your organization was required to submit a Single Audit report for the most recently closed fiscal year, provide the EIN associated with that report and state if it is available through the [Federal Audit Clearinghouse](#) website.

Certification Regarding Lobbying

Applicants requesting more than \$100,000 in Federal funding must certify to the statements in [43 CFR Part 18, Appendix A-Certification Regarding Lobbying](#). If this application requests more than \$100,000 in Federal funds, the Authorized Official's signature on the appropriate SF-424, Application for Federal Assistance form also represents the entity's certification of the statements in 43 CFR Part 18, Appendix A.

Disclosure of Lobbying Activities

Applicants and recipients must not use any federally appropriated funds (annually appropriated or continuing appropriations) or matching funds under a Federal award to pay any person for lobbying in connection with the award. Lobbying is influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any U.S. agency, a Member of the U.S. Congress, an officer or employee of the U.S. Congress, or an employee of a Member of the U.S. Congress connection with the award. Applicants and recipients must complete and submit the [SF-LLL, "Disclosure of Lobbying Activities"](#) form if the Federal share of the proposal or award is more than \$100,000 and the applicant or recipient has made or has agreed to make any payment using non-appropriated funds for lobbying in connection with the application or award. The SF-LLL form is available with this Funding Opportunity on Grants.gov. See 43 CFR, Subpart 18.100 and 31 USC 1352 for more information on when additional submission of this form is required.

Overlap or Duplication of Effort Statement

Applicants must provide a statement indicating if there is any overlap between this Federal application and any other Federal application, or funded project, in regards to activities, costs, or time commitment of key personnel. If no such overlap or duplication exists, state, “There are no overlaps or duplication between this application and any of our other Federal applications or funded projects, including in regards to activities, costs, or time commitment of key personnel”. If any such overlap exists, provide a complete description of overlaps or duplications between this proposal and any other federally funded project or application in regards to activities, costs, and time commitment of key personnel, as applicable. Provide a copy of any overlapping or duplicative proposal submitted to any other potential funding entity and identify when that proposal was submitted, to whom (entity name and program), and when you anticipate being notified of their funding decision. The statement and the description of overlap or duplication, when applicable, may be provided within the proposal or as a separate attachment to the application. If at any time a proposal is awarded funds that would be overlapping or duplicative of the funding requested from USGS, the applicant must immediately notify the USGS point of contact. Any overlap or duplication of funding between the proposed project and other active or anticipated projects may impact selection and/or funding amount.

D3. Unique Entity Identifier and System for Award Management (SAM)

Identifier and System for Award Management (SAM.gov) Registration: This requirement does not apply to individuals applying for funds as an individual (i.e., unrelated to any business or nonprofit organization you may own, operate, or work within), or any entity with an exception to bypass SAM.gov registration with prior approval from the funding bureau or office in accordance with bureau or office policy. All other applicants are required to register in SAM.gov prior to submitting a Federal award application and obtain a [Unique Entity Identifier \(UEI\)](#) which replaces the Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number from Dun & Bradstreet in April 2022. A Federal award may not be made to an applicant that has not completed the SAM.gov registration. If an applicant selected for funding has not completed their SAM.gov registration by the time the program is ready to make an award, the program may determine the applicant is not qualified to receive an award. Federal award recipients must also continue to maintain an active SAM.gov registration with current information through the life of their Federal award(s).

Register with the System for Award Management (SAM)

Applicants can register on the [SAM.gov](#) website. The “Help” tab on the website contains User Guides and other information to assist you with registration. The Grants.gov “[Register with SAM](#)” page also provides detailed instructions. Applicants can contact the supporting Federal Service Desk for help registering in SAM. Once registered in SAM, entities will be assigned a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI). Entities must renew and revalidate their SAM registration at least once every 12 months from the date previously registered. Entities are strongly encouraged to revalidate their registration as often as needed to ensure their information is up to date and reflects changes that may have been made to the entity’s IRS information. There is no cost to register with SAM.gov. There are third-party vendors who will charge a fee in exchange for registering entities with SAM.gov; please be aware you can register and request help for free. If

applicable, foreign entities who want to receive payment directly to a U.S. bank account must enter and maintain valid, current banking information in SAM.

D4. Submission Dates and Times

Due Date for Applications

January 16, 2025

Application Due Date Explanation

Electronically submitted applications must be submitted no later than 4:00 p.m., ET, on the listed application due date.

D5. Intergovernmental Review

Prior to application submission, U.S. state and local government applicants should visit the [OMB Office of Federal Financial Management website](#) and view the “State Point of Contact (SPOC) List” to determine whether their application is subject to the state intergovernmental review process under Executive Order (E.O.) 12372 “Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs.” States not on the list do not participate in the intergovernmental review process, and therefore do not have a SPOC. If you are located within a State that does not have a SPOC, you may send application materials directly to a Federal awarding agency. If your state is on the list, contact the designated entity for more information on the state’s prior review requirements for Federal assistance applications.

D6. Funding Restrictions

Funding cannot be used to:

- Purchase software or software maintenance license fees that are used for routine processing of water-level or water-quality data
- Purchase software to be used as a database to store agency data
- Upgrade data to a new database system
- Collect routine water-level or water-quality data
- Perform quality assurance work on routinely collected water-level or water-quality data
- Purchase or lease vehicles to be used to support routine data collection efforts
- Purchase equipment or supplies for water-quality sampling
- Purchase downhole cameras
- Purchase geophysical logging equipment or supplies
- Purchase GPS equipment
- Develop new agency databases
- Purchase land or obtain easements for site access
- Contract with USGS or other Federal agencies to perform work on the project

No pre-award costs are allowed.

The Federal awarding agency that provides the largest amount of direct funding to your organization is your cognizant agency for indirect costs, unless otherwise assigned by the White House Office of Management and Budget (OMB). If the Department of the Interior is your organization's cognizant agency, the Interior Business Center will negotiate your indirect cost rate. Contact the Interior Business Center by phone 916-930-3803 or using the [IBC Email Submission Form](#). See the [IBC Website](#) for more information.

Organizations must have an active Federal award before they can submit an indirect cost rate proposal to their cognizant agency. Failure to establish an approved rate during the award period renders all costs otherwise allocable as indirect costs unallowable under the award. Recipients must have prior written approval from USGS to use amounts budgeted for direct costs to satisfy cost-share or match requirements or to cover unallowable indirect costs. Recipients shall not shift unallowable indirect costs to another Federal award unless specifically authorized to do so by legislation.

Required Indirect Cost Statement to be submitted with Application

All organizations must include the applicable statement from the following list in their application, and attach to their application any documentation identified in the applicable statement:

We are:

- A U.S. state or local government entity receiving more than \$35 million in direct Federal funding each year with an indirect cost rate of [insert rate]. We submit our indirect cost rate proposals to our cognizant agency. Attached is a copy of our most recently approved rate agreement/certification.
- A U.S. state or local government entity receiving less than \$35 million in direct Federal funding with an indirect cost rate of [insert rate]. We have prepared and will retain for audit an indirect cost rate proposal and related documentation.
- A [insert your organization type; U.S. states and local governments, do not use this statement] that has previously negotiated or currently has an approved indirect cost rate with our cognizant agency. Our indirect cost rate is [insert rate]. [Insert either: "Attached is a copy of our most recently approved but expired rate agreement. In the event an award is made, we will submit an indirect cost rate proposal to our cognizant agency within 90 calendar days after the award is made." *or* "Attached is a copy of our current negotiated indirect cost rate agreement."]
- A [insert your organization type] that has never submitted an indirect cost rate proposal to our cognizant agency. Our indirect cost rate is [insert rate]. If we receive an award, we will submit an indirect cost rate proposal to our cognizant agency within 90 calendar days after the award date.
- A [insert your organization type] that has never submitted an indirect cost rate proposal to our cognizant agency and has an indirect cost rate that is lower than 10%. Our indirect cost rate is [insert rate; must be lower than 10%]. However, if we receive an award we will not be able to meet the requirement to submit an indirect cost rate proposal to our cognizant agency within 90 calendar days after award. We request as a condition of

award to charge a flat indirect cost rate of [insert rate; must be lower than 10%] against [insert a clear description of the direct cost base against which your rate is charged (e.g., salaries; salaries and fringe benefits; or modified total direct costs). However, please note that your organization cannot charge indirect costs in excess of the indirect costs that would be recovered if applied against modified total direct costs as defined in §2 CFR 200.68]. We understand that we must notify USGS in writing if we establish an approved rate with our cognizant agency at any point during the award period.

- A [insert your organization type] that has never submitted an indirect cost rate proposal to our cognizant agency and has an indirect cost rate that is 10% or higher. Our indirect cost rate is [insert your organization's indirect rate; must be 10% or higher]. However, if we receive an award we will not be able to meet the requirement to submit an indirect cost rate proposal to our cognizant agency within 90 calendar days after award. We request as a condition of award to charge a flat *de minimis* indirect cost rate of 10% to be charged against modified total direct project costs as defined in 2 CFR §200.68. We understand that we must notify USGS in writing if we establish a negotiated rate with our cognizant agency at any point during the award period. We understand that additional Federal funds may not be available to support an unexpected increase in indirect costs during the project period and that such changes are subject to review, negotiation, and prior approval by USGS.
- A [insert your organization type] that is submitting this proposal for consideration under the "Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Unit Network", which has a Department of the Interior-approved indirect cost rate cap of 17.5%. If we have an approved indirect cost rate with our cognizant agency, we understand that we must apply this reduced rate against the same direct cost base as identified in our approved indirect cost rate agreement per 2 CFR §1402.414. If we do not have an approved indirect cost rate with our cognizant agency, we understand that we must charge indirect costs against the modified total direct cost base defined in 2 CFR §200.68 "Modified Total Direct Cost (MTDC)". We understand that we must request prior approval from USGS to use the 2 CFR 200 MTDC base instead of the base identified in our approved indirect cost rate agreement. We understand that USGS approval of such a request will be based on: 1) a determination that our approved base is only a subset of the MTDC (such as salaries and wages); and 2) that use of the MTDC base will still result in a reduction of the total indirect costs to be charged to the award. In accordance with 2 CFR §200.405, we understand that indirect costs not recovered due to a voluntary reduction to our federally negotiated rate are not allowable for recovery via any other means.
- A [insert your organization type] that will charge all costs directly.

D7. Other Submission Requirements

All applications must be submitted through www.grants.gov.

E. Application Review Information

E1. Criteria

Proposal Quality

Maximum Points: 10

This factor considers the overall quality of the proposal. This criterion will apply to the overall proposal. This score will be applied to each objective in the proposal. The maximum score for this criterion is 10.

- The proposal is well written and adequately proofread
- The proposal follows guidelines for page limits and font size
- Required elements are present and meet guidelines in the Program Announcement
 - Proposal Information Summary
 - Table of recent NGWMN projects
 - Overall project budget
 - Detailed budget for each objective
 - Timeline for each objective
 - Data Management Plan
 - Staff qualifications
 - Supporting letters
 - NGWMN proposal checklist
- Maps meet the guidelines in the Program Announcement
- Tables meet the guidelines in the Program Announcement

Relevance

Maximum Points: 10

This factor considers the relevance and importance of the activity as it relates to the USGS NGWMN Program goals. Each objective included in the proposal receives a separate score for Relevance. The maximum score for this criterion is 10.

- The proposed work helps fill gaps in the NGWMN or enhances the data available to the NGWMN
- The proposed work supports the long-term goals of the NGWMN
- The proposal states the benefits of the work to the NGWMN
- Well density guidelines are cited when proposing gap filling work

Technical Quality

Maximum Points: 10

This factor considers the merit of the proposed approach, the chance of success, attention to NGWMN requirements, and completion of required products. Each objective included in the proposal receives a separate score for Technical Quality. The maximum score for this criterion is 10.

- The workplan adequately describes the need for the work
- The approach to complete the work is clearly defined and reasonable
- The workplan follows the requirements of the Program Announcement for the objective
- Techniques are adequately described and referenced
- Includes consideration of requirements from the NGWMN Framework Document and/or Tip Sheets

- Workplan includes detailed Tasks which are included in the Detailed Budget and Timeline for the Objective
- Data collection methods and quality assurance for work under the objective is described in the Data Management Plan
- Workplan includes task to document work in final report

Budget

Maximum Points: 10

This factor considers whether the proposed budget reflects the level of effort required to accomplish the work. Also considers whether the budget use the prescribed formats and contain adequate detail on tasks. Each objective included in the proposal receives a separate score for the Budget. The maximum score for this criterion is 10

- Budget formats shown in the Program Announcement are used
- Detailed budgets include the objective summary table
- Specific tasks in the workplan are included in the detailed budget
- Budget items are separated out by individual task and staff member
- The detailed budget contains adequate detail on both Federally funded work and in-kind services
- Costs and hours for the work are reasonable and justified
- Work proposed under Objectives 4-6 that does not provides at least 25% match will be scored lower
- Costs for work done under contracts are itemized

E2. Review and Selection Process

Rejection of Applications after Initial Review

If an application does not meet eligibility requirements, as determined by the Grants Specialist in consultation with the USGS NGWMN Program Office, the applicant will be promptly notified that the proposal will not be reviewed and told the reason for its ineligibility.

Program Board Review of Proposals

Applications will be reviewed by the USGS NGWMN staff and the NGWMN Program Board. The NGWMN Program Board members consist of 6 NGWMN data providers and 4 representatives from organizations involved with the NGWMN. The NGWMN Program Board will review all proposals prior to a Program Board meeting. During the review meeting, each proposal will be discussed, and each Program Board member will score each objective according to the evaluation criteria.

All proposed objectives will be evaluated individually in accordance with the criteria above.

E3. CFR – Regulatory Information

Refer to the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) Award Terms and Conditions for the general administrative and national policy requirements applicable to USGS awards. USGS will communicate any other program- or project-specific special terms and conditions to recipients in their Notice of Award.

E4. Anticipated Announcement and Federal Award Dates

Announcement of proposal selections and funding recommendations will be made to the Technical Contact and Financial Contact shown in the Proposal Information Summary through email. This should occur within two to three months after the closing date of the funding opportunity. Federal awards will be made between June 1st and September 30, 2025, depending on the requested project start date.

F. Federal Award Administration Information

F1. Federal Award Notices

F2. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

See the “[DOI Standard Terms and Conditions](#)” for the administrative and national policy requirements applicable to DOI awards.

Refer to the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) Award Terms and Conditions for the general administrative and national policy requirements applicable to USGS awards. The USGS will communicate any other program- or project-specific special terms and conditions to recipients in their Notice of Award.

Data Availability

Per the Financial Assistance Interior Regulation (FAIR), [2 CFR §1402.315](#):

(a) All data, methodology, factual inputs, models, analyses, technical information, reports, conclusions, valuation products or other scientific assessments in any medium or form, including textual, numerical, graphic, cartographic, narrative, or audiovisual, resulting from a financial assistance agreement is available for use by the Department of the Interior, including being available in a manner that is sufficient for independent verification.

(b) The Federal Government has the right to:

(1) Obtain, reproduce, publish, or otherwise use the data, methodology, factual inputs, models, analyses, technical information, reports, conclusions, or other scientific assessments, produced under a Federal award; and

(2) Authorize others to receive, reproduce, publish, or otherwise use such data, methodology, factual inputs, models, analyses, technical information, reports, conclusions, or other scientific assessments, for Federal purposes, including to allow for meaningful third-party evaluation.

Full Terms and Conditions are presented in Attachment C, 'Terms and Conditions'.

F3. Reporting

Financial Reports

All recipients must use the [SF-425, Federal Financial Report](#) form for financial reporting. At a minimum, all recipients must submit a **final** financial report. Final reports are due no later than 90 calendar days after the award period of performance end date or termination date. For awards with periods of performance longer than 12 months, recipients are required to submit **interim** financial reports on the frequency established in the Notice of Award. The only exception to the interim financial reporting requirement is if the recipient is required to use the SF 270/271 to request payment and requests payment at least once annually through the entire award period of performance. We will describe all financial reporting requirements in the Notice of Award.

Details on deadlines and how to submit the Financial Report are included in the Terms and Conditions shown in Attachment C, Section 5, Reporting Requirements.

Performance Reports

Performance reports must contain a comparison of actual accomplishments with the established goals and objectives of the award; a description of reasons why established goals were not met, if appropriate; and any other pertinent information relevant to the project results. Final reports are due no later than 90 calendar days after the award period of performance end date or termination date. For awards with periods of performance longer than 12 months, recipients are required to submit **interim** financial reports on the frequency established in the Notice of Award.

Details on deadlines and how to submit the Final Project Report are included in the Terms and Conditions shown in Attachment C, Section 5, Reporting Requirements.

Significant Development Reports

Events may occur between the scheduled performance reporting dates which have significant impact upon the supported activity. In such cases, recipients are required to notify the Bureau in writing as soon as the recipient becomes aware of any problems, delays, or adverse conditions that will materially impair the ability to meet the objective of the Federal award. This disclosure must include a statement of any corrective action(s) taken or contemplated, and any assistance needed to resolve the situation. The recipient should also notify USGS in writing of any favorable developments that enable meeting time schedules and objectives sooner or at less cost than anticipated or producing more or different beneficial results than originally planned.

Conflict of Interest Disclosures

Recipients must notify the program immediately in writing of any conflict of interest that arise during the life of their Federal award, including those reported to them by any subrecipient under the award. Recipients must notify the program in writing if any employees, including subrecipient and contractor personnel, are related to, married to, or have a close personal relationship with any Federal employee in the Federal funding program or who otherwise may

have been involved in the review and selection of the award. The term employee means any individual engaged in the performance of work pursuant to the Federal award. Recipients may not have a former Federal employee as a key project official, or in any other substantial role related to their award, whose participation put them out of compliance with the legal authorities addressing post-Government employment restrictions. See the [U.S. Office of Government Ethics website](#) for more information on these restrictions. USGS will examine each conflict of interest disclosure based on its particular facts and the nature of the project and will determine if a significant potential conflict exists. If it does, USGS will work with the recipient to determine an appropriate resolution. Failure to disclose and resolve conflicts of interest in a manner that satisfies USGS may result in any of the remedies described in 2 CFR 200.338 Remedies for Noncompliance, including termination of the award.

Other Mandatory Disclosures

The Non-Federal entity or applicant 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. Non-Federal entities that receive a Federal award including the terms and conditions outlined in 2 CFR 200, Appendix XII—Award Term and Condition for Recipient Integrity and Performance Matters are required to report certain civil, criminal, or administrative proceedings to SAM. Failure to make required disclosures can result in any of the remedies described in 2 CFR 200.338 Remedies for Noncompliance, including suspension or debarment.

Reporting Matters Related to Recipient Integrity and Performance

If the total value of your currently active grants, cooperative agreements, and procurement contracts from all Federal awarding agencies exceeds \$10,000,000 for any period of time during the period of performance of this Federal award, then you as the recipient during that period of time must maintain the currency of information reported to the System for Award Management (SAM) that is made available in the designated integrity and performance system (currently the Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System (FAPIIS)) about civil, criminal, or administrative proceedings in accordance with Appendix XII to 2 CFR 200.

G. Federal Awarding Agency Contact(s)

G1. Program Technical Contact

For **programmatic technical assistance**, contact:

First Name:

Jason

Last Name:

Fine

Address:

USGS, 2730 N Deer Run Road, Carson City, NV 89701

Telephone:

(919) 817-5395

Email:jmfine@usgs.gov
Email contact is preferred.

G2. Program Administration Contact

For **program administration assistance**, contact:

First Name:

Sara

Last Name:

Roser

Address:

12201 Sunrise Valley Drive, Mailstop 205, Reston, Virginia, 20192

Telephone:

703-648-7357

Email:

sroser@usgs.gov

Email contact is preferred.

G3. Application System Technical Support

For **Grants.gov technical registration and submission, downloading forms and application packages**, contact:

Name:

Grants.gov Customer Support

Telephone:

1-800-518-4726

Email:

Support@grants.gov

H. Other Information

Payments

Domestic recipients are required to register in and receive payment through the U.S. Treasury's Automated Standard Application for Payments (ASAP), unless approved for a waiver by the USGS program. Foreign recipients receiving funds to a final destination bank outside the U.S. are required to receive payment through the U.S. Treasury's International Treasury Services (ITS) System. Foreign recipients receiving funds to a final destination bank in the U.S. are required to enter and maintain current banking details in their SAM.gov entity profile and receive payment through the Automated Clearing House network by electronic funds transfer (EFT). The Bureau will include recipient-specific instructions on how to request payment,

including identification of any additional information required and where to submit payment requests, as applicable, in all Notices of Award.

PAPERWORK REDUCTION ACT STATEMENT:

OMB Control Number: 1028-0114, Expiration Date: July 31, 2025

OMB Control Number: 1028-0114, Expiration Date: July 31, 2025.

The Paperwork Reduction Act says that the agency must tell you why we are collecting this information, how we will use it, and whether you have to give it to us. This information is being collected to determine the eligibility of the applicant and as a basis for approval or disapproval of the proposed project. The purpose of the program is to support data providers to the National Ground-Water Monitoring Network. The Network provides groundwater data from Principal Aquifers at a regional or National scale to assist in assessing ground water resources. Response to this request is required to obtain and retain a cooperative agreement under the National Ground-Water Monitoring Network. Public report burden for this collection is estimated to average 40 hours per agreement and 125 hours to prepare a final technical report. The OMB Control Number is 1028-0114 for this information collection; the expiration date is July 31, 2025. Direct comments regarding this collection of information may be sent to the Bureau Clearance Officer, U.S. Geological Survey, 12201 Sunrise Valley Drive, MS807, Reston VA 20192.