

ANNOUNCEMENT FOR A STUDENT SERVICES CONTRACT
United States Environmental Protection Agency
Office of Research and Development
National Exposure Research Laboratory
Ecosystems Research Division, Athens GA

RFQ-RT-09-00172

The Ecosystems Research Division (ERD), Athens, GA of the National Exposure Research Laboratory, Office of Research and Development, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, is seeking individuals, at least 18 years of age who have met the requirements for graduation with a degree from a college or university within the past two years, to provide full-time services under a contractual agreement in support of a research project focusing on microbial fate and transport from terrestrial environments into freshwater and coastal environments. The Government will make the contract award based on the student's work experience, knowledge and skills, training and course work (GPA and number of course hours) as it relates to the services described in this Announcement. The student/recent graduate contractor must have completed a M.S. degree program in environmental health science, biological science, biochemistry, microbiology, molecular biology, ecology, environmental toxicology, or related discipline. For additional information regarding ERD, visit its home page at <http://www.epa.gov/athens/>.

The student contractor will primarily be responsible for using genetic molecular techniques to quantify fecal indicator bacteria and waterborne pathogens from various aquatic resources including streams, lakes, and coastal environments. The student will extract DNA from environmental matrices such as soils, water, sediments, and enrichment cultures using commercially available kits and run PCR and quantitative PCR analyses to identify and quantify microorganisms. The student contractor will apply cloning and sequencing techniques to determine the variability of pathogenic waterborne bacteria such as *Campylobacter* and/or *Salmonella* and will be responsible for running and maintaining capillary sequencing and qPCR instruments. The student will also assist with runoff and storm event sample collection during field experiments and will be responsible for logging and processing samples received from the field. The student contractor may be asked to participate in conferences or seminars in support of the statement of work. All necessary instructions and training will be provided by Dr. Marirosa Molina, who will also serve as the student's mentor. Where appropriate, the student contractor will maintain careful and accurate records in designated laboratory notebooks. These notebooks, and all other data produced under this order will be the property of the Environmental Protection Agency.

This contract is to begin on or about June or July 2009. The initial contract will be for one year with an option to extend for an additional year. It is anticipated that the student contractor will work approximately 40 hours per week not to exceed 1928 hours in the base year and 1609 hours in the optional year. The duty location is the Ecosystems Research Division, NERL, 960 College Station Road, Athens, GA 30605. Work will be primarily performed in a laboratory but some field work may be required.

U.S. citizens are eligible to participate in this program. Non-U.S. citizens may be eligible to participate, depending on their immigration status and the applicable regulations of the United States Citizenship and Immigration Service (USCIS). All non-US citizens must submit, as part of their proposal package, evidence of their immigration status that allows them to work in the United States.

EPA ORD employees, their spouses, and children are NOT eligible to participate in this program and receive these contracts.

The hourly rate for this contract is \$27.76, commensurate with the minimum required level of education and experience required. The student contractor will be paid this basic hourly rate only for the number of hours worked and will not receive overtime premium. The student contractor will not accrue leave or holiday benefits and is not paid for any non-work days, regardless of the reason. The student/recent graduate contractor is considered as an independent contractor; therefore, Federal, State, Local and Social Security taxes will not be withheld; student contractors are responsible for reporting income to authorities and paying all taxes. The student contractor will be responsible for all costs of transportation to and from the principal duty station location. EPA does not provide housing, meals or other living expenses. The student contractor must be a recent graduate in good standing who was enrolled in an advanced degree program at a recognized educational institution within the past two years.

To submit a proposal for this contract, you must provide a one or two page resume or statement of qualifications including:

1. Your full legal name
2. Mailing address
3. Telephone number
4. Email address (if any),
5. Date of birth
6. Social Security Number
7. Place of birth
8. Citizenship or, if not a US citizen, immigration/VISA status
9. Education, including description of relevant classes
10. Work or volunteer experience related to the scientific field
11. Laboratory work experience (if applicable to these services)
12. Statement of your commitment to accept the stated hourly rate of \$27.76 and to fulfill at least the initial year of the order, if selected

Attach a copy of all your college/university transcripts (unofficial copies are acceptable, if it is apparent from the transcript copy that it is a copy of an official document and that the school is identified), listing courses taken, grades, and overall GPA. Proof of driver's license and two letters of recommendation are also required. Send these materials to: William Goins, Contracting Specialist, via email at goins.william@epa.gov or via fax, with cover page, to (919) 685-3427.

Prior to submitting a proposal for this contract, you should visit the EPA procurement home page at http://www.epa.gov/oam/rtp_cmd/ to learn the full details of the contract. You should visit the website periodically to check the status of this procurement and to see whether or not any amendments (changes to the requirement of the posted contract) have been issued. If you have any questions on the information contained on the website, contact William Goins, Contracting Specialist, via email at goins.william@epa.gov or via fax, with cover page, to (919) 685-3427.

The Government will make contract award(s) based on the student=s work experience, knowledge and skills, training and course work as it relates to the services as described in the Announcement. Students who perform under contract for EPA will be required to undergo a

background check, check of FBI fingerprint files and a suitability determination by the Environmental Protection Agency. The Government may elect to award contracts to multiple students under this Announcement.

Questions regarding the technical aspects of the contracted duties and responsibilities should be directed to Dr. Marirosa Molina, the EPA mentor for this position, at molina.marirosa@epa.gov.

Any proposal received at the Government office designated after the exact time specified for receipt is "late" and will not be considered unless it is received before award is made, and the Contracting Officer determines that accepting the late offer would not unduly delay the acquisition and:

a). It was transmitted electronically and received at the initial point of entry to the Government infrastructure not later than 5:00 p.m., one working day prior to the date established for receipt; or there is acceptable evidence to establish it was received at the Government installation and was under the Government's control prior to the time set for receipt; or

b). It was the only proposal received.

However, a late modification of an otherwise successful proposal that makes its terms more favorable to the Government will be considered at any time it is received and may be accepted.

Acceptable evidence to establish the time of receipt at the Government installation includes the time/date stamp of that installation on the proposal wrapper, other documentary evidence of receipt maintained by the installation, or oral testimony or statements of Government personnel.

If an emergency or unanticipated event interrupts normal Government processes so that proposals cannot be received at the office designated by the exact time specified, and urgent Government requirements preclude amendment *of* the announcement, the time specified for receipt will be deemed extended to the same time of day specified on the first work day on which normal Government processes resume.

The Government will make contract awards based on all other factors other than price (students'/recent graduates' knowledge and skills, academic and work experience -- training and course work as it relates to the services described in the Announcement) being significantly more important than price. Personal interviews may be conducted with the most promising candidates.

The evaluations of students' resumes or statements of qualifications will be based on the evaluation factors posted on the solicitation website.

Students who perform under contract to EPA must have a checking *or* savings account at a financial institution that will accept direct deposits of Federal funds for Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT) prior to award and must register with the Central Contractor Registration (CCR) and Dun and Bradstreet (D&B). To register with D&B and obtain a DUNS number, selected students or recent graduates can call D&B at 1-866-705-5711 or contact D&B at <http://www.dnb.com/updte>. To register for the CCR, selected students or recent graduates can call 1-888-227-2423 or 296-961-5757 or contact CCR at <http://www.ccr.gov>. There is no charge to register for DUNS or CCR.

Students who perform under contract to EPA may be required to undergo a background investigation consisting of a check of Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) name and fingerprint files, and a suitability determination. Selected students or recent graduates will be provided copies of the appropriate forms and instructions on their completion and submission requirements.

Student/recent graduate contractors are responsible for all costs of transportation to and from the principal duty station location. EPA does not provide nor pay for housing, meals, or other living expenses while working at the principal duty station location. If performance of the contract requires overnight travel, the student/recent graduate contractor will travel under the rules and procedures established for Federal employee travel.

EPA will be responsible for compensating students or recent graduates in the same manner as Federal employees for any injury suffered while performing these services. Students or recent graduates are protected from personal common-law tort liability for damages to third parties arising out of his/her work under the same broad-based immunity provided to Federal employees while performing these services. Properly licensed students or recent graduates may be permitted to drive Government vehicles, if required to do so by the statement of work.

Students or recent graduates will be required to comply with Federal requirements for Standards of Ethical Conduct and Conflicts of Interest.

Students or recent graduates may be offered, at Government expense, non-mandatory vaccinations, immunizations, treatments, medical examinations, and health and safety training to safeguard their health prior to beginning certain types of work which may expose them to health or safety risks in the environment.

Selected students or recent graduates will receive more information about these issues prior to award of any contracts.