

U.S. EPA, Office of Prevention, Pesticides and Toxic Substances
Cooperative Agreement to Provide Technical Support for Mercury
Reduction in Hospitals in Other Countries
Request for Proposals FY 2008

OVERVIEW

FEDERAL AGENCY NAME: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Office of Prevention, Pesticides and Toxic Substances

FUNDING OPPORTUNITY TITLE: Cooperative Agreement to Provide Technical Support for Mercury Reduction in Hospitals in Other Countries

ANNOUNCEMENT TYPE: Initial Announcement

FUNDING OPPORTUNITY NUMBER: EPA-HQ-OPPT-2008-004

CATALOG OF FEDERAL DOMESTIC ASSISTANCE (CFDA) NO: 66.716

PROPOSAL SUBMISSION DATES: The closing date and time for receipt of hard copy proposal and grants.gov packages is **August 11, 2008**, 5:00 p.m., Eastern Standard Time (EST). All hard copies of proposal packages must be received by EPA Office of Pollution Prevention and Toxics, National Program Chemicals Division by the above date and time in order to be considered for funding. Electronic submissions must be date/time stamped by Grants.gov by the above date and time. Proposals received after the closing date and time will not be considered for funding. Final proposals will be requested from those eligible entities whose proposal has been successfully evaluated and preliminarily recommended for award.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is soliciting proposals from eligible parties to help reduce or eliminate mercury use in hospitals and health care clinics in other countries. The selected applicant will provide technical assistance to foreign governments (including local or provincial governments in other countries), international organizations, non-government organizations, and hospitals to promote the use of non-mercury devices in the health care sector. The selected applicant will identify specific countries (with initial emphasis on Latin America) that would be interested in reducing mercury in their health care sectors.

Potential activities include, but are not limited to:

- Assessment of hospital facilities for current use of mercury-containing devices;
- Assistance in drafting, or assessment of, hospital mercury reduction plans;
- Assistance in drafting, or assessment of, hospital mercury waste management plans;
- Assistance in identifying non-mercury products;

- Development of standard materials for use by any countries or health care systems interested in mercury reduction in their hospitals and clinics; and
- Provision of train-the-trainer workshops and other activities that would result in capacity building in selected countries to promote the reduction or elimination of mercury use in pilot hospitals.

This cooperative agreement is consistent with priorities in the United Nations Environment Program's (UNEP's) ongoing Global Partnership as well as the efforts to safely manage mercury waste resulting from hospital mercury products collection and retirement under the Basel Convention. As such, this cooperative agreement seeks to address mercury reduction throughout the lifecycle of various mercury-containing products in hospitals.

In 2008, EPA's Office of Prevention, Pesticides and Toxic Substances (OPPTS) anticipates awarding one cooperative agreement, to be issued for a maximum of \$1.0 million over a four-year project period. When developing proposals, applicants should consider a first-year budget of \$175,000 and working with up to five (5) hospitals distributed among two to three Latin American countries. Annual funding for future years may increase, or decrease, depending on future appropriations.

Applicant Eligibility: Assistance under this program is generally available to States, U.S. territories or possession, federally recognized Indian tribal governments and Native American Organizations, public and private universities and colleges, hospitals, laboratories, other public or private nonprofit institutions, local governments, and individuals and international entities. For profit organizations are not eligible. Non-profit organizations described in Section 501(c)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code that engage in lobbying activities as defined in Section 3 of the Lobbying Disclosure Act of 1995 are not eligible to apply. EPA may also limit eligibility for certain competitive funding opportunities under this CFDA to a subset of eligible applicants and/or to tribes, Alaska native villages, and intertribal consortia located in the Region where a project is going to be performed. For Tribal funding opportunities to be funded with the State and Tribal Grant (STAG) appropriation, eligibility will be limited to Tribes, Alaska native villages, and intertribal consortia to support the Office of Pesticide Programs Tribal Program. For certain competitive funding opportunities under this CFDA description, the Agency may limit eligibility to compete to a number or subset of eligible applicants consistent with the Agency's Assistance Agreement Competition Policy.

This request for proposals includes the following information:

- I. Funding Opportunity Description
- II. Award Information
- III. Eligibility Information
- IV. Proposal and Submission Information
- V. Proposal Review Information
- VI. Award Administration Information
- VII. Agency Contact
- VIII. Other Information

FULL TEXT OF ANNOUNCEMENT

I. FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION

A. Authority

EPA expects to award one cooperative agreement under the authority provided in Section 10 of the Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA), as supplemented by Public Law No. 106-74, and 102(2)(F) of the National Environmental Protection Act.

B. Background Information

Reducing the use of mercury-containing products is an important component of preventing mercury releases to the environment. Disposing of wastes with mercury-containing products using waste incinerators or landfills can release mercury into air, land, and water. In addition, some mercury-containing products (e.g., thermometers), can break during use and spill elemental mercury into enclosed areas (e.g., a hospital). Such releases can cause direct human exposure to elemental mercury through inhalation. Cost-effective, non-mercury alternatives to most mercury-containing products are available and can help to reduce or replace the use of such products, thereby helping to reduce global and local mercury releases and exposure.

Under the UNEP's Mercury Program, EPA is developing international partnerships to reduce or eliminate the use of mercury-containing products through pilot projects that replicate successful U.S. domestic mercury reduction programs. EPA has had a very successful voluntary mercury elimination program with the health care sector. The Agency currently has pilot programs underway for health care facilities in Argentina, China, Costa Rica, and Mexico. In addition, EPA will soon begin developing pilot projects in India.

In the health care sector, there is a continuing need to partner with national and international stakeholders to share information and successful approaches for reducing use of mercury products, increasing use of non-mercury substitutes, and promoting safer disposal of waste mercury products. Mercury-containing products of primary concern in hospitals and health care clinics are thermometers, sphygmomanometers (i.e., blood pressure cuffs), esophageal dilators, and, in certain instances, dental amalgam.

C. Program Description

1. Purpose and Scope. The Office of Pollution Prevention and Toxics (OPPT) intends to award one Cooperative Agreement award under this announcement to provide financial assistance to perform the following, although not limited to the six enumerated activities: (1) Assist in the drafting of , or assessment of hospital mercury reduction plans, (2) Assist in identifying non-mercury products, (3) Assess hospital facilities for current use of mercury-containing devices, (4) Assist in drafting, or the assessment of hospital mercury waste management plans, (5) Develop standard materials for use by any country or health care systems interested in mercury reduction in their hospitals and clinics, and (6) Provide train-the-trainer workshops and other activities that

would result in capacity building in selected countries designed to promote the reduction or elimination of mercury use in pilot hospitals.

2. Activities to be funded. Funds may be used for assessments of the types and quantities of mercury-containing equipment and products used in hospitals; assessments of hospital plans and practices related to mercury; and assistance to hospitals to develop or improve their plans and to estimate the amount of mercury expected to be removed by implementing these plans.

3. Goal and Objectives. EPA intends that recipient will use funding provided under this cooperative agreement to accomplish the following project goals:

- (1) Assist selected pilot hospitals and health care clinics in other countries in reducing their use of mercury-containing products and improving their management of mercury-containing wastes;
- (2) Provide host countries with information on the amount of mercury-containing products and equipment used by hospitals and clinics that is reduced as a result of the project; and
- (3) Develop technical know-how and capacity within host countries so that these countries can apply their new knowledge by replicating successful projects in additional hospitals without the aid of outside parties.

The selected applicant will provide technical assistance to foreign governments (including local or provincial governments in other countries), international organizations, non-government organizations, and hospitals to promote the use of non-mercury devices in the health care sector. The selected applicant will identify specific countries (with initial emphasis on Latin America) that would be interested in reducing mercury in their health care sectors.

EPA seeks applicants who have experience working with such international organizations as the United Nations Environment Program, the World Health Organization (WHO), and non-profit international regional organizations, such as the Pan-American Health Organization (PAHO) in managing projects to build capacity in hospitals and develop programs that can be replicated at the local and regional level.

In assisting hospitals in developing such plans, applicants are encouraged to partner with groups that have knowledge of the health care system of the country, as well as the local language and customs. Applicants will be expected to have the capacity to translate documents to and from local languages, or to partner with groups who have such capability. Written reports resulting from this assessment must be understandable to and easily accessible by hospital management and staff.

D. Project Phases

Working with host country and non-profit health/community organizations the applicant will conduct the following activities:

- **Facility Assessment of Mercury Use.** A full facility assessment of each hospital or clinic facility may include various components, including but not limited to: (1) the types and quantities of mercury-containing equipment and products present; (2) where the

types and quantities of mercury-containing equipment and products are located; and (3) the types and quantities of mercury-containing equipment and products used by particular departments or sections of the facility. The output of this activity will be a comprehensive inventory of mercury in the hospital or clinic.

- **Plans and Practices Assessment.** The hospital or clinic may already have in place plans or practices for reducing mercury-containing products in the facility and for properly managing mercury-containing wastes. All plans and actual practices that relate to mercury shall be assessed. This assessment may include various components, however, the plans and practices for the requirements listed below must be addressed in the proposal: (1) mercury reduction and elimination; (2) mercury management; (3) mercury spill cleanup; (4) staff training related to mercury; (5) equipment and product purchasing policies; and (6) waste disposal. The output of this activity will be a report on the assessment of existing plans and practices relating to mercury.

- **Plan Development/Improvement.** Information obtained from the assessment activities above will be used to improve pilot hospitals' existing plans, or to draft new ones. Plans may include action items and suggested roles and requirements of the hospital facility and the local, regional, and/or national environmental agencies. Existing plans and templates already available to the public should be used to develop these hospital plans. Applicants should develop a generic set of tools that can be used for all pilot hospitals in all countries, so as to maximize work that has already been done on these types of efforts. The plans should be tailored to the needs of the hospital, while minimizing redundancy of effort. Plans to be developed include, but are not limited to:
 - *Facility Mercury Management Plan*
 - *Mercury-Containing Materials Disposal Plan*
 - *Mercury Spill Clean-Up Plan*
 - *Mercury-Free Purchasing Plan*
 - *Education Plan for Staff and Patients*

Plans shall provide detailed estimates of the amount of mercury expected to be removed by implementation of the plans. Goals will be set for mercury elimination over a one-year period and an interim progress report will be developed.

- **Provision of Training and Implementation Guidance.** The Applicant shall provide training, such as workshops on reduction and safe management of mercury-containing products for hospital staff, staff from other hospitals in the country, and representatives from the country's government health agencies. Existing training resources and templates should be used to develop hospital training plans and materials to maximize previous work that has been done on these types of efforts. The applicant will also provide guidance on how to develop and implement the various plans, activities and training enumerated under **Program Description** to said staff and agencies throughout the twelve month period from the initial hospital visit. The output of this activity will be a training plan, training materials, and a report after the training, which will describe the training activities and the level of participation of attendees, as well as to provide an

evaluation and lessons learned.

- **Post-Implementation Assessment.** Hospital and clinic facilities should be reassessed after the plans have been fully implemented, approximately ten months from initial visit of Applicant, as appropriate. The date for this assessment is subject to discussion with EPA. The output of this activity will be a report documenting how successful the plan implementation has been, what, if any, barriers to success exist, and an update or modification, as needed, of plans. The assessment shall include but not be limited to: (1) an assessment of how much mercury has been removed; (2) an estimated schedule and projection of the amount of mercury to be removed as the plans proceed; and (3) an estimate of the amount of mercury that could be reduced if existing plans are revised or new plans are developed.

E. Alignment with EPA’s Strategic Plan

This cooperative agreement will support progress toward EPA Strategic Plan Goal 4: Healthy Communities, Objective 4.1: Chemical and Pesticide Risks, and Sub-objective 4.1.1: Reduce Chemical Risks. EPA intends that recipient will use funding provided under this cooperative agreement to accomplish the following:

- (1) Assist selected pilot hospitals and health care clinics in other countries in reducing their use of mercury-containing products and improving their management of mercury-containing wastes;
- (2) Provide host countries with information on the amount of mercury-containing products and equipment used by hospitals and clinics that is reduced as a result of the project; and
- (3) Develop technical know-how and capacity within host countries so that these countries can apply their new knowledge by replicating successful projects in additional hospitals without the aid of outside parties.

F. Measuring Environmental Results: Outputs and Outcomes

Pursuant to EPA Order 5700.7, “*Environmental Results under EPA Assistance Agreements*,” EPA requires that all grant recipients adequately address environmental outputs and outcomes. Outputs and outcomes differ both in their nature and in how they are measured. Applicants must discuss environmental outputs and outcomes in their proposed work plan.

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

Expected *outputs* from the project funded under this announcement must include, but are not limited to, the following. For each pilot hospital and clinic:

- A comprehensive inventory of mercury use.
- A report that assesses its existing plans and practices for reducing mercury use.
- A new or improved plan to reduce mercury use that includes at least five components:

facility mercury management, waste disposal, spill clean-up, purchasing policy, and education for staff and patients.

- A training plan and training materials.
- Number of training workshops.
- Number of hospital and government staff that participate in training activities.
- A report after the training that describes training activities, level of participation by the hospital or clinic and government agencies, and an evaluation and lessons learned.
- A report documenting how successful the mercury reduction plan implementation has been, what barriers to success exist if any, and an update or modification of plans, as needed.

2. Outcomes. The term “outcome” means the result, effect, or consequence that will occur from carrying out an environmental program or activity that is related to an environmental or programmatic goal or objective. Outcomes may be environmental, behavioral, health-related or programmatic in nature, but must be quantitative. They may not necessarily be achievable within an assistance agreement funding period.

Expected *outcomes* from the projects to be funded under this announcement may include but are not limited to the following:

- Decreased number of mercury-containing products used in each pilot hospital and clinic.
- Increased number of mercury-free alternatives purchased or used in each pilot hospital and clinic.
- Establishment of a mercury-containing waste management system for each pilot hospital and clinic.
- Increased number of staff and patients in each pilot hospital and clinic that are educated about the risks of mercury exposure and methods of preventing such exposure.
- Decreased number of staff and patients in each pilot hospital and clinic potentially exposed to mercury.
- Number of host countries that have replicated successful mercury reduction projects in additional hospitals or clinics following completion of activities under this cooperative agreement.

II. AWARD INFORMATION

A. Amount of Funding Available

In 2008, EPA anticipates awarding one cooperative agreement for approximately \$1.0 million in funding over a four-year project period. When developing proposals, applicants should consider a first-year budget of \$175,000 and working with up to five (5) hospitals distributed among two to three Latin American countries. Actual funding and number of years of the project will depend on the availability of funding.

B. Funding Type and Restrictions

This award will be funded through a cooperative agreement and will include substantial involvement by EPA. Substantial involvement may include:

- Collaborating with recipient on the project scope of work and mode of operation;
- Approval of project phases before the recipient proceeds to the next phase;
- Approval of any proposed changes to work plan and/or budget;
- Approval of qualifications of key personnel;
- Addressing deficiencies in performance; and
- Reviewing and commenting on project reports and results after completion of the work.

Cooperative agreement funding may not be used for any mercury-related activities that are being funded or has been previously funded by other EPA or other Federal government sources. EPA cooperative agreement funds may be used only for the purposes set forth in the assistance agreement, and must be consistent with the statutory authority for the award. Cooperative agreement funds may not be used as matching funds for other Federal grants or cooperative agreements, lobbying or intervention in Federal regulatory or adjudicatory proceedings, and may not be used to sue the Federal government.

C. Start Date/Project Duration

The estimated project period for the award resulting from this solicitation is to October 1, 2008 through September 30, 2012. All projects must be completed within the negotiated project performance period, normally 12 months up to four years in length.

D. Partial Funding

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

E. Miscellaneous

Funding for this project is not guaranteed and is subject to the availability of funds and the evaluation of proposals based on the criteria in this announcement. Award of funding through this year's competition is not a guarantee of future funding. EPA reserves the right to reject all proposals and make no award under this announcement. EPA reserves the right to make additional awards under this announcement, consistent with Agency policy and guidance, if additional funding becomes available after the original selections are made. Any additional selections for awards will be made no later than 6 months after the original selection decision.

III. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

A. Eligible Applicants

Assistance under this program is generally available to States, U.S. territories or possession, federally recognized Indian tribal governments and Native American Organizations, public and private universities and colleges, hospitals, laboratories, other public or private nonprofit institutions, local governments, and individuals and international entities. For profit organizations are not eligible. Non-profit organizations described in Section 501(c)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code that engage in lobbying activities as defined in Section 3 of the Lobbying Disclosure Act of 1995 are not eligible to apply.

Non-profit organization, as defined by OMB Circular A-122, located at 2 CFR Part 230, means any corporation, trust, association, cooperative, or other organization which: (1) is operated primarily for scientific, educational, service, charitable, or similar purposes in the public interest; (2) is not organized primarily for profit; and (3) uses its net proceeds to maintain, improve, and/or expand its operations.

For this purpose, the term "non-profit organization" excludes (i) colleges and universities; (ii) hospitals; (iii) state, local, and federally-recognized Indian tribal governments; and (iv) non-profit organizations which are excluded from coverage of this part in accordance with § 230.20(c).

Non-profit organizations described in Section 501(c)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code that engage in lobbying activities as defined in Section 3 of the Lobbying Disclosure Act of 1995 are not eligible to apply.

B. Cost-Sharing or Matching

There are no requirements for cost sharing or matching under this cooperative agreement.

C. Threshold Eligibility Criteria

In order to be eligible for funding consideration under this announcement, proposals must meet all of the following conditions at the time of proposal submission:

- 1. Format, content and length of proposal:** Proposals must substantially comply with the submission instructions and requirements set forth in Section IV of this announcement or else they will be rejected. Pages in excess of the page limitation expressed in Section IV will not be reviewed.
- 2. Submission on time:** Proposals must be received by the EPA or received through www.grants.gov, as specified in Section IV of this announcement, on or before the proposal submission deadline published in Section IV of this announcement. Applicants are

responsible for ensuring that their proposal reaches the designated person/office specified in Section IV of the announcement by the submission deadline. Proposals received after the submission deadline will be considered late and returned to the sender without further consideration unless the applicant can clearly demonstrate that it was late due to EPA mishandling. For hard copy submissions, where Section IV requires proposal receipt by a specific person/office by the submission deadline, receipt by an agency mailroom is not sufficient. Applicants should confirm receipt of their proposal with Clarence Lewis, at 202-566-1243, or by e-mail at lewis.clarence@epa.gov as soon as possible after the submission deadline—failure to do so may result in your proposal not being reviewed.

3. Project phases: Proposals must address the activities within the five phases of the project described in Section I, Part D.

Applicants deemed ineligible for funding consideration as a result of the threshold eligibility review will not be considered for funding and will be notified within 15 calendar days of the ineligibility determination.

IV. PROPOSAL AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

A. General

Proposals must be typewritten and unbound, and pages should be numbered in order starting with the cover page and continuing through the attachments. Proposals must be limited to no more than 10 single sided pages of text, including the cover page and excluding required attachments (letters of commitment and resumes). Excess pages will not be reviewed or considered.

If submitting a proposal electronically, please do not compress the file. The proposal should be readable in PDF or MS Word for Windows.

Proposals must address each of the evaluation criteria specified in Section V, Part B, and must include a work plan organized and outlined as follows. The documents listed below are required no matter what the mode of submission. It is recommended that confidential business information not be included in your proposal.

B. Proposal Work Plan Elements

Each proposal work plan should be organized as outlined below and should include the following components:

1. Cover Page. Include the following information with your letterhead:

a. **Docket ID number:** EPA-HQ-OPPT-2008-004

b. **Project Title.** “Cooperative Agreement to Provide Technical Support for Mercury Reduction in Hospitals in Other Countries Request for Proposals FY 2008, EPA-HQ-OPPT-2008-004”.

c. **Organization Name and Address**

d. **Contact Name.** Include name, phone and fax numbers, and an email address for the individual who should be contacted regarding the proposal.

e. **Total Project Cost.** Specify the total amount requested from EPA, as well as any resources or funding from any other sources that are contributing support.

f. **Summary Statement.** Prepare brief (e.g., one to two sentences) overview to describe the project and how it will reduce mercury use in pilot hospitals or health care clinics in selected countries.

2. Work Plan Narrative

a. **Project Approach, Methods, and Schedule.** Outline the steps to be taken and the significant milestones to be achieved to complete the project. Describe in detail how the project tasks and activities will be carried out to accomplish the project goals and anticipated outputs and outcomes as discussed in Section I. F of this announcement. Address each of the pilot project phases: facility assessment of mercury use, plans and practices assessment, plan development/improvement, provision of training and implementation guidance, and post-implementation assessment. Include a project schedule/timeline for the first year of funding which lists tasks/steps and time period for completing each in a timely manner.

b. **Measurement and Results.** Submit a plan to track and measure progress toward achieving the outputs/outcomes as described under in Section I.F. of this announcement.

c. **Budget.** Itemize all of the projected costs of the project, and who will assume responsibility for each of the expenses. Please include any in-kind contributions or leveraged resources from other sources.

d. **Past Performance.** Submit a list of all EPA and other federal agency assistance agreements (assistance agreement include Federal grants and cooperative agreement but not Federal Contracts) that your organization performed within the last three years, (no more than 5, and preferably EPA agreements) and describe how you documented and/or reported on whether you were making progress towards achieving the expected results (e.g. outputs and outcomes) under those agreements. If you were not making progress, please indicate whether, and how, you documented why not. In evaluating applicants under this factor in Section V, EPA will consider the information provided by the applicant and may also consider other relevant information from other sources, including information from EPA files and from current and prior federal agency grantors, in order to verify or supplement the information provided by the applicant. If you do not have any relevant or available environmental results past performance information please indicate this in the proposal, and you will receive a neutral score for this factor under Section V. If you do not provide any response to this item, you may receive a score of 0 for this factor.

e. Programmatic Capability. Submit a list of federally funded assistance agreements (assistance agreements include Federal grants and cooperative agreements but not Federal Contracts) that your organization performed within the last three years, preferably EPA agreements that involve **mercury**. This should include information on federal agency funding source(s), amount of funding, and funding period. Describe (i) whether, and how, you were able to successfully complete and manage those agreements and (ii) your history of meeting the reporting requirements under those agreements including submitting acceptable final technical reports. In evaluating applicants under these factors in Section V, EPA will consider the information provided by the applicant and may also consider relevant information from other sources, including information from EPA files and from current and prior Federal agency grantors (e.g., to verify and/or supplement the information provided by the applicant). If you do not have any relevant or available past performance or reporting information, please indicate this in the proposal and you will receive a neutral score for these factors under Section V. If you do not provide any response for these items, you may receive a score of 0 for these factors.

In addition, provide information on your organizational experience and plan for timely and successfully achieving the objectives of the proposed project, and your staff expertise/qualifications, staff knowledge, and resources or the ability to obtain them, to successfully achieve the goals of the proposed project.

3. Attachments. The attachments to the work plan will not count as part of the ten page limit. The attachments should include resumes of key personnel, Internal Revenue Service certification letter of non-profit status, letters of support from each group of a partnership, and information on any grants or cooperative agreements funded in the past three years by EPA or any federal department or agency for activities involving mercury. For each group represented in a partnership, include a letter showing agreement and commitment to the project.

C. Submission Instructions

You may submit your proposal either in hard copy or in electronic format through <http://www.grants.gov> (but not both) for this announcement. Instructions for both forms of submission follow. EPA **will not** accept proposals sent via FAX or e-mail. The closing date and time for applicants to submit an proposal under this announcement is no later than **August 11, 2008**, 5:00pm Eastern Standard Time (EST).

1. Hard Copy Submission. If you wish to apply via the hard copy method, one original copy and one electronic copy are required. The electronic copy **must** be submitted on a CD and readable in PDF or MS Word for Windows, to the address below. Because of security concerns, paper proposals cannot be personally delivered. They must be sent through regular mail, overnight/express mail, or a major courier.

The following address must be used for regular mail:

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
OPPTS/OPPT/NPCD

1200 Pennsylvania Ave., NW (7404T)
Washington, DC 20460
Attn: Clarence Lewis

The following address must be used for overnight/express mail and couriers:

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
OPPTS/OPPT/NPCD
1201 Constitution Ave, NW
Room 4355UU
4th Floor Connecting Wing, Old Customs Building
Washington, DC 20460
Attn: Clarence Lewis
202-566-0492

2. Electronic Submission through Grants.Gov.

SEE GRANTS.GOV INSTRUCTIONS IN APPENDIX A

D. Submission Date

The due date and time for all proposals, no matter what the mode of submission is ***August 11, 2008, 5:00pm EST***. Proposals must be received by EPA Office of Pollution Prevention and Toxics, National Program Chemicals Division or date/time stamp via grants.gov by the due date and time above.

E. Intergovernmental Review

Not applicable.

F. Confidential Business Information

It is recommended that confidential information not be included in the proposal. However, in accordance with 40 CFR 2.203, applicants may claim all or a portion of their proposal/ proposal as confidential business information. EPA will evaluate confidentiality claims in accordance with 40 CFR Part 2. Applicants must clearly mark proposals or portions of proposals they claim as confidential. If no claim of confidentiality is made, EPA is not required to make the inquiry to the applicant otherwise required by 40 CFR 2.204(c) (2) prior to disclosure. Note that under Public Law No. 105-277, data produced under an award is subject to the Freedom of Information Act.

G. Pre-proposal Communications and Assistance

In accordance with EPA's Assistance Agreement Competition Policy (EPA Order 5700.5A1), EPA staff will not meet with individual applicants to discuss draft proposals, provide informal comments on draft proposals, or provide advice to applicants on how to respond to ranking

criteria. Applicants are responsible for the contents of their proposals/proposals. However, consistent with the provisions in the announcement, EPA will respond to questions from individual applicants regarding threshold eligibility criteria, administrative issues related to the submission of the proposal, and requests for clarification about the announcement.

H. Contracts and Subawards:

a. Can funding be used for the applicant to make subawards, acquire contract services, or fund partnerships?

EPA awards funds to one eligible applicant as the recipient even if other eligible applicants are named as partners or co-applicants or members of a coalition or consortium. The recipient is accountable to EPA for the proper expenditure of funds.

Funding may be used to provide subgrants or subawards of financial assistance, which includes using subawards or subgrants to fund partnerships, provided the recipient complies with applicable requirements for subawards or subgrants including those contained in 40 CFR Parts 30 or 31, as appropriate. Applicants must compete contracts for services and products, including consultant contracts, and conduct cost and price analyses, to the extent required by the procurement provisions of the regulations at 40 CFR Parts 30 or 31, as appropriate. The regulations also contain limitations on consultant compensation. Applicants are not required to identify subawardees/subgrantees and/or contractors (including consultants) in their proposal/proposal. However, if they do, the fact that an applicant selected for award has named a specific subawardee/subgrantee, contractor, or consultant in the proposal/proposal EPA selects for funding does not relieve the applicant of its obligations to comply with subaward/subgrant and/or competitive procurement requirements as appropriate. Please note that applicants may not award sole source contracts to consulting, engineering or other firms assisting applicants with the proposal solely based on the firm's role in preparing the proposal/proposal.

Successful applicants cannot use subgrants or subawards to avoid requirements in EPA grant regulations for competitive procurement by using these instruments to acquire commercial services or products from for-profit organizations to carry out its assistance agreement. The nature of the transaction between the recipient and the subawardee or subgrantee must be consistent with the standards for distinguishing between vendor transactions and subrecipient assistance under Subpart B Section .210 of OMB Circular A-133, and the definitions of subaward at 40 CFR 30.2(ff) or subgrant at 40 CFR 31.3, as applicable. EPA will not be a party to these transactions. Applicants acquiring commercial goods or services must comply with the competitive procurement standards in 40 CFR Part 30 or 40 CFR Part 31.36 and cannot use a subaward/subgrant as the funding mechanism.

b. How will an applicant's proposed subawardees/subgrantees and contractors be considered during the evaluation process described in Section V of the announcement?

Section V of the announcement describes the evaluation criteria and evaluation process that will be used by EPA to make selections under this announcement. During this evaluation, except for those criteria that relate to the applicant's own qualifications, past performance, and reporting

history, the review panel will consider, as appropriate and relevant, the qualifications, expertise, and experience of:

(i) an applicant's named subawardees/subgrantees identified in the proposal/proposal if the applicant demonstrates in the proposal/proposal that if it receives an award that the subaward/subgrant will be properly awarded consistent with the applicable regulations in 40 CFR Parts 30 or 31. For example, applicants must not use subawards/subgrants to obtain commercial services or products from for profit firms or individual consultants.

(ii) an applicant's named contractor(s), including consultants, identified in the proposal/proposal if the applicant demonstrates in its proposal/proposal that the contractor(s) was selected in compliance with the competitive Procurement Standards in 40 CFR Part 30 or 40 CFR 31.36 as appropriate. For example, an applicant must demonstrate that it selected the contractor(s) competitively or that a proper non-competitive sole-source award consistent with the regulations will be made to the contractor(s), that efforts were made to provide small and disadvantaged businesses with opportunities to compete, and that some form of cost or price analysis was conducted. EPA may not accept sole source justifications for contracts for services or products that are otherwise readily available in the commercial marketplace.

EPA will not consider the qualifications, experience, and expertise of named subawardees/subgrantees and/or named contractor(s) during the proposal/proposal evaluation process unless the applicant complies with these requirements

Management Fee

When formulating budgets for proposals/proposals, applicants must not include management fees or similar charges in excess of the direct costs and indirect costs at the rate approved by the applicants cognizant audit agency, or at the rate provided for by the terms of the agreement negotiated with EPA. The term "management fees or similar charges" refers to expenses added to the direct costs in order to accumulate and reserve funds for ongoing business expenses, unforeseen liabilities, or for other similar costs that are not allowable under EPA assistance agreements. Management fees or similar charges may not be used to improve or expand the project funded under this agreement, except to the extent authorized as a direct cost of carrying out the scope of work.

V. PROPOSAL REVIEW INFORMATION

A. Proposal Review

All proposals will be reviewed for threshold eligibility. Each proposal that meets the threshold eligibility requirement in Section III of this announcement will then be evaluated by a panel of EPA staff based on the criteria set forth below. Proposals must address each evaluation criteria

as stated below.

B. Selection Criteria (Total 100 points)

Each eligible proposal will be evaluated using the criteria listed below. Sub factors within each criterion will be divided equally depending on the total value of the criteria and the number of sub factors. All proposals will be reviewed, evaluated, and ranked by a selected panel of EPA reviewers based on the following criteria and points:

1. Demonstrated Ability to Work with Other Countries to Reduce Mercury in Hospitals (10 points). Applicants must describe their experience working in an international setting and working with international organizations. Applicants **must** also describe their ability to conduct projects to reduce mercury in hospitals. Applicants **must** describe their experiences working on mercury-related issues and knowledge of the health care sector.

Applicants will be evaluated to the extent that they fully respond to the following criteria, each of which is valued at 5 points:

- Have experience working with such international organizations as United Nations Environment Program, the World Health Organization, the Basel Secretariat, and non-profit international regional organizations such as the Pan-American Health Organization (PAHO) in managing projects to build capacity in hospitals and develop programs that can be replicated at the local and regional level.
- Have offices, staff, or other NGO partners located in Latin America.

2. Project Approach (20 points). The proposal must fully describe the approach for conducting a hospital facility assessment, plan and practices assessment, plan assistance, post-implementation assessment, training and guidance, and translation activities. The following elements, valued at 4 points each, will be specifically evaluated:

- a. Facility Assessment of Mercury Use
- b. Plan and Practices Assessment
- c. Plan Development/Improvement
- d. Provision of Training and Implementation Guidance.
- e. Post-Implementation Assessment.

3. Measurement and Results (20 points). All proposals must address the following criteria. Criteria “a.” and “b.” are valued at 10 points each.

a. Measurable Results and Evaluation. Proposals will be evaluated based on the quality and extent to which they demonstrate that the applicant will be able to clearly track and measure progress toward achieving the expected project goals (including outputs and outcomes) identified in Section I of this announcement. EPA prefers that progress be shown in real environmental progress rather than solely in the amount of work accomplished. The proposal must describe both quantitative and qualitative results

that will be measured, and address:

- What are the specific project outputs?
- What are the measurable outcomes and results that will be achieved, and how will these results be measured and evaluated, both during the project and after the project is completed?
- To what extent does the proposal describe the specific measures that are based on the outputs (e.g., number of training workshops, number of hospital and government staff that participate in training activities), behavior changes (e.g., improvements in hospital practices for managing mercury-containing wastes), and/or environmental and human health results (e.g., decreased number of mercury-containing products being used or stored by the hospital, decreased amount of mercury-containing waste)?
- Ability to track and measure progress toward achieving project goals, including outputs and outcomes.

b. Environmental Results Past Performance. Under this factor, applicants will be evaluated based on the extent to which they adequately documented and/or reported on their progress towards achieving the expected results (e.g., outcomes and outputs) under federal agency assistance agreements performed within the last three years, and if such progress was not being made, whether the applicant adequately documented and/or report why not. Note: In evaluating applicants under this factor, EPA will consider the information provided by the applicant and may also consider relevant information from other sources, including agency files and prior/current assistance grantors, in order to verify and/or supplement the information supplied by the applicant. Applicants with no relevant or available past performance or reporting history will receive a neutral score for this factor.

4. Project Management (10 points). Under this factor, applicants will be evaluated based on the extent they are able to successfully complete and manage the proposed project, taking into account the following factors which are valued at 2.50 points each:

- Past performance in successfully completing and managing federally funded assistance agreement involving mercury within the last three years. History of meeting reporting requirements under federally funded assistance agreements similar in size, scope, and relevance to the proposed project performed within the last three years and submitting acceptable final technical reports under those agreements.
- Organizational experience and project management. To what extent does the proposal indicate whether the organization has access to facilities to conduct the project? To what extent does the proposal indicate a clearly defined project schedule, including a timeline, which lists the tasks/steps and time period for completing each?
- To what extent does the proposal indicate staff expertise/qualifications, staff knowledge, and resources or the ability to obtain them, to successfully achieve the goals of the proposed project?

Note: In evaluating applicants under this factor, the Agency will consider the information provided by the applicant and may also consider relevant information from other sources, including agency files and prior/current assistance grantors, in order to verify and/or supplement the information supplied by the applicant. Applicants with no relevant or available past performance or reporting history (first and second bullet items above) will receive a neutral score for those elements of this factor.

5. Partnerships (10 points). To what extent does the proposal describe and identify all potential international partnerships that will be involved in the project? To what extent does the proposal indicate how collaboration will be used to partner with one or more groups or organizations, and how will it be used to accomplish the purposes of this cooperative agreement project

6. Replicability/Sustainability (10 points). To what extent does the proposal indicate if others can easily duplicate the cooperative agreement activities in other hospitals or clinics in the same country or in other countries? To what extent does the proposal indicate how such duplication will be documented? To what extent does the proposal indicate if the project activities will continue after EPA cooperative assistance funds are exhausted?

7. Budget (20 points). The budget should be based on one year's funding at \$175,000, and working with up to five (5) hospitals distributed among two-to-three Latin American countries. All proposals must address the following criteria valued at 10 points each:

- a. Itemized Budget.** To what extent does the proposal indicate if the budget is reasonable, clear, and consistent with the intended use of the funds? To what extent does the proposal indicate if all items listed in the budget are necessary to complete the project? To what extent does the proposal provide a detailed, itemized budget to include personnel, supplies, travel, and training costs?
- b. Leveraging.** To what extent does the proposal indicate how the applicant will coordinate the use of EPA funding with other local or international resources (including funding, staff time, in-kind resources, etc.) to carry out the proposed project? To what extent does the proposal indicate how the applicant demonstrates that EPA funding will compliment activities relevant to the proposed project carried out by the applicant with other sources of funds or resources? Leveraged funding or other resources need not be for eligible and allowable project costs under the EPA assistance agreement unless the Applicant proposes to provide a voluntary cost share or match. If EPA accepts an offer for a voluntary cost share/match/participation, applicants must meet their matching/sharing/participation commitment as a condition of receiving EPA funding. Applicants may use their own funds or other resources for a voluntary match or cost share if the standards at 40 CFR 30.23 or 40 CFR 31.24, as applicable, are met. Only eligible and allowable costs may be used for matches or cost shares. Other federal assistance may not be used as matches or cost shares without specific statutory authority (e.g. HUD's Community Development Block Grants). Any form of proposed leveraging

that is evaluated under a section V ranking criteria must be included in the proposal and the proposal must describe how the applicant will obtain the leveraged resources and what role EPA funding will play in the overall project.

C. Review and Selection Process

All proposals are initially reviewed for meeting the threshold requirements using the eligibility criteria (Section III.C.) after which EPA HQ reviewers will conduct an initial relevancy review. Proposals that successfully pass those reviews will then be evaluated based on the evaluation criteria under V.B by program experts familiar with the project funding areas. In general, program experts are composed of EPA Headquarters program specialists who are experts in their respective areas and proficient in the technical subjects they are reviewing. Each reviewer will assign a numeric score to each ranking criteria area after which all the scores for each proposal will be added together and averaged producing a final score for each proposal. These recommendations will be submitted to the Approving Official. The Approving Official will have the final authority to make the selection. The review process is designed to evaluate each proposal for the potential grantees' ability to demonstrate how they will fulfill the requirements in each criteria category. The applicant must explain how they will fulfill the requirements by including timetables, schedules, interim products, and planned activities, as required in section IV.B.2.a. The review process also is designed to evaluate each applicant on their knowledge, experience, and familiarity with the program funding area to assure that projects are completed successfully and in a timely manner.

VI. AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

A. Award Notices

EPA will notify both successful and unsuccessful applicant(s) in writing or electronic mail. A final proposal will be requested from the eligible applicant whose proposal has been successfully evaluated and preliminarily recommended for award. This applicant will be provided with instructions and a due date for submittal of the final proposal package.

EPA reserves the right to negotiate appropriate changes in work plans after the selection and before the final award, consistent with EPA's Competition Policy (EPA Order 5700.5A1, Section 11). The notification, which advises that the applicant's proposal has been tentatively selected and is being recommended for award, is not an authorization to begin performance. The recipient will receive a signed cooperative agreement from the EPA Headquarters Grants Office which will be the authorizing document. At a minimum, this process can take up to 60 days from the date of selection.

B. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

EPA's quality assurance requirements must be complied with before any environmental or health-related measurements or data are initiated under this cooperative agreement. These requirements are addressed in 40 CFR 30.54 and 31.45 relating to quality assurance/quality

control. Information on EPA quality assurance requirements may be downloaded from the EPA Quality System web site at <http://www.epa.gov/quality/>. For further guidance on preparation of the quality documentation, please contact the appropriate EPA Lead Contact listed in Section VII.

Non-profit applicants that are recommended for funding under this announcement are subject to pre-award administrative capability review consistent with Section 8b, 8c and 9d of EPA Order 5700.8: Policy on Assessing Capabilities of Non-Profit Applicants for Managing Assistance Awards (http://www.epa.gov/ogd/grants/award/5700_8.pdf). In addition, non-profit applicants that qualify for funding may, depending on the size of the award, be required to fill out and submit to the Grants Management Office the Administrative Capabilities Form with supporting documents contained in Appendix A of EPA Order 5700.8.

Programmatic terms and conditions will be negotiated with the selected recipient.

Presently, these funds are not eligible for use in a Performance Partnership Agreement.

C. Reporting Requirement

The successful recipient will be required to provide EPA with written progress reports within 30 days after the end of each quarter, and a final report within 90 calendar days of the completion of the project period. The final report should include a summary of the project and those activities that were critical to its success.

D. Dispute Resolution Process

Assistance agreement competition-related disputes will be resolved in accordance with the dispute resolution procedures published in 70 FR (Federal Register) 3629, 3630 (January 26, 2005) which can be found at: <http://a257.g.akamaitech.net/7/257/2422/01jan20051800/edocket.access.gpo.gov/2005/05-1371.htm>. Copies of these procedures may also be requested by contacting the Agency Contact listed in Section VII.

E. Data Access and Information Release

The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Circular A-110 has been revised to provide public access to research data through the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) under some circumstances. Data that are (1) first produced in a project that is supported in whole or in part with Federal funds and (2) cited publicly and officially by a Federal agency in support of an action that has the force and effect of law (i.e., a regulation) may be accessed through FOIA. If such data are requested by the public, the EPA must ask for it, and the grantee must submit it, in accordance with A-110 and EPA regulations at 40 C.F.R. 30.36.

VII. AGENCY CONTACT

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Attn: Clarence Lewis
OPPT/NPCD Mailcode: 7404T
1200 Pennsylvania Ave., N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20460email
Telephone: 202-566-1243
Email: lewis.clarence@epa.gov

VIII. OTHER INFORMATION

The EPA Award Official is the only official that can bind the Agency to the expenditure of funds for selected projects resulting from this announcement.