

OVERVIEW SECTION

AGENCY: ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY (EPA)

TITLE: “COMMUNITY ACTION FOR A RENEWED ENVIRONMENT (CARE) PROGRAM - ANNUAL TRAINING WORKSHOP SUPPORT”

ACTION: Request for Initial Proposals (RFIP) - Initial Announcement

RFP NO: EPA-OSWER-IPCO-10-04

CATALOG OF FEDERAL DOMESTIC ASSISTANCE (CFDA) NO.: 66.035

DATES: The closing date and time for receipt of Initial Proposals is May 24, 2010, 6:00 p.m. EDT. Initial Proposals, as described in *Section 4(C)* of this announcement, must be received in the EPA Headquarters Program Office via electronic mail, hand delivery, or express mail service by May 24, 2010, 6:00 p.m. EDT in order to be considered for funding. Initial Proposals received after the closing date and time of this announcement will be returned to the sender without further consideration. Because of the unique situation involving U.S. mail screening, EPA highly recommends that applicants submitting a proposal in hard copy use a commercial delivery service or express mail option to transmit their proposals.

Final applications will be accepted, only, from those eligible entities whose Initial Proposal has been successfully evaluated and selected to submit a Final Application. EPA will notify applicants whose Initial Proposal have been successfully evaluated and selected to submit a Final Application not later than June 23, 2010. The closing date and time for submission or receipt of final applications is July 7, 2010, 5:00 p.m. EDT.

SUMMARY: This notice announces the availability of funds and solicits proposals from eligible entities to support the Community Action for a Renewed Environment (CARE) Annual Training Workshop. The CARE Annual Training Workshop is held each year to support CARE’s community-based, community-driven, multimedia demonstration program designed to help communities understand and reduce risk due to toxic pollution and environmental concerns from all sources. The objective of the training workshop is to educate the CARE program in working collaboratively within the community to increase understanding of new approaches, to facilitate use of proven concepts, and to encourage more innovation in environmental programs.

FUNDING/AWARDS: The total estimated funding available under this competitive opportunity is \$150,000, subject to the availability of funds and quality of proposals received. EPA anticipates award of one cooperative agreement resulting from this competitive opportunity. Grants/Cooperative agreements resulting from this announcement will be incrementally-funded. Maximum funding for the first year of the grant shall not exceed \$75,000. (*Refer to Section 2(B).*)

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SECTION 1. FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION

A. Background

EPA developed the CARE program in response to community requests for help in addressing environmental concerns and in recognition of the need for a new approach to help communities develop locally led solutions to address these concerns. While national regulatory approaches have resulted in significant reductions in toxic releases and other environmental improvements, these methods have not always been effective in addressing specific community concerns and cumulative risks resulting from toxic releases from multiple and often diffuse sources.

CARE is designed to complement national regulatory approaches and meet community needs by building the capacity of communities to understand and take effective actions at the local level to address existing environmental concerns in all environmental media.

CARE promotes new ways to achieve better environmental results through increased community involvement. One way includes hosting an annual CARE Training/Workshop designed to assist CARE communities with developing new ideas, encourage citizen participation, create new approaches, and share the lessons learned to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the CARE program. While EPA will have staff at the workshop, the primary goal is to assist CARE communities. The training/workshop is designed to help identify and highlight environmental innovations that can help CARE communities learn new ways to achieve better environmental results.

This funding opportunity will support the required annual training workshop for the EPA's national CARE program. In the CARE program, communities select and carry out EPA partnership programs to reduce toxic exposures and protect the environment in their communities. The partnership programs and other actions taken differ from community to community across all environmental media (i.e., air, water, land preservation and restoration, as well as pollution prevention and environmental stewardship).

B. Project Description

The project will involve planning up to two training/workshops over a two-year period that brings together CARE communities to share information and engage in dialogues about experiences and issues related to CARE projects. Planning will be done by a Steering Committee consisting of representatives from the recipient, EPA, and CARE communities. The Steering Committee, which will have a majority CARE membership, will assist with analyzing environmental innovations, developing workshop agendas, identifying appropriate speakers and presenters, and promoting the event within their respective communities or organizations.

San Diego, California will be the meeting place for the December 2010 CARE Training Workshop. The recipient will evaluate the expected costs for the 2010 workshop location and provide a recommendation to the Steering Committee. This recommendation will be weighed with other factors in making a final decision (e.g., a particular Region's interest in hosting, other meetings in a location or within a certain time frame that might facilitate community participation). In planning the workshop/training event, the recipient will incorporate as many environmentally-sound techniques as possible. (A listing of green meeting techniques can be found on the EPA green meeting website at www.epa.gov/oppt/greenmeetings).

EPA funding will be used to support the costs associated with hosting the workshop. For each event, the recipient will arrange for supporting session speakers, lunch, and light refreshments for up to 250 attendees in order to assure attendees' full participation. All session speakers must be present at the working lunch. The recipient will also assist with note-taking and sessions in progress.

For further information on the care program, go to <http://www.epa.gov/care> and click on the words "Contact Us" at the bottom of the screen.

C. EPA Strategic Plan Linkage

Awards under the CARE program directly support progress towards EPA Strategic Plan's Goal 4 (Healthy Communities and Ecosystems), Objective 4.2 (Communities), Sub-objectives 4.2.1 (Sustain Community Health), and 4.2.2 (Restore Community Health Through Collaborative Problem-Solving) and; Objective 4.3 (Restore and Protect Critical Ecosystems), Sub-objective 4.3.1 (Increase Wetlands).

(View EPA's Strategic Plan on the internet at: <http://www.epa.gov/ocfo/plan/plan.htm>.)

E. Measuring Environmental Results: Anticipated Outcomes/Outputs

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

1. **Outcomes.** The term “outcomes” refer to 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, must be quantitative, and may not necessarily be achievable during the project period.

EPA anticipates outcomes from projects expected to be awarded under this announcement will include, but are not limited to the following:

- a. Improved knowledge and enhanced technical skills for CARE cooperative agreement recipients who are required to attend the annual training workshop.
- b. Improved technical expertise by CARE recipients regarding various sources of toxic risk exposure and public health concerns within their neighborhood.
- c. Increased knowledge by CARE recipients about EPA environmental programs towards reducing toxic pollution through collaborative action (e.g. Healthy Homes or Clean School Bus Voluntary Programs leads to lead abatement in neighborhood homes and reduced bus idling outside school buildings).

2. **Outputs.** The term “outputs” refer to an environmental activity, effort, and/or associated work products related to an environmental goal or 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 the project period.

EPA anticipates the outputs from the project expected to be awarded under this announcement will include, but are not limited to the following:

- a. Number of participants expected to be trained at each annual workshop will be up to 250 community stakeholders and EPA staff.;
- b. Scientific, technical and public health exhibits during the annual training workshop that will showcase up to 30 different environmental and public health programs.

F. Supplementary Information

EPA CARE cooperative agreements will be awarded under the following EPA research and demonstration statutory authorities:

- Clean Water Act, Section 104(b) (3);
- Solid Waste Disposal Act, Section 8001(a);
- Clean Air Act, Section 103(b) (3);
- Toxic Substances Control Act, Section 10(a);
- Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act, Section 20(a); and,
- Marine Protection, Research, and Sanctuaries Act, Section 203.
- National Environmental Policy Act, Section 102(2)(F)

SECTION 2. AWARD INFORMATION

A. What is the amount of available funding?

The total estimated funding available under this competitive opportunity is \$150,000, subject to the availability of funds and quality of proposals received. Grants/Cooperative agreements resulting from this announcement will be incrementally-funded. Maximum funding for the first year of the grant shall not exceed \$75,000. **The proposed total budget may not exceed a maximum value of \$150,000, excluding any in-kind contribution or match.**

EPA reserves the right to make additional awards under this competition, consistent with Agency policy, if additional funding becomes available. Any additional selections for awards will be made no later than six months from the date of original selection decision.

B. How many agreements will EPA award in this competition?

EPA anticipates award of one cooperative agreement resulting from this competitive opportunity.

Cooperative agreements permit substantial involvement between the EPA Project Officer and the selected applicants in the performance of the work supported. Although EPA will negotiate precise terms and conditions relating to substantial involvement as part of the award process, the anticipated substantial federal involvement for this project will include:

1. Close monitoring of the recipient's performance to verify the expected results proposed by the recipient;
2. Collaboration during performance of the scope of work;
3. Review project progress reports and, any proposed changes to the work plan and/or budget;
4. Review of proposed procurements in accordance with 40 CFR 31.36(g);
5. Approving qualifications of key personnel (EPA will not select employees or contractors employed by the award recipient);
6. Review and comment on content of publications and reports prepared under the cooperative agreement (the final decision on the content of reports rests with the recipient); and
7. Review and concur on project outputs for consistency with the EPA approved scope of work.

EPA reserves the right to reject all proposals and make no awards under this announcement.

C. Will proposals be partially funded?

In appropriate circumstances, EPA reserves the right to partially fund proposals by funding discrete activities, portions, or phases of proposed projects. If EPA decides to partially fund a 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; therefore, maintains the integrity of the competition and selection process.

D. What is the project period for award(s) resulting from this solicitation?

The estimated start date for projects resulting from this solicitation is October 1, 2010. All project activities must be completed within the negotiated project performance period.

E. Can funding be used to acquire services or fund partnerships?

EPA awards funds to one eligible applicant as the “recipient” even if other eligible applicants are named as ‘partners,’ ‘co-applicants,’ 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 Part 31. 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 Part 31. The regulations also contain limitations on consultant compensation. Applicants are not required to identify subawardees/subgrantees and/or contractors (including consultants) in their 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 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.

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 subgrant at 40 CFR 31.3. 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 31.36 and cannot use a subaward/subgrant as the funding mechanism.

F. How will an applicant's proposed subawardees or contractors be considered during the evaluation process described in *Section 5* of this announcement?

Section 5 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:

1. An applicant's named subawardees/subgrantees identified in the proposal if the applicant demonstrates in the proposal that if it receives an award that the subaward/subgrant will be properly awarded consistent with the applicable regulations in 40 CFR Part 31. For example, applicants must not use subawards/subgrants to obtain commercial services or products from for-profit firms or individual consultants.
2. An applicant's named contractor(s), including consultants, identified in the proposal if the applicant demonstrates in its proposal that the contractor(s) was selected in compliance with the competitive Procurement Standards in 40 CFR 31.36. 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 evaluation process unless the applicant complies with these requirements.

SECTION 3. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

A. Eligible Entities

Proposals will be accepted from local, public non-profit institution/organizations, Federally Recognized Indian Tribal Government, Native American Organizations, Private nonprofit institution/organization, Quasi-public nonprofit institution/organization, both interstate and intrastate, local government, colleges, and universities.

Applicants must fall within the statutory terms of EPA's research and demonstration grant authorities to be considered an eligible entity to apply for financial assistance under this RFIP. (*Refer to Section 1(F), Supplementary Information.*)

B. Cost-Sharing or Matching

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Although cost-sharing or matching is not required as a condition of eligibility under this competition, under Section 5 of this announcement EPA will evaluate proposals based on a leveraging criterion. (*Refer to Section 5(A), Evaluation Criteria*).

In order to be considered for evaluation, any leveraged funds/resources, and their source, must be identified in the proposal (*Refer to Section 4(B)(2)(b)(viii), Leveraging*). 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 as its form of leveraging. Leveraging other than voluntary cost share is not included in the project budget on the grant forms but should be included in the grant workplan in the form of a statement to the effect that the applicant is expected to produce the proposed leveraging consistent with the terms of the announcement and their proposal.

If EPA accepts an offer for a voluntary cost share, applicants must meet their sharing commitment as a condition of receiving EPA funding. The recipient is legally obligated to meet any proposed voluntary cost share that is included in the approved project budget because the grant agreement includes the voluntary cost share. Applicants may use their own funds or other resources for a voluntary cost share if the standards at 40 CFR 31.24 are met. Only eligible and allowable costs may be used for voluntary cost shares. Other Federal grants may not be used as voluntary cost shares without specific statutory authority (e.g. HUD's Community Development Block Grants).

C. Threshold Criteria

Initial Proposals must meet the following “threshold criteria,” **by the time of proposal submission. Proposals that fail to meet any one of the threshold criteria will not be considered further.** EPA will notify applicants who do not meet the threshold criteria within 15 calendar days of the “fail” determination. Proposals that meet the threshold criteria will then be evaluated based on the factors disclosed in *Section 5(A), Evaluation Criteria*. The threshold criteria are:

1. The proposed project total budget may not exceed the maximum value of \$150,000, excluding any in-kind contribution or match. Proposals requesting assistance funding in excess of this value will not be considered.
2. Proposals must substantially comply with the proposal submission instructions and requirements set forth in *Section 4(B)* of this announcement or else they will be rejected. However, where a page limit is expressed in *Section 4(B)* with respect to the proposal, pages in excess of the page limitation will not be reviewed.

In addition, proposals must be received by the EPA, as specified in *Section 4(C)* of this announcement, on or before the proposal submission deadline published in *Section 4(C)* of this announcement. Applicants are responsible for ensuring that their proposal reaches

the designated person/office specified in *Section 4(C)* 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 4 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 **Felicia Palmer-Greene, EPA Project Officer**, as soon as possible after the submission deadline—failure to do so may result in your proposal not being reviewed.

3. Proposals must be written in English. The minimum acceptable font size for the narrative proposal and the budget is 12 point; material in smaller font sizes will not be considered. Pages must have at least 1 inch margins on all sides.
4. Only one proposal may be submitted per applicant organization.

D. Funding Restrictions

Applicable cost principles are found in OMB circular A-21 for educational institutions, OMB Circular A-87 for State and Local governments and Indian Tribes, and OMB Circular A-122 for nonprofit organizations.

This project includes funds for support for expert speakers, meals and refreshments for all participants at the Training/Workshop. EPA funds can be used for these purposes so long as these items are deemed necessary to allow full participation and assure that the main goal of the event--information sharing among CARE Communities--is achieved.

EPA funds may not be used for entertainment purposes, however, EPA can co-sponsor an event that has a social component (such as a modest reception), as long as the event has a primarily educational purpose that is related to the Agency's mission. EPA funds may not be used for events that have a primary purpose of entertaining participants.

None of the funds for this project may be used to pay for travel of federal employees or other costs associated with federal participation in this project.

SECTION 4. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

A. How to Obtain an Application Package

Applicants may download individual grant application forms, or electronically request a paper application package and an accompanying computer CD of information related to applicants/grant recipients' roles and responsibilities from EPA's Grants and Debarment website by visiting: http://www.epa.gov/ogd/grants/how_to_apply.htm.

To obtain a hard copy of materials, please send an email or written request to the Agency contact listed in Section 7 of this RFP.

B. Content and Form of Initial Proposals

The following documents are required for all Initial Proposals, irrespective of the mode of submission. All proposals must contain a "Narrative Proposal," and one completed and signed Standard Form 424 (SF-424), "Application for Federal Assistance," and Standard Form (SF-424A), "Budget Information." The "Narrative Proposal," a maximum of 15 pages in length, must explicitly describe the applicant's proposed project and specifically address each of the evaluation criteria disclosed in *Section 5(A), Evaluation Criteria*.

1. **Standard Form 424 (SF-424), Application for Federal Assistance, with original signature.** Complete the form (available at <http://www.epa.gov/ogd/forms.htm>). There are no attachments. Please be sure to include organization fax number and email address in Block 5 of the Standard Form SF 424. Please note that the organizational Dun and Bradstreet (D&B) Data Universal Number System (DUNS) number must be included on the SF-424. Organizations may obtain a DUNS number at no cost by calling the toll free DUNS number request line at 1-866-705-5711.

NOTE: Individual grant application forms may be downloaded from EPA's Grants and Debarment website by visiting: <http://www.epa.gov/ogd/AppKit/application.htm>.

2. **Standard Form (SF-424A), Budget Information.** Complete the form (available at <http://www.epa.gov/ogd/forms.htm>). There are no attachments. The total amount of federal funding requested for the project period should be shown on line 5(e) and on line 6(k) of SF-424A, the amount of indirect costs should be entered on line 6(j). The indirect cost rate (i.e., a percentage), the base (e.g., personnel costs and fringe benefits), and the amount should also be indicated on line 22.
3. **Narrative Proposal.** The Narrative Proposal must be readable in PDF for Windows, consolidated into a single file and, provide the information detailed in this section.

The Narrative Proposal (*sections "a" through "e" below*) must substantially conform to the following outline and content:

- a. **Project Description.** Provide a description of your technical approach for meeting the objectives/requirements of the proposed project, as referenced in *Section 1, Funding Opportunity Description*.
- b. **Programmatic Capability.** Submit a list of federally and/or non-federally funded assistance agreements (assistance agreements include federal grants and cooperative agreements but not federal contracts) similar in size, scope and relevance to the proposed project that your organization performed within the last three years (no more than 5, and preferably EPA agreements) and describe: (i) whether, and how, you were able to successfully complete and manage those agreements, and (ii) your history of meeting the reporting requirements under those agreements including submitting acceptable final technical reports. In evaluating applicants under these factors in *Section 5*, 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 this factor under *Section 5*. Failure to do so may result in a “0” score for this factor.

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.

- c. **Environmental Results Past Performance Reporting.** Submit a list of federally and/or non-federally funded assistance agreements (an assistance agreement is a grant or cooperative agreement and not a contract) that your organization performed within the last three years (limit 5, and preferably EPA assistance 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 5*, 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 environmental results past performance information, please indicate this in the proposal and you will receive a neutral score for this factor under *Section 5*. Failure to do so may result in a “0” score for this factor.
- d. **Performance Measurement: Anticipated Outcomes and Outputs.**

Anticipated Outcomes: Specify the expected environmental outcomes as described in *Section 1(D), Measuring Environmental Results: Anticipated Outcomes/Outputs* of this announcement. Discuss how you propose to track and measure your progress in achieving the project outcomes and results. (*Refer to Section 5(A), Evaluation Criteria, Performance Measurement.*)

Anticipated Outputs. Identify the expected project outputs, including those described in *Section 1(E), Measuring Environmental Results: Anticipated Outcomes/Outputs* of this announcement and how you will track and measure your expected project outputs. Outputs, quantitative or qualitative, must be measurable during the project performance period.

- e. **Leveraging.** Demonstrate how you will coordinate the use of EPA funding with other Federal and/or non-Federal sources of funds/resources to leverage additional resources beyond the grant funds awarded to carry out the proposed project(s) and/or that EPA funding will complement activities relevant to the proposed project(s) carried out by the applicant with other sources of funds or resources. Describe the type and amount of leveraging proposed, how you will obtain the leveraged resources, the likelihood the leveraging will materialize during grant performance, the strength of the leveraging commitment, and the role the leveraged funds/resources will play in the overall project. Selected applicants are expected to abide by their proposed leveraging commitments during grant performance and the failure to do so may affect the legitimacy of the award.

C. Submitting an Initial Proposal Package

Applicants may choose to submit proposal packages, as described in Section B above, either in hard copy (paper) format or by e-mail. Instructions for all methods are detailed below. Please select **only one** method. Proposals must be received by EPA by May 24, 2010, 6:00 p.m. EDT.

1. **Hard copy (paper) submission.** Submit a complete proposal package including all of the documents identified in *Section 4(B)* of this announcement. **The complete proposal must be sent via express mail or commercial delivery service to the EPA Headquarters Program contact listed below.** Paper submission must include one original signature document and two copies of the completed Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424), and Budget Information (SF-424A).

Because of the unique situation involving U.S. mail screening, EPA highly recommends that applicants submitting a proposal in hard copy use a commercial delivery service or express mail option to transmit their proposals.

EPA Headquarters Address for Mailing Proposals – US Postal Service Mail:

Felicia-Palmer Greene, (CARE Program), U.S. Environmental Protection Agency,

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Office of Wetlands, Oceans and Watersheds (MC 4501T), 1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W., Washington, DC 20004; Phone: (202) 564-5382.

Address for all Commercial Delivery Services (i.e., all services other than the US Postal Service, including hand delivery):

Felicia-Palmer Greene, (CARE Program), U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, 1301 Constitution Avenue, NW, Room 7410L, (MC 4501T), EPA West Building, Washington, DC 20460; Phone: (202) 564-5382.

- 2. Electronic mail (e-mail) submission.** E-mail submissions must be submitted to CARE_2010_RFP@epa.gov and be received by the submission deadline stated in *Section 4(C)* of this announcement. All required documents listed in *Section 4(B)* of this announcement must be attached to the e-mail as separate Adobe PDF files. Please note that if you choose to submit your materials via e-mail, you are accepting all risks attendant to e-mail submission including server delays and transmission difficulties. E-mail submissions exceeding 15MB will experience transmission delays which will affect when they are received by the Agency. For these size submissions, applicants should submit their proposal materials via hard copy because if they are sent via e-mail they may be received late and not considered for funding. Applicants submitting their proposal materials through e-mail should confirm receipt of the materials with Felicia-Palmer Greene at palmer-greene.felicia@epa.gov as soon as possible after submission. Failure to do so may result in your proposal not being reviewed.

D. Final Application Packages

Final (full) grant applications will be requested only from those eligible entities whose proposals have been successfully evaluated and selected to submit a Final Application. Additional instructions for final application packages will be provided when the applicant is notified of the tentative selection.

E. Confidential Business Information

In accordance with 40 CFR 2.203, applicants may claim all or a portion of their proposal package as confidential business information. EPA will evaluate confidentiality claims in accordance with 40 CFR Part 2. Applicants must clearly mark proposals or portions thereof that 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. However, competitive proposals are considered confidential and protected from disclosure prior to the completion of the competitive selection process.

F. Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS)

All applicants are required to provide a Dun and Bradstreet (D&B) Data Universal Numbering

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System (DUNS) number when applying for a federal grant or cooperative agreement. Applicants can receive a DUNS number, at no cost, by calling the dedicated toll-free DUNS Number request line at 1-866-705-5711, or by visiting the D&B website at <http://www.dnb.com>.

G. Pre-proposal/Application Assistance and Communications

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.

EPA will respond to questions in writing from individual applicants regarding threshold eligibility criteria, administrative issues related to the submission of the proposal, and requests for clarification about the announcement. Questions received from applicants and EPA’s responses will also be posted on-line at <http://www.epa.gov/oswer/grants-funding.htm>.

SECTION 5. APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

A. Initial Proposal Evaluation Criteria

Each eligible Initial Proposal will be evaluated according to the criteria set forth below. Each proposal will be rated under a points system, with a total of 100 points possible.

Criterion	Maximum Points per Criterion
<p>Technical Soundness. Under this criterion, EPA will evaluate the extent to which the proposal effectively addresses the scope of work activities described in <i>Section 1</i> of this announcement. Proposals will be evaluated based on the quality and extent to which the proposed project description:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is technically sound and structured to accomplish the proposal requirements; (15 pts.) • Includes measures which outline prior experience with managing conferences, supporting appropriate community speakers and presenters, negotiating hotel vendor contracts, and managing exhibit halls. (15 pts.) • Includes measures for demonstrating success; (10 pts.) 	40
<p>Programmatic Capability. This criterion refers to the technical capability of an applicant or recipient to successfully carry out the proposed project taking into account such factors as the applicant’s:</p>	25

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Past performance in successfully completing and managing federally and/or non-federally funded assistance agreements (assistance agreements include federal grants and cooperative agreements but not federal contracts) similar in size, scope, and relevance to the proposed project performed within the last 3 years. (10 pts.) • History of meeting reporting requirements under federally and non-federally funded assistance agreements (assistance agreements include federal grants and cooperative agreements but not federal contracts) similar in size, scope, and relevance to the proposed project performed within the last 3 years and submitting acceptable final technical reports under those agreements. (5 pts.) • Organizational experience and plan for timely and successful achievement of the objectives of the project. (5 pts.) • Staff expertise/qualifications, staff knowledge, and resources or the ability to obtain them, to successfully achieve the goals of the project. (5 pts.) <p><i>NOTE: In evaluating applicants for programmatic capability purposes, EPA will consider information provided by the applicant in their proposal as well as relevant information from other sources including EPA agency files and prior/current grantors (i.e., to verify and/or supplement the information provided by the applicant). Applicants with no relevant or available past performance and/or reporting history (the first two items above) will receive a neutral score for those elements of this criterion.</i></p>	
<p>Environmental Results Past Performance. Under this criterion, applicants will be evaluated based on the extent and quality to which they adequately documented and/or reported on their progress towards achieving the expected results (e.g., outcomes and outputs) under federally and/or non-federally funded assistance agreements (an assistance agreement is a grant or cooperative agreement and not a contract) performed within the last three years, and if such progress was not being made whether the applicant adequately documented and/or reported why not.</p> <p><i>Note: In evaluating applicants under this criterion, EPA will consider the information provided by the applicant and may also consider relevant information from other sources including agency files and prior/current grantors (e.g., to verify and/or supplement the information supplied by the applicant). Applicants with no relevant or available past performance reporting history will receive a neutral score for this factor.</i></p>	15
<p>Performance Measurement: Anticipated Outcomes and Outputs. Under this criterion, EPA will evaluate the extent to which the “Narrative Proposal” realistically describes how the project will lead to measurable environmental results (i.e., amount of pollution prevented; waste reduced, reused, recycled</p>	15

<p>or, resources conserved). Proposals will be evaluated on the quality and extent to which they:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clearly specify anticipated environmental outcomes and outputs as described in <i>Section 1(E), Measuring Environmental Results: Anticipated Outcomes/Outputs</i>. (4 pts.) • Clearly describe the measures of success for the project. Measure of success should be either measures of environmental improvement or should be directly linked to such measures. EPA will look for quantitative and qualitative measurability. (3 pts.) • Describe how success in achieving project outcomes and outputs will be evaluated and measured. Include a description of any planned reports or other deliverables that measure and track the project success and, document achievement of expected outputs identified in <i>Section 1(D), Measuring Environmental Results: Anticipated Outcomes/Outputs</i>. (3 pts.) 	
<p>Leveraging. Under this criterion applicants will be evaluated based on the extent they demonstrate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (i) how they will coordinate the use of EPA funding with other Federal and/or non Federal sources of funds/resources to leverage additional resources beyond the grant funds awarded to carry out the proposed project(s) and/or (ii) that EPA funding will complement activities relevant to the proposed project(s) carried out by the applicant with other sources of funds or resources. Applicants will also be evaluated based on the type and amount of leveraging proposed, how the applicant will obtain the leveraged resources, the likelihood the leveraging will materialize during grant performance, the strength of the leveraging commitment, and the role the leveraged resources will play to support the proposed project activities. (5 pts.) 	5

B. Review and Selection Process

All Initial Proposals received by the closing date and time for submissions will first be reviewed to determine eligibility for funding based upon compliance with *Section 3(C)*. Only proposals determined eligible will be evaluated for technical merit. Each eligible proposal will be evaluated by a review panel of EPA Headquarters staff for technical merit, based on the evaluation factors detailed in *Section 5(A)* of this solicitation.

Upon completion of the technical merit evaluation, each Initial Proposal will be given an evaluated numerical score, with a total of 100 points possible. The evaluated numerical scores will be rank ordered. The Initial Proposal with the highest evaluated numerical score will be selected to submit a Final Application.

A final (full) grant application will be requested from the eligible entity whose Initial Proposal has been successfully evaluated and selected to submit a Final Application. Additional instructions for the content and submission of the final application package will be provided when the applicant is notified of the tentative selection.

SECTION 6. AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

A. Award Notices

EPA anticipates notification to both successful and unsuccessful applicants will be made, via telephone, electronic, or postal mail by June 23, 2010.

The notification to successful applicant(s) that their Initial Proposal has been selected for award is not an authorization to begin performance. EPA reserves the right to negotiate appropriate changes in work plans after the selection and before the final award consistent with the Agency's Competition Policy ([EPA Order 5700.5A1, Section 11](#)). The "Award Notice" signed by the EPA Grants Officer is the authorizing document and will be provided through postal mail. At a minimum, this process can take up to 90 days from the date of selection.

B. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

1. A listing and description of general EPA Regulations applicable to the award of assistance agreements may be viewed at:
http://www.epa.gov/ogd/AppKit/applicable_epa_regulations_and_description.htm.
2. Executive Order 12372, Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs, may be applicable to awards resulting from this announcement. Applicants *selected* for funding may be required to provide a copy of their proposal to their [State Point of Contact](#) (SPOC) for review, pursuant to Executive Order 12372, Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs. This review is not required with the initial proposal and not all states require such a review.
3. Grants and cooperative agreements with institutions of higher education are subject to 40 CFR Parts 30 and 40 and OMB circular A-122 for non-profits and A-21 for institutions of higher learning. Grants and cooperative agreements with Tribal governments are subject to 40 CFR Part 31 and OMB Circular A-87 (2 CFR Part 225).
4. Programmatic terms and conditions will be negotiated with the selected recipient.
5. Reimbursement Limitation. If the recipient expends more than the amount of funding in its EPA approved budget in anticipation of receiving additional funds from EPA, it does so at its own risk. EPA is not legally obligated to reimburse the recipient for costs incurred in excess of the EPA approved budget.

C. Reporting Requirement

Quarterly progress reports and a detailed final report will be required. The quarterly progress reports will be submitted to the EPA Project Officer within thirty days after each reporting period. These reports shall cover work status, work progress, difficulties encountered, preliminary data results and a statement of activity anticipated during the subsequent reporting period. A discussion of expenditures along with a comparison of the percentage of the project completed to the project schedule and an explanation of significant discrepancies shall be included in the report. The report shall also include any changes of key personnel involved with the project.

The final report will address goals and objectives, performance measurements, lessons learned, any other resources leveraged during the project and how they were used, as well as any plans to continue the project after the expiration of the grant/cooperative agreement and associated sources of funding. The final report will be submitted to the EPA Project Officer within 90 calendar days of completion of the period of performance.

D. Additional Reporting

As part of EPA's efforts to evaluate the long-term effectiveness of the CARE program, EPA, its contractors, or future grantees may, on occasion, attempt to follow up with community stakeholders groups involved in the CARE program and, to ask the applicant a series of questions regarding the accomplishments of the community after the end of the cooperative agreement. Such questions would be of a general nature (e.g., additional funding received and programs accomplished). The recipient must be willing to provide such information when requested.

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.

F. Disputes

Assistance agreement competition-related disputes will be resolved in accordance with the dispute resolution procedures published in 70 FR (Federal Register) 3629, 3630 (January 26, 2005) which can be found at <http://www.epa.gov/ogd/competition/resolution.htm>. Copies of

these procedures may also be requested by contacting Felicia-Palmer Greene at palmer-greene.felicia@epa.gov.

SECTION 7. AGENCY CONTACT

Felicia-Palmer Greene, (CARE Program), U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Office of Wetlands, Oceans and Watersheds (MC 4501T), 1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W., Washington, DC 20460; Phone: (202) 564-5382; or e-mail: palmer-greene.felicia@epa.gov.

SECTION 8. OTHER INFORMATION

A. National Environmental Information Exchange Network

EPA, states, territories, and tribes are working together to develop the National Environmental Information Exchange Network, a secure, Internet- and standards-based way to support electronic data reporting, sharing, and integration of both regulatory and non-regulatory environmental data. States, tribes and territories exchanging data with each other or with EPA, should make the

Exchange Network and the Agency's connection to it, the Central Data Exchange (CDX), the standard way they exchange data and should phase out any legacy methods they have been using. More information on the Exchange Network is available at www.exchangenetwork.net.

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