

Federal Agency Name: Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)

Funding Opportunity Title: Environmental Finance Center Grant Program for EPA Region 8 (Colorado, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, Utah, and Wyoming)

Announcement Type: Request for Applications (RFA)

Funding Opportunity Number: EPA-OW-OWM-16-01

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number: 66.203

DATES: The closing date and time for receipt of application submissions is Monday, August 29, 2016 at 11:59 PM, Eastern Daylight Time (EDT) in order to be considered for funding. Application packages must be submitted electronically to EPA through Grants.gov <http://www.grants.gov> no later than Monday, August 29, 2016 at 11:59 PM (EDT) in order to be considered for funding. Applications of any type received after the closing date and time will not be considered for funding. See Section IV for further submission information. Questions about this RFA must be submitted in writing via email and must be received by the Agency contact identified in Section VII before Friday, August 12, 2016. Written responses will be provided on EPA's website at <https://www.epa.gov/envirofinance/efc-grant-competition>. Please note that answers to frequently asked questions (FAQs) are available at <https://www.epa.gov/envirofinance/efc-grant-competition>. EPA strongly recommends interested applicants refer to the FAQs webpage prior to submitting a question.

Note to Applicants: Following EPA's evaluation of applications, all applicants will be notified regarding their status. If you name sub-awardees/sub-grantees and/or contractor(s) including individual consultants in your application as partners to assist you with the proposed project, pay careful attention to the information in the CONTRACTS AND SUBAWARDS provision found at [https://www.epa.gov/grants/epa-solicitation-clauses#Contracts and Subawards](https://www.epa.gov/grants/epa-solicitation-clauses#Contracts%20and%20Subawards).

SUMMARY: This notice announces the availability of funds and solicits applications from eligible entities for an established regional Environmental Finance Center (EFC) serving EPA Region 8 states (Colorado, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, Utah, and Wyoming) that will provide multi-media environmental finance expertise and outreach to regulated communities (e.g., states, tribes, local governments, and private sector entities) to help them meet environmental requirements. The objective is to help the regulated parties in these communities find effective and innovative ways to help address the growing costs of protecting public health and the environment in a sustainable and equitable manner. Under this program, the EFC will be established to provide regulated parties in Colorado, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, Utah, and Wyoming with finance-related training, technical assistance, finance studies, and other analytical support (eligible services) to help them develop sustainable solutions to the critical "how-to-pay" issues associated with meeting environmental standards and goals. This EFC will educate regulated parties on lowering costs, increasing investments, improving financial capacity, encouraging full cost pricing, and identifying and evaluating financing options.

FUNDING/AWARDS: The total estimated funding available under this competitive opportunity is \$2.4 million for the five-year period, FY 2017-2021, depending on Agency funding levels, the quality of applications received, and other applicable considerations. EPA will seek to award one cooperative agreement to support regulated parties in Colorado, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, Utah, and Wyoming under this competitive announcement. In FY 2017, total estimated funding shall not exceed \$480,000. It is anticipated that this cooperative agreement will be funded incrementally at \$480,000 each additional year up to a total of five years, subject to the availability of funds, satisfactory performance, and other applicable considerations.

Any eligible entity may apply for this announcement. EPA reserves the right to reject all proposals and make no awards under this announcement.

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I. FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION

A. Background

While the nation has made significant investments and progress in addressing environmental and public health needs over the past forty years, more remains to be done. Not only does the nation still face many environmental challenges such as water and air pollution, solid and hazardous waste clean-up and disposal, ecosystem protection needs and suburban sprawl, it also faces the problem of how to pay for the growing costs of the facilities, programs, services, and activities needed to meet these and other environmental challenges on a sustainable basis. In addition, these environmental and financing challenges are occurring at a time when budgets at all levels of government are facing increasing pressures, and problems in the financial markets are constraining needed sources of capital. EPA recognizes that existing environmental gains cannot be preserved nor further progress achieved unless the regulated communities (State and local governments, tribes, and the private sector) find ways to pay for the growing costs of protecting the environment and public health.

The EPA recognizes that supporting the capacity of state, tribal, and local governments and the private sector to meet the costs of their environmental and public health responsibilities is critical to the success of the Agency's mission. The EPA further recognizes that given the trends of growing costs and increasing resource pressures, the need to support the environmental work of regulated communities through vehicles such as the regional Environmental Finance Centers (EFCs) is as important and timely as ever. The EFCs provide state, tribal, and local governments and private sector parties with eligible services to develop their capacity to protect human health and the environment. The EFCs pursue this work using specialized expertise in environmental finance and management and through cooperation and collaborative partnerships with other EFCs, regulated parties, regulators, universities, technical assistance providers, and non-profit organizations throughout the U.S. The EFCs are expected to use their expertise, resources, and partnerships to provide eligible services for environmental finance projects in the EPA regions, as appropriate.

B. Program Objectives

The EPA is soliciting applications from eligible applicants to support the operation of a regional EFC providing eligible services to parties in the regulated communities (e.g., state, tribal, and local governments and the private sector) in Colorado, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, Utah, and Wyoming. The EFC will work with state, tribal, and local governments and private sector entities to help them address the growing costs of environmental protection. The EFC will assist these regulated parties

develop solutions to the difficult “how-to- pay” issues associated with meeting environmental standards and goals.

Under this cooperative agreement, the EFC will assist the regulated communities in lowering the costs of environmental protection, increasing environmental investments, improving/expanding financial capacity, supporting responsible asset management, encouraging the use of full-cost pricing and improving environmental financing options. A central goal of the EFC will be to create environmentally and financially sustainable systems. Such systems should have the financial, technical and institutional resources and capabilities to operate in compliance with environmental requirements and in conformance with accepted environmental practices over the long term. The EFC will focus on helping regulated communities find ways to finance their environmental protection and public health responsibilities in ways that promote and ensure environmental justice.

Specific types of EFC eligible services that the successful applicant should provide include, but are not limited to, developing training courses, delivering educational presentations on infrastructure development and management, holding finance-focused, community-based workshops, providing training on how to build public-private partnerships, conducting environmental justice finance-related training, providing expertise and analytical support for public information and involvement efforts, developing computer planning and finance models, and sharing and marketing environmental finance tools. In addition to training activities, the EFC should develop and share environmental financing information through research reports, videos, case studies, best practices and how-to guides, models, computer software, and direct consultations.

Examples of environmental finance-related activities that applicants for this regional EFC award might include in their applications and then, if selected, provide to the regulated communities (e.g., state, tribal, and local officials and the private sector) via eligible services are:

1. building the capacity of communities and private parties to develop, implement, and support sustainable public-purpose water and other environmental infrastructure systems;
2. providing computer-based and other financial and outreach tools to communities (particularly small and disadvantaged ones) to help them more effectively manage watersheds and water systems;
3. supporting cleaner/greener business through source reduction, pollution prevention, conservation, resource recovery, reuse, and recycling (sustainable materials management);
4. promoting environmentally sustainable development, redevelopment, smart growth and land use planning; green infrastructure approaches; and green building efforts by state and local governments and the private sector;
5. supporting environmentally and fiscally sustainable environmental infrastructure, including ensuring the resiliency and security of that infrastructure;
6. supporting wetlands programs and protection;
7. improving drinking water and wastewater utility water conservation, energy efficiency, management, and capital planning;
8. encouraging green jobs and green business products and services;
9. promoting innovative ways to finance and otherwise support interstate, state, regional, and local air pollution reduction efforts;
10. reducing greenhouse gas emissions, and developing decision tools and financial strategies for adaptation to adverse weather events and/or climate change;
11. improving water quality and quantity (includes aquifer recharge);
12. evaluating the feasibility of attracting non-federal public and private resources to water

- infrastructure and other environmental projects;
13. assisting the owners and operators of small, medium, and disadvantaged environmental systems in planning, developing, and obtaining financing for infrastructure projects;
 14. developing fiscal sustainability plans for utilities that include inventories of critical assets, evaluations asset performance, energy conservation efforts, operations, maintenance and repair needs and activities, and any required certifications;
 15. reducing and mitigating stormwater runoff from public and private facilities and properties, and developing systems to fund and finance stormwater activities;
 16. encouraging the development and use of public-private partnerships, where appropriate in providing environmental services, infrastructure, projects, and activities;
 17. developing, identifying, and marketing innovative financing approaches as well as successful traditional approaches such as the state clean water and drinking water revolving fund loan programs; and
 18. identifying, supporting and advancing environmental equity and justice concerns, where appropriate, in all trainings, outreach, projects, programs, and activities.

EPA will not fund activities which seek to provide research, training, and technical assistance to facilitate the inventory of brownfield sites, site assessments, remediation of brownfield sites, community involvement, or site preparation. EPA funds these activities in competitions conducted under Catalogue of Federal Domestic Assistance Number 66.814, Brownfields Training, Research, and Technical Assistance Grants and Cooperative Agreements Program.

C. EPA’s Strategic Plan and Anticipated Environmental Results

The activities to be funded under this announcement support EPA’s FY 2014-2018 Strategic Plan available at <https://www.epa.gov/planandbudget/strategicplan>. The assistance agreement awarded under this announcement will support the following Strategic Plan Goals. All proposed projects must address the Strategic Plan priorities and include specific statements describing the environmental results of the proposed project in terms of well-defined outputs and, to the maximum extent practicable, well-defined outcomes.

Linkage to EPA Strategic Plan. Proposals must support all of the following goals in the EPA Strategic Plan in order to be considered eligible:

- | | |
|--------|---|
| Goal 1 | Addressing Climate Change and Improving Air Quality |
| Goal 2 | Protecting America’s Waters |
| Goal 3 | Cleaning Up Communities and Advancing Sustainable Development |
| Goal 4 | Ensuring the Safety of Chemicals and Preventing Pollution |
| Goal 5 | Protecting Human Health and the Environment by Enforcing Laws and Assuring Compliance |

The EPA Strategic Plan also sets forth the following four cross-agency strategies which set clear expectations for changing the way EPA does business in achieving its results:

- Working Toward a Sustainable Future
- Working to Make a Visible Difference in Communities
- Launching a New Era of State, Tribal, Local, and International Partnerships
- Embracing EPA as a High-Performing Organization

Applications must demonstrate how the proposed project will support all of these goals and cross-agency strategies. Detailed information on EPA's Strategic Plan, may be found on the EPA website at: <https://www.epa.gov/planandbudget/strategicplan>. Detailed information on EPA's Cross-Agency Strategies may be found on the Agency's website at: <https://www.epa.gov/planandbudget/fy-2015-cross-agency-strategies-action-plans>

- 2. Outputs.** The term output (or deliverable) means an environmental activity, effort, and/or associated work product 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.

Examples of anticipated outputs from the project(s) to be funded under this announcement may include, but are not limited to:

- the development and implementation of environmental finance training courses;
- on-line environmental finance information exchanges and forums;
- computerized models and software tools focused on paying for environmental protection; and
- case studies, and direct consultations, all related to environmental finance.

It is expected that these outputs will be provided to state, tribal, and local governments, and the private sector as appropriate.

Progress reports and a final report will also be a required output, as specified in Section VI(C) of this announcement, "Reporting Requirement."

- 3. 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, and may be used to gauge a project's performance and take the form of output measures and outcome measures. Outcomes may be environmental, behavioral, health-related, or programmatic in nature. Outcomes must be quantitative, and may not necessarily be achieved within an assistance agreement funding period. Outcomes may be short term (changes in learning, knowledge, attitude, skills) intermediate (changes in behavior, practice, or decisions) or long-term (changes in the condition of the resource).

Examples of anticipated environmental outcomes from projects to be funded under this announcement should include, but are not limited to the following:

- States, tribes, local communities, and private sector parties will create more sustainable environmental financing systems covering all environmental and public health media and these systems will have the financial, technical, and institutional resources and capabilities to operate in compliance with environmental requirements and in conformance with accepted environmental practices over the long term.
- Improved compliance with regulations and practices will further all five of EPA's strategic plan goals listed above under Section I.C.1 and located on the EPA website at: <https://www.epa.gov/planandbudget/strategicplan>

D. Statutory Authority

The statutory authorities for award(s) expected to be made under this announcement are, as appropriate: the Clean Water Act, Section 104(b)(3), as amended; the Safe Drinking Water Act, Section 1442(b)(3) and Section 1420(g), as amended; the Solid Waste Disposal Act, Section 8001(a); the Clean Air Act, Section 103(b)(3); the Toxics Substances Control Act, Section 10, as amended; the Federal Insecticide, the Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act, Section 20, as amended; and the Marine Protection, Research and Sanctuaries Act, Section 203. Pursuant to Section 104(b)(3), lobbying is prohibited using funds from this grant.

II. AWARD INFORMATION

A. Amount of Funding

The total estimated amount of federal funding expected to be available for award under this competitive opportunity is up to \$2.4 million depending on Agency funding levels, the quality of applications received, and other applicable considerations. It is anticipated that one award will be made. Cooperative agreement(s) funded under this announcement are anticipated to have a 5-year project period. It is anticipated that awards will be incrementally funded, with the first year of funding anticipated not to exceed \$480,000.

B. Partial Funding

In appropriate circumstances, EPA reserves the right to partially fund applications by funding discrete portions or phases of proposed projects. If EPA decides to partially fund a project, it will do so in a manner that does not prejudice any applicant or affect the basis upon which the application or portion thereof, was evaluated and selected for award, and therefore maintains the integrity of the competition and selection process.

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

EPA anticipates awarding one cooperative agreement to establish a regional Environmental Finance Center serving Colorado, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, Utah, and Wyoming, subject to the quality of applications received, availability of funds, and other applicable considerations. EPA reserves the right to make no awards as a result of this announcement.

D. What is the project period for awards resulting from this solicitation?

The estimated project period for awards resulting from this competitive solicitation is FY 2017 through FY 2021. All project activities must be completed within negotiated activity performance periods within this overall project period.

E. Type of Funding

The funding for selected projects will be provided in the form of a cooperative agreement. Cooperative agreements permit substantial involvement between the EPA Project Officer(s) and the selected applicant 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:

- in accordance with the applicable regulations at 2 CFR 200 Subpart D (200.317 through 200.326) as appropriate, review of proposed procurements;
- review of qualifications of key personnel (EPA does not have the authority to select employees or contractors employed by the recipient);
- participation in planning meetings;
- consultations when problems or difficulties are encountered;
- collaboration during the performance of the scope of work including participation in training and technical assistance activities such as attending specific trainings and workshops;
- close monitoring of the successful applicant's performance to verify the results proposed by the applicant;
- review and comment on the content of printed or electronic publications prepared; and
- review and comment on tasks/deliverables and reports prepared under the cooperative agreement(s) (the final decision on the content of these reports rests with the recipient).

III. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

A. Eligible Applicants

In accordance with CFDA 66.203, applications will be accepted from public and private non-profit universities and colleges and non-profit organizations subject to 2 CFR Part 200 (and 1500, as applicable) Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards.

Non-profit organizations, as defined by 2 CFR Part 200.70, means any corporation, association, cooperative, or other organization, not including Institutions of Higher Education, that: (a) is operated primarily for scientific, educational, service, charitable, or similar purposes in the public interest; (b) is not organized primarily for profit; and (c) uses net proceeds to maintain, improve, or expand the operations of the organization.

To be eligible for funding under this announcement, an educational institution must be public (e.g. state, tribal, or municipal colleges and universities) or a private college or university that is recognized by a governmental body as a non-profit or not-for-profit entity. Proprietary, commercial or other "for profit" schools, colleges or universities are not eligible to apply for funding under this announcement.

EPA recognizes that it is important to engage all available minds to address the environmental challenges the nation faces. At the same time, EPA seeks to expand the environmental conversation by including members of communities which may have not previously participated in such dialogues to participate in EPA programs. For this reason, EPA strongly encourages all eligible applicants identified in Section III, including minority serving institutions (MSIs), to apply under this opportunity.

For purposes of this solicitation, the following are considered MSIs:

1. Historically Black Colleges and Universities, as defined by the Higher Education Act (20 U.S.C. § 1061). A list of these schools can be found at [White House Initiative on Historically Black Colleges and Universities](#);
2. Tribal Colleges and Universities, as defined by the Higher Education Act (20 U.S.C. § 1059(c)). A list of these schools can be found at [American Indian Tribally Controlled Colleges and Universities](#);

3. Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs), as defined by the Higher Education Act (20 U.S.C. § 1101a(a)(5)). There is no list of HSIs. HSIs are institutions of higher education that, at the time of application submittal, have an enrollment of undergraduate full-time equivalent students that is at least 25% Hispanic students at the end of the award year immediately preceding the date of application for this grant; and
4. Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander-Serving Institutions; (AANAPISIs), as defined by the Higher Education Act (20 U.S.C. § 1059g(a)(2)). There is no list of AANAPISIs. AANAPISIs are institutions of higher education that, at the time of application submittal, have an enrollment of undergraduate students that is not less than 10 % students who are Asian American or Native American Pacific Islander.

EPA invites eligible applicants from all regions of the country and hopes that ones with a wide range of experience and background will apply. In this regard, the Agency encourages historically black colleges and universities, tribal universities, and community colleges to apply for funding under this announcement or to partner with another eligible applicant.

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.

A. Cost Sharing or Matching

No matching funds are required under this competition. Although cost-sharing/matching is not required as a condition of eligibility under this competition, under Section V of this announcement EPA will evaluate proposals based on a leveraging criterion.

Leveraging is generally when an applicant proposes to provide its own additional funds/resources or those from third party sources to support or complement the project they are awarded under the competition which are above and beyond the EPA grant funds awarded. Any leveraged funds/resources, and their source, must be identified in the proposal (See Section IV of the announcement). Leveraged funds and resources may take various forms as noted below.

Voluntary cost share is a form of leveraging. Voluntary cost sharing is when an applicant voluntarily proposes to legally commit to provide costs or contributions to support the project when a cost share is not required. Applicants who propose to use a voluntary cost share **must** include the costs or contributions for the voluntary cost share in the project budget on the SF-424. If an applicant proposes a voluntary cost share, the following apply:

- a voluntary cost share is subject to the match provisions in the grant regulations at 2 CFR 200.306;
- a voluntary cost share may only be met with eligible and allowable costs;
- the recipient may not use other sources of federal funds to meet a voluntary cost share unless the statute authorizing the other federal funding provides that the federal funds may be used to meet a cost share requirement on a federal grant; and
- the recipient is legally obligated to meet any proposed voluntary cost share that is included in the approved project budget. If the proposed voluntary cost share does not materialize during grant performance, then EPA may reconsider the legitimacy of the award and/or take other appropriate action as authorized by 2 CFR Part 200.338.

Other leveraged funding/resources that are not identified as a voluntary cost share. This form of leveraging may be met by funding from another federal grant, from an applicant's own resources, or resources from other third party sources. This form of leveraging should not be included in the budget and the costs need not be eligible and allowable project costs under the EPA assistance agreement. While this form of leveraging should not be included in the budget, the grant workplan should include a statement indicating that the applicant is expected to produce the proposed leveraging consistent with the terms of the announcement and the applicant's proposal. If applicants propose to provide this form of leveraging, EPA expects them to make the effort to secure the leveraged resources described in their proposals. If the proposed leveraging does not materialize during grant performance, then EPA may reconsider the legitimacy of the award and/or take other appropriate action as authorized by 2 CFR Parts 200 or 1500.

B. Threshold Eligibility Criteria

These are requirements that if not met by the time of application submission will result in elimination of the application from consideration for funding. Only applications that meet all of these criteria will be evaluated against the ranking factors in Section V of this announcement. Applicants deemed ineligible for funding consideration as a result of the threshold eligibility review will be notified within 15 calendar days of the ineligibility determination.

1. An applicant must meet the eligibility requirements in Section III.A of this announcement at the time of application submission.
2. Applications must be from eligible entities to establish a regional EFC serving Colorado, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, Utah, and Wyoming.
3. Applications must substantially comply with the application submission instructions and requirements set forth in Section IV of this announcement or else they will be rejected. Where a page limit is expressed in Section IV with respect to the application or parts thereof (e.g., narrative proposal), pages in excess of the page limitation will not be reviewed. Section IV establishes a 20-page, single-spaced Narrative Proposal page limit that includes the summary information page.
4. Applications must be submitted through www.grants.gov as stated in Section IV of this announcement (except in the limited circumstances where another mode of submission is specifically allowed for as explained in Section IV) on or before the application submission deadline published in Section IV of this announcement. Applicants are responsible for following the submission instructions in Section IV of this announcement to ensure that their application is timely submitted.
5. Applications submitted after the submission deadline will be considered late and deemed ineligible without further consideration unless the applicant can clearly demonstrate that it was late due to EPA mishandling or because of technical problems associated with Grants.gov or relevant SAM.gov system issues. An applicant's failure to timely submit their application through Grants.gov because they did not timely or properly register in SAM.gov or Grants.gov will not be considered an acceptable reason to consider a late submission. Applicants should confirm receipt of their applications via email with the Agency Contact, Vanessa Bowie at

efcgrant@epa.gov as soon as possible after the submission deadline—failure to do so may result in your application not being reviewed.

6. Applications must demonstrate how the proposed project will support all five Goals and cross-cutting strategies contained in the current EPA Strategic Plan:

Goal 1	Addressing Climate Change and Improving Air Quality
Goal 2	Protecting America’s Waters
Goal 3	Cleaning Up Communities and Advancing Sustainable Development
Goal 4	Ensuring the Safety of Chemicals and Preventing Pollution
Goal 5	Protecting Human Health and the Environment by Enforcing Laws and Assuring Compliance

- Working Toward a Sustainable Future
- Working to Make a Visible Difference in Communities
- Launching a New Era of State, Tribal, Local, and International Partnerships
- Embracing EPA as a High-Performing Organization

7. Ineligible activities: If an application is submitted that includes any ineligible tasks or activities, that portion of the proposal will be ineligible for funding and may, depending on the extent to which it affects the proposal, render the entire proposal ineligible for funding. This includes ineligible activities which seek funding to provide research, training, and technical assistance to facilitate the inventory of brownfield sites, site assessments, remediation of brownfield sites, community involvement, or site preparation are not eligible for consideration under this announcement.

IV. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

A. Requirement to Submit Through Grants.gov and Limited Exception Procedures

Applicants, except as noted below, must apply electronically through [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) under this funding opportunity based on the grants.gov instructions in this announcement. If an applicant does not have the technical capability to apply electronically through grants.gov because of limited or no internet access which prevents them from being able to upload the required application materials to [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov), the applicant must contact OGDWaivers@epa.gov or the address listed below in writing (e.g., by hard copy, email) *at least 15 calendar days prior to the submission deadline under this announcement* to request approval to submit their application materials through an alternate method.

Mailing Address:
OGD Waivers
c/o Barbara Perkins
USEPA Headquarters
William Jefferson Clinton Building
1200 Pennsylvania Ave., N. W.
Mail Code: 3903R
Washington, DC 20460

Courier Address:
OGD Waivers
c/o Barbara Perkins
Ronald Reagan Building
1300 Pennsylvania Ave., N.W.
Rm # 51267
Washington, DC 20004

In the request, the applicant must include the following information:

- Funding Opportunity Number (FON);
- Organization Name and DUNS;
- Organization's Contact Information (email address and phone number); and
- Explanation of how they lack the technical capability to apply electronically through Grants.gov because of 1) limited internet access or 2) no internet access which prevents them from being able to upload the required application materials through Grants.gov.

EPA will only consider alternate submission exception requests based on the two reasons stated above and will timely respond to the request -- all other requests will be denied. If an alternate submission method is approved, the applicant will receive documentation of this approval and further instructions on how to apply under this announcement. Applicants will be required to submit the documentation of approval with any initial application submitted under the alternative method. In addition, any submittal through an alternative method must comply with all applicable requirements and deadlines in the announcement including the submission deadline and requirements regarding proposal content and page limits (although the documentation of approval of an alternate submission method will not count against any page limits).

If an exception is granted, it is valid for submissions to EPA for the remainder of the entire calendar year in which the exception was approved and can be used to justify alternative submission methods for application submissions made through December 31 of the calendar year in which the exception was approved (e.g., if the exception was approved on March 1, 2015, it is valid for any competitive or non-competitive application submission to EPA through December 31, 2015). Applicants need only request an exception once in a calendar year and all exceptions will expire on December 31 of that calendar year. Applicants must request a new exception from required electronic submission through Grants.gov for submissions for any succeeding calendar year. For example, if there is a competitive opportunity issued on December 1, 2015 with a submission deadline of January 15, 2016, the applicant would need a new exception to submit through alternative methods beginning January 1, 2016.

Please note that the process described in this section is only for requesting alternate submission methods. All other inquiries about this announcement must be directed to the Agency Contact listed in Section VII of the announcement. Queries or requests submitted to the email address identified above for any reason other than to request an alternate submission method will not be acknowledged or answered.

B. Submission Instructions

The electronic submission of your application must be made by an official representative of your institution who is registered with Grants.gov and is authorized to sign applications for Federal assistance. For more information on the registration requirements that must be completed in order to

submit an application through grants.gov, go to Grants.gov and click on “Applicants” on the top of the page and then go to the “Get Registered” link on the page. If your organization is not currently registered with Grants.gov, please encourage your office to designate an Authorized Organization Representative (AOR) and ask that individual to begin the registration process as soon as possible. Please note that the registration process also requires that your organization have a DUNS number and a current registration with the System for Award Management (SAM) and the process of obtaining both could take a month or more. Applicants must ensure that all registration requirements are met in order to apply for this opportunity through grants.gov and should ensure that all such requirements have been met well in advance of the submission deadline. Registration on grants.gov, SAM.gov, and DUNS number assignment is FREE.

Applicants need to ensure that the AOR who submits the application through Grants.gov and whose DUNS number is listed on the application is an AOR for the applicant listed on the application. Additionally, the DUNS number listed on the application must be registered to the applicant organization’s SAM account. If not, the application may be deemed ineligible.

To begin the application process under this grant announcement, go to Grants.gov and click on “Applicants” on the top of the page and then “Apply for Grants” from the dropdown menu and then follow the instructions accordingly. Please note: To apply through grants.gov, you must use Adobe Reader software and download the compatible Adobe Reader version. For more information about Adobe Reader, to verify compatibility, or to download the free software, please visit Adobe Reader Compatibility Information on Grants.gov

You may also be able to access the application package for this announcement by searching for the opportunity on Grants.gov. Go to Grants.gov and then click on “Search Grants” at the top of the page and enter the Funding Opportunity Number, EPA-OW-OWM-16-01, or the CFDA number that applies to the announcement (CFDA 66.203), in the appropriate field and click the Search button. Alternatively, you may be able to access the application package by clicking on the Package button at the top right of the synopsis page for the announcement on Grants.gov. To find the synopsis page, go to Grants.gov and click “Browse Agencies” in the middle of the page and then go to “Environmental Protection Agency” to find the EPA funding opportunities.

Application Submission Deadline: Your organization’s AOR must submit your complete application package electronically to EPA through Grants.gov no later than Monday, August 29, 2016 at 11:59 PM (EDT) in order to be considered for funding. Please allow for enough time to successfully submit your application process and allow for unexpected errors that may require you to resubmit.

Please submit *all* of the application materials described below using the grants.gov application package that you downloaded using the instructions above. For additional instructions on completing and submitting the electronic application package, click on the “Show Instructions” tab that is accessible within the application package itself.

Application Materials

The following forms and documents are required under this announcement:

Mandatory Documents:

1. Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424)

2. Budget Information for Non-Construction Programs (SF-424A)
3. Assurances for Non-Construction Programs (SF-424B)
4. Grants.gov Lobbying Form
5. EPA Form 4700-4 – Pre-award Compliance Review Report
6. EPA Key Contacts Form 5700-54
7. Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement
8. Narrative Proposal (Project Narrative Attachment Form)-prepared as described below
9. Biographical Sketches/Resumes
10. Letters of Support

Applications submitted through grants.gov will be time and date stamped electronically.

If you have not received a confirmation of receipt from EPA (not from grants.gov) within 30 days of the application deadline, please contact Vanessa Bowie at 202 564-5186. Failure to do so may result in your application not being reviewed.

C. Technical Issues with Submission

1. Once the application package has been completed, the “Submit” button should be enabled. If the “Submit” button is not active, please call Grants.gov for assistance at 1-800-518-4726. Applicants who are outside the U.S. at the time of submittal and are not able to access the toll-free number may reach a Grants.gov representative by calling 606-545-5035. Applicants should save the completed application package with two different file names before providing it to the AOR to avoid having to re-create the package should submission problems be experienced or a revised application needs to be submitted.
2. Submitting the application. The application package must be transferred to Grants.gov by an AOR. The AOR should close all other software before attempting to submit the application package. Click the “submit” button of the application package. Your Internet browser will launch and a sign-in page will appear. **Note: Minor problems are not uncommon with transfers to Grants.gov. It is essential to allow sufficient time to ensure that your application is submitted to Grants.gov BEFORE the due date identified in Section IV of the solicitation.** The Grants.gov support desk operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week, except Federal Holidays.

A successful transfer will end with an on-screen acknowledgement. For documentation purposes, print or screen capture this acknowledgement. If a submission problem occurs, reboot the computer – turning the power off may be necessary – and re-attempt the submission.

Note: Grants.gov issues a “case number” upon a request for assistance.

3. Transmission Difficulties. If transmission difficulties that result in a late transmission, no transmission, or rejection of the transmitted application are experienced, and following the above instructions do not resolve the problem so that the application is submitted to [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) by the deadline date and time, follow the guidance below. The Agency will make a decision concerning acceptance of each late submission on a case-by-case basis. All emails, as described below, are to be sent to Vanessa Bowie at efcgrant@epa.gov with the FON in the subject line. If you are unable to email, contact Vanessa Bowie at 202 564-5186. Be aware that EPA will only consider accepting applications that were unable to transmit due to [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) or relevant [www.Sam.gov](https://www.sam.gov) system issues or for unforeseen exigent circumstances, such as extreme weather interfering with internet access. Failure of an applicant to submit timely because they did not properly or timely register in SAM.gov or Grants.gov is not an acceptable reason to justify acceptance of a late submittal.

- a. If you are experiencing problems resulting in an inability to upload the application to Grants.gov, it is essential to call [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) for assistance at 1-800-518-4726 before the application deadline. Applicants who are outside the U.S. at the time of submittal and are not able to access the toll-free number may reach a Grants.gov representative by calling 606-545-5035. Be *sure* to obtain a case number from Grants.gov. If the problems stem from unforeseen exigent circumstances unrelated to Grants.gov, such as extreme weather interfering with internet access, contact Vanessa Bowie at efcgrant@epa.gov.
- b. Unsuccessful transfer of the application package: If a successful transfer of the application cannot be accomplished even with assistance from Grants.gov due to electronic submission system issues or unforeseen exigent circumstances, send an email message to Vanessa Bowie at efcgrant@epa.gov prior to the application deadline. The email message must document the problem and include the Grants.gov case number as well as the entire application in PDF format as an attachment.
- c. Grants.gov rejection of the application package: If a notification is received from Grants.gov stating that the application has been rejected for reasons other than late submittal promptly send an email to Vanessa Bowie at efcgrant@epa.gov with the FON in the subject line within one business day of the closing date of this solicitation. The email should include any materials provided by Grants.gov and attach the entire application in PDF format.

D. Content of Application Package Submission

Applicants should read the following section very carefully. All application submissions must contain completed application forms, as well as a Narrative Proposal, as described below.

Application Materials. The required grant application forms are listed below and they are available in the Grants.gov Application Package for this opportunity on Grants.gov.

- Signed Standard Form 424, *Application for Federal Assistance*. Complete the form. There are no attachments. Please be sure to include the organization fax number and email in Block 5 of the SF 424. The organizational Dun and Bradstreet (D&B) Data Universal Number System (DUNS) number must be included in 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.
- Standard Form 424A, *Budget Information – Non-Construction Programs*. The total amount of federal funding requested for the project period should be shown on line 5(e) and on line 6(k) of the SF-424A. If indirect costs are included, the amount of indirect costs should be entered on line 6(j). The indirect cost rate (a percentage), the base (e.g., personnel costs and fringe benefits), and the amount should also be indicated on line 22. If indirect costs are requested, a copy of the Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement must be submitted as part of the application package. In Section B, Budget Categories column (1) should be filled out for federal funds, column (2) should be filled out for non-federal cost-share/match, and column (5) should be filled out for total project cost (combined federal funds and non-federal cost-share/match).
- Standard Form 424B, *Assurances for Non-Construction Programs*. Complete the form. There are no attachments.
- Grants.gov Lobbying Form. Complete the form. There are no attachments.

- EPA Form 4700-4, *Pre-Award Compliance Review Report*. Complete the form. There are no attachments.
- EPA Form 5700-54, *Key Contacts Form*. Complete the form. Attach additional forms as needed.
- Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (if indirect costs are included in your proposed project budget). Complete this form if indirect costs are included in the proposed project budget. You must submit a copy of your organization's Indirect Cost Rate Agreement as part of the application package if your proposed project budget includes indirect costs.
- Narrative Proposal. See details below on how to prepare your Narrative Proposal.
- Biographical Sketches. Submit a biographical sketch of each major project manager, support staff member, or other major project participant (see Section IV.D).
- Letters of Support. Indicate how the supporting organization will assist in the project.

Narrative Proposal. The **Narrative Proposal (including sections 1-2 below)** is limited to no more than twenty (20) typewritten, single spaced 8.5 x 11-inch pages (a page is one side of a piece of paper) including the **Summary Page**. Pages should be consecutively numbered for ease of reading. It is recommended that applicants use a standard 12-point type with 1-inch margins. While these guidelines establish the minimum type size recommended, applicants are advised that readability is of paramount importance and should take precedence in selection of an appropriate font for use in the Project Narrative. **Pages beyond the 20 page limit will not be considered.** The Project Narrative will be reviewed up to the equivalent of the 20 page single-spaced page limit; excess pages will not be reviewed. Supporting materials such as resumes and letters of support, can be submitted as attachments and are not included in the 20-page limit.

The application's Narrative Proposal must be typewritten and must include the information listed below. If a particular item is not applicable, clearly state this in the Narrative Proposal.

- 1. Summary Information Page** (included in the 20-page limit and recommended not to exceed one page)
 - a. Project Title
 - b. Applicant Information. Include applicant (organization) name, address, contact person, phone number, fax and e-mail address.
 - c. Funding Requested. Specify the amount you are requesting from EPA.
 - d. Total Project Cost. Specify total cost of the project. Identify funding from other sources, including cost share or in-kind resources.
 - e. Project period. Provide beginning and ending dates. (Projects are anticipated to begin date and end no later than date.)
- 2. Narrative Proposal Work Plan** (also included in the 20-page limit)

The Narrative Proposal work plan must explicitly describe how the proposed project meets the guidelines established in Sections I-III of this announcement, and must address each of the evaluation criteria set forth in Section V.

- a. Project Summary/Approach: This section should contain the following components:
 - i. Detailed project summary of how the project will address the priorities, objectives, and information contained in Section I of the announcement.
 - ii. Description of specific actions and methods to be undertaken and the responsible institutions, including estimated time line for each task.
 - iii. Description of the associated work products to be developed.
 - iv. Explanation of project benefits to the public, and specifically the potential audience(s) served.

b. Environmental Results and Measuring Progress:

- i. Linkage to EPA Strategic Plan - Description of how the project will address all of the EPA Strategic Plan goals. See <https://www.epa.gov/planandbudget/strategicplan>
- ii. Results of Activities (outputs) – Describe the expected project outputs / results which are expected to be achieved from accomplishment of the project and describe an approach for tracking and reporting your progress toward achieving the expected project output(s) (examples of outputs can be found in Section I.C. of this announcement).
- iii. Anticipated Environmental Improvement (outcomes) - Identify the expected quantitative and qualitative outcomes that will be accomplished as a result of the project (See Section I.C). These improvements are changes or benefits to the environment or public health which are a result of the accomplishments of the work plan commitments and outputs. Describe and approach for tracking and reporting your progress towards achieving the expected outcomes and how the results of the project will be evaluated.

c. Past Performance: Submit a list of federally and/or non-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 (no more than 5 agreements) similar in size, scope and relevance to the proposed project and:

- i. Describe how you successfully completed and managed those agreements; and
- ii. Describe your history of meeting reporting requirements under the agreements including submission of acceptable final technical reports.

This may include past performance under agreements that involved addressing environmental finance issues, multi-media environmental challenges and solutions, and working cooperatively on such projects with other universities and non-profit entities.

Note: 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 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 narrative 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.

Reporting on Environmental Results--Outcomes and Outputs: Submit a list of federally and/or non-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 (no more than 5) 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.

Note: In evaluating applicants under this factor 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 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 narrative proposal and you will receive a neutral score for this factor under Section V. If you do not provide any response for this item, you may receive a score of 0 for this factor.

d. Staff Expertise/Qualifications:

- i. Description of the applicant's organization and experience related to the proposed project.
- ii. Description of staff expertise/qualifications, staff knowledge, and resources or the ability to obtain them, to successfully achieve the goals of the proposed project.

e. Milestone Schedule: Provide a projected milestone schedule for the proposed project period (up to 5 years). The milestone schedule should provide a breakout of the project activities into phases with associated tasks and a timeframe for completion of tasks and an approach for ensuring that awarded funds will be expended in a timely and efficient manner. The project start date will follow award acceptance by the successful applicant.

f. Detailed Budget Narrative: Clearly explain how EPA funds will be used. Provide a detailed budget and estimated funding amounts for each project component/task. This section provides an opportunity for narrative description of the budget found in the SF-424A such as "other" and "contractual".

- i. Applicants must itemize costs related to personnel, fringe benefits, contractual costs, travel, equipment, supplies, other direct costs, indirect costs and total cost. All sub-grant funding should be located in the "other" cost category. Total costs must include both federal and cost-share/matching (non-federal) components. For each cost category, indicate what portion of the cost will be paid by EPA and what portion of the cost will be covered by the minimum non-federal cost-share/match as required in Section III.B. Describe itemized costs in sufficient detail for EPA to determine the allowability of costs for each project component/task, as well as the cost-effectiveness and reasonableness of all costs (both federal and non-federal components).

- ii. **Voluntary cost share/match and leveraged funds (See Section III.B. also)**
Demonstrate how you will leverage additional funds/resources beyond the grant funds awarded to support the proposed project activities and how these funds/resources will be used to contribute to the performance and success of the proposed project. This includes but is not limited to funds and other resources leveraged from businesses, labor organizations, non-profit organizations, education and training providers, and/or Federal, state, tribal, and local governments, as appropriate. Describe the amount and type of

leveraged resources to be provided, 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 resources will play to support the proposed project activities. 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.

- g. **Expenditure of Awarded Grant Funds.** Demonstrate the approach, procedures, and controls how the applicant will ensure that the awarded grant funds will be expended timely and efficiently.

3. **Attachments** (not included in the 20-page limit)

- a. **Biographical Sketches.** Provide a biographical sketch of each major project manager, support staff member, or other major project participant.
- b. **Letters of Support.** Indicate how the supporting organization will assist in the project.

E. Submission Dates and Times

The closing date and time for receipt of application submissions is Monday, August 29, 2016 at 11:59 PM EDT. Electronic submissions via Grants.gov must be submitted to www.grants.gov on or before Monday, August 29, 2016 at 11:59 PM EDT. Applications submitted electronically after the closing date and time will not be considered for funding.

F. Additional Provisions for Applicants Incorporated into the Solicitation

Additional provisions that apply to this solicitation and/or awards made under this solicitation, including but not limited to those related to confidential business information, contracts and subawards under grants, and proposal assistance and communications, can be found at [EPA Solicitation Clauses](#). These, and the other provisions that can be found at the website link are important, and applicants must review them when preparing proposals for this solicitation. If you are unable to access these provisions electronically at the website above, please communicate with the EPA contact listed in the solicitation to obtain the provisions.

V. APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

All eligible applications, based on the Section III threshold eligibility review, will be evaluated based on the evaluation criteria and weights below (100 total point scale). Applicants should explicitly address all of these criteria as part of their application package submittal.

A. Evaluation Criteria

	Criteria	Points
#1	<p>Project Summary/Approach: Under this criterion, EPA will evaluate the extent and quality to which the application:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. includes a well-conceived strategy for addressing all of the Strategic Plan goals in Section 1, Part C (Project Overview and Scope of Work) of this announcement (10 points); and b. demonstrates how the proposed project will address the program objectives listed in Section I, Part B (Project Overview and Scope of Work (5 points). 	15
#2	<p>Environmental Results and Measuring Progress: Applications will be evaluated based on the extent and quality to which it demonstrates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. a sound plan for tracking and measuring progress toward achieving the anticipated project outputs and outcomes (examples of outputs and outcomes are identified in Section I, Part C of this announcement (5 points); b. demonstrates the potential to achieve environmental results, anticipated outputs and outcomes, and how the outcomes are linked to EPA’s Strategic Plan (5 points); and c. a reasonable time schedule for the execution of the tasks associated with the project(s) (5 points). 	15
#3	<p>Past Performance and Reporting on Environmental Results: Under this criterion, EPA will evaluate the applicant’s technical ability to successfully complete and manage the proposed project taking into account the applicant’s:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. past performance in successfully completing and managing federally and/or non-federally funded assistance agreements* similar in size, scope, and relevance to the proposed project performed within the last 3 years including but not limited to environmental finance projects or similar projects in which the applicant worked in cooperation with other public and private non-profit universities and colleges and/or non-profit entities or for multimedia projects involving the financing of environmental protection activities for state, tribal, and local governments and/or the private sector (20 points); and b. history of meeting reporting requirements and submitting acceptable final technical reports under federally and/or non-federally funded assistance agreements* similar in size, scope, and relevance to the proposed project performed within the last 3 years (5 points); and c. extent and quality to which they adequately documented and/or reported on their progress towards achieving the expected outcomes and outputs (e.g., results) under federally and/or non-federally funded assistance agreements* similar in size, scope and relevance to the proposed project within the last 3 years; and, if such progress was not made whether the documentation and/or reports satisfactorily explained why not (5 points). <p>NOTE: In evaluating applicants under this criterion, EPA will consider the information provided by the applicant and may consider relevant information from other sources including Agency files and prior/current grantors (e.g., to verify and/or supplement the information supplied by the applicant). Applicants with no relevant or available past performance or reporting history will receive a neutral score for those elements under this criterion. A neutral score is half of the total points available in a subset of possible</p>	30

	Criteria	Points
	<p>points (e.g.10 points for item (i), 2.5 points for item (ii) and 2.5 points for item (iii). Failure to provide any past performance information, or to include a statement that you do not have any relevant or available past performance information, may result in a zero score for the factor (i.e., 0 points for item (i), 0 points for item (ii), and 0 points for item (iii).</p> <p>* (assistance agreements include Federal grants and cooperative agreements but not Federal contracts)</p>	
#4	<p>Expertise/Qualifications: Under this criterion, the Agency will evaluate the following factors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. the applicant’s staff expertise/qualifications, staff, knowledge and resources or the ability to obtain them, to successfully achieve the goals of the proposed project (10 points); and b. organizational experience related to the proposed project and their infrastructure as it relates to the ability to successfully implement the proposed project (5 points). 	15
#5	<p>Budget/Milestone Schedule: Applications will be evaluated based on the extent and quality to which the proposed project:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. is appropriate to accomplish the proposed goals, objectives, and measurable environmental outcomes and whether the budget provides an approximation of the percentage of the budget designated for each major activity (5 points); b. demonstrates that the applicant will leverage (voluntary cost share) additional funds/ resources beyond the grant funds awarded to support the proposed project activities and how these funds/resources will be used to contribute to the performance and success of the proposed project. This includes but is not limited to funds and other resources leveraged from businesses, labor organizations, non-profit organizations, education and training providers, and/or Federal, state, tribal, and local governments, as appropriate. Applicants will also be evaluated based on the amount and type of leveraged resources to be provided, how they 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 to support the proposed project activities (5 points); and c. Applicants will be evaluated based on the adequacy and completeness of the milestone schedule, including timeframes and major milestones to complete significant project tasks, and an approach to ensure that awarded funds will be expended in a timely and efficient manner (5 points). 	15
#6	<p>Expenditure of Awarded Grant Funds: Under this criterion, applicants will be evaluated based on their approach, procedures, and controls for ensuring that awarded grant funds will be expended in a timely and efficient manner (10 points).</p>	10

B. Review and Selection Process

Applications will first be evaluated against the threshold factors listed in Section III. Only those applications which meet all of the threshold factors will be deemed eligible and evaluated using the evaluation criteria listed above **under Section V.A** by an EPA evaluation panel. Each application will be given a numerical score and will be rank-ordered according to the numerical score. The ranking list will be provided to the Selection Official who will make the final funding decisions.

Other Factors. Final funding decisions will be made by the Selection Official based on the rankings and preliminary recommendations of the EPA evaluation team. In addition, in making the final funding decisions, the Selection Official may also consider programmatic priorities, geographic diversity of funds, and the availability of funds. Once final decisions have been made, a funding recommendation will be developed and forwarded to the EPA Award Official.

C. Additional Provisions for Applicants Incorporated Into the Solicitation

Additional provisions that apply to this solicitation and/or awards made under this solicitation including the clause on Reporting and Use of Information Concerning Recipient Integrity and Performance can be found at [EPA Solicitation Clauses](#). These, and the other provisions that can be found at the website link, are important, and applicants must review them when preparing proposals for this solicitation. If you are unable to access these provisions electronically at the website above, please communicate with the EPA contact listed in this solicitation to obtain the provisions.

VI. AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

A. Award Notices

Following EPA's evaluation of applications, all applicants will be notified regarding their status. The notification will be sent to the original signer of the proposal or the project contact listed in the proposal. This notification, which informs the applicant that its proposal has been selected and is being recommended for award, is not an authorization to begin work. The official notification of an award will be made by the Regional Award Official. Applicants are cautioned that only an Award Official is authorized to bind the Government to the expenditure of funds; selection does not guarantee an award will be made. For example, statutory authorization, funding or other issues discovered during the award process may affect the ability of EPA to make an award to an applicant. The award notice, signed by an EPA Award Official, is the authorizing document and will be provided through electronic or postal mail. The successful applicant may need to prepare and submit additional documents and forms (e.g., work plan), which must be approved by EPA, before the grant can officially be awarded. The time between notification of selection and award of a grant can take up to 90 days or longer.

B. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

The general award and administration process for assistance agreements are governed by regulations at 2 CFR 200 and 1500, as applicable. A description of the Agency's substantial involvement in the cooperative agreement will be included in the final assistance agreement.

C. Reporting Requirements

Quarterly or semiannual reports (as determined by the regional EPA project officer) and a detailed final technical report will be required. The quarterly or semiannual progress reports shall cover work status, work progress, any difficulties encountered, planned activities for next quarter or six months, and a summary of expenditures which shall include a comparison of the percentage of the project activities completed to the project schedule. The report shall also include any changes of key personnel concerned with the project. The schedule for the submission of quarterly or semiannual progress reports will be determined by EPA after the award.

The final technical report shall be completed within 90 calendar days of the completion of the period of performance. The final technical report should include: summary of the project or activity, advances achieved and costs of the project or activity. In addition, the final technical report shall discuss the problems, successes, and lessons learned from the project or activity that could help overcome structural, organizational or technical obstacles to implementing a similar project elsewhere.

D. 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 [Dispute Resolution Procedures](#). Copies of these procedures may also be requested by contacting the person listed in Section VII of the announcement.

E. Additional Provisions for Applicants Incorporated into the Solicitation

Additional provisions that apply to this solicitation and/or awards made under this solicitation, including but not limited to those related to DUNS, SAM, copyrights, disputes, and administrative capability, can be found at [EPA Solicitation Clauses](#). These, and the other provisions that can be found at the website link are important and applicants must review them when preparing proposals for this solicitation. If you are unable to access these provisions electronically at the website above, please communicate with the EPA contact listed in this solicitation to obtain the provisions.

VII. AGENCY CONTACTS

Note to Applicants: In accordance with EPA's Assistance Agreement Competition Policy (EPA Order 5700.5A1), EPA staff will not meet with individual applicants to discuss draft applications, provide informal comments on draft applications, or provide advice to applicants on how to respond to ranking criteria. Applicants are responsible for the contents of their applications. 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 application, and requests for clarification about any of the language or provisions in the announcement. Please note that applicants should raise any questions they may have about the solicitation language to the contact identified in below as soon as possible so that any questions about the solicitation language may be resolved prior to submitting a proposal. In addition, if necessary, EPA may clarify threshold eligibility issues with applicants prior to making a final eligibility determination. Questions about this RFA must be submitted in writing via e-mail and must be received by the Agency Contact identified below by Friday, August 12, 2016 and written responses will be posted on EPA's website at <https://www.epa.gov/envirofinance/efc-grant-competition>

Please note answers to FAQs are available at <https://www.epa.gov/envirofinance/efc-grant-competition> and EPA strongly recommends interested applicants refer to the FAQs webpage prior to submitting a question.

Agency Contact: Vanessa Bowie

E-mail: efcgrant@epa.gov