

Federal Agency Name: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Office of Water, Office of Ground Water and Drinking Water

Funding Opportunity Title: Technical Assistance and Support for Improved Protection of Drinking Water Sources

Announcement Type: Request for Applications (RFA)

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

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number: 66.424

Dates: The closing date and time for receipt of application submissions is **July 15, 2016 by 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 **11:59 PM EDT July 15, 2016, in order to be considered for funding.** Questions about this RFA must be submitted in writing via e-mail and must be received by the Agency contact identified in Section VII before July 1, 2016. Written responses will be posted on EPA's website at: <https://www.epa.gov/uic/technical-assistance-and-support-improved-protection-drinking-water-sources>. Please note that answers to frequently asked questions (FAQs) are available at: <https://www.epa.gov/uic/technical-assistance-and-support-improved-protection-drinking-water-sources>; 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 subawardees/subgrantees 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>

Summary:

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is soliciting applications from eligible applicants for technical assistance and support that will enhance communication and coordination between the EPA and the states¹ to protect drinking water sources. The technical assistance and support should develop and expand the capability of state and tribal Underground Injection Control (UIC) programs (Classes I-VI) and state and tribal Source Water Protection programs to protect drinking water sources. Funds awarded under this announcement may be used by recipients to promote non-federal participation in meetings that improve the ability to protect drinking water sources and to support the travel expenses of non-federal personnel to attend appropriate meetings.

The proposed activities support the Agency's Strategic Plan for Fiscal Year (FY) 2014 – 2018, Goal 2: Protecting America's Waters, Objective 2.1, Protect Human Health. EPA's Strategic Plan is available at: <http://www2.epa.gov/planandbudget/strategicplan>. The statutory authority for this announcement is Section 1442(c)(3)(c) of the Safe Drinking Water Act.

¹ Throughout this RFA, reference is made to state UIC and Source Water Protection programs. This reference also includes tribes and territories.

Eligible applicants under this competition are states, local governments, territories, Indian tribes, and possessions of the U.S. (including the District of Columbia), public and private universities and colleges, hospitals, laboratories, and public and private nonprofit institutions². Individuals are not eligible to apply. For-profit organizations are not eligible to apply. Nonprofit organizations described in Section 501(c)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code that engage in prohibited lobbying activities as defined in Section 3 of the Lobbying Disclosure Act of 1995 are not eligible to apply.

The total amount of expected federal funding available under this announcement is approximately \$900,000, depending on Agency funding levels, the quality of applications received, and other applicable considerations. It is anticipated that one award will be made under this announcement. It is anticipated that the award will be incrementally funded at approximately \$300,000 per year and will have a three-year project period.

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I. Funding Opportunity Description

A. Background

The EPA, together with states, tribes, and its many partners, protects public health by protecting current and future drinking water sources and ensuring the availability of high quality drinking water. EPA's UIC Program is responsible for regulating the construction, operation, permitting, and closure of injection wells that emplace fluids underground for storage or disposal. The UIC Program also provides information for owners and operators of injection wells and state regulators on how to safely operate injection wells to prevent contamination of underground sources of drinking water. EPA's Source Water Protection Program promotes tools and programs that can be used to help protect drinking water sources. The Source Water Protection Program encourages partnerships among state and tribal agencies, local governments, utilities, non-governmental agencies, and citizen groups to carry out the source water protection actions.

EPA works with states and tribes to implement the UIC and Source Water Protection programs and the goal of this solicitation is to improve the capacity of states and tribes, working with EPA, to protect drinking water sources and public health. The UIC Program protects current and future underground sources of drinking water (USDWs) from endangerment by setting minimum

² In accordance with the Federal Financial Assistance Management Improvement Act at 31 USC Sec. 6101, the term "nonprofit organization" means "any corporation, trust, association, cooperative, or other organization 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."

requirements for siting, construction, operation and closure of injection wells. Approximately one trillion gallons of hazardous and non-hazardous fluids are disposed of safely through underground injection wells every year. The purpose of the UIC requirements is to protect USDWs by ensuring that injected fluids do not endanger sources of drinking water or otherwise adversely affect public health. Injection wells are directly regulated by either a state or tribal agency, or the EPA.

States and Tribes administer their UIC programs as “co-regulators” with the EPA. Therefore, the technical assistance and support should enhance communication and coordination between the EPA and the states/tribes with primary enforcement authority (primacy) to protect drinking water sources. The technical assistance and support should also help ensure that state and tribal interests are effectively represented in the development of national UIC policies and programs that states and tribes carry out. The EPA has approved primacy for UIC well classes I-V for 34 states and three territories; it shares responsibility in seven states and two Indian tribes (the Fort Peck Assiniboine and Sioux Tribes and the Navajo), and directly implements the UIC program for all well classes in nine states, two territories, and the District of Columbia (<https://www.epa.gov/uic/primary-enforcement-authority-underground-injection-control-program>). The EPA is currently the implementing authority for all Class VI wells; however, some states are creating Class VI programs and will be applying for Class VI Primacy.

The UIC program uses a National UIC Database to collect critical information/data for the UIC program. The database includes well-specific permitting, facility, compliance, enforcement, geological, engineering, well inventory, well location, and contact information that helps to increase public knowledge and the effectiveness of EPA understanding, management, and oversight of the National UIC Program.

The Source Water Protection Program helps protect sources of drinking water delivered by drinking water utilities and withdrawn by private wells. Sources of drinking water include groundwater, streams, rivers, springs or lakes. Although most water requires some treatment before use, protecting these sources of water is an important part of providing safe drinking water to the public. Source water protection usually requires the combined efforts of many partners at the federal, state, and local levels. The SDWA Amendments of 1996 required states to develop and implement source water assessment programs to analyze existing and potential threats to the quality of the public drinking water throughout the state. Using these programs, states have completed source water assessments for essentially every public water system – from major metropolitan areas to the smallest towns. Groundwater and surface water supplies for schools, restaurants, and other public facilities have been assessed. States, tribes, local communities, and public water systems are working to implement protection measures to address potential threats to sources of drinking water, building on information not only from the source water assessments, but also from watershed-based, wellhead, ground water, and tribal water protection programs. An informed public with an understanding that everybody plays a role in water protection is critical to protecting our drinking water now and for the future.

For more information on EPA’s UIC program, please go to: <http://www.epa.gov/uic>. For more information on EPA’s Source Water Protection Program, please go to: <http://www.epa.gov/sourcewaterprotection>.

B. Project Description

The EPA is soliciting applications from eligible applicants to provide technical assistance and support to develop and expand the capability of state and tribal UIC and Source Water Protection programs. In their applications, applicants should describe their proposed approach to providing technical assistance and support that will achieve these objectives. The project elements described below provide detail on roles and responsibilities that are important in improving the capability of states and tribes to protect drinking water sources and public health. The description below does not attempt to be comprehensive. Applicants are encouraged to identify additional project elements in their applications that may not be included in the announcement, but that may contribute to overall project success.

1. Provide leadership and support to states and tribes on emerging/high priority issues.

The successful applicant will provide leadership and support to states and tribes by assisting state and tribal officials who are responsible for implementing state and tribal UIC and Source Water Protection programs in identifying UIC and source water protection issues, prioritizing those issues, and developing strategies to address those issues. The successful applicant will monitor, coordinate, represent, and advance state and tribal environmental interests among states, tribes and to EPA.

It is anticipated that one or two emerging/high priority issues for UIC and for source water protection will be identified per year for the three-year project period. The emerging/high priority issues should reflect input from state and tribal agencies involved in implementation of UIC and Source Water Protection programs to inform national policy. Examples of issues include but are not limited to Class II disposal wells and induced seismicity, Class VI wells, Class V and aquifer storage and recovery wells, aquifer exemptions, population of the National UIC Program database, and identification of challenges and tools to protect and promote protection of sources of drinking water.

The successful applicant will convene and facilitate discussions/workgroups that will address emerging/high priority UIC and source water protection issues. Discussions of these issues should include identifying the best practices from among the state and tribal agency officials, policy and technical options, implementation approaches and impacts, and strategies for solutions in the context of the federal/state/tribal UIC and the Source Water Protection programs. The successful applicant should develop products that states and tribes can utilize and benefit from such as an issue analysis and synthesis of best management policies or regulations other states and tribes have successfully used to address the issue.

The recipient will identify and invite appropriate participants for the discussions/workgroups, including stakeholders and relevant experts. The primary participants of the discussions/workgroups will be state and tribal agency officials involved in implementation of drinking water protection programs (e.g., UIC and Source Water Protection programs) as well as other federal and non-federal stakeholders. Federal stakeholders may participate, but will constitute a small percentage of each discussion group/workgroup.

Support activities may include preparing agendas, facilitating conference calls and meetings, and summarizing discussion of action items on emerging/high priority issues. A portion of the assistance funds may be used by the successful applicant to defray transportation and subsistence expenses for non-federal attendees to attend discussions/workgroups. The applicant is solely responsible for determining a methodology for selecting and funding reimbursement requests and providing a report on how participating non-federal attendees benefited from the discussions/workgroups. The EPA

will not participate in the selection or approval of individuals who receive travel assistance.

2. Sponsor annual meetings for UIC and Source Water Protection programs.

It is anticipated that the successful applicant will sponsor (or cosponsor) an annual UIC meeting and an annual Source Water meeting for state and tribal agency officials engaged in implementing protection of drinking water (including UIC and Source Water Protection Programs). Meetings should also supply ample opportunities for interaction between EPA, state and tribal co-regulators only, facilitated by the applicant, especially in situations where premature disclosure could reasonably be expected to cause misinterpretations or violate privacy interests. Applicants should, to the extent practicable, identify specific anticipated meetings in their application and indicate the expected target audience and the need for a face-to-face meeting.

These meetings should be held in locations which will allow for broad attendance of state and tribal co-regulators and other stakeholders as well as provide geographic diversity during the three-year project period. The applicant may choose to combine the annual meetings for UIC and source water protection issues, and/or combine them with other meetings, provided that the applicant can demonstrate that the appropriate audiences will still be served by doing so. The applicant should consider ways to reduce the carbon footprint of the annual meetings and encourage off-site participation through, for example, the use of webinars and video conferences.

Technical assistance and support funds may be used by the successful applicant to defray transportation and subsistence expenses for non-federal attendees. The applicant is solely responsible for determining a methodology for selecting and funding reimbursement requests and providing a report on how participating non-federal attendees benefited from the annual meetings. EPA will not participate in the selection or approval of individuals who receive travel assistance.

3. Support and encourage state and tribal participation in the federal/state/tribal National UIC Database.

The Agency is working with all states, tribes, and U.S. territories to populate a National UIC Database with well-specific inventory, enforcement, and compliance information. The end goal is to better understand and explain the status of the national UIC program, better understand state program activities, and communicate the impact of UIC program activities to drinking water protection. The Agency also hopes to achieve regular electronic data flow from UIC programs in order to replace required paper reporting. Ultimately, the database will serve as an important tool for UIC programs to track wells and oversee UIC activities. To date, ten state agencies and eight EPA Regions are e-reporters using the database as their official data of record, and a number of others have taken steps towards data flow. The successful applicant will provide leadership and support to states, tribes, and territories in efforts to complete the database through communication and technical support activities such as:

- Facilitate peer-to-peer information sharing such as trouble-shooting data mapping/flowing issues and sharing best data management practices amongst contributors to the National UIC Database;
- Assist in development and dissemination of informational materials and support training efforts;
- Provide technical support to help states troubleshoot existing issues on mapping and flowing data to the National UIC Database;
- Communicate with states and EPA to understand the issues and problems associated with state

- efforts to populate the database and encourage solutions; and
- Provide information technology tools to ease states' data flow activities.

4. Disseminate and share information with states, tribes, and other non-federal stakeholders.

The successful applicant will stay abreast of relevant and timely issues and share this information with states, tribes, and other non-federal stakeholders. It is anticipated that information sharing may be accomplished by establishing multiple means of communication with and among states, tribes, and other non-federal stakeholders including, for example, face-to-face meetings, a dedicated website, e-mail contact lists, conference calls, and video conferences. Opportunities for collaborating with other organizations and meetings (e.g., the Source Water Collaborative, additional information is available at www.sourcewatercollaborative.org/) should be employed to the maximum extent possible. Types of information that may be of interest to the target audience of states, tribes, and other non-federal stakeholders include, but are not limited to, relevant technical and policy papers, court decisions, and drafts/proposals of new federal or state policies/regulation that may have ground water resource consequences for state UIC or Source Water Protection programs.

5. Additional project elements. Describe any additional elements or tasks that are proposed as key features of the project and how they will be implemented.

Applications will be evaluated based on the criteria in Section V. EPA anticipates funding one award for approximately \$900,000, depending on the amount requested and the overall size and scope of the project. It is anticipated that the project period for this award will be three years and that the award will be incrementally funded at approximately \$300,000 per year.

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: <http://www2.epa.gov/planandbudget/strategicplan>) Goal 2: Protecting America's Waters, Objective 2.1, Protect Human Health. Environmental results are a way to gauge a project's performance and are described in terms of outputs and outcomes. All proposed activities must address the Strategic Plan priorities and include specific statements describing the environmental results of the proposed project as well-defined outputs and, to the maximum extent practicable, well-defined outcomes that will demonstrate how the project will contribute to the overall protection of ground and surface water sources of drinking water.

Environmental outputs (or deliverables) refer to an environmental activity, effort, and/or associated work product 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 an assistance agreement funding period.

Examples of anticipated environmental outputs from the assistance agreement to be awarded under this announcement include, but are not limited to:

- Identification of one or two emerging/high priority issues for UIC and for source water protection on an annual basis;
- Organization and facilitation of discussions/workgroups to identify best practices, develop products that analyze or synthesize those practices and develop policy and technical options;
- Preparation of annual meetings for both UIC and Source Water Protection programs for state and

tribal co-regulator agency officials and other stakeholders engaged in implementing protection of drinking water sources;

- Expansion of state and tribal participation in the federal/state UIC national database; and
- Promotion of communication tools and/or venues such as webinars, websites, and conference calls.

Environmental outcomes are 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 are used as a way to gauge a projects 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 condition of the natural resource).

Examples of anticipated outcomes from the assistance agreement to be awarded under this announcement include, but are not limited to:

- Increased awareness and knowledge of practices that promote protection of drinking water sources and the resultant benefits to public health;
- Improved capacity of states and tribes with primacy to implement UIC programs;
- Improved ability to identify well types, location, and types of fluids being injected nationwide; and
- Enhanced exchange of information regarding best practices and improved capacity of state and tribal agencies to strengthen Source Water Protection programs.

As part of the Project Narrative, an applicant will be required to describe how the project results will link the outcomes to the Agency's Strategic Plan. In addition, applicants will have to describe their plan and approach for tracking and measuring their progress towards achieving expected outputs and outcomes. Additional information regarding EPA's discussion of environmental results in terms of "outputs" and "outcomes" can be found at: <https://www.epa.gov/grants/epa-order-environmental-results-under-epa-assistance-agreements>.

Statutory Authority

The statutory authority for this announcement is Section 1442(c)(3)(c) of the SDWA. This SDWA section authorizes EPA to make grants for any project or activity designed to develop and expand the capability of programs of states and municipalities to carry out the purposes of the SDWA (other than those projects or activities supported by statutory grants such as the EPA Drinking Water State Revolving Fund for carrying out state public water system supervision programs or the EPA Underground Injection Control Grant for carrying out state UIC programs (as defined in section 1443(c))).

II. Award Information

A. Amount of Funding

The total amount of funding expected to be available under this announcement is approximately \$900,000, depending on Agency funding levels, the quality of applications received, and other applicable considerations. It is anticipated that one award will be made under this announcement. It

is anticipated that the award will be incrementally funded at approximately \$300,000 per year and will have a three-year project period.

In appropriate circumstances, EPA reserves the right to partially fund applications by funding discrete portions or phases of proposed projects. If the EPA decides to partially fund an application, it will do so in a manner that does not prejudice any applicants 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.

EPA reserves the right to make no awards under this announcement. In addition, EPA reserves the right to make additional awards under this announcement, consistent with Agency policy and guidance, if additional funding becomes available after the original selections are made. Any additional selections for awards will be made no later than six months after the original selection decisions.

B. Type of Funding

It is anticipated that a cooperative agreement will be awarded under this announcement. When cooperative agreements are awarded, EPA will have substantial involvement with the project work plans and budget. Although EPA will negotiate precise terms and conditions relating to substantial involvement as part of the award process, the anticipated substantial federal involvement for the project selected may include:

1. Close monitoring of the recipient's performance to verify the results proposed by the applicant;
2. Collaboration during the performance of the scope of work;
3. In accordance with 2 CFR 200 Subpart D (200.317 through 200.326) as appropriate, review of proposed procurements;
4. Review of qualifications of key personnel (EPA does not have authority to select employees or contractors employed by the recipient); and
5. Review and comment on tasks/deliverables and reports prepared under the cooperative agreement (the final decision on the content of reports rests with the recipient).

III. Eligibility Information

A. Eligible Applicants

Eligible applicants under this competition are states, local governments, territories, Indian tribes, and possessions of the U.S. (including the District of Columbia), public and private universities and colleges, hospitals, laboratories, and public and private nonprofit institutions. Individuals are not eligible to apply. For-profit organizations are not eligible to apply. Nonprofit organizations described in Section 501(c)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code that engage in lobbying activities as defined in Section 3 of the Lobbying Disclosure Act of 1995 are not eligible to apply. EPA may ask applicants to demonstrate that they are eligible for funding under this announcement.

B. Cost Sharing/Match Requirements

No cost share or match is required.

C. Threshold Eligibility Criteria

These are requirements that if not met by the time of application package submission will result in

the 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 the 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. Applicants must meet the eligibility requirements in Section III.A of this announcement at the time of application submission.
2. 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.C.2 with respect to the Project Narrative, pages in excess of the page limitation will not be reviewed. Section IV.C.2 establishes a 12-page, single-spaced Project Narrative page limit that does not include the cover page.
3. 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.
4. 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 application via e-mail with Suzanne Kelly at kelly.suzanne@epa.gov as soon as possible after the submission deadline - failure to do so may result in your application not being reviewed.
5. If an application is submitted that includes any ineligible tasks or activities, that portion of the application will be ineligible for funding and may, depending on the extent to which it affects the application, render the entire application ineligible for funding.

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 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 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)
- Explanation of how they lack the technical capability to apply electronically through www.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 www.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, 2016, it is valid for any competitive or non-competitive application submission to EPA through December 31, 2016). 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, 2016 with a submission deadline of January 15, 2017, the applicant would need a new exception to submit through alternative methods beginning January 1, 2017.

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.

All applications must be prepared and include the information as described in Section IV.C. (Content of Application Package Submission).

B. Grants.gov Application Submission Instructions

Your organization's authorized official representative (AOR) must submit your complete application electronically to EPA through Grants.gov (<http://www.grants.gov>) no later than **July 15, 2016 by 11:59 PM, EDT**.

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 <http://www.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.

To begin the application process under this grant announcement, go to <http://www.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 <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/support/technical-support/software/adobe-readercompatibility.html>

You may also be able to access the application package for this announcement by searching for the opportunity on <http://www.grants.gov>. Go to <http://www.grants.gov> and then click on "Search Grants" at the top of the page and enter the Funding Opportunity Number, **EPA-OW-OGWDW-16-01**, or the CFDA number that applies to the announcement (CFDA 66.424), in the appropriate field and click the Search button. Alternatively, you may be able to access the application package by clicking on the Application Package button at the top right of the synopsis page for the announcement on <http://www.grants.gov>. To find the synopsis page, go to <http://www.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 authorized official representative (AOR) must submit your complete application electronically to EPA through Grants.gov (<http://www.grants.gov>) no later than **11:59 PM EDT July 15, 2016**.

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.

Please submit *all* of the application materials described below.

Application Materials

The following forms and documents are required under this announcement:

Mandatory Documents:

- Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424).
- Budget Information for Non-Construction Programs (SF-424A).
- SF-424B, Assurances for Non-Construction Programs.
- Grants.gov Lobbying Form - Certification Regarding Lobbying.
- EPA Key Contacts Form 5700-54.
- EPA Form 4700-4, Pre-Award Compliance Review Report.
- Project Narrative. See Section IV.C.2

Optional Documents:

- Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (SF-LLL), if applicable
- Other Attachments Form- Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement, if applicable
- Other Attachments Form - Biographical Sketches: Submit biographical sketches of major project managers, support staff members, or other major project participants (see Section IV.C.2.C.4.b.) for the proposed project.

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 15 days of the application deadline, please contact Suzanne Kelly at 202-564-3887 or e-mail at kelly.suzanne@epa.gov. Failure to do so may result in your application not being reviewed.

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 reattempt 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 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 Suzanne Kelly at kelly.suzanne@epa.gov with the FON in the subject line. If you are unable to email, contact Suzanne Kelly at 202-564-3887. Be aware that EPA will only consider accepting applications that were unable to transmit due to www.Grants.gov or relevant 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 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 Suzanne Kelly at 202-564-3887.

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 Suzanne Kelly at kelly.suzanne@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 Suzanne Kelly at kelly.suzanne@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.

C. Content of Application Package Submission

Applicants should read the following section very carefully. A complete application package must include the following documents described below.

1. Application Materials

- a. **Signed Standard Form (SF) 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.
- b. **SF-424A – Budget Information for 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).
- c. **Assurances for Non-Construction Programs (SF-424B).** Complete the form. There are no attachments.
- d. **EPA Lobbying Form - Certification Regarding Lobbying.** Complete the form. There are no attachments.
- e. **EPA Key Contacts Form 5700-54.** Complete the form. Attach additional forms as needed.
- f. **EPA Form 4700–4, Pre-Award Compliance Review Report.** Complete the form. There are no attachments.
- g. **Project Narrative. See Section IV.C.2 (Project Narrative)** for details on specific information that must be included. When developing the Project Narrative, applicants should refer to Section I.B of the announcement which provides the description and objectives for the project.
- h. **Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (SF-LLL).** This form is required if your organization is involved in lobbying. Complete this form if your organization is involved in lobbying activities.
- i. **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.
- j. **Biographical Sketches.** Submit a biographical sketch of each major project manager, support staff member, or other major project participant (see Section IV.C.2.C.4.b).
- k. **Letters of Support.** Applicants may provide up to 15 letters of support from potential recipients of technical assistance to demonstrate that the applicant’s proposed approach is responsive to the potential recipients’ needs.

2. Project Narrative

NOTE: The Project Narrative must include sections A-C below. The Project Narrative is limited to no more than twelve (12) typewritten, single-spaced 8.5x11-inch pages (a page is one side of a piece of paper) including the executive summary, but not the cover 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 proposal. **Additional pages beyond the 12 page single-spaced limit will not be considered.** The Project Narrative will be reviewed up to the equivalent of the 12 page single-spaced limit (24 double-spaced pages); excess pages will not be reviewed. Supporting materials, which are limited to no more than a cover page, biographical sketches, letters of support, and full resumes as described below, are not included within the page limit.

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

A. Cover Page (not included in page limit) including:

- a. Name of applicant;
- b. Project title;
- c. Key personnel and contact information (i.e., e-mail address and phone number); and
- d. Total project cost: specify the amount of federal funds requested and the total project cost.

B. Executive Summary (included in 12 page limit): Provide a brief summary (should not exceed one page) of the proposed project. This should include a brief description of the proposed project and the anticipated environmental outputs and outcomes.

C. Work Plan (included in 12 page limit): The work plan must address the following elements:

1. **Technical Approach:** Describe the approach to provide technical assistance and support to enhance communication and coordination between the EPA and the states and tribes with primacy to protect surface and ground water sources of drinking water by developing and expanding the capability of state and tribal UIC and Source Water Protection programs. The technical approach should include a description of the strategy for accomplishing the project elements listed, and any additional project elements to the extent applicable, in Section I.B. Project Description.
2. **Environmental Results and Measuring Progress:**
 - a. Stated Objective/Link to EPA Strategic Plan - List the objective of the project and the linkage to the EPA Strategic Plan Goal 2 – Protecting America's Waters, Objective 2.1 – Protect Human Health, (see Section I.C of this announcement).
 - b. Results of Activities (Outputs) - Describe the anticipated products/results which are expected to be achieved from accomplishment of the project activities, and describe an approach for tracking your progress toward achieving the expected project output(s) (examples of outputs can be found in Section I.C of this announcement).
 - c. Anticipated Environmental Improvement (Outcomes) - Describe the environmental improvements to be accomplished as a result of the project activities. These improvements are changes or benefits to the environment which are a result of the accomplishment of the work plan commitments and outputs. Describe an approach for tracking progress toward achieving the expected project outcome(s) (examples of outcomes can be found in Section I.C of this announcement).

3. **Milestone Schedule:** Provide a detailed projected timeline for the proposed project period. The timeline should cover each year of the project period and provide a breakout of the project activities in phases with associated tasks, 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.
4. **Programmatic Capability/Specialized Experience:**
 - a. Organizational Experience - Provide a brief description of your organization and experience related to the proposed project, and your organization's infrastructure as it relates to your ability to successfully implement the proposed project.
 - b. Staff Expertise/Qualifications - Provide a list of key staff and briefly describe their expertise/qualifications and knowledge, and describe your resources or the ability to obtain them to successfully achieve the goals of the project. Key staff include major project managers, support staff members, or other major project participants. Include an estimate of the number of full-time equivalent (FTE) workers (based on 2,080 hours per year/FTE). Biographical sketches of applicant's key staff are also encouraged and are not included in the page limit for the Project Narrative. Biographical sketches are not counted in the page limit. Full resumes may be included as an appendix to the application narrative and are not counted in the page limit.
 - c. Specialized Experience - Describe prior experiences with interacting with state and tribal agencies responsible for environmental programs, particularly in relation to programs responsible for protecting ground water. Include a description of experience: (1) working on human health and environmental issues related to ground water protection issues, source water protection issues, and/or UIC issues; (2) working with senior managers in state and tribal governments responsible for protecting ground water (i.e., implementation of UIC programs and Source Water Protection programs); and (3) demonstrated ability in engaging with experts in UIC program implementation and source water protection implementation.
5. **Detailed Budget Narrative:** Provide a detailed budget and estimated funding amounts for each project task. This section provides an opportunity for a narrative description of the budget or aspects of the budget found in the SF-424A such as "other" and "contractual".
 - a. Applicants must itemize costs related to personnel, fringe benefits, contractual costs, travel, equipment, supplies, other direct costs, indirect costs, and total cost. All subgrant funding should be located in the "other" cost category. Describe itemized costs in sufficient detail for the EPA to determine the reasonableness and allowability of costs for each project component/task, as well as the cost-effectiveness and reasonableness of all costs. If applicable, the budget narrative for the "travel" cost category must include travel reimbursement to pay for travel costs of the applicant's employees. The budget narrative for the "other" cost category must include travel reimbursement to pay for travel costs of non-federal personnel other than applicant staff.
6. **Past Performance:** Briefly describe federally funded and/or non-federally funded assistance agreements (assistance agreements include grants and cooperative agreements but not contracts) similar in size, scope, and relevance to the proposed project that your organization performed within the last three years (no more than five agreements, and preferably EPA agreements) and:

- a. Describe whether, and how, you were able to successfully complete and manage those agreements.
- b. Describe your history of meeting the reporting requirements under those agreements including submitting acceptable final technical reports.
- c. Describe how you documented and/or reported on whether you were making progress towards achieving the expected results (i.e., 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 these factors in Section V, the 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, you must indicate this in the application in order to receive a neutral score for these factors under Section V. Failure to provide any programmatic past performance or reporting information, or to include a statement that you do not have any relevant or available past performance or reporting information, may result in a zero score for these factors (see also Section V).

D. Submission Dates and Times

Applications submitted electronically through Grants.gov must be **received by 11:59 PM EDT July 15, 2016**. Late applications will not be considered for funding.

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 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 this solicitation to obtain the provisions.

V. Application Review Information

A. Selection Criteria

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). Points will be awarded based on how well and thoroughly each criterion and/or sub-criterion is addressed in the application package.

25 points total	Criterion 1: Technical Approach Under this criterion, applicants will be evaluated based on the extent and quality to which the application proposes an approach to address the technical assistance and support project elements, and any additional project elements as applicable, described in Section I.B. Project Description. <i>(25 points)</i>
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<p>10 points total</p>	<p>Criterion 2: Milestone Schedule and Detailed Budget Applications will be evaluated based on the extent and quality to which the application addresses each of the following sub-criterion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) A detailed milestone schedule for the proposed project period. Clearly articulated 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. <i>(5 points)</i> b) Reasonableness of the budget and estimated funding amounts for each project component/task. Applicants will be evaluated based on the adequacy of the information provided in the detailed budget narrative and whether the proposed costs are reasonable and allowable. <i>(5 points)</i>
<p>20 points total</p>	<p>Criterion 3: Environmental Results and Measuring Progress Applications will be evaluated based on each of the following sub-criterion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Environmental Results: The extent and quality to which the application demonstrates the ability to identify and articulate anticipated environmental outputs and outcomes, as described in Section IV of the announcement, and how the outcomes are linked to EPA’s Strategic Plan. <i>(10 points)</i> b) Measuring Progress: The extent and quality to which the application demonstrates a sound plan for measuring and tracking progress toward achieving expected outputs and outcomes (examples of outcomes and outputs can be found in Section I.C of this announcement). <i>(10 points)</i>
<p>25 points total</p>	<p>Criterion 4: Programmatic Capability/Specialized Experience Under this criterion, applications will be evaluated based on the applicant’s ability to successfully complete and manage the proposed project taking into account the applicant’s:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Technical expertise and/or experience working on human health and environmental issues related to ground water protection issues, source water protection issues, and/or UIC issues. <i>(8 points)</i> b) Experience in working with senior managers in state and tribal governments responsible for protecting ground water (i.e., implementation of UIC programs and Source Water Protection programs); and demonstrated ability in engaging with experts in UIC program implementation and source water protection implementation. <i>(8 points)</i> c) Organizational experience related to the proposed project, and their infrastructure as it relates to the ability to successfully implement the proposed project. <i>(4 points)</i> d) Staff expertise/qualifications, staff knowledge, and resources or the ability to obtain them, to successfully achieve the goals of the proposed project. <i>(5 points)</i>

<p>20 points total</p>	<p>Criterion 5: Past Performance</p> <p>Under this criterion, applicants will be evaluated based on their ability to successfully complete and manage the proposed project, taking into account their:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Past performance in successfully completing and managing federally funded and/or non-federally funded assistance agreements (assistance agreements include grants and cooperative agreements but not contracts) similar in size and scope to the proposed project within the last three years (no more than five agreements, and preferably EPA agreements). <i>(7 points)</i> b) History of meeting reporting requirements under federally funded and/or non-federally funded assistance agreements(assistance agreements include grants and cooperative agreements but not contracts) similar in size and scope performed within the last three years (no more than five agreements, and preferably EPA agreements) and submitting acceptable final technical reports under those agreements. <i>(7 points)</i> c) Extent and quality to which the applicant adequately documented and/or reported on its progress towards achieving the expected results (e.g., outcomes and outputs) under federally funded and/or non-federally funded assistance agreements (assistance agreements include grants and cooperative agreements but not contracts) performed within the last three years (no more than five agreements, and preferably EPA agreements), and if such progress was not being made, whether the applicant adequately documented and/or reported why not. <i>(6 points)</i> <p>Note: In evaluating applicants under (a), (b), and (c) above, the 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 information or reporting history must indicate that in the application and will receive a neutral score for the factor (i.e., 3.5 points for item (a), 3.5 points for item (b), and 3 points for item (c)). Failure to provide any past performance information, or to include a statement in your application that you do not have any relevant or available past performance information, may result in a zero score for the factor (i.e., zero points for item (a), zero points for item (b), and zero points for item (c)).</p>
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B. Review and Selection Process

All applications received via Grants.gov by the submission deadline will first be screened by EPA staff against the threshold criteria in Section III of the announcement. Applications that do not pass the threshold review will not be evaluated further or considered for funding.

A panel(s) comprised of EPA staff will review the eligible applications based on the evaluation criteria listed in Section V.A and will develop a ranking list of the applications based on the scores received. The ranking list will be provided to the Selection Official who makes final funding decisions. In making the final funding decisions, the Selection Official will consider the application score and may take into account other factors such as programmatic priorities.

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 on the [EPA Solicitation Clauses](#) page. 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 the applications, all applicants, including those who are not selected for funding, will be notified regarding their status. The notification will be made to the original signer of the Standard Form (SF) 424, Application for Federal Assistance. The notification of recommendation for award is not an authorization to begin performance, nor is it a guarantee that the award will be made. The official notification of an award will be made by Grants and Interagency Agreements Management Division.

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 cooperative agreement can officially be awarded. The time between notification of selection and award of a cooperative agreement can take up to 90 days or longer.

EPA reserves the right to negotiate and/or adjust the final grant amount and workplan narrative prior to award, as appropriate and consistent with Agency policy including the Assistance Agreement Competition Policy, EPA Order 5700.5A1. An approvable final workplan narrative is required to include:

1. Components to be funded under the assistance agreement;
2. Estimated work years and the estimated funding amounts for each component;
3. Commitments for each component and a timeframe for their accomplishment;
4. Performance evaluation process and reporting schedule; and
5. Roles and responsibilities of the recipient and EPA (for cooperative agreements only) in carrying out the commitments.

B. 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

C. 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.

D. Reporting

In general, recipients are responsible for managing the day-to-day operations and activities supported by the assistance funding, to assure compliance with applicable federal requirements, and for ensuring that established milestones and performance goals are being achieved. Performance reports and financial reports must be submitted quarterly and are due 30 days after the reporting period. The final report is due 90 days after the assistance agreement has expired. Recipients will be required to report direct and indirect environmental results from the work accomplished through the award. In negotiating assistance agreements, EPA will work closely with the recipient to incorporate appropriate performance measures and reporting requirements in the work plan consistent with 2 CFR 200 and 1500, and 40 CFR Part 45, as appropriate.

E. Intergovernmental Review

This program may be eligible for coverage under E.O. 12372, "Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs." An applicant should consult the office or official designated as the single point of contact in his or her state for more information on the process the state requires to be followed in applying for assistance, if the state has selected the program for review. Further information regarding this can be found at http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants_spoc.

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

VII. Agency Contact

Note to Applicants: In accordance with EPA's Assistance Agreement Competition Policy (EPA Order 5700.5A1), EPA staff will not meet with individual applicants or 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 written questions from individual applicants regarding threshold eligibility criteria, administrative issues related to the submission of the application, and requests for clarification about the announcement. Please note that applicants should raise any questions they may have about the solicitation language to the contact identified in Section VII as soon as possible so that any questions about the solicitation language may be resolved prior to submitting a proposal. In addition, if necessary, the 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 before **July 1, 2016**. And written responses will be posted on EPA's website at: <https://www.epa.gov/uic/technical-assistance-and-support-improved-protection-drinking-water-sources>. Please note answers to FAQs are available at: <https://www.epa.gov/uic/technical-assistance-and-support-improved-protection-drinking-water-sources>; EPA strongly recommends interested applicants refer to the FAQs webpage prior to

submitting a question.

Agency Contact:

Suzanne Kelly

E-mail: kelly.suzanne@epa.gov

VIII. Other Information

A. Data Sharing

All recipients of these assistance agreements may be required to share any data generated through this funding agreement as a defined deliverable in the final workplan.

B. 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.