

## OVERVIEW SECTION

**TITLE:** “IMPLEMENTATION OF THE COMPLIANCE/PREVENTION UNDERGROUND STORAGE TANK PROGRAM AND THE CLEANUP OF LEAKING UNDERGROUND STORAGE TANK PROGRAM”

**ACTION:** Request for Proposals (RFP) – Initial Announcement

**RFP NO:** EPA-OLEM-OUST-18-04

**CATALOG OF FEDERAL DOMESTIC ASSISTANCE (CFDA) NO.:** 66.816

**DATES:** The closing date and time for receipt of proposal submissions is November 15, 2018, 11:59 p.m. (ET). Proposals must be submitted electronically through <https://www.grants.gov> by 11:59 p.m. (ET) on November 15, 2018 to receive consideration. Proposals received after 11:59 p.m. (ET) on November 15, 2018, will not be considered.

**SUMMARY:** This notice announces the availability of funds and solicits proposals to promote the prevention, identification, corrective action, and management of releases from federally-regulated underground storage tanks (USTs) through training of state and tribal personnel, information exchange, dissemination of the results of studies and research electronically, and coordination that promotes cooperation among federal, state, and tribal programs. Funding under this announcement shall be used for activities that support state and tribal underground storage tank compliance/prevention programs and state and tribal leaking underground storage tank cleanup programs. The goals of these cooperative agreements are to provide states and tribes with training opportunities, technical information, communication exchange of research and demonstration projects, and a forum for federal, state, and tribal partners to give insights on lessons learned.

**FUNDING/AWARDS:** The total estimated funding available under this competitive announcement is \$3,200,000, subject to availability of funds, quality of proposals received, and other applicable considerations. EPA anticipates award of two cooperative agreements whose maximum estimated value each shall not exceed \$1,600,000 from this competitive opportunity. (*Refer to Section 2(B)*).

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## **SECTION 1 - FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION**

### **A. Introduction**

There are approximately 555,000 active regulated underground storage tanks (USTs) nationwide that store petroleum or hazardous substances. The greatest potential threat from a leaking UST is contamination of groundwater, the source of drinking water for nearly half of all Americans. EPA, states, and tribes work together to protect the environment and human health from potential UST releases. For more information on EPA's underground storage tank prevention and cleanup programs, go to [www.epa.gov/ust](http://www.epa.gov/ust).

### **B. Project Description**

EPA's Office of Underground Storage Tanks (OUST) is soliciting proposals to foster interaction, information sharing, and coordination among federal, state, and tribal programs responsible for the detection, prevention, and cleaning up of releases from federally-regulated USTs.

EPA anticipates awarding two cooperative agreements from this competitive announcement. One cooperative agreement will support states and tribal UST release prevention programs and the other will support states and tribal leaking underground storage tank (LUST) cleanup programs. There are separate evaluation criteria for each agreement in *Section 5* of this announcement. Applicants may submit proposals for either or both of the two cooperative agreements; however, applicants must submit a separate proposal for each award. EPA will not consider combined proposals.

The goal of these cooperative agreements is to improve program implementation by the following: providing states and tribes with training opportunities; serving as a source of exchange of outreach and communication regarding research and demonstration projects as they relate to UST release prevention and LUST cleanup; and, providing a forum for federal, state, and tribal partners to give insights on lessons learned. At a minimum, the proposals must include a description of activities associated with each cooperative agreement as follows:

#### **1. State and Tribal Underground Storage Tank Release Prevention Program Support**

The recipient will develop and implement training and information exchange opportunities for states and tribes that will foster the continued improvement of the UST release prevention program. These opportunities will allow federal, state, and tribal partners to interact with each other by sharing experiences and insights on UST release prevention issues. While face-to-face interaction is often advantageous for communication and exchange, other vehicles (such as webinars and conference calls) are encouraged, as appropriate, for lower-cost, more frequent interaction.

Exchanges may include, but are not limited to the following:

##### **(a) UST Inspector Training**

Serve as sponsor and coordinator for national UST inspector training for state and tribal UST inspectors. Training topics may be determined by an assessment of needs from state or tribal partners, or by technical and training requests from state or tribal partners. Training delivery and frequency should be provided in the most effective and cost-efficient manner. The successful recipient will provide feedback results to EPA after each training session. Tasks include but are not limited to:

- Organize a workgroup comprised of federal, state, and tribal partners that represent the interests of tank inspectors
- Organize planning meetings, taking meeting minutes, and distributing minutes to all workgroup members
- Finalize topics that will be presented during training
- Obtain competent trainers to speak on relevant topics
- Provide all logistical arrangements (e.g., training frequency, location selection, training venue, computer support, participant invitation/registration, training feedback, and other necessary training materials).

Training delivery options (e.g., classroom, in-field, and web-based) and frequency should be provided in the most effective and cost-efficient manner.

At the discretion of the successful recipient, travel arrangements may be provided to UST state and tribal partners to ensure their representation at UST-related training events and meetings.

#### **(b) The National Tanks Conference**

Serve as a co-sponsor and planning team member, representing the interests of states and tribes. Other co-sponsors/planning team members include EPA, other federal assistance agreement recipient(s), and state partners. Tasks include but are not limited to:

- Organize and host planning team meetings for conference that are beneficial and cost efficient (e.g., on-site, webinar, telephone conference)
- Plan, coordinate, and facilitate planning team conference calls
- Provide minutes of all meetings and calls to planning team members
- Represent the interests of states and tribes in the conference planning
- Organize and promote an exhibitor hall for demonstrations of UST related technology
- Develop conference communications and promotional activities
- Provide conference support such as record-keeping, registration, and other conference logistics.
- Host conference information and participant registration on the successful recipient's website, which is a non-EPA domain server. As a result, the successful recipient will be required to post a privacy notice that provides information about how registration information is collected, used, maintained, and shared.

The successful recipient must incorporate green principles into every aspect of conference planning and utilize as many environmentally preferable measures as possible, in accordance with EPA's Green Meetings initiative. Environmentally preferable measures may include but

are not limited to selecting venues that minimize the distance the attendees have to travel and have efficient transportation and mass transportation routes, electronic distribution of conference handouts and materials, and recycling conference badges. More information can be found at <http://www.epa.gov/epp/pubs/meet/greenmeetings.htm#mandate>.

The successful recipient may collect fees from exhibitors (including federal exhibitors) and use those fees as “program income” to supplement EPA grant funding as authorized by 2 CFR § 200.80 and 2 CFR § 200.3072 CFR § 200.80 and 2 CFR § 200.307, as applicable.

The successful recipient will provide travel arrangements to UST state and tribal partners to ensure their representation at events and meetings. At the discretion of the successful recipient, travel arrangements may also be made available to other non-federal participants (e.g., speakers, presenters) invited by the recipient to participate in related events. Please see EPA Ethics Advisory 96-15 (<http://www.epa.gov/wastewatergrants/96-15.pdf>) for details on the Agency’s policies for co- sponsoring conferences and other events.

### **(c) National Tribal Meeting**

Serve as a co-sponsor and planning team member. Other co-sponsors/planning team members include EPA and tribal UST partners. Tasks include but are not limited to:

- Organize and host planning team meetings that are beneficial and cost efficient (e.g., on-site, webinar, telephone conference)
- Plan, coordinate, and facilitate planning team conference calls
- Provide minutes of all meetings and calls to planning team members
- Represent the interests of tribes in the meeting planning
- Organize and promote an exhibitor hall for demonstrations of UST related technology
- Develop meeting communications and promotional activities
- Provide meeting support such as record-keeping, registration, and other logistics
- Host meeting information and participant registration on the successful recipient’s website, which is a non-EPA domain server. As a result, the successful recipient will be required to post a privacy notice that provides information about how registration information is collected, used, maintained, and shared.

The successful recipient must incorporate green principles into every aspect of meeting planning and utilize as many environmentally preferable measures as possible, in accordance with EPA’s Green Meetings initiative. Environmentally preferable measures may include but are not limited to selecting venues that minimize the distance the attendees have to travel and have efficient transportation and mass transportation routes, electronic distribution of conference handouts and materials, and recycling conference badges. More information can be found at <http://www.epa.gov/epp/pubs/meet/greenmeetings.htm#mandate>.

The successful recipient may collect fees from exhibitors (including federal exhibitors) and use those fees as “program income” to supplement EPA grant funding as authorized by 2 CFR § 200.80 and 2 CFR § 200.307, as applicable.

The successful recipient will provide travel arrangements to UST tribal partners to ensure their representation at events and meetings. At the discretion of the successful recipient, travel arrangements may also be made available to other non-federal participants (e.g., speakers, presenters) invited by the recipient to participate in related events. Please see EPA Ethics Advisory 96-15 (<http://www.epa.gov/wastewatergrants/96-15.pdf>) for details on the Agency's policies for co-sponsoring conferences and other events.

#### **(d) State and Tribal UST Meetings**

At the request of states and tribes, the successful recipient will help facilitate regional all-state and tribal meetings that provide information on federal/state/tribal UST release prevention programs. Tasks may include but are not limited to:

- Plan, organize, and make logistical arrangements for the meetings
- Obtain speakers
- Document follow-up meeting action items

Topics to be discussed during these meetings may include, but are not limited to:

- UST compliance
- UST program initiatives
- Release prevention
- Owner/operator training and compliance assistance
- Training opportunities
- Alternative fuels and compatibility

The successful recipient may organize a planning team consisting of federal, state, and tribal partners to help assist with aforementioned tasks.

At the discretion of the successful recipient, travel arrangements may be provided to UST state and tribal partners to ensure their representation at UST-related training events and meetings.

#### **(e) Distribution of Information**

Provide a program for electronic distribution and information sharing of UST compliance/release prevention related technical and policy information, outreach documents, studies, research, and demonstration projects that promote communication and information exchange between federal, state, and tribal UST partners.

- Develop and distribute a periodic publication related to UST compliance/release prevention through electronic and other means to federal, state, and tribal partners in a timely manner.
- Deliver information to states and tribes in a timely manner through electronic newsletters, websites, list servers, electronic forums, or other means. Websites may also advertise training opportunities that will be of interest to state and tribal UST compliance/release prevention programs, as well as link to other UST partner's websites.

- Stay abreast of current UST compliance, release prevention, release detection issues, and pertinent technical and academic publications.

EPA will review all technical information relating to UST compliance/release prevention prior to distribution.

## **2. State and Tribal Leaking Underground Storage Tanks Cleanup Program Support**

The recipient will develop and implement training and information exchange opportunities for states and tribes that will foster the continued improvement of the LUST cleanup program. These opportunities will allow federal, state, and tribal partners to interact with each other by sharing experiences and insights on LUST cleanup issues. While face-to-face interaction is often advantageous for communication and exchange, other vehicles (such as webinars and conference calls) are encouraged, as appropriate, for lower-cost, more frequent interaction.

Exchanges may include, but are not limited to the following:

### **(a) LUST Corrective Action Training**

Serve as sponsor and coordinator for National LUST Corrective Action Training for state and tribal LUST partners. Training topics may be determined by an assessment of needs from state or tribal partners, or by technical and training requests from state or tribal partners. Training delivery and frequency should be provided in the most effective and cost-efficient manner. The successful recipient will provide feedback results to EPA after each training session. Tasks include but are not limited to:

- Organize a workgroup comprised of federal, state, and tribal partners that represent the interests of LUST program personnel
- Organize planning meetings, taking meeting minutes, and distributing minutes to all workgroup members
- Finalize topics that will be presented during training
- Obtain competent trainers to speak on relevant topics
- Provide all logistical arrangements (e.g. computer support, participant invitation/registration, training feedback, and other necessary training materials)

Training delivery options (e.g., classroom, in-field, and web-based) and frequency should be provided in the most effective and cost-efficient manner.

At the discretion of the successful recipient, travel arrangements may be provided to UST state and tribal partners to ensure their representation at LUST-related training events and meetings.

### **(b) The National Tanks Conference**

Serve as a co-sponsor and planning team member, representing the interests of states and tribes. Other co-sponsors/planning team members include EPA, other federal assistance agreement recipient(s), and state partners. Tasks include but are not limited to:

- Organize and host planning team meetings for conference that are beneficial and cost efficient (e.g., on-site, webinar, telephone conference)
- Plan, coordinate, and facilitate planning team conference calls
- Provide minutes of all meetings and calls to planning team members
- Represent the interests of states and tribes in the conference planning
- Organize and promote an exhibitor hall for demonstrations of LUST related technology
- Develop conference communications and promotional activities
- Provide conference support such as record-keeping, registration, and other conference logistics
- Host conference information and participant registration on the successful recipient's website, which is a non-EPA domain server. As a result, the successful recipient will be required to post a privacy notice that provides information about how registration information is collected, used, maintained, and shared.

The successful recipient will host conference information and participant registration on their website, which is a non-EPA domain server. As a result, the successful recipient will be required to post a privacy notice that provides information about how registration information is collected, used, maintained, and shared.

The successful applicant must incorporate green principles into every aspect of conference planning and utilize as many environmentally preferable measures as possible, in accordance with EPA's Green Meetings initiative. Environmentally preferable measures may include but are not limited to selecting venues that minimize the distance the attendees have to travel and have efficient transportation and mass transportation routes, electronic distribution of conference handouts and materials, and recycling conference badges. More information can be found at <http://www.epa.gov/epp/pubs/meet/greenmeetings.htm#mandate>.

The successful recipient may collect fees from exhibitors (including federal exhibitors) and use those fees as "program income" to supplement EPA grant funding as authorized by 2 CFR § 200.80 and 2 CFR § 200.307, as applicable.

The successful recipient will provide travel arrangements to UST tribal partners to ensure their representation at events and meetings. At the discretion of the successful recipient, travel arrangements may also be made available to other non-federal participants (e.g., speakers, presenters) invited by the recipient to participate in related events. Please see EPA Ethics Advisory 96-15 (<http://www.epa.gov/wastewatergrants/96-15.pdf>) for details on the Agency's policies for co-sponsoring conferences and other events.

### **(c) National Tribal Meeting**

Serve as a co-sponsor and planning team member. Other co-sponsors/planning team members include EPA and tribal LUST partners. Tasks include but are not limited to:

- Organize and host planning team meetings that are beneficial and cost efficient (e.g., on-site, webinar, telephone conference)

- Plan, coordinate, and facilitate planning team conference calls
- Provide minutes of all meetings and calls to planning team members
- Represent the interests of tribes in the meeting planning
- Organize and promote an exhibitor hall for demonstrations of LUST related technology
- Develop meeting communications and promotional activities
- Provide meeting support such as record-keeping, registration, and other conference logistics.
- Host meeting information and participant registration on the successful recipient's website, which is a non-EPA domain server. As a result, the successful recipient will be required to post a privacy notice that provides information about how registration information is collected, used, maintained, and shared.

The successful recipient must incorporate green principles into every aspect of meeting planning and utilize as many environmentally preferable measures as possible, in accordance with EPA's Green Meetings initiative. Environmentally preferable measures may include but are not limited to selecting venues that minimize the distance the attendees must travel and have efficient transportation and mass transportation routes, electronic distribution of conference handouts and materials, and recycling conference badges. More information can be found at <http://www.epa.gov/epp/pubs/meet/greenmeetings.htm#mandate>.

The successful recipient may collect fees from exhibitors (including federal exhibitors) and use those fees as "program income" to supplement EPA grant funding as authorized by 2 CFR § 200.80 and 2 CFR § 200.307, as applicable.

The successful recipient will provide travel arrangements to LUST tribal partners to ensure their representation at events and meetings. At the discretion of the successful recipient, travel arrangements may also be made available to other non-federal participants (e.g., speakers, presenters) invited by the recipient to participate in related events. Please see EPA Ethics Advisory 96-15 (<http://www.epa.gov/wastewatergrants/96-15.pdf>) for details on the Agency's policies for co-sponsoring conferences and other events.

#### **(d) State and Tribal LUST Clean Up/Remediation Meetings**

At the request of states and tribes, the successful recipient will help facilitate regional state and tribal meetings that provide information on federal/state/tribal LUST cleanup programs. Tasks may include but are not limited to:

- Plan, organize, and make logistical arrangements for the meetings
- Obtain speakers
- Document follow-up meeting action items

Topics to be discussed during these meetings may include, but are not limited to:

- LUST program initiatives
- Soil and groundwater contamination
- Petroleum vapor intrusion



- State LUST Fund implementation
- UST releases remaining
- Remedial technologies and remedy selection
- Other elements that are relevant to funding cleanups and improved LUST cleanup/remediation.

The successful recipient may organize a planning team consisting of federal, state, and tribal partners to help assist with aforementioned tasks.

At the discretion of the successful recipient, travel arrangements may be provided to UST state and tribal partners to ensure their representation at LUST-related training events and meetings.

**(e) Distribution of Information**

Provide a program for electronic distribution of LUST related cleanup, remediation, technical and policy information, outreach documents, studies, research, and demonstration projects that promote communication and information exchange between federal, state, and tribal UST partners.

- Develop and distribute a periodic publication related to LUST related cleanup and remediation through electronic and other means to federal, state, and tribal partners in a timely manner.
- Deliver information to states and tribes in a timely manner through electronic newsletters, websites, list servers, electronic forums, or other means. Websites may also advertise training opportunities that will be of interest to state and tribal LUST cleanup programs, as well as link to other LUST partner’s websites.
- Stay abreast of current LUST cleanup and remediation issues, and pertinent technical and academic publications.

EPA will review all technical information relating to LUST cleanup and remediation prior to distribution.

**C. EPA Strategic Plan Linkage**

The activities to be funded under this announcement support EPA’s FY 2018-22 Strategic Plan. Awards made under this announcement will support Goal 1 (Core Mission: Deliver real results to provide Americans with clean air, land, and water, and ensure chemical safety.), Objective 1.3 (Revitalize Land and Prevent Contamination). Specifically, the activities to be funded under this announcement will be linked to EPA’s strategic plan consistent with EPA’s current priorities for preventing releases of contamination. All applications must be for projects that support the goals and objectives identified above. Applicants must explain in their proposal how their project will further these current priorities.

(View EPA’s Strategic Plan online at: <http://www.epa.gov/planandbudget/strategicplan.html>.)

## **D. Measuring Environmental Results: Anticipated Outcomes/Outputs.**

Pursuant to [EPA Order 5700.7A1](#), “Environmental Results under EPA Assistance Agreements,” EPA requires that all grant applicants and recipients adequately address environmental outcomes and outputs. Outcomes and outputs differ both in their nature and in how they are measured. Applicants must discuss environmental outcomes and outputs in their proposed work plan.

- 1. Outcomes.** The term “outcomes” refer to the result, effect, or consequence that will occur from carrying out an environmental program or activity that is related to an environmental or programmatic goal or objective. Outcomes may be environmental, behavioral, health- related or programmatic in nature, must be quantitative, and may not necessarily be achievable during the project period. EPA anticipates outcomes from projects expected to be awarded under this announcement will include but are not limited to the following:
  - a. For the UST Release Prevention Program Support Assistance Agreement-- Improvement in compliance measures of underground storage tank systems and a corresponding reduction in UST releases as a result of state and tribal UST release prevention programs.
  - b. For the LUST Cleanup Program Support Assistance Agreement-- Increase in the number of LUST cleanups completed by states and tribes and a corresponding reduction in the releases remaining of leaking underground storage tanks.
  
- 2. Outputs.** The term “outputs” refer to an environmental activity, effort, and/or associated work products related to an environmental goal or objective, that will be produced or provided over a period of time or by a specified date. Outputs may be quantitative or qualitative but must be measurable during the project period. EPA anticipates the outputs from the project expected to be awarded under this announcement will include but are not limited to the following:
  - a. Coordination of state and tribal participation in approximately four (4) UST-related trainings and four (4) LUST-related trainings per year. Training will be provided based on the needs of states and tribes Training will be presented both in person and electronically, and provided in the most effective manner
  - b. Coordination of state and tribal participation in three (3) National Tanks Conferences (release prevention and cleanup activities related to USTs)
  - c. Coordination of tribal participation in one (1) National Tribal Meeting per year
  - d. Coordination of approximately four (4) all-states meetings per year
  - e. Development and distribution of (2) newsletters per year, that deliver UST prevention and LUST cleanup related technical and policy information to states and tribes
  - f. Development of a web page dedicated to UST release prevention information exchange between federal, state, and tribal partners

- g. Development of a web page dedicated to LUST cleanup and remediation information exchange between federal, state, and tribal partners

## **E. Supplementary Information.**

The statutory authority for this action is the Solid Waste Disposal Act, Section 8001, as amended; and the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, Public Law 94-580, 42 U.S.C. 6901 et seq.

## **SECTION 2 - AWARD INFORMATION**

### **A. What is the amount of available funding?**

The total estimated funding available under this competitive announcement is \$3,200,000, subject to availability of funds, quality of proposals received, and other applicable considerations. EPA anticipates award of two cooperative agreements, whose maximum estimated value each will be approximately \$1,600,000.

The proposed cooperative agreements will each be funded incrementally for five (5) years, depending on satisfactory performance, funding availability, and other applicable considerations. Maximum funding for the first year of each agreement shall not exceed **\$320,000**. The proposal's total budget may not exceed a maximum value of \$1,600,000, excluding any voluntary cost share or leveraging.

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

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

EPA anticipates award of two cooperative agreements resulting from this announcement, subject to availability of funds and the quality of the proposals received. One award will cover state and tribal underground storage tank compliance/prevention program support. The second award will cover state and tribal leaking underground storage tank cleanup program support.

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

1. Close monitoring of the recipient's performance to verify the expected results proposed by the recipient;
2. Collaboration during performance of the scope of work;
3. Review any proposed changes to the work plan and/or budget;
4. Review of proposed procurements in accordance with 2 CFR 200.317 and 2 CFR 200.318, as appropriate;

5. Review qualifications of key personnel (EPA does not have the authority to select employees or contractors employed by the award recipient);
6. Review and comment on the content of printed or electronic publications prepared under the cooperative agreement (the final decision on the content of reports rests with the recipient); and
7. Review and concur on project outputs for consistency with the EPA approved scope of work.

Applicants whose proposals are selected will be asked to submit a cooperative agreement application package to EPA. This package will include the application (Standard Form 424), a proposed work plan, a proposed budget, and other required forms. An EPA Project Officer will work with selected grantees to finalize the budget and work plan.

EPA reserves the right to reject all proposals and make no awards under this announcement or, to make fewer awards than anticipated.

### **C. Will proposals be partially funded?**

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

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

The estimated start date for projects resulting from this solicitation is September 1, 2019. All project activities must be completed within the negotiated project performance period of five years.

## **SECTION 3 - ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION**

### **A. Eligible Entities**

Proposals will be accepted from public authorities (State, interstate, intrastate, agencies designated by States or Territorial Governors to receive UST notifications, federally-recognized Tribes and Intertribal Consortia, and local), public agencies and institutions; private non-profit organizations and agencies that meet the requirements of Section 8001(a) and (b) of the Solid Waste Disposal Act. **Profit-making organizations and the general public are not eligible.**

### **B. 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 5* 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 4 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 2 CFR Part 200 as applicable.
- 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.
- 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 as applicable.

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 Part 200 as applicable.

### **C. Threshold Eligibility Criteria**

Proposals must meet the following “threshold criteria,” **by the time of proposal submission. Proposals that fail to meet any one of the threshold criteria will not be considered further.** Only proposals from eligible applicants (see *Section 3(A)*) that meet all of these threshold eligibility criteria will be evaluated. Proposals that meet the threshold criteria will then be evaluated based on the factors disclosed in *Section 5(A), Evaluation Criteria*. EPA will notify applicants who do not meet the threshold criteria within 15 calendar days of the “fail” determination.

The threshold criteria are:

1. Proposals must address the program elements described in Section 1(B), *Project Description*, of this announcement, applicable to the cooperative agreement they are applying for.
2. The total requested Federal assistance funding may not exceed \$1,600,000. This **excludes any leveraging or voluntary cost share**. Proposals requesting Federal assistance funding in excess of this value will not be considered.
3. **Applicants may submit proposals for either or both of the two project areas described in Section 1(B); however, a separate proposal package must be submitted for each project. Proposals for combined assistance funding will not be considered.**
4. Proposals must substantially comply with the proposal submission instructions and requirements set forth in *Section 4* of this announcement or else they will be rejected. However, where a page limit is expressed in *Section 4(D)* with respect to the narrative proposal, pages in excess of the page limitation will not be reviewed.

In addition, proposals must be received via [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov) as specified in *Section 4(B)* on or before the proposal submission deadline published in *Section 4(B)* of this announcement. Proposals received through [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov) after the submission deadline will be considered late and returned to the sender without further consideration unless the applicant can clearly demonstrate that it was late due to EPA mishandling or because of technical issues associated with grants.gov or relevant [SAM.gov](http://SAM.gov) system issues. An applicant's failure to timely submit their proposal through Grants.gov because they did not timely or properly register in SAM.gov or Grants.gov will not be considered as acceptable reason to consider a late submission. Applications submitted through Grants.gov will be time and date stamped electronically. If you have not received a confirmation of receipt from EPA (not Grants.gov) within 30 days of the proposal deadline, please contact Erin Knighton at (202)-564-0684 or [knighton.erin@epa.gov](mailto:knighton.erin@epa.gov). Failure to do so may result in your proposal not being reviewed.

5. All proposal materials must be submitted in English.

**Ineligible activities:** If a proposal 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.

## **SECTION 4 - PROPOSAL AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION**

### **A. Requirements to Submit Through Grants.gov and Limited Exception Procedures**

Applicants, except as notes below, must apply electronically through Grants.gov under this funding opportunity based in the Grants.gov instructions in the 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, the applicant must contact [OGDWaivers@epa.gov](mailto:OGDWaivers@epa.gov) of the address listed below, in writing *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 Jessica Durand  
USEPA Headquarters  
William Jefferson Clinton Building  
1200 Pennsylvania Ave., N. W.  
Mail Code: 3903R  
Washington, DC 20460

**Courier Address:**

OGD Waivers c/o Jessica Durand  
Ronald Reagan Building  
1300 Pennsylvania Ave., N.W. Rm # 51278  
Washington, DC 20004

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

- Funding Opportunity Number (FON)
- Organization Name and Unique Entity Identifier (e.g., DUNS)
- Organization's Contact Information (email address and phone number)
- 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, 2018, it is valid for any competitive or non-competitive application submission to EPA through December 31, 2018*). 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, 2018 with a submission deadline of January 15, 2019, the applicant would need a new exception to submit through alternative methods beginning January 1, 2019.

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 7* 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](https://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 Unique Entity Identifier (e.g. DUNS number) and a current registration with the [System for Award Management](https://www.sam.gov) (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](https://www.sam.gov), and DUNS number assignment is FREE.

Applicants need to ensure that the AOR who submits the application through Grants.gov and whose Unique Entity Identifier (e.g., 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](https://www.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](https://www.adobe.com/reader/compatibility) on Grants.gov.

You may also be able to access the application package for this announcement by searching for the opportunity on [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov). Go to [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) and then click on “Search Grants” at the top of the page and enter the Funding Opportunity Number, EPA-OLEM-OUST-18-04, or the CFDA number that applies to the announcement (CFDA 66.816), in the appropriate field and click the Search button.



Please Note: All applications must now be submitted through [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) using the “Workspace” feature. Information on the “Workspace” feature can be found at the Grants.gov [Workspace Overview Page](#).

**Application Submission Deadline.** Your organization’s authorized official representative (AOR) must submit your complete proposal electronically to EPA through Grants.gov no later than November 15, 2018, 11:59 PM Eastern Time.

## Application Materials

**The following forms and documents are required under this announcement:**

### Mandatory Documents

1. Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424). Please note that the organizational Dun and Bradstreet (D&B) Data Universal Number System (DUNS) number must be included on the SF-424. Organizations may obtain a DUNS number at no cost by calling the toll-free DUNS number request line at 1-866-705-5711.
2. Budget Information – Non-Construction Programs (SF-424A)
3. Project Narrative. The project narrative must explicitly describe how the proposed project meets the guidelines established in Sections 1-3 of this announcement (including the threshold eligibility criteria in *Section 3(C)*) and must address each of the evaluation criteria set forth in *Section 5*.

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 **Erin Knighton (202) 564-0684** or [knighton.erin@epa.gov](mailto:knighton.erin@epa.gov). 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 4 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 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 **Erin Knighton at [knighton.erin@epa.gov](mailto:knighton.erin@epa.gov)** with the FON in the subject line. If you are unable to email, contact **Erin Knighton at (202) 564-0684**. Be aware that EPA will only consider accepting applications that were unable to transmit due to Grants.gov or relevant 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](http://SAM.gov) or [Grants.gov](http://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](http://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 **Erin Knighton at (202) 564-0684**.
  - b. Unsuccessful transfer of the application package: If a successful transfer of the application cannot be accomplished even with assistance from [Grants.gov](http://Grants.gov) due to electronic submission system issues or unforeseen exigent circumstances, and you have already attempted to resolve the issue by contacting Grants.gov, send an email message to **Erin Knighton at [knighton.erin@epa.gov](mailto:knighton.erin@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](http://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 and it is too late to reapply, promptly send an email to Erin Knighton at [knighton.erin@epa.gov](mailto:knighton.erin@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.

Please note that successful submission through Grants.gov or via email does not necessarily mean your application is eligible for award.

#### **D. Content and Form of Proposal**

**The following documents are required for all proposal packages.** In addition to the mandatory documents listed in *Section 4(C)*, all proposals must contain a “Narrative Proposal,” and a budget narrative. The “Narrative Proposal,” a maximum of 18 pages in length, must explicitly describe the applicant’s proposed project and specifically address each of the evaluation criteria disclosed in *Section 5(A) Evaluation Criteria*, and the threshold eligibility criteria in *Section 3(C)*.

1. **Narrative Proposal.** Narrative proposals must be concise, well organized, and not exceed 18 typed, single-line spaced, 8 1/2 x 11” pages. The cover page, item “a” below, is included in this page limit. The Narrative Proposal must provide the information detailed in this section and **include responses to all *Section 3(C), Threshold Criteria; Section 5(A), Evaluation Criteria; as well as the information identified in Section 1, Funding Opportunity Description***, for each project proposal area. Factual information about your proposed project must be provided. Do not include discussions of broad principles that are not specific to the proposed work or project covered by your proposal. Responses to evaluation criteria should include the criteria number and title but need not restate the entire text of the criteria. Sufficient detail must be provided to allow for an evaluation of the merits of the proposal. Vague descriptions, redundancy, and failure to address each of the evaluation criteria will result in a lower ranking.

The Narrative Proposal (*Sections “a” and “b” below*) must substantially conform to the following outline and content:

- a. **Cover Letter.** The cover letter must include a brief description of your project, be written on your organization’s official letterhead, and signed by an official with the authority to commit your organization to the proposed project. The cover letter must also include:
  - i. **Project Title.**
  - ii. **Applicant Information.** Provide the name and full address of the organization applying for funds. This is the agency or organization that will be receiving the grant and will be accountable to the EPA;
  - iii. **Contacts.** Provide phone/fax numbers, e-mail address, and mailing address of the Project Manager and head of organization/Executive Director responsible for the project application. These individuals may be contacted if other information is needed;
  - iv. **Cooperative Partners.** Provide names and phone numbers of individuals and organizations that have agreed to participate in the implementation of the project, if any; and
  - v. **Funding Requested.** Specify the total amount you are requesting from EPA. The total funding requested amount may not exceed \$1,600,000, excluding any leveraging or voluntary cost share. Proposals requesting federal assistance funding in excess of this value will not be considered.

- b. **Detailed Project Narrative.** The project narrative should provide the information below on how the applicant will implement and conduct its project and discuss how the proposal addresses each of the evaluation criteria in *Section 5* of this announcement.
- i. **Project Description.** Provide a description of how you will implement and conduct the proposed project activities as referenced in *Section I(B), Project Description*, and do so to achieve the program objectives. The description should demonstrate consideration of the activities that will be conducted to accomplish objectives of the project. The project description should: (1) demonstrate how the proposed project supports joint State and federal development and implementation of regulatory and non-regulatory activities described in *Section I(B), Project Description*; (2) address how the proposed project activities relate to the EPA Strategic Plan Linkage goals, objectives and sub-objectives described in *Section I(C)*; (3) identify necessary tasks and activities that will be conducted to accomplish the project objectives; and (4) present an estimated timeline or schedule of expected target dates and milestones to achieve specific tasks and activities that will be conducted during the budget and project period. In addition, describe your approach to providing assistance to States, and the methodology for transferring information and lessons learned during the project to others. The tasks and activities should be realistic and achievable within the budget and project period of the grant. Also, make sure you address the elements identified in *Section I(B)*.
- ii. **Programmatic Capability and 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) similar in size, scope and relevance to the proposed project that your organization performed within the last three years (no more than 5 agreements, and preferably EPA agreements) and describe (i) whether, and how, you were able to successfully complete and manage those agreements and (ii) your history of meeting the reporting requirements under those agreements including whether you adequately and timely reported on your progress towards achieving the expected outputs and outcomes of those agreements (and if not, explain why not) and whether you submitted acceptable final technical reports under the agreements. 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/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 past reporting information, please indicate this in the proposal and you will receive a neutral score for these factors (a neutral score is half of the total points available in a subset of possible points). If you do not provide any response for these items, you may receive a score of 0 for these factors.

In addition, provide information on your organizational experience and plan for

timely and successfully achieving the objectives of the proposed project, and your staff expertise/qualifications, staff knowledge, and resources or the ability to obtain them, to successfully achieve the goals of the proposed project.

iii. **Performance Measurement: Anticipated Outcomes and Outputs.**

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

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

- iv. **Leveraging.** 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.
- v. **Cooperative Partnerships.** Identify all proposed partnerships and stakeholder groups that will be involved in the project. Describe what each group's role will be in project staffing, funding, design and implementation. Please note that procurement of commercial services (e.g., consultants, audio visual equipment, meeting space) is subject to the competitive procurement provisions of 40 CFR Part 30 or Part 31, as applicable. Naming a commercial vendor as a "partner" does not relieve the applicant of responsibility for complying with competitive procurement requirements, including cost or price analysis, or justify sole source procurement.
- vi. **Expenditure of Awarded Grant Funds.** Describe your organization's procedures, and controls for ensuring that awarded grant funds will be expended in a timely and efficient manner.

c. **Attachments.** The following documents shall be included as attachments to the narrative proposal. These documents will not count as part of the 18-page limit and do not have an individual page limitation. Attachments beyond the required attachments below will not be considered. Please provide a list of all attachments to the proposal.

i. **Budget Narrative.** Include a detailed budget narrative which clearly explains how funds will be used. The successful applicant’s budget narrative should identify (1) specific tasks for which EPA funding will be used; (2) the costs associated with each task, (3) the costs that the applicant or other partners will fund for each task, if appropriate, and (4) what outputs will be produced as a result of each task. (*Refer to Section 1(D), Measuring Environmental Results: Anticipated Outcomes/Outputs, for a definition and examples of outputs.*)

The budget should include information on each major task broken out using the following cost elements:

- Personnel;
- Fringe Benefits;
- Contractual Costs;
- Travel;
- Supplies;
- Other Costs (be specific);
- Administrative Costs (other than Indirect Costs);
- Non-EPA Project Funding. Identify funding from other sources including in-kind resources;
- Total Direct Costs;
- Total Indirect Costs (must include Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement as documentation of federally-approved indirect cost rate (percentage); and
- Total Project Cost (Total Direct + Indirect Costs). Costs proposed in the budget must be linked directly to the narrative proposal.

Following is a suggested format to summarize your proposed budget. Applicants are not limited to three Project Activities. Please expand (add more columns), as necessary, to include Activities listed in *Section 1(B)* of this announcement.

Budget Categories (Required Field)	Project Activities			TOTAL (Required Field)
	Activity 1 (fill in)	Activity 2 (fill in)	Activity 3 (fill in)	
Personnel				
Fringe Benefits				
Contractual				
Travel				

Supplies		
Equipment		
Other Costs		
Administrative		
Total Direct		
Indirect Costs		
Non-EPA Project		
Total Project Cost		
Non-EPA Funding		

- ii. **Milestones.** Provide a schedule indicating start times and completion dates of significant tasks and responsibilities under your program. For efficiency, it is suggested that project milestones be coordinated with important events (e.g., budget cycle, meetings, etc.).
- iii. **Letters of Support.** The applicant should provide names and phone numbers of persons to contact at the organization providing the letter of support along with a description of what involvement (e.g., assistance, role) the organization has or will have with your organization/project. Applicants may include letters confirming commitments. If your organization intends to provide funding to any supporting organization, please refer to *Sections 2(E) and (F)* of this 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 confidential business information, contracts and subawards under grants, and proposal assistance and communications, can be found at <https://www.epa.gov/grants/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.

**SECTION 5 - PROPOSAL REVIEW INFORMATION**

**A. Evaluation Criteria**

Each eligible proposal will be evaluated according to the criterion set forth below that applies to each type of cooperative agreement as described in *Section 1(B)*. Applicants must directly and explicitly address these criteria as part of their "Narrative Proposals." Each proposal will be rated under a points system, with a total of 100 points possible.

UST COMPLIANCE/PREVENTION PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION AND SUPPORT AWARD CRITERION	Maximum Points per Criterion
<b>Project Description.</b> Under this criterion, EPA will evaluate the extent to which the	40

<p>proposal effectively addresses the UST compliance/prevention scope of work activities described in <i>Section 1(B)</i> of this announcement. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The extent to which the “Proposal Narrative” clearly, concisely and realistically provides a description of the proposed UST compliance/prevention project goals, activities, budget, and project milestones. (10 points)</li> <li>• The extent to which the proposed project activities will contribute to overall UST compliance/prevention program implementation for states and tribes. (20 points)</li> <li>• The extent to which the proposed project will lead to improved UST compliance/prevention training, communication, and assistance for states and tribes. (10 points)</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Programmatic Capability and Environmental Results Past Performance Criterion.</b> Under this criterion, applicants will be evaluated based on their ability to successfully complete and manage the proposed project taking into account:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Past performance in successfully completing and managing the assistance agreements described in <i>Section 4</i> of this announcement. (5 points)</li> <li>• History of meeting the reporting requirements under the assistance agreements described in <i>Section 4</i> of this announcement including whether the applicant submitted acceptable final technical reports under those agreements and the extent to which the applicant adequately and timely reported on their progress towards achieving the expected outputs and outcomes under those agreements and if such progress was not being made whether the applicant adequately reported why not; (5 points)</li> <li>• Organizational experience and plan for timely and successfully achieving the objectives of the proposed project, and staff expertise/qualifications. (10 points)</li> <li>• Staff knowledge, and resources or the ability to obtain them, to successfully achieve the goals of the proposed project. (10 points)</li> </ul> <p><b>Note:</b> In evaluating applicants under items of this criterion, the Agency will consider the information provided by the applicant and may also consider relevant information from other sources including agency files and prior/current grantors (e.g., to verify and/or supplement the information supplied by the applicant). If you do not have any relevant or available past performance or past reporting information, please indicate this in the proposal and you will receive a neutral score for these subfactors (items i and ii above-a neutral score is half of the total points available in a subset of possible points). If you do not provide any response for these items, you may receive a score of 0 for these factors.</p>	30
<p><b>Performance Measurement: Anticipated Outcomes and Outputs.</b> Under this criterion, proposals will be evaluated based on the extent to which the “Narrative Proposal” realistically describes how the project will lead to measurable environmental results. The proposal will be evaluated based on whether it:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clearly specifies anticipated environmental outcomes and outputs as described in <i>Section 1(D), Measuring Environmental Results: Anticipated Outcomes/Outputs</i>. (4 points)</li> <li>• Clearly describes the measures of success for the project. Measure of success should be either measures of environmental improvement or should be directly linked to such measures. EPA will look for quantitative and qualitative measurability. (3 points)</li> </ul>	10



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Describes how progress towards achieving project results (including the outcomes and outputs identified in <i>Section I</i>) will be evaluated and measured. (3 points)</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Budget/Resources.</b> This criterion refers to the proposed budget, in-kind goods and services, and other resources that the applicant outlines to carry out the proposed project. The proposal will be evaluated based on the extent that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The budget is clearly stated, detailed, and appropriate to achieve the project’s objectives. How will your proposed budget effectively sustain your proposed project? How will you plan on managing this budget? This should include cost estimates for each of the proposed project activities to be conducted using EPA funds. (5 pts)</li> <li>• The proposal identifies partnering organization(s) and documents the relationship with the applicant, for example, through letters of support, joint statements, or principles of agreement signed by other parties. (5 pts)</li> </ul>	10
<p><b>Expenditure of Awarded Grant Funds.</b> 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.</p>	5
<p><b>Leveraging.</b> Under this criterion, applicants will be evaluated based on the extent they demonstrate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How they will coordinate the use of EPA funding with other federal and/or non-federal sources of funds/resources to leverage additional resources beyond the grant funds awarded to carry out the proposed project(s) and/or that EPA funding will complement activities relevant to the proposed project(s) carried out by the applicant with other sources of funds or resources. Applicants will also be evaluated based on the type and amount of leveraging proposed, how the applicant will obtain the leveraged resources, the likelihood the leveraging will materialize during grant performance, the strength of the leveraging commitment, and the role the leveraged resources will play to support the proposed project activities.</li> </ul>	5

<b>LUST CLEANUP PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION AND SUPPORT AWARD CRITERION</b>	<b>Maximum Points per Criterion</b>
<p><b>Project Description.</b> Under this criterion, EPA will evaluate the extent to which the proposal effectively addresses the LUST cleanup scope of work activities described in <i>Section 1(B)</i> of this announcement. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The extent to which the “Narrative Proposal” clearly, concisely and realistically provides a description of the proposed LUST cleanup project goals, activities, budget, and project milestones. (10 points)</li> <li>• The extent to which the proposed project activities will contribute to overall LUST cleanup program implementation for states and tribes. (20 points)</li> </ul> <p>The extent to which the proposed project will lead to improved LUST cleanup training, communication, and assistance for states and tribes. (10 points)</p>	40
<p><b>Programmatic Capability and Environmental Results Past Performance Criterion.</b> Under this criterion, applicants will be evaluated based on their ability to successfully complete and manage the proposed project taking into account:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Past performance in successfully completing and managing the assistance agreements described in Section 4 of this announcement. (5 points)</li> <li>• History of meeting the reporting requirements under the assistance agreements described in Section 4 of this announcement including whether the applicant submitted acceptable final technical reports under those agreements and the extent to which the applicant adequately and timely reported on their progress towards achieving the expected outputs and outcomes under those agreements and if such progress was not being made whether the applicant adequately reported why not; (5 points)</li> <li>• Organizational experience and plan for timely and successfully achieving the objectives of the proposed project, and staff expertise/qualifications. (10 points)</li> <li>• Staff knowledge, and resources or the ability to obtain them, to successfully achieve the goals of the proposed project. (10 points)</li> </ul> <p><b>Note:</b> In evaluating applicants under items of this criterion, the Agency will consider the information provided by the applicant and may also consider relevant information from other sources including agency files and prior/current grantors (e.g., to verify and/or supplement the information supplied by the applicant). If you do not have any relevant or available past performance or past reporting information, please indicate this in the proposal and you will receive a neutral score for these subfactors (items i and ii above—a neutral score is half of the total points available in a subset of possible points). If you do not provide any response for these items, you may receive a score of 0 for these factors.</p>	30
<p><b>Performance Measurement: Anticipated Outcomes and Outputs.</b> Under this criterion, proposals will be evaluated based on the extent to which the “Narrative Proposal” realistically describes how the project will lead to measurable environmental results. The proposal will be evaluated based on whether it:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clearly specifies anticipated environmental outcomes and outputs as described in <i>Section 1(D), Measuring Environmental Results: Anticipated Outcomes/Outputs</i>. (4 points)</li> <li>• Clearly describes the measures of success for the project. Measure of success</li> </ul>	10

<p>should be either measures of environmental improvement or should be directly linked to such measures. EPA will look for quantitative and qualitative measurability. (3 points)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Describes how progress towards achieving project results (including the outcomes and outputs identified in <i>Section 1</i>) will be evaluated and measured. (3 points)</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Budget/Resources.</b> This criterion refers to the proposed budget, in-kind goods and services, and other resources that the applicant outlines to carry out the proposed project. The proposal will be evaluated based on the extent that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The budget is clearly stated, detailed, and appropriate to achieve the project’s objectives. How will your proposed budget effectively sustain your proposed project? How will you plan on managing this budget? Does the budget include cost estimates for each of the proposed project activities to be conducted using EPA funds. (5 pts)</li> <li>• The proposal identifies partnering organization(s) and documents the relationship with the applicant, for example, through letters of support, joint statements, or principles of agreement signed by other parties. (5 pts)</li> </ul>	10
<p><b>Expenditure of Awarded Grant Funds.</b> 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.</p>	5
<p><b>Leveraging.</b> Under this criterion, applicants will be evaluated based on the extent they demonstrate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How they will coordinate the use of EPA funding with other federal and/or non-federal sources of funds/resources to leverage additional resources beyond the grant funds awarded to carry out the proposed project(s) and/or that EPA funding will complement activities relevant to the proposed project(s) carried out by the applicant with other sources of funds or resources. Applicants will also be evaluated based on the type and amount of leveraging proposed, how the applicant will obtain the leveraged resources, the likelihood the leveraging will materialize during grant performance, the strength of the leveraging commitment, and the role the leveraged resources will play to support the proposed project activities.</li> </ul>	5

**B. Other Factors**

The EPA Headquarters Selection Official may consider the following factors, in addition to the evaluation results based on the criteria above, in making the final funding decisions: (1) program priorities and (2) the availability of funds.

**C. Review and Selection Process**

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

Upon completion of the technical merit evaluation, each proposal will be given an evaluated

numerical score, with a total of 100 points possible. The review panel will recommend the proposals with the highest numerical score. In the event of a tied score, the review panel will recommend for selection the applicant with the highest numerical score for the **Programmatic Capability and Environmental Results Past Performance Criterion**. Preliminary funding recommendations will be provided to the EPA Headquarters Selection Official based on this ranking. Once final decisions have been made, a funding recommendation will be developed and forwarded to the EPA Award Official.

#### **D. 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.

### **SECTION 6 - AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION**

#### **A. Award Notices**

EPA anticipates notification to successful and unsuccessful applicants by telephone, or postal, or electronic mail by July 1, 2019.

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.

Applicants are cautioned that only a grants officer 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 grants officer, 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., workplan), 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.

EPA also reserves the right to negotiate appropriate changes in work plans after the selection of a proposal and before the final award of a grant consistent with the Agency's Competition Policy ([EPA Order 5700.5A1](#), Section 11).

#### **B. Administrative and National Policy Requirements**

1. A listing and description of general EPA regulations applicable to the award of assistance agreements may be viewed at: <https://www2.epa.gov/grants/grant-terms-and->

[conditions](#).

2. Applicants selected for award will be required to submit a final cooperative agreement proposal package to the EPA. This package will include an EPA-approved final work plan that describes the work to be performed, a final budget, and the required certification forms. Programmatic terms and conditions will be negotiated with the selected recipient. Terms and conditions specify what grantees must do to ensure that grant-related and program-related requirements are met.
3. Grants and cooperative agreements with non-profit organizations and institutions of higher education are subject to 40 CFR Part 30 and OMB Circular A-122 (2 CFR Part 230) for non-profits and A-21 (2 CFR Part 220) for institutions of higher learning. Grants and cooperative agreements with governmental organizations are subject to 40 CFR Part 31 and OMB Circular A-87 (2 CFR Part 225).
4. **Reimbursement Limitation.** If the recipient expends more than the amount of funding in its EPA approved budget in anticipation of receiving additional funds from EPA, it does so at its own risk. EPA is not legally obligated to reimburse the recipient for costs incurred in excess of the EPA approved budget.
5. **Intergovernmental Review.** Executive Order 12372, Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs, may be applicable to awards resulting from this announcement. EPA implemented the Executive Order in 40 CFR Part 29. EPA may require applicants selected for funding to provide a copy of their application to their State Point of Contact (SPOC) for review as provided at 40 CFR 29.7 and 40 CFR 29.8. The SPOC list can be found at the [Intergovernmental Review \(SPOC List\)](#) page. EPA may require successful applicants from states that do not have a SPOC to provide a copy of their application for review to directly affected state, area-wide, regional and local government entities as provided at 40 CFR 29.7 and 40 CFR 29.8. These reviews are not required before submitting an application. Only applicants that EPA selects for funding under this announcement are subject to the Intergovernmental Review requirement.

### C. Reporting Requirement

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

At the close of the grant, the successful applicant will submit a final technical report to the EPA Project Officer within 90 calendar days of completion of the period of performance. The final technical report shall include a summary of the project or activity, advances or goals achieved, and costs of the project or activity. In addition, the final technical report should

discuss the problems, successes, and lessons learned during the project period.

#### **D. Use of Funds**

An applicant that receives an award under this announcement is expected to manage assistance agreement funds efficiently and effectively and make sufficient progress towards completing the project activities described in the work-plan in a timely manner. The assistance agreement will include terms/conditions implementing this requirement.

#### **E. Disputes**

Disputes related to this competition 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 <https://www.epa.gov/grants/grant-competition-dispute-resolution-procedures>. Copies of these procedures also may be requested by contacting Erin Knighton at [knighton.erin@epa.gov](mailto:knighton.erin@epa.gov) or 202-564-0684.

#### **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 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.

### **SECTION 7 - AGENCY CONTACT**

Erin Knighton, U.S. EPA, Office of Underground Storage Tanks (MC 5401-R), 1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20460; Phone 202-564-0684; or email [knighton.erin@epa.gov](mailto:knighton.erin@epa.gov).