

**FEDERAL AGENCY: ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY (EPA) Office of Environmental Education**

**TITLE: Environmental Education Local Grants Program for Region 5-- Solicitation Notice for 2020**

**ACTION: Request for Applications (RFA)**

**FUNDING OPPORTUNITY NUMBER: EPA-EE-20-05**

**Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA): 66.951**

**Dates:** The closing date and time for receipt of application submissions is **January 6, 2020, 11:59pm Eastern Time (ET)**.

**Summary:** The purpose of the Environmental Education Local Grants Program in Region 5 is to support locally-focused environmental education projects that increase public awareness and knowledge about environmental and conservation issues and provide the skills that participants in its funded projects need to make informed decisions and take responsible actions toward the environment.

**Funding/Awards:** The total estimated funding for this competitive opportunity in U.S. EPA Region 5 is **up to \$300,000**. The Region expects to award three or four grants for **no less than \$50,000, and no more than \$100,000 each**. Region 5 covers the states of Illinois (IL), Indiana (IN), Michigan (MI), Minnesota (MN), Ohio (OH) and Wisconsin (WI).

This RFA is one of 10 being issued nationally, one in each of EPA's ten Regions, for a total funding of **approximately \$3,000,000 nationwide**. EPA expects to award **three or four grants from each of the EPA's 10 Regional Offices under the Fiscal Year 2020 Environmental Education Local Grants Program, for a total of approximately 30 to 35 grants nationwide**. The award amount for each of these grants will be **no less than \$50,000, and no more than \$100,000** in federal funds. The award amounts and the number of awards are subject to the availability of funds, the quality and quantity of applications received, and other applicable considerations.

**Cost Sharing Requirement:** Applicants must demonstrate how they will provide non-federal matching funds of **at least 25% of the total cost** of the project.

**Project Period:** Applications should plan for projects to start **no earlier than August 1, 2020**. Project periods should be proposed for one or two years or any time period between one and two years.

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## Section I. Funding Opportunity Description

### A. Background

Under this solicitation EPA is seeking grant applications from eligible applicants to support locally-focused environmental education projects that promote environmental and conservation stewardship and help develop knowledgeable and responsible students, teachers, and citizens. This grant program provides financial support for projects that design, demonstrate, and/or disseminate environmental education practices, methods, or techniques, as described in this notice, that will serve to increase environmental literacy and encourage behavior that will benefit the environment in the local community(ies) in which they are located. Selections and awards will be made in Region 5 (Note that separate solicitations will be issued from each of the 10 EPA Regional Offices, and selections and awards will be made in each respective Region.)

The National Environmental Education Act (Act) requires that exactly 25% of all funds obligated under Section 6 of the Environmental Education Grant Program in a fiscal year be for grant awards of not more than \$5,000. Accordingly, each recipient (i.e., the “prime” recipient) of a grant under this solicitation will be required to award exactly 25% (no more and no less) of the funds received from EPA to eligible sub-recipients in the form of subawards of \$5,000 or less. Please note that this is different from the requirement in the Act that each recipient provide a **cost sharing (match) of 25% or more of the total project amount.**

EPA receives a large number of grant applications under this program and can fund just a small percentage of those applications received. To ensure that grant applications are competitive, applicants should carefully read Sections IV and V regarding how to structure an application and what criteria will be used to evaluate applications.

EPA seeks to fund a variety of projects in each competition cycle in order to support a range of educational and environmental priorities, geographic areas, and audiences, especially as compared to the pool of previously funded projects. In addition, applicants must demonstrate that their application is for a project for which they (the applicant) have not been previously awarded a grant by EPA’s EE program and a statement to this effect must be included in the Project Summary; or the applicant must demonstrate that they are expanding, building on, enhancing or otherwise modifying a project previously funded by EPA’s EE Grant Program. Go to the [Environmental Education \(EE\) Grants page](#) to see the list and descriptions of projects previously funded by this program.

## **B. Goal and Definitions**

### (1) Goal

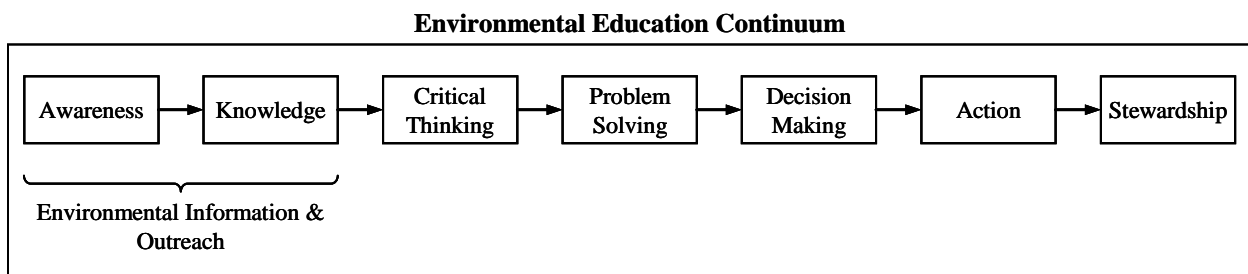
The goal of this solicitation is to fund locally-focused EE projects that design, demonstrate, and/or disseminate environmental education practices, methods, or techniques, as described in this notice. EPA will provide financial support for projects that promote environmental and conservation stewardship and help develop informed, knowledgeable and responsible citizens in the community(ies) in which the project is located.

### (2) Definition of Environmental Education (EE)

EE is defined in the Act as:

“educational activities and training activities involving elementary, secondary, and postsecondary students, as such terms are defined in the State in which they reside, and environmental education personnel, but does not include technical training activities directed toward environmental management professionals or activities primarily directed toward the support of non-educational research and development.” The Act also states that “The Office of Environmental Education shall...support development and the widest possible dissemination of model curricula, educational materials, and training programs for elementary and secondary students and other interested groups, including senior Americans.”

EPA further clarifies that environmental and conservation information and outreach may be important elements of EE projects, but these activities by themselves are not EE. By itself, environmental or conservation information only addresses awareness and knowledge, usually about a particular environmental or conservation issue. Outreach involves information dissemination and requests or suggestions for action on a particular issue (often without the critical thinking, problem solving and decision-making steps in between). EE teaches individuals how to weigh various sides of an issue through critical thinking, problem solving and decision-making skills on environmental and conservation topics. EE is a continuum that covers the range of steps and activities from awareness to action with an ultimate goal of environmental and conservation stewardship.



EE increases public awareness and knowledge about environmental and conservation issues and provides the participants in its programs the skills necessary to make informed decisions and to take responsible actions. EE is based on objective and scientifically-sound information and does not advocate a particular viewpoint or a particular course of action. EE involves lifelong learning; its audiences are of all age groups, from very young children through senior citizens. EE can include both outdoor and in-classroom education, in both formal and non-formal settings.

(3) Definitions of terms used throughout this solicitation and for purposes of this solicitation.

(a) “Conservation”, as related to EPA’s mission and for purposes of this solicitation, is defined as the preservation, protection, or restoration of the natural environment, natural ecosystems, vegetation, and wildlife in order to achieve maximum environmental and human health benefits.

(b) “Environmental or Conservation Information” provides facts or opinions about environmental or conservation issues or problems. Information is essential to any educational effort. However, environmental or conservation information is not by itself EE. Information provides facts or opinions, whereas education teaches people how to think, analyze, and solve problems.

(c) “Environmental or Conservation Outreach” disseminates information and sometimes asks audiences to take specific action but doesn’t necessarily teach people how to analyze an issue. Outreach often presents a particular point of view, and often in pursuit of a particular goal. Examples may include a community meeting to inform residents about a toxic site in their area and where they can go for help, or a campaign to get volunteer participants for restoration of soil health or of a stream’s riparian zone.

(d) “Environmental or Conservation Stewardship” is voluntary commitment, behavior, and action that results in environmental protection or improvement, or conservation of our natural resources. Stewardship refers to an acceptance of personal responsibility for actions to improve environmental quality and to achieve conservation outcomes. Stewardship involves lifestyles and business practices, initiatives and actions that enhance the state of the environment and natural resources. Some examples are: living or conducting business in such a way as to minimize or eliminate pollution at its source; using natural resources efficiently; decreasing the use of hazardous chemicals; recycling wastes effectively; and conserving or restoring soil, forests, prairies, wetlands, rivers, and parks. Stewardship can be practiced by individuals, groups, schools, organizations, companies, communities, and state and local governments.

### **C. Educational and Environmental Priorities**

In order to be eligible, all applications must:

- (1) address at least one of the EPA educational priorities listed below,
- (2) address at least one of the EPA Administrator’s environmental priorities listed below; and,
- (3) satisfy the definition of “environmental education” as defined under Section I (B) as discussed above.

The educational and environmental priorities listed below are not in order of importance or preference. Applications may address more than one priority in each category, but if more than one priority is addressed, then it is important that the application is clear which priority in each category (educational and environmental) is the focus of the project and why that focus was chosen for the proposed project. EPA seeks to fund a balance of projects in this competition cycle in order to support as even a distribution of educational priorities as possible, as well as a variety of geographic areas and audiences in both educational and environmental priority categories.

In addition, these priorities focus on environmental and conservation challenges that require a population that is diverse, informed, environmentally literate, as well as willing and able to translate their knowledge and skills into decisions and actions that protect the environment and conserve natural resources in every community, including but not limited to minority, low income, rural, and tribal communities. We encourage applications that reach out to a variety of communities, especially those that are or more likely to have been affected adversely (e.g., higher rates of medical problems due to environmental factors) by environmental risks or conservation issues than other communities.

**EPA’s Educational Priorities:**

**Applications must address at least one of these Educational Priorities to be considered eligible.**

1. **Agricultural Education:** Educating students of any age group and/or training their educators or community leaders on how to teach, in formal and non-formal settings, about environmental issues affecting agriculture in urban, suburban and rural communities -- in such areas as integrated pest management, nutrient management, integrated vegetation management, and air, soil and water quality issues-- and how to find creative solutions to such issues.

2. **Community Projects:** Increasing public understanding of the benefits of and participation in environmental and conservation stewardship through community collaboration on such issues as water and soil quality, food waste management, increase of locally sourced food in farm to table systems, management of ecosystem health and/or local fire or flood prevention and fire, flood or hurricane preparedness as related to human health and environmental protection. Projects can take place in rural, suburban and urban settings, in a local formal or non-formal educational context, and use outdoor, place-based, experiential, service learning and/or community-focused stewardship activities as the primary teaching tool(s).

3. **Career Development:** Educating students of any age group and/or training their educators or community leaders on how to teach, in formal and non-formal settings, about environmental and conservation issues, solutions and stewardship for the purpose of encouraging interest in careers in environmental fields, including conservation, natural resources, chemical safety, and water and air quality management fields.

***A note on training educators:***

EPA has previously funded various projects focused on the skills needed to be an effective environmental educator. A resource developed by one of these projects, [\*Guidelines for the Preparation and Professional Development of Environmental Educators\*](#), is intended to guide other projects that address EE teaching skills.

**EPA’s Environmental Priorities:**

**Applications must address at least one of the Administrator’s Environmental Priorities to be considered eligible. From the list below, select at least one numbered priority. Then specify a topic under the priority that the application will address. Note that for illustrative purposes only, samples of topics are listed under each priority below. You may choose one of the sample topics or propose another topic relevant to your local area and consistent with the Administrator’s priorities and the Agency’s Strategic Plan.**

1. **Priority: Improving air quality** to ensure Americans are living and working in areas that meet high air quality standards.

**Sample Topic:**

- a. Work to prevent future air quality issues by making appropriate preparations for the prevention of wild fires.
  - b. Work to educate communities about sources of air pollution and potential solutions; e.g., using farmers' markets and farm to table systems to teach about the environmental benefits of local food supplies that do not require long distance transportation.
2. **Priority: Ensuring clean and safe water** by supporting clean drinking water, aquatic ecosystems, and recreational, economic and subsistence activities.

**Sample Topics:**

- a. Work to prevent future water quality and human health issues through appropriate management for flood and hurricane preparedness.
  - b. Work to prevent future water quality and human health issues through appropriate communications about the risks of poor water quality in local area(s).
  - c. Work to participate in the conservation of quality water resources; e.g., educating school-age children, their parents, and the community about water conservation through the establishment and maintenance of school or community gardens or the removal of invasive plant species and/or planting of native gardens.
  - d. Work to manage nutrients in water systems by reducing the use of pesticides and/or nutrient run-off from soil, while maintaining both quality agricultural yields and minimal environmental harm.
  - e. Work to manage the health of aquatic ecosystems to achieve the maximum in environmental and human health benefits and support recreational, economic, and subsistence activities.
3. **Priority: Ensuring the safety of chemicals. Sample topics:**
- a. Work on Integrated Pest Management to achieve the most environmentally effective management of pests in the agricultural setting.
  - b. Work on Integrated Vegetation Management issues for the maximum in environmental benefits; for example, for maintaining native species within public rights-of-way.
  - c. Work to educate school-aged children, their parents, and the community on pesticide and environmental health issues; e.g., maintaining school gardens to teach about pesticide management.
4. **Priority: Revitalize land and prevent contamination. Sample topics:**
- a. Work to manage food waste for environmental benefits; e.g., the benefits of composting, reduction of waste going to landfills, etc.
  - b. Work to increase electronic recycling and other efforts to reduce waste disposal in landfills.
  - c. Work to increase plastic recycling and other efforts to reduce plastic disposal in landfills.
  - d. Work to educate individuals about human health and environmental risks associated with improper management of waste and the benefits associated with reducing trash in waterways.



## D. Partnerships

Partnerships are not required. However, applicants are encouraged to work with partners to develop, design and implement proposed projects and will be evaluated on their plan to work with partners (or their plan to develop, design and implement the project without partners) under a criterion explained in Section V. Partners can be non-profit organizations, colleges and universities, schools and school districts, tribal entities, state and local government agencies, federal agencies, and for-profit companies. Note, however, that federal agencies and for-profit companies cannot receive any of the grant funds awarded by EPA under this program and federal funds cannot be used as match.

Partnerships can increase the potential numbers and diversity of audiences, can increase the variety of and accessibility to expertise needed to conduct a successful project, and can assist in meeting the matching funds requirement. See Section III (B) for more information about the matching funds requirement. Note too that partnerships with for-profit companies are especially encouraged when they can help the applicant produce environmental results in their grant project that improve the quality of air, water, soil, and natural resources.

## E. Linkage to EPA's Strategic Plan and Expected Outputs and Outcomes

**(1) Linkage to EPA's Strategic Plan.** EPA's Strategic Plan is available at <https://www.epa.gov/planandbudget/strategicplan.html>.

The activities to be funded under this announcement are intended to further EPA's current Goal 2.2, to **increase transparency and public participation by listening to and collaborating with impacted stakeholders and providing effective platforms for public participation and meaningful engagement**. In addition, because environmental education is an important non-regulatory tool the Agency uses to help meet its mission, the activities to be funded under this announcement are intended to further EPA's current objectives of **improving air quality, ensuring clean and safe water, revitalizing land and preventing contamination, and/or ensuring the safety of chemicals**, as outlined in Section I (C). of this solicitation. Applicants must explain in their application how their project will further these current goals and objectives.

EPA also requires that grant applicants adequately describe environmental outputs and outcomes to be achieved under assistance agreements (see EPA Order 5700.7A1, Environmental Results under Assistance Agreements, <https://www.epa.gov/grants/epa-order-57007a1-epas-policy-environmental-results-under-epa-assistance-agreements>). Applicants must include specific statements describing the environmental results of the proposed project in terms of well-defined outputs and, to the maximum extent practicable, well-defined outcomes that will demonstrate how the project will contribute to the priorities described above.

**(2) Expected Outputs and Outcomes (See Appendix D).** Recipients of these grants will design, develop and implement locally-focused educational projects that encourage behavior beneficial to the environment and our natural resources through non-regulatory means while raising public awareness of actions that can be taken to promote environmental and conservation

stewardship. The mission of the EPA is to protect human health and the environment. As such, the application should demonstrate how the project will result in both educational and environmental outputs and outcomes.

During the evaluation process for applications, EPA will determine if each work plan contains well-defined educational and environmental outputs and outcomes, adequately describes the applicant's plan and approach for tracking and measuring progress towards achieving the outputs and outcomes, and clearly explains how the applicant will achieve the expected outputs and outcomes. Proposed outputs and short-term outcomes must be completed and be reported to EPA within the project period. Progress should at least begin on medium-term or long-term outcomes during the project period. For more detailed information on expected outputs and outcomes from environmental education grants, please see Appendix D.

## **F. Required Subawards and Matching Funds**

A grantee under this solicitation will be required to **award exactly 25% (no more and no less) of the funds received from EPA to eligible sub-recipients in the form of subawards of \$5,000 or less**. This means that if the total dollar amount proposed to be awarded to subawards in an application is either below or above exactly 25% of EPA funds requested, the application may be deemed ineligible. Note that awarding a contract will not fulfill this requirement. All subawards must be in the form of a grant. [EPA Subaward Policy](#) has detailed information available for differentiating between contractors and subrecipients.

There is also a **cost sharing (match) requirement that all applicants must meet**, which must be for a **minimum of 25% of the total project amount**. An application will be deemed ineligible if funds for less than 25% of the total project amount are proposed as match.

More information about matching funds and subaward requirements can be found in Sections III and IV.

## **G. Other Funding Opportunities**

Please note that this is a very competitive grant program. Limited funding is available and not all grant applications can be funded. If your project is not funded, you may wish to review other available grant funding opportunities on the federal site Grants.gov, <https://www.grants.gov/>.

## **H. Statutory Authority**

Section 6 of the National Environmental Education Act of 1990 (Public Law 101-619) authorizes the award of these Environmental Education Grants.

# **Section II. Award Information**

## **A. Funding Type**

The funding for selected projects will be in the form of a grant.

## **B. Number and Amount of Awards**

EPA Region 5 **anticipates funding three or four grants in Fiscal Year 2020 under this solicitation; each grant will be funded for no less than \$50,000, and no more than \$100,000 in federal funds**, subject to the availability of funds, the quality and quantity of applications received, and other applicable considerations.

## **C. Start Date and Length of Project Period**

Applicants should plan for their **projects to begin no earlier than August 1, 2020**. Applicants should plan for a flexible start date since the date awards are made depends on a variety of factors. EPA will accept applications for one or 2-year project periods, but the total funding will be the same regardless of the project period (i.e., if a 2-year project is proposed for \$100,000, the award amount is \$100,000 for the whole 2 years and no additional funding will be issued for the second year). The application must demonstrate clearly how the project will be completed in the time frame proposed.

## **D. Funding and Partial Funding Provisions**

EPA reserves the right to reject all applications and make no awards under this announcement or make fewer awards than expected.

EPA also reserves the right to make additional awards under this announcement consistent with Agency policy and guidance if additional funding becomes available after the original selections are made. Any additional selections for awards will be made no later than 6 months after the original selection decisions.

In appropriate circumstances, EPA reserves the right to partially fund applications by funding discrete portions or phases of a proposed project. If 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 or selected for award and therefore maintains the integrity of the competition and selection process.

## **E. Multiple Applications**

Applicants may submit more than one application under this solicitation so long as each one is for a different project and is separately submitted.

# **Section III. Eligibility Information**

## **A. Eligible Applicants**

The terms for eligibility to apply for a grant under this RFA are defined in Section 3 of the Act and 2 CFR Part 200 and CFDA 66.951.

Any local education agency, college or university, state education or environmental agency, nonprofit organization as described in Section 501(C)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or a noncommercial educational broadcasting entity as defined and licensed by Federal

Communications Commission may submit an application. Applicant organizations must be located in the United States or territories, and the majority of the educational activities must take place in the United States; or in the United States and Canada or Mexico; or in U.S. Territories. A teacher's school district, a nonprofit organization of which an educator or other individual is a member, or a faculty member's college or university may apply, but an individual, a teacher or a faculty member may not apply on his/her own. Eligibility requirements apply to both "prime" recipients and subawardees. "Tribal education agencies" that are eligible to apply include a school or community college which is controlled by an Indian tribe, band, or nation, which is recognized as eligible for special programs and services provided by the United States to Indians because of their status as Indians and which is not administered by the Bureau of Indian Education. Tribal organizations do not qualify unless they meet those criteria or the non-profit criteria listed above and below.

For-profit organizations are not eligible to apply for this funding opportunity. Additionally, non-profit organizations described in Section 501(c)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code that engage in lobbying activities as defined in Section 3 of the Lobbying Disclosure Act of 1995 are not eligible to apply.

## **B. Matching Funds**

Non-federal matching funds of at least 25% of the total cost of the grant project are required for awards made under this announcement. The matching requirement is explained in detail in Section IV(E)(6)(b) under Detailed Budget Table and Narrative and Matching Funds Explanation.

In order to be eligible for funding consideration, applications must demonstrate how the match requirement will be met if selected for an award. Under appropriate circumstances, applicants may use partnerships to assist with matching funds requirements. See Section I (D) above for further information about Partnerships. Applicants must be aware, however, that regardless of whether it is a partner(s) or their own organization that is providing the matching funds, the applicant itself is responsible for ensuring that the cost share requirement is met.

## **C. Threshold Eligibility Criteria**

Applications must meet the following threshold criteria to be eligible for funding consideration under this solicitation. **Failure to meet any of the following criteria in the application will result in disqualification of the application for funding consideration.** Ineligible applicants will be notified by email within 15 calendar days of the determination that they are ineligible based on the threshold criteria.

(1) 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 specified in Section IV for the work plan, pages in excess of the page limitation will not be reviewed.

(2) Applications must be submitted through the Grants.gov website (<https://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.

(3) 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 the Grants.gov website (<https://www.grants.gov/>) or relevant SAM.gov (<https://www.sam.gov/>) system issues. An applicant's failure to timely submit their application through the Grants.gov website 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 with Megan Gavin ([gavin.megan@epa.gov](mailto:gavin.megan@epa.gov)) as soon as possible after the submission deadline—failure to do so may result in your application not being reviewed. Note: Successful submission and receipt of an application does not guarantee its eligibility for review.

(4) The applicant must be an eligible organization as described in Section III (A) above and state in its application how it meets that eligibility criterion.

(5) The applicant must demonstrate in its application how the non-federal match will be met, as required in Section III (B) above.

(6) Applications for awards must be for no less than \$50,000, and no more than \$100,000, in federal funds or the application will be rejected.

(7) Applications must describe how the applicant's project will result in the award of exactly (no more and no less than) 25% of the amount awarded by EPA as subawards of \$5,000 or less to eligible subawardees. **Note:** This means that if the total dollar amount proposed to be awarded to subawards of \$5,000 or less is either below or above exactly 25% of the EPA funds requested, the application may be deemed ineligible. This is different from the match requirement, which can be more than 25% of the total project amount. For example, if EPA awards \$100,000 to the prime recipient, then the prime must award exactly \$25,000 in subawards of \$5000 or less.

(8) The application must be for a project that satisfies the definition of "environmental education" as defined under Section I (B).

(9) The application must address at least one of the educational priorities listed in Section I (C).

(10) The application must address at least one of the EPA's environmental priorities listed in Section 1 (C), along with a specific topic related to that priority that is consistent with the Administrator's priorities and the Agency's Strategic Plan.

(11) Applicants must demonstrate that their application is for a project for which they (the applicant) have not been previously awarded a grant by EPA's EE program and a statement to this effect must be included in the Project Summary; or the applicant must demonstrate that they are expanding, building on, enhancing or otherwise modifying a project previously funded by EPA's EE Grant Program.

(12) Applicants can submit more than one application under this solicitation so long as each one is for a different project and is separately submitted.

(13) Project activities must be located in one or more of the following states in Region 5: IL, IN, MI, MN, OH, WI.

#### **D. Ineligible Activities**

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. Activities and tasks ineligible for funding in the EE Grants Program include:

- (1) Technical training of environmental management professionals;
- (2) Environmental "information" and/or "outreach" projects that have no additional educational component, as described in Section I (B)(3);
- (3) Advocacy promoting a particular point of view or course of action;
- (4) Lobbying or political activities as defined in 2 CFR Part 200.450;
- (5) Non-educational research and development; or
- (6) Construction projects—EPA will not fund construction activities such as the acquisition of real property (e.g., buildings) or the construction or modification of any building.

## **Section IV. Application and Submission Information**

### **A. Requirement to Submit through the Grants.gov and Limited Exception Procedures**

Applicants, except as noted below, must apply electronically through [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) under this funding opportunity, based on the Grants.gov instructions in this announcement. If an applicant does not have the technical capability to apply electronically through Grants.gov because of limited or no internet access which prevents them from being able to upload the required application materials to Grants.gov, the applicant must contact [OMS-ARM-OGDWaivers@epa.gov](mailto:OMS-ARM-OGDWaivers@epa.gov) or the address listed below in writing (i.e., by email or hard copy) *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) – EPA-EE-20-05
- 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 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](https://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 application 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 is approved on October 1, 2019, it is valid for any competitive or non-competitive application submission to EPA through December 31, 2019). 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 the Grants.gov for submissions for any succeeding calendar year. For example, if there is a competitive opportunity issued on

November 15, 2019 with a submission deadline of January 15, 2020, the applicant would need a new exception to submit through alternative methods beginning January 1, 2020.

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

## **B. Submission Instructions**

The electronic submission of your application must be made by an official representative of your institution who is registered with [Grants.gov](https://www.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 <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 (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. Registrations on [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov), [SAM.gov](https://www.sam.gov), and DUNS number assignment are 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, 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 Software Compatibility](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. 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-EE-20-05 or the CFDA number that applies to the announcement (CFDA 66.951), in the appropriate field and click the Search button.



Please Note: Applications submitted through Grants.gov must be submitted 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 AOR must submit your complete application package electronically to EPA through [Grants.gov](#) no later than **11:59pm Eastern Time on January 6, 2020**. **Please allow for enough time to successfully submit your application package and allow for unexpected errors that may require you to resubmit.**

Please submit *all* of the application materials described below using Grants.gov application package that you downloaded using the instructions above.

### **Application Materials:**

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

1. Standard Form 424 (SF-424). *Application for Federal Assistance*. Please note that the organizational Unique Entity Identifier (e.g., DUNS number) must be included on the SF-424.
2. Standard Form 424A (SF-424A). *Budget Information for Non-Construction Programs*
3. Standard Form 424B (SF-424B). *Assurances for Non-Construction Programs*
4. EPA Key Contacts Form 5700-54
5. EPA Form 4700-4 – *Pre-award Compliance Review Report*
6. Narrative Application (Project Narrative Attachment Form) - prepared as described in Section IV(E)(6) below

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 the Grants.gov website) within 30 days of the application deadline, please contact Megan Gavin ([gavin.megan@epa.gov](mailto:gavin.megan@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 the applicant’s AOR, who should have registered with Grants.gov before starting the submission of the application. 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 common with transfers to the Grants.gov website. It is essential to allow sufficient time to ensure that your application is submitted to Grants.gov BEFORE the due date and time identified in Section IV of this solicitation.** The Grants.gov support desk, 1-800-518-4726, or [support@grants.gov](mailto:support@grants.gov), 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.

Once you have submitted, you will receive the following communications:

- **Submission Receipt Email:** Confirms successful receipt of your application by the Grants.gov system and indicates application status is "Received." This will include a tracking number, which will have the following format: GRANTxxxxxxx
- **Submission Validation –OR– Rejection with Errors Email:** Indicates that your application was either successfully validated or rejected by the Grants.gov system prior to transmission to the grantor agency.
- If your application is rejected with errors, you may resolve these errors and attempt to submit again as long as the submission deadline has not already passed.
- Once your application package has passed validation, it is available for the awarding agency (EPA) to retrieve to perform further review and award determination. (Please note that Grants.gov does not review application content for award determination.) After the EPA confirms receipt of your application, Grants.gov will send you a third email to indicate the **Received by Agency status**.

If you do not receive the above emails, please contact 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.

Note: Grants.gov issues a “case number” upon a request for assistance. Save this number in case you encounter additional problems.

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 does not resolve the problem so that the application is submitted to [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) by the deadline date and time, follow the guidance below. The EPA 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 [EEGrants@EPA.gov](mailto:EEGrants@EPA.gov) with the Funding Opportunity Number (EPA-EE-20-05) in the subject line. 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 by the deadline 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 the Grants.gov representative. If the problems stem from unforeseen exigent circumstances unrelated to the Grants.gov website, such as extreme weather interfering with internet access, send an email to [EEGrants@EPA.gov](mailto:EEGrants@EPA.gov) as soon as internet access is available and explain the circumstances.

b. Unsuccessful transfer of the application package. If a successful transfer of the application cannot be accomplished even with assistance from a 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 [EEGrants@EPA.gov](mailto:EEGrants@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 and it is too late to reapply, promptly send an email to [EEGrants@EPA.gov](mailto:EEGrants@EPA.gov) with the Funding Opportunity Number (EPA-EE-20-05) 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 an attachment of the entire application in PDF format.

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

#### **D. Format of Application Submission**

Applications must include the information described below, and it is highly recommended that applications follow the format provided. Please follow the instructions and do not submit additional items or forms. Please do not refer to websites or online tools in your application as the reviewers will evaluate only the materials provided in the application.

The portion of the Narrative Application referred to as the Work Plan (which includes the Project Summary, Detailed Project Description, and Project Evaluation) shall not exceed 8 single-spaced pages. Pages in excess of the page limit will not be reviewed. "One page" refers to one side of a single-spaced typed page. The pages must be letter-sized (8 ½ X 11 inches); recommended font size is no smaller than 10 point; and margins no less than 1 inch. The

remaining pieces of the Narrative Application – the Detailed Budget and the Appendices (i.e., Timeline, Logic Model, Programmatic Capabilities and Past Performance, and Partnership Commitment Letters) - are not included in the page limit.

## E. Contents of Submission

A complete application package must contain all of the information outlined below. Please see the additional instructions provided under “Instructions” below, as well as Appendix C -- Checklist for Application.

1. Standard Form 424 (SF-424). *Application for Federal Assistance*. Please note that the organizational DUNS number must be included on the SF-424. Refer to Appendix A for additional instructions.
2. Standard Form 424A (SF-424A). *Budget Information for Non-Construction Programs*. Complete only Section B with the EPA funds and matching funds in separate columns and with the totals in column 5. Do **not** complete Section A, C, D, E or F of this form. Refer to Appendix A for additional instructions.
3. Standard Form 424B (SF-424B). *Assurances for Non-Construction Programs*
4. EPA Key Contacts Form 5700-54
5. EPA Form 4700-4 – *Pre-award Compliance Review Report*
6. Project Narrative
  - (a) Work Plan - not to exceed 8 single spaced pages total:
    - (i) Project Summary (recommended, one page);
    - (ii) Detailed Project Description;
    - (iii) Project Evaluation;
  - (b) Detailed Budget (no page limit)
  - (c) Appendices (no page limit):
    - (i) Timeline;
    - (ii) Logic Model;
    - (iii) Programmatic Capability and Past Performance; and
    - (iv) Partnership Letters of Commitment (only if you have partner organizations making a commitment to the project – please NO letters of endorsement or recommendation)

**Project Narrative Instructions:** You must include a project narrative, which will consist of a work plan that describes your proposed project, a detailed budget, and appendices. The narrative must address the requirements in Section I of this solicitation as well as any applicable threshold eligibility requirements in Section III and each of the evaluation criteria set forth in Section V. Grant reviewers look at many applications; providing your information in the order and format outlined below is highly recommended, as it prevents information from being overlooked. Your application should use ordinary terms to provide reviewers with an understanding of the purpose and expected outcomes of your project. A person unfamiliar with your project, its location/setting, and its topics should be able to read the application and understand it without further research.

The project narrative will be scored based on the ranking factors identified in Section V.

(a) **Work Plan.** The work plan must not exceed 8 single-spaced pages total; excess pages will not be reviewed. The work plan must include items i-iii below.

**(i) Executive Summary:** Provide a concise overview of your application in the following format. The primary purpose of this part of the work plan is to help reviewers determine the eligibility of the applicant and/or application. Detailed explanations should be provided in the Detailed Project Description, not here.

### 1. Organization

- Name of organization
- Point of Contact for Organization, Mailing and Email Address
- How does your organization meet the eligibility requirement described in Section III(A).

### 2. Costs

List the following information in dollar amounts only:

- The dollar amount of funding you are requesting from EPA.
- The total dollar amount of your project costs.
- The dollar amount of matching funds you will be providing. (**Note:** This amount must be at least 25% of the total budget for the project.)
- The dollar amount you will be awarding to subawards. (**Note:** This amount must be exactly 25% of the dollar amount you are requesting from EPA.)

(**Note:** The form 424A and the Detailed Budget are where you will include your full allocation of costs.)

### 3. Environmental Education

- Briefly describe (no more than one paragraph) how your project will meet the definition of environmental education. See Section I(B) for the definition.
- Priorities. Identify:
  - the educational priority(ies) listed in Section I(C) that your project addresses;
  - the environmental priority(ies) listed in Section I(C) that your project addresses, along with the specific topic(s) related to that priority that your project will address.

#### 4. History of Receiving EE Grants

- Provide a concise statement that your organization is not currently receiving and has not previously received funding for this project from EPA's EE Grant Program, or explain clearly how a project previously funded by EPA's EE Grant Program is being expanded, built on, enhanced or otherwise modified by these additional funds. Note: Grantees currently or previously funded by EPA's EE grant program who are interested in applying under this solicitation also must list all of the previously funded projects of the last three (3) years, clearly labeled as "EPA EE Grants", in the Past Performance Appendix in their narrative application.

#### 5. Brief Project Description

- Describe in 150 words or less, how the organization and partner (when applicable) educates the audience to achieve major educational activities and goals of the project in various settings and locations. Please identify the audiences by specific types – students, teachers, general public – and other relevant demographics like minority populations, low income, urban/rural, etc., including the number reached. Describe settings and locations – e.g., in schools and nature centers in city, state. Describe the environmental issue that the project will address as well as the proposed stewardship activities. Describe the major educational activities and goals of the project. Add any other unique, interesting, or relevant information in a sentence or two.
- Describe in 150 words or less, what education methodology will you use to teach your audience and encourage participation in environmental or conservation stewardship; such as workshops, field trips, interactive programs, conferences, etc.

**(ii) Detailed Project Description:** Under the headings Where, What, Why, How and Who, describe precisely what your project will achieve, especially how it will serve to increase environmental and/or conservation literacy and encourage behavior that will benefit the environment and/or natural resources in the local community in which it is located; why the goals and priorities of the project were chosen; how it will achieve its goals, including how it will use subawards in amounts of \$5,000 or less each to carry out its goals; and who it will reach. It is highly recommended that you explain each aspect of your application clearly and address each topic by following the format below, include the headings as given, and do not reorder the paragraphs, or you risk the possibility of information being left out by you as the applicant, or overlooked or not fully comprehended by the reviewers when the project is scored.

1. **Where:** explain where the project will take place, and how the environmental or conservation issue being addressed is relevant to the local community(ies) in which the project is located.
  
2. **What:** Provide a detailed description of the activities that will occur under your project. Clearly identify your activities as well as the materials and implementation/delivery methods that will be used. Do not omit steps that lead up to or follow the actual delivery methods (e.g., if you plan to make a presentation about your project at a conference, specify where). Do not reference your logic model (see Appendix D) in your response. The description should include:
  - State the project goals and list specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, time-based objectives.
  - Describe what your project will be doing to address the educational priority(ies) you have chosen to focus on. Note: Please see the information provided in the Frequent Questions about the Environmental Education Grants Program about developing, evaluating, and selecting educational materials to be used as part of your application. The “Excellence in EE” series of publications listed in the Environmental Education (EE) Guidelines includes guidelines for: developing and evaluating educational materials; the initial preparation of environmental educators; and using environmental education to support local elementary, middle and high school education.
  - Describe what your project will be doing to address the environmental priority(ies) you have chosen to focus on, along with the specific topic(s) related to each priority, especially as each priority relates to the local community in which the project is located.
  
3. **Why:**
  - Explain the need for this project. Describe why you are proposing this particular project, why you have chosen these goals, and the need for this project to increase environmental and/or conservation literacy and encourage behavior that benefits the environment and/or natural resources in the local community in which it is located.
  - Explain why you have chosen the educational and environmental priorities on which you are focusing, including why they are important to your specific goals and to your audience.
  - Cite studies or sources, where appropriate, that verify the need for your project. (Citations and lists of sources may be submitted

as a separate Attachment and not counted in the page limit for the Work Plan.)

#### **4. How:**

- Explain how you will reach your educational goals and objectives and how you will achieve your expected educational outputs and outcomes as described in your Logic Model (see Appendix D). Be specific in explaining how your project will increase environmental and/or conservation literacy in the local community in which it is located.
- Explain how you will reach your environmental and/or conservation goals and objectives and how you will achieve your expected environmental and/or conservation outputs and outcomes as described in your Logic Model (see Appendix D). Be specific in explaining how your project will encourage behavior that improves the environment and natural resources (i.e., increases environmental and/or conservation stewardship as defined in Section I) in the community in which it is located.
- Where appropriate, how will the project reach diverse and/or underserved communities, including but not limited to minority, low income and tribal or rural communities.
- Explain how you will use a subaward program to attain your goals and objectives and how you will ensure that exactly 25% (no more, no less) of the EPA funds awarded will be used for subawards of \$5000 or less to eligible subawardees (e.g., if EPA awards \$100,000 to the prime recipient, then the prime must award exactly \$25,000 in subawards of \$5000 or less). See Section III (A) for eligibility information. Include clear explanations of how you will select the subawardees and ensure that all subaward activities address at least one educational and one environmental priority of EPA and all are fundamentally educational (not just outreach or information distribution, as defined in Section I).
- Applications must also explain how the prime recipient will ensure that eligible subawardees implement EE activities that encourage behavior that benefits the environment and natural resources through non-regulatory means, increase environmental and/or conservation literacy, and raise public awareness of actions that can be taken to promote environmental and/or conservation stewardship. This includes explanations of how the prime recipient will monitor the subawardees' activities, materials, and delivery methods to ensure that they achieve the project's expected outputs and outcomes.



## 5. Who:

- Explain who in your organization will manage and implement your project. Note: Full details about your organization and staff will be in the Appendix called Programmatic Capability and Past Performance.
- List the key partners who will help implement this project, if applicable, and their role in the project. Partnerships are not required but are considered a contribution to the success of projects. See Section I (D) for more information about the use of partnerships in applications submitted under this solicitation. Note: If you have partner(s), Letters of Commitment from those partners stating their role in the project must be included with your application.
- Describe in detail your target audience, such as educators and students (with specific grade levels) or community members, and the numbers of individuals your project is expected to reach. Discuss the environmental and/or conservation literacy needs of that audience as they relate to the environmental priority(ies), goals and objectives of your project.
- Explain your recruitment plan to attract your target audience, and identify incentives that will be used to facilitate recruitment, such as teacher stipends, continuing education credits, or partnerships.

**(iii) Project Evaluation:** In this section, you must explain:

- 1) Your plans for tracking and measuring your progress, and that of your subawardees, toward meeting the goals and objectives of your project and achieving the expected educational and environmental outputs and short-term outcomes.
- 2) Your evaluation of your medium- and long-term outcomes, if they can also be measured within the project period.
- 3) Your approach, procedures, and controls for ensuring that awarded grant funds, including those to be used for subawards, will be expended in a timely and efficient manner.

For additional information on project outputs and outcomes, please refer to Appendix D. Evaluation plans may be quantitative and/or qualitative and may include, for example, evaluation tools, observation, or outside consultation. Pre- and post-activity assessments are recommended to determine if your performance measures for environmental and/or conservation literacy and stewardship are being satisfied.

Please be sure to include project evaluation tasks in your Timeline of activities. Also, be sure your evaluation plan is accounting for the measurement of the outputs and outcomes you describe in your Logic Model. A Timeline and a Logic Model are both required to be included in your Narrative Application.

If funded by EPA, grant recipients must report evaluation results to EPA, including their success in increasing environmental and/or conservation literacy, encouraging behavior that benefits the environment and natural resources, actual environmental and/or conservation results in the local community in which the project is located, and the success of their subawards and how they contribute to the achievement of the project goals.

**Note:** Section I (E)(1) above explains that all EE grants must support the EPA Strategic Plan. In addition, all EPA grants must have an outcome of environmental improvement or protection over time.

**(b) Detailed Budget Table and Narrative.** Make sure you:

- (i) Create a detailed budget table using the same order and headings listed on the Budget Form 424A.
  - 1) Across the top, create three columns titled “EPA Funds”, “Non-EPA Funds”, and “Total” to show how EPA funds and non-federal matching funds will be used.
  - 2) The line items or cost categories that should be listed along the left side of the table are (as appropriate, since not all applicants will use every cost category): personnel/salaries; fringe benefits; travel; equipment over \$5000; supplies; contract costs; other costs (including subaward costs); and indirect costs.
- (ii) Demonstrate how you will meet the non-Federal match requirement (a minimum of 25% of the total budget) described in Section III (B) of this solicitation.
- (iii) Describe how you will ensure that exactly 25% of the federal funds received from EPA are awarded to subawards of \$5,000 or less.
- (iv) Factor in the costs for all proposed activities; clarify which will be paid by EPA and which will be paid with matching funds.
- (v) In a narrative within the table or as a separate attachment, provide details for each expense, such as personnel (number of staff, title or role in project, hourly wage, and percentage of time spent on project), travel (reasons for travel, costs and locations of trips, and costs per mile for travel and per diem per person), supplies (provide categories and detailed listings according to the project tasks in which they will be used), and “other” expenses. “Other” expenses may include costs such as stipends for teachers, expenses for field trips, entrance fees to parks (and other facilities like

conservation, agricultural and science centers), printing, postage, conference fees for booths, and other costs that do not fall under the categories listed above. Subaward funds also should be listed as “Other”.

See Appendix A, Instructions for the SF424 Application, which includes instructions for preparing a detailed budget, and Appendix B, which provides an example of a Detailed Budget (<https://www.epa.gov/grants/rain-2019-g02>).

**Please note** the following funding restrictions:

**Indirect costs:** **Indirect costs (IDCs) may be budgeted and charged by recipients of Federal assistance agreements in** accordance with [2 CFR Part 200](#). EPA’s [Indirect Cost Policy for Recipients of EPA Assistance Agreements](#) (IDC Policy) implements the Federal regulations, and the following applies to all EPA assistance agreements, unless there are [statutory or regulatory limits on IDCs](#).

In order for an assistance agreement recipient to use EPA funding for indirect costs, the IDC category of the recipient’s assistance agreement award budget must include an amount for IDCs and at least one of the following must apply:

- With the exception of “exempt” agencies and Institutions of Higher Education as noted below, all recipients must have one of the following current (not expired) IDC rates, including IDC rates that have been extended by the cognizant agency:
  - Provisional;
  - Final;
  - Fixed rate with carry-forward;
  - Predetermined;
  - 10% de minimis rate authorized by 2 CFR 200.414(f)
  - EPA-approved use of one of the following:
    - 10% de minimis as detailed in section 6.3 of the IDC Policy; or
    - Expired fixed rate with carry-forward as detailed in section 6.4.a. of the IDC Policy.
- “Exempt” state or local governmental departments or agencies are agencies that receive up to and including \$35,000,000 in Federal funding per the department or agency’s fiscal year, and must have an IDC rate proposal developed in accordance with [2 CFR 200 Appendix VII](#), with documentation maintained and available for audit.
- Institutions of Higher Education must use the IDC rate in place at the time of award for the life of the assistance agreement (unless the rate was provisional at time of award, in which case the rate will change once it becomes final). As provided by [2 CFR Part 200, Appendix III\(C\)\(7\)](#), the term “life of the assistance agreement”, means each competitive segment of the project. Additional information is available in the regulation.

IDCs incurred during any period of the assistance agreement that are not covered by the provisions above are not allowable costs, and must not be drawn down by the recipient.

Recipients may budget for IDCs pending approval of their IDC rate by the cognizant Federal agency or an exception granted by EPA under section 6.3 or 6.4 of the IDC Policy. However, recipients may not draw down IDCs until their rate is approved or EPA grants an exception.

The IDC Policy does not govern indirect rates for subrecipients or recipient procurement contractors under EPA assistance agreements. Pass-through entities are required to comply with [2 CFR 200.331\(a\)\(4\)](#) when establishing indirect cost rates for subawards.

See the [Indirect Cost Guidance for Recipients of EPA Assistance Agreements](#) for additional information.

**Construction and Acquisition of Property:** EPA's EE Grant Program will not fund the acquisition of real property (including buildings) or the construction or modification of any building. EPA may, however, fund activities such as creating a nature trail with educational signs or building a bird watching station, as long as these items are an integral part of the environmental education project, and the cost is a relatively small percentage of the total amount of federal funds requested.

**Salaries and Fringe Benefits:** Funds for salaries and fringe benefits may be requested only for those personnel who are directly involved in implementing the proposed project and whose salaries and fringe benefits are directly related to specific products or outcomes of the proposed project. EPA strongly encourages each applicant to request reasonable amounts of funding for salaries and fringe benefits to ensure that the proposal is competitive.

**Matching Funds Explanation:** Non-federal matching funds must be at least 25% of the total cost of the project. The match must be for allowable costs and may be provided by the applicant or a partner organization or institution. The match may be provided in cash or by in-kind contributions and other non-monetary support. In-kind contributions often include salaries and/or other verifiable costs such as volunteer time and/or supplies/materials, and this value must be carefully documented. In the case of salaries or volunteer time, applicants may use fair market value for the locale. If the match is provided by a partner organization, the applicant is still responsible for proper accountability and documentation. All grants are subject to federal audit.

**IMPORTANT:** The required matching non-federal share is at least 25% of the ENTIRE cost of the project. To calculate 25% of the entire cost of the project, determine how much you will spend on the entire project from beginning to end, including both federal funds and your own funds, and divide this amount by 4. The amount resulting will be the amount you will need to contribute to the project as the minimum match. For example, if the total cost of the project is \$133,333, divide this amount by 4, which equals \$33,333. Your match needs to be at least \$33,333 and the amount you request from EPA would be \$100,000. (Some applicants find it easier to calculate their match requirement by dividing the amount of federal funds by 3; e.g., \$100,000/3 = \$33,333). A simple calculator provided at the [Environmental Education \(EE\) Grants](#) page can help you figure out your requirements.

<b>Federal Funds</b>	<b>Minimum Match</b>	<b>Total Project Cost</b>
\$100,000	\$33,333	\$133,333

**Other Federal Funds:** You may not use any federal funds to meet any part of the required 25% match described above, unless it is specifically authorized by statute. If you have already been awarded federal funds for a project for which you are seeking additional support from this grant program, you must indicate those funds in the budget section of the work plan and ensure that none of those funds are used toward your matching funds for this project. You must also identify the project officer, agency, office, address, phone number, and the amount of the federal funds.

**(c) Appendices.** Include the following appendices, as applicable.

(i) **Timeline** – Include a timeline to link your activities to a clear project schedule and indicate at what point over the months of your budget period each action, event, milestone, product development, and evaluation will occur, including the awarding of subawards and the major activities carried out by them.

(ii) **Logic Model** – Provide a graphic to display the educational and environmental outputs and outcomes that are planned to be developed specifically to accomplish the goals and objectives of the project. Include outputs and outcomes that directly relate to increasing environmental and/or conservation literacy and encouraging behavior that benefits the environment and natural resources in the local community in which the project is located, and that account for the anticipated accomplishments of the subawards to be awarded as part of the project. An example of a basic logic model is attached in Appendix D of this document. The EPA EE website has a blank logic model template where you can enter your data and print a copy to submit with your proposal (see “Helpful Resources” at the Environmental Education (EE) Grants page). Refer to Appendix D for additional instructions and information on outputs and outcomes.

(iii) **Programmatic Capability and Past Performance** – Attach a description of your programmatic capabilities and ability to successfully implement and manage the proposed project, including staff expertise/qualifications, staff knowledge, and resources or the ability to obtain them, to successfully achieve the goals of the project, and your organizational experience and past history in performing tasks similar to the proposed project. Include a paragraph describing the qualifications of each of the key personnel conducting the project and how each will contribute to the timeliness and success of the educational and environmental outputs and outcomes of your project. If you send resumes for the key personnel conducting the project, please keep them to a maximum of 3 one-page resumes.

Please also submit a list of federally and 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 (3) years (no more than 5 agreements, and preferably EPA agreements) and describe:

- 1) whether, and how, you were able to successfully complete and manage those agreements;
- 2) 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 application 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.

**Note:** If you have received or are receiving grant funds from EPA’s EE Grant program in the past three (3) years, you must clearly label those as “EPA EE Grants” when responding to this item. You must list all previously EPA funded EE grants from the last three (3) years, even if you are proposing to expand, build on, enhance or otherwise modify a project previously funded by EPA’s EE Grant Program and for which you are seeking funding under this RFA.

(iv) **Partnership Letters of Commitment** – Partnerships are not mandatory, and therefore partnership letters of commitment are not mandatory either. If the applicant organization has partners, such as commercial (for-profit) enterprises, non-profit organizations, schools or school districts, federal, state or local agencies, or other entities, letters of commitment should be included from partners **explaining their role** in and/or funding of the proposed project. If no letters are included, it will be assumed the applicant has no partners. Applicants must be aware, however, that regardless of whether it is their partners or their own organization that proposes providing the matching funds, the applicant itself is responsible for ensuring that the cost share requirement described in Section III (B) of the announcement is met. See Section I(D) for further information about the value of partnerships. If an applicant does not have partners for this project, the proposal should be clear about how the project will be completed effectively without partners. Applications will be evaluated, as described in Section V, on their use of partnerships to develop, design and implement their project (or their explanation of how they will develop, design and implement the project without partners).

**Note:** All letters of commitment must be received by the close of the application period along with the application. Do **not** include letters of endorsement or recommendation. Regardless of the source, letters of endorsement or recommendation will **not** be considered in evaluating applications.

## **F. Pre-Proposal/Proposal Assistance and Communications**

At least one conference call or webinar will be conducted by EPA staff during the application period to clarify the contents of this solicitation notice for potential applicants. Please go to the [Environmental Education Grants page](#) for announcements of dates/times and call-in numbers, or to sign up to be on an EE email list for newsletters which will contain, among other announcements, notifications of dates/times and call-in numbers for the open solicitation call(s).

Answers to frequently asked questions about this program will be listed on the [Frequent Questions about the Environmental Education Grants Program](#). For information on whom to contact, please see Section VII of this announcement. Email inquiries only.

## **G. Contracts and Subawards**

Exactly 25% (no more and no less) of the funding received by an applicant from EPA under this solicitation must be used for subawards in the amounts of \$5,000 or less. If the applicant uses EPA funds to make any subawards beyond the ones covered by the 25% requirement, then those subawards must be for an amount greater than \$5,000. The applicant may also choose to fund subawards out of their matching funds, but those subawards will not count toward the 25% (of EPA funds) requirement and therefore are not subject to a dollar restriction (i.e., they may be awarded for any amount of money deemed suitable by the applicant). Provisions that contain standard language about requirements with which applicants to any EPA grant program who plan to use project funds for contracting or subawards must comply can be found in section [d. Contracts and Subawards](#) of the [EPA Solicitation Clauses page](#). [EPAs Subaward Policy](#) also has detailed information available for differentiating between contractors and subrecipients.

## **H. 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 sub-awards under grants, and proposal assistance and communications, can be found at the [EPA Solicitation Clauses](#) page. These, and the other provisions that can be found at the web site link, are important, and applicants must review them when preparing applications for this solicitation. If you are unable to access these provisions electronically at the web site, please communicate with an EPA contact listed in this solicitation to obtain the provisions.

## Section V. Application Review Information

### A. Evaluation and Scoring

This section describes the merit review process that will be used by each of the EPA Regional Offices to evaluate applications that meet all of the eligibility criteria listed in Section III. Eligible applications will be reviewed and ranked on a 100-point scale using the criteria and scoring system described below. Applicants should include these criteria into consideration when designing applications and should address them directly in their applications.

The following criteria and points will be used to score eligible applications:

(1) **Executive Summary – Maximum Score: 5 points.** Under this factor, applications will be evaluated based on the extent to which the executive summary clearly and completely addresses the content and format described in Section IV (E)(6)(a)(i).

(2) **Detailed Project Description – Maximum Score: 45 points**

(i) **Where: Maximum Score: 2 points:** explain where the project will take place, and how the environmental or conservation issue being addressed is relevant to the local community(ies) in which the project is located.

(ii) **What: Maximum Score: 10 points.** Under this factor, applications will be evaluated based on the substance, clarity and completeness of the explanation of what the project will entail, including:

a) what activities, methods and materials your project (including those of the subawards) will undertake to address the educational priority(ies) described in Section I on which you have chosen to focus. (5 points)

b) what activities, methods and materials your project (including those of the subawards) will undertake to address the environmental priority(ies) described in Section I and the specific, related topic(s) on which you have chosen to focus. (5 points)

Please refer to Section IV (E)(6)(a)(ii)(2) for more information.

(iii) **Why: Maximum Score: 10 points.** Under this factor, applications will be evaluated based on the substance, clarity, and completeness of the explanation of the need for a project such as the one proposed to increase environmental and/or conservation literacy and encourage behavior that benefits the environment and/or natural resources in the local community in which it is located, including why the particular goals, priorities and audience(s) have been chosen. See Section IV (E)(6)(a)(ii)(3) for further information.



(iv) **How: Maximum Score: 13 points**. See Section IV (E)(6)(a)(ii)(4) for further information. Under this factor, applications will be evaluated based on the substance, clarity and completeness of the explanation of:

a. how the project's activities, delivery methods, and materials will accomplish its educational goals and objectives, including an increase in environmental and/or conservation literacy in the community in which the project is located. (5 points)

b. how the project's activities, methods and materials will accomplish its environmental goals and objectives, including the encouragement of behavior that leads to environmental and/or conservation stewardship, especially in the local community in which the project is located. (5 points)

c. the approach for selecting and managing subawards, including how applicants will be ensuring that exactly 25% (no more and no less) of the grant funds awarded are distributed through subawards of \$5000 or less to eligible sub-recipients. For example, if EPA awards \$100,000 to the prime recipient, then the prime must award exactly \$25,000 in subawards of \$5000 or less. Applicants will also be evaluated on the substance, clarity and completeness of their explanation of how the subaward program will be integrated into and contribute to the success of the project they are proposing. (3 points)

(v) **Who: Maximum Score: 10 points**. See more at Section IV (E)(6)(a)(ii)(5). Under this factor, applications will be evaluated based on how well the project:

a) identifies the target audience and their environmental and/or conservation literacy needs, the numbers to be reached, and clearly explains the recruitment plan, including incentives to be used such as teacher stipends or continuing education credits and if/how the applicant's partner(s) will help with recruitment. (5 points).

b) reaches a diverse audience, including but not limited to minority, low income and tribal or rural communities, and demonstrates how the project will help address environmental and/or conservation issues that are more likely to adversely affect the audience(s) targeted. (5 points).

(3) **Project Evaluation – Maximum Score: 12 points**. Under this factor, applications will be evaluated based on the substance, clarity and completeness of the explanation of how the project's success in meeting its goals and objectives will be achieved and tracked and measured. This includes evaluating the applicant's:

a. plan for tracking and measuring progress toward achieving the project's proposed educational outputs and outcomes, especially the success of the project's increase of

environmental and/or conservation literacy in the local community in which the project is located; (3 points)

- b. plan for tracking and measuring progress toward achieving the project's proposed environmental outputs and outcomes, especially the success of the project's support of the Administrator's environmental priorities and EPA's Strategic Plan, the encouragement of behavior leading to environmental and/or conservation stewardship in the local community in which it is located, and the improvement of the environment and/or conservation of natural resources over time; (3 points)
- c. plan for ensuring the success of its subawards, especially in how they contribute to the achievement of the project's educational and environmental goals; (3 points)
- d. approach, procedures, and controls for ensuring that awarded grant funds, including those used for subawards, are expended in a timely and efficient manner. (3 points)

See Section IV (E)(6)(a)(iii) for more information.

**(4) Budget – Maximum Score: 8 points.** Under this factor, applications will be evaluated on:

(i) Consistency and Accuracy: How well the budget information clearly, consistently, and accurately shows how funds will be used (including how the subaward program funds will be distributed). (4 points)

(ii) Return on Investment: Whether the funding request is reasonable given the activities proposed and demonstrates a good return on the investment. (4 points)

See Section IV (E)(6)(b) for more information.

**(5) Timeline, Logic Model, and Partnership Letters of Commitment – Maximum Score: 15 points.** Under this factor, applications will be evaluated on the extent to which they clearly and completely address the content of each of the following. Please review Section IV(E)(6)(c) for information on what content and format is expected in each of these appendices.

(a) **Timeline:** The extent to which the timeline links the educational and environmental activities to a clear project schedule and clearly indicates realistic goals, objectives and timing of each action, event, milestone, product development, subaward award and activity, and evaluation activity. (5 points)

(b) **Logic Model:** The extent to which the logic model graphic displays both educational and environmental outputs and outcomes developed through the project in accordance with the instructions and information in Appendix D, including outputs and outcomes that directly relate to the increase of environmental and/or conservation literacy and the encouragement of behavior that leads to environmental and/or conservation stewardship in the local community in which the project is located, and that account for the anticipated accomplishments of the subawards to be awarded as part of the project. (5 points)

(c) **Partnership Letters of Commitment:** Applications will be evaluated based on the extent to which the applicant will engage with other partners to effectively develop and implement the project in the local community in which it is located. If the applicant has partners, then letters of commitment from the partners should be provided. A letter of commitment should provide details about the partner's role in the project, including any matching funds they are providing for the project. Partnerships are not mandatory, and therefore partnership letters of commitment are not mandatory either. If no letters of commitment are provided, it will be assumed the applicant has no partners for the project. Please do not send letters of endorsement or recommendation; they will not be considered.

Applicants that do not plan on collaborating with other groups in project performance will be evaluated based on the extent to which they explain and demonstrate how they will be able to effectively perform and complete the project without such collaboration. (5 points)

**(6) Programmatic Capability and Past Performance – Maximum Score: 15 points.** Under this criterion, applicants will be evaluated based on their ability to successfully complete and manage the proposed project taking into account their:

(a) past performance in successfully completing and managing the assistance agreements identified in response to Section IV(E)(6)(c)(iii) of the announcement. (3 points)

(b) history of meeting the reporting requirements under the assistance agreements identified in response to Section IV(E)(6)(c)(iii) of the 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. (2 points).

(c) organizational experience and plan for the timely and successful achievement of the objectives of the proposed project, including the proposed approach, procedures, and controls for ensuring the timely and efficient expenditure of grant funds. (5 points).

(d) staff expertise/qualifications, staff knowledge, and resources or the ability to obtain them, to successfully achieve the goals of the proposed project. (5 points)

**Note:** In evaluating applicants under items (a) and (b) 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 sub-factors - items (a) and (b) 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.

## **B. Review and Final Selections**

The review process to be used by EPA is described below. Applications will be reviewed by EPA staff and external reviewers approved by EPA. Please make sure your application is for a project located in one or more of the following states in Region 5: IL, IN, MI, MN, OH, WI. The contact for Region 5 is listed in Section VII (Agency Contacts). Do NOT submit any application directly to the Regional Office. All applications must be submitted through [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov).

Applications will first be reviewed in Region 5 for threshold eligibility purposes. All eligible applications will then be evaluated on the 100-point scale described above by a review panel established by the EPA Regional Office. The panel will be comprised of EPA staff and external reviewers approved by EPA. Applications will be reviewed and scored, and then will be ranked based on the reviewers' scores, and the scores and rankings will be provided to the EPA Region's Selection Official for this solicitation for final funding decisions. In addition to providing the rankings and scores to the Selection Official, EPA staff will also brief the Selection Official on the EPA educational and environmental priorities, geographic areas, and audiences that are addressed in the highest ranked applications.

Final funding selection decisions will be made by the EPA Region's Selection Official for this solicitation based on the rankings and the scoring by the review panel. In making the final funding decisions, the Selection Official may also consider the balance of educational and environmental priorities, the variety of types of audiences, and the geographic diversity of funds. Once final decisions have been made, applicants who are selected as finalists may be asked to submit additional information, after which a funding recommendation will be developed and forwarded to the EPA Award Official.

## **C. Additional Provisions Incorporated By Reference**

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 applications 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 VI. Award Administration Information

### A. Notification to Applicants

EPA anticipates notification to applicants will be made via e-mail by the Regional Office contact (see Section VII). The notification will be sent to the original signer of the application or the project contact listed in the application (**line #21 of the SF 424**).

Note that if the applicant receives notification that its application has been selected and is being recommended for award, this notification is not an authorization to begin work. The official notification of an award will be made by EPA's Grants and Interagency Agreements Management Division (GIAMD).

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, which must be approved by EPA, before the grant can officially be awarded. The EPA Regional contact will inform the selected applicants about which additional documents and forms are required. The time between notification of selection and award of a grant can take up to 90 days or longer.

### B. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

The Uniform Administrative Requirement, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards (2 CFR Part 200) at <http://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?node=2:1.1.2.2.1&rgn=div5> provides a complete explanation of the national policy requirements for the award of federal assistance agreements. A listing and description of general EPA Regulations applicable to the award of assistance agreements may be viewed at: <http://www.epa.gov/grants/policy-regulations-and-guidance-epa-grants>.

### C. Progress Reports and Work Products

Specific financial, technical, and other reporting requirements to measure the grant recipient's progress will be identified in the Programmatic Terms and Conditions document sent with the EPA grant award agreement. Grant recipients must submit periodic (i.e., quarterly, semi-annually, and annually) formal progress reports, as instructed in the Terms and Conditions. All progress reports, including the Final Technical Report may be submitted either electronically or in hard copy to the EPA Project Officer. The Final Technical Report and all work products must be sent to the EPA project officer within 90 days after the expiration of the project period.

Progress reports should summarize technical progress, planned activities for the next reporting period, and a summary of expenditures as required in the Terms and Conditions. The final

technical report should include, among other details outlined in the Terms and Conditions document: summary of the project activities (including those of the subawardees), quantitative and/or qualitative assessments of outputs and outcomes achieved (including both educational and environmental results), description of audience(s) and the number of project participants reached, and a breakdown of the costs of the project activities (including those of the subawardees) according to whether they were paid for by EPA or with non-EPA (matching) funds.

#### **D. Disputes**

Assistance agreement competition-related disputes will be resolved in accordance with the dispute resolution procedures published in 70 FR (Federal Register) 3629, 3630 (January 26, 2005) which can be found at [Grant Competition Dispute Resolution Procedures](#). Copies of these procedures may also be requested by contacting the person listed in Section VII of the announcement. Note, the FR notice references regulations at 40 CFR Parts 30 and 31 that have been superseded by regulations in 2 CFR parts 200 and 1500. Notwithstanding the regulatory changes, the procedures for competition-related disputes remains unchanged from the procedures described at 70 FR 3629, 3630, as indicated in 2 CFR Part 1500, Subpart E.

#### **E. Additional Provisions for Applicants Incorporated Into The Solicitation**

Additional provisions that apply to this solicitation and/or awards made under this solicitation, including but not limited to those related to DUNS, SAM, copyrights, disputes, and administrative capability, can be found at [EPA Solicitation Clauses](#). These, and the other provisions that can be found at the website link, are important, and applicants must review them when preparing applications 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 VII. Agency Contacts**

#### **A. Internet:**

Please visit [Environmental Education \(EE\) Grants](#) to view or download: a basic logic model template (under “Helpful Resources”), descriptions of projects funded under this program in each state and U.S. territory (under “Grants Awarded”), [Frequent Questions about the Environmental Education Grants Program](#), and other education links and resource materials.

#### **B. Notification of Future Environmental Education Grant Cycles**

If you wish to be notified when the next Solicitation Notice is issued, you should visit [Environmental Education \(EE\) Grants](#), where you can sign up to receive e-newsletters from EPA’s Office of Environmental Education. The e-newsletters will contain news and

announcements related to the field of environmental education, as well as notifications of new solicitation notices and other information on EPA’s EE Grants Program.

### C. Regional Contact for Submission and Exception Procedures

Applications will NOT be accepted in hard copy unless an exception is granted to the applicant. See Section IV(A) for information about requesting exceptions. If such an exception is granted, please contact the EPA Regional EE Coordinator in the Region in which your project will be located to get information on where to send the application and the exception approval letter. **All applications must be received by January 6, 2020.**

Region 5- IL, IN, MI, MN, OH WI	Megan Gavin ( <a href="mailto:gavin.megan@epa.gov">gavin.megan@epa.gov</a> )
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### D. For Further Information

(1) Applicants who need clarification about specific requirements in this Solicitation Notice may contact **Michael Band** in the Office of Environmental Education at EPA Headquarters in Washington, D.C. at [EEGrants@EPA.gov](mailto:EEGrants@EPA.gov). **Information given to applicants in response to inquiries is solely for the purpose of clarifying specific requirements in this Solicitation Notice. Email inquiries only.**

(2) Please review the list of [Frequent Questions about the Environmental Education Grants Program](#) regarding this grant program **before contacting EPA with a question**. The FAQs are updated during the open solicitation period, so please check the list for new questions and answers before submitting your proposal.

(3) EPA’s Office of Environmental Education will hold at least one conference call or webinar for potential applicants. Announcements of dates, times and call-in numbers for the conference call(s) will be posted online at [Environmental Education \(EE\) Grants](#). It is anticipated that the first of possibly several calls will be held within 30 days of the publication of this solicitation notice.

(4) You can also go to [Environmental Education \(EE\) Grants](#) to sign up for the EE grants listserv, which provides periodic e-newsletters with information regarding the Environmental Education Grants Program at EPA.

#### **For inquiries about this solicitation, please contact:**

U.S. EPA Headquarters  
Environmental Education Grant Program, Office of Environmental Education  
Michael Band ([EEGrants@EPA.gov](mailto:EEGrants@EPA.gov))

## Appendix A: Federal Forms and Instructions

### Supplementary Instructions for the SF 424 – Application for Federal Assistance

This is a federal government Standard Form (SF) to be used by applicants as a required face sheet for the Environmental Education Grants Program. Please note that Appendix A serves as instructions only. Additional instructions can be found here:

<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms/sf-424-family.html>, but please fill out the SF 424 in the Grants.gov Workspace you created to apply for this opportunity, not on the website above.

1. Select "Application."
2. Select "New."
3. Leave blank.
4. Leave blank.
5. a. Leave blank.  
b. Leave blank.
6. Leave blank.
7. Leave blank.
8. a. Enter the legal name of the applicant **organization**.  
b. Enter the Employee/Taxpayer Identification Number as assigned by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS).  
c. Enter the DUNS number of the applicant organization.  
d. Enter the address (including street, city, state, and zip code) of the applicant organization.  
e. Enter information as appropriate.  
f. Enter the name, telephone number, fax, and e-mail address of the person to be contacted on matters involving this proposal. Middle name and suffix are optional.
9. Enter the appropriate letter to identify the applicant organization. If a not-for-profit organization, the organization must be categorized as a 501(c)(3) by the IRS to be eligible for this grant program.
10. Enter "Environmental Protection Agency."
11. Enter "66.951."
12. Enter "EPA-EE-20-05"
13. Leave blank.
14. List only the major areas affected by the project.
15. Enter the title of the project for which you are applying (**brief title** such as "Farm to Table: Practical Conservation Education for Students and Their Parents")
16. a. List the Congressional District where the applicant organization is located.  
b. List the Congressional District(s) affected by the project. If the project affects an entire state, enter "STATEWIDE." To identify the appropriate Congressional District, go to <http://www.house.gov/>.
17. Enter the project start and end dates for the project (e.g., 8/1/19 to 7/31/21).
18. Enter the amount of funding requested or to be contributed during the funding/budget period.



- a. Enter the amount of money you are requesting from EPA.
- b. Enter the amount of money the applicant organization is contributing.
- c. Enter the amount of money a state organization is contributing, as appropriate.
- d. Enter the amount of money a local organization is contributing, as appropriate.
- e. Enter the amount of money another organization is contributing, as appropriate.
- f. Enter the amount for any program income which you expect will be generated by the project: e.g., income from admission fees to a workshop financed by the grant funds. In your detailed budget (see Appendix B) explain how the income will benefit the project.
- g. Enter the total amount of the project. The total of lines (b-e) must be at least 25% of the amount entered into (g) because this grant program has a minimum matching requirement of 25% of the total allowable project costs. **Divide the total amount entered in (g) by 4 to determine the minimum match required for your proposal.** A simple calculator provided at the [Environmental Education \(EE\) Grants](#) page can help you figure out your requirements

19. Select "c. Program is not covered by E.O. 12372."

20. Answer as appropriate.

21. Enter the name, title, telephone number and e-mail of the person authorized to contract or obligate the applicant organization to the terms and conditions of the grant. **The person listed on this line will be the one to receive all notifications about this application.**

## Supplementary Instructions for the SF-424A - Budget

The SF-424A is a standard federal form used by applicants as a basic budget.

**Section A - Budget Summary –Do NOT complete** – Leave whole page blank for this program.

**Section B - Budget Categories - Complete Columns (1), (2) and (5) as stated below.**

All funds requested and contributed as a match must be listed under the appropriate Object Class categories listed on this form. Please round figures to the nearest dollar. In column (1) list by category how EPA funds will be spent; in column (2) list matching funds by category; then add across and put the totals in column (5) per category. Many applicants will have blank lines in some Object Class Categories, and no applicant should use line 6(g) Construction because it is an unallowable cost for this program.

Line 6(i) - Show the totals of lines 6(a) through 6(h) in each column.

Line 6(j) - Show the amount of indirect costs. **Note:** if you are claiming indirect costs, you MUST either: 1) have an Indirect Cost (IDC) Rate Agreement on file with a Federal Agency, or 2) submit an indirect cost rate application to the EPA or other Federal agency (with copy to EPA) for approval within 90 days of being awarded a grant. Recipients are not allowed to seek reimbursement for indirect costs until an approved indirect cost rate is obtained. If a non-profit recipient does not have a current negotiated IDC rate or application, and if EPA is the non-profit recipient's cognizant agency, EPA can allow the recipient to charge a flat IDC rate of 10% of salaries and wages (see 2 CFR Part 200). Recipients that opt to use the 10% flat rate are obligated to use the flat rate for the life of the grant award.

Line 6(k) - Enter the total amount of Lines 6(i) and 6(j).

Line 7 - Program Income - Enter the estimated amount of income, if any, expected to be generated from this project. Do not add or subtract this amount from the total project amount.

### Instructions for the Detailed Budget (See Example in Appendix B)

The proposal must also contain a detailed itemization of costs in a Detailed Budget Table and Narrative as specified in Section IV(E)(3)(b) of this Notice. Your total dollar figures on the Form 424 and 424A and detailed budget should all be the same. Your detailed budget should list costs under the same object class categories used on the 424A, but with significantly more information; for example, the 424A will have a total for travel and the detailed budget will list number of travelers and trips, locations, per diem costs, etc. The Object Class Categories on both the 424A and the detailed budget should be:

**Personnel:** List by position title all personnel who will work directly on this project. Give the percentage of the budget period for which they will be fully employed on the project (e.g., half-time for half the budget period equals 25%, full-time for half the budget period equals 50%, etc.). The detail should include for each person: percentage of time on project x annual salary and/or hourly wage = Personnel Cost.

**Fringe Benefits:** Indicate percentage of basic salary and what it includes, such as health insurance.

**Travel:** If travel is budgeted, show trips, travelers, destinations, costs per mile, per diem and purpose of travel.

**Equipment:** Identify each piece of equipment with a cost of \$5,000 or more per unit to be purchased and explain the purpose for which it will be used in this project. Less costly items are listed under supplies.

**Supplies:** List categories of supplies, e.g., laboratory supplies and office supplies, for items that can be grouped. If the supply budget is less than 2% of total costs, you do not need to itemize.

**Contractual:** Specify the nature and cost of such services and how costs were determined, such as by using estimates or historical information. Explain (in Detailed Budget and/or in Work Plan) how you will select your contractor. EPA may require review of contracts for personal services prior to their execution to assure that all costs are reasonable and necessary to the project.

**Note:** Subaward funds do not get listed here. Those funds should be listed under the category "Other".

**Construction: Do Not Include.** Not allowable for this program.

**Other:** Specify all other costs under this category. These may include costs such as: stipends for teachers, expenses for field trips, fees for entrance to parks and nature centers, printing, postage, conference fees for booths, and other costs that do not fall under the categories listed above. Subaward funds also should be listed here. Make sure that the total dollar amount for subawards of \$5000 or less is exactly 25% (no more, no less) of the dollar amount being requested from EPA. A simple calculator provided at the [Environmental Education \(EE\) Grants](#) page can help you figure out your requirements. Further, EPA's budget guidance is available here: <https://www.epa.gov/grants/rain-2019-g02>.

**Indirect Costs:** Provide the percentage rate used and explain how charges were calculated for this project. **Note:** if you are claiming indirect costs, you MUST either: 1) have an Indirect Cost Rate Agreement on file with a Federal Agency, or 2) submit an indirect cost rate application to the EPA or other Federal agency (with copy to EPA) for approval within 90 days of being awarded a grant. Recipients are not allowed to seek reimbursement for indirect costs until an approved indirect cost rate is obtained. If a non-profit recipient does not have a current negotiated IDC rate or application, and if EPA is the non-profit recipient's cognizant agency, EPA can allow the non-profit to charge a flat IDC rate of 10% of salaries and wages (see 2 CFR Part 200). Recipients that opt to use the 10% flat rate are obligated to use the flat rate for the life of the grant award.

**Income:** If you anticipate earning program income as a result of your EPA award, show the estimated amount, explain how it is to be earned (the source of income), and how it will be used to enhance your project.

## Appendix B: Example of a Detailed Budget Table

Compare your Detailed Budget to your Work Plan, SF 424 and SF 424A to ensure that all numbers and dollar amounts in all categories are consistent from document to document.

Line Item	EPA Funds	Matching Funds	Total Project Cost
<b>Personnel</b>	\$40,000 (Smith and Jones @ ½ of \$30k each = \$30k; Johnson @ ¼ of \$40k=\$10k)	\$8,000 (\$3000 - Smith and \$3000 – Jones; \$2000 - Johnson )	\$48,000
<b>Fringe Benefits</b>	\$4,000 (1/10 of salary: health insurance)	\$0	\$4,000
<b>Travel</b>	\$2,000 (1 trip of 2 nights for 2 staff to Montana @ \$200/day lodge & per diem + \$600 airfare per person to present project at outdoor education conference)	\$333 (miscellaneous local travel costs reimbursed to volunteers)	\$2,333
<b>Equipment</b>	\$0	\$0	\$0
<b>Supplies</b>	\$10,000 (100 water monitoring kits @ \$100.00 each)	\$5,000 (field notebooks, pens, pencils for 500 students, teachers and volunteers)	\$15,000
<b>Contractual</b>	\$15,000 (current market rates; competed; evaluation of project)	\$5,000 (contribution of partner toward evaluation of project)	\$20,000
<b>Other</b>	\$25,000 (5 subawards of \$5000 each: 5 school districts in local area for teacher workshops.)	\$15,000 (partner's contribution, to be used for subawards to nature centers for misc. expenses for field studies for 500 students, teachers and volunteers)	\$40,000
<b>Indirect Cost</b>	\$4,000 (10% of personnel salaries)	\$0	\$4,000
<b>Income</b>	\$0	\$0	\$0
<b>TOTAL</b>	\$100,000	\$33,333	\$133,333

## Appendix C: Environmental Education Grant Proposal Checklist

Applicants may choose to use this checklist as a tool to help organize their application and to assist them in submitting a complete and accurate application. This checklist is not required and does not need to be included with the application.

Indicate what type of eligible organization you are:

- local education agency
- college or university
- state education or environmental agency
- nonprofit organization as defined in Sec. 501(C)(3) of Internal Revenue Code
- noncommercial educational broadcasting entity as defined/licensed by FCC
- tribal education agency

Indicate your environmental priority(ies) and specify the topic(s) related to the priority(ies) that your project will address (note that topics listed in the RFA are suggestions only):

1. **Improving air quality** to ensure Americans are living and working in areas that meet high air quality standards  
**Topic:** \_\_\_\_\_
2. **Ensuring clean and safe water** by supporting clean drinking water, aquatic ecosystems, and recreational, economic and subsistence activities.  
**Topic:** \_\_\_\_\_
3. **Ensuring the safety of chemicals.**  
**Topic:** \_\_\_\_\_
4. **Revitalize land and prevent contamination.**  
**Topic:** \_\_\_\_\_

Indicate your educational priority(ies):

- 1) **Agricultural Education**
- 2) **Community Projects**
- 3) **Career Development**

Indicate where your project will take place.

\_\_\_\_\_

Have you demonstrated clearly in the Project Summary and Detailed Project Description how your project will increase environmental and/or conservation literacy and encourage behavior

that benefits the environment and/or natural resources in the local community(ies) in which the project is located?

- a. Yes
- b. No

Ensure the following dollar amounts are consistent in all documents in your application: SF 424, SF 424A, Work Plan and Detailed Budget Table/Narrative. (Examples given for this RFA. Be sure to check your math, especially if you do not use these exact figures.):

- (a) Total project amount \_\_\_\_\_ (e.g., \$133,333)
- (b) Match (at least – can be more than - 25% of Total project amount) \_\_\_\_\_  
(e.g., 25% of \$133,333 = \$33,333)
- (c) Federal requested amount \_\_\_\_\_ (e.g., \$100,000)
- (d) Subaward amount (exactly – no more & no less than - 25% of Federal requested amount) \_\_\_\_\_ (e.g., 25% of \$100,000 = \$25,000)

Check that you have submitted all aspects of the application. Please submit only the following documents.

- \_\_\_\_\_ Standard Federal Application Form (SF-424)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Budget Form (SF-424A) – only Section B
- \_\_\_\_\_ Standard Form 424B (SF-424B)
- \_\_\_\_\_ EPA Key Contacts Form 5700-54
- \_\_\_\_\_ EPA Form 4700-4
- \_\_\_\_\_ Project Narrative

Workplan (8 page limit), including:

- \_\_\_\_\_ a. Project Summary
- \_\_\_\_\_ b. Detailed Project Description
- \_\_\_\_\_ c. Project Evaluation
  
- \_\_\_\_\_ Detailed Budget Table and/or Narrative

### Appendices

- \_\_\_\_\_ Timeline listing all major activities and milestones over entire project period
- \_\_\_\_\_ Logic Model showing educational and environmental outputs and outcomes
- \_\_\_\_\_ Programmatic Capability and Past Performance

\_\_\_\_\_ Letters of Commitment from partners explaining the tasks or funding they will provide

Please do not submit letters of recommendation or endorsement from individuals or organizations that explain the merits of your project or your past accomplishments. They will **not** add to your score regardless of who sends them on your behalf. Also, please do **not** submit unnecessary cover letters, maps and other attachments, binders and binder sheets, and audio visuals such as videos or CDs. These create a burden for the reviewers and are not helpful, nor are they reviewed or evaluated.

## Appendix D: Expected Outputs and Outcomes and a Sample Logic Model

### **Expected Outputs and Outcomes.**

Expected outputs and outcomes of your proposed project are outlined in a Logic Model, which is an Appendix to your application. Both educational and environmental outputs and short-term outcomes must be completed and reported to EPA within the project period. Progress should at least begin on medium-term or long-term outcomes during the project period. Recipients of these grants will further the Administrator's priorities and EPA's strategic goals by implementing educational projects that improve environmentally responsible behavior through non-regulatory means, raise public awareness of actions that can be taken to improve and conserve the environment and our natural resources or prevent them from being damaged, reach a variety of audiences, and promote environmental and conservation stewardship. At least some of the outputs and outcomes should directly relate to the increase of environmental and/or conservation literacy and encouragement of behavior that benefits the environment and natural resources in the local community(ies) in which the project is located, and should account for the anticipated accomplishments of the subawards to be awarded as part of the project. During the evaluation process for applications, EPA will determine if each work plan contains well-defined, measurable outputs and outcomes.

(a) **Outputs** are activities, efforts, and/or work products that the applicant proposes to produce or provide during the project period to support both educational and environmental goals.

Expected outputs funded under this announcement may include (examples only):

- number of individuals recruited for projects that educate teachers, students, parents and the public about environmental and/or conservation issues;
- number and variety of classroom activities, workshops, or field trips conducted;
- number and variety of effective training sessions conducted for formal and informal educators;
- number and kind of educational materials and websites developed;
- new methods designed to measure knowledge acquired or benefits to the environment and natural resources;
- number and kind of actions taken to benefit the environment and natural resources;
- number of subawards awarded; and
- reports of quantitative and qualitative results to EPA.

Grant applications must clearly define measurable quantitative or qualitative outputs that can be reported during the funding period. After the project is implemented, grant recipients are required to submit to EPA status reports about their progress in achieving educational and environmental outputs and outcomes according to the Terms and Conditions outlined in the award. A final technical report is required from grant recipients at the close of a project, and details about what should be included in that report are also outlined in the award document's Terms and Conditions.



(b) **Outcomes** are the results, effects, or consequences that will occur from carrying out the activities or outputs of the environmental education project that, for this solicitation, is supportive of one of the Administrator's priorities, as well as the EPA strategic plan. Outcomes may have behavioral or health-related elements, but all must be environmental (and/or conservation-related), educational and measurable. EPA encourages outcomes that reach traditionally under-served audiences such as tribes, communities of color, economically distressed communities and/or rural or geographically isolated communities. Outcomes can be short-term, medium-term, and long-term. Short-term outcomes are expected to occur during the project period. They may include increased learning, knowledge, skills including communication skills, attitudes, and motivation, as well as immediate benefits to the environment and natural resources, like reduced waste in a landfill due to a food waste management project. Medium-term outcomes include decisions, actions, practices, and behavior that are the foundations of stewardship to protect the environment and natural resources. For example, a community project outcome may include a homeowners gained knowledge on making choices that will conserve water or improve soil health when planning their landscaping to make it less susceptible to wild fires. Most projects will accomplish some medium-term outcomes during the project period. Long-term outcomes of the projects funded under this solicitation may occur after the project closes. These projects include a sustained program that increases environmental and/or conservation literacy and enhances civic responsibility among the citizens of the local community(ies) in which the project is located. Long-term outcomes should also include on-going environmental improvements and increased conservation efforts due to an increased willingness among citizens to take action to restore or protect their local environment and natural resources. Anticipated outcomes for environmental education grants may include:

- Promotion and expansion of environmental and conservation stewardship;
- Increased environmental knowledge and public awareness of environmental and conservation issues as measured by pre- and post-training assessments or other evaluation techniques;
- Improved environmental and/or conservation literacy among students as measured by improved scores on standardized achievement tests or other evaluation techniques;
- Improved educator access to training on environmental and conservation topics and EE methods and materials;
- Environmental education programs that are viable beyond the life of the grant.

**Example of a Logic Model.** This chart provides broad examples of some outputs and outcomes EE Grants may produce. It is intended as guidance only. A blank logic model template can be found on the [Environmental Education \(EE\) Grants](#) page (see “Helpful Resources”) and can be used to create a specific version that complements your grant application.

<b>Sample Logic Model</b> <b>(with broad examples of outputs and outcomes for an EE project)</b>			
<b>OUTPUTS</b>		<b>OUTCOMES</b>	
Short-term	Short-term	Medium-term	Long-term
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recruitment of teachers, students, or other target audience</li> <li>• Training</li> <li>• Workshops/Clinics</li> <li>• Courses</li> <li>• Field Trips</li> <li>• Educational Materials</li> <li>• Videos, CDs, DVDs, web sites</li> <li>• Conferences and presentation of results</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased access to environmental education resources and programs</li> <li>• Increased teaching skills among educators</li> <li>• Increased environmental and conservation knowledge</li> <li>• Increased empowerment and skills in becoming stewards of wildlife habitats, natural resources, and the environment</li> <li>• Assessment of learning; measuring success</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased ability to think critically about issues and decisions that affect the environment and our natural resources</li> <li>• Students and community leaders start making decisions to improve their environment and conserve resources</li> <li>• Specific actions are taken to improve the environment and/or conserve natural resources</li> <li>• Environmental and/or conservation stewardship is underway</li> <li>• Assessment of actions to improve the environment and/or conserve natural resources</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establishment of viable, long-term environmental education programs</li> <li>• Improved environmental and/or conservation literacy and environmental change for the better</li> <li>• Increased stewardship leads to civic responsibility for environmental protection, conservation of natural resources, habitat preservation, and improvement to human health</li> </ul>