



National Priorities: Innovative Sampling Designs for Public Health Surveillance of Coronaviruses and Other Pathogens in Wastewater Request for Applications (RFA)



Informational Webinar for Applicants

EPA NATIONAL PRIORITIES RFA

November 9th, 2021

- Review application Information for this RFA:
 - “National Priorities: Innovative Sampling Designs for Public Health Surveillance of Coronaviruses and Other Pathogens in Wastewater”
- Provide guidance for eligibility, submission, technical aspects of application process
- Answer questions about the application process

Webinar Ground Rules

- Please hold your questions until all EPA presentations have been completed.
- You may type your questions in the meeting chat box. 
- No specific research project or idea can be discussed but clarifying questions regarding what is written in the RFA announcement may be answered.
- These slides will be provided after the webinar.
- Please keep your microphone muted during the presentation. 

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- **Electronic Submissions:** Debra M. Jones, Administrative Officer
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RFA and Award Information

- RFA will close on December 15th, 2021, at 11:59:59 pm Eastern Time. Make sure you allow enough time to complete the submission in [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov).
- Estimated Number of Awards: 1
- Anticipated Funding Amount: Up to \$1 million in Federal funds, including direct and indirect costs, maximum duration 3 years.
- 25% non-federal cost share/match is required (can include in-kind contributions such as donated time or equipment)
- Proposed Federally funded portion of budget must not exceed \$1 million
- Details in the Award Information section of the RFA.

**Please read the RFA very carefully,
all necessary information is provided.**



Research Interests and Questions

Research Interest: Innovative research that advances understanding of how wastewater monitoring data can be rapidly and effectively deployed in a sampling network design for early detection of pathogens and inform public health agencies across the U.S. to address current and future epidemics/pandemics.

- The proposed research should focus on new approaches and developing a thorough and representative sampling strategy to make the best use of data collected as part of a wastewater monitoring program. The monitoring strategy should be rapidly deployable and able to account for the contributing population.
- The research should include an approach for how the data could be used for actionable public health applications and how a sampling plan could be used for potential decision-makers.
- The research should include a real-world evaluation of the feasibility, implementability and effectiveness of the wastewater monitoring strategy and sampling network design for at least several communities in different geographical areas, including underserved communities with limited resources.



Research Areas and Questions

Research Areas (Application should address all 3 research areas):

Research Area 1: Develop appropriate survey design(s)/sampling strategies to optimize wastewater monitoring networks for detection and monitoring of emerging nationwide threats (i.e., the next epidemic/pandemic).

Research Area 2: Develop a framework for adapting the wastewater monitoring strategies based on characteristics of the pathogen, its infection, transmission processes, and target population(s).

Research Area 3: Develop a strategy to provide actionable wastewater monitoring information to public health officials and utilities to inform efforts to control an epidemic/pandemic.

Research questions are listed under each research area for applicants to consider in shaping the proposed research project.

Potential outcomes expected under the funded research may include:

- Innovative improvements in science-based approaches for the implementation of wastewater surveillance systems for detection of pathogens in community populations.
- Such approaches should specifically address the interface of these systems with public health decision making, providing practical structures for the effective use of wastewater surveillance data in infectious disease control. This will facilitate further advancement of wastewater-based pathogen monitoring for public health applications and support the real-world implementation of these systems.

Eligible to Apply (See Section III)

Public and private nonprofit institutions/organizations

Public or nonprofit institutions of higher education

Nonprofit hospitals located in the U.S.

Foreign collaborators, data collection or use are OK

- International Budget needs to be justified, reviewed, and approved



Application Materials and Process

- **Section IV. Application And Submission Information** of the RFA
- To apply under this solicitation, use the application package available at **Grants.gov**
- For further submission information see: **RFA Section IV.F. “Submission Instructions and Other Submission Requirements”**
- Note: All necessary forms are included in the electronic application package, with the exception of the current and pending support form, available at: **[Research Funding Opportunities: How to Apply and Required Forms.](#)**

Make sure to include the current and pending support form as part of the mandatory project narrative attachment in your submission to Grants.gov.

Required application package materials include:

- Quality Assurance Statement (QAS) for projects involving environmental data collection or processing, conducting surveys, modeling, method development or development of environmental technology
- EPA Human Subjects Research Statement (HSRS)
- Scientific Data Management Plan (SDMP)



Application Review Process

Please refer to the following RFA sections for additional information:

V. Application Review Information

- Peer Review Criteria
- Relevancy Review Criteria
- Peer Review Officers: Ron Josephson, Eligibility and Peer Review Officer, josephson.ron@epa.gov, phone: 202-564-7823
Chris Rea, rea.chris.L@epa.gov) phone: 202-564-2517

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Thank you!