**NOTES ON THE FY22 OPTIONAL PROJECT NARRATIVE TEMPLATE**

* *Note:* This is an optional template and is not required
* *Note:* The project narrative should be a **maximum of ten pages**; review panels score applications based on how well the evaluation criteria are met within these ten pages
* *Note:* Blue text enclosed in brackets signifies sections of text that should be edited/expanded upon by the applicant; change this text to black and remove brackets before submitting the project narrative
* *Note:* Applicants using this optional template should feel free to expand and edit the suggested text as desired
* *Note:* Bulleted lists and table rows/sections in this template can be expanded as needed
* *Note:* Delete all headers, footers, and template notes before submitting the project narrative

**THE OPTIONAL PROJECT NARRATIVE TEMPLATE BEGINS ON THE NEXT PAGE**

**DELETE THIS PAGE BEFORE SUBMISSION**

**[Project Title]**

**[State, Tribe or Territory Name]** **[Name of Department or Agency]**

FY 2022 Exchange Network Grant Program

Project Narrative

[Month][Day], 2022

1. **Project Description**

The [State, Tribe or Territory Name] [Name of Department or Agency]’s [program]submits this application in support of Exchange Network (EN) Funding Area(s) [‘1’, ‘2’, and/or ‘3’] under the following EN project opportunities[[1]](#footnote-1): [insert EN specific project opportunity name(s)].

[Provide a brief history/description of Department/Agency and the organization’s scope of work].

If successful, funding from this Exchange Network grant will enable [department/agency name or abbreviation] to address the following [business and/or administrative] needs:

* [List general business and/or administrative needs (of the department/agency)]

This project supports the goals and objectives of the **EPA’s Draft FY 2022-2026 Strategic Plan**[[2]](#footnote-2) and the achievement of associated environmental results, as described below in **Table 1. Supported EPA Strategic Goals and Objectives**.

**Table 1. Supported EPA Strategic Goals and Objectives**

| **Strategic Goal** | **Strategic Objective** | **Description of Project Support** | **Associated**  **Environmental Output(s) and/or Outcome(s)** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| [Strategic Goal Number and Title]  *E.g., ‘Goal 1:  Tackle the Climate Crisis’* | [Strategic Objective Number and Title]  *E.g., ‘Objective 1.1 Reduce Emissions that Cause Climate Change’* | [Enter brief description of how this strategic goal and objective will be supported by the proposed project] | [List the associated anticipated environmental output(s) and/or outcome(s)] |

1. **Project Goals, Outputs, and Outcomes**

This project proposes [enter #] project goals to successfully accomplish the proposed work. These goals and all associated costs, outputs, schedule dates and rationales, outcomes, supported business/administrative needs, and supported EPA Strategic Plan goals and outputs are detailed below in **Table 2. Goals, Outputs, and Outcomes.**

**Table. 2 Goals, Outputs, and Outcomes[[3]](#footnote-3)**

| **Goal** | **Output** | **Scheduled Completion Date** | **Rationale for Scheduled Completion Date of Output** | **Output Cost** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Goal 1:  [Enter Descriptive Goal Title]  Goal 1 Cost:  $ [Enter] | 1.1 [Enter Descriptive Output Title] | [Enter Date] | [Enter brief description of how output date was selected/ deemed appropriate] | $ [Enter Output Cost] |
| 1.2 [Enter Descriptive Output Title] | [Enter Date] | [Enter brief description of how output date was selected/ deemed appropriate] | $ [Enter Output Cost] |
| **Anticipated Outcome(s):** | | | [Enter outcome(s) from this goal/output(s)] | |
| **Supported Administrative/Business Need(s):** | | | [Enter administrative and/or business needs supported by this goal/output(s)] | |
| **Supported EPA Strategic Goal and Objective:** | | | [Enter the EPA strategic goal & objective (one) most supported by the proposed goal/output] | |
| **Total Budget for Goal One:** | | | **$** [Enter Sum of Output Costs] | |
| Goal 2:  [Enter Descriptive Goal Title]  Goal 2 Cost:  $ [Enter] | 2.1 [Enter Descriptive Output Title] | [Enter Date] | [Enter brief description of how output date was selected/ deemed appropriate] | $ [Enter Output Cost] |
| 2.2 [Enter Descriptive Output Title] | [Enter Date] | [Enter brief description of how output date was selected/ deemed appropriate] | $ [Enter Output Cost] |
| **Anticipated Outcome(s):** | | | [Enter outcome(s) from this goal/output(s)] | |
| **Supported Administrative/Business Need(s):** | | | [Enter administrative and/or business needs supported by this goal/output(s)] | |
| **Supported EPA Strategic Goal and Objective:** | | | [Enter the EPA strategic goal & objective (one) most supported by the proposed goal/output(s)] | |
| **Total Budget for Goal Two:** | | | **$** [Enter Sum of Output Costs] | |
| *- Expand Table to Include More Goals as Applicable to the Proposed Project[[4]](#footnote-4)-* | | | | |
| a. Total Budget for Goals: | | | **$** [Enter Sum of Goal Costs] | |
| b. Personnel Costs *(Not Included in Goal Costs)*: | | | **$** [Enter, if applicable] | |
| c. Fringe Costs *(Not Included in Goal Costs)*: | | | **$** [Enter, if applicable] | |
| **Total Direct Costs:** | | | **$** [Enter Total Direct Costs (Sum of A-C)] | |
| **Total Indirect Costs:** | | | **$** [Enter Total Indirect Costs] | |
| **Total Project Budget:** | | | **$** [Add Total Direct Costs & Indirect Costs] | |

1. **Identifying Key Personnel and Associated Roles, Responsibilities, and Qualifications**

**Table. 3 Key Contacts** below explicitly identifies which project roles are applicable to the proposed project and provides the full name, current job title, current organization, anticipated project roles and responsibilities, and other mandatory role-specific details for each applicable role.

**Table. 4 Contractors/Vendors Key Contacts** explicitly identifies that the project role of [‘contractor’ or ‘vendor’] [‘is’ or ‘is not’] applicable to the proposed project [and provides the planned method of acquisition, planned method of qualification vetting, and anticipated project roles and responsibilities].

**Table. 3 Key Contacts[[5]](#footnote-5)**

| **Key Contact Type** | **Applicable Role?[[6]](#footnote-6)** | **Contact Name** | **Current Job Title** | **Current Organization** | **Anticipated Role(s)/ Responsibilit(ies)** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **PROJECT MANAGER** | Yes | [Enter Name] | [Enter  Job Title] | [Enter  Org. Name] | [Enter brief description of proposed project roles and responsibilities] |
| **Project and Financial Management Experience and/or Qualifications** | | [Enter brief description of relevant qualifications/experience] | | | |
| **PROGRAMMATIC CONTACT[[7]](#footnote-7)** | [Enter Y/N] | [Enter Name] | [Enter  Job Title] | [Enter  Org. Name] | [Enter brief description of proposed project roles and responsibilities] |
| **Programmatic Office’s Relationship to the Applicant** | | [Enter brief description of relationship between programmatic office and applicant office] | | | |
| **FORMAL PARTNER**  **CONTACT** | [Enter Y/N] | [Enter Name] | [Enter  Job Title] | [Enter Org. Name] | [Enter brief description of proposed project roles and responsibilities] |
| **Partnering Organization’s Relation to the Lead Applicant** | | [Enter brief description of relationship between lead applicant and the partner contact’s organization] | | | |
| **FORMAL MENTOR**  **CONTACT[[8]](#footnote-8)** | [Enter Y/N] | [Enter Name] | [Enter  Job Title] | [Enter Org. Name] | [Enter brief description of proposed project roles and responsibilities] |
| **Summary of Mentor’s Prior Exchange Network Experience** | | [Enter brief summary of mentor organization’s EN experience/history] | | | |
| **Mentor’s Prior EN Grant(s)** | | [List at least one prior EN grant – include EN grant number and fiscal year] | | | |
| **Does This Mentor Currently Report or Publish Data for One or More Environmental Programs Using an EN Node, VES, or API? (Y/N)** | | | | | [Enter Y/N] |

**Table 4. Contractors/Vendors Key Contact**[[9]](#footnote-9)

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Applicable Role? (Y/N)** | **Planned Method of Acquisition** | **Planned Method of Qualification Vetting** | **Anticipated Role(s)/ Responsibilit(ies)** |
| [Enter Y/N] | [Enter  Job Title] | [Enter  Org. Name] | [Enter brief description of proposed project roles and responsibilities] |

1. **Commitment to Reuse**

The [State, Tribe or Territory Name] [Name of Department or Agency] is committed to reusing existing tools developed and available for Exchange Network partner use. Specifically, the program will reuse the following product[s] [detailed below in **Table 5. Reused Components**][[10]](#footnote-10)**.**

**Table 5. Reused Components[[11]](#footnote-11)**

| **Component Name** | **Component Description** | **Location Where Reusable Component Was Found[[12]](#footnote-12)** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| [Enter Component Name or Title] | [Provide a brief description of the component and why it is appropriate for the proposed project] | [Identify the Database or Site] |

In accordance with the terms and conditions of the Exchange Network Grant Program13, the [State, Tribe or Territory Name] [Name of Department or Agency] commits to register any new tools developed during the execution of this grant project at the time of grant close-out.

In accordance with the terms and conditions of the Exchange Network Grant Program[[13]](#footnote-13), the [State, Tribe or Territory Name] [Name of Department or Agency] commits to register any reuse of existing EN tools during the execution of this grant project at the time of grant close-out.

1. **Technical Understanding**

In order to accomplish the goals and outputs as outlined in this project, [State, Tribe or Territory Name] [Name of Department or Agency] will be utilizing the following [data [and/or] IT management [and/or] technological solutions[[14]](#footnote-14)]:

* **[Name of data, IT management, or technical solution][[15]](#footnote-15)**
  + **Description:** [Provide a short description of the solution and its project purpose].
  + **Necessity and Appropriateness:** This solution is a necessary and appropriate choice for the proposed project because [provide a short rationale addressing this].
  + **Meeting Business/Administrative Needs:** This solution helps [Department/Agency name or abbreviation] to address [list the business/administrative need(s) this solution helps to meet, as identified in the ‘Project Description’ and/or ‘Project Goals, Outputs, and Outcomes’ sections]
  + **Ability to Implement:** [Department/Agency name or abbreviation] is confident in its ability to implement and maintain this solution because [provide an explanation, referencing key personnel and/or partner and/or contractor qualifications and experience, as applicable].

The [knowledge [and/or] data [and/or] technology] outputs developed during the proposed project will enhance data sharing and availability for immediate stakeholders, including the [Department/Agency name or abbreviation] [and [name formal partner(s), if applicable]], by [provide a detailed explanation]. Additionally, this project will enhance data sharing and availability for organizations across the Exchange Network by [provide a detailed explanation].

1. **Project Alignment with the E-Enterprise Digital Strategy (EEDS)**

The technical solutions as detailed in **Section Five: Technical Understanding** align with the three principles of the EEDS[[16]](#footnote-16).

* 1st Principle: The Information-Centric Approach:
  + [Describe in detail how the project’s proposed technical solution(s) align with this principle].
* 2nd Principle: The Shared Platform Approach:
  + [Describe in detail how the project’s proposed technical solution(s) align with this principle].
* 3rd Principle: The Customer-Centric Approach:
  + [Describe in detail how the project’s proposed technical solution(s) align with this principle].

The technical solutions of this project [do/do not] reflect the EEDS’s API-first approach15 [by [describe in detail how the project’s proposed technical solution(s) reflect an API-first approach]].

This project’s goals and outputs will also enhance data sharing and availability specifically in the context of [the first EEDs principle [and/or] an API-first approach] by [provide a detailed explanation].

1. **Overview of Project Budget**

A detailed overview of project goal and output costs for this project has been provided in **Section Two:** **Project Goals, Outputs, and Outcomes.** The cost appropriateness of each goal is described below:

**Project Goal One: [Enter Goal Title][[17]](#footnote-17)**

* Goal One [does/does not] relate directly to one of the activities listed in the FY22 Exchange Network Solicitation Notice (SN) under the ‘Potential Activities Under this Opportunity’ tables in the EN project opportunity write-ups in Appendices A-C[[18]](#footnote-18).
  + [[19]](#footnote-19)[This goal falls under [name of EN project opportunity] and corresponds to the [activity name/description] from the opportunity’s ‘Potential Activities Under this Opportunity’ table. This goal’s costs [‘fall within’ or ‘exceed’] the cost range for this activity as provided in the project opportunity write-up.]
  + [[20]](#footnote-20)[Though Goal One’s costs exceed the estimate(s) as provided in the Solicitation Notice, [State, Tribe or Territory Name] [Name of Department or Agency] has deemed the requested budget appropriate and necessary because [provide a detailed description of how costs were estimated and deemed appropriate]].

-----OR-----

* + [[21]](#footnote-21)[As this goal does not correspond to the activities or cost estimates provided in the SN, [State, Tribe or Territory Name] [Name of Department or Agency] estimated the cost of Goal One by [provide a clear and detailed rationale for how the goal cost was estimated]. These costs are necessary for the success of the project because [provide a detailed description]].

**Summary of Project Costs**

* The total budget for this project is $[dollar amount], with $[dollar amount] in direct grants funding and $[‘dollar amount’ or ‘0’] in in-kind support.
* This project [‘is’ or ‘is not’] a partnership project. $[‘Dollar amount’ or ‘0’] of the $[total budget, dollar amount] are funds for project partners.
* This project [‘does’ or ‘does not’] include a formal mentor[[22]](#footnote-22), [with an associated mentorship cost of $[‘dollar amount’ or ‘0’][[23]](#footnote-23). [Including mentorship costs], this project includes $[‘dollar amount’ or ‘0’] in funds for subawardees[[24]](#footnote-24).
* The proposed project budget also includes $[dollar amount] for in-house costs and $[‘dollar amount’ or ‘0’] budgeted for contractual costs.
* This project [‘is’ or ‘is not’] charging indirect costs [at a rate of [%]]. [This ICR is active until [insert date: mm/dd/yyyy]].
* This project is requesting a total of $[‘dollar amount’ or ‘0’] in equipment and a total of $[‘dollar amount’ or ‘0’] in supplies.
* This project is requesting a total of $[‘dollar amount’ or ‘0’] in travel costs, [as detailed below in **Table 6. Project Travel**].

**Table 6. Project Travel[[25]](#footnote-25)**

| **#** | **Destination** | **# of Travelers** | **Traveler Name(s)** | **Cost per Traveler** | **Total Trip Cost** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1 | [Enter location and purpose of trip]  *E.g., ‘EN Regional Conference, EPA Region 10, Seattle’* | [Enter #] | [Enter Name(s)] | $[Enter amount] | $[Enter amount] |
| 2 | [Enter location and purpose of trip] | [Enter #] | [Enter Name(s)] | $[Enter amount] | $[Enter amount] |
|  | **Total Travel Costs:** |  |  |  | $[Enter amount] |

1. **Past Performance**

[State, Tribe or Territory Name] [Name of Department or Agency] has been awarded [‘no’ or ‘#’] Exchange Network assistance agreements since 2002.

[State, Tribe or Territory Name] [Name of Department or Agency] has registered [‘no’ or ‘#’] IT components in RCS/ENDS/SSRC since 2011[[26]](#footnote-26), [as detailed in **Table.7 Component Registrations in Closed Grants from 2011 Onwards.**]

**Table 7. Component Registrations in Closed Grants from 2011 Onwards[[27]](#footnote-27)**

| **Grant ID** | **Year of Grant Award** | **Year of Grant Close-Out** | **Component Description** | **System** | **Link to Record[[28]](#footnote-28)** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| [Enter #] | [Enter #] | [Enter #] | [Enter brief description of the registered IT component] | [‘ENDS’, ‘RCS’, or ‘SSRC’] | [Enter] |
| [Enter #] | [Enter #] | [Enter #] | [Enter brief description of the registered IT component] | [‘ENDS’, ‘RCS’, or ‘SSRC’] | [Enter] |
| [Enter #] | [Enter #] | [Enter #] | [Enter brief description of the registered IT component] | [‘ENDS’, ‘RCS’, or ‘SSRC’] | [Enter] |

1. The phrase ‘EN project opportunities’ in this context refers to specific project write-ups as available in Appendices A-C of the Solicitation Notice that provide potential applicants with the information needed to design a proposal for a particular data exchange, data service, or project type (e.g., ‘VES’, ‘EIS’, ‘WQX’) [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. See Solicitation Notice Section I-C. ‘Environmental Results Supported by Assistance Activities’ or read full text at<https://www.epa.gov/system/files/documents/2021-10/fy-2022-2026-epa-draft-strategic-plan.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Expand Table 2. Goals, Outputs, and Outcomes to include all project goals [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Delete this note and row before submitting the final project narrative document [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Include one key contact per applicable role type; mark ‘no’ in the second column titled ‘applicable role’ for any role that is not applicable and write N/A in all the associated fields for that section; for any role that has not yet been hired, write ‘not yet hired’ under columns ‘contact name’, ‘current job title’, and ‘current organization’ and then add the following row:

   | **Statement of Skills, Knowledge, Abilities, and Qualifications from the Recruitment Package** | [Enter brief summary of position’s recruitment package] |
   | --- | --- |

   [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. The role of project manager is applicable to all projects; use this column to indicate whether the other listed roles are applicable to your project [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. If programmatic involvement will not be included in the project, the applicant must provide a detailed rationale why this was not deemed applicable and/or necessary for this grant project [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. The mentor role only applies to applicants specifically applying under the ‘Capacity Building with Mentorship’ EN project opportunity (see Solicitation Notice, Appendix C) [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Mark ‘no’ in the first column if contractors/vendors are not applicable and write N/A in all other fields [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. See Solicitation Notice, Appendix D ‘Identifying Items for Reuse - Exchange Network Partner Products’ for guidance on finding components for reuse [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. Include table only if applicable; if no products have been identified for reuse in this project, applicants should explicitly state this in this section and explain in detail why this is the case [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. SSRC, EECIP, etc. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. See Solicitation Notice, Section: VI-B. Administration and National Policy Requirements [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. If specific solutions and/or technological aspects of the project are not yet known (e.g., if the applicant is utilizing a contractor), clearly state who will make the project’s technical decisions, describe why they are the qualified/the appropriate party, and identify which business/admin. needs the selected technology or solutions will need to address [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. Expand this list as needed to include each project solution, including the the four sub-bullets for each [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. See Solicitation Notice, Appendix D ‘Alignment with the E-Enterprise Digital Strategy (EEDS)’ or view the full EEDS text here: <https://e-enterprisefortheenvironment.net/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/Interim-E-Enterprise-Digital-Strategy-V-2.0.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. Expand section to include all project goals and sub-bullets [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. Each project opportunity write-up (e.g., ‘WXQ’, ‘ICIS’) in Appendices A-C of the Solicitation Notice includes a table titled ‘Potential Activities Under This Opportunity’, which details potential activities and the estimated costs of these activities. [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. This text should be included under the listed goal if your project falls under one or more EN project opportunities (e.g., ‘WXQ’, ‘ICIS’) in Solicitation Notice Appendices A-C AND the project goal relates to one or more of the activities in the ‘Potential Activities Under This Opportunity’ table with a cost estimate [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. Include this text if everything under #18 is true, but your goal cost exceeds the cost estimate as found in the ‘Potential Activities Under This Opportunity’ table [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. This text should be included if the project goal does not relate to one or more activities in the ‘Potential Activities Under This Opportunity’ in the applicable EN project opportunity OR for a proposed project that is not applying under an EN project opportunity [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. Only applicable to applicants applying specifically under the ‘Individual Capacity Building with Mentorship’ EN project opportunity (see Solicitation Notice, Appendix C) [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. Up to $15,000; see ‘Capacity Building with Mentorship’ (Solicitation Notice, Appendix C) [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. See definition of subawards on Solicitation Notice, page 9 [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. Include table only if applicable [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. 2011 was the first year this requirement was included in the EN Terms and Conditions; grants prior to 2011 do not have a registration requirement [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. Include table only if applicable [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
28. Only appliable for registrations made in SSRC; mark ‘N/A’ if unapplicable [↑](#footnote-ref-28)