

# Clean Water Rural, Small and Tribal Training and Technical Assistance Grant Program

## Request for Applications

*Sustainable Communities and Infrastructure*

*Office of Wastewater Management*

*EPA Office of Water*

*July 27, 2022*

# Overview of Webinar

- Welcome and Zoom Introduction
- Speakers
  - Wynne Miller, Deputy Director, Office of Wastewater Management
  - Matthew Richardson and Alma Hidalgo, Office of Wastewater Management, Sustainable Communities and Infrastructure Branch
- Additional Information

*Today's webinar will be recorded and made available on the EPA website within 2 weeks.*

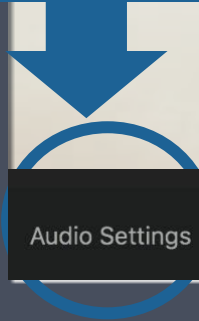
## Zoom Controls



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*If you don't see the menu bar, move your mouse slightly and the bar will appear.*

Adjust audio by clicking on  
small arrow next to audio  
settings



Audio Settings ^



Chat



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Q&A

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*Have a question about the RFA?*

*Please submit your webinar IT questions during the webinar in the Q+A.*

*Technical RFA questions to: [treatmentworksRFA@epa.gov](mailto:treatmentworksRFA@epa.gov)*

*We will use your questions to help populate frequently asked questions on our web page.*

*We will not be answering questions during the webinar*

# Agenda

- Welcome
- Important Dates
- Project Description, Amount of Funding, and Who is Eligible
- How to Apply, Required Documents
- Scoring Criteria
- Additional Information

# Welcome, EPA Office of Water and Technical Assistance

## Water Technical Assistance (TA)

- EPA provides TA to help communities:
  - Identify drinking water, wastewater & stormwater infrastructure needs,
  - Plan for capital improvements,
  - Build capacity, and
  - Apply for the range of eligible projects under the Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF), Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF), tribal or territory funding programs.
- Please see our new [TA landing page](https://www.epa.gov/water-infrastructure/water-technical-assistance) at:

<https://www.epa.gov/water-infrastructure/water-technical-assistance>

## **EPA Announces: *Training and Technical Assistance for Rural, Small and Tribal Municipalities and Wastewater Treatment Systems for Clean Water Act Prevention, Reduction, and Elimination of Pollution***

- Through this grant program EPA is soliciting applications to provide training and technical assistance to rural, small, and tribal municipalities, publicly owned wastewater treatment works, and decentralized wastewater treatment systems for the prevention, reduction, and elimination of pollution.
- Eligible activities include training and technical assistance only. Infrastructure construction projects such as repairing water or sewer lines, adding new equipment, or upgrading, retrofitting or rehabilitating existing equipment are not eligible for funding under this announcement.
- The Agency is seeking applications from organizations that serve a range of geographic service areas with project budgets appropriate to the number of rural, small, and tribal entities to be supported.

## **EPA Announces: Training and Technical Assistance for Rural, Small and Tribal Municipalities and Wastewater Treatment Systems for Clean Water Act Prevention, Reduction, and Elimination of Pollution**

- EPA also seeks to maximize the impact of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, signed in November 2021.\*
- The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law includes over \$50 billion in water infrastructure investments. Approximately \$11.7 billion for the Clean Water State Revolving Funds. The Agency is prioritizing for projects that maximize the potential for these new funds to provide significant benefit to rural, small, or tribal municipalities, publicly owned treatment works, and decentralized systems.

***This is a historic opportunity to upgrade clean water infrastructure in rural, small, and tribal communities.***

\*Note that this RFA is funded through the Consolidated Appropriations Act and not the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law



## **EPA Announces: *Training and Technical Assistance for Rural, Small and Tribal Municipalities and Wastewater Treatment Systems for Clean Water Act Prevention, Reduction, and Elimination of Pollution***

- EPA's current priorities include working to advance equity, address climate change, and responsibly support and implement the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law.
- These priorities include helping ensure that communities that have struggled to access public funding receive the help they need. EPA aims to maximize the potential for the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law funds to significantly benefit rural, small, or tribal communities with clean water projects.
- Awards made through this RFA are intended also to enable communities to comply with environmental regulations and build their technical, managerial, and financial capacity to sustainably operate wastewater infrastructure. Providing this support will allow communities to better protect both public health and the environment.

# Important Dates

- Closing date and time for applications is:  
**August 22, 2022 by 11:59 PM Eastern Time (ET)**
- Questions about this RFA must be submitted in writing via e-mail and must be received by **August 1, 2022, to** Agency Contact: Matthew Richardson at [treatmentworksRFA@epa.gov](mailto:treatmentworksRFA@epa.gov)
- If your organization has no access to the internet or access is very limited, you may request an exception to applying electronically. Please note that your request must be RECEIVED 15 days before the application due date to allow enough time to negotiate alternative submission methods

# Priority Area Descriptions

*Section I of RFA*

EPA is inviting applications for Five Training and Technical Assistance Priority Areas to support rural, small and tribal communities

Priority Area 1: Acquisition of Finance and Funding

Priority Area 2: Protect Water Quality and Compliance Assistance

Priority Area 3: Tribal

Priority Area 4: Decentralized

Priority Area 5: Lagoons

# Priority Area 1: Acquisition of Finance/Funding

*Section I of RFA*

Approximately 3-8 applications will be selected for award

- Training and technical assistance for rural, small, and tribal municipalities for planning, developing and acquisition of financing/funding for CWSRF eligible activities.
- Award range: \$500,000 - \$6,000,000

# Project Area 2: Protect Water Quality and Compliance Assistance

*Section I of RFA*

Approximately 2 - 6 applications will be selected for award

- Training and technical assistance for rural, small, and tribal publicly owned treatment works and decentralized wastewater systems to help improve water quality and to achieve and maintain compliance.
- Award Range: \$500,000 - \$3,000,000

Approximately 1-3 applications will be selected for award

- Training and technical assistance focused specifically on tribes for planning developing and acquisition of financing/funding, to help improve water quality and achieve and maintain compliance, and/or to support emerging contaminants project development.
- Award Range: \$500,000 - \$3,000,000

# Project Area 4: Decentralized Systems

*Section I of RFA*

Approximately 1-3 applications will be selected for award

- Information Dissemination, Training and Technical Assistance focused specifically on decentralized wastewater treatment systems to support planning, development and acquisition of finance.
- Award Range: \$500,000 - \$3,000,000

# Project Area 5: Lagoon Systems

*Section I of RFA*

Approximately 1-2 applications will be selected for award

- Information Dissemination, Training and Technical Assistance focused specifically on municipalities that use lagoon wastewater treatment systems to support planning, development, and acquisition of finance, to improve water quality and achieve and maintain compliance.
- Award Range: \$500,000 - \$1,000,000



# Amount of Funding

**The total estimated amount of federal funding available under this announcement is approximately \$18 million**, depending on Agency funding levels, the quality of applications received, Agency priorities, and other applicable considerations.

- The grant program awards are for up to three years.
- EPA anticipates making 8 to 22 awards.
- Applications must address one, and only one, of the five Priority Areas listed in Section I.D, although eligible organizations may submit more than one application under this competition, as long as each one is separately submitted and addresses only one Priority Area
  - *Only one application may be submitted for each Priority Area per applicant.*

# Estimated Number of Awards & Funding Range\*

Priority	# of Awards	Funding Range	Available Funding
1. Acquisition of Finance/Funding	3-8	\$500,000- \$6,000,000	\$7 million
2. Protect Water Quality and Compliance Assistance	2-6	\$500,000- \$3,000,000	\$4 million
3. Tribal	1-3	\$500,000- \$3,000,000	\$3 million
4. Decentralized	1-3	\$500,000- \$3,000,000	\$3 million
5. Lagoons	1-2	\$500,000- \$1,000,000	\$1.0 million

*\*The actual award amounts and number of projects awarded under each of the priorities described below may differ from the estimated amounts for many reasons including the number of meritorious applications received, agency priorities, and funding availability.*

# Who is Eligible to Apply?

*Section III of RFA*

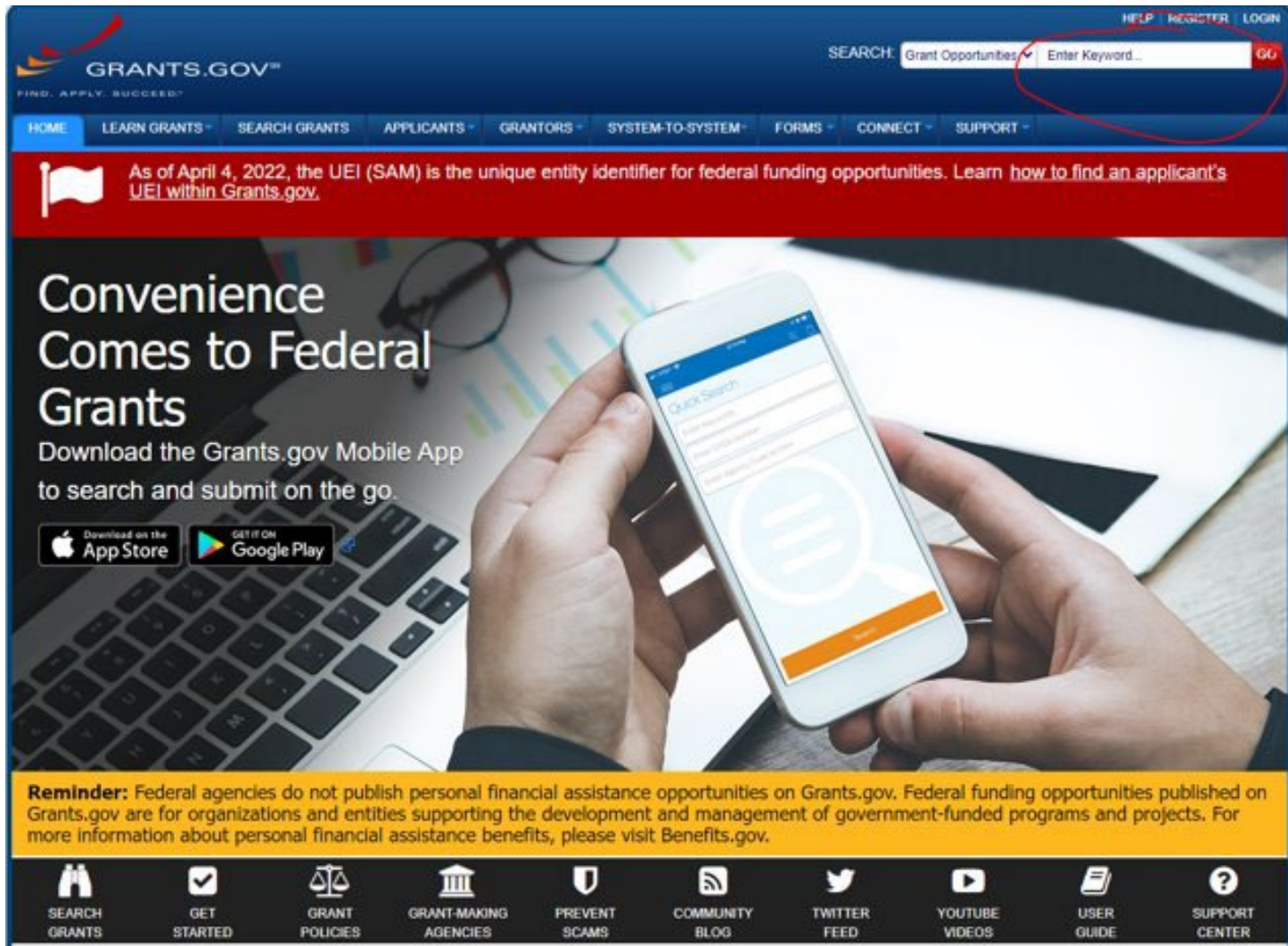
Eligible applicants under this competition are:

- Public and private nonprofit organizations, subject to CWA 104(w), that are qualified and experienced in providing on-site training and technical assistance to rural, small, and tribal municipalities and/or small publicly owned treatment works and/or decentralized wastewater treatment systems.
- See Section III A of RFA

# Partnerships and Sub-Awards

*Section IV of RFA*

- Applicants may partner with another (other) eligible organization(s) to submit an application. Please carefully review Section IV.E for information regarding applications that include partners as subawardees.
- Subawards must be consistent with the definition of that term in 2 CFR 200.1 and comply with EPA's [Subaward Policy](#).
- For-profit organizations are not eligible for subawards under this grant program but may receive procurement contracts.
- For any contracts for services or products funded with EPA financial assistance refer to the [Best Practice Guide for Procuring Services, Supplies, and Equipment Under EPA Assistance Agreements](#) for guidance on competitive procurement requirements and consultant compensation.



# HOW TO APPLY

Applications must be submitted electronically through [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov)

Enter "EPA-OW-OWM-22-02" into the search bar in the upper right corner of the screen



*Quick Start Guide for  
Getting a Unique Entity ID*

# HOW TO APPLY, cont.

## Quick Start Guide for Getting a Unique Entity ID

- Applicants must register on [SAM.gov](https://sam.gov).
- All registrants will receive a free SAM-issued Unique Entity Identifier (UEI).
- Applicants must use their UEI, not their DUNS number, when filling out forms.
- Guide to Getting a Unique Entity ID available at [SAM.gov](https://sam.gov).
- All registration requirements must be met well in advance of the submission deadline.

# Threshold Eligibilities

*Section III of RFA*

Each application must:

- Meet All Threshold Requirements.
- See Section III.C for the full list of required threshold eligibility criteria.
- Applications must address one, and only one, of the five Priority Areas.
  - Eligible organizations may submit more than one application under this competition as long as each one is separately submitted and addresses only one Priority Area.
  - Applications that address more than one Priority Area in a single application will not be reviewed.

# Required Documents

*Section IV of RFA*

## **Mandatory Documents:**

1. Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424)
2. Budget Information for Non-Construction Programs (SF-424A)
3. EPA Key Contacts Form 5700-54
4. EPA Form 4700-4 Preaward Compliance Review Report
5. Narrative Proposal prepared as described in Section IV of the announcement

## **Optional Documents:**

6. Other Attachments Form - Biographic Sketches (Other Attachments Form)
7. Other Attachments Form – Negotiated Indirect Cost Agreement, if applicable



# Project Narrative

*Section IV of RFA*

## The Project Narrative:

- No more than 20 pages

## Must include:

- Cover Page
- Executive Summary
- Workplan



# Project Narrative – Workplan

*Section IV of RFA*

These contents in the Workplan count toward the 20-page limit:

1. Technical Assistance and Training Approach
2. Geographic Area and Targeted Municipalities and Systems
3. Consultation and Coordination with State, Territorial and Tribal Governments
4. Partnerships
5. Environmental Results and Measuring Progress
6. Milestone Schedule
7. Detailed Budget Narrative
8. Programmatic Capability/ Experience
9. Past Performance
10. Quality Assurance/Quality Control

# Scoring Criteria

*Section V of RFA*

All eligible applications will be evaluated based on the evaluation criteria in Section V of the RFA.

1. Training and Technical Assistance Approach (50 points)
2. Environmental Results and Measuring Progress (15 points)
3. Milestone Schedule/Detailed Budget (10 points)
4. Programmatic Capability/Experience (15 points)
5. Past Performance (10 points)

## Scoring Criteria

# Criteria 1 – Training and Technical Assistance Approach (50 points)

*Section V of RFA*

Under this criterion, applicants will be evaluated based on their ability and approach for effectively addressing their chosen Priority Area (Section I.D.) and other Project Components described in Section I.C. In conducting this evaluation, applicants will be evaluated on the extent and quality to which the applicant demonstrates:

- i. their overall approach to addressing the Priority Area training and technical assistance requirements, including the training and technical assistance techniques and resources proposed to address the specific needs of the target audience identified in the application. (15 points)
- ii. its capacity to provide training and technical assistance in the geographic scope defined in the proposal, and rationale for that geographic scope, within which it will provide training and technical assistance. (10 points)

## Scoring Criteria

# Criteria 1 – Training and Technical Assistance Approach (50 points)

*Section V of RFA*

iii. their approach to identifying and reaching out to municipalities and/or systems that are in the greatest need of receiving assistance (e.g., disproportionate environmental and public health impacts, disadvantaged or historically underserved, permit violations, future permit limits, etc.) as well as in protecting public health and the environment when providing training and technical assistance. (15 points)

iv. an effective process for consultation with the appropriate finance and/or regulatory authority in each state, tribe, or territory prior to initiating training and technical assistance activities, and for keeping these authorities informed regarding the implementation and outcome of training and technical assistance activities. (5 points)

## Scoring Criteria

# Criteria 1 – Training and Technical Assistance Approach (50 points)

*Section V of RFA*

v. that they will work in partnership with other technical assistance providers or organizations in performing the project to effectively and efficiently implement the proposed project and that will result in a greater positive environmental impact from the applicant's project. This includes evaluating the applicant's plans for obtaining collaboration and support from these organization in performing the project in order to expand program effectiveness and impact, the type of collaboration proposed, and what role it will play in the overall project. Applicants that do not plan on collaborating with other groups in project performance will be evaluated based on the extent to which they demonstrate how they will be able to effectively perform and complete the project without such collaboration. (5 points)

## Scoring Criteria

# Criteria 2 – Environmental Results and Measuring Progress (15 points)

*Section V of RFA*

Applications will be evaluated on the extent and quality to which the application demonstrates:

- i. The potential to achieve environmental results, anticipated outputs and outcomes, and how the outputs and outcomes are linked to EPA's Strategic Plan described in Section I.D of this announcement. (10 points)
- ii. A sound plan for measuring and tracking progress toward achieving the anticipated outputs and outcomes (examples of outputs and outcomes can be found in Section I.D of this announcement). (5 points)

## Scoring Criteria

# Criteria 3 – Milestone Schedule/ Detailed Budget (10 points)

*Section V of RFA*

Applications will be evaluated based on the extent and quality to which the application addresses each of the following sub-criteria.

- i. Applicants will be evaluated based on the adequacy and completeness of the milestone schedule, timeframes and major milestones to complete significant project tasks, number of training and technical assistance activities projected to be completed per quarter, and an approach to ensure that awarded funds will be expended in a timely and efficient manner. (5 points)
- ii. The reasonableness of the budget and estimated funding amounts for each project component/task. Applicants will be evaluated based on the adequacy of the information provided in the detailed budget and whether the proposed costs are cost effective, reasonable, and allowable. (5 points)



## Scoring Criteria

# Criteria 4 – Programmatic Capability/ Experience (15 points)

*Section V of RFA*

Under this criterion, applications will be evaluated based on the applicant's ability to successfully complete and manage the proposed project considering the following.

- i. Organizational experience related to the proposed project, and their infrastructure as it relates to the ability to successfully implement the proposed project. (7 points)
- ii. Staff expertise/qualifications, cultural competency including appropriate language fluency to serve communities in the geographic area to be served, staff knowledge, and resources or the ability to obtain them, to successfully achieve the goals of the project, including demonstrated knowledge of state and local regulations and policies relevant to the training or technical assistance. (8 points)

## Scoring Criteria

# Criteria 5 – Past Performance (10 points)

*Section V of RFA*

Under this criterion, applicants will be evaluated based on their ability to successfully complete and manage the proposed project considering the following.

- i. Past performance in successfully completing and managing the assistance agreements identified in response to Section IV.D.2.C.9. of this solicitation. (5 points)
- ii. History of meeting reporting requirements under assistance agreements identified in response to Section IV.D.2.C.9. of this solicitation submitting acceptable final technical reports under those agreements including the extent and quality to which the applicant adequately documented and/or reported on progress towards achieving the expected outcomes and outputs (e.g., results) under assistance agreements identified in response to Section IV.D.2.C.9 of this solicitation and, if such progress was not made whether the documentation and/or reports satisfactorily explained why not. (5 points)

# Additional Information

- Please submit your questions to Matthew Richardson at: [treatmentworksRFA@epa.gov](mailto:treatmentworksRFA@epa.gov) prior to the **August 1, 2022, deadline**
- A recording of this webinar will be posted within 2 weeks
- EPA will post answers to questions on the Frequently Asked Questions webpage soon after they are received
- See: [www.epa.gov/small-and-rural-wastewater-systems/technical-assistance-treatment-works](http://www.epa.gov/small-and-rural-wastewater-systems/technical-assistance-treatment-works)
- Check this webpage often!

Thank you

*Technical RFA questions to: [treatmentworksRFA@epa.gov](mailto:treatmentworksRFA@epa.gov)*