

AGENCY: ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY (EPA)

TITLE: Hydrofluorocarbon Reclaim and Innovative Destruction Grants

ANNOUNCEMENT TYPE: Request for Applications (RFA)

FUNDING OPPORTUNITY NUMBER: EPA-R-OAR-HFC-24-01

ASSISTANCE LISTING NUMBER: 66.047

IMPORTANT DATES

11/17/2023	Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) Opens
12/7/2023	Information Session
12/15/2023	Optional Intent to Apply
2/2/2024	Final Date to Submit Questions
2/16/2024	NOFO Closes – Application Deadline
April 2024	Anticipated Notification of Selection
Summer 2024	Anticipated Awards

Application packages must be submitted electronically to the EPA through Grants.gov (www.grants.gov) no later than **February 16, 2024, at 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time (ET)** in order to be considered for funding.

To allow for efficient management of the competitive process, the EPA requests submittal of an optional informal notice of an Intent to Apply by December 15, 2023, to HFCgrants@epa.gov. Submission of Intent to Apply is optional; it is a process management tool that will allow the EPA to better anticipate the total staff time required for efficient review, evaluation, and selection of submitted applications. The Submission of Intent to Apply should contain:

- Information about the applicant including name of the organization and contact details;
- Identification of the type of project that will be submitted in the application (see Section I.B);
- The amount of funds that will be requested; and
- A brief description of no more than five sentences of the project.

NOTE: The EPA does not require nor encourage applicants to name procurement contractors (including consultants) or subrecipients in applications for grant funding. However, if you intend to name a contractor (including an individual consultant or equipment vendor) or a subrecipient as a project partner or otherwise in your application, the EPA recommends that you carefully review, and comply with, the directions contained in the “Contracts and Subawards” clause at the [EPA Solicitation Clauses](#). Refer to the [EPA’s Best Practice Guide for Procuring Services, Supplies, and Equipment Under EPA](#)

[Assistance Agreements](#), the [EPA's Subaward Policy](#), and supplemental Frequent Questions for additional guidance. Applicants must demonstrate that named contractors (including individual consultants and equipment vendors) were selected in compliance with the competitive requirements of the Procurement Standards in 2 CFR Part 200 as interpreted in EPA guidance and/or that named subrecipients meet the eligibility requirements in the EPA's Subaward Policy for the EPA to consider their qualifications and role in the proposed project.

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I. FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION

A. Background and Summary

This NOFO announces the availability of funds and solicits applications from eligible entities to develop projects for hydrofluorocarbon (HFC) reclamation and innovative destruction technologies. Section 60109 of the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) provided the EPA with \$15 million for competitive grants for “reclaim and innovative destruction technologies” consistent with subsections (a) through (i) and subsection (k) of section 103 division S of Public Law 116-260 (42 U.S.C. 7675) (also known as the American Innovation and Manufacturing Act). Enacted in 2020, the American Innovation and Manufacturing (AIM) Act authorizes the EPA to address climate-damaging greenhouse gases (GHGs) called HFCs by: phasing down their production and consumption, maximizing reclamation and minimizing releases from equipment, and facilitating the transition to next-generation technologies through sector-based restrictions on HFCs. HFCs are potent GHGs commonly used in refrigeration and air conditioning equipment, as well as foams and many other applications. A global phasedown of HFCs is expected to avoid up to 0.5°C of global warming by 2100. There are hundreds of possible HFC compounds. The 18 HFCs listed as regulated substances by the AIM Act are some of the most commonly used HFCs and have high impacts as measured by the quantity emitted multiplied by their respective global warming potentials (GWPs). For more information on the AIM Act and its implementing regulations, please visit <https://www.epa.gov/climate-hfcs-reduction>.

The IRA sets aside 5% of the \$15 million for administrative purposes; therefore, \$14.25 million is available for competitive grants under this opportunity. The EPA anticipates approximately four to nine awards under this opportunity with funding ranging from \$450,000 to \$5 million, depending on the type of project and subject to the availability of funds, the quality of proposals received, and other applicable considerations. For grants under the technology project areas (1 and 3, described below), the EPA expects to make awards in the range of \$3-5 million; for grants under the market dynamics project area (2 below), the EPA expects to make awards in the range of \$450,000 to \$1.5 million. This opportunity has set aside \$1.5 million for federally recognized tribes. The EPA anticipates that the competition under this NOFO will award all the competitive funding under Section 60109 of the IRA.

“Reclaim” is defined in [40 CFR 84.3](#) as the reprocessing of regulated substances (used interchangeably with “HFCs” in this NOFO) to specifications in appendix A of 40 CFR part 82, subpart F that are applicable to that regulated substance. Reclamation refers to the reprocessing of a recovered regulated substance to meet at least the purity described in Air-Conditioning, Heating, and Refrigeration Institute (AHRI) standard AHRI 700–2016 (or an appropriate successor standard adopted by the Administrator); the purity of the reclaimed regulated substances must be verified using, at a minimum, the analytical method described in that standard. Reclaimed HFCs help reduce the need for new HFCs and support a smooth transition as HFCs are phased down under the AIM Act.

“Destruction” is defined in [40 CFR 84.3](#) as the expiration of a regulated substance to the destruction and removal efficiency actually achieved. Such destruction might result in a commercially useful end product, but such usefulness would be secondary to the act of destruction. As part of these competitive grants, the EPA will only fund projects that advance or innovatively deploy the

technologies listed in [40 CFR 84.29](#).

There are three broad categories of destruction technologies listed in [40 CFR 84.29](#): thermal oxidation (incineration), plasma, and conversion (other, non-incineration) technologies. As finalized in an October 2021 rule (“Phasedown of Hydrofluorocarbons: Establishing the Allowance Allocation and Trading Program under the AIM Act” (86 FR 5516)), there are two lists of destruction technologies: one for HFCs other than HFC-23 and one for all HFCs including HFC-23.

The following twelve destruction technologies are approved by the EPA for destruction of all regulated substances except for HFC-23:

- Incineration (6 technologies): Cement kilns, gaseous/fume oxidation, liquid injection incineration, porous thermal reactor, reactor cracking, and rotary kiln incineration.
- Plasma (3): Argon plasma arc, nitrogen plasma arc, and portable plasma arc.
- Conversion (3): Chemical reaction with hydrogen (H₂) and carbon dioxide (CO₂), gas phase catalytic de-halogenation, and superheated steam reactor.

The following eight technologies are approved by the EPA for the destruction of HFC-23:

- Incineration (4): Gaseous/fume oxidation, liquid injection incineration, reactor cracking, and rotary kiln incineration.
- Plasma (2): Argon plasma arc and nitrogen plasma arc.
- Conversion (2): Chemical reaction with H₂ and CO₂ and superheated steam reactor.

These technologies are capable of either destroying HFCs at a destruction removal efficiency of at least 99.99 percent or converting them into non-regulated substances. Innovative technologies are those that demonstrate efficacy in destroying HFCs and are not yet widely available, particularly in the United States (U.S.) (e.g., chemical conversion or portable plasma arc).

B. Program Goals and Objectives

The objectives of the HFC Reclaim and Innovative Destruction Grants, as described under Assistance Listing 66.047, are to support and contribute to addressing HFCs under the AIM Act by funding the following three project areas (listed order below does not indicate preference):

(1) Reclaim Technologies – pilot projects for new/better technologies to increase the reclamation of HFCs by expanding access to reclamation and improving the reclamation process;

(2) Reclaim Market Dynamics – programs or pilot projects for innovative strategies that address market dynamics to increase HFC reclamation by lowering barriers; or

(3) Innovative Destruction Technologies – pilot projects for innovative technologies or innovative deployment of technologies to destroy unusable and/or unwanted HFCs.

When applying, applicants should clearly indicate under which project area their proposed project falls: (1) reclaim technology, (2) reclaim market dynamics, or (3) innovative destruction technologies. If applicants do not indicate a project area, the EPA will assign a project area to the application after

consulting with the applicant. These project areas are intended to guide applicants in project design and assist the EPA reviewers to gain a better understanding of the proposed projects' goals and outcomes. Each application will be scored and ranked independently of its project area. However, based on the number of meritorious applications received in each project area, the EPA intends to make at least one award in either of the reclaim project areas (1 and 2) and at least one award in the innovative destruction technologies project area (3).

Successful projects will provide a plan to thoughtfully and actively engage with and mitigate any potential negative human health or environmental risks and hazards to disadvantaged communities in the project design and implementation. Additionally, any projects that propose to build fixed infrastructure will have to comply with the Build America Buy America Act requirements, as described in Section VI.D. Successful implementation of these funds by grantees will result in the advancement of improved technologies, the deployment of technologies for HFC reclamation or destruction, and the identification of successful strategies to address barriers to HFC reclamation.

This NOFO allows for coalitions (described in greater detail in Section IV.D) of multiple organizations that are eligible entities to co-develop a proposed project together, with one organization as the lead applicant under the grant. Applicants are encouraged to think about potential project partners that could strengthen the design and implementation of potential projects. **NOTE:** for-profit organizations are not eligible for subawards under this grant program but may receive procurement contracts.

Expected projects to be funded under this announcement and the corresponding project area(s) could include, but are not limited to, the following (examples are provided for illustrative purposes):

- Project Area 1 (Reclaim Technology): Demonstrations¹, pilot projects, and/or improved technologies that advance knowledge and technical capacity for HFC reclamation using metrics such as reduced time or cost to process HFCs, ability to handle mixed or contaminated refrigerants, unique and innovative deployment of existing technologies (e.g., portable reclaim), etc. Funding range: \$3 million to \$5 million.
 - Example potential project: Two eligible entities apply as a coalition to address highly mixed or contaminated refrigerants by developing and testing a new technology that reduces the time required to reclaim those kinds of refrigerants. One entity provides the technical capability to develop the technology, and the other entity supports the field testing, community engagement, and workforce development components. At the end of the project, new technologies (or new applications of existing technologies) are developed that can reduce the time and/or cost of treating highly contaminated refrigerants that previously would have been destroyed. As a result,

¹ The statutory term "demonstration" can encompass the first instance of the application of pollution control and prevention techniques, or an innovative application of a previously used method. Demonstrations generally must involve new or experimental technologies, methods, or approaches, where the results of the project will be disseminated so that others can benefit from the knowledge gained in the demonstration project. A project that is accomplished through the performance of routine, traditional, or established practices, or a project that is simply intended to carry out a task rather than transfer information or advance the state of knowledge, however worthwhile the project might be, is not a demonstration.

these technologies are ready to be scaled up for more widespread use, or for additional testing and confirmation by external parties.

- Project Area 2 (Reclaim Market Dynamics): Pilot projects demonstrating effective strategies to increase the amount of HFCs reclaimed by creatively overcoming barriers and improving and/or addressing market dynamics. Funding range: \$450,000 to \$1.5 million.
 - Example potential project: An eligible entity proposes a pilot project at the state or county scale that address barriers to reclaim in that geography and designs and implements innovative strategies to increase the amount of refrigerants reclaimed in that area. To gain a better understanding of the barriers to reclaim, the entity procures services under a competitive contract solicitation for private-sector reclaimers to inform the design of the project and its implementation. The project would include active engagement with the community about solutions. At the end of the project, the entity shares results that indicate a 30% increase in reclaimed refrigerants from their baseline data based on implementation of these innovative practices in their pilot location.
- Project Area 3 (Innovative Destruction Technologies): Demonstrations and/or pilot projects that advance knowledge and technical capacity for innovative HFC destruction technologies and/or innovative deployment of HFC destruction technologies (e.g., developing portable HFC destruction technology for use at ports, for example, which eliminate transportation externalities). Funding range: \$3 million to \$5 million.

Example potential project: An eligible entity develops techniques to deploy existing destruction technologies (approved for use under 40 CFR 84.29) in innovative new ways, such as by making the technology more compact and portable so that it is readily available to destroy unusable and/or unwanted HFCs, including illegally imported HFCs. The project is innovative in that it is utilizing technology that is not widely used in the U.S. and applying that technology in novel ways. The project contains a workforce development component to train existing and new technicians on its use. The project considers any potential negative human health or environmental risks and hazards to the local community and has a plan to mitigate them. As a result of the project, the new technology is ready to be deployed or further tested and reduces the time and potentially the cost to destroy unusable and/or unwanted HFCs by 20% based on field testing and baseline data collected during the duration of the project.

Disadvantaged Communities: The EPA is committed to accelerating environmental justice in communities overburdened by pollution through its IRA investments, including through this grant program. This program is responsive to the Administration's call for agencies to advance environmental justice in Executive Order 14096: *Revitalizing Our Nation's Commitment to Environmental Justice for All*.

Accordingly, applications should describe how proposed projects will advance environmental justice by meaningfully including disadvantaged communities in decision-making and discuss how it will mitigate any potential disproportionate and adverse human health and environmental risks and hazards to them. The EPA will evaluate applications under this NOFO for community involvement and avoided risks and hazards to disadvantaged communities from the proposed HFC reclaim or destruction

projects under criterion 3 of Section V.A. Examples of community involvement and mitigated risks and hazards could include, but are not limited to:

- Effective community engagement resulting in an increased awareness of the environmental benefits of reclamation or destruction of unusable and/or unwanted HFCs.
- Mitigation of potential localized negative human health or environmental risks and hazards from project implementation.

For the purposes of this NOFO, the EPA defines disadvantaged communities as any community that meets at least one of the following characteristics:

1. Any census tract that is included as disadvantaged in the [Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool](#) (CEJST) ²;
2. Any census block group that is at or above the 90th percentile for any of [EJScreen's Supplemental Indexes](#) when compared to the nation or relevant state³; or,
3. Any geographic area within tribal lands as included in EJScreen⁴. (The HFC Reclaim and Innovative Destruction grants consider that federally recognized tribes meet the definition of disadvantaged communities for the purposes of this grant program.)

The EPA provides a [geospatial map layer](#) that combines the methodologies of 1, 2, and 3 above to facilitate identification of disadvantaged communities as defined for the EPA IRA programs. This map layer can be found on the EJScreen website.⁵ Although some states may have state-specific definitions of disadvantaged communities, applicants for HFC reclaim and innovative destruction grants must use the EPA's definition.

Data, analyses, and results from CEJST and EJScreen may be included as an optional attachment, which will not count towards the project narrative 15-page limit; see Section IV.C. for more information.

² CEJST has an interactive map and uses datasets that are environmental and socioeconomic indicators of burdens. Percentiles show how much burden each Census tract experiences compared to other tracts. To qualify as a disadvantaged community in the CEJST, one of the burden indicators must be at or above the 90th percentile. In addition, lands within the boundaries of Federally Recognized Tribes are also considered to be disadvantaged communities.

³ EJScreen is the EPA's environmental justice mapping and screening tool that uses national datasets for environmental and socioeconomic indicators to show how a selected area compares to the state, the EPA region, or the nation. EJScreen operates at a finer geographic scale of Census block groups than the CEJST, allowing EJScreen [Supplemental Indexes](#) to identify smaller areas that may be disadvantaged within a larger non-disadvantaged area. To identify areas in EJScreen that meet one of the above definitions of a disadvantaged community, applicants should use the "Supplemental Indexes" option under the tool's map layers.

⁴ As set forth in M-23-09, the Addendum to the Interim Implementation Guidance for the Justice40 Initiative, M-21-28, on using the Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool (CEJST), "all Federally Recognized Tribal entities are considered disadvantaged communities for the purposes of the Justice40 Initiative." The CEJST uses the Bureau of Indian Affairs Land Area Representation dataset to depict American Indian land areas for Federally Recognized Tribes. The Tribal Lands category in EJScreen to use for this purpose includes Alaska Native Allotments (EPA Metadata Record), Alaska Native Villages (EPA Metadata Record), American Indian Reservations (EPA Metadata Record), American Indian Off-reservation Trust Lands (EPA Metadata Record), and Oklahoma Tribal Statistical Areas (EPA Metadata Record).

⁵ The EJScreen mapping tool is available at: <https://ejscreen.epa.gov/mapper/>. To locate the map layer displaying areas that meet the EPA definition of disadvantaged communities, go to the "Places" Tab, then select "Justice40/IRA" from the drop-down menu, and then select "EPA IRA Disadvantaged Communities." At the time of release of this NOFO, EJScreen version 2.2 was the current version.

Additional details on the contents of applications, including specifics on what should be included in the project narrative and other optional attachments such as partnership letters, are included in Section IV.C.

C. Environmental Results and Strategic Plan Information

Pursuant to Section 6.a. of the EPA Order 5700.7A1, “Environmental Results under EPA Assistance Agreements,” the EPA must link proposed assistance agreements with the Agency’s Strategic Plan. The EPA also requires that grant applicants and recipients adequately describe environmental outputs and outcomes to be achieved under assistance agreements (see [EPA Order 5700.7A1, Environmental Results under 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 Strategic Plan goals listed below.

1. Linkage to the EPA Strategic Plan: The activities to be funded under this announcement support the EPA’s Fiscal Year (FY) 2022-2026 Strategic Plan. Awards made under this announcement will support Goal 4, “Ensure Clean and Healthy Air for All Communities;” Objective 4.1, “Improve Air Quality and Reduce Localized Pollution and Health Impacts.” Under this objective, “EPA will reduce air pollution on local, regional, and national scales to achieve healthy air quality for people and the environment.” All applications must be for projects that support the goals and objectives above. For more information, see the [EPA’s FY 2022 – FY 2026 EPA Strategic Plan](#).

2. Outputs: The term “output” means an environmental activity, effort, and/or associated work product related to an environmental goal and objective that will be produced or provided over a period of time or by a specified date. Outputs may be quantitative or qualitative but must be measurable during an assistance agreement funding period.

Expected outputs from the projects to be funded under this announcement include, but are not limited to:

- Pilot projects or demonstration projects that show advancements in HFC reclamation technologies and innovative destruction technologies; innovative deployment of HFC destruction technologies; and/or addressing HFC reclaim market dynamics leading to increased availability of reclaimed HFCs.
- Reduced time or cost to reclaim or destroy HFCs compared to baseline data.
- Expansion of types of refrigerants that can be reclaimed (i.e., highly contaminated or mixed refrigerants).
- Increased knowledge and understanding of HFC reclamation (e.g., co-pollutants (as applicable), supply chain transportation), innovative destruction technologies, innovative deployment of HFC destruction technologies, and/or strategies to increase

reclaimed HFCs. References that may be useful include the EPA's HFC Reclamation Market Report⁶ or Frequent Questions on the Phasedown of Hydrofluorocarbons.⁷

- Publicly shared research, technical reports, papers, and/or webinars, including applicable quantifiable data, to the extent it is available, that identify and provide information about technological and/or market improvements to increase the reclaim and innovative destruction of HFCs and/or the innovative deployment of HFC destruction technologies.
- Demonstration of technologies that are scalable and practical for use beyond laboratory settings.
- Demonstration of strategies that reduce barriers to HFC reclamation that are scalable and replicable.
- Evidence for development and scale-up process, demonstration scenarios, and cost structures/business models to apply reclaim or destruction technologies nationally.
- Outreach materials for the public demonstrating the benefits of HFC reclaim or destruction technologies.
- Outreach and training materials for technicians (working in the field or supply chain) emphasizing best practices for HFC reclamation or destruction, as well as technician safety.

For projects under project areas 1 (reclaim technology) and 3 (innovative destruction technology), the EPA will prioritize funding for projects with expected results that can be practically applied in real-world settings and potentially transform HFC reclaim or destruction; proof-of concept or bench-scale projects are a lower funding priority. While this NOFO solicits innovative HFC technology projects, in general, applicants should not propose a new prototype but rather a system that can be demonstrated to improve HFC reclaim or destruction outcomes.

Assessment with Technology Readiness Levels (TRL) is a formal approach to evaluate the maturity of a technology and has been widely adopted by the industry to manage technology development.⁸ There are three main stages of development. The first stage (technology with TRL 1-3) involves designing a feasibility prototype based on an invention. The second stage (technology with TRL 4-6) requires prototype development, aiming to deliver the α prototype, which embeds all the essential features in the final product. The final stage (technology with TRL 7-9) involves commercial product development. This NOFO will prioritize HFC technology that is ready to be validated and demonstrated outside the lab, equivalent to a TRL of 5-6. Applications should clearly define the TRL of their technology. Projects with a lower TRL may not be rated as highly as those with a higher

⁶ EPA, October 2022, Analysis of the U.S. Hydrofluorocarbon Reclamation Market: Stakeholders, Drivers, and Practices. Available at: https://www.epa.gov/system/files/documents/2022-10/Draft_HFC-Reclamation-Report_10-13-22%20sxf%20v3.pdf (Note: An updated reclamation market report is available at: <https://www.regulations.gov/document/EPA-HQ-OAR-2022-0606-0021>).

⁷ EPA, Frequent Questions on the Phasedown of Hydrofluorocarbons. Available at: <https://www.epa.gov/climate-hfcs-reduction/frequent-questions-phasedown-hydrofluorocarbons>.

⁸ See: Mankins J. (1995). Technology Readiness Levels – A White Paper. NASA Office of Space Access and Technology. Available at: http://www.artemisinnovation.com/images/TRL_White_Paper_2004-Edited.pdf. Also: Tzinis I. (2012). Technology Readiness Level. NASA. Available at: <https://www.nasa.gov/directorates/somd/space-communications-navigation-program/technology-readiness-levels/>.

TRL. (**NOTE:** grant funding cannot be used for commercialization or for-profit initiatives such as business creation.)

Progress reports and a final report will also be required outputs, as specified in Section VI.C. “Reporting Requirements,” of this NOFO.

3. Outcomes: The term “outcome” means the result, effect, or consequence that will occur from carrying out an environmental program or activity that is related to an environmental or programmatic goal or objective. Outcomes may be environmental, behavioral, health-related, or programmatic in nature, but must also be quantitative. They may not necessarily be achievable within an assistance agreement funding period.

Expected outcomes from the projects to be funded under this announcement include, but are not limited to:

- Reduction of HFCs released into the atmosphere through reclaim and effective destruction of unusable and/or unwanted HFCs.
- Increased amount of HFCs reclaimed to the purity standards described in AHRI Standard 700-2016 (or an appropriate successor standard adopted by the Administrator).
- Strategies to lower barriers to HFC reclamation (e.g., reduced costs in reclaiming HFCs, amount of time reduced in reclaiming HFCs, etc.) to support increased amounts of reclaimed HFCs.

D. Statutory Authority

The statutory authority for this action is Section 60109 of the IRA (Public Law 117-169), which authorizes the award of grants for HFC reclaim and innovative destruction technologies. This funding opportunity will award grants that address the goals of Section 60109 of the IRA by supporting the goals and objectives of the AIM Act.

E. Minority Serving Institutions

The EPA recognizes that it is important to engage all available minds to address the environmental challenges the nation faces. At the same time, the EPA seeks to expand the environmental conversation by including members of communities which may have not previously participated in such dialogues to participate in the EPA programs. For this reason, the EPA strongly encourages all eligible applicants identified in Section III.A, including minority serving institutions (MSIs), to apply under this opportunity.

For purposes of this solicitation, the following are considered MSIs:

1. Historically Black Colleges and Universities, as defined by the Higher Education Act (20 U.S.C. § 1061(2)). A list of these schools can be found at [Historically Black Colleges and Universities](#);
2. Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs), as defined by the Higher Education Act (20 U.S.C. § 1059c(b)(3) and (d)(1)). A list of these schools can be found at [American Indian Tribally Controlled Colleges and Universities](#);
3. Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs), as defined by the Higher Education Act (20 U.S.C. §

1101a(a)(5)). A list of these schools can be found at [Hispanic-Serving Institutions](#);

4. Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander-Serving Institutions; (AANAPISIs), as defined by the Higher Education Act (20 U.S.C. § 1059g(b)(2)). A list of these schools can be found at [Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander-Serving Institutions](#); and
5. Predominately Black Institutions (PBIs), as defined by the Higher Education Act of 2008, 20 U.S.C. 1059e(b)(6). A list of these schools can be found at [Predominately Black Institutions](#).

F. Requirements for Increasing Access to Results of EPA-Funded Extramural Scientific Research

1. It is the EPA policy to ensure that the results of the EPA-funded extramural scientific research are accessible to the public to the greatest extent feasible consistent with applicable law, policies, and Orders; the Agency’s mission; resource constraints; and U.S. national, homeland and economic security. This entails maximizing, at no charge, access by the public to peer-reviewed, scientific research journal publications or associated author manuscripts, and their underlying digital research data, created in whole or in part with EPA funds, while protecting personal privacy; recognizing proprietary interests, confidential business information, and intellectual property rights; and avoiding significant negative impact on innovation and U.S. competitiveness. The EPA’s Policy for Increasing Access to Results of the EPA-Funded Extramural Scientific Research and the terms and conditions may be accessed at: [Non-EPA Researcher Requirements](#). Applications submitted under this solicitation shall include a Scientific Data Management Plan (SDMP) that addresses public access to the EPA-funded scientific research data. See the SDMP clause in Section IV for details on the content of an SDMP. Applicants will also be asked to provide past performance information on whether journal publications or associated author manuscripts, and the associated underlying scientific research data and metadata, under prior assistance agreements were made publicly accessible. These items will be evaluated prior to award.

Reasonable, necessary, and allocable costs for data management and public access may be included in extramural research applications and detailed in the budget justification described in Section IV.

2. Agency policy and ethical considerations prevent the EPA technical staff and managers from providing applicants with information that may create an unfair competitive advantage. Consequently, the EPA employees will not review, comment, advise, and/or provide technical assistance to applicants preparing applications in response to the EPA funding opportunities. The EPA employees cannot endorse any particular application.
3. Multiple Investigator applications may be submitted as: (1) a single Lead Principal Investigator (PI) application with Co-PI(s) or (2) a Multiple PI application (with a single Contact PI). If you choose to submit a Multiple PI application, you must follow the specific instructions provided in Sections IV and V of this NOFO. For further information, please see the [EPA Implementation Plan for Policy on Multiple Principal Investigators](#).
4. These awards may involve the collection of “Geospatial Information,” which includes information that identifies the geographic location and characteristics of natural or constructed

features or boundaries on the Earth or applications, tools, and hardware associated with the generation, maintenance, or distribution of such information. This information may be derived from, among other things, a Geographic Positioning System (GPS), remote sensing, mapping, charting, surveying technologies, or statistical data.

G. Additional Provisions for Applicants Incorporated into the Solicitation

Additional provisions that apply to Sections III, IV, V, and VI, and/or awards made under this solicitation, can be found at the [EPA Solicitation Clauses](#). These provisions are important for applying to this solicitation 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 contact the EPA point of contact listed in Section VII of this solicitation to obtain the provisions.

II. FEDERAL AWARD INFORMATION

A. Amount of Funding Available

The total estimated funding expected to be available for awards under this competitive opportunity is approximately \$14,250,000. Funding is dependent upon agency appropriations, funding availability, Agency priorities, and other applicable considerations.

B. Number and Amount of Awards

The EPA anticipates awarding a total of approximately four to nine grants under this announcement, depending on the type of project and subject to the availability of funds, the quality of proposals received, and other applicable considerations. Awards are expected to be between \$450,000 and \$5 million. The funding cap for an award is \$6.5 million. As described in Section I, the following are approximate funding ranges for specific project areas:

Project Area 1 (Reclaim Technology): approximately \$3 million to \$5 million.

Project Area 2 (Reclaim Market Dynamics): approximately \$450,000 to \$1.5 million.

Project Area 3 (Innovative Destruction Technologies): approximately \$3 million to \$5 million.

Each applicant can submit up to a total of three applications. As stated in Section I, the EPA intends to make at least one award in either of the reclaim project areas (1 and 2) and at least one award in the innovative destruction technologies project area (3). If the EPA selects multiple applications from an applicant, the EPA may combine the selected applications into one grant award for the successful applicant (See Section VI.B. Combining of Successful Applications into One Award).

C. Funding Set-Asides

Approximately \$1.5 million is available for competitive grants under this opportunity as a set-aside for federally recognized tribes. The actual award amounts and number of projects awarded under the set-aside described in Section I may differ from the estimated amounts for many reasons, including the

number of meritorious applications received, Agency priorities, and funding availability. In addition, EPA reserves the right to increase or decrease (including decreasing to zero) the total number and amount of awards under this set-aside or change the ratio of assistance agreements it awards among the set-asides.

D. Partial Funding

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

E. Additional Awards

The EPA reserves the right to make additional awards under this solicitation, 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 six months after the original selection decisions. In addition, the EPA reserves the right to reject all applications and make no awards under this announcement or to make fewer awards than anticipated.

F. Award Funding and Incremental/Full Funding

Awards are expected to be fully funded, as appropriate, based on funding availability, satisfactory performance, and other applicable considerations.

G. Period of Performance

The estimated period of performance for awards resulting from this solicitation will be up to five years. The estimated project start date for awards is Fall 2024.

H. Funding Type

It is anticipated that grants will be funded under this solicitation.

III. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

NOTE: Additional provisions that apply to this section can be found at the [EPA Solicitation Clauses](#).

A. Eligible Entities

Consistent with Assistance Listing No. 66.047 and the [EPA's Policy for Competition of Assistance Agreements \(EPA Order § 5700.5A1\)](#), competition under this solicitation is available to states (including the District of Columbia); local governments; U.S. territories and possessions; Indian tribes; public universities and colleges, hospitals, and laboratories; and other public or private nonprofit institutions.

Consistent with the definition of nonprofit organization at 2 CFR § 200.1, the term nonprofit organization means any corporation, trust, association, cooperative, or other organization that is operated mainly for scientific, educational, service, charitable, or similar purpose in the public interest and is not organized primarily for profit; and uses net proceeds to maintain, improve, or expand the operation of the organization. The term includes tax-exempt nonprofit neighborhood and labor organizations. Note that 2 CFR § 200.1 specifically excludes Institutions of Higher Education from the definition of nonprofit organization because they are separately defined in the regulation. While not considered to be a nonprofit organization as defined by 2 CFR § 200.1, public or nonprofit Institutions of Higher Education are, nevertheless, eligible to submit applications under this NOFO. Hospitals operated by state, tribal, or local governments or that meet the definition of nonprofit at 2 CFR § 200.1 are also eligible to apply as nonprofits or as instrumentalities of the unit of government depending on the applicable law. For-profit colleges, universities, trade schools, and hospitals are ineligible. Nonprofit organizations that are not exempt from taxation under section 501 of the Internal Revenue Code must submit other forms of documentation of nonprofit status, such as certificates of incorporation as nonprofit under state or tribal law. Nonprofit organizations exempt from taxation under section 501 I (4) of the Internal Revenue Code that lobby are not eligible for the EPA funding as provided in the Lobbying Disclosure Act, 2 U.S.C. 1611.

For-profit organizations are not an eligible entity for this funding opportunity. Additionally, nonprofit 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. Voluntary Cost Sharing or Matching Funds

Cost sharing/matching is not required as a condition of eligibility under this competition.

C. Threshold Criteria

All applications will be reviewed for eligibility and must meet the eligibility requirements described in Sections III. A., B., and C., to be considered eligible. If necessary, the EPA may contact applicants to clarify threshold eligibility questions prior to making an eligibility determination. Applicants deemed ineligible for funding consideration due to the threshold eligibility review will be notified within 15 calendar days of the ineligibility determination.

1. Applications must substantially comply with the application submission instructions and requirements set forth in Section IV or else they will be rejected. However, where a page limit is expressed in Section IV.C. with respect to the application, or parts thereof, pages in excess of the 15-page limitation will not be reviewed. Applicants are advised that readability is of paramount importance and should take precedence in application format, including selecting a legible font type and size for use in the application.

All applications must be submitted through Grants.gov as stated in Section IV.A. 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.B. of this solicitation. Applicants are responsible for following the

submission instructions in Section IV.A. of this solicitation to ensure that their application is timely and properly submitted. Please note that applicants experiencing technical issues with submitting through Grants.gov should follow the instructions provided in Section IV.A., which include both the requirement to contact Grants.gov and email a full application to HFCGrants@epa.gov prior to the deadline.

2. The EPA will only consider accepting applications from applicants that are able to demonstrate that they are unable to submit through Grants.gov due to Grants.gov or relevant SAM.gov system issues or for unforeseen exigent circumstances, such as extreme weather interfering with internet access. Failure to submit the application prior to the application submission deadline date because they did not properly or timely register in SAM.gov or Grants.gov is not an acceptable reason to justify acceptance of an application outside of Grants.gov.

NOTE: Registering in SAM.gov or Grants.gov can take a month or more. Applicants are advised to begin their registration process early so it does not interfere with drafting the application near the deadline.

3. Applications must support Goal 4 “Ensure Clean and Healthy Air for All Communities;” Objective 4.1: “Improve Air Quality and Reduce Localized Pollution and Health Impacts” of the EPA’s Strategic Plan described in Section I.C.
4. Applications may only address one project area. Applications that address more than one project area will be rejected.
5. Applications must identify which project area they are applying under in their original application or after consultation with EPA: (1) Reclaim technologies, (2) Reclaim market dynamics, or (3) Innovative destruction technologies. If an application does not clearly indicate which project area is being addressed, EPA will contact the applicant to clarify and assign a project area.
6. Applications that propose projects under innovative destruction technologies must demonstrate that their proposed technologies will use one of the approved technologies listed at [40 CFR 84.29](#). Applications must include the name of the destruction technology as listed in [40 CFR 84.29](#) and the HFCs they intend to destroy.

Applications which request the EPA assistance funds less than \$450,000 or in excess of \$6.5 million as specified in Section II.B of this NOFO, are not eligible and will not be reviewed.

Additionally, if an applicant submits more than three applications, the applicant will be contacted prior to the EPA review of any of the applications to determine which application(s) the applicant will withdraw from the competition.

D. Ineligible Activities and Other Considerations

Any of the following may lead to a portion or all of the application not being reviewed:

1. **Ineligible Costs or 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 must meet the following requirements to be eligible for funding:

- a. **Federal Matching Funds:** Funding under this NOFO cannot be included as a cost or used to meet cost sharing or matching requirements of any other federally financed grant, as required under 2 CFR 200.306(b)(5) and 2 CFR 200.403(f).
- b. **Expenses Incurred Prior to the Project Period:** Funding under this NOFO cannot be used to cover expenses incurred prior to the project period set forth in any assistance agreement funded under this NOFO, except for eligible pre-award costs as defined in 2 CFR 200.458 and as authorized by 2 CFR 200.309 and 2 CFR 1500.

2. Other Considerations:

- a. Applicants can submit no more than the total number of applications listed in Section II.B. If an applicant submits more applications than what is listed, the EPA will contact the applicant to determine which application(s) to withdraw.
- b. Applicants can include multiple types of projects within one application, but they cannot include the same project(s) in multiple applications. If an applicant submits more than one application that requests funding for the same project, the applicant will be contacted prior to the EPA's review of any of the applications to determine which application(s) the applicant will withdraw from the competition.

IV. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

NOTE: Additional provisions that apply to this section can be found at the [EPA Solicitation Clauses](#).

A. How to Register to Apply for Grants Under This Competition

NOTE: The registration process can take a month or more. We advise you to start the process as soon as possible so that it does not overlap or interfere with finalizing your application.

Applicants should visit [How to Register to Apply for Grants](#) for additional information. All the EPA grant applications must be submitted online, except in limited circumstances. Organizations must be registered in two government systems to apply for the EPA grants:

1. The System for Award Management (SAM.gov) registers organizations to conduct business with the U.S. Government, which includes federal grants.
2. Grants.gov is the official system for managing all federal grant applications.

These two systems share information. Together, they provide access to everything needed to identify federal grant opportunities and to complete the online application process.

Note that individuals access both systems through a single user account set up in Login.gov. Creating a Login.gov account is easy. If you do not have a Login.gov account, you will be prompted to create one when you register with SAM.gov or Grants.gov. [Learn more about Login.gov](#).

If you have done business with the federal government previously, you can and should check your entity status using your government-issued Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) to determine if your registration is active. SAM.gov requires you renew your registration every 365 days to keep it active. Organizations should ensure that their SAM.gov registration includes a current e-Business (EBiz) point of contact name and email address. The EBiz point of contact is critical for Grants.gov registration and system functionality. If the point of contact has changed, you may need to contact the [Federal Service Desk](#) for help with your SAM.gov account: (866) 606-8220. The Federal Service desk hours of operation are Monday – Friday, 8am – 8pm ET.

Please note that SAM.gov registration is different than obtaining a UEI only. Obtaining a UEI only validates your organization’s legal business name and address. Please review the [Frequently Asked Questions](#) document for additional details.

Follow these steps to register to apply for the EPA grants. **Start the registration process early.** The process can take a month or more. Errors or inconsistencies in registration in the two systems can prolong the process. Applicants are encouraged to start the registration process **before you begin your application.**

Step 1. Register Your Organization in SAM.gov

Organizations must register with SAM.gov to obtain a UEI, which is a 12-character alphanumeric identifier assigned to each unique organization. There is no fee for registering with SAM.gov and registration must be renewed annually.

Registration in SAM.gov requires providing assertions, representations and certifications, and other information so that the federal government can verify the existence and uniqueness of the organization. Follow these steps to get started:

1. Go to the [SAM.gov Entity Registration](#) page. Review the “Before You Get Started” section and download the Entity Registration Checklist to help prepare.
2. Click the “Get Started” button when you are ready. You may be prompted to accept the usage terms and sign in through Login.gov. If necessary, click the “Get Started” button again after you sign in.
3. You will be prompted to choose what you want to do. Most grant applicants will select the option to “Register for Financial Assistance Awards Only.”
4. Select the appropriate option and click the Next button.
5. Proceed through the registration process by answering the questions and providing the necessary information.

Organizations will need to designate an E-Business Point of Contact (EBiz POC). The EBiz POC is likely to be your organization’s chief financial officer or authorizing official. There can be only one EBiz POC for each unique organization. The EBiz POC will:

- Manage the SAM.gov account and login.
- Set up the Grants.gov profile for the organization (see Step 2 below).
- Oversee all activities for the organization within Grants.gov.

- Assign all roles in Grants.gov for individuals from the organization who will be involved in applying for grants, including the Authorized Organization Representative (AOR), Expanded AOR roles, Workspace Manager, and Custom roles (see Step 3 below).

Note that the EBiz POC does not submit grant proposals for the organization. Proposals are submitted by the AOR in Grants.gov. After the information submitted through the registration process is authenticated, the EBiz POC will receive an email from SAM.gov indicating that the registration is active.

Contact the [Federal Service Desk](#) for help with your SAM.gov account, to resolve technical issues or chat with a help desk agent: (866) 606-8220. The Federal Service desk hours of operation are Monday – Friday, 8am – 8pm ET.

Once your SAM.gov account is active, you must register in Grants.gov. Grants.gov will electronically receive your organization information, such as EBiz POC email address and UEI.

Step 2. Create a User Account and Applicant Profile in Grants.gov

After obtaining a UEI, an organization must create an applicant profile in Grants.gov.

The EBiz POC will set up the applicant profile in two steps:

1. Create a user account in Grants.gov with the same email address used by the EBiz POC in SAM.gov. The email address is used to match the EBiz POC from SAM.gov to Grants.gov.
2. Create the applicant profile in Grants.gov using the UEI obtained from SAM.gov.

Grants.gov registration is FREE. If you have never applied for a federal grant before, please review the [Grants.gov Applicant Registration instructions](#). As part of the Grants.gov registration process, the EBiz point of contact is the only person that can affiliate and assign applicant roles to members of an organization. In addition, at least one person must be assigned as an AOR. Only the person(s) with the AOR role can submit applications in Grants.gov. Please review the [Intro to Grants.gov-Understanding User Roles](#) and [Learning Workspace - User Roles and Workspace Actions](#) for details on this important process. Applicants need to ensure that the AOR who submits the application through Grants.gov and whose UEI is listed on the application is an AOR for the applicant listed on the application. Additionally, the UEI listed on the application must be registered to the applicant organization's SAM.gov account. If not, the application may be deemed ineligible.

Contact [Grants.gov](#) for assistance at 1-800-518-4726 or support@grants.gov to resolve technical issues with Grants.gov. 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. The Grants.gov Support Center is available 24 hours a day 7 days a week, excluding federal holidays.

Step 3. Create Individual Grants.gov Accounts for Organization Members

There is no fee for registering with Grants.gov. Each member of the organization who will participate in the online grant application process needs to register an individual account on Grants.gov.

1. Go to the [Grants.gov registration](#) page.
2. Complete the form, which includes specifying a username and password. This username and password are used to create the Grants.gov account. You will be prompted to link the Grants.gov account to your Login.gov account.
3. Associate your individual account with the organization's UEI. You will also enter the organization's Profile Name and your Job Title.

The organization's EBiz POC can delegate administrative roles to other Grants.gov users associated with the UEI, as necessary. Learn more about [managing roles in Grants.gov](#)

Step 4. Learn How to Use Workspace in Grants.gov

Workspace is the application in Grants.gov that an organization's grant team uses when applying for federal grants. Workspace is a role-based tool, in which the user's assigned role controls permissions to perform specific actions, such as accessing and editing application forms. As noted in Step 3 above, the EBiz POC has the initial responsibility to assign roles to individuals.

The core roles include:

- Expanded AOR: has the most privileges.
- Standard AOR: allows user to submit the final application and perform other actions.
- Workspace Manager: the minimum role required to create a workspace and begin work on an application.

Custom roles can also be created. Becoming familiar with Grants.gov Workspace roles and understanding the process will help applicants be better prepared to submit applications. The videos [on this page](#) are just two of many Grants.gov training resources to help applicants get started.

If your organization has no access to the internet or access is very limited, you may request an exception for the remainder of this calendar year by following the procedures outlined in [Exceptions to the Grants.gov Submission Requirement](#) website. Please note that your request must be received at least 15 calendar days before the application due date to allow enough time to negotiate alternative submission methods.

B. Application Process

To begin the application process under this grant announcement, go to [Grants.gov](#) and click the "Search Grants" tab. Search the opportunity number associated with this opportunity – EPA-R-OAR-HFC-24-01. Once the opportunity has been selected, click the red "Apply" button at the top of the view grant opportunity page.

The electronic submission of your application to this funding opportunity must be made by an official representative of your organization who has been registered as an AOR and is authorized by your organization to sign applications for federal financial assistance. If the submit button is grayed out, it may be because you do not have the appropriate role to submit in your organization. Contact your organization's EBiz point of contact or contact [Grants.gov](#) for assistance at 1-800-518-4726

or support@grants.gov.

Applicants need to ensure that the AOR who submits the application through Grants.gov and whose UEI is listed on the application is an AOR for the applicant listed on the application, specifically on the SF-424. Additionally, the UEI listed on the application must be registered to the applicant organization's SAM.gov account. If not, the application may be deemed ineligible.

Applications submitted through Grants.gov will be time and date stamped electronically. Please note that successful submission of your application through Grants.gov does not necessarily mean your application is eligible for award. Any application submitted after the application's time and date deadline will be deemed ineligible and not be considered.

Technical Issues with Submission

If applicants experience technical issues during the submission of an application that they are unable to resolve, follow these procedures **before** the application deadline date:

- a. Contact Grants.gov Support Center **before** the application deadline date.
- b. Document the Grants.gov ticket/case number.
- c. Send an email with "EPA-R-OAR-HFC-24-01" in the subject line to HFCGrants@epa.gov **before** the application deadline time and date. The email **must** include the following:
 - i. Grants.gov ticket/case number(s)
 - ii. Description of the issue
 - iii. The entire application package in PDF format.

Without this information, the EPA may not be able to consider applications submitted outside of Grants.gov. Any application submitted after the application time and date deadline will be deemed ineligible and will **not** be considered.

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

The EPA will make decisions concerning acceptance of each application submitted outside of Grants.gov on a case-by-case basis. The EPA will only consider accepting applications that were unable to submit through Grants.gov due to [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) or relevant [SAM.gov](https://www.sam.gov) system issues or for unforeseen exigent circumstances, such as extreme weather interfering with internet access. Failure of an applicant to submit prior to the application submission deadline date because they did not properly or timely register in SAM.gov or Grants.gov is **not** an acceptable reason to justify acceptance of an application outside of Grants.gov.

Application Materials

The following forms and documents are required under this announcement.

Mandatory Documents:

- Standard Form 424, *Application for Federal Assistance*. Please note that the organizational UEI must be included on the SF-424. Applicants are advised to begin the SAM.gov

registration process early so they have an active UEI prior to beginning this step. Otherwise, progress can be delayed on other parts of the application. See Section IV.A. for information on SAM.gov registration.

- Standard Form 424A, *Budget Information for Non-Construction Programs*.
- EPA Form 4700-4, *Pre-Award Compliance Review Report*.
- EPA Form 5700-54, *Key Contacts Form*.
- Project Narrative Attachment Form, *Project Narrative* – Prepared as described in Section IV.C. below.
- For nonprofits: Internal Revenue Service tax letter confirming nonprofit status, e.g., affirmation letter. Please note that this will be attached using the “other attachments” form that is found under the optional category on Grants.gov.

Optional Attachment Documents. Use the “*Other Attachments*” form identified under the Mandatory Documents tab to submit the following:

- Project Team Biographies.
- Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement; note that this will be required if application is selected for funding.
- Partnership Letter(s), if applicable, as described in Section 3 of the workplan below.
- [Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool](#) (CEJST) or the EPA’s [EJScreen](#) results.
- Approval Letter, if applicable, to use alternate means to submit initial application.

When saving application files, please ensure that the following characters are **not** included in the file names: ~ “ # % & * : < > ? / \ { | }. Including these characters can cause problems with application files. Please try to name files in a way that concisely indicates their contents (e.g., APPLICANT NAME_XXX.docx).

Applications submitted through [Grants.gov](#) will be time and date stamped electronically. If you wish to confirm receipt of your application from the EPA (not from [Grants.gov](#)), please contact the Agency contact in Section VII within 30 days of the close of this solicitation.

Your organization’s AOR must submit your complete application electronically to the EPA through [Grants.gov](#) no later than **February 16, 2024, 11:59 PM ET**.

C. Project Narrative Instructions, Format, and Content

Instructions: The project narrative should substantially comply with the instructions, format, and content described below. It should also address the evaluation criteria in Section V.A. of the NOFO. The project narrative, including the cover page, workplan, and budget table and detail, must not exceed a maximum of 15 single-spaced typewritten pages. Pages in excess of the 15-page limit will not be reviewed.

Supporting materials, such as project team biographies, partnership letters, CEJST or EJSCREEN reports, and negotiated indirect cost rate agreements can be submitted as attachments and are not included in the 15-page limit. Supporting materials should also be submitted using the Optional Attachments form,

as described in Section IV.B. above.

Applicants should ensure that their project narratives are written clearly using understandable terms. Doing so will help ensure that the evaluation team members understand the purpose, outputs, and outcomes of the proposed project.

Applicants may use the project narrative format outlined below; however, it is not required.

(1) Cover Page:

The cover page should not exceed one page. The cover page should include the following information:

- **Project Title:** One descriptive sentence only.
- **Project Location:** List the primary location(s) of the project.
- **Applicant Information:**
 - Applicant organization
 - Address
 - Primary contact name, phone number, and e-mail address
 - UEI number
 - Chosen Project Area (see Section I.B)
- **Funding Requested:** Total grant funding requested. As stated in Section II.B. of the NOFO, awards are expected to be between \$450,000 and \$5 million. The funding cap for an award is \$6.5 million. The total amount of requested funding needs to be commensurate with the applicant's proposed activities.
- **Project Period of Performance:** Beginning and ending dates of the proposed project.
- **Short Project Description:** Brief description of the project in one to three sentences only, especially noting the expected outputs and outcomes.

(2) Workplan:

Applicants must ensure that the workplan addresses the evaluation criteria in Section V.A. of the NOFO. Applicants should use the section and subsection numbers and headings below, which correspond with the evaluation criteria in Section V.A. of the NOFO. The workplan should be written clearly using understandable terms.

Section 1 – Project Summary and Approach (25 total possible points from Section V.A. of the NOFO)

This section should contain a detailed project description including the following information:

a. Overall Project (15 possible points)

Provide a detailed project summary and description of the proposed activities to be undertaken, consistent with Section I.B. (Program Goals and Objectives) of the NOFO. Include details of every activity for which the applicant is seeking funding. This section should include details about how the activities will meet the goals of the program.

Applications should only include information in Section 1.a. of their workplan that will not be

covered by another section of their workplan.

b. Anticipated Project Benefits (10 possible points)

Describe the extent of the environmental problem the proposed project will address and how the proposed project will address these problems, including anticipated environmental and public benefits. For example, describe how the project will contribute to increased amounts of reclaimed HFCs or destruction of unusable and/or unwanted HFCs leading to reduced emissions and improved climate benefits. Note that the expected outputs and outcomes will be included in Section 2 – Environmental Results.

Section 2 – Environmental Results—Outcomes, Outputs and Performance Measures (15 total possible points from Section V.A. of the NOFO)

a. Expected Project Outputs and Outcomes (5 possible points)

Identify the expected quantitative and qualitative outcomes and outputs of the project as defined in Section I.C. of the NOFO. Specific outputs and outcomes should be provided and may include short- and long-term activities. For projects under project areas 1 (reclaim technology) and 3 (innovative destruction technology), applications should clearly define the TRL of their technology. This NOFO will prioritize HFC technology that is ready to be validated and demonstrated outside the lab. Projects with a lower TRL may not be rated as highly as those with a higher TRL.

In addition to a narrative discussion of the outputs and outcomes, the applicant is encouraged to include a table such as the following:

Example of Outputs and Outcomes Table

<i>Anticipated Outputs and Outcomes</i>	
<i>Outputs</i>	<i>Outcomes</i>
Pilot projects to increase reclaim of HFCs; demonstration projects for new or improved technologies; demonstration projects for innovative deployment of HFC destruction technologies; reduction in the cost or time for HFC reclaim or destruction	Increased amounts of reclaimed HFCs leading to reduced emissions and improved climate benefits
	Increased destruction of unusable and/or unwanted HFCs leading to reduced emissions and improved climate benefits
Research, technical reports, papers, and/or webinars	Improved understanding of new technologies to reclaim or destroy HFCs
	More HFCs reclaimed or unusable and/or unwanted HFCs destroyed thereby reducing HFCs emitted into the atmosphere where they contribute to climate change

b. Performance Measures and Plan (5 possible points)

Applicants should describe the proposed performance measures, which will be the mechanism to track, measure, and report progress towards achieving the expected outputs and outcomes. Applicants should describe their plan for tracking and measuring progress toward achieving the expected project outputs and outcomes and how the results of the project will be evaluated, as described in Section I.C. of the NOFO and Section 3 of the workplan.

c. Timeline and Milestones (5 possible points)

The applicant should include a detailed timeline for the project including milestones for specific tasks, such as bidding, procurement, installation, and reports, along with estimated dates. The applicant should include scheduled time for quarterly and final report preparation into the project timeline.

Section 3 – Disadvantaged Communities (10 total possible points from Section V.A. of the NOFO)

For the purposes of this NOFO, the EPA defines disadvantaged communities as described in Section I.B. above.

The application should discuss and quantify (to the extent possible) any anticipated potential negative human health or environmental risks and hazards to disadvantaged communities and concrete strategies for mitigating those risks and hazards. Applicants should use the definition of disadvantaged communities as provided in Section I.B above. Only communities qualifying as disadvantaged communities according to the EPA’s IRA definition will be considered under this evaluation criterion.

Applicants are encouraged to include data from the [Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool](#) (CEJST) as well as EJScreen Supplemental Indexes as part of their application to help characterize and describe the affected communities/populations and area(s). CEJST analyses may be included as an optional attachment, which will not count towards the project narrative 15-page limit; see Section IV.B. of the NOFO.

Applicants should provide a qualitative discussion of how the applicant will engage with affected communities to ensure their meaningful involvement with respect to the design and implementation of the project. Meaningful involvement means people have an opportunity to participate in decisions about activities that may affect their environment and/or health; the public’s contribution can influence the regulatory agency’s decision; community concerns will be considered in the decision-making process; and decision makers will seek out and facilitate the involvement of those potentially affected. Meaningful involvement should include providing access for people with limited English proficiency and people with disabilities.

Partnership letter(s) should be included in the application as an attachment if applicable, which do not count toward the 15-page project narrative page limit; see Section IV.B. of the NOFO. These partnership letters should describe the partner’s support for and/or involvement with the project.

Grant recipients will be expected to report on their community engagement and, as applicable, their strategy for mitigating potential negative human health or environmental risks and hazards and/or

environmental risks (see Section I.B.). Examples of meaningful community involvement could include, but are not limited to:

- Developing an outreach and engagement strategy;
- Promoting the use of a wide variety of techniques to create early, frequent, and continuing opportunities for community engagement;
- Creating a transparent planning process that also provides opportunity for early risk mitigation;
- Holding community consultations or public input meetings;
- Providing a publicly accessible list of all upcoming community engagement opportunities (e.g., listening sessions, outreach, questions and answers sessions, door-to-door visits, and community meetings);
- Creating a community work group or advisory board made up of community members;
- Including community-elected member(s) on the planning and project team; and/or,
- Getting community feedback on local benefits and prioritizing what they value most.

Section 4 – Programmatic Capability and Past Performance (10 total possible points from Section V.A. of the NOFO)

a. Past Performance (4 possible points)

Submit a list of up to five federally funded or non-federally funded assistance agreements that the applicant is performing or has performed within the last three years. Assistance agreements include grants and cooperative agreements but not contracts. These assistance agreements should be awards directly to the applicant. For each of the agreements, include:

- Project title
- Assistance agreement number
- Federal funding agency and assistance listing number (formerly known as the CFDA number), if applicable
- Brief description of the agreement – no more than two sentences

Include a discussion of whether, and if so how, the applicant was able to successfully complete and manage the listed agreements.

b. Reporting Requirements (3 possible points)

For each of the assistance agreements listed, the applicant should describe their history of meeting the reporting requirements under the agreement(s). This should include:

- Whether the applicant submitted acceptable final reports under those agreements;
- The extent to which the applicant adequately and timely reported on its progress towards achieving the expected outputs and outcomes under those agreements; and
- If progress was not being made, whether the applicant adequately reported why not.

c. Staff Expertise (3 possible points)

Include information on the applicant’s organization, including a description of the staff’s

knowledge, expertise, qualifications, and resources and/or the ability to obtain them, to successfully achieve the proposed project's goals. Biographical sketches, including resumes or curriculum vitae for key staff, managers, and any other key personnel can be included as an optional project team biography attachment, as listed in Section IV.B. of the NOFO; the optional attachment does not count towards the 15-page limit of the project narrative.

NOTE: In evaluating applicants under the past performance factors in Section V.A. of the NOFO, the 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, which is half of the total points available for these sub-criteria in Section V.A. of the NOFO. If the applicant does not provide any response for these items, a score of 0 for these factors may be received.

Section 5 – Project Sustainability and Replicability (10 points)

Applicants should describe how their project will advance efforts to reclaim or innovatively destroy HFCs even after the EPA funding has ended. Applicants should explain how outputs and outcomes from the project can readily be replicated and scaled, including with other technologies or in other communities. The Agency will also evaluate the projects "sustainability," meaning its ability to sustain HFC reductions over time at the end of the project period, as opposed to overall environmental sustainability.

Section 6 – Job Quality and Equitable Workforce Development (5 points)

As part of the EPA's implementation of Executive Order 14082: [Implementation of the Energy and Infrastructure Provisions of the Inflation Reduction Act of 2022](#), the Agency seeks to fund projects that support good-paying jobs with the free and fair choice to join a union, use an appropriately credentialed workforce, and increase equitable access to high-quality career pathways. Applications will be evaluated on the quality of the response and extent to which it describes concrete commitments for high labor standards and equitable workforce pathways.

Applicants may demonstrate that workers are compensated family-sustaining wages and benefits, such as wages pegged to the upper quartile or union pattern wage scales for relevant occupations and labor markets. Additionally, applicants are encouraged to articulate how they will prioritize worker training, certification, and safety. Note that the EPA regulations (40 CFR Part 82, Subpart F) under Section 608 of the Clean Air Act require that technicians who maintain, service, repair, or dispose of appliances that could release ozone-depleting and substitute refrigerants (including HFCs) into the atmosphere must be certified.⁹

⁹ <https://www.epa.gov/section608/section-608-technician-certification>

Applicants are encouraged to demonstrate how their proposal supports high-quality training opportunities for workers involved in HFC reclamation, destruction, and related industries. For example, proposals may demonstrate they use participants of a Registered Apprenticeship Program to carry out project work, employ paid interns or fellows, or partner with an external training provider. Applicants are encouraged to describe how their proposal supports high-quality job opportunities for individuals from disadvantaged communities to expand access to high-quality job opportunities in this field.

Where appropriate, applicants are encouraged to partner with labor organizations. Applicants may attach any letters of commitment from applicable labor organizations including unions and other workers' rights groups they plan to partner with as optional attachments.

Section 7 – Innovative Approaches and Solutions (10 points)

Under this criterion, the Agency will evaluate the application based on the extent to which the application proposes a project that includes innovative approaches (e.g., not usual, routine, or established practices) to support the development of technologies and practices for HFC reclamation or destruction. Examples of innovative approaches and solutions include, but are not limited to, new or novel services, purchases, development, or installation of emerging technologies, creating and encouraging the development of emerging markets, solving local challenges around access to safe HFC reclamation or destruction, and others.

Section 8 – Budget (15 total possible points from Section V.A. of the NOFO)

This section of the project narrative is a detailed description of the budget found in the SF-424A and must include a discussion of the applicant's approach to ensuring proper management of grant funds, a detailed budget narrative, as well as the itemized budget table below. An applicant's budget table and budget narrative must account for both federal funds and any non-federal voluntary cost share, if applicable. Selected applicant(s) will need to submit a copy of their current indirect cost rate that has been negotiated with a federal cognizant agency prior to award. Additional guidance for developing the applicant's budget is available in the [Interim General Budget Development Guidance for Applicants and Recipients of EPA Financial Assistance](#).

a. Budget Detail (5 possible points)

This section of the project narrative provides a detailed breakout by funding type included in the proper budget category for each activity requesting funds; applicants should consult the [EPA's Interim General Budget Development Guidance for Applicants and Recipients of EPA Financial Assistance](#).

Applicants should provide a detailed breakout by funding type included in the proper budget category for each activity requesting funds. Applicants should use the instructions, budget object class descriptions, and example table below to complete the detailed budget section of the project narrative. The budget detail and the budget table should be included in the project narrative and count towards the maximum 15-page limit. Additional budget documents, excluding the SF-424 and SF-424A

forms, or project narratives pages in excess of the page limit will not be reviewed, as listed in Section III.C. of the NOFO. Applicants should include applicable rows of costs for each budget category in their budget table to accurately reflect the proposed project budget. Applicants must itemize costs related to personnel, fringe benefits, travel, equipment, installation or labor supplies, contractual costs, other direct costs (i.e., subawards, participant support costs), indirect costs, and total costs. If providing a voluntary cost share, the budget detail must clearly specify the amount of federal funding and the cost share amount for each category. For applicants proposing to implement a participant support cost or rebate program, the rebates are appropriately listed under the “Other” budget category as “Participant Support Costs.” See Appendix A and [RAIN-2018-G05, “EPA Guidance on Participant Support Costs.”](#) for more information on participant support costs.

- **Personnel - List all staff positions by title. Give annual salary, percentage of time assigned to the project, and total cost for the budget period.** This category includes only direct costs for the salaries of those individuals who will perform work directly for the project (paid employees of the applicant organization as reflected in payroll tax records). If the applicant organization is including staff time (in-kind services) as a cost-share, this should be included as Personnel costs. Personnel costs do not include: (1) costs for services of contractors (including individual consultants), which are included in the “Contractual” category; (2) costs for employees of subrecipients under subawards or non-employee program participants (e.g., interns or volunteers), which are included in the “Other” category; or (3) effort that is not directly in support of the proposed project, which may be covered by the organization’s negotiated indirect cost rate. The budget detail must identify the personnel category type by Full Time Equivalent (FTE), including percentage of FTE for part-time employees, number of personnel proposed for each category, and the estimated funding amounts.
- **Fringe Benefits - Identify the percentage used, the basis for its computation, and the types of benefits included.** Fringe benefits are allowances and services provided by employers to their employees as compensation in addition to regular salaries and wages. Fringe benefits may include, but are not limited to, the cost of leave, employee insurance, pensions, and unemployment benefit plans. If the applicant’s fringe rate does not include the cost of leave and the applicant intends to charge leave to the agreement, it must provide supplemental information describing its proposed method(s) for determining and equitably distributing these costs.
- **Travel - Specify the mileage, per diem, estimated number of trips in-state and out-of-state, number of travelers, and other costs for each type of travel.** Travel may be integral to the purpose of the proposed project (e.g., inspections), related to proposed project activities (e.g., attendance at meetings), or to a technical training or workshop that supports effective implementation of the project activities. Only include travel costs for employees in the travel category. Travel costs do not include: (1) costs for travel of contractors (including consultants), which are included in the “Contractual” category; or (2) travel costs for employees of subrecipients under subawards and non-employee program participants (e.g., trainees), which are included in the “Other” category. Further, travel

does not include bus rentals for group trips, which would be covered under the contractual category. Finally, if the applicant intends to use any funds for travel outside the U.S., it must be specifically identified. All proposed foreign travel must be approved by the EPA's Office of International and Tribal Affairs prior to being taken.

- **Equipment - Identify each item to be purchased which has an estimated acquisition cost of \$5,000 or more per unit and a useful life of more than one year.** Equipment also includes accessories necessary to make the equipment operational. Equipment does not include: (1) equipment planned to be leased/rented, including lease/purchase agreements; or (2) equipment service or maintenance contracts that are not included in the purchase price for the equipment. These types of proposed costs should be included in the "Other" category. Items with a unit cost of less than \$5,000 should be categorized as supplies, pursuant to 2 CFR § 200.1, "Equipment." The budget detail must include an itemized listing of all equipment proposed under the project. If installation costs are included in the equipment costs, labor expenses shall be itemized with the detailed number of hours charged and the hourly wage. If the applicant has written procurement procedures that define a threshold for equipment costs that is lower than \$5,000, then that threshold takes precedence.
- **Supplies - All tangible personal property other than "equipment."** The budget detail should identify categories of supplies to be procured (e.g., laboratory supplies or office supplies). Non-tangible goods and services associated with supplies, such as printing service, photocopy services, and rental costs should be included in the "Other" category.
- **Contractual - Identify each proposed contract and specify its purpose and estimated cost.** Contractual services (including consultant services) are those services to be carried out by an individual or organization, other than the applicant, in the form of a procurement relationship. The [EPA's Subaward Policy and Supplemental Frequent Questions](#) has detailed guidance available for differentiating between contractors and subrecipients. Leased or rented goods (equipment or supplies) should be included in the "Other" category. The EPA does not require applicants to identify specific contractors. The applicant should list the proposed contract activities along with a brief description of the anticipated scope of work or services to be provided, proposed duration, and proposed procurement method (competitive or non-competitive), if known. Any proposed non-competed/sole-source contracts in excess of \$3,500 must include a justification. Note that it is unlikely that the EPA will accept proposed sole source contracts for goods and services (e.g., consulting) that are widely available in the commercial market. Refer to the [EPA's Best Practice Guide for Procuring Services, Supplies, and Equipment Under EPA Assistance Agreements](#) for the EPA's policies on competitive procurements and encouraging the use of small and disadvantaged business enterprises.
- **Other - List each item in sufficient detail for the EPA to determine the reasonableness and allowability of its cost.** This category should include only those types of direct costs that do not fit in any of the other budget categories. Examples of costs that may be in this category are insurance; rental/lease of equipment or supplies; equipment service or

maintenance contracts; printing or photocopying; participant support costs such as non-employee training stipends and travel; subsidies or rebates for purchases of pollution control equipment (such as a specified amount of funding for residential woodstove changeouts or truck owners to purchase cleaner trucks); and subaward costs. Applicants should describe the items included in the “Other” category and include the estimated amount of participant support costs in a separate line item. Additional information about participant support costs is contained in [RAIN-2018-G05, “EPA Guidance on Participant Support Costs.”](#)

Subawards (e.g., subgrants) and participant support costs are a distinct type of cost under this category. The term “subaward” means an award of financial assistance (money or property) by any legal agreement made by the recipient to an eligible subrecipient even if the agreement is referred to as a contract. Rebates, subsidies, and similar one-time, lump-sum payments to program beneficiaries for purchase of eligible emission control technologies are considered participant support costs. Please refer to Appendix A for detailed guidance on funding projects and partnerships and how to correctly categorize these costs in the workplan budget. “Other” does not include procurement purchases, technical assistance in the form of services instead of money, or other assistance in the form of revenue sharing, loans, loan guarantees, interest subsidies, insurance, or direct appropriations. Subcontracts are not subawards and belong in the contractual category. Applicants must provide the aggregate amount they propose to issue as subaward work as a separate line item in the “Other” category, and a description of the types of activities to be supported. Refer to the [EPA’s Subaward Policy and Supplemental Frequent Questions](#) for additional guidance.

- **Indirect Charges - If indirect charges are budgeted, indicate the approved rate and base.** Indirect costs are those incurred by the grantee for a common or joint purpose that benefit more than one cost objective or project and are not readily assignable to specific cost objectives or projects as a direct cost. Examples of Indirect Cost Rate calculations are shown below:
 - Personnel (Indirect Rate x Personnel = Indirect Costs)
 - Personnel and Fringe (Indirect Rate x Personnel & Fringe = Indirect Costs)
 - Total Direct Costs (Indirect Rate x Total Direct Costs = Indirect Costs)
 - Direct Costs, less distorting or other factors such as contracts and equipment
(Indirect Rate x (Total Direct Cost – distorting factors) = Indirect Costs)

Additional indirect cost guidance is available in [RAIN-2018-G02, “Indirect Cost Guidance for Recipients of EPA Assistance Agreements.”](#)

Example Budget Table (Required, included in the 15-page limit)

Line Item & Itemized Cost	EPA Funding¹⁰
(1) Project Manager @ \$40/hr x 10 hrs/wk x 208 wks	\$83,200
(2) Project Staff @ \$30/hr x 40 hrs/wk x 208 wks	\$249,600
TOTAL PERSONNEL	\$332,800
20% of Salary and Wages @ 20% x Total Personnel - Retirement, Health Benefits, FICA, SUI	\$66,560
TOTAL FRINGE BENEFITS	\$66,560
Mileage for PM: 25 miles/wk @ \$.17/mi x 208 wks	\$884
Mileage for Staff: 50 mi/wk @ \$.17/mi x 208 wks	\$1,768
TOTAL TRAVEL	\$2,652
Reclamation equipment @ \$100,000/unit	\$300,000
TOTAL EQUIPMENT	\$300,000
Outreach Materials and Supplies	\$10,000
TOTAL SUPPLIES	\$10,000
Consulting services with a reclamation company or destruction facility	\$55,000
TOTAL CONTRACTUAL	\$55,000
Subaward/subgrant to local community-based organization for outreach and engagement	\$200,000
TOTAL OTHER	\$200,000
(Federal Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate = 20%)	
Federal Indirect Cost Rate x Personnel = Indirect Costs	\$66,560
TOTAL INDIRECT	\$66,560
TOTAL FUNDING	\$1,033,572
TOTAL PROJECT COST¹¹	\$1,033,572

Note on Management Fees: When formulating budgets for applications, applicants must not include management fees or similar charges in excess of the direct costs and indirect costs at the rate approved by the applicant’s cognizant federal audit agency, or at the rate provided for by the terms of the agreement negotiated with the EPA. The term “management fees or similar charges” refers to expenses added to the direct costs in order to accumulate and reserve funds for ongoing business expenses, unforeseen liabilities, or for other similar costs that are not allowable under the EPA assistance agreements. Management fees or similar charges cannot be used to improve or expand the project funded under this agreement, except to the extent authorized as a direct cost of carrying out the workplan.

¹⁰ EPA Funding amount must be included on the SF-424 in Section 18.a and SF-424A in: cell 5(e) under Section A – Budget Summary; and Column (1) under Section B – Budget Categories.

¹¹ Total Project Cost must be included on the SF-424 in Section 18.g and SF-424A in: cell 5(g) under Section A – Budget Summary; and column (5), Row k under Section B – Budget Categories.

b. Expenditure of Awarded Funds (5 possible points)

Applicants should provide a detailed written description of the applicant’s approach, procedures, and controls for ensuring that awarded grant funds will be expended in a timely and efficient manner.

c. Reasonableness of Costs (5 possible points)

The EPA will evaluate the reasonableness of the applicant’s budget based on the applicant’s narrative description of the budget and detailed breakout of requested funding for each work component or task. The applicant should provide a detailed description of every itemized cost, including how every cost relates to the project narrative and specific emission reduction activities. Instructions for what to include in the Budget Detail are described in Section 8 above.

Applicants must itemize the cost categories as listed above and in the SF-424A form: personnel, fringe benefits, contractual costs, travel, equipment, supplies, contractual costs, other direct costs (subawards, participant support costs), indirect costs, and total costs. Round up to the nearest dollar and do not use any cents.

For applicants that provide a voluntary cost share/match or leveraged resources as described in Section III.B. of the NOFO and Section 8 above, the budget narrative must include a detailed description of how the applicant will obtain the cost share and leveraged resources and how the cost share funding and leveraged resources will be used. Proposed voluntary cost share included in the budget detail must also be included on the SF-424 and SF-424A. Leveraged resources should not be included in the SF-424 or SF-424A.

Recipients may issue subawards, contracts, or participant support costs to implement projects. Please refer to Appendix A for detailed guidance on these funding options and how to correctly categorize these costs in the workplan budget.

Section 9 - Attachments (As listed in Section IV.A of the NOFO; this information does not count towards the project narrative 15-page limit):

Project Team Biographies: Optional. Provide resumes or curriculum vitae for key staff, managers, and any other key personnel. If submitted, this should be referenced under Section 8 “Budget” of the workplan.

CEJST or EJSscreen Supplemental Indexes Data: Optional. Include data, analyses, and results to help characterize and describe the affected communities/populations and area(s); see Section I.B. “Program Goals and Objectives” of the NOFO.

Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement: Optional. The applicant will be required to submit this

agreement if their application is selected for funding.

Partnership Letters: If applicable, letters of support that demonstrate strong, long-term involvement throughout the project from a variety of project partners are encouraged. Letters should specifically indicate how project partners and supporting organizations will participate in or directly assist in the design and performance of the project. Letters should be addressed to the applicant organization and included as attachments to the application. Please do not ask partners to submit letters directly to the EPA.

D. Coalition Coverage

Groups of two or more eligible applicants may choose to form a coalition and submit a single application under this NOFO; however, one entity must be responsible for the grant. Coalitions must identify which eligible organization will be the recipient of the grant and which eligible organization(s) will be subrecipients of the recipient (the “pass-through entity”). Subawards must be consistent with the definition of that term in 2 CFR 200.1 and comply with the [EPA’s Subaward Policy](#). The pass-through entity that administers the grant and subawards will be accountable to the EPA for proper expenditure of the funds and reporting and will be the point of contact for the coalition. As provided in 2 CFR 200.332, subrecipients are accountable to the pass-through entity for proper use of the EPA funding. For-profit organizations are not eligible for subawards under this grant program but may receive procurement contracts. Any contracts for services or products funded with the EPA financial assistance must be awarded under the competitive procurement procedures of 2 CFR Part 200 and/or 2 CFR Part 1500, as applicable. The regulations at 2 CFR 1500.10 contain limitations on the extent to which the EPA funds may be used to compensate individual consultants. 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. Do not name a procurement contractor (including a consultant) as a “partner” or otherwise in your application unless the contractor has been selected in compliance with competitive procurement requirements.

E. Scientific Data Management Plan (SDMP)

Applications submitted in response to this solicitation must include an SDMP that addresses public access to the EPA-funded scientific research data by including the information below:

1. If the proposed research described in the application is expected to result in the generation of scientific research data, the application must include an SDMP of up to two single-spaced pages (this is in addition to any application page limits described in Section IV of this NOFO that apply to other parts of the application package) describing plans for providing long-term preservation of, and public access to, the scientific research data and accompanying metadata created and/or collected under the award (including data generated under subawards and contracts) funded in whole or in part by the EPA. The SDMP should indicate that recipients will make accessible, at a minimum, scientific research data and associated metadata underlying their scientific research journal publications funded in whole or in part by the EPA. SDMPs should reflect relevant standards and community best practices for data and metadata and make use of community-accepted repositories whenever practicable. The contents of the SDMP (or

absence thereof) will be considered as part of the application review process for selected applicants as described in Section V and must be deemed acceptable for the applicant to receive an award. The SDMP should include the following elements (Note: If any of the items listed below do not apply, please explain why):

- i. Types of scientific research data and metadata expected to be generated and/or collected under the award.
- ii. The location where the data will be publicly accessible.
- iii. The standards to be used for data/metadata format and content.
- iv. Policies for accessing and sharing data including provisions for appropriate protection of privacy, security, intellectual property, and other rights or requirements consistent with applicable laws, regulations, rules, and policies.
- v. Plans for digital data storage, archiving, and long-term preservation that address the relative value of long-term preservation and access along with the associated costs and administrative burden.
- vi. Description of how data accessibility and preservation will enable validation of published results or how such results could be validated if data are not shared or preserved.
- vii. Roles and responsibilities for ensuring SDMP implementation and management (including contingency plans in case key personnel leave the project).
- viii. Resources and capabilities (equipment, connections, systems, software, expertise, etc.) requested in the research application that are needed to meet the stated goals for accessibility and preservation (reference can be made to the relevant section of the research application's budget justification).
- ix. If appropriate, an explanation as to why data accessibility and/or preservation are not possible.

If the proposed research is not expected to result in the generation of scientific research data, provide the following statement (not subject to any application page limits described in Section IV of this solicitation) in your application as the SDMP: "The proposed research is not expected to result in the generation of scientific research data." If scientific research data are generated after award, the recipient agrees to update the statement by providing the EPA with a revised SDMP (see content of SDMP described above) describing how scientific research data and accompanying metadata created and/or collected under the award (including data generated under subawards and contracts) will be preserved and, as appropriate, made publicly accessible.

F. Releasing Copies of Applications

In concert with the EPA's commitment to conducting business in an open and transparent manner, copies of applications submitted under this NOFO may be made publicly available on the EPA's IRA website or other public website for a period of time after the selected applications are announced. The EPA recommends that applications not include trade secrets, commercial or financial information that is confidential or privileged, or sensitive information, if disclosed, that would invade another individual's personal privacy (e.g., personal email addresses, personal phone numbers, etc.). However,

if such information is included, it will be treated in accordance with [40 CFR § 2.203](#). (Review the EPA clause IV.a., Confidential Business Information, under the [EPA Solicitation Clauses](#).)

Clearly indicate which portion(s) of the application you are claiming as confidential, privileged, or sensitive information, or state ‘n/a’ or ‘not applicable’ if the application does not have confidential, privileged, or sensitive information. As provided at 40 CFR § 2.203(b), if no claim of confidential treatment accompanies the information when it is received by the EPA, it may be made available to the public by the EPA without further notice to the submitter.

V. APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

NOTE: Additional provisions that apply to this section can be found at the [EPA Solicitation Clauses](#).

Only eligible entities whose application(s) meet the threshold criteria in Section III.C. of this NOFO will be evaluated according to the criteria set forth below. **Applicants should explicitly address these criteria as part of their application package submittal in the project narrative, following the content requirements set forth in Section IV.** Each application will be rated using a point system. Applications will be evaluated based on a total of 100 points possible.

A. Evaluation Criteria

Criteria	Points
Total Possible Points	100
<p>1. <u>Project Summary and Approach:</u> Under this criterion, the EPA will evaluate applications based on the extent and quality of the applicant’s project summary and overall approach. Specifically, The EPA will evaluate the extent and quality of:</p> <p>A. Overall Project (15 points) The overall proposed project, consistent with Section I.B.</p> <p>B. Anticipated Project Benefits (10 points) How the proposed project will support or benefit the public or advance scientific knowledge and the relationship of the proposed project to the seriousness, extent, and urgency of the environmental problems toward which the project is directed. How the application demonstrates the anticipated public benefits to be derived from the project and describe the degree to which the project can be expected to produce results that will have general application to national pollution control problems.</p>	25
<p>2. <u>Environmental Results – Outputs, Outcomes and Performance Measures:</u> Under this criterion, The EPA will evaluate:</p> <p>A. Expected Project Outputs and Outcomes (5 points) The extent and quality to which the applicant identifies and proposes outputs and outcomes, as described in Section I.C.</p> <p>B. Performance Measures and Plan (5 points) The quality of the proposed performance measures and effectiveness of the applicant’s plan for tracking and measuring its</p>	15

<p>progress toward achieving the expected project outputs and outcomes, including those identified in Section I.C. of this announcement.</p> <p>C. Timeline and Milestones (5 points) The reasonableness of the proposed timeline including key milestones for specific tasks and the likelihood of completion of the project’s goals and objectives by project end.</p> <p>For projects under project areas 1 (reclaim technology) and 3 (innovative destruction technology), applications should clearly define the TRL of their technology. Projects with a lower TRL may not be rated as highly as those with a higher TRL.</p>	
<p>3. <u>Disadvantaged Communities:</u> The application will be evaluated on the quality of the response and extent to which it:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides a comprehensive discussion and assessment of avoided risks and hazards to disadvantaged communities from the proposed HFC reclaim or destruction projects; • Explains how input from disadvantaged communities was incorporated into the application; and • Includes meaningful involvement of disadvantaged communities during the period of performance of the project. 	10
<p>4. <u>Programmatic Capability and Past Performance:</u> Under this criterion, the EPA will evaluate applicants based on their ability to successfully complete and manage the proposed project considering their:</p> <p>A. Past Performance (4 points) Past performance in successfully completing and managing the assistance agreements identified in the project narrative as described in Section IV.C. of the announcement.</p> <p>B. Reporting Requirements (3 points) History of meeting the reporting requirements under the assistance agreements identified in the project narrative as described in Section IV.C. 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.</p> <p>C. Staff Expertise (3 points) Organizational experience, including staff expertise and qualifications, staff knowledge, and resources or the ability to obtain them, to successfully achieve the goals of the proposed project.</p> <p>NOTE: In evaluating applicants under items A. and B. of this criterion, the EPA 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 the applicant does not have any relevant or available past performance or reporting information, please indicate this in the</p>	10

<p>application and you will receive a neutral score for sub-criteria A. and B. (a neutral score is half of the total points available in a subset of possible points). If the applicant does not provide any response for these items, you may receive a score of 0 for these sub-criteria.</p>	
<p>5. <u>Project Sustainability and Replicability:</u> Under this criterion, the EPA will evaluate applicants based on the extent to which the project outputs and outcomes are sustainable and can be continued after project completion. The Agency will also evaluate the application based on the extent and quality to which the application identifies and explains how results from the project can be replicated, including with other technologies or in other communities.</p>	10
<p>6. <u>Job Quality:</u> The application will be evaluated on the quality of the response and extent to which it describes, as applicable, concrete strategies and commitments to ensure job quality, strong labor standards, and a diverse, highly skilled workforce for the implementation of the GHG reduction measures.</p>	5
<p>7. <u>Innovative Approaches and Solutions:</u> Under this criterion, the Agency will evaluate the application based on the extent to which the application proposes a project that includes innovative approaches (e.g., not usual, routine, or established practices) to support the development of technologies and practices to support HFC reclamation or destruction. Examples of innovative approaches and solutions include, but are not limited to, new or novel services, purchases, development, or installation of emerging technologies, creating and encouraging the development of emerging markets, solving local challenges around access to safe HFC reclamation or destruction, and others.</p>	10
<p>8. <u>Budget:</u> Under this criterion, the EPA will evaluate applicants based on the extent and quality to which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Budget Detail (5 points) The proposed budget provides a detailed breakout by funding type in the proper budget category for each activity for which the applicant is requesting funding. B. Expenditure of Awarded Funds (5 points) The applicant’s approach, procedures, and controls to ensure that awarded grant funds will be expended in a timely and efficient manner. C. Reasonableness of Costs (5 points) The proposed costs are reasonable to accomplish the proposed goals, objectives, and measurable environmental outcomes. 	15

B. Review and Selection Process

Applications will first be evaluated against the threshold factors listed in Section III.C. of this NOFO. Only those applications which meet all of the threshold factors will be evaluated using the evaluation criteria listed above by the EPA evaluation team. Each application will be given a numerical score and will be rank ordered by the review panel. Preliminary funding recommendations will be provided to the EPA selection official based on these reviews and rankings. Final funding decisions will be made by the EPA headquarters selection official based on the rankings and preliminary recommendations of the EPA evaluation team and the other factors listed in Section V.C. below.

C. Other Factors

In making the final funding decisions, the EPA headquarters selection official may also consider programmatic priorities, geographic diversity, diversity among the three project areas, and a diversity of organization types. Once final decisions have been made, a funding recommendation will be developed and forwarded to the EPA award official.

D. Anticipated Announcement and Federal Award Dates

The EPA anticipates it will announce selection decisions in April 2024 and tentatively plans to issue awards by summer of 2024.

VI. AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

NOTE: Additional provisions that apply to this section can be found at the [EPA Solicitation Clauses](#).

A. Award Notices

The EPA anticipates notification to successful applicants will be made via telephone or electronic mail by the Office of Air and Radiation. The notification will be sent to the original signer of the application, or the project contact listed in the application. This notification, which informs the applicant that their application has been selected and is being recommended for award, is not an authorization to begin work. The EPA's Office of Grants and Debarment will make the official notification of an award. 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 the EPA to make an award to an applicant. The award notice, signed by the EPA grants officer, is the authorizing document and will be provided through electronic mail. The successful applicant may need to prepare and submit additional documents and forms (e.g., workplan), which must be approved by the EPA, before the grant can officially be awarded. The time between notification of selection and award of a grant can take up to 90 days or longer.

B. Combining Successful Applications into One Award

If an applicant submits multiple applications under this competition, and multiple applications are selected for funding, the EPA may award a single assistance agreement that combines separate applications for different tasks/activities.

C. Reporting Requirement

Quarterly progress reports and a detailed final report will be required. Quarterly reports summarizing technical progress, planned activities for the next quarter, and a summary of expenditures are required. The final report shall be submitted to the EPA within 120 calendar days of the completion of the period of performance. The final report must include a summary of the project or activity,

advances achieved, and costs of the project or activity. In addition, the final report shall discuss the problems, successes, and lessons learned from the project or activity that could help overcome structural, organizational, or technical obstacles to implementing a similar project elsewhere. The schedule for submission of quarterly reports will be established by the EPA after the grants are awarded. Award recipients may be provided with additional information and guidance on reporting performance measures and project progress after award.

Performance Measures. The applicant should also develop performance measures they expect to achieve through the proposed activities and describe them in their application. These performance measures will help gather insights and will be the mechanism to track progress concerning successful processes and output and outcome strategies and will provide the basis for developing lessons to inform future recipients. It is expected that the description of performance measures will directly relate to the project outcomes and outputs (see Section I.C.). The description of the performance measures will directly relate to the project's outcomes and outputs, including but not limited to:

- Overseeing subrecipients and/or contractors and vendors;
- Tracking and reporting project progress on expenditures and purchases; and
- Tracking, measuring, and reporting accomplishments and proposed timelines/milestones.

The following are questions to consider when developing output and outcome measures of quantitative and qualitative results:

- What are the measurable short term and longer term results the project will achieve?
- How does the plan measure progress in achieving the expected results (including outputs and outcomes) and how will the approach use resources effectively and efficiently?
- What are the expected locations (such as Census tract) of the outputs and outcomes?

D. Buy America Requirements

Projects under this competition are subject to the domestic content sourcing requirements under the Build America, Buy America (BABA) provisions of the [Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act \(IIJA\)](#) (P.L. 117-58, §§70911-70917) when using funds for the purchase of goods, products, and materials on any form of construction, alteration, maintenance, or repair of infrastructure in the U.S.¹²

BABA requires that all iron, steel, manufactured products, and construction materials consumed in, incorporated into, or affixed to federally funded infrastructure projects must be produced in the U.S. The recipient must implement these requirements in its procurements, and this article must flow down to all subawards and contracts at any tier. Applicants must consider this information when preparing

¹² See 2 CFR 184. "Infrastructure encompasses public infrastructure projects in the United States, which includes, at a minimum, the structures, facilities, and equipment for roads, highways, and bridges; public transportation; dams, ports, harbors, and other maritime facilities; intercity passenger and freight railroads; freight and intermodal facilities; airports; water systems, including drinking water and wastewater systems; electrical transmission facilities and systems; utilities; broadband infrastructure; and buildings and real property; and structures, facilities, and equipment that generate, transport, and distribute energy including electric vehicle (EV) charging."

budget information. For legal definitions and sourcing requirements, the recipient must consult [EPA's Build America, Buy America website](#).

When supported by a rationale provided in IJJA §70914, the recipient may submit a waiver request to the EPA. The recipient should request guidance on the submission instructions of an EPA waiver request from the EPA Project Officer. A list of approved the EPA waivers is available on the [Build America, Buy America website](#).

In addition to BABA requirements, all procurements under grants may be subject to the domestic preference provisions of 2 CFR §200.322.

See "Build America, Buy America" clause in the [EPA Solicitation Clauses](#).

VII. CONTACT INFORMATION

Further information, if needed, may be obtained from the EPA contact indicated below. Information regarding this NOFO obtained from sources other than these Agency Contacts may not be accurate. Email inquiries are preferred.

Chris Orvin; (202) 564-0430; orvin.chris@epa.gov and/or HFCGrants@epa.gov.

Questions and answers will be posted until the closing date of this announcement at the OAR Grants/Funding webpage: <http://www.epa.gov/grants/air-grants-and-funding>.

APPENDIX A – Further information Regarding Contracts, Subawards, and Participant Support Costs

I. Background

The Standard Form 424A (SF-424A) includes a separate row for “contractual” costs and “other” costs. As noted in Section 8 under Section IV.C., the “Other” cost category on the SF-424A should be used to cover both subawards and participant support costs. Depending on the project, these costs may be applicable to a targeted airshed application. This appendix helps clarify these differences. Additional information about participant support costs is contained in [RAIN-2018-G05, “EPA Guidance on Participant Support Costs.”](#)

If a recipient intends to fund the proposed project’s technologies (i.e., vehicles, engines, equipment, and/or appliances) that they do not directly own, the recipient may have the option to: (1) issue a contract; (2) make a subaward to an eligible entity; or (3) provide participant support costs to a program beneficiary. For options (2) and (3), the recipient may be able to fund technology and installation costs, but only subawards can be used to fund direct and indirect costs. If the grant recipient only intends to fund equipment and installation costs, the recipient may choose to provide participant support costs to a program beneficiary rather than a subaward.

II. Contracts

As described in 2 CFR § 200.331, a contract is for the purpose of obtaining goods and services for the recipient’s own use and creates a procurement relationship with the contractor. Characteristics indicative of a procurement relationship between the recipient and a contractor are when the contractor:

- Provides the goods and services within normal business operations;
- Provides similar goods or services to many different purchasers;
- Normally operates in a competitive environment;
- Provides goods or services that are ancillary to the operation of the federal program; and
- Is not subject to compliance requirements of the federal program as a result of the agreement, though similar requirements may apply for other reasons.

Grant recipients that enter into procurement contracts must comply with the applicable procurement provisions in 2 CFR § 200.317 through 200.327.

NOTE: If you intend to name a contractor (including an individual consultant or equipment vendor) or a subrecipient as a project partner or otherwise in your application, the EPA recommends that you carefully review, and comply with, the directions contained in the “Contracts and Subawards” clause that can be accessed at the [EPA Solicitation Clauses](#). Refer to the [EPA’s Best Practice Guide for Procuring Services, Supplies, and Equipment Under EPA Assistance Agreements](#) and the [EPA’s](#)

[Subaward Policy](#) and supplemental Frequent Questions for additional guidance. Applicants must demonstrate that named contractors (including individual consultants and equipment vendors) were selected in compliance with the competitive requirements of the Procurement Standards in 2 CFR Part 200 as interpreted in the EPA guidance and/or that named subrecipients meet the eligibility requirements in the EPA's Subaward Policy for the EPA to consider their qualifications and role in the proposed project.

III. Subawards

Under 2 CFR § 200.1, subrecipient means a non-federal entity that receives a subaward from a grantee to carry out part of a federal program but does not include program beneficiaries receiving participant support costs; see Section IV. of this appendix below. Grant recipients may make subawards to subrecipients to carry out a portion of the grant project; in such case, the grant recipient is also known as a "pass-through entity." Subawards establish a financial assistance relationship under which the subrecipient's employees and contractors implement programs and projects to accomplish the goals and objectives of the grant. It is important to bear in mind that subrecipients are subject to the same federal requirements as the pass-through entity.

Under this competition, a non-federal entity is eligible to receive a subaward even if it is not eligible to receive a grant from the EPA directly. While there may be some situations in which a subaward to an individual may be appropriate, those situations are rare.

Subrecipients only receive reimbursement for their actual direct or approved indirect costs and do not "profit" from the transaction. For-profit entities participating in grant activities are typically contractors rather than subrecipients.

The EPA's Award Official must approve subawards to for-profit entities and individuals on the basis of either a precise description of the subaward in the EPA approved budget and project narrative, or on a transaction-by-transaction basis.

The applicant's project narrative and budget narrative should include detailed descriptions of any proposed subawards and include cost estimates for subawards as line items under the "Other" budget category in the SF-424A; see Section 7 in Section IV.B. Should a recipient decide to make a subaward that was not described in the approved project narrative and budget, the recipient must obtain prior written approval from the EPA's Award Official for the subaward.

If a recipient chooses to pass funds from its grant to other entities through subawards, the recipient must comply with applicable subaward provisions of 2 CFR Part 200, the EPA Subaward Policy, and the EPA's National Term and Condition for Subawards. Note that under 2 CFR § 200.331 through 200.333, there are extensive requirements for subrecipient monitoring and management that apply to pass-through entities.

Many of the federal administrative grant regulations in 2 CFR Part 200 and 2 CFR Part 1500, as well as the grant terms and conditions in the assistance agreement, “flow down” to subrecipients receiving a subaward. Such requirements need to be identified in the written subaward agreement between the recipient and the subrecipient. Additionally, if a subrecipient intends to procure goods or services using targeted airshed grant funds, the subrecipient must comply with the applicable federal procurement standards in 2 CFR Part 200, 2 CFR Part 1500, and 40 CFR Part 33 as these requirements also “flow down” to subrecipients.

There is no requirement for recipients to compete subawards under this NOFO; however, pass-through entities may choose to select subrecipients competitively provided this practice is consistent with applicable statutes, regulations, and the terms and conditions of their targeted airshed grant.

Recipients may use the subaward template contained in Appendix D of the EPA’s Subaward Policy to assist them in complying with the “subaward content” requirements; however, the EPA does not mandate the use of this template.

IV. Participant Support Costs

Recipients may provide participant support costs (PSCs) to program beneficiaries to enable beneficiaries to participate in the recipient’s program or project. PSCs include stipends, or other payments to program beneficiaries by a grantee, subrecipient, or contractor. For example, PSCs might be used for the purchase of eligible technologies. Program beneficiaries, rather than the grant recipient, would own the new technology.

PSCs differ from subawards in that the beneficiary is participating in the grant recipient’s project or program instead of implementing their own project or program. Program beneficiaries may include but are not limited to individual owner/operators, private or public fleet owners, or residents in the applicable area; however, program beneficiaries are not employees, contractors or subrecipients of the grant recipient.

Recipients may also use PSCs to make purchases on behalf of program beneficiaries. In some situations, this approach allows grant recipients to achieve economies of scale and/or take advantage of existing purchase contracts. Competitive procurement requirements apply to the grant recipient when the recipient takes this approach.

The federal administrative grant regulations in 2 CFR Part 200 and 2 CFR Part 1500, as well as the grant terms and conditions in the recipient’s grant agreement, generally do not “flow down” to program beneficiaries receiving PSCs except that costs must be reasonable and incurred within the grant project period. Requirements for compliance with civil rights laws and ensuring that program beneficiaries are eligible to receive federal financial assistance are applicable as explained in the [EPA Guidance on Participant Support Costs](#). In addition, program beneficiaries must abide by requirements to ensure that the funds are used only for authorized purposes.

If a grantee, subrecipient, or contractor is issuing PSCs, it must have a written agreement in place. The written agreement should not be structured as a subaward agreement and should not refer to program beneficiaries as subrecipients consistent with 2 CFR § 200.1, "Subrecipient." In addition, the written agreement should not include language requiring the program beneficiary to comply with the federal grant regulations at 2 CFR § Part 200, 2 CFR § Part 1500, or the terms and conditions found in the award between the EPA and the recipient, other than requiring that the costs must be reasonable, necessary, and allocable. The written agreement should also include the following:

- A description of the activities and amounts that will be supported by the PSCs;
- The program and/or statutory requirements that the program beneficiary must abide by in order to ensure that the funds are used only for authorized purposes;
- Specify which party will have title to the technologies (e.g., vehicles, engines, equipment and/or appliances), if any, purchased with PSCs;
- Source documentation requirements to ensure proper accounting of the PSCs; and
- Any reporting that must be submitted by the program beneficiary.

The EPA's Award Official must approve PSCs on the basis of either a precise description of the PSCs in the EPA approved budget and workplan, or on a transaction-by-transaction basis. The applicant's project narrative and budget narrative should include detailed descriptions of any proposed PSCs and include cost estimates for PSCs as line items under the "Other" budget category. Should a recipient decide to issue PSCs that were not described in the approved workplan and budget, the recipient must obtain prior written approval from the EPA's Award Official. Moreover, after a grant is awarded, should a recipient decide to modify the amount approved (upwards or downwards) for PSCs, prior written approval from the EPA's Award Official is also required.

When creating budgets, applicants/recipients must exclude PSCs from Modified Total Direct Costs for calculation of indirect costs as required by 2 CFR § 200.1, "Modified Total Direct Costs."

Resources:

[RAIN-2018-G05, "EPA Guidance on Participant Support Costs."](#)

[Best Practice Guide for Procuring Services, Supplies, and Equipment Under EPA Assistance Agreements](#)

[Grants Policy Issuance 16-01: EPA Subaward Policy for EPA Assistance Agreement Recipients](#), with attachments, including:

- The EPA Subaward Policy
- Appendix A: Distinctions Between Subrecipients and Contractors
- Appendix B: National Term and Condition for Subawards
- Appendix C: Model Programmatic Subaward Reporting Requirement
- Appendix D: Subaward Agreement Template