

FINAL – March 29, 2010

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

TITLE: National Environmental Education Training Program

ACTION: Solicitation Notice

RFP NUMBER: EPA-EE-10-03

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA): 66-950

Application Deadline: Applications must be e-mailed to U.S. EPA at EnvEdTraining@epa.gov no later than 11:59pm EDT July 26, 2010 as described in Section IV. EPA will reply to applicants by e-mail that their e-mailed application has been received. If you can not submit your application by e-mail, please contact the person identified in Section VII to determine an alternative method. Applications submitted after the closing date and time will not be eligible for further consideration.

Number and Value of Award: One cooperative agreement will be awarded to a U.S. institution of higher education, a not-for-profit institution, or a consortium of such institutions to operate the program. Approximately \$2.2 million will be awarded for the first year of the program based on FY 2010 appropriations. Funding for the subsequent four years of the program is subject to annual appropriations by Congress. For planning purposes, applicants should estimate funding for each subsequent four years of the program at \$2 million per year.

Cost Sharing Requirement: Applicants must provide non-federal matching funds of at least 25% of the total cost of the first year of the program. The same match is required for the four subsequent years of the program and will need to be documented with the annual submission of a work plan.

Start Date: The start date for the program is October 1, 2010. The award will cover the first year of the program which will operate from October 1, 2010 - September 30, 2011. The Agency intends, subject to annual performance reviews, the availability of funds, and if consistent with Agency policy, to execute supplemental funding agreements for up to four subsequent project periods through September 30, 2015.

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Section I: Funding Opportunity Description

A. What is the purpose of this notice?

The purpose of this notice is to invite eligible institutions to submit applications to operate the National Environmental Education Training Program (referred to as the “National Training Program”) as authorized under Section 5 of the National Environmental Education Act of 1990 (the Act) (P.L. 101-619).

B. What is the National Training Program? What is environmental education training and long-term support?

The National Training Program delivers environmental education training and long-term support to teachers and other education professionals across the U.S. to enable them to effectively teach about environmental issues. Environmental education training refers to activities such as classes, workshops, seminars, conferences, and on-line learning which are designed to prepare teachers and other education professionals to effectively teach about environmental issues. Long-term support refers to activities that support training such as maintaining a web site of quality environmental education information, materials, and resources for educators; integrating environmental education into colleges and universities; linking environmental education to state efforts; and applying the results of research and evaluation to environmental education training programs.

C. What is the history of the National Training Program?

There have been four previous multi-year cooperative agreements awarded under this program. In 1992, the first award was made to a consortium of universities and non-profit organizations headed by the University of Michigan entitled the “National Consortium for Environmental Education and Training” (NCEET). In 1995, the second award was made to a consortium headed by the North American Association for Environmental Education (NAAEE) entitled the “Environmental Education and Training Partnership” (EETAP). In 2000, the third award was made to a consortium headed by the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point (UWSP) entitled the “Environmental Education and Training Partnership 2” (EETAP - 2). In 2005, the fourth award was made to a consortium headed by the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point (UWSP) entitled the “Environmental Education and Training Partnership 3” (EETAP - 3). The current program is scheduled to be completed by September 30, 2010. For information on the current program, go to: <http://www.eetap.org>.

Each of the four consortia identified above included various university and non-profit partners that shared responsibility for implementing program activities. For example, past

partners have included: Global Rivers EE Network, Greater Washington Urban League, Ground Water Foundation, Howard University, Michigan State University, National Association for Conservation Districts, Northern Illinois University, Ohio State University, and World Wildlife Fund. The current program, EETAP - 3, led by UWSP includes: American Forest Foundation/ Project Learning Tree, Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, Council for EE/Project WILD, NAAEE, National Audubon Society, Project WET Foundation, University of Oregon, and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service/National Conservation Training Center.

D. What is environmental education?

Environmental education (EE) increases awareness and knowledge about environmental issues and provides the skills needed to make informed and responsible decisions. EE enhances critical thinking, problem solving and effective decision making skills and teaches individuals how to weigh various sides of an environmental issue before making decisions. EE does not advocate a particular viewpoint or course of action.

E. What is the goal of environmental education? What is environmental literacy?

The goal of environmental education is to ensure that individuals are environmentally literate so they are able to make informed and responsible decisions that impact environmental quality. To become environmentally literate, people need a basic level of environmental knowledge; skills for gathering, analyzing, and investigating environmental issues; and the ability to apply what they have learned to their decisions and actions. In simple terms, an environmentally literate person:

- Knows that the choices they make as individuals and as consumers affect the environment;
- Understands that those choices can either help or harm the environment; and
- Applies what they have learned, individually or as part of a community, to promote stewardship and environmental sustainability.

F. What is “quality” environmental education? Do guidelines exist that address what “quality” environmental education is?

The National Project for Excellence in Environmental Education (NPEEE) has developed a series of national guidelines to promote quality environmental education. NPEEE is a project of the North American Association for Environmental Education (NAAEE) which has received substantial support from U.S. EPA. To date, guidelines have been developed for: 1) education materials, 2) K-12 environmental literacy goals, 3) educator preparation and professional development, 4) non-formal programs, and 5) early childhood learning (forthcoming Spring 2010). For more information on the NPEEE guidelines, go to: <http://www.naaee.org/npeee.html>. For more information on what an environmentally literate student needs to know and be able to do in grades K-12 see “Excellence in Environmental Education: Guidelines for Learning (K-12)” at: http://www.naaee.org/npeee/learner_guidelines.php.

G. What are the environmental education training needs of education professionals?

EPA and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's National Conservation Training Center recently funded a study entitled "Environmental Education Professional Development Needs and Priorities" (the "Professional Development Study," December 2009). The purpose of the study was to identify: 1) the professional development needs of environmental educators, 2) the top priorities for the next five years (2010-2015), 3) gaps in current programs, and 4) work needed to advance professional development that leads to environmental literacy. Based on key findings, the study concluded that environmental educators need professional development that enables them to:

- Conduct EE programs with diverse audiences in local communities
- Share models of what works, work together, and network
- Understand stewardship and environmental sustainability in the context of communities, culture, and human health
- Apply knowledge gained from research to EE practice about how to:
 - motivate citizen participation, action, attitude and behavior change
 - connect people with nature
 - engage diverse audiences and partners
 - help students learn
 - instruct adults
- Understand and apply basic EE knowledge, skills, and instructional techniques as well as the NPEEE's Guidelines for Excellence
- Teach critical thinking, problem solving, and inquiry skills
- Integrate EE into K-12, Science, Technology, Engineering & Math (STEM) projects, the reauthorization of the Primary and Secondary Education Act (called "No Child Left Behind"), and state standards
- Perform needs assessments, build evaluation into program design, develop objectives, and conduct outcome evaluations.

To download a copy of the Professional Development Study, go to:

http://www.eetap.org/pages/dynamic/web.page.php?page_id=116&topology_id=20&eod

Other studies or needs assessments may also exist that address the environmental education training needs of education professionals.

H. What are EPA's priorities for protecting human health and the environment? How can environmental education help EPA meet its goals?

The mission of EPA is to protect human health and the environment. EPA has identified seven key priorities that help focus the work of the Agency. These priorities are:

- Taking Action on Climate Change
- Improving Air Quality
- Assuring the Safety of Chemicals
- Cleaning Up Our Communities
- Protecting America’s Waters
- Expanding the Conversation on Environmentalism and Working for Environmental Justice
- Building Strong State and Tribal Partnerships

Many of these priorities focus on environmental challenges, such as climate change, that are complex, intractable, and not easily solved solely by government regulation and enforcement. Addressing these challenges requires a population that is diverse, informed, environmentally literate, as well as willing and able to translate their knowledge and skills into decisions and actions that protect the environment in every community, including those that are traditionally under-served. Environmental education is an important non-regulatory tool the Agency uses to help us meet our mission. For more information on EPA’s priorities, go to: <http://blog.epa.gov/administrator/2010/01/12/seven-priorities-for-epas-future>.

I. What factors should be used to guide the National Training Program?

The following factors should be used to guide the development and implementation of the National Training Program:

1) **NPEEE Guidelines:** Activities should be consistent with relevant NPEEE Guidelines as described in Section I.F. For example, the NPEEE Guidelines include the “Environmental Education Materials: Guidelines for Excellence” and the “Guidelines for the Preparation and Professional Development of Environmental Educators” which provide guidelines on how to develop and/or evaluate environmental education materials as well as on what an environmentally literate educator should know to teach effectively about the environment.

2) **Environmental Education Training Needs of Education Professionals:** Activities should address relevant findings of the “Environmental Education Professional Development Needs and Priorities” study as described in Section I.G. For example, this study indicates that training is needed on the following: learning basic environmental education knowledge and skills, understanding stewardship and environmental sustainability, applying research to practice, and sharing models of what works. Other appropriate environmental education professional development studies or needs assessments may also be used to guide the National Training Program.

3) **EPA Priorities:** Activities should be consistent with relevant EPA priorities as described in Section I.H. For example, EPA’s priorities include a wide range of environmental issues that need to be addressed such as taking action on climate change, improving air quality, and protecting America’s waters. These priorities also include important ways of addressing these environmental problems by reaching traditionally under-served audiences and building strong state partnerships.

J. What type of education professionals *must* be reached by the National Training Program? What demographic populations and geographic regions of the United States *must* be reached?

The National Training Program *must*, at a minimum, deliver training and long-term support to the wide range of education professionals that reach diverse demographic populations in all geographic regions of the United States as follows:

- 1) K-12 classroom teachers;
- 2) Faculty in education departments at colleges and universities (i.e., pre-service educators); and
- 3) Non-formal educators in settings such as parks, nature centers, and museums.

Educators from Mexico and Canada are also eligible to participate in this program.

An important priority for EPA is reaching historically under-served audiences. Therefore, the National Training Program *must* include opportunities for education professionals who reach historically under-served audiences such as communities of color, economically distressed communities and/or geographically isolated communities. Training that involves colleges and universities should include efforts to reach out to Minority Academic Institutions (MAIs) such as Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSIs), and Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs), Alaska Native Serving Institutions, and Native Hawaiian Serving Institutions. For information on EPA's MAI program, go to: http://www.epa.gov/osdbu/mai_program.htm.

K. Do existing national environmental education resources and programs need to be part of the National Training Program?

The National Training Program *must*, at a minimum, build on existing national environmental education resources and programs to leverage resources, encourage partnerships, and reduce duplication of effort. To build on these national resources and programs, partnerships may be formed with colleges/universities and/or non-profit organizations who are eligible to receive funds under this program. Partnerships may also be formed with other Federal agencies that support or implement environmental education and conservation education programs, as appropriate. Examples of federal agencies that are involved in environmental education and conservation education programs include: the U.S. Forest Service, National Park Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, NOAA, NASA, Bureau of Land Management, and the Corporation for National and Community Service. Federal agencies may not receive funds from this program, but can use their own resources to partner with this program. For more information on Federal agencies that support or implement environmental education and conservation programs, go to: <http://www.epa.gov/education/FTFmemws.html>.

L. What are the expected outputs of the National Training Program? How are training and long-term support activities defined?

“Outputs” describe what the program will do. The National Training Program has two basic outputs: 1) environmental education training and 2) long-term support. Environmental education training refers to activities such as classes, workshops, seminars, conferences, and on-line learning which are designed to prepare teachers and other education professionals to effectively teach about environmental issues. Long-term support refers to activities that support training such as maintaining a web site of EE information, materials, and resources for educators; integrating EE into education departments in colleges and universities; linking EE to education standards; and applying the results of EE research and evaluation. The expected “outputs” of the National Training Program are described below.

1) **Training:** Environmental education training under the National Training Program should, at a minimum, include the following:

a) **Developing and/or delivering NPEEE Guidelines workshops:** Workshops and other forums that promote understanding as well as provide instruction on how to apply the NPEEE guidelines to a wide range of environmental education programs and materials as described in Section I.F.

b) **Developing and/or delivering environmental education professional development workshops:** Workshops and other forums that address a wide range of issues and needs including environmental content as well as pedagogy to assist education professionals in becoming environmentally literate as well as skilled and effective educators. Workshops should be offered to meet the different needs of educators at beginning, intermediate and advanced levels of understanding and integrating EE into their teaching. Workshops can be provided for educators themselves, including classroom teachers, as well as for education professionals using a Train-the-Trainer model. Workshops may include how to effectively reach under-represented audiences, such as communities of color and economically distressed communities. Workshops that involve colleges and universities should include efforts to reach out to Minority Academic Institutions (MAIs) as described in Section I.J.

c) **Developing and/or delivering leadership and organizational development workshops:** Workshops and other forums that focus on how to develop, deliver, coordinate, and sustain EE programs through strategic planning, communication, and fundraising. Training should also include workshops that focus on how to work with state agencies and organizations to build their capacity to develop, deliver, coordinate, and sustain EE programs statewide (referred to as “state capacity building”). One model for developing effective leaders and organizations within the context of state capacity building is “leadership clinics” which focus on professional development, networking, strategic planning, and evaluation. Leadership clinics can be held at all levels, including state, regional and national. This leadership clinic model can also be modified to apply to meet different types of leadership development needs that do not focus on state capacity building. For more information on state capacity building, go to:

<http://eelink.net/capacitybuilding.html>. For more information on leadership clinics, go to:
http://eetap.org/pages/dynamic/web.page.php?page_id=25&topology_id=25&eod=1.

d) **Developing and/or delivering on-line courses:** Different types of on-line courses that address environmental content as well as pedagogy to assist education professionals in becoming environmentally literate as well as skilled and effective educators. Courses should be available to education professionals for credit that can be applied to various degree programs or continuing education requirements as well as available for those educators not seeking college credit. Courses may cover a wide range of topics for education professionals such as understanding the fundamentals of environmental education, utilizing strategic planning to meet program goals and objectives, and integrating evaluation into program design. Courses may also address improving the cultural relevancy of environmental education to various audiences and reaching historically under-represented audiences such as communities of color and economically distressed communities.

Other types of classes, workshops, seminars, conferences, and on-line learning that are designed to prepare education professionals to effectively teach about environmental issues may be implemented under this program.

2) **Long-Term Support:** Long-term support is as important as the actual training that occurs under the National Training Program. These activities often lay the institutional foundation needed to ensure that education professionals effectively use the knowledge and skills they have gained as part of their training. Below are examples of the types of long-term support that are relevant to the National Training Program. Other long-term support activities may be included as part of the program. To ensure effectiveness, it's important that applications have a focus. Addressing too many efforts or initiatives at the expense of quality outcomes is not recommended.

Long-term support should include the following:

a) **Maintaining a web site or portal of quality environmental education information, materials, and resources.** This may include refining existing web sites or portals or developing new ones. This web site or portal should not be limited to the EE information, materials, and resources of the applicant (and their key partner institutions where the application is a consortium of institutions). This may also include developing and utilizing Web 2.0 technologies for facilitating communication among educators on the Internet.

Long-term support may also include one or more of the following:

b) **Developing a framework for environmental education training programs that promote cultural diversity.** This may include developing strategies and offering training that help institutions and organizations become more inclusive so they are able to develop and deliver more effective EE programs that are culturally relevant to diverse audiences. This may include working with institutions and organizations that already provide EE educator training as well as

those who are seeking to add EE educator training to their programs.

c) **Developing additional national environmental education guidelines.** The applicant may develop additional guidelines such as “Community EE Guidelines for Excellence” that establish a framework for implementing EE programs at the local level with diverse communities, including communities of color and economically distressed communities. The need for such guidelines, to complement the existing NPEEE Guidelines, is discussed in the Professional Development Study as described in Section I.G. The NPEEE Guidelines, as described in Section I.F, address a broad range of issues that are consistent with the findings of the Professional Development Study such as involving diverse audiences in EE, addressing EE content and methods, integrating EE into K-12 education, and promoting stewardship and environmental sustainability.

d) **Integrating environmental education into colleges and universities.** This may include integrating EE into teacher education departments in colleges and universities to prepare future teachers to teach effectively about environmental issues. This may include applying the “Standards for the Initial Preparation of Environmental Educators” (October 2007) to education departments as part of their accreditation by the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE). The NCATE EE standards were developed by NAAEE with EPA funds. This may also include integrating EE into natural resource, environmental studies, and other appropriate departments at colleges and universities. This may include adding EE courses as well as EE graduate or undergraduate degree programs to various departments at colleges and universities. Efforts to work with colleges and universities should include efforts to reach out to Minority Academic Institutions as described in Section I.J. For more information about the NCATE EE standards, go to:

<http://www.naaee.org/Members/sue/ncate-naaee-ee-standards.doc/view?searchterm=ncate>.

e) **Linking environmental education to state efforts relating to state education standards, STEM projects, certification of non-formal educators, and state environmental literacy plans.** This may include: 1) working with EE resource providers to correlate their EE materials to state education standards to demonstrate how the EE can be used to meet state education requirements; 2) integrating EE into STEM education projects to demonstrate how EE can be used to further goals for improving science, technology, engineering and mathematics education; 3) developing state certification programs for non-formal environmental educators to establish a baseline of EE knowledge and skills that are needed to effectively teach about environmental issues; and 4) working with states that are currently developing “State Environmental Literacy Plans” in response to the proposed “No Child Left Inside” amendment to the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (referred to as “No Child Left Behind”). For more information about current state certification efforts, go to:

<http://www.naaee.org/programs-and-initiatives/professional-certification-and-accreditation/the-pilot-states>. For more information about, “No Child Left Inside,” go to:

<http://www.cbf.org/Page.aspx?pid=687>. For more information on developing state environmental literacy plans, go to: <http://www.naaee.org/>.

f) **Collecting, analyzing, and applying the results of research and evaluation to environmental education training programs.** This may include conducting literature reviews, developing annotated bibliographies, analyzing and disseminating results, and/or developing or modifying existing educator training programs to ensure that the results of research and evaluation from EE and other disciplines are integrated into EE training efforts. For more information on EE research, go to: <http://eelink.net/pages/EE+-+Research>.

g) **Ensuring quality environmental education materials are identified, utilized and developed (where gaps exist).** This may include developing or refining an on-line process that identifies, evaluates, and promotes the use of quality EE materials. This may also include the development and implementation of workshops and other training activities that enable teachers and other education professionals to evaluate their own materials and/or gain access to quality materials that have been evaluated. For information on the NPEEE Guidelines for ensuring quality materials, go to: <http://www.naaee.org/programs-and-initiatives/guidelines-for-excellence/materials-guidelines/materials-guidelines>.

M. What are the expected outcomes of the National Training Program?

“Outcomes” describe the impact the outputs will have once the program is implemented. Because this is an educator training program, short-term outcomes should describe the impact the outputs have on educator knowledge and skills. An intermediate outcome may go beyond what an educator learns to address their ability to effectively apply what they learned to their teaching. A long-term outcome should have a broader impact that addresses the ability of students and other learners (e.g., adult audiences) to apply what they have learned to their decisions and actions that impact the environment. Outcomes should include efforts to reach teachers and other education professionals who work with under-served audiences, such as communities of color and economically distressed communities. Outcomes must be quantitative and may be short-term or intermediate (occur during the project period) or long-term (may occur after the project closes).

Short-term, intermediate, and long-term outcomes must be identified for all major outputs. Examples of outcomes are provided below.

1) **Short-term Outcomes:** Outcomes may include better educated teachers, faculty, and other education professionals who have: gained EE content knowledge; improved their teaching skills; improved their knowledge about reaching under-served audiences; improved the design of education, natural resource, and environmental studies departments at colleges and universities to include EE; improved their understanding of how EE can be used to reach state or national education goals; increased their knowledge about how to be effective leaders and develop effective programs, organizations, and partnerships; increased their knowledge about what EE research and evaluation tells us about what works; improved their ability to identify and evaluate EE materials; as well as increased their access to quality EE information, materials and programs.

2) **Intermediate Outcomes:** Outcomes may include the increased ability of teachers, faculty, and other education professionals to apply the results of their training to: integrate EE into K-12 schools; more effectively teach about environmental issues in non-formal settings; effectively reach under-served audiences; sustain their programs, organizations, and partnerships over the long-term; as well as evaluate and make better use of information, materials and programs.

3) **Long-term Outcomes:** Outcomes may include the increased ability of students, young people, and adult learners, including people in communities of color and economically distressed communities, who have been reached by these educators and are, therefore, able to demonstrate they are more environmentally literate and are able to use this knowledge to: pursue environmental careers, become more effective teachers, and/or apply what they have learned to promote stewardship and environmental sustainability.

N. How do these outputs and outcomes support EPA's Strategic Plan?

"Goal 5: Compliance and Environmental Stewardship" of EPA's Strategic Plan is designed to protect human health and the environment by improving environmental behavior through regulatory and non-regulatory means. This goal states that EPA will work to ensure that government, business and the public meet federal environmental requirements and will empower and assist them to do more. The goal also states that EPA programs are designed to, among other things, increase voluntary and self-directed actions to minimize or eliminate pollution before it is generated (pollution prevention) and promote environmental stewardship behavior. "Objective 5.2.1: Prevent Pollution and Promote Environmental Stewardship by Government and the Public" calls for raising the public's awareness of actions it can take to prevent pollution.

The purpose of the National Environmental Education Training Program is to deliver environmental education training and long-term support for teachers and other education professionals across the U.S. to enable them to effectively teach about environmental issues. The outputs of the program are the delivery of environmental education training and long-term support (e.g., ensuring quality by developing and applying the NPEEE guidelines for materials, K-12 students, educators, non-formal programs, and early childhood learning). Short-term and intermediate outcomes focus on better trained educators who are able to apply what they have learned to their teaching. Long-term outcomes focus on the impact the educators have on their students and other learners (e.g., adults) to increase their environmental literacy. A more environmentally literate public is better able to understand complex environmental issues and to make responsible decisions that minimize adverse impacts on the environment. This knowledge and understanding enables the public to take actions that prevent pollution and to become effective environmental stewards.

Section II: Award Information

A. What type of funding mechanism will be used to support the National Training Program?

Funding will be awarded as a cooperative agreement.

B. How many awards will be made?

One award will be made under this program to an eligible institution or consortium of such institutions. The award will be made as a one year cooperative agreement. The Agency intends, based upon annual performance reviews, the availability of funds, and if consistent with Agency policy, to execute supplemental funding agreements for up to four subsequent project periods.

C. What is the start date and length of the project period?

The start date for the program is October 1, 2010. The award will cover the first year of the program which will operate from October 1, 2010 - September 30, 2011. The Agency intends, subject to annual performance reviews, the availability of funds, and if consistent with Agency policy, to execute supplemental funding agreements for up to four subsequent project periods through September 30, 2015.

D. What is EPA's role in the National Training Program?

As a cooperative agreement, EPA will have substantial involvement in the program. This includes EPA participation in the development of an annual work plan and EPA approval of the annual work plan.

E. How will the National Training Program be funded?

The program will be funded for an initial project period of one year. The Agency intends, subject to annual performance reviews, the availability of funds, and if consistent with Agency policy, to execute supplemental funding agreements for up to four subsequent project periods. The first year of the program will be funded with FY 2010 appropriations of approximately \$2.2 million. Approximately \$2 million may be available for each additional year up to a total of five years, subject to the availability of funds, annual performance reviews, and consistency with Agency policy.

Section III: Eligibility Information

A. Who is eligible to apply to operate the National Training Program?

U.S. institutions of higher education, eligible not-for-profit institutions, or a consortium

of such institutions may apply to operate this program as specified under the Act. Institutions of higher education include Minority Academic Institutions (MIAs) such as Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSIs), Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs), Alaska Native Serving Institutions, and Native Hawaiian Serving Institutions as described in Section I.J. Eligible not-for-profit institutions mean an organization, association, or institution described in section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 which is exempt from taxation.

B. Does EPA encourage applicants to form a consortium of institutions?

Yes, EPA encourages eligible institutions to form a consortium to operate the National Training Program due to the broad and diverse nature, in both scope and reach, of the program. EPA further encourages the formation of consortia with and between institutions whose diversity reflects that of the program.

C. May an institution be part of or submit more than one application?

Yes, eligible institutions may be a member of a consortium in more than one application. However, such institutions may not apply as the sole applicant or as the lead institution in a consortium in more than one application.

D. Is cost-sharing required?

Yes, non-federal matching funds of at least 25% of the total cost of the program are required. The non-federal match may be provided by the applicant and/or partners in a consortium (if a consortium of institutions has submitted a application). The source of matching funds must be identified in the application and may be provided in cash or by in-kind contributions. In-kind contributions often include salaries or other verifiable costs. All in-kind contributions must be for allowable and verifiable costs that are carefully documented. The matching non-federal share is a percentage of the entire cost of the project. For example, the federal portion of the project is approximately \$2.2 million for the first year. If the applicant is providing the minimum of 25% of the total cost of the project, then the match would be \$733,333 and the total cost of the project would be \$2,933,333. Applications that do not include the required non-federal match will not be considered for funding.

An applicant may propose a "voluntary" cost share which is any amount greater than the required cost share. If the applicant proposes to provide a "voluntary" cost share, the applicant is legally committed to providing those costs or contributions above the costs or contributions needed to satisfy the required cost share. Applicants who propose to use a voluntary cost share *must* include the costs or contributions for the voluntary cost share in the project budget on the SF-424. If EPA accepts an offer for a voluntary cost share, applicants must meet their sharing commitment as a condition of receiving EPA funding. The recipient is legally obligated to meet any proposed voluntary cost share that is included in the approved project budget because the grant agreement includes the voluntary cost share. Applicants may use their own funds or other

resources for a voluntary cost share if the standards at 40 CFR 30.23 or 40 CFR 31.24, as applicable, are met. Only eligible and allowable costs may be used for voluntary cost shares. Other Federal grants may not be used as voluntary cost shares without specific statutory authority (e.g. HUD's Community Development Block Grants).

E. What are the threshold eligibility requirements of the National Training Program?

Applications must meet the following threshold criteria to be eligible for funding consideration under this solicitation. Failure to meet any of the following criteria in the application will result in disqualification of the application from funding consideration. Applicants deemed ineligible for funding consideration as a result of the threshold eligibility review will be notified within 15 calendar days of the ineligibility determination.

1) **Applications:** Applications must substantially comply with the application submission instructions and requirements as described in Section IV of this solicitation notice. Regarding page limits, any pages that are submitted as part of the application in excess of the page limit will not be reviewed.

a) Applications must be submitted by e-mail to U.S. EPA at EnvEdTraining@epa.gov no later than 11:59pm EDT July 26, 2010 as described in Section IV. Applicants are responsible for ensuring that their application reaches the designated U.S. EPA e-mail address specified in Section IV by the submission deadline. EPA will reply to applicants by e-mail that their e-mailed application has been received.

b) Applications submitted after the deadline will be considered late and returned to the sender without further consideration unless the applicant can clearly demonstrate that it was late due to EPA mishandling or because of technical problems attributable to EPA systems.

2) **Eligible Institutions:** The applicant must be an eligible institution as described in Section III.A of this solicitation notice.

3) **Non-Federal Match:** The application must meet the non-federal match as described in Section III.D of this solicitation notice.

4) **Type of Education Professionals, Demographic Populations, and Geographic Regions:** The application must, at a minimum, meet the requirements as described in Section I.J of this solicitation notice regarding reaching a wide range of education professionals that reach diverse demographic populations in all geographic regions of the U.S.

5) **National Environmental Education Resources and Programs:** The application must, at a minimum, meet the requirement as described in Section I.K of this solicitation notice for building on existing national environmental education resources and programs.

Section IV: Application and Submission Information

A. What are the submission requirements? Where can I get an application?

This solicitation notice describes all the information and forms necessary to prepare an application. Do not submit additional items or forms. Reviewers will only evaluate the materials provided in the application. EPA will provide the applicant who is the finalist with additional federal forms and may request other information needed to process the application.

Applicants must submit their applications by e-mail to U.S. EPA at EnvEdTraining@epa.gov no later than 11:59 pm EDT July 26, 2010. All required documents listed below must be attached to the e-mail as separate Adobe PDF files. When you submit your materials by e-mail, you are accepting all risks attendant to e-mail submission including server delays and transmission difficulties. E-mail submissions exceeding 15MB will experience transmission delays which will affect when they are received by the Agency. EPA will reply to applicants by e-mail that their e-mailed application has been received. If you can not submit your application by e-mail, please contact the person identified in Section VII to determine an alternative method.

You may access and print the two required federal forms (SF 424 and SF 424A) from EPA's environmental education web site at:
<http://www.epa.gov/education/educate/solicitation.html>.

B. What is the required format of the application?

Work plans must be limited to 20 pages (not including the appendices). Evaluators will not read work plans beyond the 20th page. A "page" refers to one side of a single-spaced typed page. The page should be letter sized (8 x 11 inches) with normal type size (10 or 12 cpi).

C. What are the contents of the application?

The application must include the following three components: a signed SF 424, an SF 424A, and a work plan described below. Only the finalist will be asked to submit additional federal forms needed to process the application (e.g., certification regarding debarment and lobbying).

1) Application for Federal Assistance (SF 424): This form requests basic information about applications such as the name of the project and the amount of money requested. The SF 424 is required for all federal grants and cooperative agreements. Please note that the organizational Dun and Bradstreet (D&B) Data Universal Number System (DUNS) number must be included on the SF-424. Organizations may obtain a DUNS number at no cost by calling the toll-free DUNS number request line at 1-866-705-5711. A completed SF 424 for the first year of the program must be submitted as part of the application. See Section IV.A for a link to access the SF 424.

2) **Budget Information: Non-Construction Programs (SF 424A):** This form requests budget information by object class categories such as personnel, travel, and supplies. This form is also required for all federal grants and cooperative agreements. The total amount of federal funding requested for the project period should be shown on line 5(e) and on line 6(k) of SF-424A. If indirect costs are included, the amount of indirect costs should be entered on line 6(j). The indirect cost rate (i.e., a percentage), the base (e.g., personnel costs and fringe benefits), and the amount should also be indicated on line 22. If indirect costs are requested, a copy of the Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement must be submitted as part of the application package. A completed SF 424 A for the first year of the program must also be submitted as part of the application. Note that additional budget information describing how the funds will be used for all major activities during the first year is also required under the budget section of the work plan discussed below. See Section IV.A for a link to access the SF 424A.

3) **Work Plan:** The work plan contains four sections. First, the summary discusses the broad goals and objectives for the entire five years of the proposed program with certain details about the first year. Second, the program description focuses on the detailed goals, objectives, outputs, and outcomes for the first year. Third, the evaluation plan discusses how the effectiveness of the program will be evaluated. Fourth, the appendices include information about the timeline, budget, programmatic capability, and qualifications of key staff. The work plan that is submitted as part of the application is subject to final review, comment, and approval by the EPA Project Officer. The work plan is limited to 20 pages (not including the appendices) and must include the following four sections.

a) **Summary:** The summary must be no more than two pages and include the following:

1) The name of the institution requesting funds (and the names of key partner institutions if the proposed program is a consortium of institutions).

2) A mission statement that articulates what the program proposes to do and how the program will accomplish its work over a five year period.

3) A statement about how the program proposes to address the NPEEE Guidelines, the environmental education training needs of education professionals, as well as EPA's priorities such as working with educators who reach communities of color and economically distressed communities over a five year period.

4) A statement about the types of education professionals to be reached as well as the expected demographic populations and geographic areas expected to benefit from the program in the first year.

5) A statement about how the proposed program will build on existing national environmental education resources and programs over a five year period.

6) A summary of the outputs and outcomes of the program in the first year.

7) A statement about how the funds will be used in the first year.

b) **Program Description:** The program description identifies what the program will do and how it will be implemented. *The program description must address only the first year of the*

program. The work plan must include the following:

1) A discussion about how the program proposes to address the NPEEE Guidelines, the environmental education training needs of education professionals, as well as EPA's priorities such as working with educators who reach communities of color and economically distressed communities.

2) A discussion about the types of education professionals to be reached as well as the expected demographic populations and geographic areas expected to benefit from the program.

3) A discussion about how the proposed program will build on existing national environmental education resources and programs.

4) A detailed description of all outputs (i.e., training and long-term support activities) and outcomes of the program. The description of outputs must also identify which institutions will implement the activities (if the proposed program is a consortium of institutions) and how these outputs will be delivered.

c) **Evaluation Plan:** The evaluation plan describes how the effectiveness of the program will be evaluated. It is important that the applicant demonstrate how the outputs and outcomes of the program address the NPEEE Guidelines, the environmental education training needs of education professionals, and EPA priorities such as working with educators who reach communities of color and economically distressed communities. The evaluation must be conducted by an institution that has appropriate credentials and expertise in evaluating education programs and is independent of the applicant and key partner institutions (if the proposed program is a consortium of institutions). For more information on developing an evaluation plan, go to "My Environmental Education Evaluation Resource Assistant" at <http://meera.snre.umich.edu>. This on-line resource was developed with funding from U.S. EPA and the U.S. Forest Service.

d) **Appendices:** The appendices to the work plan must include:

1) **Matrix, Table or Timeline:** Include a matrix, table or timeline identifying all key outputs of the program as well as a schedule for conducting and completing these outputs during the first year.

2) **Budget and Non-Federal Match:** Describe how funds will be used in the first year, including budget milestones for each major proposed output. Estimates must include the allocation of funding for all major outputs. Include indirect costs as well as a statement on the relative effectiveness of the program in terms of the ratio of indirect to direct costs. Non-federal matching funds of at least 25% of the total cost of the program must be included. The match must be for allowable costs and may be provided by the applicant and/or partner institutions. The match may be provided in cash or by in-kind contributions and other non-monetary support. In-kind contributions often include salaries or other verifiable costs. Note: Applicants may use

other federal funds in addition to those provided by this program, but not for the same activities that EPA is funding. The applicant may not use any federal funds to meet any part of the required 25% match.

3) **Logic Model:** Provide a graphic that displays the relationships between the resources you invest, activities you carry out, outputs you produce or deliver, and benefits or outcomes you expect. Include short-term, intermediate, and long-term outcomes. Outputs and outcomes for this program are described in Section I. M and N. For more information on developing logic models, go to “My Environmental Education Evaluation Resource Assistance” web site at: <http://meera.snre.umich.edu/plan-an-evaluation/plonearticlemultipage.2007-10-30.4643560864/step-2-clarify-program-logic>.

4) **Programmatic Capability and Past Performance:** a) Describe your “programmatic capability” – that is, your organizational experience, knowledge and resources that demonstrate your capability to successfully lead, manage and implement the National Training Program. If your application is a consortium of institutions, also include a description of the “programmatic capabilities” of all key institutions who are partners in the consortium. b) Describe the “past performance” of your organization by including a list of Federal and/or non-Federal assistance agreements that are similar in size, scope and relevance to the proposed program that your organization performed within the last five years. “Past performance” only applies to the applicant (i.e., the lead institution if the application is a consortium of institutions and not the partners in a consortium). Assistance agreements are grants and cooperative agreements, but not contracts. Submit a list of up to five assistance agreements, including relevant EPA agreements. Also, describe whether, and how, you were able to successfully complete and manage those agreements; your history of meeting the reporting requirements under those agreements including whether you adequately and timely reported on your progress towards achieving the expected outputs and outcomes of those agreements (and if not, explain why not); and whether you submitted acceptable final technical reports under the agreements. If the applicant does not have any relevant or available “past performance” information, the application should indicate this and explain why.

5) **Qualifications of Key Personnel:** Describe your staff expertise/qualifications, knowledge, and resources, or the ability to obtain them, to successfully achieve the goals of the proposed Training Program. If the application is a consortium of institutions, also include this information for all key institutions who are partners in the consortium. Include brief resumes of no more than three pages for each of the following: Program Director, Program Manager, and key staff (including key staff of partner institutions if the application is a consortium of institutions). Resumes must describe educational, administrative, management, and professional qualifications and experience.

6) **Partner Letters of Commitment:** Include a one page “letter of commitment” from each key partner institution with major responsibilities in the program (if the proposed program is a consortium). “Letters of endorsement” from individuals or institutions will not be considered in the evaluation process.

D. What is the deadline for submitting an application and where should it be sent?

Applications must be e-mailed to U.S. EPA at: EnvEdTraining@epa.gov. Applications must be received no later than 11:59pm EDT July 26, 2010. Any application received after this date and time will not be considered for funding.

E. Can I claim my application as confidential business information?

In accordance with 40 CFR 2.203, applicants may claim all or a portion of their application as confidential business information. EPA will evaluate confidentiality claims in accordance with 40 CFR Part 2. Applicants must clearly mark applications or portions of applications they claim as confidential. If no claim of confidentiality is made, EPA is not required to make the inquiry to the applicant otherwise required by 40 CFR 2.204(c)(2) prior to disclosure. However, competitive applications are considered confidential and protected from disclosure prior to the completion of the competitive selection process.

F. Is intergovernmental review required?

This program may be eligible for coverage under E.O. 12372 "Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs." An applicant should consult the office or official designated as the single point of contact in his or her State for more information on the process the State requires to be followed in applying for assistance, if the State has selected the program for review. You may obtain additional information on intergovernmental review at <http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants/spoc.html>.

G. Are there restrictions on management fees?

When formulating budgets for applications, applicants must not include management fees or similar charges in excess of the direct costs at the rate approved by the applicant's cognizant audit agency, or at the rate provided for by the terms of the agreement negotiated with EPA. These are fees added to the direct costs in order to accumulate and reserve funds for ongoing expenses, unforeseen liabilities, or for other similar costs that are not allowable under EPA grants. Management fees or similar charges may not be used to improve or expand the project funded, except to the extent authorized as a direct cost of carrying out the scope of work.

H. Can funding be used for the applicant to make subawards, acquire contract services, or fund partnerships?

EPA awards funds to one eligible applicant as the recipient even if other eligible applicants are named as partners or co-applicants or members of a coalition or consortium. The recipient is accountable to EPA for the proper expenditure of funds.

Funding may be used to provide subgrants or subawards of financial assistance, which includes using subawards or subgrants to fund partnerships, provided the recipient complies

with applicable requirements for subawards or subgrants including those contained in 40 CFR Parts 30 or 31, as appropriate. Applicants must compete contracts for services and products, including consultant contracts, and conduct cost and price analyses, to the extent required by the procurement provisions of the regulations at 40 CFR Parts 30 or 31, as appropriate. The regulations also contain limitations on consultant compensation. Also, if an applicant selected for award has named a specific subawardee or subgrantee, contractor, or consultant in the application EPA selects for funding, this does not relieve the applicant of its obligations to comply with subaward or subgrant and/or competitive procurement requirements, as appropriate.

Please note that applicants may not award sole source contracts to consulting, engineering or other firms assisting applicants with the application solely based on the firm's role in preparing the application.

Successful applicants cannot use subgrants or subawards to avoid requirements in EPA grant regulations for competitive procurement by using these instruments to acquire commercial services or products from for-profit organizations to carry out its assistance agreement. The nature of the transaction between the recipient and the subawardee or subgrantee must be consistent with the standards for distinguishing between vendor transactions and subrecipient assistance under Subpart B Section .210 of OMB Circular A-133, and the definitions of subaward at 40 CFR 30.2(ff) or subgrant at 40 CFR 31.3, as applicable. EPA will not be a party to these transactions. Applicants acquiring commercial goods or services must comply with the competitive procurement standards in 40 CFR Part 30 or 40 CFR Part 31.36 and cannot use a subaward or subgrant as the funding mechanism.

I. How will the applicant's proposed subawardees or subgrantees and contracts be considered during the evaluation process described in Section V of this solicitation notice?

Section V of this solicitation notice describes the evaluation criteria and evaluation process that will be used by EPA to make the selection under this solicitation. During this evaluation, except for those criteria that relate to the applicant's own qualifications, past performance, and reporting history, the reviewers will consider, as appropriate and relevant, the qualifications, expertise, and experience of:

1) An applicant's named subawardees or subgrantees (including partners who would be properly receiving subawards and not contracts) identified in the application if the applicant demonstrates in the application that if it receives an award that the subaward or subgrant will be properly awarded consistent with the applicable regulations in 40 CFR Parts 30 or 31. For example, applicants must not use subawards or subgrants to obtain commercial services or products from for profit firms or individual consultants.

2) An applicant's named contractor(s), including consultants, identified in the application if the applicant demonstrates in its application that the contractor(s) was selected in compliance with the competitive Procurement Standards in 40 CFR Part 30 or 40 CFR 31.36, as appropriate. For example, an applicant must demonstrate that it selected the contractor(s) competitively or that a proper non-competitive sole-source award consistent with the regulations will be made to the contractor(s), that efforts were made to provide small and disadvantaged businesses with

opportunities to compete, and that some form of cost or price analysis was conducted. EPA may not accept sole source justifications for contracts for services or products that are otherwise readily available in the commercial marketplace.

EPA will not consider the qualifications, experience, and expertise of named subawardees or subgrantees and/or named contractor(s) during the application evaluation process unless the applicant complies with the above requirements.

Section V: Application Review Information

A. What criteria will be used to evaluate applications? How will applications be scored?

The evaluators will consider the extent to which the application meets each of the nine criteria described below. Note that the criteria are provided with specified points that indicate how the application will be scored.

Factors Guiding the National Training Program

Evaluators will consider the extent to which the application:

1) **NPEEE Guidelines:** Demonstrates that the proposed National Training Program is consistent with relevant NPEEE Guidelines as described in Section I.F. Applicants must identify which NPEEE Guidelines are relevant to their application and discuss how such guidelines are used to guide the implementation of the proposed program. (Subtotal: 5 points)

2) **Environmental Education Training Needs of Education Professionals:** Demonstrates that the proposed National Training Program addresses relevant environmental education training needs as described in Section I.G. Applicants must identify which studies or assessments they have used to guide their application. They must also discuss why they are focusing on specific findings and how their application supports those findings. (Subtotal: 5 points)

3) **EPA Priorities:** Demonstrates that the proposed National Training Program is consistent with relevant EPA priorities as described in Section I.H. Applicants must identify which EPA priorities they have used to guide their application. They must also discuss why they are focusing on specific priorities and how their application supports those priorities. (Subtotal: 5 points)

Subtotal: 15 points

Development and Delivery of Training and Long-Term Support

Evaluators will consider the extent to which the application:

4) **Audience:** Demonstrates that the proposed National Training Program delivers

training and long-term support to a wide range of education professionals that reach diverse demographic populations in all geographic regions of the United States as described in Section I.J. At a minimum, the following types of education professionals must be reached: 1) K-12 classroom teachers (2 points); b) faculty in education departments in colleges and universities (i.e., pre-service educators) (2 points); and c) non-formal educators in settings such as parks, nature centers, and museums (2 points). These education professionals must reach diverse demographic populations that include opportunities to reach historically under-served audiences such as communities of color, economically distressed communities, and/or geographically isolated communities (2 points) in all geographic regions of the United States. (2 points) (Subtotal: 10 points)

5) National Environmental Education Resources and Programs: Demonstrates that the proposed National Training Program builds, at a minimum, on existing national environmental education resources and programs effectively and efficiently as described in Section I.K. Applicants must identify which national resources and programs they are utilizing as part of their application. They must also discuss why they are using these national resources and programs and how this helps them meet the goals of the proposed National Training Program. Applicants should also discuss to what extent they have included opportunities to work in partnership with various colleges/universities and/or non-profit organizations as well as with other Federal agencies that support or implement environmental education or conservation education programs, as appropriate. (Subtotal: 10 points)

6) Training and Long-Term Support: Demonstrates that the proposed National Training Program develops and delivers effective environmental education training and long-term support as described in Section I.L. Applicants must identify which specific types of training they propose to implement, including NPEEE Guidelines workshops, EE professional development workshops, leadership and organizational development workshops, and on-line courses as described in Section I.L.1.a-d. (10 points). Applicants must also indicate how they propose to develop or maintain a web site or portal as described in Section I.L.2.a. as well as other long-term activities that support training such as integrating environmental education into colleges and universities by applying the NCATE standards, linking environmental education to state efforts, and/or applying the results of research and evaluation to the proposed National Training Program as described in Section I.L.2.b-g. (10 points) (Subtotal 20 points)

Subtotal: 40 points

Organizational Capability

Evaluators will consider the extent to which the application:

7) Programmatic Capability and Past Performance: a) Regarding “programmatic capability,” demonstrates that the proposed National Training Program, including key partner institutions if the application is a consortium of institutions, has the organizational experience, knowledge and resources to successfully lead, manage and implement the National Training

Program based on the information submitted as described in Section IV.C.3.d.4. (7.5 points). b) Regarding “past performance,” demonstrates the ability to perform and report under past agreements based on the information submitted as described in Section IV.C.3.d.4. 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 the applicant does not have any relevant or available “past performance” information and the applicant indicates this in the application, the applicant will receive a score of half the total points available in this subsection (i.e., 3.75 points). If the applicant omits any reference to “past performance,” the applicant may receive a score of zero for this subsection. (7.5 points) (Subtotal: 15 points)

8) Staff Qualifications and Expertise: Demonstrates that the proposed National Training Program is staffed with a Program Director, Program Manager, and key staff with relevant qualifications, expertise and abilities in a range of appropriate disciplines that are able to develop, manage and implement an effective and efficient program by providing strong leadership in setting the direction of and properly overseeing a cohesive program as described in Section IV.C.3.d.5. If the applicant is a consortium of institutions, the applicant must also demonstrate that key staff members who work for partner institutions have the qualifications, expertise and abilities to develop, manage and implement the training and long-term support activities they are responsible for. (Subtotal: 10 points)

Subtotal: 25 points

Work Plan and Budget

Evaluators will consider the extent to which the application:

9) Work Plan and Budget: Provides a clear and concise a work plan and budget. The work plan must clearly: i) describe the outputs and outcomes of the program; and ii) track and measure progress toward achieving the outputs and outcomes as described in Section IV.C.3.a-d. (10 points). The budget must: i) clearly describe how funds will be used; ii) link the expenditure of funds to the outputs of the program; iii) ensure the relative economic effectiveness of the program in terms of the ratio of overhead costs to direct services; and iv) demonstrate effective use of public funds. (10 points) (Subtotal: 20 points)

Subtotal: 20 points

The maximum score for each application is 100 points.

B. Who will review the applications and make the final decision?

Federal environmental education officials will evaluate and rank the applications using the criteria established under Section V.A of this solicitation. EPA’s Office of Environmental Education will recommend the highest ranked application for funding. This recommendation

will be forwarded to the Associate Administrator for the Office of External Affairs and Environmental Education for concurrence.

C. When will the award be made?

The award is expected to be made by September 30, 2010.

Section VI: Award Administration Information

A. How will the grantee and other applicants be notified?

EPA's Grants Administration Division will provide official notification of the award to the applicant's Project Director by mail by September 30, 2010. EPA's Office of Environmental Education will notify other applicants of their status within 15 calendar days after the final selection is made.

B. What administrative requirements apply?

This award will include the standard administrative conditions that apply to all EPA grants and cooperative agreements. A listing and description of general EPA Regulations applicable to the award of assistance agreements may be found at:

http://www.epa.gov/ogd/AppKit/applicable_epa_regulations_and_description.htm.

Non-profit applicants that are recommended for funding under this solicitation are subject to pre-award administrative capability reviews consistent with Section 8b, 8c and 9d of EPA Order 5700.8 - Policy on Assessing Capabilities of Non-Profit Applicants for Managing Assistance Awards (http://www.epa.gov/ogd/grants/award/5700_8.pdf). In addition, non-profit applicants that qualify for funding may, depending on the size of the award, be required to fill out and submit to the Grants Management Office the Administrative Capabilities Form with supporting documents contained in Appendix A of EPA Order 5700.8.

C. Are DUNS numbers required?

All applicants are required to provide a Dun and Bradstreet (D&B) Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number when applying for a Federal grant or cooperative agreement.

Applicants can receive a DUNS number, at no cost, by calling the toll-free request line at 1-866-705-5711, or visiting the D&B Web site at: <http://www.dnb.com>.

D. What reports are required?

The award notice will specify the reporting requirements. A detailed progress report is due to the EPA Project Officer bi-annually. A final report is due at the end of the project period.

E. How will disputes be resolved?

Assistance agreement competition-related disputes will be resolved in accordance with the dispute resolution procedures published in 70 FR (Federal Register) 3629, 3630 (January 26, 2005) which can be found at <http://www.epa.gov/ogd/competition/resolution.htm>.

Section VII: Agency Contact

Please contact Kathleen MacKinnon, U.S. EPA Office of Environmental Education, at mackinnon.kathleen@epa.gov, if you have any *administrative questions* about the solicitation notice. In accordance with EPA's Competition Policy (EPA Order 5700.5A1), EPA staff will not meet with individual applicants to discuss draft applications, provide comments on draft applications, or provide advice to applicants on how to address ranking criteria. *EPA staff can only answer questions to clarify the contents of the solicitation and administrative issues related to the submission of an application.*

EPA will post frequently asked questions on our web site at: <http://www.epa.gov/education/educate/solicitation.html>. EPA encourages applicants to review the frequently asked questions and to check this web site for any updates or additional information. *EPA prefers to receive questions by e-mail as specified above rather than by phone because e-mail can be responded to more expeditiously.* If you can not send an e-mail, you may call the National Environmental Education Training Program Hotline at 202-564-0451 to leave a message for an EPA representative to return your call.

Section VIII: Other Information

A. Where can I get additional information about the current National Training Program?

For information on the current program, visit EPA's environmental education web site at <http://www.epa.gov/education/eetap.html> or the Environmental Education and Training Partnership's web site at <http://www.eetap.org>.

B. What is the relationship between the EPA's National Environmental Education Training Program and EPA's Environmental Education Grant Program?

The National Environmental Education Training Program and the Environmental Education Grant Program are two separate programs administered by EPA's Office of Environmental Education. This solicitation notice applies only to the National Training Program authorized under Section 5 of the Act (<http://www.epa.gov/education/educate.html>). This program focuses on delivering training and long-term support to a wide range of education professionals that reach diverse demographic populations in all geographic regions of the United States, including K-12 classroom teachers, faculty in education departments at colleges and universities, and non-formal educators. Only one award is made to operate the entire national program which is expected to operate from October 1, 2010 through September 30, 2015, subject

to annual performance reviews, the availability of funds, and consistency with Agency policy.

The Environmental Education Grant Program is authorized under Section 6 of the Act. This program typically awards about 100 grants worth between \$2 – 3 million per year to support individual environmental education projects around the country, including smaller scale educator training projects. Institutions seeking funding for local, state, or regional educator training efforts or other types of environmental education projects are encouraged to apply for funds under the Environmental Education Grant Program (<http://www.epa.gov/education/grants.html>). Solicitation notices for this program are typically issued in the Fall with applications due in the Winter each year.

For more information on the National Environmental Education Act, go to: (<http://www.epa.gov/education/whatis.html>).