

**Federal Agency Name:** U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Office of Water, Office of Wastewater Management

**Funding Opportunity Title:** FY 2009 Technical Training Support Activities for the State Revolving Fund (SRF) Programs

**Announcement Type:** Request for Proposals

**Funding Opportunity Number:** EPA-OW-OWM-09-01

**Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number:** 66.436

**Dates:** Proposals must be received by the Agency Contact (see Section IV of this RFP) by **4:00 PM Eastern Standard Time (EST) January 14, 2009**, or by electronic submission through Grants.gov by **11:59 PM EST January 14, 2009**. Questions about this Request for Proposals must be submitted in writing via e-mail and must be received by the Agency contact identified in Section VII before **January 5, 2009**. Written responses will be posted on EPA's website at: [www.epa.gov/wastewatergrants](http://www.epa.gov/wastewatergrants).

*Following EPA's evaluation of proposals, all applicants will be notified regarding their status. Final applications will be requested from those eligible entities whose proposal has been successfully evaluated and preliminarily recommended for award. Those entities will be provided with instructions and a due date for submittal of the final application package.*

## **SUMMARY**

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is soliciting proposals from eligible applicants to conduct technical training support activities that support the State Revolving Fund (SRF) programs. The technical training support activities are limited to the following two separate activities: (1) plan, prepare, and provide technical training support for two National SRF Infrastructure Financing and Training Workshops, and (2) plan, prepare, and provide technical training support on effective methods to communicate Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF) environmental benefits, using environmental benefit data generated from the CWSRF Benefits Reporting (CBR) Initiative. Funds awarded under this announcement for either of the two activities may be used by recipients to promote participation and to support the travel expenses of non-Federal personnel to attend workshop/workgroup meetings.

The proposed activities support the Agency's Strategic Plan, Goal 2: Clean and Safe Water, Objective 2.2: Protect Water Quality, Sub-Objective 2.2.1: Improve Water Quality on a Watershed Basis. EPA's Strategic Plan is available at <http://www.epa.gov/ocfo/plan/plan.htm>.

States and local governments, Federally recognized Indian Tribes, territories and possessions of the U.S. (including the District of Columbia), interstate agencies or intertribal consortia, public or private non-profit, non-governmental institutions, and individuals are eligible to apply. Non-profit organizations described in Section 2 501(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. Interstate agencies and intertribal consortia are also eligible for funding under

this competition. The term “interstate agency” is defined in the Clean Water Act (CWA) Section 502 as “an agency of two or more States established by or pursuant to an agreement or compact approved by the Congress, or any other agency of two or more States, having substantial powers or duties pertaining to the control of pollution as determined and approved by the Administrator.” Intertribal consortia must meet the requirements of 40 CFR Part 35.504.

The total amount of expected funding available is approximately \$340,000, depending on Agency funding levels, program priorities, and other applicable considerations. It is anticipated that two separate awards will be made under this announcement; one for the National SRF Infrastructure Financing and Training Workshops activity and one for the training on effective methods to communicate CWSRF environmental benefits activity. It is anticipated that the award for the National SRF Infrastructure Financing and Training Workshops will be approximately \$180,000 and will have a two-year project period. It is anticipated that the award for the training on effective methods to communicate CWSRF environmental benefits will be approximately \$160,000 and will have a two-year project period.

## **I. FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION**

### **A. PROGRAM OBJECTIVES**

EPA’s two State Revolving Fund Programs, the CWSRF program and the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF) program, provide low-interest loans for a wide range of eligible water quality and drinking water projects. Principal repayments plus interest earnings combined with annual capitalization grants and a required State match are available to fund new water quality and drinking water projects, allowing the funds to revolve over time. There are individual State CWSRF and DWSRF programs in each of the 50 States and Puerto Rico. For more information on EPA’s CWSRF and DWSRF programs, go to: <http://www.epa.gov/owm/cwfinance/cwsrf> for the CWSRF program and <http://www.epa.gov/safewater/dwsrf> for the DWSRF program.

The National SRF Infrastructure Financing and Training Workshop and the training on effective methods to communicate CWSRF environmental benefits activities support the Agency’s Strategic Plan, Goal 2: Clean and Safe Water, Objective 2.2: Protect Water Quality, Sub-Objective 2.2.1: Improve Water Quality on a Watershed Basis.

The statutory authority for this announcement is Section 104(b)(3) of the CWA . This section of the CWA restricts the use of these assistance agreements to the following: conducting or promoting the coordination and acceleration of research, investigations, experiments, training, demonstrations, surveys, and studies relating to the causes, effects (including health and welfare effects), extent, prevention, reduction, and elimination of water pollution. Implementation projects are not eligible for funding under this announcement.

### **B. TECHNICAL TRAINING SUPPORT ACTIVITIES**

Proposals to fund projects under this announcement must address one of the following technical training support activities: (1) plan, prepare, and provide technical training support for two National SRF Infrastructure Financing and Training Workshops, or (2) plan, prepare, and provide technical training support on effective methods to communicate CWSRF environmental benefits. Applicants may submit more than one complete project proposal package (including

SF 424, SF 424A and Proposal Narrative) under this announcement. However, each proposal package must address only one technical training support activity (i.e., National SRF Infrastructure Financing and Training Workshops or training on effective methods to communicate CWSRF environmental benefits) as described below. The cover page of each proposal package must clearly indicate the technical training support activity addressed. Proposals that address more than one technical training support activity will not be reviewed.

It is anticipated that two separate awards will be made, one for the National SRF Infrastructure Financing and Training Workshops and one for the training on effective methods to communicate CWSRF environmental benefits. It is anticipated that the award for the National SRF Infrastructure Financing and Training Workshops will be approximately \$180,000 and will have a two-year project period. It is anticipated that the award for the training on effective methods to communicate CWSRF environmental benefits will be approximately \$160,000 and will have a two-year project period.

### **Activity 1. Technical Training Support for National SRF Infrastructure Financing and Training Workshops**

EPA is soliciting proposals from eligible applicants to plan, prepare, and provide technical training support for two, three-day National SRF Infrastructure Financing and Training Workshops. The workshops will target SRF program officials and other interested stakeholders and should address new developments in the CWSRF and DWSRF programs, identify best management practices (including strategic management), produce environmental outputs and outcomes (improved water quality and public health), and promote successful innovative approaches when dealing with the programmatic and financial aspects of each program.

The project elements described below provide some detail on roles and responsibilities the successful applicant may be expected to assume in order to establish and manage the National SRF Infrastructure Financing and Training Workshops. The description below does not attempt to be comprehensive. However, the project elements described do support the proposal review and ranking criteria in section V.A., and may provide guidance as applicants decide what activities will be needed to successfully support the workshops. Applicants are encouraged to identify additional project elements that may not be included in the announcement, but that may contribute to overall project success in their proposals.

The workshops will provide a forum for training in the programmatic, financial, and technical aspects of the SRF programs. Workshop participants will examine and discuss SRF management issues, and any information and lessons learned by the States, EPA, and others interested in the programs will be exchanged. The training should include innovative approaches to finance infrastructure and reduce costs, and creative uses of SRF eligibility authority. Other areas addressed should include innovative approaches used by SRF programs to reduce infrastructure costs, improve infrastructure system sustainability, address non-point source pollution and failing decentralized wastewater systems, identify and measure environmental benefits achieved from wastewater infrastructure investment, and identify and measure the environmental benefits achieved from working with small disadvantaged communities.

The successful applicant will use its logos on workshop materials; EPA will use its logos on any workshop materials it provides. Individuals from the State SRF programs are expected to attend, specifically those individuals dealing with the financial issues of the programs. Individuals from the financial community (bond brokers, banks, investment brokers) and EPA staff from Headquarters and the Regional Offices are also expected to attend. Approximately 300 to 350 attendees are expected to attend each workshop, 90% State/State Advisors and 10% Federal.

The successful applicant will provide the overall leadership for the workshops, select the locations for the two workshops (West Coast, October - November 2009 / East Coast, October – November 2010), secure the workshop facilities (meeting rooms, accommodations, audio-visual equipment, etc.), develop the workshop agenda and promotion materials, and select the speakers. EPA will support the workshops by providing technical assistance, workshop promotion, review of workshop agenda, and printed materials. The successful applicant will be responsible for determining the registration fees, vendor and exhibitor fees, and managing the waiver process of any fees for specific individuals (speakers, State officials, etc.).

Assistance funds may be used by the successful applicant to defray transportation and subsistence expenses for non-Federal attendees. The applicant is solely responsible for determining a methodology for selecting and funding reimbursement requests and providing a report on how participating non-Federal attendees benefited from the training. EPA will not participate in the selection or approval of individuals who receive travel assistance.

EPA anticipates awarding one cooperative agreement with a two-year project period for this activity. Each workshop is estimated to cost \$90,000 for a total award amount of approximately \$180,000, depending on Agency funding levels and other applicable considerations.

## **Activity 2. Technical Training Support on Effective Methods to Communicate Clean Water State Revolving Fund Environmental Benefits**

EPA is soliciting proposals from eligible applicants to plan, prepare, and provide technical training support on how to enhance the nationwide delivery of summarized information on the environmental benefits achieved from the CWSRF program to State and EPA water program managers and potential borrowers.

In 2005, all 51 CWSRF programs agreed to use a suite of environmental indicators to show how their CWSRF projects impact water quality and public health. The measures are based on existing water quality program data and are designed to illustrate four types of benefits: subsidy, utility service, addressing water quality issues, and protecting and restoring waterbody uses. State CWSRF programs report on these indicators in the CWSRF Benefits Reporting (CBR) database. The CBR database was designed with the support of the State CWSRF programs to help improve the program, and management of the system is undertaken in collaboration with the SRF State/EPA Workgroup. As of October 2008, \$17.9 billion in CWSRF loans have been reported in the CBR database. This accounts for 26% of cumulative CWSRF funding. The CBR database has been a highly successful tool for States to collect information on the environmental benefits of CWSRF-funded projects; however, the challenge remains to effectively communicate the information collected to relevant stakeholders. State CWSRF coordinators have expressed interest in receiving training to help them effectively use CBR data to better communicate the

environmental benefits of their programs. Additional information on the CBR database can be found at <http://www.cwsrf.net> under the link to “CWSRF Benefits Training Materials.” The successful applicant will be provided full access to the CBR database.

The project elements described below provide some detail on roles and responsibilities the successful applicant may be expected to assume in order to plan, prepare, and provide technical training support on effective methods to communicate CWSRF environmental benefits. The description below does not attempt to be comprehensive. However, the project elements described do support the proposal review and ranking criteria in Section V.A., and may provide guidance as applicants decide what activities will be needed to successfully support the planning, preparation, and provision of technical training support on effective methods to communicate CWSRF environmental benefits. Applicants are encouraged to identify additional project elements that may not be included in the announcement, but that may contribute to overall project success in their proposals.

The goal of this training is to provide information to the State CWSRF programs on effective methods of using CBR data to communicate the critical role the CWSRF program plays in protecting and restoring our nation’s waters. Achievement of this goal will directly benefit the State CWSRF programs as they work with State and local officials, seek public comment on their intended use plans, and provide information to potential borrowers.

In their proposals, applicants should describe their proposed approach to planning, preparing, and providing technical training support on effective methods to communicate the environmental benefits of the CWSRF program. Training may include, but is not limited to: development of webcasts, informational documents, and/or training workshops. The training should use State case studies to address topics relevant and useful to State CWSRF program managers, including but not limited to: (1) presenting CWSRF benefits reporting (CBR) data in a format that is easily understood by State and EPA water program managers and potential borrowers, and (2) incorporating the CWSRF benefits reports into the State’s communications documents. The proposed approach should address the applicant’s ability to collaborate with State CWSRF coordinators to exchange ideas on quantifying and communicating the environmental benefits of the program and engage State CWSRF coordinators in training events (webcasts, workshops, etc).

The successful applicant will provide the overall leadership for the project, and identify and select the States that exhibit the best way to collect and quality control the environmental benefits data in the CBR database. EPA will provide technical assistance and will review training plans at crucial time intervals. Assistance funds may be used by the successful applicant to defray transportation and subsistence expenses for non-Federal attendees at meetings to develop training contents or plan training approaches. The applicant will select meeting locations, will secure the meeting facility (meeting rooms, accommodations, audio-visual equipment, etc.), and will develop the meeting agenda and materials. The applicant is solely responsible for determining a methodology for selecting and funding reimbursement requests and providing a report on how participating non-Federal attendees benefited from the meetings. EPA will not participate in the selection or approval of individuals who receive travel assistance.

EPA anticipates awarding one cooperative agreement with a two-year project period for this activity. Each year is estimated to cost \$80,000 for a total award amount of approximately \$160,000, depending on Agency funding levels and other applicable considerations.

### **C. EPA'S STRATEGIC PLAN AND ANTICIPATED ENVIRONMENTAL RESULTS**

The activities to be funded under this announcement are consistent with Goal 2: Clean and Safe Water, Objective 2.2: Protect Water Quality, Sub-Objective 2.2.1: Improve Water Quality on a Watershed Basis. For more information on EPA's Strategic Plan go to:

<http://www.epa.gov/ocfo/plan/plan.htm>.

All proposed activities must address the Strategic Plan priorities and 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 overall development and improvement of water quality on a watershed basis.

Environmental results are a way to gauge a project's performance and are described in terms of outputs and outcomes. Expected environmental outputs (or deliverables) refer to an environmental activity, effort, and/or associated work product related to an environmental goal or 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.

Examples of anticipated environmental outputs from the assistance agreements to be awarded under this announcement include, but are not limited to:

- Identification of program innovations and best practices.
- Training workshops related to Clean Water and Drinking Water Infrastructure Financing and associated logistical support and training materials.
- Training sessions and materials (webcasts, workshops, etc.) that effectively train State CWSRF program coordinators on how to use CBR data to communicate the environmental benefits of the CWSRF program.
- Innovative ways to communicate and demonstrate the environmental benefits resulting from successful CWSRF program operations.

Examples of anticipated outcomes from the assistance agreements to be awarded under this announcement include, but are not limited to:

- Improved utilization of funds provided through the SRF programs.
- Improved public health and water quality.
- Increased State support for using CBR data to market and manage CWSRF programs.

As part of the Proposal Narrative, an applicant will be required to describe how the project results will link the outcomes to the Agency's Strategic Plan. Additional information regarding EPA's discussion of environmental results in terms of outputs and outcomes can be found at:

<http://www.epa.gov/ogd/grants/award/5700.7.pdf> or

<http://www.epa.gov/water/waterplan/documents/FY06NPGappendix-b.pdf>.

## **D. STATUTORY AUTHORITY**

The statutory authority for the assistance agreements to be awarded under this announcement is Section 104(b)(3) of the CWA. Section 104(b)(3) of the CWA restricts the use of these assistance agreements to the following: conducting or promoting the coordination and acceleration of research, investigations, experiments, training, demonstrations, surveys, and studies relating to the causes, effects (including health and welfare effects), extent, prevention, reduction, and elimination of water pollution.

## **II. AWARD INFORMATION**

### **A. AMOUNT OF FUNDING**

The total amount of funding expected to be available under this announcement is approximately \$340,000, depending on Agency funding levels, program priorities, and other applicable considerations. It is anticipated that two separate awards will be made under this announcement; one for the National SRF Infrastructure Financing and Training Workshops activity and one for the training on effective methods to communicate CWSRF environmental benefits activity. It is anticipated that the award for the National SRF Infrastructure Financing and Training Workshops will be approximately \$180,000 and will have a two-year project period. The total amount of funding anticipated to be available for the first year is approximately \$90,000. It is anticipated that the award for training on effective methods to communicate CWSRF environmental benefits will be approximately \$160,000 and will have a two-year project period. The total amount of funding anticipated to be available for the first year is approximately \$80,000.

In appropriate circumstances, EPA reserves the right to partially fund proposals by funding discrete portions or phases of proposed projects. If EPA decides to partially fund a proposal, it will do so in a manner that does not prejudice any applicants or affect the basis upon which the proposal or portion thereof, was evaluated and selected for award, and therefore maintains the integrity to the competition and selection process.

EPA reserves the right to make no awards under this announcement, or make fewer awards than anticipated. In addition, EPA reserves the right to make additional awards under this announcement, 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.

### **B. TYPE OF FUNDING**

It is anticipated that cooperative agreements will be awarded under this announcement. When cooperative agreements are awarded, EPA will have substantial involvement with the project work plans and budget. Although EPA will negotiate precise terms and conditions relating to substantial involvement as part of the award process, the anticipated substantial Federal involvement for the project selected may include:

1. Close monitoring of the recipient's performance to verify the results proposed by the applicant;
2. Collaboration during the performance of the scope of work;

3. In accordance with 40 CFR 31.36(g) and 40 CFR 30.43(e) as appropriate, review of proposed procurements;
4. Review of qualifications of key personnel (EPA does not have authority to select employees or contractors employed by the recipient); and
5. Review and comment on tasks/deliverables and reports prepared under the cooperative agreement (the final decision on the content of reports rests with the recipient).

### **C. CONTRACTS AND SUBAWARDS**

1. 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. Applicants are not required to identify subawardees/subgrantees and/or contractors (including consultants) in their proposal. However, if they do, the fact that an applicant selected for award has named a specific subawardee/subgrantee, contractor, or consultant in the proposal EPA selects for funding does not relieve the applicant of its obligations to comply with subaward/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 proposal solely based on the firm's role in preparing the proposal.

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/subgrant as the funding mechanism.

2. How will an applicant's proposed subawardees/subgrantees and contractors be considered during the evaluation process described in Section V of the announcement?

Section V of the announcement describes the evaluation criteria and evaluation process that will be used by EPA to make selections under this announcement. During this evaluation, except for

those criteria that relate to the applicant's own qualifications, past performance, and reporting history, the review panel will consider, as appropriate and relevant, the qualifications, expertise, and experience of:

(i) an applicant's named subawardees/subgrantees identified in the proposal if the applicant demonstrates in the proposal that if it receives an award that the subaward/subgrant will be properly awarded consistent with the applicable regulations in 40 CFR Parts 30 or 31 as appropriate. For example, applicants must not use subawards/subgrants to obtain commercial services or products from for profit firms or individual consultants.

(ii) an applicant's named contractor(s), including consultants, identified in the proposal if the applicant demonstrates in its proposal that the contractor(s) was selected in compliance with the competitive Procurement Standards in 40 CFR Part 30 or 40 CFR Part 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/subgrantees and/or named contractor(s) during the proposal evaluation process unless the applicant complies with these requirements.

### **III. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION**

#### **A. ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS**

States and local governments, Federally recognized Indian Tribes, territories and possessions of the U.S. (including the District of Columbia), interstate agencies or intertribal consortia, public or private non-profit, non-governmental institutions, and individuals are eligible to apply. Non-profit organizations described in Section 2 501(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. Interstate agencies and intertribal consortia are also eligible for funding under this competition. The term "interstate agency" is defined in the CWA Section 502 as "an agency of two or more States established by or pursuant to an agreement or compact approved by the Congress, or any other agency of two or more States, having substantial powers or duties pertaining to the control of pollution as determined and approved by the Administrator." Intertribal consortia must meet the requirements of 40 CFR Part 35.504.

Non-profit organizations may be asked to provide documentation that they meet the definition of a non-profit organization in OMB Circular A-122, now at 2 CFR Part 230. Interstate agencies may be asked to provide a citation to the statutory authority, which establishes their status.

#### **B. COST SHARING/MATCH REQUIREMENTS**

No cost share or match is required.

### **C. THRESHOLD ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA**

These are requirements that, if not met by the time of proposal package submission, will result in elimination of the proposal from consideration for funding. Only proposals that meet all of these criteria will be evaluated against the ranking factors in Section V of the announcement.

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. An applicant must meet the eligibility requirements in Section III.A of this announcement.
2. Proposals must substantially comply with the proposal submission instructions and requirements set forth in Section IV of this announcement or else they will be rejected. Where a page limit is expressed in Section IV with respect to the project narrative, pages in excess of the page limitation will not be reviewed. If a single spaced narrative is submitted, it will only be reviewed up to the equivalent of the 20 page double spaced page limit for the project narrative specified in Section IV.C.3; excess pages will not be reviewed (Section IV.C.3 establishes a 20 page double spaced project narrative page limit which would be the equivalent of 10 single spaced pages; any single spaced pages in excess of 10 pages will not be reviewed).
3. Applicants may submit more than one complete project proposal package under this announcement. However, each complete proposal package **must address only one** technical training support activity listed in Section I.B: (1) National SRF Infrastructure Financing and Training Workshops or (2) training on effective methods to communicate CWSRF environmental benefits. The cover page of each proposal package **must** clearly indicate which technical training support activity is addressed. Individual proposals that address more than one activity will not be reviewed.
4. Proposals must be received by the EPA or received through [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov), as specified in Section IV of this announcement, on or before the proposal submission deadline published in Section IV of this announcement. If submitting a hard copy proposal, applicants are responsible for ensuring that their proposal reaches the designated Agency Contact specified in Section IV of the announcement by the submission deadline.
5. Proposals received after the submission 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. For hard copy submissions, where Section IV requires proposal receipt by the Agency Contact by the submission deadline, receipt by an agency mailroom is not sufficient. Applicants should confirm receipt of their proposal via e-mail with the Agency

Contact identified in Section VII as soon as possible after the submission deadline—failure to do so may result in your proposal not being reviewed.

6. Hard copy proposals must be submitted by hand delivery, express delivery service, or courier service. **Proposals submitted by any type of U.S. Postal Service mail (including any form of U.S. Postal Service express mail) will not be considered. EPA will not accept faxed submissions.**
7. Proposals must be consistent with funding restrictions set forth in Section III.D.

#### **D. FUNDING RESTRICTIONS**

All costs incurred under this program must be allowable under the applicable Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Cost Circulars: A-87 (States and local governments), A-122 (non-profit organizations), or A-21 (universities). Copies of these circulars can be found at <http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/circulars/>. In accordance with EPA policy and the OMB circulars, as appropriate, any recipient of funding must agree not to use assistance funds for lobbying, fund-raising, or political activities (i.e., lobbying members of Congress or lobbying for other Federal grants, cooperative agreements, or contracts). Funds cannot be used to pay for travel by Federal agency staff. Proposed project activities must also comply with all State and Federal regulations applicable to the project area. It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure compliance.

### **IV. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION**

#### **A. ADDRESS TO REQUEST APPLICATION PACKAGES**

Grant application forms, including Standard Forms (SF) 424 and SF 424A, are available at [http://www.epa.gov/ogd/grants/how\\_to\\_apply.htm](http://www.epa.gov/ogd/grants/how_to_apply.htm) and by mail upon request by calling the Grants and Interagency Agreements Management Division at (202) 564-5320.

#### **B. FORM OF APPLICATION SUBMISSION**

Applicants have the option of submitting their proposal packages (as described in Section IV.C below) in *one* of two ways: 1) electronically through the Grants.gov website; or 2) by hard copy (with CD) to the EPA contact identified in Section IV.B.2. via hand delivery, express delivery service, or courier service. All proposals must be prepared, and include the information as described in Section IV.C below, regardless of mode of transmission.

##### **1. Grants.gov Submission**

Applicants who wish to submit their materials electronically through the Federal government's Grants.gov web site may do so. Grants.gov allows an applicant to download an application package template and complete the package offline based on agency instructions. After an applicant completes the required application package, it can submit the package electronically to Grants.gov, which transmits the package to the funding agency.

The electronic submission of your proposal must be made by an official representative of your institution who is registered with Grants.gov and is authorized to sign applications for Federal

assistance. For more information, go to <http://www.grants.gov> and click on “Get Registered” on the left side of the page.

*Note that the registration process may take a week or longer to complete.* If your organization is not currently registered with Grants.gov, please encourage your office to designate an Authorized Organization Representative (AOR) and ask that individual to begin the registration process as soon as possible.

To begin the proposal process under this grant announcement, go to <http://www.grants.gov> and click on the “Apply for Grants” tab on the left side of the page. Then click on “Apply Step 1: Download a Grant Application Package” to download the compatible Adobe viewer and obtain the application package. **To apply through Grants.gov you must use Adobe Reader applications and download the compatible Adobe Reader version (Adobe Reader applications are available to download free on the Grants.gov website).** For more information on Adobe Reader, please visit the Help Section on grants.gov at <http://www.grants.gov/help/help.jsp> or [http://www.grants.gov/aboutgrants/program\\_status.jsp](http://www.grants.gov/aboutgrants/program_status.jsp).

Once you have downloaded the viewer, you may retrieve the proposal package by entering the Funding Opportunity Number, **EPA-OW-OWM-09-01**, or the CFDA number that applies to the announcement (CFDA 66.436), in the appropriate field. You may also be able to access the proposal package by clicking on the Application button at the top right of the synopsis page for this announcement on <http://www.grants.gov> (to find the synopsis page, go to <http://www.grants.gov> and click on the “Find Grant Opportunities” button on the left side of the page and then go to Search Opportunities and use the Browse by Agency feature to find EPA opportunities).

### **Proposal Submission Deadline**

Your organization’s AOR must submit your complete proposal electronically to EPA through Grants.gov (<http://www.grants.gov>) no later than **11:59 PM EST January 14, 2009.**

Please submit *all* of the proposal materials described below. To view the full funding announcement, go to [www.epa.gov/wastewatergrants](http://www.epa.gov/wastewatergrants) or go to <http://www.grants.gov> and click on “Find Grant Opportunities” on the left side of the page and then click on Search Opportunities/Browse by Agency and select Environmental Protection Agency. Proposal materials submitted through Grants.gov will be time/date stamped.

### **How to submit your proposal through Grants.gov**

Applicants are required to submit the following documents to apply electronically through Grants.gov. All documents should appear in the “Mandatory Documents” box on the Grants.gov Grant Application Package page.

- For the Proposal Narrative portion, you will need to attach electronic files. Prepare this as described in Section IV.C.3 of the announcement and save the documents to your computer as an MS Word or PDF file. When you are ready to attach the documents to the application package, click on “Project Narrative Attachment Form,” and open the form. Click “Add Mandatory Project Narrative File,” and then attach it (previously saved to your computer)

using the browse window that appears. You may then click “View Mandatory Project Narrative File” to view it. Enter a brief descriptive title of your project in the space beside “Mandatory Project Narrative File Filename,” the filename should be no more than 40 characters long. If there are other attachments that you would like to submit to accompany your proposal, you may click “add Optional Project Narrative File” and proceed as before. When you have finished attaching the necessary documents, click “Close Form.” When you return to the “Grant Application Package” page, select the “Project Narrative Attachment Form” and click “Move Form to Submission List.” The form should now appear in the box that says, “Mandatory Completed Documents for Submission.”

- The following 2 additional documents should appear in the “Mandatory Documents” box on the Grants.gov Grant Application Package page.
  1. SF 424 – Application for Federal Assistance
  2. SF 424A – Budget Information for Non-Construction Programs
- For each document, click on the appropriate form and then click “Open Form” below the box. The fields that must be completed will be highlighted in yellow. Optional fields and completed fields will be displayed in white. If you enter an invalid response or incomplete information in a field, you will receive an error message. When you have finished filling out each form, click “Save.” When you return to the electronic Grant Application Package page, click on the form you just completed, and then click on the box that says, “Move Form to Submission List.” This action moves the document over to the box that says, “Mandatory Completed Documents for Submission.”

Once you have finished filling out all of the forms/attachments and they appear in one of the “Completed Documents for Submission” boxes, click the “Save” button that appears at the top of the Web page. It is suggested that you save the document a second time, using a different name, since this will make it easier to submit an amended package later if necessary.

Please use the following format when saving your file: “Applicant Name – FY09 – Technical Training Support Activities for SRF – 1<sup>st</sup> Submission.” If it becomes necessary to submit an amended package at a later date, then the name of the 2<sup>nd</sup> submission should be changed to “Applicant Name – FY09 – Technical Training Support Activities for SRF - 2<sup>nd</sup> Submission.” Once your proposal package has been completed and saved, send it to your AOR for submission to U.S. EPA through Grants.gov. Please advise your AOR to close all other software programs before attempting to submit the proposal package through Grants.gov.

From the “Grant Application Package” page, your AOR may submit the proposal package by clicking the “Submit” button that appears at the top of the page. The AOR will then be asked to verify the agency and funding opportunity number for which the application package is being submitted. If problems are encountered during the submission process, the AOR should reboot his/her computer before trying to submit the proposal package again. [It may be necessary to turn off the computer (not just restart it) before attempting to submit the package again.] If the AOR continues to experience submission problems, he/she may contact Grants.gov for assistance by phone at 1-800-518-4726 or email at <http://www.grants.gov/help/help.jsp> or contact Clifford Yee at 202-564-0598 or email at [yee.clifford@epa.gov](mailto:yee.clifford@epa.gov). If you have any other

technical difficulties while applying electronically, please refer to <http://www.grants.gov/help/help.jsp>.

If you have not received a confirmation of receipt from EPA (*not from Grants.gov*) within 14 days of the proposal deadline, please contact Clifford Yee as indicated in the paragraph above. Failure to do so may result in your proposal not being reviewed.

## **2. Hard Copy and CD Submission**

Three hard copies of the complete proposal package and an electronic version on a CD, as described in Section IV.C below are required to be sent by hand delivery, express delivery service, or courier service. **Proposals submitted by any type of U.S. Postal Service mail (including any form of U.S. Postal Service express mail) will not be considered. EPA will not accept faxed submissions.** Electronic files on the CD may be in Adobe Portable Document Format (.pdf) or Microsoft Word (.doc). Proposal submission sent by hard copy with CD must be received by the Agency Contact identified below by **4:00 PM EST January 14, 2009.**

The address for hard copy submission is:

Attn: Clifford Yee  
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Office of Wastewater Management  
EPA East Building, Room 7309J  
1201 Constitution Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20004

## **C. CONTENT OF PROPOSAL PACKAGE SUBMISSION**

**Applicants should read the following section very closely.** A complete proposal package *must* include the following documents below:

### **1. Signed Standard Form (SF) 424, Application for Federal Assistance**

Complete the form. There are no attachments. Please be sure to include organization fax number and e-mail address in Block 5 of the SF 424.

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 or by visiting the web site at [www.dnb.com](http://www.dnb.com).

### **2. SF 424A – Budget Information for Non-Construction Programs**

Complete the form. There are no attachments. The total amount of Federal funding requested for the project period should be shown on line 5(e) and on line 6(k) of the 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 (personnel costs and fringe benefits), and the amount should also be indicated on line 22.

### **3. Proposal Narrative:**

**NOTE: The Proposal Narrative must include sections A-C below. The project narrative (IV.C.3.C) portion is limited to no more than twenty (20) typewritten double spaced 8.5x11-inch pages (a page is one side of a piece of paper).** Pages should be consecutively numbered for ease of reading. It is recommended that applicants use a standard 12-point type with 1-inch margins. While these guidelines establish the minimum type size recommended, applicants are advised that readability is of paramount importance and should take precedence in selection of an appropriate font for use in the project narrative. Additional pages beyond the 20 page limit will not be considered. Hard copy submissions may be submitted double-sided. If a single-spaced project narrative is submitted, it will be reviewed up to the equivalent of the 20 page double-spaced page limit; excess pages will not be reviewed (the 20 page double-spaced project narrative page limit would be the equivalent of 10 single-spaced pages; any single-spaced pages in excess of 10 will not be reviewed). Supporting materials (including the Cover Page, Executive Summary, and annotated resumes described below) are not included within the page limit.

The Proposal Narrative must be typewritten and must include the information listed below. If a particular item is not applicable, clearly state this.

**A. Cover Page (not included in the page limit) including:**

- a. Name of applicant;
- b. Project title;
- c. Technical training support activity from Section I.B addressed in proposal (i.e., National SRF Infrastructure Financing and Training Workshops **or** training on effective methods to communicate CWSRF environmental benefits. **A proposal must address only one technical training support activity;**
- d. Number of proposals applicant is submitting in response to this announcement (e.g., Proposal Number 1 of 1, or Proposal Number 1 of 2);
- e. Key personnel and contact information (i.e., e-mail address and phone number); and
- f. Total project cost: specify the amount of Federal funds requested and the total project cost.

**B. Executive Summary (not included in the page limit):** Provide a brief summary (recommended 75 words or less) of the proposal. This should include a brief description of the proposed project and the anticipated environmental outputs and outcomes.

**C. Project Narrative (subject to the page limit):**

- a.) **Technical Approach:** Describe how the proposal addresses one of the specific technical training support activities described in Section I.B of this announcement. Applicants must address **only one** technical training support activity per complete proposal package.
- b.) **Environmental Results and Measuring Progress:**
  - i. Stated Objective/Link to EPA Strategic Plan - List the objective of the project and provide a link to the EPA Strategic Plan Goal 2 – Clean and Safe Water, Objective 2.2 – Protect Water Quality, Sub-Objective 2.2.1 – Improve Water Quality on a Watershed Basis (see Section I.C of this announcement).

ii. Results of Activities (Outputs) - List the products/results which are expected to be achieved from accomplishment of the project and an approach for tracking your progress toward achieving the expected project output(s) (examples of outputs can be found in Section I.C of this announcement).

iii. Anticipated Environmental Improvement (Outcomes) - List what environmental improvements will be accomplished as a result of the project activities and an approach for tracking your progress toward achieving the expected project outcome(s). These improvements are changes or benefits to the environment which result from the accomplishment of project outputs (examples of outcomes can be found in Section I.C of this announcement).

c.) **Project Tasks:** Outline the steps you will take to meet the project goals. Include a description of your roles and responsibilities in carrying out the project's tasks. If travel assistance is to be provided, describe the process for selecting non-Federal attendees who will receive travel assistance.

d.) **Milestone Schedule:** Provide a projected timeline for the proposed project period. The timeline should show timeframes and major milestones to complete significant project tasks. The project start date will follow award acceptance by the successful applicant.

e.) **Transfer of Results:** Provide a brief description of how the applicant will transfer the results of the project to States, local governments, and other interested stakeholders.

f.) **Detailed Budget Narrative:** Provide a detailed budget and estimated funding amounts for each project task.

i. Applicants must itemize costs related to personnel, fringe benefits, contractual costs, travel, equipment, supplies, other direct costs, indirect costs, and total cost. This section provides an opportunity for a narrative description of the budget or aspects of the budget found in the SF 424A such as "other" and "contractual". All subgrant funding should be located in the "other" cost category. Describe itemized costs in sufficient detail for EPA to determine the reasonableness and allowability of costs for each project component/task. If applicable, the budget narrative for the travel cost category must include travel reimbursement to pay for travel costs of non-Federal attendees.

ii. When formulating budgets for proposals, applicants must not include management fees or similar charges in excess of the direct costs and indirect costs at the rate approved by the applicants cognizant audit agency, or at the rate provided for by the terms of the agreement negotiated with 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 EPA assistance agreements. Management fees or similar charges may not 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 scope of work.

g.) **Quality Assurance/Quality Control:** If the applicant expects to collect data and information, briefly describe how the applicant will assure and control data quality. If this is

not applicable to the project, state so in the project narrative. Note: Development of a Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP) is required of all EPA assistance agreements that fund data collection and assessment. The cost of QAPP development should be included in the project budget.

**h.) Programmatic Capability:**

i. Organizational Experience - Provide a brief description of the applicant's organization and experience related to the proposed project, and the organization's infrastructure as it relates to its ability to successfully implement the proposed project.

ii. Staff Expertise/Qualifications - Provide a list of key staff and briefly describe their expertise/qualifications and knowledge, and resources or the ability to obtain them to successfully achieve the goals of the project. Include an estimate of the number of full-time equivalent (FTE) workers (based on 2080 hours per year/FTE). List proposed partner entities, and describe their roles, and whether they will participate as subgrantees. Annotated resumes of applicant's key staff are also encouraged and are not included in the page limit.

**i.) Past Performance:**

i. Programmatic Past Performance - Submit a list of Federally funded and/or non-Federally funded assistance agreements (assistance agreements include grants and cooperative agreements but not contracts) that your organization performed within the last three years (no more than 5, and preferably EPA agreements) and describe: (1) whether, and how, you were able to successfully complete and manage those agreements; and (2) your history of meeting the reporting requirements under those agreements including submitting acceptable final technical reports. In evaluating applicants under these factors in Section V, 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 and prior Federal agency 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 reporting information, please indicate this in the proposal and you will receive a neutral score for these factors under Section V. Failure to provide any programmatic past performance or reporting information, or to include a statement that you do not have any relevant or available past performance or reporting information, may result in a zero score for these factors (see also Section V).

ii. Environmental Results Past Performance - Submit a list of Federally funded and/or non-Federally funded assistance agreements (assistance agreements include grants and cooperative agreements but not contracts) that your organization performed within the last three years (no more than 5, and preferably EPA agreements), and describe how you documented and/or reported on whether you were making progress towards achieving the expected results (e.g., outputs and outcomes) under those agreements. If you were not making progress, please indicate whether, and how, you documented why not. In evaluating applicants under this factor in Section V, 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 and prior Federal agency grantors

(e.g., to verify and/or supplement the information provided by the applicant). If you do not have any relevant or available environmental results past performance information, please indicate this in the proposal and you will receive a neutral score for this factor under Section V. Failure to provide any environmental results past performance information, or to include a statement that you do not have any relevant or available environmental results past performance information, may result in a zero score for this factor (see also Section V).

**NOTE:** The applicant should also provide in its Proposal Narrative any additional information, to the extent not already identified above, that addresses the selection criteria found in Section V.

**D. SUBMISSION DATES AND TIMES**

Proposal submissions sent by hard copy with CD must be **received** by the Agency Contact identified in Section VII by **4:00 PM EST January 14, 2009**. Proposals submitted electronically through Grants.gov must be submitted by **11:59 PM EST January 14, 2009**. Late proposals will not be considered for funding.

**E. INTERGOVERNMENTAL REVIEW**

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. Further information regarding this can be found at <http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants/spoc.html>.

**F. CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS INFORMATION**

In accordance with 40 CFR 2.203, applicants may claim all or a portion of their proposal as confidential business information. EPA will evaluate confidentiality claims in accordance with 40 CFR Part 2. Applicants must clearly mark proposals or portions of proposals 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.

**V. APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION**

**A. SELECTION CRITERIA**

All eligible proposals, based on the Section III threshold eligibility criteria review, will be evaluated based on the evaluation criteria and weights below (100 total point scale). Points will be awarded based on how well and thoroughly each criterion and/or sub-criterion is addressed in the proposal package.

<p><b>1) Technical Approach (25 points)</b></p>	<p>Under this criterion, proposals will be evaluated based on the extent and quality to which the proposed project addresses <b>one</b> of the technical training support activities identified in Section I.B of the announcement.</p>
	<p>Points will be awarded based on how well and thoroughly the National SRF Infrastructure Financing and Training</p>

	Workshops <b>or</b> the training on effective methods to communicate CWSRF environmental benefits is addressed in the proposal narrative. ( 25 points)
<b>2) Environmental Results (20 points)</b>	Proposals will be evaluated based on the following sub-criterion:  a) Environmental Results: The extent and quality to which the proposal demonstrates potential environmental results, anticipated outputs and outcomes, and how the outcomes are linked to EPA’s Strategic Plan. (10 points)  b) Measuring Progress: The extent and quality to which the proposal demonstrates a sound plan for measuring progress toward achieving the expected outputs and outcomes (examples of outcomes and outputs can be found in Section I.C of this announcement). (10 points)
<b>3) Proposal Narrative and Budget Elements (25 points)</b>	Proposals will be evaluated based on the extent and quality to which the proposal demonstrates the following:  a) Clearly articulated steps to meet project goals, including a description of roles and responsibilities of the applicant in carrying out the project tasks. (10 points)  b) Clearly articulated milestone schedule for project tasks. (5 points)  c) A description of how the applicant will transfer the results of the project to States, local governments, and other interested stakeholders. (5 points)  d) Reasonableness of the budget and estimated funding amounts for each project component/task. Applicants will be evaluated based on the adequacy of the information provided in the detailed budget narrative and whether the proposed costs are reasonable and allowable. (5 points)
<b>4) Programmatic Capability (Experience/Qualifications) (15 points)</b>	Under this criterion, proposals will be evaluated based on the applicant’s ability to successfully complete and manage the proposed project taking into account the applicant’s:  a) Organizational experience and infrastructure as it relates to its ability to successfully implement the proposed project. (10 points)  b) Staff expertise/qualifications, staff knowledge, and resources or the ability to obtain them, to successfully

	achieve the goals of the project. (5 points)
<b>5) Past Performance (15 points)</b>	<p>Under this criterion, proposals will be evaluated based on the applicant's ability to successfully complete and manage the proposed project taking into account the following factors:</p> <p>a) Past performance in successfully completing and managing Federally funded and/or non-Federally funded assistance agreements (assistance agreements include grants and cooperative agreements but not contracts) similar in size, scope, and relevance to the proposed project within the last 3 years (no more than 5, and preferably EPA agreements). (5 points)</p> <p>b) History of meeting reporting requirements under Federally funded and/or non-Federally funded assistance agreements (assistance agreements include grants and cooperative agreements but not contracts) similar in size, scope, and relevance to the proposed project performed within the last 3 years (no more than 5, and preferably EPA agreements) and submitting acceptable final technical reports under those agreements. (5 points)</p> <p>c) Extent and quality to which the applicant adequately documented and/or reported on its progress towards achieving the expected results (e.g., outcomes and outputs) under Federally funded and/or non-Federally funded assistance agreements (assistance agreements include grants and cooperative agreements but not contracts) performed within the last 3 years (no more than 5, and preferably EPA agreements), and if such progress was not being made, whether the applicant adequately documented and/or reported why not. (5 points)</p> <p>Note: In evaluating applicants under a), b), and c) above, the Agency 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). Applicants with no relevant or available past performance information or reporting history must indicate that in the proposal and will receive a neutral score for the factor (i.e., 2.5 points for item a), 2.5 points for item b), and 2.5 points for item c)).</p> <p>Failure to provide any past performance information or to include a statement that you do not have any relevant or available past performance information, may result in a zero score for the factor (i.e., 0 points for item a), 0 points for item b), and zero points for item c)).</p>

## **B. REVIEW AND SELECTION PROCESS**

All proposals received by EPA or submitted electronically through Grants.gov by the submission deadline will first be screened by EPA staff against the threshold criteria in Section III of the announcement. Proposals that do not pass the threshold review will not be evaluated further or considered for funding.

A panel of EPA staff will review eligible proposals based on the evaluation criteria listed in Section V.A and will develop a ranking list of the proposals for each technical training support activity (i.e., National SRF Infrastructure Financing and Training Workshops and training on effective methods to communicate CWSRF environmental benefits) based on the scores received. The ranking list for each technical training support activity will be provided to the Selection Official who makes final funding decisions. In making the final funding decisions for each technical training support activity, the Selection Official will consider the proposal score and may also take into account program priorities and funding levels.

## **VI. AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION**

### **A. AWARD NOTICES**

All applicants, including those who are not selected for funding, will be notified by e-mail. Successful applicant(s) will be invited to submit a complete application package prior to award (see 40 CFR 30.12 and 31.10). Required forms and instructions for preparing and submitting the completed application will be provided at that time. The notification of recommendation for award is not an authorization to begin performance.

EPA reserves the right to negotiate and/or adjust the final grant amount and workplan prior to award, as appropriate and consistent with Agency policy including the Assistance Agreement Competition Policy, EPA Order 5700.5A1. An approvable final work plan narrative is required to include:

1. Components to be funded under the assistance agreement;
2. Estimated work years and the estimated funding amounts for each work plan component;
3. Work plan commitments for each component and a timeframe for their accomplishment;
4. Performance evaluation process and reporting schedule; and
5. Roles and responsibilities of the recipient and EPA (for cooperative agreements only) in carrying out the work plan commitments.

In addition, successful applicants will be required to certify that they have not been Debarred or Suspended from participation.

Any additional information about this RFP will be posted on EPA's Office of Wastewater Management's website at [www.epa.gov/wastewatergrants](http://www.epa.gov/wastewatergrants). Deadline extensions, if any, will be posted on this website and [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov).

## **B. ADMINISTRATIVE AND NATIONAL POLICY REQUIREMENTS**

The general award and administration process for all assistance agreements is governed by regulations at 40 CFR Part 30 (“Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Agreements to Institutions of Higher Education, Hospitals, and Other Non-profit Organizations”), 40 CFR Part 31 (“Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Cooperative Agreements to State and Local Governments”), and 40 CFR Part 45 (Training Assistance). A description of the Agency’s substantial involvement in the cooperative agreement will be included in the final assistance agreement.

### **C. DUNS NUMBER**

Applicants are required to provide a Dun and Bradstreet Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number with the full application for Federal grants or cooperative agreements. Organizations can receive a DUNS number in one day, at no cost, by calling the dedicated toll free DUNS Number request line at 1-866-705-5711 or by visiting the web site at [www.dnb.com](http://www.dnb.com).

### **D. REPORTING**

In general, recipients are responsible for managing the day-to-day operations and activities supported by the assistance funding, to assure compliance with applicable Federal requirements, and for ensuring that established milestones and performance goals are being achieved. Performance reports and financial reports must be submitted quarterly and are due 30 days after the reporting period. The final report is due 90 days after the assistance agreement has expired. Recipients will be required to report direct and indirect environmental results from the work accomplished through the award. In negotiating assistance agreements, EPA will work closely with the recipient to incorporate appropriate performance measures and reporting requirements in the workplan consistent with 40 CFR 30.51, 31.40, and 40 CFR Part 45. Additionally, if travel assistance is provided to selected attendees, the recipient will be required to provide a report on how participating State or local attendees benefited from the training.

### **E. COMPETITION-RELATED DISPUTE PROCEDURES**

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>. Copies of these procedures may also be requested by contacting the Agency Contact (see Section VII).

### **F. ADMINISTRATIVE CAPABILITY REQUIREMENT**

Non-profit applicants that are recommended for funding under this announcement 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](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.

### **G. COPYRIGHTS**

In accordance with 40 CFR 31.34 for State, local and Indian Tribal governments or 40 CFR 30.36 for other recipients, EPA reserves a royalty-free, nonexclusive and irrevocable right to reproduce, publish, or otherwise use, and to authorize others to use, for Federal government

purposes, copyrighted works developed under a grant, subgrant or contract under a grant or subgrant.

## VII. AGENCY CONTACT

**Note to Applicants:** In accordance with EPA's Competition Policy (EPA Order 5700.5A1), EPA staff will not meet with individual applicants or discuss draft proposals, provide informal comments on draft proposals, or provide advice to applicants on how to respond to ranking criteria. Applicants are responsible for the contents of their proposals. However, consistent with the provisions in the announcement, EPA will respond to written questions from individual applicants regarding threshold eligibility criteria, administrative issues related to the submission of the proposal, and requests for clarification about the announcement. Questions about this RFP must be submitted in writing via e-mail and must be received by the Agency Contact identified below before **January 5, 2009**. Written responses will be posted on EPA's website at: [www.epa.gov/wastewatergrants](http://www.epa.gov/wastewatergrants).

### Agency Contact:

Clifford Yee

Phone Number: 202-564-0598

E-mail: yee.clifford@epa.gov

## VIII. OTHER INFORMATION

### **A. QUALITY ASSURANCE/QUALITY CONTROL (QA/QC) and STORET**

QA/QC requirements are applicable to these assistance agreements (see 40 CFR 30.54 and 40 CFR 31.45). QA/QC requirements apply to the collection of environmental data. Environmental data are any measurements or information that describe environmental processes, location, or conditions; ecological or health effects and consequences; or the performance of environmental technology. Environmental data include information collected directly from measurements, produced from models, and compiled from other sources such as databases or literature. Applicants should allow sufficient time and resources for this process. EPA can assist applicants in determining whether QA/QC is required for the proposed project. If QA/QC is required for the project, the applicant is encouraged to work with the EPA QA/QC staff to determine the appropriate QA/QC practices for the project. Contact the Agency Contact (See Section VII for Agency Contact information) for referral to an EPA QA/QC staff.

Additionally, recipients of grants for projects that involve ambient monitoring will be required to submit all data from monitoring activities to STORET (short for STorage and RETrieval) database. STORET provides an accessible, nationwide central repository of water information of known quality. Grantee submission of monitoring data into STORET can be made via the new Water Quality Exchange (WQX). WQX is based upon the Environmental Sampling, Analysis, and Results (ESAR) standard, which defines a standard format for sharing monitoring and analytical data. More information about WQX and STORET can be found at <http://www.epa.gov/storet>. More information about ESAR can be found at [http://www.exchangenetwork.net/standards/ESAR\\_Overview\\_01\\_06\\_2006\\_Final.pdf](http://www.exchangenetwork.net/standards/ESAR_Overview_01_06_2006_Final.pdf). Submitting data through WQX is done via EPA's Central Data Exchange, and leverages the

Exchange Network (which is a State/Tribal/Federal data exchange partnership). These tools provide common internet protocols for sharing information. More information about CDX and the Exchange Network can be found at: <http://exchangenetwork.net>. Grantees should manage their data in a STORET compatible format that will facilitate the sharing of data via WQX.

## **B. DATA SHARING**

All recipients of these assistance agreements will be required to share any data generated through this funding agreement as a defined deliverable in the final work plan. The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Circular A-110 has been revised to provide public access to research data through the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) under some circumstances. Data that are (1) first produced in a project that is supported in whole or in part with Federal funds and (2) cited publicly and officially by a Federal agency in support of an action that has the force and effect of law (i.e., a regulation) may be accessed through FOIA. If such data are requested by the public, the EPA must ask for it, and the grantee must submit it, in accordance with A-110 and EPA regulations at 40 CFR. 30.36.

## **C. EXCHANGE NETWORK**

EPA, States, territories, and tribes are working together to develop the National Environmental Information Exchange Network, a secure, Internet- and standards-based way to support electronic data reporting, sharing, and integration of both regulatory and non-regulatory environmental data. States, tribes and territories exchanging data with each other or with EPA, should make the Exchange Network and the Agency's connection to it, the Central Data Exchange (CDX), the standard way they exchange data and should phase out any legacy methods they have been using. More information on the Exchange Network is available at [www.exchangenetwork.net](http://www.exchangenetwork.net).