

Integrated Atmospheric Deposition Network 2019 Request for Applications

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Funding Opportunity Title:	Integrated Atmospheric Deposition Network
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INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

This Request for Applications (RFA) solicits applications from eligible entities for a cooperative agreement to support the Integrated Atmospheric Deposition Network pursuant to the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI) action plan (www.glri.us/documents#actionplan). This RFA is one of several funding opportunities available through federal agencies under the GLRI.

Funding/Awards

Under this competition, approximately \$6 million may be awarded for one cooperative agreement over a five-year and three-month period, consisting of incremental funding of about \$1.2 million per year. Awarding of the cooperative agreement, and incremental funding, is contingent upon funding availability, the quality of applications received and other applicable considerations. Applications must have a project period of five years and three months. The award is expected to be incrementally funded and subject to the availability of funding, future appropriations, satisfactory performance of work, and other applicable considerations.

GLRI's statutory authority to award cooperative agreements is contained in the Clean Water Act, Section 118(c)(7), as amended by Public Law 114-322. EPA has authority to award grants and cooperative agreements for planning, research, monitoring, outreach and implementation projects in furtherance of the GLRI and the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement. Governmental entities, including state agencies, interstate agencies, Indian tribes, local governments, institutions of higher learning (i.e., colleges and universities), and non-profit organizations (as defined at 2 CFR 200) are eligible to apply for funding under this RFA. Individuals, foreign organizations and governments, nonprofit organizations exempt from taxation under Section 501(c)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code that engage in lobbying, and "for-profit" organizations are not eligible.

Important Dates

- Tuesday, May 28, 2019 – Applications must be received by EPA via Grants.gov by 10:59 p.m. Central Daylight Time / 11:59 p.m. Eastern Daylight Time. There are limited exceptions to submission via Grants.gov. See Section IV for further submission information.
- June 2019 (tentative) – EPA will notify finalist.
- August 2019 (tentative) – EPA will make official award.

Other Application Information

For your convenience, an RFA web page has been created at www.epa.gov/great-lakes-funding/2019-rfa-integrated-atmospheric-deposition-network. Here you will find information relating to the RFA process as well as a link to frequently asked questions (FAQs). We encourage all applicants to sign up for our mailing list and register with us at www.epa.gov/great-lakes-funding/great-lakes-news-email-list. Further submittal information is described in Section IV.

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I. APPLICATION INFORMATION

A. General Background, Authority, and Funded Activities

The Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (“GLRI” or “Initiative”) builds on the prior efforts of federal, state, and local agencies; Indian tribes; businesses; public interest groups; interested citizens; and others to develop a collaborative and comprehensive approach to restoring the Great Lakes. Information about the Initiative can be found at www.glri.us.

This RFA is expected to result in the award of one cooperative agreement, as appropriate (hereafter collectively referred to as “grants”), to help implement the GLRI. Authorization for GLRI funding is contained in the Clean Water Act, Section 118(c)(7), as amended by Public Law 114-322.

EPA has authority to award cooperative agreements for planning, research, monitoring, outreach and implementation projects in furtherance of GLRI and the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement (GLWQA). The statutory authority to act to implement the U.S. responsibilities under GLWQA and for GLRI funding is contained in the Clean Water Act, Section 118(c)(7), as amended by Public Law 114-322. The principal goal of GLWQA is the restoration and maintenance of the chemical, physical, and biological integrity of the Great Lakes ecosystem. Funded activities must advance protection and restoration of the Great Lakes ecosystem in support of: (i) the GLRI action plan (www.glri.us/documents#actionplan) and (ii) EPA’s Strategic Plan. Projects must also either: (i) protect, enhance, and/or restore the Great Lakes, including projects impacting connecting waterways such as Lake St. Clair and the St. Lawrence River (at or upstream from the point at which the St. Lawrence River becomes the international boundary between Canada and the United States); or (ii) protect Great Lakes ecosystem health, including human health. Information about the GLRI can be found at www.epa.gov/great-lakes-funding/great-lakes-restoration-initiative-glri. Applications for other activities will be rejected.

The activities to be funded under this announcement support EPA’s FY 2018-22 Strategic Plan. Awards made under this announcement will support Goal 1: Core Mission, Objective 1.2: Provide for Clean and Safe Water of the EPA Strategic Plan (www.epa.gov/planandbudget/strategicplan.html). All applications must be for projects that support the goals and objectives identified above.

For projects with international aspects, the above statutes are supplemented, as appropriate, by the National Environmental Policy Act, Section 102(2)(F).

This RFA solicits applications from eligible entities for a cooperative agreement to be awarded pursuant to the statutory authorities referenced above and the GLRI action plan. Up to \$6 million may be awarded under this RFA over an approximately five-year and three-month period, consisting of incremental funding of about \$1.2 million per year, contingent on the quality of applications received, funding availability, future appropriations, satisfactory performance of work, and other applicable considerations. Funding each year is not guaranteed. The application should include an annualized budget and budget detail narrative for the project, and a detailed workplan covering each year of the project.

All projects will be evaluated as described in Section V.

Minority Serving Institutions (MSIs)

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

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

- A. Historically Black Colleges and Universities, as defined by the Higher Education Act (20 U.S.C. § 1061). A list of these schools can be found at sites.ed.gov/whhbcu/one-hundred-and-five-historically-black-colleges-and-universities/
- B. Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs), as defined by the Higher Education Act (20 U.S.C. § 1059c(b)(3) and (d)(1)). A list of these schools can be found at sites.ed.gov/whiaiane/tribes-tcus/tribal-colleges-and-universities/
- C. Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs), as defined by the Higher Education Act (20 U.S.C. § 1101a(a)(5)). A list of these schools can be found at ed.gov/about/offices/list/ope/itudes/hsi-eligibles-2016.pdf
- D. Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander-Serving Institutions; (AANAPISIs), as defined by the Higher Education Act (20 U.S.C. § 1059g(a)(2)). A list of these schools can be found at www.google.com/maps/d/viewer?mid=1XVvOWKMDORm53pvU0L8EPsrJC94&msa=0&ie=UTF8&t=m&z=3&source=embed&ll=40.58644586187277%2C-148.28228249999984; and
- E. Predominantly Black Institutions (PBIs), as defined by the Higher Education Act of 2008, 20 U.S.C. 1059e(b)(6). A list of these schools can be found at www.google.com/maps/d/viewer?mid=1wlli3j7gtINq_w-ONKAb2bF2VmY&ie=UTF8&msa=0&ll=37.35160769312534%2C-96.17229800000001&z=4.

Subawardees and/or Contractors

If you name subawardees/subgrantees and/or contractor(s), including individual consultants, in your application as partners to assist you with the proposed project, pay careful attention to

the information in Section III regarding "Coalitions" and to the "Contracts and Subawards" provisions at www.epa.gov/grants/epa-solicitation-clauses (incorporated by reference in Section IV).

B. IADN Background, Goals and Objectives

The Integrated Atmospheric Deposition Network (IADN) was established in 1990 as a binational monitoring network between EPA and Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC), in response to scientific evidence that demonstrated the atmosphere is a significant source of many persistent toxic chemicals to the Great Lakes. Since 1990, IADN has monitored persistent toxics in vapor, particulates, and precipitation at both urban and rural sites across the basin. Master stations are located on each of the Great Lakes (Eagle Harbor, MI; Sleeping Bear Dunes, MI; Sturgeon Point, NY; and Point Petre, ON [operated by ECCC]) to characterize the broad lakewide trends of persistent toxic chemical loadings to the Lakes. Satellite stations are also located in two urban areas in the U.S. (Chicago, IL; and Cleveland, OH) to better understand the contribution of urban areas to lakewide loadings.

IADN measures the concentrations of persistent toxic chemicals in Great Lakes air and precipitation. These measurements are used to track and report spatial and temporal trends, determine atmospheric loadings to the Great Lakes, and identify emerging contaminants.

The goals of IADN are to track spatial and temporal trends of atmospheric toxics, determine atmospheric loadings of persistent toxics in the Great Lakes, and to identify emerging chemicals that may be impacting the lakes. These goals are accomplished through the following objectives, which should be addressed by applicants in their applications:

- Acquire quality-assured vapor and particulate and precipitation concentration measurements, with attention to continuity and consistency of those measurements, so that trend data are not biased by changes in network operations or personnel;
- Determine the atmospheric loadings and trends (both spatial and temporal) of persistent toxic chemicals to the Great Lakes;
- Discovery of new emerging chemical threats to the Great Lakes;
- Make data publicly available in a user friendly and effective manner; and
- Develop annual reports and Triennial State of the Great Lakes (SOGL) indicator reports

C. Program Activities

Applicants are expected to conduct activities in support of the above goals and objectives through the IADN core program (listed below) and may also include other activities associated with conducting new and emerging chemical surveillance and special research. The following provides a brief description of the of expected activities, more extensive details can be found in Section IV.D.2.a.

1. *Core Program* – Applicants must propose projects to address the IADN core program. The IADN core program monitors the long-term air deposition of persistent toxics, including PCBs, PAHs, pesticides, PBDEs, and other flame retardants in vapor, particulate, and precipitation phases (see table 1).
 - a. *Sample Collection*

Applicants are expected to collect air (vapor and particulate) and precipitation samples and perform meteorological measurements at the five U.S. IADN sites (Eagle Harbor, MI; Sleeping Bear Dunes, MI; Sturgeon Point, NY; Chicago, IL; and Cleveland, OH) through agreements with local site operators from October 1, 2019 to September 30, 2024.
 - b. *Sample Analysis*

Applicants are expected to analyze all collected vapor, particulate, and precipitation samples for persistent toxic chemicals currently on the IADN analyte list (see table 1).
 - c. *Data Management, Interpretation, Statistical Analysis and Reporting*

Applicants are expected to manage data generated through sample collection and analysis and submit to EPA. Applicants are expected to interpret data through statistical analysis and report findings.
 - d. *Quality Assurance and Quality Control*

Applicants are expected to develop, implement, and maintain a Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP).
2. *New Chemicals and Special Research* - Applicants may propose plans to conduct targeted and non-targeted surveillance of new and emerging chemicals. Further, monitoring per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) and hexabromocyclododecane (HBCDD) has become a focus for the IADN program
 - a. Applicants should propose plans to monitoring per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) and hexabromocyclododecane (HBCDD).
 - b. Applicants may also propose plans for surveillance activities including targeted and non-targeted screening for new chemicals.
 - c. Applicants may also propose plans for other special research including include measurement of persistent toxic chemicals in water samples to calculate net loadings to/from the Lakes; the use of other sampling methods to supplement the existing network with supporting rationale; and other research that contributes to the overall understanding of atmospheric concentrations and impacts to the Great Lakes.

Note: Applications must demonstrate a plan for performing chemical analyses to retain comparability and continuity with historical IADN data. IADN's Quality Assurance Project Plan (www.epa.gov/great-lakes-funding/2019-rfa-integrated-atmospheric-deposition-network) detail the analytical methodology currently used in IADN. Applications that do not demonstrate how they will ensure continuity and comparability of sampling and analytical methods with historic IADN data will be rejected.

Table 1: List of priority toxic chemicals analyzed by IADN (PCB congeners are only analyzed in vapor and precipitation samples; pesticides are analyzed in vapor and precipitation samples at all sites, and in particle samples at the 2 urban sites; PAHs

PCB congener		PAHs		PBDE congener	
4+10	119	Fluorine		7	153
7+9	83	phenanthrene		10	154 + BB-153
6	97	anthracene		15	156+169
8+5	81	fluoranthene		17	180
19	87	Pyrene		28	183
12	85	Retene		30	184
13	77	benzo[a]fluoranthene		47	191
18	110	benzo[b]fluoranthene		49	196
15+17	135+144	benzo[k]fluoranthene		66	197
16	123	benzo[e]pyrene		71	201
32	149	benzo[a]pyrene		85	203
26	118	chrysene+ triphenylene		99	204
31	114	indeno[1,2,3,cd]pyrene		100	205
28	131	dibenzo[a,h]anthracene		119	206
33	132+153+105	benzo[g,h,i]perylene		126	207
53	163+138	Coronene		138	208
22	128	Total PAHs		139	209
45	167	Pesticides		140	Total
52	174	HCB			
49	202+171	alpha-HCH		Other flame retardants	
47	156	beta-HCH		decabromodiphenylethane	
48	172	gamma-HCH		tribromophenoxyethane	
44	180	heptachlor epoxide		Dechlorane Plus	
37	199	alpha-chlordane		pentabromobenzene	
42	169	gamma-chlordane		p-tetrabromoxylene	
41+71	170+190	Oxychlordane		tetrabromobenzoate	
64	201	trans-nonachlor		tetrabromophthlate	
100	207	Methoxychlor		pentabromoethylbenzene	
74	194	endosulfan I		hexabromobenzene	
70+76	205	endosulfan II			
66	206	endosulfan sulfate			
95	Total	p,p'-DDT			
91		p,p'-DDE			
56+60		p,p'-DDD			
92+84		o,p'-DDT			
89		o,p'-DDD			
101		Aldrin			
99		Endrin			
126		Dieldrin			

D. Outputs and Outcomes

For purposes of this RFA:

- The term “output” means an environmental activity, effort, and/or associated work product related to an environmental goal and objective that will be produced or provided over a period of time or by a specified date. Outputs may be quantitative or qualitative but must be measurable over the term of the cooperative agreement funding period.
- The term “outcome” means the result, effect or consequence that will be achieved by carrying out an environmental activity, effort, and/or associated work product that is related to an environmental or programmatic goal or objective. Outcomes may be environmental, behavioral, health-related, or programmatic in nature, must be quantitative, and may not necessarily be achievable within a cooperative agreement funding period.

Outputs should include the following (and any additional ones that apply to the project) and must link to the GLRI Action Plan’s Measures of Progress or goals and objectives:

- A quantification of persistent toxic chemicals in Great Lakes air and precipitation samples, with attention to continuity and consistency of those measurements, so that trend data are not biased by changes in network operations or personnel.
- An evaluation of the spatial and temporal trends of persistent toxic chemicals
- Co-author State of the Great Lakes (SOGL) Toxic Chemicals in Air sub-indicator; an estimate of the atmospheric loadings of persistent toxic chemicals and select CMCs to the Great Lakes.
- The discovery of new emerging chemical threats to the Great Lakes.
- Development of Great Lakes scientists through the education of graduate and undergraduate students in Great Lakes ecosystem science and environmental chemistry.
- Delivering quality assured data to EPA in appropriate timeframes (listed above)
- Dissemination of results via peer-reviewed journal articles

Applicants should also demonstrate how their proposed project will achieve one or more of the following outcomes:

- Improved understanding of the atmospheric fate and cycling of persistent toxic chemicals in the Great Lakes region.
- Improved understanding of the sources and loadings of persistent toxic chemicals entering the Great Lakes.
- Improved decision-making in the development of strategies to reduce toxic chemicals in the Great Lakes.
- Increased understanding of the effectiveness of toxic reduction strategies.

- Increased understanding of persistent toxic chemical trends in Great Lakes air and precipitation.
- Increased understanding of the effects of persistent toxic chemicals on the health of the Great Lakes ecosystem.
- Increased understanding of emerging toxic chemicals in the Great Lakes.

II. AWARD INFORMATION

A. Amounts, Targets, and Number of Projects

Approximately \$6 million in EPA funding is expected to be awarded under this RFA for one cooperative agreement over an approximately 5-year period, consisting of incremental funding of approximately \$1.2 million per year. Awarding and funding of the cooperative agreement is contingent upon funding availability, the quality of applications received and other applicable considerations. The anticipated total amount and annual increments are estimates only and are being provided solely for application preparation purposes. Applications requesting funding above the anticipated total amount will not be considered.

The actual total and incremental award amount may differ from what is estimated for many reasons, including funding availability. In addition, EPA reserves the right to reject all applications and make no award under this announcement or make an award for less than expected.

B. Anticipated Project Start and End Dates

This Request for Applications (RFA) instructs applicants to submit certifications and other documentation required for a full and complete funding package so that their projects could, if selected, proceed expeditiously. Applications should have a project period ending October 31, 2024. The award will be incrementally funded each year, and is expected to start August 1, 2019, and is subject to the availability of funding, future appropriations, satisfactory performance of work, program priorities and other applicable considerations.

C. Additional Awards

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 6 months after the original selection decisions.

D. Funding Type

The successful applicant will be issued a cooperative agreement. A cooperative agreement is an assistance agreement that is used when there is substantial federal involvement with the recipient during the performance of an activity or project. EPA expects to have substantial involvement in this project in the form of technical assistance, network guidance, use of the

R/V Lake Guardian as appropriate, providing historic data, evaluation of project progress, and quantification and reporting of results. EPA will negotiate the precise terms and conditions of “substantial involvement” as part of the award process. Federal involvement may include close monitoring of the recipient’s performance; collaboration during the performance of the scope of work; review of proposed procurements in accordance with; 2 CFR 200.317 and 2 CFR 200.318 and 2 CFR 1500.9 reviewing qualifications of key personnel; and/or review and comment on the content of printed or electronic publications prepared. EPA does not have the authority to select employees or contractors employed by the recipient. The final decision on the content of reports rests with the recipient.

E. Future Funding

Selection or award of funding under this RFA is not a guarantee of future funding.

F. Partial Funding

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

III. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

A. Applicant Eligibility (CFDA 66.469)

Qualified non-federal entities eligible to apply for grants include non-federal governmental entities, nonprofit organizations, and institutions. This includes state agencies; any agency or instrumentality of local government; interstate agencies; federally-recognized tribes and tribal organizations; colleges and universities; non-profit organizations; and other public or non-profit private agencies, institutions, and organizations.

Non-profit organization means any corporation, trust, association, cooperative, or other organization which: (1) is operated primarily for scientific, educational, service, charitable, or similar purposes in the public interest; (2) is not organized primarily for profit; and (3) uses its net proceeds to maintain, improve, and/or expand its operations. Non-profit organizations described in Section 501(c)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code that engage in lobbying activities as defined in Section 3 of the Lobbying Disclosure Act of 1995 are not eligible applicants. "For profit" organizations, federal agencies, and individuals are not eligible applicants.

Eligible Minority Serving Institutions, as described in Section I, are strongly encouraged to apply for funding under this competition.

Coalitions

Groups of two or more eligible applicants may choose to form a coalition and submit a single application under this RFA; however, one entity must be responsible for the grant. Coalitions must identify which eligible organization will be the recipient of the grant and which eligible organization(s) will be subawardees of the recipient. Subawards and subgrants must be consistent with the definitions of those terms in 2 C.F.R. 200.92. The recipient that administers the grant will be accountable to EPA for proper expenditure of the funds and reporting and will be the point of contact for the coalition. As provided in 2 C.F.R. 200.331(d), subrecipients or subgrantees are accountable to the recipient or grantee for proper use of EPA funding.

Coalitions may not include for-profit organizations that will provide services or products to the successful applicant. For-profit organizations are not eligible for subawards. For-profit organizations are eligible to receive contracts. Any contracts for services or products funded with EPA financial assistance must be awarded under the competitive procurement procedures of 2 C.F.R. 200.319, as applicable. The regulations also contain limitations on consultant compensation. (Please see 2 C.F.R. § 1500.9, formerly at 40 C.F.R. § 30.27(b) or 31.36(j), as applicable.) For additional information, please review the following Federal Register: [edocket.access.gpo.gov/2004/pdf/04-7867.pdf](https://www.federalregister.gov/2004/pdf/04-7867.pdf).

B. Match or Cost-Share

There is no cost-sharing or matching requirement as a condition of eligibility under this RFA.

C. Threshold Eligibility Criteria

These are requirements that if not met by the applicant by the time of application submission will result in elimination of the application from consideration for funding. Only applications for eligible activities from eligible entities that meet these criteria by the time of application submission will be evaluated against the ranking factors in Section V of this RFA. Applicants deemed ineligible for funding consideration as a result of the threshold eligibility review will be notified by email within 15 calendar days of the ineligibility determination.

- A. Applications **must** substantially comply with the application submission instructions and requirements set forth in Section IV of this RFA or else they will be rejected. Where a page limit is stated for the Narrative Proposal in Section IV, pages in excess of the page limitation will not be reviewed.
- B. In addition, applications must be submitted through Grants.gov as stated in Section IV of this announcement (except in the limited circumstances where another mode of submission is specifically allowed for as explained in Section IV) on or before the application submission deadline published in Section IV of this announcement. Applicants are responsible for following the submission instructions in Section IV of this announcement to ensure that their application is timely submitted.
- C. Applications submitted after the submission deadline will be considered late and deemed ineligible without further consideration unless the applicant can clearly demonstrate that it was late due to EPA mishandling or because of technical problems associated with Grants.gov

or relevant SAM.gov system issues. An applicant's failure to timely submit their application through Grants.gov because they did not timely or properly register in SAM.gov or Grants.gov will not be considered an acceptable reason to consider a late submission. Applicants should confirm receipt of their application with Derek Ager (ager.derek@epa.gov) as soon as possible after the submission deadline—failure to do so may result in your application not being reviewed.

- D. Unless specifically excluded under this RFA, assistance is available to eligible applicants for planning, research, monitoring, outreach, and implementation of the GLRI and GLWQA. Proposed projects must also either: (i) protect, enhance, and/or restore the Great Lakes, including projects impacting connecting waterways such as Lake St. Clair and the St. Lawrence River (at or upstream from the point at which the St. Lawrence River becomes the international boundary between Canada and the United States); or (ii) protect Great Lakes ecosystem health, including human health. Information about the GLRI can be found at www.epa.gov/great-lakes-funding/great-lakes-restoration-initiative-glri. Applications for other activities will be rejected.
- E. Applications must address the four components of IADN's core program (detailed in Section I and IV).
- F. Applications must demonstrate a plan for performing chemical analyses to retain comparability and continuity with historical IADN data. IADN's Quality Assurance Project Plan (www.epa.gov/great-lakes-funding/2019-rfa-integrated-atmospheric-deposition-network) detail the analytical methodology currently used in IADN.
- G. Applications requesting funding above the anticipated total amount specified in Section II (\$6 million) will not be considered.

D. Ineligible Activities

If an application is submitted that includes any ineligible tasks or activities, including, but not limited to, those listed above, that portion of the application will be ineligible for funding and may, depending on the extent to which it affects the application, render the entire application ineligible for funding.

Applicants should contact the applicable individual listed in Section VII with any questions about the threshold eligibility requirements.

IV. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

- A. [Requirement to Submit Through Grants.gov and Limited Exception Procedures](#)
Applicants, except as noted below, must apply electronically through Grants.gov under this funding opportunity based on the Grants.gov instructions in this announcement. If an applicant does not have the technical capability to apply electronically through Grants.gov because of limited or no internet access which prevents them from being able to upload the required application materials to Grants.gov the applicant must contact OGDWaivers@epa.gov or the address listed below in writing (e.g., by hard copy, email) at least 15 calendar days prior to the

submission deadline under this announcement to request approval to submit their application materials through an alternate method.

Mailing Address:

OGD Waivers
c/o Jessica Durand
USEPA Headquarters
William Jefferson Clinton Building
1200 Pennsylvania Ave., N. W.
Mail Code: 3903R
Washington, DC 20460

Courier Address:

OGD Waivers
c/o Jessica Durand
Ronald Reagan Building
1300 Pennsylvania Ave., N.W.
Rm # 51278
Washington, DC 20004

In the request, the applicant must include the following information:

1. Funding Opportunity Number (FON)
2. Organization Name and DUNS
3. Organization's Contact Information (email address and phone number)
4. Explanation of how they lack the technical capability to apply electronically through Grants.gov because of 1) limited internet access or 2) no internet access which prevents them from being able to upload the required application materials through Grants.gov.

EPA will only consider alternate submission exception requests based on the reasons stated above and will timely respond to the request--all other requests will be denied. If an alternate submission method is approved, the applicant will receive documentation of this approval and further instructions on how to apply under this announcement. Applicants will be required to submit the documentation of approval with any initial application submitted under the alternative method. In addition, any submittal through an alternative method must comply with all applicable requirements and deadlines in the announcement including the submission deadline and requirements regarding proposal content and page limits (although the documentation of approval of an alternate submission method will not count against any page limits).

If an exception is granted, it is valid for submissions to EPA for the remainder of the entire calendar year in which the exception was approved and can be used to justify alternative submission methods for application submissions made through December 31 of the calendar year in which the exception was approved (e.g., if the exception was approved on March 1, 2019, it is valid for any competitive or non-competitive application submission to EPA through December 31, 2019). Applicants need only request an exception once in a calendar year and all exceptions will expire on December 31 of that calendar year. Applicants must request a new

exception from required electronic submission through Grants.gov for submissions for any succeeding calendar year. For example, if there is a competitive opportunity issued on December 1, 2018 with a submission deadline of January 15, 2019, the applicant would need a new exception to submit through alternative methods beginning January 1, 2019.

NOTE: The process described in this section is only for requesting alternate submission methods. All other inquiries about this announcement must be directed to the Agency Contact listed in Section VII of the announcement. Queries or requests submitted to the email address identified above for any reason other than to request an alternate submission method will not be acknowledged or answered.

B. Submission Instructions

The electronic submission of your application 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 on the registration requirements that must be completed in order to submit an application through Grants.gov, go to Grants.gov and click on “Applicants” on the top of the page and then go to the “Get Registered” link on the page. 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. Please note that the registration process also requires that your organization have a unique entity identifier (e.g., DUNS number) and a current registration with the System for Award Management (SAM) and the process of obtaining both could take a month or more. Applicants must ensure that all registration requirements are met in order to apply for this opportunity through Grants.gov and should ensure that all such requirements have been met well in advance of the submission deadline. Registration on Grants.gov, SAM.gov, and DUNS number assignment is FREE.

Applicants need to ensure that the AOR who submits the application through Grants.gov and whose unique entity identifier (e.g., DUNS number) is listed on the application is an AOR for the applicant listed on the application. Additionally, the DUNS number listed on the application must be registered to the applicant organization’s SAM account. If not, the application may be deemed ineligible.

To begin the application process under this grant announcement, go to Grants.gov and click on “Applicants” on the top of the page and then “Apply for Grants” from the dropdown menu and then follow the instructions accordingly. Please note: To apply through Grants.gov, you must use Adobe Reader software and download the compatible Adobe Reader version. For more information about Adobe Reader, to verify compatibility, or to download the free software, please visit Adobe Reader Compatibility Information on Grants.gov (www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/adobe-software-compatibility.html).

You may also be able to access the application package for this announcement by searching for the opportunity on Grants.gov. Go to Grants.gov and then click on “Search Grants” at the top of the page and enter the Funding Opportunity Number, EPA-R5-GL2019-IAD, in the appropriate field and click the Search button.

NOTE: All applications must now be submitted through Grants.gov using the "Workspace" feature. Information on the Workspace feature can be found at www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/workspace-overview.html.

Application Submission Deadline

Your organization's AOR must submit your complete application package electronically to EPA through Grants.gov on or before 10:59 p.m. Central Time / 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time on May 28, 2019.

Please allow for enough time to successfully submit your application and allow for unexpected errors that may require you to resubmit. Please submit *all* of the application materials described below using the Grants.gov application package accessed using the instructions above. All documents must be submitted as PDF files.

Application Materials

The following forms and documents are required under this announcement. 1-7 are listed as mandatory on Grants.gov. Submit 8 and 9, as applicable, using the Other Attachments Form listed in the mandatory section in Grants.gov:

1. Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424)
2. Budget Information for Non-Construction Programs (SF-424A)
3. Assurances for Non-Construction Programs (SF-424B)
4. EPA Key Contacts Form 5700-54
5. EPA Form 4700-4 – Pre-award Compliance Review Report
6. Narrative Proposal (Project Narrative Attachment Form)-prepared as described in Section IV.D of the announcement
7. Other Attachments Form - Resumes or curriculum vitae of Principal Investigators and Critical Staff
8. Other Attachments Form - Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement, if applicable
9. Other Attachments Form - Letters of support, if applicable

NOTE: The Narrative Proposal includes the Summary Information Page; Workplan; Detailed Budget Narrative; Maps, Charts and Figures; and Meeting/Conference/Workshop Information. Prepare as described in Section IV.D of the announcement. This is the only file that should be submitted using the Project Narrative Attachment form.

NOTE: An Other Attachments Form should be used for Resumes or curriculum vitae of Principal Investigators and critical staff. Such documentation should outline the education, work history, and knowledge/expertise of the individual that relate to managing the proposed project. Please include the word "resume" in the filename.

NOTE: An Other Attachments Form should be used for Support Letters from collaborators or partners in support of the project. Specifically indicate how the supporting organization will assist in the project or what that organization supports, as applicable. No other types of letters

of support will be considered in the review of the application. Please include the words “letters of support” or “LOS” in the filename.

Applications submitted through Grants.gov will be time and date stamped electronically. If you have not received a confirmation of receipt from EPA (not from Grants.gov) within 30 days of the application deadline, please contact Derek Ager at 312-353-7463. Failure to do so may result in your application not being reviewed.

C. Technical Issues with Submission

1. Once the application package has been completed, the “Submit” button should be enabled. If the “Submit” button is not active, please call Grants.gov for assistance at 1-800-518-4726. Applicants who are outside the U.S. at the time of submittal and are not able to access the toll-free number may reach a Grants.gov representative by calling 606-545-5035. Applicants should save the completed application package with two different file names before providing it to the AOR to avoid having to re-create the package should submission problems be experienced, or a revised application needs to be submitted.
2. *Submitting the application.* The application package must be transferred to Grants.gov by an AOR. The AOR should close all other software before attempting to submit the application package. Click the “submit” button of the application package. Your Internet browser will launch, and a sign-in page will appear. Note: Minor problems are not uncommon with transfers to Grants.gov. It is essential to allow sufficient time to ensure that your application is submitted to Grants.gov BEFORE the due date identified in Section IV of the solicitation. The Grants.gov support desk operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week, except Federal Holidays.

A successful transfer will end with an on-screen acknowledgement. For documentation purposes, print or screen capture this acknowledgement. If a submission problem occurs, reboot the computer – turning the power off may be necessary – and re-attempt the submission.

NOTE: Grants.gov issues a “case number” upon a request for assistance.

3. *Transmission Difficulties.* If transmission difficulties that result in a late transmission, no transmission, or rejection of the transmitted application are experienced, and following the above instructions do not resolve the problem so that the application is submitted to Grants.gov by the deadline date and time, follow the guidance below. The Agency will make a decision concerning acceptance of each late submission on a case-by-case basis. All emails, as described below, are to be sent to ager.derek@epa.gov with the FON in the subject line. If you are unable to email, contact Derek Ager at 312-353-7463. Be aware that EPA will only consider accepting applications that were unable to transmit due to Grants.gov or relevant SAM.gov system issues or for unforeseen exigent circumstances, such as extreme weather interfering with internet access. Failure of an applicant to submit timely because they did not properly or timely register in SAM.gov or Grants.gov is not an acceptable reason to justify acceptance of a late submittal.

- a. If you are experiencing problems resulting in an inability to upload the application to Grants.gov, it is essential to call Grants.gov for assistance at 1-800-518-4726 before the application deadline. Applicants who are outside the U.S. at the time of submittal and are not able to access the toll-free number may reach a Grants.gov representative by calling 606-545-5035. Be sure to obtain a case number from Grants.gov. If the problems stem from unforeseen exigent circumstances unrelated to Grants.gov, such as extreme weather interfering with internet access, contact Derek Ager at 312-353-7463.
- b. Unsuccessful transfer of the application package: If a successful transfer of the application cannot be accomplished even with assistance from Grants.gov due to electronic submission system issues or unforeseen exigent circumstances, send an email message to ager.derek@epa.gov prior to the application deadline. The email message must document the problem and include the Grants.gov case number as well as the entire application in PDF format as an attachment.
- c. Grants.gov rejection of the application package: If a notification is received from Grants.gov stating that the application has been rejected for reasons other than late submittal promptly send an email to ager.derek@epa.gov with the FON in the subject line within one business day of the closing date of this solicitation. The email should include any materials provided by Grants.gov and attach the entire application in PDF format.

NOTE: Successful submission through Grants.gov or via email does not necessarily mean your application is eligible for award.

D. Narrative Proposals

Narrative Proposals (including the Summary Information Page, Workplan, Detailed Budget Narrative; Maps, Charts and Figures; and Meeting/Conference/Workshop Information) must be no more than thirty single-spaced pages in length and include the items below in the requested order. Excess pages will not be reviewed. Maps, charts, pictures, and other figures must be included in the Narrative Proposal file. They may be included within the body of the workplan or as an appendix. In either case those items will be counted against the page limit. Maps, charts, pictures, and other figures that are submitted as a separate attachment will not be reviewed.

Each Narrative Proposal must be formatted for 8½" x 11" paper and should use no smaller than an 11-point Times New Roman font with 1" margins. Do not use a "double column" (aka newspaper) format. Readability is of paramount importance. Do not include more than one application in any file. Please do not zip the file or use a zip extension for your file because it will not be accepted.

1. Summary Information Page (should not exceed one page)
 - a. **Project Title.** Please limit to 60 characters. EPA reserves the right to change the project title for its administrative convenience.
 - b. **Applicant Information.** Include applicant (organization) name, address, contact person, phone number, and email address. Do not include private information.

- c. *Proposed Funding Request.* The total dollar amount requested from EPA-make sure it is within the limits specified in Section II or your application will be rejected.
- d. *Project Duration.* Provide beginning and ending dates. See “Anticipated Start and End Dates” in Section II.
- e. *Brief Project Description.* Summarize the proposed project in 100 words or less in a clear and succinct manner in PLAIN LANGUAGE, including expected outputs, outcomes and environmental benefits resulting from implementation of the project. Include environmental KEY TERMS that could be used as search terms (e.g., monitoring, atmosphere, chemicals, etc.). Do not use acronyms. Should the application be selected, and a grant awarded, this description may be posted to the EPA Website. EPA reserves the right to make unilateral changes to conform to posting requirements. See www.glri.us/projects for examples.

2. Work Plan

The Work Plan for the proposed project must explicitly describe how the proposed project meets the guidelines established in Sections I-III of this RFA (including the threshold eligibility criteria in Section III) and must address each of the evaluation criteria set forth in Section V. Each Work Plan should be organized in the order and with the headings and information requested below.

a. *Technical Process and Study Design*

Applicants should describe with specificity the nature of the proposed project including what will be done, by whom, how, and when it will be accomplished. Outline the steps to be taken and the significant milestones to be achieved to complete the proposed project as well as the estimated dates of these achievements, including the submittal of the final report. Further, plans should be organized in accordance to the two project components mentioned in section I: Core Program; New Chemicals and Special Research.

Core Program

i. *Sample Collection*

Applicants are expected to collect air (vapor and particulate) and precipitation samples and perform meteorological measurements at the five U.S. IADN sites through agreements with local site operators from October 1, 2019 to September 30, 2024. Historically, air samples have been collected for 24 hours every 12 days using a modified high-volume air sampler with XAD-2 resin cartridges and quartz fiber filters. Historically, precipitation samples have been collected every month using an automated wet-only MIC sampler and XAD-2 resin. Historically, meteorological measurements (wind speed, wind direction, air temperature, barometric pressure, relative humidity, and solar radiation) have been made on a tower at each site, recorded on a data logger and transferred remotely. All sampling equipment is presently located at each site and available for use under this request. Duplicate high-volume air samplers are also presently located at all

five U.S. IADN stations to collect field blanks. A summary of the current sampling methods can be found in the IADN QAPP and SOPs found at www.epa.gov/great-lakes-funding/2019-rfa-integrated-atmospheric-deposition-network.

Applicants are expected to demonstrate how they will ensure efficient operation of the network. This includes coordination of sample collection schedules with the EPA and *ECCC for sampling site at Point Petre*; review and optimization of field sampling methods as appropriate; preparation and shipping of sampling supplies and samples (including XAD-2 resin preparation procedures); supervision and training of site operators; maintenance and calibration of the sampling equipment beyond that required of the site operators; maintenance and calibration of meteorological equipment and archiving of meteorological data; and maintenance of overall site (grounds, platform, fence, power supply, etc.). *Applicants may propose alternative sampling methods. However, they should provide appropriate rationale and be able to demonstrate how modified methods will still ensure comparability and consistency with historic datasets.*

ii. **Sample Analysis**

Applicants are expected to analyze all collected vapor, particulate, and precipitation samples for persistent toxic chemicals currently on the IADN analyte list for the core program (table 1). As previously stated and working with EPA, this list may be revised and/or expanded in the future depending on available resources, advancements of methods, and the priorities of the network and recipient. *Applicants may also suggest minor modifications to this list if accompanied by a supporting rationale and demonstration that data will remain consistent and comparable to historic datasets.*

Historically, quartz fiber filter and XAD-2 samples (vapor and precipitation) have been Soxhlet extracted separately using 1:1 acetone/hexane. The extracts are then concentrated, cleaned up, and fractionated. Each fraction is spiked with internal standards for quantitation. Surrogate standards are also used to estimate recoveries of each compound in each sample. A summary of the current analytical methods can be found in the IADN QAPP at www.epa.gov/great-lakes-funding/2019-rfa-integrated-atmospheric-deposition-network.

Applicants must demonstrate how they will retain comparability and continuity with historic IADN data sets. Applicants are also expected to detail the analytical methodology they will employ to measure toxics in vapor, particulate, and precipitation samples, and how these methods are comparable to current IADN procedures. Applicants are expected to identify the analytical equipment they intend to use to analyze samples. Applicants are also expected to demonstrate how they will store and archive sample extracts for the duration of the 5-year agreement. Applicants may also request archived extracts from EPA for further retrospective analysis to ensure data comparability and consistency. *Applicants*

may propose alternative analysis methods. However, they should provide appropriate rationale and be able to demonstrate how modified methods will still ensure comparability and consistency with historic datasets.

Awardees may need to conduct a performance evaluation through the analysis of a standard reference and archived extracts provided by EPA prior to analyzing any environmental samples.

iii. [Data Management, Interpretation, Statistical analysis, and Report Writing](#)

With large quantities of data being generated, a comprehensive and efficient data management system is necessary. Every year, the previous year's final data must be submitted to the EPA and will be made publicly available by EPA through the GLENDAsite once data has been verified and approved. Applicants are encouraged to also make EPA-approved data available through innovated online tools.

Applicants must demonstrate how they will submit quality-assured analytical results for: (i) PAHs, PCBs, and other organochlorine chemicals within 11 months of receipt of samples in their laboratory (i.e., submit data on all 2019 samples by November 1, 2020) and (ii) PBDEs, other flame retardants, and potential new and emerging chemicals identified, within 18 months or less of receipt of samples in their laboratory. Data reports should include chemical concentration data for each sample and hourly average meteorological data during each 24-hour sampling period.

The Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement (Agreement) calls for establishment and maintenance of "comprehensive, science-based ecosystem indicators to assess the state of the Great Lakes, to anticipate emerging threats and to measure progress..." The Agreement also calls for identification and assessment of loadings of chemicals into the Waters of the Great Lakes from all sources including the atmosphere. Assessing and reporting air deposition trends of toxic chemicals in the Great Lakes plays a key role in informing the triannual State of the Great Lakes (SOGL) Indicators Report. Applicants are expected to demonstrate how they will work with the EPA and Environment and Climate Change Canada to report on the status and trends of the toxic chemicals in the atmosphere sub-indicator in the SOGL Indicators Report.

A key project component is to ensure that the monitoring information generated is made available to the Great Lakes community in a wide variety of formats, including peer reviewed journals and internet products. It is also important that any new information generated be placed in a historical perspective so that determinations may be made of how chemical concentrations and loads are changing over time and place. EPA will provide the existing data from 1990 through September 2018 for these purposes. Applicants are expected to discuss how their work will further the development of the body of knowledge related to

atmospheric deposition of persistent toxic chemicals to the Great Lakes in a timely manner. The advancement of scientific knowledge may include the use of ancillary data to identify sources, the use of fate and transport models; publishing project results in scientific journals; collaboration with other long-term contaminant monitoring programs (e.g., Great Lakes Fish Monitoring and Surveillance Program, www.epa.gov/great-lakes-monitoring/great-lakes-fish-monitoring-and-surveillance), and further education of graduate students and post-doctoral candidates in Great Lakes chemistry research.

Applicants should demonstrate how they will provide an interim report with initial findings of this study by March 2022 for use in the 2022 GLWQA Progress Report of the Parties and the Great Lakes Public Forum. The final report should include recommendations for future application of this work, specifically ways to enhance ongoing monitoring and assessment programs in the Great Lakes, such as the Cooperative Science and Monitoring Initiative (CSMI)¹ or SOGL, to meet GLRI and GLWQA objectives.

iv. [Quality Assurance and Quality Control](#)

Applicants are expected to demonstrate how they will develop, implement, and maintain a Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP). The QAPP details project organization and responsibility, sampling procedures, sample custody, analytical procedures, data reduction, validation, internal quality control checks and preventative maintenance. Applicants should discuss their plans for ensuring the continuity and consistency of IADN measurements through reproducible quality assurance and quality control samples (e.g., field and laboratory duplicates, field and laboratory blanks, and matrix spikes). Currently, IADN uses 5% duplicates and blanks for field sampling and lab analysis. Applicants need to provide documentation and rationale for keeping low percentage of duplicates and blanks, or applicants may propose higher percentage of duplicates and blanks. A summary of the current quality program can be found in the IADN QAPP at www.epa.gov/great-lakes-funding/2019-rfa-integrated-atmospheric-deposition-network.

Historically, IADN has performed rigorous binational quality programs at the collocated master station at Point Petre as part of an intercomparison program of U.S. and Canadian laboratories and sampling methods. Applicants should include the analysis of an extra 12 precipitation samples per year and approximately an extra 10 air samples per year (24-hour samples in vapor and particles every 36 days) from Point Petre. These samples are collected and shipped by ECCC. Historically, IADN also uses common reference standards and common calibration

¹ The Cooperative Science and Monitoring Initiative (CSMI) is a joint U.S. and Canada effort to provide environmental managers with needed information on each Great Lake. The lakes are visited one per year in a five-year rotation. In 2015, CSMI will be focused on Lake Michigan. In subsequent years (2016-2019), CSMI will focus on Lake Superior, Lake Huron, Lake Ontario, and Lake Erie.

standards to improve comparability and consistency of U.S. and Canadian laboratories. *Applicants may propose additional quality assurance and control methods, including analysis of archived extracts and other inter-laboratory comparisons. However, they should provide appropriate rationale and be able to demonstrate how modified methods will still ensure comparability and consistency with historic datasets.*

New Chemicals and Special Research

Identifying new contaminants and conducting special research are also important components of the IADN program. Applicants may propose plans to conduct appropriate surveillance and research activities including targeted and non-targeted screening for new chemicals; measurement of persistent toxic chemicals in water samples to calculate net loadings to/from the Lakes; the use of other sampling methods to supplement the existing network with supporting rationale; and other research that contributes to the overall understanding of atmospheric concentrations and impacts to the Great Lakes. Any research proposed must link back to the goals and objectives of the GLRI and GLWQA.

Per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) and hexabromocyclododecane (HBCDDs) are compounds of high interest to the EPA. Applicants should propose plans for sampling and analyzing these compounds. Plans will be reviewed more favorably if they identify critical phases (vapor, particulate, or precipitation) and compounds to be monitored, with supporting rationale.

3. Results: Outputs and Outcomes

Specify the estimated quantitative and qualitative expected results (outputs and outcomes) of the proposed project including but not limited to those specifically identified in Section I, as well as the GLRI action plan goal of reporting on GLRI progress and Great Lakes ecosystem health and the GLRI action plan commitment to issue Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement triennial State of the Lakes reports, and the approach and measurements that will be used to track and measure your progress towards achieving the applicable outputs and outcomes. Demonstrate how the project will achieve the desired results. Provide a timetable or schedule with target dates projected for major tasks, accomplishments and deliverables.

Include a statement of the project's relevance to the Great Lakes, particularly how the results will address the needs and priorities of the GLRI action plan and/or the GLWQA. (www.glri.us/documents#actionplan or binational.net/2012/09/05/2012-glwqa-aqegl/).

4. Collaboration

Describe the type of any collaboration/support proposed, how you will ensure that it will materialize during project performance, and what role it will play in the overall project. Any letters demonstrating evidence of collaboration and support from the public or private sector should be attached as part of Section IV, Application Materials, item 11. Describe how you will coordinate activities of the project with related or complementary projects

and studies. IF YOU INTEND TO PROVIDE EPA FUNDS TO ANY COLLABORATING ORGANIZATION, PLEASE CAREFULLY REVIEW PROVISIONS ON “CONTRACTS AND SUBAWARDS” at: www.epa.gov/grants/epa-solicitation-clauses.

5. Programmatic Capability and Past Performance

Submit a list (of no more than five) federally-funded assistance agreements² (including but not limited to previous GLRI awards from EPA or other federal sources) similar in size, scope and relevance to the proposed project that your organization performed within the last three years (no more than five agreements, 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 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. For all EPA grants listed, include the EPA Grant Number. 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).

NOTE: If you have previously received a GLRI award or awards, you should list the award(s) and provide the information described above. In addition, for EPA GLRI awards issued in 2010 to 2018 please provide an explanation of and documentation supporting your quarterly rate of expenditure on those prior GLRI projects up through the date of the applicant’s submission under this solicitation.

If you do not have any relevant or available past performance or past reporting information, please indicate this in the application and you will receive a neutral score for these factors (a neutral score is half of the total points available in a subset of possible points). *If you do not provide any response for these items, you may receive a score of 0 for these factors.*

In addition, provide information on your organizational experience and plan for timely and successfully achieving the objectives of the proposed project, and your staff expertise/qualifications, staff knowledge, and resources or the ability to obtain them, to successfully achieve the goals of the proposed project.

Applicants should also demonstrate expertise in low-level persistent toxic chemical measurements using the methods proposed in their application, including XAD-2 resin or alternative methodologies proposed in the application. Demonstrated expertise should include publications in the literature relevant to the Great Lakes, environmental science, chemistry, and technology. Provide information on your organizational experience and your plan for timely and successfully achieving the objectives of the proposed project, and your staff expertise/qualifications, staff knowledge, and resources (or the ability to obtain

² Assistance agreements include federal grants and cooperative agreements, but not federal or other contracts.

them) to successfully achieve the goals of the proposed project. This information should be supported by resumes or curricula vitae for key staff as defined in document 8 of Section IV.

6. Education/Outreach

Applicants should describe how they intend to educate and train undergraduate and graduate students in Great Lakes environmental chemistry as part of the project.

Applicants should demonstrate that the project will effectively disseminate data and reports for use by local, state and tribal environmental managers, academia and/or other interested stakeholders. The applicant must also specify plans for timely information transfer, including annual interpretive reports, presentations at meetings and conferences, journal articles, textbooks, Internet postings, and peer-reviewed publications.

Applicants should describe how project results will be disseminated to interested stakeholders; your demonstrated track record of outreach to citizens on environmental issues; and the potential of the project for transferability and applicability to other places in accordance with the application review criteria in Section V.A. Further, applicants may describe how a potential online data access tool could be marketed to appropriate stakeholders.

7. Detailed Budget Narrative

Applicants should clearly explain how EPA funds and any voluntary cost-shares will be used. For guidance, see Appendix -1. Use this section to provide a narrative description of the budget found in the SF-424A. Applicants must itemize costs related to personnel, fringe benefits, contractual costs, travel, equipment, supplies, other direct costs, indirect costs, and total costs. Applicants should use whole dollar amounts. Applicants should include costs for quality system documentation (i.e., quality assurance project plans or quality management plans) and environmental and regulatory compliance (e.g., costs for assisting EPA with compliance by conducting surveys and analysis to identify whether protected resources are in the project location and, if so, whether there will be any effects; costs associated with potential mitigation measures; etc.). Applicants that do not include such costs may have to fund these and other overlooked costs out of their own funds.

As part of the detailed budget narrative, applicants should explain their approach, procedures, and controls for ensuring that awarded grant funds will be expended in a timely and efficient manner. Please include an explanation of expenditure projections, with quarterly fiscal projections and milestones, for the life of the grant.

8. Other Attachments

The additional attachments listed in Section IV.B are not part of the Narrative Proposal and are not included in the 30-page limit; however, forms 7 and 9 as described in Section IV.B may, as appropriate, be considered during evaluations. For additional information about each of these attachments, see the descriptions contained in Section IV.B.

E. Notification

See Section VII for contact information. All applicants will be contacted following selections to tell them whether they have been selected. Selection information will also be posted to a page

linked to: www.epa.gov/great-lakes-funding/2019-rfa-integrated-atmospheric-deposition-network.

F. Subawardees and/or Contractors

If you name subawardees/subgrantees and/or contractor(s), including individual consultants, in your application as partners to assist you with the proposed project, pay careful attention to the information in Section III regarding "Coalitions" and to the "Contracts and Subawards" provisions at www.epa.gov/grants/epa-solicitation-clauses.

G. Information provided to EPA

Before applying for an award, applicants should be aware that under Public Law No. 105-277, data produced under an award, and any information provided to EPA, is subject to the Freedom of Information Act.

H. Additional Provisions for Applicants Incorporated Into RFA

Additional provisions that apply to this RFA and/or awards made under this RFA, including but not limited to those related to confidential business information, application assistance and communications, management fees, contracts and subawards under grants, and duplicate funding can be found at: EPA Solicitation Clauses (www.epa.gov/grants/epa-solicitation-clauses).

These, and the other provisions that can be found at the website link, are important, and applicants must review them when preparing proposals for this RFA. If you are unable to access these provisions electronically at the website above, please communicate with the EPA contact listed in Section VII of this RFA to obtain the provisions.

V. APPLICATION REVIEW AND SELECTION PROCESS

A. Application Review

Applications meeting the threshold eligibility criteria in Section III will be evaluated based on the criteria set forth below. Applicants should directly and explicitly address these criteria as part of their Narrative Proposal and application submission. Each submittal will be rated under a point system, with a total of 125 points possible. Applicants will be evaluated based on the quality and extent to which the application addresses the criteria; the failure to provide applicable information in the application may affect the score assigned for a criterion.

1. Technical Ability and Study Design – 70 points

a. Core Program (55 points)

Applicants will be evaluated based on how they will sample and analyze the current list of toxics measured by the core IADN program (see table 1 in Section I) in vapor,

particulate, and precipitation phases. A failure to address all four subcomponents of the core program (sample collection, sample analysis, data management/interpretation/statistical analysis/report writing, and quality assurance and quality control) will result in a score of 0 on this criterion. Applicants will be evaluated on their detailed explanations of each sampling and analyzing step and the extent they demonstrate how they will retain comparability and continuity with the historic IADN monitoring program and continue that body of knowledge. EPA can provide extracts for analysis comparisons and historical data for reference.

b. New Chemicals and Special Research (15 points)

Applicants will be evaluated based on their approach and capability to conduct new chemical surveillance. Applicants will also be evaluated based on their approach and documented rationale for conducting other special research. Applicants will be evaluated based on their approach and capabilities to collect and analyze samples for PFAS and HBCDD. Applicants will be reviewed more favorably if they identify critical phases (vapor, particulate, or precipitation) and PFAS compounds to be monitored, with supporting rationale.

2. Results: Outputs and Outcomes – 10 points

Applicants will be evaluated based on their approach for demonstrating how they will achieve the expected and proposed project outputs and outcomes including but not limited to those identified in Section I. Applicants will also be evaluated based on their plan and approach for measuring and tracking their progress towards achieving the expected and proposed project outputs and outcomes including but not limited to those identified in Section 1.

3. Collaboration – 5 points

Applicants will be evaluated based on the extent to which they demonstrate that they will work in partnership with appropriate partners to effectively and efficiently implement the proposed project. Applicants may score higher on this criterion to the extent they demonstrate in their Narrative Proposal how the project will effectively disseminate data and reports for use by state, tribal, and local environmental managers and academia.

4. Programmatic Capability and Past Performance-15 points

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

- a. 3 points – past performance in successfully completing and managing the assistance agreements identified in response to Section IV.D.5 of the announcement,
- b. 3 points – history of meeting the reporting requirements under the assistance agreements identified in response to Section IV.D.5 of the announcement including whether the applicant submitted acceptable final technical reports under those agreements and the extent to which the applicant adequately and timely reported on their progress towards achieving the expected outputs and outcomes under those agreements and if such progress was not being made whether the applicant adequately reported why not,

- c. *4.5 points* – organizational experience and plan for timely and successfully achieving the objectives of the proposed project, and
- d. *4.5 points* – staff expertise/qualifications, staff knowledge, and resources or the ability to obtain them, to successfully achieve the goals of the proposed project.

NOTE: In evaluating applicants under items (a) and (b) of this criterion, 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). If you do not have any relevant or available past performance or past reporting information, please indicate this in the application and you will receive a neutral score for these subfactors (items (a) and (b) above—a neutral score is half of the total points available in a subset of possible points). If you do not provide any response for these items, you may receive a score of 0 for these factors.

NOTE: Points may be reduced from an applicant’s score under item (a), above, if it has previously been awarded GLRI funds and such funds, or a significant portion of them, have not been expended expeditiously as of the date of the applicant’s submission without adequate explanation. Applicants must provide an explanation if they have failed to expeditiously expend previously awarded GLRI funds or a significant portion thereof.

NOTE: Points may be reduced from an applicant’s score under part c. of this criterion if the applicant, without adequate explanation, has not demonstrated an ability to timely comply with current American National Standard Specifications and Guidelines for Quality Systems for Environmental Data Collection and Environmental Technology Programs, ANSI/ASQC E4-1994.

5. Education/Outreach – 5 points

Applicants will be evaluated based on the effectiveness of their education/outreach plans to disseminate project results to interested stakeholders including, but not limited to, whether the applicant has a demonstrated track record of outreach to inform citizens on environmental issues and the potential of the project for transferability and applicability to other places.

6. Budget – 15 points

Applications will be evaluated based on the reasonableness, necessity and allowability³ (of costs) of the proposed budget for the level of work proposed and for the expected benefits to be achieved.

An applicant’s budget and budget narrative must account for both federal funds and any non- federal funds (e.g., any voluntary cost-share/match if applicable). Applicants must precisely describe in their budget narrative how they will account for any voluntary cost-

³ As determined in accordance with Grants Management Circulars on Cost Principles issued by the Office of Management (http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants_circulars).

share/match or other non-EPA funds if applicable and what role EPA funding will play in the overall project.

7. Expenditure of Awarded Grant Funds – 5 points

Under this criterion, applicants will be evaluated based on their approach, procedures, and controls for ensuring that awarded grant funds will be expended in a timely and efficient manner.

B. Selection Process

Applications will first be evaluated against the threshold factors listed in Section III. Only those applications which meet all of the threshold factors will be evaluated using the evaluation criteria listed above by a review panel composed of federal agency staff.

Final funding decisions will be made by the selection official. In making the final funding decision, the selection official will consider the review panel rankings and recommendations and may also consider program priorities.

C. Additional Provisions Incorporated by Reference

Additional provisions that apply to this solicitation and/or awards made under this solicitation including the clause on Reporting and Use of Information Concerning Recipient Integrity and Performance can be found at EPA Solicitation Clauses (www.epa.gov/grants/epa-solicitation-clauses). These, and the other provisions that can be found at the website link, are important, and applicants must review them when preparing proposals for this solicitation. If you are unable to access these provisions electronically at the website above, please communicate with the EPA contact listed in this solicitation to obtain the provisions.

VI. AWARD ADMINISTRATION

A. Award Notices and Status

Following evaluation of applications, all applicants will be notified regarding their status, as follows:

EPA anticipates notification to unsuccessful applicants will be made via email or postal mail to the original signer of the application or the project contact listed in the application.

EPA anticipates that notification to finalists will be made via email to the original signer of the application or the project contact listed in the application. The notification will advise them that their proposed project has been evaluated and forwarded to the EPA approving official for further consideration and possible award. This notification, which informs the applicant that its proposal has been selected and is being recommended for award, is not an authorization to begin work. Applicants are cautioned that only the EPA award official is authorized to bind the Government to the expenditure of funds; selection does not guarantee an award will be made. For example, statutory authorization, funding or other issues discovered during the award

process may affect the ability of EPA to make an award to an applicant. The award notice signed by the EPA award official, is the authorizing document and will be provided through electronic or postal mail. The finalist may need to prepare and submit additional documents and forms (e.g., work plan), which must be approved by EPA, before the cooperative agreement can officially be awarded. The time between notification of selection and award of grant can take up to 90 days or longer.

B. Administrative and National Policy Requirement

The successful applicants will be required to adhere to federal grants requirements, particularly those found in 2 CFR 200.

(Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards) and EPA-specific regulations that are in 2 CFR 1500. This includes government-wide requirements pertaining to accounting standards, lobbying, minority or woman business enterprise, publication, meetings, construction, and disposition of property. EPA regulations governing assistance programs and recipients are codified in Title 40 of the Code of Federal Regulations. A listing and description of general EPA regulations applicable to the award of assistance agreements may be viewed at: www.epa.gov/grants.

C. Quality System Documentation

Quality system documentation (i.e., quality assurance project plans or quality management plans) is required for grants involving the use or collection of environmental data. EPA must have this documentation within 90 days of award and it must be approved before grantees commence activities associated with the use or collection of environmental data. Applicants should budget time and resources for developing quality system documentation. Applicants that do not do so may have to fund the quality system documentation and any necessary project changes out of their own funds. For specific guidance on GLNPO's quality requirements please see www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2019-02/documents/iadn-qapp-201805-164pp.pdf.

D. Reporting Requirements

Applicants selected for funding shall provide narrative technical progress reports addressing financial and work progress. Special conditions requiring financial and progress reporting and a detailed final technical report, will be added to awards. Applicants should budget time and resources for these activities.

NOTE: If selected, applicants may be asked to revise their anticipated fiscal expenditure projections on a quarterly basis to monitor the progress of the awarded project. These projections should be submitted as a part of the fiscal and technical reporting.

E. Other Programmatic Requirements

Additional applicable programmatic terms and conditions will be included in grant agreements, including, but not limited to:

1. EPA pre-approval of subcontracting and of conference participation. Applicants should budget time and resources for these activities.

2. Applicants must collect meteorological data, vapor, particulate, and precipitation samples from October 1, 2019 through September 30, 2024 at all five U.S. IADN stations⁴. IADN's Quality Assurance Project Plan and Standard Operating Procedures (www.epa.gov/great-lakes-funding/2019-rfa-integrated-atmospheric-deposition-network) detail the sampling methodology currently used in IADN.
3. Applicants must submit quality-assured analytical results for PAHs, PCBs, and other organochlorine chemicals, within 11 months or less of receipt of samples in their laboratory (i.e., submit data on all 2019 samples to EPA by November 2020) and meteorological data within 3 months of sampling.
4. Applicants must maintain and calibrate sampling equipment at all five U.S. IADN stations.
5. Applicants must submit quality-assured analytical results for PBDEs, other flame retardants, and potential new and emerging chemicals identified, within 18 months or less of receipt of samples in their laboratory.

F. Issuance of Awards

EPA reserves the right to negotiate appropriate changes in project terms and amounts (i.e., changes that do not affect the integrity of the competition or materially change the application) consistent with EPA Order 5700.5A1 and other applicable policies, before making final decisions and awards. Applicants may be asked to include greater detail and specificity for their work plans before final awards are issued. Applicants may also be requested to satisfy data quality or peer review requirements before or shortly after the awarding of grants.

G. Additional Provisions for Applicants Incorporated Into RFA

Additional provisions that apply to this solicitation and/or awards made under this solicitation, including but not limited to those related to DUNS, SAM, copyrights, disputes, and administrative capability, can be found at EPA Solicitation Clauses (www.epa.gov/grants/epa-solicitation-clauses). These, and the other provisions that can be found at the website link, are important, and applicants must review them when preparing proposals for this solicitation. If you are unable to access these provisions electronically at the website above, please communicate with the EPA contact listed in this solicitation to obtain the provisions.

VII. AGENCY CONTACTS

RFA Contact (for administrative, eligibility, and other general RFA questions):

- Meonii Bristol, 312-353-4716 / bristol.meonii@epa.gov

Technical Contact:

- Derek Ager, 312-353-7463 / ager.derek@epa.gov

⁴ Eagle Harbor, MI; Sleeping Bear Dunes, MI; Sturgeon Point, NY; Cleveland, OH; and Chicago, IL

VIII. OTHER INFORMATION

GLNPO will send an email announcement of these and any of its funding opportunities to all who register at www.epa.gov/great-lakes-funding/great-lakes-news-email-list.

IX. APPENDIX I – BUDGET SAMPLE

Budget Narrative

This section of the work plan is a detailed description of the budget found in the SF-424A, and must include a detailed discussion of how EPA funds will be used. Applicants must itemize costs related to personnel, fringe benefits, travel, equipment, supplies, contractual costs, other direct costs, indirect costs, and total costs.

Applicants should use the following instructions, budget object class descriptions, and example table to complete the Budget Detail section of the work plan. Use only whole dollar amounts.

A. Personnel

List all staff positions by title. Give annual salary, percentage of time assigned to the project, and total cost for the budget period. This category includes only direct costs for the salaries of those individuals who will perform work directly for the project (generally, paid employees of the applicant organization). If the applicant organization is including staff time (in-kind services) as a cost share, this should be included as Personnel costs. Personnel costs do not include: (1) costs for services of consultants, contractors, consortia members, or other partner organizations, which are included in the “Contractual” category; (2) costs for employees of subrecipients under subawards, which are included in the “Other” category; or (3) effort that is not directly in support of the proposed project, which may be covered by the organization’s negotiated indirect cost rate. The budget detail must identify the personnel category type by Full Time Equivalent (FTE), including percentage of FTE for part-time employees, number of personnel proposed for each category, and the estimated funding amounts.

B. Fringe Benefits

Identify the percentage used, the basis for its computation, and the types of benefits included. Fringe benefits are allowances and services provided by employers to their employees as compensation in addition to regular salaries and wages. Fringe benefits include, but are not limited to the cost of leave, employee insurance, pensions and unemployment benefit plans.

C. Travel

Specify the mileage, per diem, estimated number of trips in-State and out-of-State and international (include specific international locations), number of travelers, and other costs for each type of travel. Travel may be integral to the purpose of the proposed project (e.g., inspections) or related to proposed project activities (e.g., attendance at meetings). Travel costs do not include: (1) costs for travel of consultants, contractors, consortia members, or other partner organizations, which are included in the “Contractual” category; (2) travel costs for employees of subrecipients under subawards, which are included in the “Other” category.

D. Equipment

Identify each item to be purchased which has an estimated acquisition cost of \$5,000 or more per unit and a useful life of more than one year. Equipment also includes accessories necessary to make the equipment operational. Equipment does not include: (1) equipment planned to be

leased/rented, including lease/purchase agreement; or (2) equipment service or maintenance contracts. These types of proposed costs should be included in the “Other” category. Items with a unit cost of less than \$5,000 should be categorized as supplies, pursuant to 2 C.F.R. 200 and or 2 C.F.R. 1500. The budget detail must include an itemized listing of all equipment proposed under the project.

E. Supplies

“Supplies” means all tangible personal property other than “equipment”. The budget detail should identify categories of supplies to be procured (e.g., laboratory supplies or office supplies). Non-tangible goods and services associated with supplies, such as printing service, photocopy services, and rental costs should be included in the “Other” category.

F. Contractual

Identify each proposed contract and specify its purpose and estimated cost.

Contractual/consultant services are those services to be carried out by an individual or organization, other than the applicant, in the form of a procurement relationship. Leased or rented goods (equipment or supplies) should be included in the “Other” category. The applicant should list the proposed contract activities along with a brief description of the scope of work or services to be provided, proposed duration, and proposed procurement method (competitive or noncompetitive), if known.

G. Other

List each item in sufficient detail for EPA to determine the reasonableness and allowability of its cost. This category should include only those types of direct costs that do not fit in any of the other budget categories. Examples of costs that may be in this category are: insurance, rental/lease of equipment or supplies, equipment service or maintenance contracts, printing or photocopying, rebates, and subaward costs. Subawards (e.g., subgrants) are a distinct type of cost in this category. The term “subaward” means an award of financial assistance (money or property) by any legal agreement made by the recipient to an eligible subrecipient. This term does not include procurement purchases, technical assistance in the form of services instead of money, or other assistance in the form of revenue sharing, loans, loan guarantees, interest subsidies, insurance, or direct appropriations. Subcontracts are not subawards and belong in the contractual category. Applicants must provide the aggregate amount they propose to issue as subaward work and a description of the types of activities to be supported.

H. Indirect Charges

If indirect charges are budgeted, indicate the approved rate and base.

Indirect costs are those incurred by the grantee for a common or joint purpose that benefit more than one cost objective or project, and are not readily assignable to specific cost objectives or projects as a direct cost. In order for indirect costs to be allowable, the applicant must have a federal or state negotiated indirect cost rate (e.g., fixed, predetermined, final or provisional), or must have submitted a proposal to the cognizant federal or state agency. Examples of Indirect Cost Rate calculations are shown below:

- Personnel (Indirect Rate x Personnel = Indirect Costs)

- Personnel and Fringe ($\text{Indirect Rate} \times \text{Personnel \& Fringe} = \text{Indirect Costs}$)
- Total Direct Costs ($\text{Indirect Rate} \times \text{Total direct costs} = \text{Indirect Costs}$)
- Direct Costs minus distorting or other factors such as contracts and equipment
- ($\text{Indirect Rate} \times (\text{total direct cost} - \text{distorting factors}) = \text{Indirect Costs}$)

Example Budget Table

	EPA Funding	Cost-Share
Personnel		
(1) Project Manager @ \$40/hr x 10 hrs/week x 52 wks		\$20,800
(5) Project Staff @ \$30/hr x 40 hrs/week x 40 wks	\$244,000	
TOTAL PERSONNEL	\$244,000	\$20,800
Fringe Benefits		
20% of Salary and Wages	20% (\$244,000)	20% (20,800)
- Retirement, Health Benefits, FICA, SUI	\$48,800	\$4,160
TOTAL FRINGE BENEFITS	\$48,800	\$4,160
Travel		
In State travel for Project Manager and staff: 500 mi/mo @ \$0.55/mi x 12 mos.	\$3,300	
Out of State (IL, WI, IA) Travel for Project Staff: 20 trips per month x \$2,500 per trip	\$600,000	
SOLEC Meeting (Toronto, Canada) Travel for Project Manager: 2 trips/year x \$3,500 each	\$7,000	
TOTAL TRAVEL	\$610,300	
Equipment		
Sample Bottles (8600 x \$2.98 each)	\$25,700	
Fish Sampling Nets (300 x \$50each)	\$15,000	
1 Project Vehicle	\$25,000	
1 Project Boat	\$15,000	
TOTAL EQUIPMENT	81,100	
Supplies		
Office and related supplies to support training	\$400	
Office computer and printer	\$2,500	
TOTAL SUPPLIES	\$2,900	
Contractual		
ABC Support Services Contract	\$100,000	
XYZ Land & Water Conservation	\$66,400	
TOTAL CONTRACTUAL	\$166,400	
Other		
Travel for 3 representatives to attend workshop training – 100 trips x \$1,000 each	\$100,000	
Travel for 4 representatives to attend workshop training – 200 trips x \$2,000 each	\$500,000	
TOTAL OTHER	\$500,000	
Indirect Charges		
Federal Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate = 10% (Indirect Rate x Personnel = Indirect Costs; as negotiated)	\$26,480	
TOTAL INDIRECT	\$26,480	
TOTAL FUNDING	\$1,679,580	\$24,960
TOTAL PROJECT COST	\$1, 704,540	

Expeditious Spending and Sufficient Progress in the use of GLRI Funds

Include an explanation of how, if the applicant is awarded a grant, they will ensure that the funding will be used expeditiously.