

Fact Sheet: 2020 Request for Applications: Puget Sound Action Agenda - Strategic Initiative Leads

Background

- In the 2012 Action Agenda, the Leadership Council endorsed an approach to Puget Sound recovery that focused on three areas termed Strategic Initiatives: Habitat, Shellfish, and Stormwater.
- The EPA Puget Sound Geographic Program redesigned its funding model in 2016 to align with the three Strategic Initiatives and competitively awarded cooperative agreements to three recipients that would lead the work in Habitat, Shellfish, and Stormwater.
- Under these awards, the Habitat, Shellfish, and Stormwater Strategic Initiative Leads each received a more than \$26M, \$21M, and \$22M, respectively, for a total of approximately \$70M over five years.

2021 Funding Model

- Implementation of the 2021 Funding Model begins with next round of Strategic Initiative Lead (SIL) awards. These SILs will receive funding from FY21 through FY25, with amounts depending upon the appropriation and priorities established in the 2018 and 2022 Action Agendas.
- Input on new SIL agreements was sought through discussions with the Puget Sound recovery community and Management Conference Boards. The majority of the nineteen comment letters received from various partners, including letters from the Science Panel and Leadership Council, strongly supported the continuation of the SIL awards in the 2021 funding model.

2020 Request for Applications for Strategic Initiative Leads

- Areas of emphasis remain Habitat, Shellfish, and Stormwater to align with the Action Agenda.
- Each SIL has three main responsibilities: 1) selection and management of subawards that implement the priorities in the Action Agenda, 2) serving as Implementation Strategy Leads for the development, adaptive management, analysis, and operationalizing of the priority Implementation Strategies selected by the Leadership Council that fall under the respective Strategic Initiative, and 3) supporting the Puget Sound Partnership in work groups (e.g., Action Agenda Coordination Group).
- Notable improvements and changes from previous SIL RFA as suggested through input received include:
 - Emphasis on land use and marine water quality as cross-SIL areas of coordination.
 - Addition of socio-ecological resilience as a core principle.
 - Pivot from development of Implementation Strategies to working with partners and ongoing programs on operationalizing the Implementation Strategies.
 - Increased collaboration and coordination with tribes and Local Integrating Organizations, and well as those with expertise in land use practices and designs.
 - Call for innovative approaches.
- Competition Timeline: (For more detail, please refer to the RFA.)
 - September 9, 2020: Request for Applications (RFA) posted at <https://www.epa.gov/puget-sound/funding-and-grants-puget-sound>
 - September 30, 2020: Informational Webinar for Prospective Applicants
 - November 9, 2020: Applications Due

- December 7, 2020: Selections Made and Recipients Notified
- December 2020 and January 2021: Final Workplans and Budgets Negotiated
- March - September 2021: Awards Made (for first year of funding)