

**Federal Agency Name:** U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Office of Water, Office of Ground Water and Drinking Water

**Funding Opportunity Title:** Reduction in Lead Exposure Via Drinking Water

**Announcement Type:** Request for Applications (RFA)

**Funding Opportunity Number:** EPA-OW-OGWDW-21-02

**Assistance Listing Number:** 66.443

**Dates:** The closing date and time for receipt of application submissions is **April 19, 2022 by 11:59 PM, Eastern Time, in order to be considered for funding.** Application packages must be submitted electronically to EPA through Grants.gov (<http://www.grants.gov>) no later than **11:59 PM, Eastern Time, April 19, 2022 in order to be considered for funding.** Questions about this RFA must be submitted in writing via e-mail and must be received by the Agency contact identified in Section VII by **11:59 PM Eastern Time, April 4, 2022.** Written responses will be posted on EPA’s website at: <https://www.epa.gov/dwcapacity/water-infrastructure-improvements-nation-act-wiin-act-grant-programs>. Please note that answers to frequently asked questions (FAQs) are available at <https://www.epa.gov/dwcapacity/water-infrastructure-improvements-nation-act-wiin-act-grant-programs>. EPA strongly recommends interested applicants refer to the FAQs webpage prior to submitting a question.

**COVID-19 Update:** EPA is providing flexibilities to applicants experiencing challenges related to COVID-19. Please see the **Flexibilities Available to Organizations Impacted by COVID-19** clause in Section IV of [EPA’s Solicitation Clauses](#).

**Note to Applicants: Following EPA’s evaluation of applications, all applicants will be notified regarding their status.** 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 the CONTRACTS AND SUBAWARDS provision found at <http://www.epa.gov/grants/epa-solicitation-clauses>.

### **Summary:**

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is soliciting applications from eligible applicants as described in [Section III.A](#) to reduce lead in drinking water in disadvantaged communities through full lead service line replacements and/or treatment improvements or facility remediation in schools and child care facilities. The goal of these projects is to address conditions that contribute to increased concentrations of lead in drinking water in disadvantaged communities. The lead reduction projects should proceed to implementation upon award. The proposed projects support the Agency’s Strategic Plan for Fiscal Year (FY) 2022 – 2026, Goal 5: Ensure Clean and Safe Water for All Communities., Objective 5.1: Ensure Safe Drinking Water and Reliable Water Infrastructure. The EPA’s Strategic Plan is available at <https://www.epa.gov/system/files/documents/2021-10/fy-2022-2026-epa-draft-strategic-plan.pdf>. All applications must be for projects that support the goals and objectives identified above. National Priority Areas identified in this announcement are for: (1) Reduction of Lead Exposure in the Nation’s Drinking Water Systems through Full Lead Service Line Replacements and Treatment Improvements and (2) Reduction of Children’s Exposure to Lead in Drinking Water at Schools and

Child Care Facilities. Assisting drinking water systems, schools, child care facilities, and communities nationwide to remediate sources of lead in their drinking water to minimize lead exposure is a key priority for the Agency.

The total estimated amount of federal funding potentially available under this announcement is approximately \$20,000,000 depending on Agency funding levels, the quality of applications received, and other applicable considerations. It is anticipated that a total of three to seven assistance agreements, each with a project period of up to four years, will be awarded under this announcement. **For this funding cycle, EPA is applying a waiver to all grant applicants of the statutory 20 percent cost-share due to the financial constraints caused by the COVID-19 pandemic across the country.** (See Section III.B of this announcement for information on the waiver of the minimum non-federal 20 percent cost-share/match requirement.)

## CONTENTS BY SECTION

- I. [Funding Opportunity Description](#)
- II. [Award Information](#)
- III. [Eligibility Information](#)
- IV. [Application and Submission Information](#)
- V. [Application Review Information](#)
- VI. [Award Administration Information](#)
- VII. [Agency Contact](#)
- VIII. [Other Information](#)

## SECTION I. FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION

### A. Program Objectives

EPA is soliciting applications from eligible applicants for projects in two National Priority Areas as discussed below. While EPA expects to make at least one award in each area, there is no guarantee that this will be done, and EPA may redistribute the number of awards, and amount of funding, per area. These projects must include at least one or more disadvantaged communities based on the affordability criteria each state establishes under section 1452(d)(3) of the Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA). For the purposes of this announcement, a disadvantaged community is defined as “the service area of a public water system that meets affordability criteria.” The affordability criteria must be met for the disadvantaged community(ies) in which the project will be performed. More information about a state’s affordability criteria can be found in a state’s most current final Intended Use Plan or by contacting the state Drinking Water State Revolving Fund program.

Applications will be evaluated based on the extent to which the proposed project is in and/or benefits a disadvantaged community(ies) as defined by section 1452(d)(3) of the SDWA as “the service area of a public water system that meets affordability criteria”, (ii) benefits drinking water systems with at least one lead action level exceedance within the last three years, or in schools/child care programs with at least 50% of the children receiving free and reduced lunch, in Head Start facilities, and/or in areas with additional environmental health burdens (e.g., areas with older buildings likely to have lead-based paint), and/or (iii) to the extent to which the proposed project benefits a disadvantaged community and supports the Justice40 Initiative. With respect to this RFA, the benefits as described under Justice40 include actions that support or aid improvements to communities experiencing disproportionate drinking water access and affordability environmental stressors (e.g., removing sources of lead in drinking water by funding projects that replace thousands of lead service lines and remove potential sources of lead in hundreds of schools and child care facilities across the United States.) More information on the Justice40 initiative is available at <https://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/briefing-room/2021/07/20/the-path-to-achieving-justice40/>.

The goal of National Priority Area One is to reduce lead in drinking water through full lead service line replacements and/or optimization of drinking water treatment in a drinking water system. The goal of National Priority Area Two is to reduce children’s exposure to lead in schools and child care facilities by reducing lead in drinking water.

EPA expects that successful applications will demonstrate that projects are ready to proceed expeditiously upon award. All applications must be for lead reduction projects that support the goals and objectives identified below. Projects solely comprised of planning, training, and technical assistance projects are not eligible for funding under this announcement. The two National Priority Areas support the [EPA’s Strategic Plan for FY 2022 - FY2026](#). The activities to be funded under this announcement

support the Agency’s Strategic Plan for Fiscal Year (FY) 2022 – 2026, Goal 5: Ensure Clean and Safe Water for All Communities., Objective 5.1: Ensure Safe Drinking Water and Reliable Water Infrastructure. As discussed in [Section I.E](#), the statutory authority for the awards expected to be made under this announcement is Section 1459B of the SDWA.

## **B. National Priority Areas**

Each application submitted under this announcement must address one, and only one, of the National Priority Areas described below. Applicants may submit more than one application package under this announcement so long as each application is separately submitted and addresses only **one** National Priority Area. The cover page of the application package must clearly indicate the National Priority Area being addressed in the application. If an applicant submits an application addressing more than one National Priority Area, it will be rejected.

### **National Priority Area One: Reduction of Lead Exposure in the Nation’s Drinking Water Systems through Full Lead Service Line Replacements and Treatment Improvements**

Under this National Priority Area, EPA is soliciting applications to reduce lead in drinking water in disadvantaged communities, as defined based on the affordability criteria each state establishes under section 1452(d)(3) of the SDWA, through full lead service line replacements and/or treatment projects, such as lead service line replacement and corrosion control practices. For the purposes of this announcement “drinking water system” means a community water system, a non-transient noncommunity water system, and a water system located in an area governed by an Indian Tribe.

Many drinking water systems in disadvantaged communities face challenges in lead source removal, providing safe drinking water to their customers, and in consistently meeting the requirements of the SDWA and the National Primary Drinking Water Regulations (NPDWRs). These challenges include, but are not limited to, lead entering drinking water through corrosion of lead service lines connecting the home to the drinking water system; and changes in source water or treatment processes that could impact water chemistry in the distribution system.

For this National Priority Area, applicants should describe in the application their proposed approach for reducing lead in drinking water in disadvantaged communities and enabling drinking water systems to comply with regulatory requirements applicable to the system. If the proposed project is part of a broader lead exposure reduction effort, include a brief description of how the proposed project complements the broader effort. The lead reduction project may include full lead service line replacements and/or treatment improvements. Applicants should describe the known lead issue in the disadvantaged community by describing for example: any lead action level exceedances the system has had, factors consistent with lead service line presence such as historical use in the area and age of housing, service line inventories, historical challenges in meeting the requirements of the Lead and Copper Rule, as defined in 40 CFR Part 141, Subpart I, and any other information relevant to demonstrate the need for the proposed lead reduction project.

Public education and outreach about the health effects of lead exposure via drinking water are critical to obtaining public support for the anticipated lead reduction projects. It is also important that community members are informed about lead reduction projects prior to the start of the project and are updated as the project proceeds. Applications should describe the proposed approach to provide public education and conduct outreach related to the project.

Remediation follow-up monitoring is critical to ensure treatment changes are working as anticipated. Applicants should conduct remediation follow-up water sampling after completing full lead service line replacements or implementing treatment changes in order to verify that lead levels are reduced as anticipated. Applications should describe the proposed approach to conduct post-implementation drinking water quality monitoring during the project period.

Long-term maintenance of the lead reduction treatment or infrastructure is important to ensure that public health protection is maintained. Applications should also describe proposed plans to maintain lead level reductions after project completion, through, for example, maintenance plans for corrosion control treatment.

Applicants must demonstrate the ability and readiness to proceed expeditiously upon receiving an award. Applicants must describe their plan and proposed approach to proceed expeditiously to implement the projects to reduce lead as described further under [Section I.C](#), Expedient Project Readiness to Proceed Upon Award. EPA also encourages applications that support environmental justice by prioritizing lead reduction projects in and/or benefits a disadvantaged community(ies) as defined by section 1452(d)(3) of the SDWA as “the service area of a public water system that meets affordability criteria”, (ii) benefits drinking water systems with at least one lead action level exceedance within the last three years, or in schools/child care programs with at least 50% of the children receiving free and reduced lunch, in Head Start facilities, and/or in areas with additional environmental health burdens (e.g., areas with older buildings likely to have lead-based paint), and/or (iii) to the extent to which the proposed project benefits a disadvantaged community and supports the Justice40 Initiative. With respect to this RFA, the benefits as described under Justice40 include actions that support or aid improvements to communities experiencing disproportionate drinking water access and affordability environmental stressors (e.g., removing sources of lead in drinking water by funding projects that replace thousands of lead service lines and remove potential sources of lead in hundreds of schools and child care facilities across the United States.) Information regarding the Justice40 Initiative is available at <https://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/briefing-room/2021/07/20/the-path-to-achieving-justice40/>.

The goal of the full lead service line replacements and/or treatment improvements projects under this National Priority Area is to reduce lead in drinking water in disadvantaged communities and to improve and maintain the drinking water supply and public health protection. Applicants should describe how they will document and report progress toward meeting this goal as described in [Section I.D](#), [EPA’s FY2022-2026 Strategic Plan](#) .

The projects under this National Priority Area are expected to result in reduction of lead in drinking water in disadvantaged communities. Examples of eligible drinking water lead reduction activities to support this National Priority Area may include, but are not limited to, the following.

- Replacing lead service lines (including goosenecks, pigtails and/or other lead components) and/or replacement of partial lead service lines that are remnants of previous partial replacement efforts. Publicly-owned, privately-owned, and jointly-owned service lines are eligible for replacement under this grant program. Note that partial lead service line replacements are not an eligible activity unless replacing remnants of previous partial replacement efforts.
- Replacing galvanized pipes downstream of a lead service line.
- Improving corrosion control to reduce lead in drinking water through installation or re-optimization of corrosion control treatment.

- As a part of the project funded under this grant, developing and maintaining the drinking water system's service line inventory to accurately track existing lead service lines and replacements of full or partial lead service lines, if the project includes lead service line replacement. Inventories may also include lead pigtails and/or lead goosenecks.
- As a part of the project funded under this grant, conducting remediation follow-up monitoring, public education, and related outreach.

#### SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS FOR LEAD SERVICE LINE REPLACEMENT PROJECTS:

Applications including lead service line replacement projects must include a description of the proposed approach for the following required project elements.

1. Plan to ensure that both the publicly-owned and privately-owned portions of a lead service line will be replaced, or, if replacing partial lead service lines that are remnants of previous partial replacement efforts, plan to ensure that no section of lead service line remains in place. Note that partial lead service line replacements are not an eligible activity unless replacing remnants of previous partial replacement efforts.
2. Plan for notifying customers of the replacement of any publicly-owned portion of the lead service line.
3. Plan for notifying each customer that a replacement of any publicly-owned portion of a lead service line that is funded by this grant program will not be carried out unless the customer agrees to the simultaneous replacement of the privately-owned portion of the lead service line.
4. Plan for ensuring customers are provided filters certified to remove lead, in accordance with applicable standards established by the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) or National Sanitation Foundation International (NSF), along with no less than three months of replacement cartridges, notifying each customer of premise plumbing flushing instructions within 24 hours of the conclusion of each lead service line replacement, and post replacement lead testing(s).
5. Demonstration that the applicant has considered other options for reducing the concentration of lead in its drinking water, including an evaluation of options for corrosion control.

For additional information regarding the ANSI/NSF standards, visit [www.nsf.org](http://www.nsf.org) or [www.ansi.org](http://www.ansi.org). Regarding Point of Use (POU) filters, visit EPA's [factsheet](#).

EPA also encourages applicants to propose other types of activities that may achieve the objectives of this National Priority Area.

All eligible applications will be evaluated based on the criteria in [Section V](#), including how well and thoroughly the National Priority Area is addressed (see [Section V.A](#)). EPA anticipates awarding approximately one to two assistance agreements under this National Priority Area, ranging from approximately \$5,000,000 to no more than \$10,000,000 in federal funds. It is anticipated that the total amount of federal funding awarded under this priority area will be approximately \$10,000,000, with project periods of up to four years, depending on the amount requested and the overall size and scope of the project(s).

#### **National Priority Area Two: Reducing Children's Exposure to Lead in Drinking Water in Schools and Child Care Facilities**



Under this National Priority Area, EPA is soliciting applications for projects in disadvantaged communities, as defined based on the affordability criteria each state establishes under section 1452(d)(3) of the SDWA, that will reduce children's exposure to lead in schools and child care facilities through removal and/or replacement of lead-containing drinking water fixtures, fountains, outlets, and plumbing materials.

For the purposes of this RFA, a child care facility is a Head Start program or an Early Head Start program, a state-licensed or regulated child care program, a state pre-kindergarten program, or a program operated by a local educational agency serving children from birth through age six.

For the purposes of this RFA, a school is a nonprofit institutional day or residential school, including a public charter school, that provides elementary or secondary education, as determined under state law, up through grade twelve. Additionally, for the purposes of this RFA, the definition of a school includes a school or community college that is controlled by an Indian tribe, band, or nation, including any Alaska Native village, which is recognized as eligible for special programs and services provided by the United States to Indians because of their status as Indians. Facilities administered by the Bureau of Indian Affairs are not included in this definition for the purposes of this announcement.

Even when water entering a facility meets all federal and state standards for lead, older plumbing materials in schools and/or child care facilities may contribute to elevated lead levels in their drinking water. The potential for lead to leach into water increases the longer the water remains in contact with leaded plumbing materials. As a result, facilities with intermittent water use patterns, such as schools, may be more likely to have elevated lead concentrations in drinking water. The EPA's [\*3Ts for Reducing Lead in Drinking Water in Schools and Child Care Facilities: A Training, Testing, and Taking Action Approach\*](#) (3Ts) provides tools for schools, child care facilities, states, and water systems to implement voluntary drinking water lead reduction programs.

For this National Priority Area, applicants should describe their proposed approach for projects serving disadvantaged communities that will reduce children's exposure to lead through the removal and/or replacement of drinking water fixtures, fountains, outlets, and plumbing materials in schools and child care facilities, including full replacement of lead service lines serving such facilities. If the proposed project is part of a larger, ongoing lead reduction project, include a brief description of how the proposed project complements the broader effort. EPA will consider applications for projects in individual disadvantaged communities, as well as applications with projects designed to serve multiple disadvantaged communities regionally, state-wide, or nation-wide. Applicants should describe the known lead issue in the disadvantaged communities' schools and/or child care facilities by describing, for example: drinking water fixtures, fountains, outlets, and/or plumbing including lead service lines that need to be removed or replaced. The description may include prior use of the 3Ts, or applicable state regulations or guidance that are not less stringent, for identification and prioritization of drinking water fixtures, fountains, outlets, and/or plumbing including lead service lines that need to be removed or replaced.

Public education and outreach about the health effects of lead exposure via drinking water are critical to obtaining public support for the anticipated lead reduction projects. It is also important that community members are informed about lead reduction projects prior to the start of the project and are updated as the project proceeds. Applications should describe the proposed approach to provide public education and conduct outreach.

Remediation follow-up monitoring is critical to ensure treatment changes are working as anticipated. Applicants should conduct follow-up water sampling after installing the drinking water fixtures, fountains, outlets, and/or plumbing materials in order to verify that lead levels are reduced as anticipated. Applications should describe the proposed approach to conduct post-implementation drinking water quality monitoring during the project period.

Long-term maintenance of the drinking water fixtures, fountains, outlets, and/or plumbing materials is important to ensure that public health protection is maintained. Applications should also describe proposed plans to maintain lead level reductions after project completion, for example with a drinking water management plan for a school or child care facility.

Applicants must demonstrate the ability and readiness to proceed expeditiously upon receiving an award. Applicants must describe their plan and proposed approach to proceed expeditiously to implement the projects to reduce lead as described under [Section I.C](#), Expedient Readiness to Proceed Upon Award. Applicants should also describe additional project components, such as outreach, public education, follow-up monitoring, and additional remediation if needed. EPA also encourages applications that support environmental justice by prioritizing lead reduction projects in and/or benefits a disadvantaged community(ies) as defined by section 1452(d)(3) of the SDWA as “the service area of a public water system that meets affordability criteria”, (ii) benefits drinking water systems with at least one lead action level exceedance within the last three years, or in schools/child care programs with at least 50% of the children receiving free and reduced lunch, in Head Start facilities, and/or in areas with additional environmental health burdens (e.g., areas with older buildings likely to have lead-based paint), and/or (iii) to the extent to which the proposed project benefits a disadvantaged community and supports the Justice40 Initiative.

With respect to this RFA, the benefits as described under Justice40 include actions that support or aid improvements to communities experiencing disproportionate drinking water access and affordability environmental stressors (e.g., removing sources of lead in drinking water by funding projects that replace thousands of lead service lines and remove potential sources of lead in hundreds of schools and child care facilities across the United States.) Information regarding the Justice40 Initiative is available at <https://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/briefing-room/2021/07/20/the-path-to-achieving-justice40/>.

The goal of the lead reduction projects under this National Priority Area is to reduce lead in drinking water at schools and/or child care facilities in disadvantaged communities. Applicants must describe how they will document and report progress toward meeting this goal as described in [Section I.D](#), [EPA’s FY 2022 – 2026 Strategic Plan](#).

The projects are expected to result in reduction of lead in drinking water in schools and/or child care facilities in disadvantaged communities. Examples of eligible drinking water lead reduction activities to support this National Priority Area may include, but are not limited to, the following.

- Removing or replacing drinking water fixtures, fountains, or outlets demonstrated to be sources of lead in schools and/or child care facilities' drinking water.
- Replacing plumbing materials determined to be sources of lead in schools and/or child care facilities drinking water, including full replacement of lead service lines serving such facilities.
- Conducting follow-up monitoring, public education, and outreach to ensure the long-term performance of the remediation.



- Providing filters certified to remove lead, in accordance with applicable standards established by ANSI or NSF post full lead service line remediations, along with no less than three months of replacement cartridges, notifying the schools and/or child care facilities of premise flushing instructions within 24 hours of the conclusion, and post-remediation lead testing(s).

EPA also encourages applicants to propose other types of activities the objectives of this National Priority Area.

All eligible applications will be evaluated based on the criteria in [Section V](#), including how well and thoroughly the National Priority Area is addressed. EPA anticipates awarding approximately two to five assistance agreements under this National Priority Area, ranging from approximately \$2,000,000 to no more than \$5,000,000 in federal funds. It is anticipated that the total amount of all awards under this priority area will be approximately \$10,000,000, with project periods of up to four years, depending on the amount requested and the overall size and scope of the project(s).

### **C. Expedient Project Readiness to Proceed**

Applications for projects under both of the National Priority Areas described above should demonstrate the applicant's ability and readiness to proceed expeditiously upon receiving an award and applications will be evaluated based on this under the applicable Section V evaluation criteria. Applicants should describe the plan and approach to proceed expeditiously to implement the project upon award of funding. Applicants should describe past and current practices being implemented to reduce exposure of lead in drinking water (such as public education and outreach, existing corrosion control treatment, or the use of control measures to reduce exposure from fountains or fixtures where elevated lead levels have been detected in schools or child care facilities). Applicants should also include a description of the completed project planning and design phases. Applications must demonstrate that all required permits and approvals from the appropriate regulatory authority (such as the primacy agency, municipality, or school board) have been obtained.

Supporting documentation demonstrating readiness to proceed, such as bid documents, construction schedules, easements, any legal agreements to access private property to complete the project, and, if applicable, agreements or planned agreements between an applicant that is a qualified nonprofit organization servicing a public water system, such as a nonprofit community organization, and the water system or water systems the organization is servicing, may be submitted as optional attachments to applications, as referenced in [Section IV](#) of the solicitation. These additional documents are not subject to the 25-page limitation under the Project Narrative. Please note the "Expedient Project Readiness to Proceed" evaluation criteria in [Section V](#).

It is important to note that under the Lead and Copper Rule, as defined in 40 CFR Part 141, Subpart I, prior to any long-term change in water treatment, water systems are required to notify the primacy agency in writing of the change or addition. The primacy agency must review **and** approve the long-term change in treatment before it is implemented by the water system. Applications that include corrosion control treatment projects must demonstrate the treatment change has been approved by the primacy agency.

#### **D. EPA's Strategic Plan and Anticipated Environmental Results**

Applicants must demonstrate in their application how their project and proposed activities link to the Strategic Plan Goal and Objective identified below. This announcement is consistent with the EPA's priority to address conditions that contribute to increased concentrations of lead in drinking water.

The lead reduction projects to be funded under this announcement support the [FY 2022-2026 Strategic Plan](#). Awards made under this announcement will support Goal 5: Ensure Clean and Safe Water for All Communities., Objective 5.1: Ensure Safe Drinking Water and Reliable Water Infrastructure.

EPA also requires that grant applicants adequately describe environmental outputs and outcomes to be achieved under assistance agreements (see EPA Order 5700.7A1, Environmental Results under Assistance Agreements, <https://www.epa.gov/grants/epa-order-57007a1-epas-policy-environmental-results-under-epa-assistance-agreements> ). All proposed projects must demonstrate a linkage to the [FY 2022-2026 Strategic Plan](#) Goal 5, Objective 5.1, and include specific statements describing the environmental results of the proposed project in terms of well-defined outputs and, to the maximum extent practicable, well-defined outcomes that will demonstrate how the project will contribute to the overall protection of human health and the environment by ensuring safe drinking water. Outputs and outcomes should directly address the goal of achieving a reduction of lead and lead exposure and providing safe drinking water in the long term for disadvantaged communities.

#### **Outputs**

Environmental outputs (or deliverables) refer to an environmental activity, effort, and/or associated work product related to an environmental goal or objective, that will be produced or provided over a period or by a specified date. Outputs may be quantitative or qualitative but must be measurable during an assistance agreement funding period.

Examples of anticipated environmental outputs from the assistance agreements expected to be awarded under this announcement for National Priority Area 1, *Reduction of Lead Exposure in the Nation's Drinking Water Systems through Full Lead Service Line Replacements and Treatment Improvements*, may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- A reduction in lead in drinking water provided by the drinking water system due to full lead service line replacements and/or treatment improvements.
- A decrease in the number of lead service lines, and galvanized pipes downstream of lead service lines, in the drinking water system, resulting in a decrease in exposure to lead via drinking water.
- Improved corrosion control in the drinking water system, as measured by maintaining optimal water quality parameters and achieving lower 90<sup>th</sup> percentiles level for lead.
- An increased number of customers with information about lead in drinking water, achieved through outreach and public education.

Examples of anticipated environmental outputs from the assistance agreements expected to be awarded under this announcement for National Priority Area 2, *Reduction of Children's Exposure to Lead in Schools and Child Care Facilities*, may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- A decreased number of drinking water fixtures, fountains, outlets, plumbing, and/or lead service lines in schools and/or child care facilities associated with high levels of lead in drinking water due to removal or replacement of those components.

- An increased number of schools and/or child care facilities administrations, faculty, staff, and community members with information about lead in drinking water, achieved through outreach and public education.
- A decreased number of children drinking water from outlets that are known to have high levels of lead in drinking water.

### **Outcomes**

Environmental outcomes are the result, effect, or consequence that will occur from carrying out an environmental program or activity that is related to the environmental or programmatic goal or objective. Outcomes may be environmental, behavioral, health-related, or programmatic in nature. Outcomes should be quantitative and may not necessarily be achieved within the assistance agreement funding period. Outcomes may be short-term (changes in behavior, practice, or decisions), intermediate (changes in behavior, practice or decisions), or long-term (changes in the condition of the natural resource).

Examples of anticipated environmental outcomes from the assistance agreements expected to be awarded under this announcement for National Priority Area 1, *Reduction of Lead Exposure in the Nation's Drinking Water Systems through Full Lead Service Line Replacements and Treatment Improvements* may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- An overall reduction in lead exposure and associated harms through reduction of sources of lead in drinking water systems.
- An overall improvement in health outcomes in disadvantaged communities through increased efforts to remove sources of lead.
- An overall increase in public understanding of the health effects of lead and efforts towards the reduction of sources of lead in the drinking water system.

Examples of anticipated environmental outcomes from the assistance agreements expected to be awarded under this announcement for National Priority Area 2, *Reduction of Children's Exposure to Lead in Schools and Child Care Facilities*, may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- An overall reduction in lead exposure and associated harms through reduction of sources of lead in drinking water in schools and child care facilities.
- An overall improvement in health outcomes in disadvantaged communities through increased efforts to remove sources of lead.
- An overall increase in public understanding of the health effects of lead and efforts towards the reduction of children's exposure to lead in drinking water in schools and child care facilities.

As part of the Project Narrative, an applicant will be required to describe how the project results will link the outcomes to the [Agency's Strategic Plan](#) and to the goal of reducing lead in drinking water through full lead service line replacements and/or treatment improvements or facility remediation in schools and/or child care facilities. In addition, applicants will have to describe their plan and approach for tracking and measuring their progress towards achieving expected outputs and outcomes. Additional information regarding the EPA's discussion of environmental results in terms of "outputs" and "outcomes" can be found at <https://www.epa.gov/grants/epa-order-57007a1-epas-policy->

[environmental-results-under-epa-assistance-agreements](#) (see EPA Order 5700.7, Environmental Results under Assistance Agreements).

### **E. Statutory Authority**

The statutory authority for the awards expected to be made under this announcement is section 1459B of the SDWA, which authorizes EPA to provide grants for projects to reduce the concentration of lead in water for human consumption.

### **F. Additional Provisions For Applicants Incorporated Into The Solicitation**

Additional provisions that apply to sections III, IV, V, and VI of this solicitation and/or awards made under this solicitation, can be found at [EPA Solicitation Clauses](#). These provisions are important for applying to this solicitation and applicants must review them when preparing applications for this solicitation. If you are unable to access these provisions electronically at the website above, please contact the EPA point of contact listed in this solicitation (usually in Section VII) to obtain the provisions.

## **SECTION II. AWARD INFORMATION**

### **A. Amount of Funding**

The total estimated amount of federal funding available under this announcement is approximately \$20,000,000, depending on Agency funding levels, the quality of applications received, and other applicable considerations. It is anticipated that approximately one to two assistance agreements will be awarded for National Priority Area 1, *Reduction of Lead Exposure in the Nation's Drinking Water Systems through Full Lead Service Line Replacements and Treatment Improvements* and two to five assistance agreements will be awarded for National Priority Area 2, *Reduction of Children's Exposure to Lead in Drinking Water*, as described in Section I.B of this announcement. It is anticipated that awards made under National Priority Area 1 will total approximately \$10,000,000 and that awards made under National Priority Area 2 will also total approximately \$10,000,000 of federal funds. Assistance agreements funded under this announcement will have up to four-year project periods. See [Section I](#) for more information on award ranges for each of the National Priority Area.

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, is evaluated and selected for an award, and therefore maintains the integrity of the competition and selection process.

EPA reserves the right to make no awards under this announcement or to make fewer awards than anticipated. While EPA expects to make at least one award in each area, there is no guarantee that this will be done, and EPA may redistribute the number of awards, and amount of funding, per area. In addition, EPA reserves the right to make additional awards under this announcement, consistent with Agency policy and guidance, if additional funding becomes available. Any additional selections for awards will be made no later than six months after the original selection decisions.

### **B. Type of Funding**

It is anticipated that grants and/or cooperative agreements may be funded under this announcement. Successful applicant(s) will be issued a grant or cooperative agreement as appropriate. 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 awards cooperative agreements for those projects in which it expects to have substantial interaction with the recipient throughout the recipient's performance of the project. EPA will negotiate the precise terms and conditions of "substantial involvement" as part of the award process. Federal involvement may include:

1. Close monitoring of the recipient's performance to verify the results proposed by the applicant.
2. Collaboration during the performance of the scope of work, including site visits to observe lead reduction projects.
3. In accordance with the applicable regulations at 2 CFR 200 Subpart D (200.317 through 200.327) as appropriate, review of proposed procurements.
4. Review of qualifications of key personnel.
5. Review and comment on tasks/deliverables and reports prepared under the cooperative agreement(s).

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.

### **SECTION III. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION**

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

#### **A. Eligible Applicants**

Eligible applicants under this competition include the following. Individuals and for-profit organizations are not eligible to apply.

- Community water systems, for example, a town's drinking water system.
- Water systems located in an area governed by an Indian Tribe.
- Non-transient non-community water systems, for example, schools, factories, office buildings, and hospitals that have their own water systems.
- Qualified nonprofit organizations<sup>1</sup> servicing a public water system, such as a nonprofit community organization.
- Municipalities.

---

<sup>1</sup> Consistent with the definition of *Nonprofit organization* at 2 CFR § 200.1, the term nonprofit organization means any corporation, trust, association, cooperative, or other organization that is operated mainly for scientific, educational, service, charitable, or similar purpose in the public interest and is not organized primarily for profit; and uses net proceeds to maintain, improve, or expand the operation of the organization. The term includes tax-exempt nonprofit neighborhood and labor organizations. Note that 2 CFR 200.1 specifically excludes Institutions of Higher Education from the definition of nonprofit organization because they are separately defined in the regulation. While not considered to be a non-profit organization(s) as defined by 2 CFR 200.1, public or nonprofit Institutions of Higher Education are, nevertheless, eligible to submit applications under this RFA. Hospitals operated by state, tribal, or local governments or that meet the definition of nonprofit at 2 CFR 200.1 are also eligible to apply as nonprofits or as instrumentalities of the unit of government depending on the applicable law. For-profit colleges, universities, trade schools, and hospitals are ineligible. Nonprofit organizations that are not exempt from taxation under section 501 of the Internal Revenue Code must submit other forms of documentation of nonprofit status; such as certificates of incorporation as nonprofit under state or tribal law. Nonprofit organizations exempt from taxation under section 501(c)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code that lobby are not eligible for EPA funding as provided in the Lobbying Disclosure Act, 2 U.S.C. 1611.

- State, interstate, or intermunicipal agencies, such as a department of environmental protection, an interstate environmental commission, or a joint municipal pollution control board.

## **B. Cost Sharing or Matching**

Section 1459(b)(4)(A) of the SDWA requires a minimum non-federal cost-share/match of 20 percent of the total project cost. Section 1459B(b)(4)(B) of the SDWA states that EPA may reduce the cost-share/match requirement for reasons of affordability, as the Administrator determines to be appropriate. For this funding only, EPA is applying a waiver to all grant applicants of the statutory 20 percent cost-share due to the financial constraints caused by the COVID-19 pandemic across the country. Waiver of the 20 percent cost-share is at the discretion of the agency.

## **C. Threshold Eligibility Criteria**

These are requirements that if not met by the time of application submission will result in the elimination of the application from consideration from funding. Only applications that meet all of these criteria will be evaluated against the ranking factors in [Section V](#) of this announcement. Applicants deemed ineligible as a result of the threshold eligibility review will be notified within 15 calendar days of the ineligibility determination.

1. An applicant must meet the eligibility requirements in [Section III.A](#) of this announcement at the time of application submission.
2. Applications must address one, and only one, of the two National Priority Areas listed in Section I.B. Eligible organizations may submit more than one application under this competition as long as each one is separately submitted and addresses only one National Priority Area. Applications that address more than one National Priority Area in a single application will not be reviewed.
3. Applications must demonstrate that the proposed project is in at least one disadvantaged community based on the affordability criteria established by each state under section 1452(d)(3) of the SDWA, and a disadvantaged community is defined as “the service area of a public water system that meets affordability criteria.” The affordability criteria must be met for the community for which the project will be performed. Applicants must include their state’s affordability criteria and how the proposed project meets the affordability criteria. Applicants can obtain more information about their state’s affordability criteria in their state’s most current final Intended Use Plan or contact their state Drinking Water State Revolving Fund program for more information.
4. Applications that include lead service line replacement activities under National Priority Area 1 must address the following elements. Applications that do not address all four of the elements described below will be rejected.
  - a) Demonstration that the applicant has considered corrosion control as an option for reducing the concentration of lead in its drinking water.
  - b) Plan to ensure that, at the conclusion of the service line replacement, both the publicly-owned and privately-owned portions of a lead service line will be replaced. Eligible activities can include the replacement of publicly-owned, privately-owned, or jointly-owned service lines, as well as pigtails, goosenecks, and other lead components. Projects can also include the replacement of remnants of previous partial lead service line



- replacement provided that at the conclusion of the service line replacement, all lead lines and components must be removed.
- c) Plan to ensure that customers will be notified of the replacement of any publicly-owned portion of the lead service line and that a planned replacement of any publicly-owned portion of a lead service line will not be carried out unless the customer agrees to the simultaneous replacement of the privately-owned portion of the lead service line.
  - d) Plan for ensuring customers are provided filters certified to remove lead, in accordance with applicable standards established by the ANSI, along with no less than three months of replacement cartridges, notifying each customer of premise plumbing flushing instructions within 24 hours of the conclusion of each lead service line replacement, and post replacement lead testing(s).
5. Applications for awards under National Priority Area 1 that include corrosion control treatment projects must demonstrate the treatment change has been reviewed and approved by the primacy agency.
  6. Applications for awards under National Priority Area 1, *Reduction of Lead Exposure in the Nation's Drinking Water Systems through Full Lead Service Line Replacements and Treatment Improvements*, cannot request more than \$10,000,000 in federal funds, and applications for awards under National Priority Area 2 *Reduction of Children's Exposure to Lead in Drinking Water at Schools and Child Care Facilities* cannot request more than \$5,000,000 in federal funds. Applications exceeding the amount for the National Priority Area it addresses will be rejected.
  7. Applications must **substantially comply** with the application submission instructions and requirements set forth in [Section IV](#) of this announcement, or else they will be rejected. Where a page limit is expressed in Section IV with respect to the Project Narrative, pages in excess of the page limitation will not be reviewed. Section IV.D.2 establishes a 25- page, single-spaced Project Narrative page limit.
  8. Applications must be submitted through [Grants.gov](https://www.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.
  9. 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](https://www.grants.gov) or relevant [SAM.gov](https://www.sam.gov) system issues. An applicant's failure to timely submit its application through [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) because they did not timely or properly register in [SAM.gov](https://www.sam.gov) or [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) will not be considered an acceptable reason to consider a late submission. Applicants should confirm receipt of their application via email with Ying Tan at [WIINDrinkingWaterGrants@epa.gov](mailto:WIINDrinkingWaterGrants@epa.gov) as soon as possible after the submission deadline – failure to do so may result in your application not being reviewed.
  10. If an application is submitted that includes any ineligible tasks or activities, that portion of the application will be ineligible for funding and may, depending on the extent to which it affects

the application, render the entire application ineligible for funding. As an example, applications that include projects solely comprised of planning, training, and technical assistance projects are not eligible for funding under this announcement.

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

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

##### **A. Requirement to Submit Through Grants.gov and Limited Exception Procedures**

Applicants must apply electronically through [Grants.gov](#) under this funding opportunity based on the grants.gov instructions in this announcement. If your organization has no access to the internet or access is very limited, you may request an exception for the remainder of this calendar year by following the procedures outlined [here](#). Please note that your request must be received at least 15 calendar days before the application due date to allow enough time to negotiate alternative submission methods. Issues with submissions with respect to this opportunity only are addressed in section *c. Technical Issues with Submission* below.

##### **B. Grants.gov Application 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 "Organization Registration" link listed under the "Get Registered" section and follow the instructions. Please note, this process can take a month or more for new registrants. 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.

Existing and new SAM.gov registrants are also assigned a free SAM-issued Unique Entity Identifier (UEI). Applicants must use their UEI, not their DUNS number, when filling out forms in the package for this funding opportunity. Please see [RAIN-2021-G01](#) for information about EPA's implementation of the upcoming Government-wide transition from DUNS to UEI. Please note that until April 4, 2022, applicant organizations registering for the first time in SAM.gov will need a DUNS number.

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

To begin the application process under this grant announcement, go to Grants.gov and click the red "Apply" button at the top of the view grant opportunity page. If you encounter technical difficulties or the Apply button is grayed out please contact grants.gov for assistance at the grants.gov support center at [support@grants.gov](mailto:support@grants.gov) or 1-800-518-4726 before the application deadline. 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](#)

You may also be able to access the application package for this announcement by searching for the opportunity on [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov). Go to [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) and then click on "Search Grants" at the top of the page and enter the Funding Opportunity Number, EPA-OW-OGWDW-21-02, or the Assistance Listing number that applies to the announcement (66.443), in the appropriate field and click the Search button.

Please Note: All applications must be submitted through [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) using the "Workspace" feature. Information on the Workspace feature can be found on the [Grants.gov Workspace Overview Page](#).

**Application Submission Deadline:** Your organization's AOR must submit your complete application package electronically to EPA through [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) no later than **April 19, 2022, 11:59 PM, Eastern Time**. 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.

### **Application Materials**

**The following forms and documents are required under this announcement.**

#### **Mandatory Documents:**

1. Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424).
2. Budget Information for Non-Construction Programs (SF-424A).
3. EPA Key Contacts Form 5700-54.
4. EPA Form 4700-4 – Preaward Compliance Review Report.
5. Narrative Proposal (Project Narrative Attachment Form)-prepared as described in Section IV of the announcement.

#### **Optional Documents:**

6. Other Attachments Form – Biographical Sketches
7. Other Attachments Form – Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement, if applicable
8. Other Attachments Form – Supporting documentation demonstrating readiness to proceed
9. Other Attachments Form – Supporting documentation describing the known lead issue

Applications submitted through [Grants.gov](https://www.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 Ying Tan at 202-564-2392 or email [WIINDrinkingWaterGrants@epa.gov](mailto:WIINDrinkingWaterGrants@epa.gov). 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 acknowledgment. For documentation purposes, print or screen capture this acknowledgment. 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](https://www.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 [WIINDrinkingWaterGrants@epa.gov](mailto:WIINDrinkingWaterGrants@epa.gov) with the FON in the subject line. If you are unable to email, contact Ying Tan at (202) 564-2392. Be aware that EPA will only consider accepting applications that were unable to transmit due to [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) or relevant <https://www.sam.gov/SAM/> 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.

If you are experiencing problems resulting in an inability to upload the application to Grants.gov, it is essential to call [Grants.gov](https://www.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 Ying Tan at (202) 564-2392.

4. Unsuccessful transfer of the application package: If a successful transfer of the application cannot be accomplished even with assistance from [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) due to electronic submission system issues or unforeseen exigent circumstances, and you have already attempted to resolve the issue by contacting [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov), send an email message to [WIINDrinkingWaterGrants@epa.gov](mailto:WIINDrinkingWaterGrants@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.
5. 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 and it is too late to reapply, promptly send an email to [WIINDrinkingWaterGrants@epa.gov](mailto:WIINDrinkingWaterGrants@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.

Please note that successful submission through [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) or via email does not necessarily mean your application is eligible for an award.

#### **D. Content of Application Package Submission**

Applicants should read the following section very carefully. A complete application package must include the following documents described below.

##### **1. Application Materials**

- a. **Signed Standard Form (SF) 424 – Application for Federal Assistance.** Complete the form. There are no attachments. The organizational Dun and Bradstreet (D&B) Data Universal Number System (DUNS) number must be included in the SF-424. Organizations may obtain a DUNS number at no cost by calling the toll-free DUNS number request line at 1-866-705-5711.
- b. **SF-424A – Budget Information for Non-Construction Programs.** The total amount of federal funding requested for the project period should be shown on line 5(e) and line 6(k) of the SF-424A. If indirect costs are included, the number of indirect costs should be entered on line 6(j). The indirect cost rate (a percentage), the base (e.g., personnel costs and fringe benefits), and the amount should also be indicated on line 22. If indirect costs are requested, a copy of the Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement must be submitted as part of the application package. In Section B, Budget Categories column (1) should be filled out for federal funds, column (2) should be filled out for non-federal cost- share/match, and column (5) should be filled out for total project cost (combined federal funds and all non-federal funds that will also be applied).
- c. **EPA Key Contacts Form 5700-54.** Complete the form. Attach additional forms as needed.
- d. **EPA Form 4700-4, Pre-Award Compliance Review Report.** Complete the form. There are no attachments.
- e. **Project Narrative.** See **Section IV.D.2 below** (Project Narrative) for details on specific information that must be included. When developing the Project Narrative, applicants should refer to Section I.B of the announcement which provides a project description for the National Priority Areas and please note there is a page limit for the project narrative as stated below.
- f. **Biographical Sketches.** Must submit a biographical sketch of each major project manager, support staff member, or other major project participant (Section IV.D.2.C.4.b.).
- g. **Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement** (if indirect costs are included in your proposed project budget). Complete this form if indirect costs are included in the proposed project budget. You must submit a copy of your organization's Indirect Cost Rate Agreement as part of the application package if your proposed project budget includes indirect costs.

- h. **Supporting documentation demonstrating readiness to proceed** Submit planning and design and permits from the appropriate regulatory authority (such as the primacy agency or municipality), bid documents, construction schedules, and any legal agreements (essential for lead service line replacement on private).
- i. **Supporting documentation describing the known lead issue** Submit historical sampling results, for example, lead testing or action level exceedance information, or inventories of lead components, such as service lines, water fountains and/or faucets.

## 2. Project Narrative

**NOTE: The Project Narrative must include sections A-C below. The Project Narrative (covering sections A-C below) is limited to no more than twenty-five (25) typewritten, single-spaced 8.5x11-inch pages (a page is one side of a piece of paper) including the cover page and executive summary.** Pages should be consecutively numbered for ease of reading. It is recommended that applicants use a standard 12-point type with 1-inch margins. While these guidelines establish the minimum type size recommended, applicants are advised that readability is of paramount importance and should give attention to selection of an appropriate font for use in the Project Narrative. **Additional pages beyond the 25-page limit will not be considered.**

The following documents may be included as supporting materials and do not count towards the 25 page limitation. These include, as mentioned in Section D.1, parts f. through i (*f. Biographical Sketches, g. Negotiated Indirect Rate Cost Agreement, h. Supporting documentation demonstrating readiness to proceed, and i. Supporting documentation describing the known lead issue*). Additionally, full resumes and QA/QC documentation are not included within the page limitation.

The application's Project Narrative must be typewritten and must include the information listed below. If a particular item is not applicable, clearly state this in the Project Narrative.

### A. Cover Page (included in the page limit)

1. Project title;
2. National Priority Area from [Section I. B](#) that is addressed in the application (**applicants must address only one National Priority Area per application package**);
3. Name of applicant;
4. Key personnel and contact information (i.e., e-mail address and phone number); and
5. Total project cost (specify the amount of federal funds requested, any non-federal funds that are included, and the total project cost).

**B. Executive Summary:** Provide a brief summary of the proposed project (should not exceed one page). This should include a brief description of the proposed project and the anticipated environmental outputs and outcomes.

**C. Workplan:** The workplan must address the following elements.

#### 1. National Priority Area:

- a. Describe the approach for addressing one of the two National Priority Areas described in Section I. Provide a description of the extent to which the project supports lead reduction for the disadvantaged community (e.g. the number of



lines that will be replaced and the population they serve, the installation of corrosion control treatment, the addressing of lead exposure in schools and/or child care facilities).

- b. Describe the known lead issue in the disadvantaged community. Examples of relevant information include any lead action level exceedances the system has had, service line inventories, testing results identifying drinking water fixtures, fountains, outlets, and plumbing materials with high levels of lead, historic challenges in meeting the requirements of the Lead and Copper Rule, and any other information relevant to demonstrate the need for the proposed lead reduction project.
  - c. Describe the approach to provide public education, and conduct outreach, and conduct post-implementation monitoring.
  - d. Describe plans to maintain lead level reductions after project completion.
  - e. Describe if the proposed project demonstrates environmental justice by prioritizing lead reduction at a drinking water systems with at least one lead action level exceedance within the last three years, in schools with at least 50% of the children receiving free and reduced lunch, in Head Start facilities, and/or in disadvantaged areas with additional environmental health burdens (e.g., areas with older buildings likely to have lead-based paint) and/or to the extent to which the proposed project benefits a disadvantaged community and supports the Justice40 Initiative. If the application includes lead service line replacement projects, also describe the approach for addressing the four required project elements outlined in Section I.B and Section III.C of this announcement.
2. **Expeditious Project Readiness to Proceed:** Demonstrate that the project will be ready to proceed expeditiously upon award of funding. Describe past and current practices being implemented to reduce lead exposure in drinking water (such as public education and outreach, existing corrosion control treatment, or the use of control measures to reduce exposure from fountains or fixtures where elevated lead levels have been detected in schools or child care facilities). Describe the completion of planning and design, and demonstrate that all necessary permits and approvals from the appropriate regulatory authority (such as the primacy agency or municipality), bid documents, construction schedules, and any legal agreements (essential for lead service line replacement on private property) have been obtained. If the project includes corrosion control treatment, demonstrate the approval of the corrosion control treatment project to be implemented.

**Submission of supporting documentation demonstrating this readiness to proceed (e.g., bid documents, construction schedules, easements, and any legal agreements to access private property to complete the project), may be included as optional attachments using the Other Attachments from in grants.gov and are not subject to the Project Narrative page limitation.**

3. **Environmental Results and Measuring Progress:**

- a. Stated Objective/Link to the EPA Strategic Plan - List the objective of the project and the linkage to the EPA Strategic Plan Goal 5: Ensure Clean and Safe Water for All Communities, Objective 5.1: Ensure Safe Drinking Water and Reliable Water Infrastructure (see Section I.D of this announcement).
- b. Results of Activities (Outputs) - Describe the anticipated products/results which are expected to be achieved from the accomplishment of the project, and describe an approach for tracking and reporting your progress toward achieving the expected project output(s) (examples of outputs can be found in Section I.D of this announcement).
- c. Projected Environmental Improvement (Outcomes) - List the anticipated environmental improvements that will be accomplished as a result of the project. These improvements are changes or benefits to the environment or public health which are a result of the accomplishment of the work plan commitments and outputs. Describe an approach for tracking and reporting progress toward achieving the expected project outcome(s) (examples of outcomes can be found in Section I.D of this announcement).

4. **Milestone Schedule:** Provide a projected milestone schedule for the proposed project period (up to four years). The milestone schedule should provide a breakout of the project into phases with associated tasks and a timeframe for completion of tasks, and an approach for ensuring that awarded funds will be expended in a timely and efficient manner. The project start date will follow award acceptance by the successful applicant.

5. **Detailed Budget Narrative:** Provide a detailed budget and estimated funding amounts for each project component/task. This section provides an opportunity for narrative description of the budget or aspects of the budget found in the SF- 424A such as “other” and “contractual”.

- a. Applicants must itemize costs related to personnel, fringe benefits, contractual costs, travel, equipment, supplies, other direct costs, indirect costs and total cost. All subgrant funding should be located in the “other” cost category. Total costs must include both federal and, if applicable, non-federal components. For each cost category, indicate what portion of the cost will be paid by EPA and what portion of the cost will be covered by any additional non-federal funding if applied. For this funding cycle, EPA is applying a waiver to all grant applicants of the statutory 20 percent cost-share due to the financial constraints caused by the COVID-19 pandemic across the country. See Section III. B for additional information. Describe itemized costs in sufficient detail for EPA to determine the allowability of costs for each project component/task, as well as the cost-effectiveness and reasonableness of all costs (both federal and non-federal components). There is guidance that may be used by applicants when preparing budgets which can be found on the [Agency’s General Budget Development Guidance for Applicants and Recipients of EPA Financial Assistance](#) webpage.

**6. Programmatic Capability/Experience:**

- a. Organizational Experience – Provide a brief description of your organization and experience related to the proposed project, and your organization’s infrastructure as it relates to its ability to successfully implement the proposed project.
- b. Staff Expertise/Qualifications – Provide a list of key staff and briefly describe their experience/expertise/qualifications, knowledge, and resources of the ability to obtain them, to successfully achieve the goals of the project. Include an estimate of the number of full-time equivalent (FTE) workers (based on 2080 hours per year/FTE). If you choose to identify any partner organizations who will receive subawards or procurement contracts (including consultants) please refer to Section I.F, Additional Provisions for Applicants Incorporated into the Solicitation, before doing so as EPA will not consider their qualifications unless you select them in compliance with applicable regulations and provisions. A biographical sketch must be submitted for each major project manager, support staff member or other major project participants. Biographical sketches are not counted in the page limit. Full resumes may be included as an appendix to the application narrative and are not counted in the page limit.

**7. Past Performance:** Briefly describe federally funded and/or non-federally funded assistance agreements (assistance agreements include grants and cooperative agreements but not contracts) to the proposed project that your organization performed within the last three years (no more than five agreements). If you have had any EPA agreements in the last three years, those are preferred to be included. Please provide the following information.

- a. Describe whether, and how, you were able to successfully complete and manage those agreements.
- b. Describe your history of meeting the reporting requirements under those agreements including submitting acceptable final technical reports.
- c. Describe how you documented and/or reported on whether you were making progress towards achieving the expected results (i.e., outputs and outcomes) under those agreements. If you were not making progress, please indicate whether, and how, you documented why not.

**Note:** In evaluating an applicant’s past performance, the Agency will consider the information provided by the applicant and may also consider relevant information from other sources, including information from EPA files and/or from current and prior federal agency grantors (e.g. to verify and/or supplement the information provided by the applicant). If you do not have any relevant or available past performance information, please indicate this in the application, and you will receive a neutral score for these factors under Section V. Failure to provide any programmatic past performance or reporting information, or to include a statement that you do not have any relevant or available past performance or reporting information, may result in a zero score for these factors (see also Section V).

8. **Quality Assurance/Quality Control (not included in the Project Narrative work plan page limit):**
- a. Quality Assurance/Quality Control (QA/QC) (not included in the page limit) –If you plan to collect or use environmental data or information, explain how you will comply with the Quality Assurance/Quality Control requirements (see Section VIII.A. Quality Assurance/Quality Control (QA/QC) of this announcement for additional information.)

**Note:** The applicant should also provide in the Project Narrative any additional information, to the extent not already addressed above, that addresses the selection criteria in Section V and threshold criteria in Section III.

**E. Submission Dates and Times**

Applications submitted electronically through Grants.gov must be **received by 11:59 PM Eastern Time, Monday, April 19, 2022.** Late applications will not be considered for funding.

**SECTION V. APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION**

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

**A. Evaluation Criteria**

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

<p><b>1) National Priority Area</b>  Under this criterion the applicant will be evaluated based on their ability and approach for effectively addressing the National Priority Area that is the subject of their application. In conducting this evaluation, the following factors will be evaluated:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. The extent and quality of the overall approach to addressing the National Priority Area that is the subject of the application. (13 points)</li> <li>ii. The extent and quality to which the applicant describes a known lead issue in the disadvantaged community. (6 points)</li> <li>iii. The extent and quality to which the application demonstrates plans to provide public education, conduct outreach, and conduct post-implementation monitoring. (4 points)</li> <li>iv. The extent and quality to which the application demonstrates plans to maintain lead reduction after project completion. (4 points)</li> <li>v. The degree to which the proposed project is in and/or benefits a disadvantaged community(ies) as defined by section 1452(d)(3) of the SDWA as “the service area of a public water system that meets affordability criteria”, (ii) benefits drinking water systems with at least one</li> </ul>	<p><b>34 points</b></p>
--	-------------------------

<p>lead action level exceedance within the last three years, or in schools/child care programs with at least 50% of the children receiving free and reduced lunch, in Head Start facilities, and/or in areas with additional environmental health burdens (e.g., areas with older buildings likely to have lead-based paint), and/or (iii) to the extent to which the proposed project benefits a disadvantaged community and supports the Justice40 Initiative. (7 points)</p>	
<p><b>2) Expeditious Project Readiness to Proceed</b>  Under this criterion applicants will be evaluated based on their ability, plan, and approach to proceeding expeditiously to implement the project upon award (see Section I.C of this announcement) taking into account the following factors.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. The extent and quality to which the application describes past and current practices being implemented to reduce lead exposure in drinking water. (6 points)</li> <li>ii. The extent and quality to which the applicant demonstrates completion of planning and design, and securement of necessary approvals to proceed expeditiously. (8 points)</li> </ul>	<p><b>14 points</b></p>
<p><b>3) Environmental Results and Measuring Progress</b>  Applications will be evaluated based on each of these sub-criteria.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. The extent and quality to which the application demonstrates the potential to achieve environmental results, anticipated outputs and outcomes, and how the outcomes are linked to the <a href="#">EPA’s Draft FY 2022-2026 Strategic Plan</a>, described in Section I.D of this announcement. (5 points)</li> <li>ii. The extent and quality to which the application demonstrates a sound plan for measuring and tracking progress toward achieving the anticipated outputs and outcomes (examples of outputs and outcomes can be found in Section I.D of this announcement). (5 points)</li> </ul>	<p><b>10 points</b></p>
<p><b>4) Milestone Schedule/Detailed Budget</b>  Applications will be evaluated based on the extent and quality to which the application addresses each of the following sub-criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. The adequacy and completeness of the milestone schedule, including timeframes and major milestones to complete significant project tasks, and an approach to ensure that awarded funds will be expended in a timely and efficient manner. (8 points)</li> <li>ii. The reasonableness of the budget and estimated funding amounts for each project component/task and the adequacy of the information provided in the detailed budget and whether the proposed costs are reasonable and allowable. Total costs must include both federal and, if applicable, non-federal components. The cost-effectiveness and reasonableness of all costs (both federal and non-federal components) will also be evaluated. (8 points)</li> </ul>	<p><b>16 points</b></p>

<p><b>5) Programmatic Capability/Experience</b></p> <p>Under this criterion, applicants will be evaluated based on their ability to successfully complete and manage the proposed project considering their:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Organizational experience related to the proposed project, and their organizational infrastructure as it relates to the ability to successfully implement the proposed project. (7 points)</li> <li>ii. Staff expertise/qualifications, staff knowledge, and resources or the ability to obtain them, to successfully achieve the goals of the proposed project. (7 points)</li> </ul>	<p><b>14 points</b></p>
<p><b>6) Past Performance</b></p> <p>Under this criterion, applicants will be evaluated based on their ability to successfully complete and manage the proposed project taking into account their:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Past performance in successfully completing and managing federally funded and/or non-federally funded assistance agreements (assistance agreements include grants and cooperative agreements but not contracts) performed within the last three years (no more than five agreements, and preferably EPA agreements) and identified in response to Section IV.2.7. (4 points)</li> <li>ii. History of meeting reporting requirements under federally funded and/or non-federally funded assistance agreements (assistance agreements include grants and cooperative agreements but not contracts) performed within the last three years (no more than five agreements, and preferably EPA agreements) identified in response to Section IV.2.7. and submitting acceptable final technical reports under those agreements. (4 points)</li> <li>iii. The extent and quality to which the applicant adequately documented and/or reported on their progress towards achieving the expected results (e.g., outcomes and outputs) under the federally funded and/or non-federally funded assistance agreements (assistance agreements include grants and cooperative agreements but not contracts) performed within the last three years (no more than five agreements, and preferably EPA agreements) identified in response to Section IV.2.7., and if such progress was not being made, whether the applicant adequately documented and/or reported why not. (4 points)</li> </ul> <p>Note: In evaluating applicants under these three subfactors, above, EPA will consider the information provided by the applicant and may also consider relevant information from other sources including Agency files and/or prior/current grantors (e.g., to verify and/or supplement the information supplied by the applicant). Applicants with no relevant or available past performance information or reporting history must indicate that in the application and they will receive a neutral score for the factor (i.e., 2 points for item (i), 2 points for item (ii), and 2 points for item (iii)).</p>	<p><b>12 points</b></p>



Failure to provide any past performance information, or to include a statement that you do not have any relevant or available past performance information, may result in a zero score for the factor (i.e., 0 points for item (i), 0 points for item (ii), and 0 points for item (iii)).	
---	--

## **B. Review and Selection Process**

All applications received via [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) by the submission deadline will first be screened by EPA staff against the threshold criteria in Section III of the announcement. Applications that do not pass the threshold review will not be evaluated further or considered for funding.

A panel(s) comprised of EPA staff will review the eligible applications by National Priority Area based on the evaluation criteria listed in [Section V.A](#). Two separate ranking lists, one per National Priority Area, will be developed based on the panel evaluations. The ranking list for each National Priority Area will be provided to the Headquarters Selection Official(s) who make(s) the final funding decisions. In making the final funding decisions for each National Priority Area, the Selection Official(s) will consider the application score/ranking and may also take into account geographic distribution of funds and programmatic priorities such as ensuring that lead reduction projects meet the needs of the disadvantaged communities being served by the project. As noted above, while EPA expects to make awards in each National Priority Area, it reserves the right not to do so and to redistribute the number of awards, and amounts, per area.

## **SECTION VI. AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION**

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

### **A. Award Notification**

Following EPA's evaluation of the applications, all applicants, including those who are not selected for funding, will be notified regarding their status. The notification will be made to the original signer of the Standard Form (SF) 424, Application for Federal Assistance. The notification will be sent to the original signer of the application or the project contact listed in the application. This notification, which informs the applicant that its application has been selected and is being recommended for award, is not an authorization to begin work. The official notification of an award will be made by the Grants and Interagency Agreements Management Division.

Applicants are cautioned that only an 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 an EPA Award Official, is the authorizing document and will be provided through electronic or postal mail. The successful applicant may need to prepare and submit additional documents and forms (e.g., workplan), which must be approved by EPA, before the assistance agreement can officially be awarded. The time between notification of selection and award of a grant can take up to 90 days or longer.

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

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

## **B. Administrative and National Policy Requirements**

The general award and administration process for assistance agreements to be funded under this announcement are governed by regulations at 2 CFR 200 and 1500, as applicable. A description of the Agency's substantial involvement in the cooperative agreement will be included in the final assistance agreement.

## **C. Reporting**

In general, recipients are responsible for managing the day-to-day operations and activities supported by the assistance funding, to assure compliance with applicable federal requirements, and for ensuring that established milestones and performance goals are being achieved.

Performance reports and financial reports must be submitted quarterly and are due 30 days after the reporting period. The final report is due 120 days after the assistance agreement has expired. Recipients will be required to report direct and indirect environmental results from the work accomplished through the award. In negotiating assistance agreements, EPA will work closely with the recipient to incorporate appropriate performance measures and reporting requirements in the workplan consistent with 2 CFR 200 and 1500, and 40 CFR Part 45, as appropriate.

## **D. Disputes**

Assistance agreement competition-related disputes will be resolved in accordance with the dispute resolution procedures published in 70 FR (Federal Register) 3629, 3630 (January 26, 2005) which can be found at [Grant Competition Dispute Resolution Procedures](#). Copies of these procedures may also be requested by contacting the person listed in Section VII of the announcement. Note, the FR notice references regulations at 40 CFR Parts 30 and 31 that have been superseded by regulations in 2 CFR parts 200 and 1500. Notwithstanding the regulatory changes, the procedures for competition-related disputes remain unchanged from the procedures described at 70 FR 3629, 3630, as indicated in 2 CFR Part 1500, Subpart E.

## **SECTION VII. AGENCY CONTACT**

**Note to Applicants:** In accordance with EPA's Assistance Agreement Competition Policy (EPA Order 5700.5A1), EPA staff will not meet with individual applicants to discuss draft applications, provide informal comments on draft applications, or provide advice to applicants on how to respond to ranking criteria. Applicants are responsible for the contents of their applications. However, consistent with the provisions in the announcement, EPA will respond to questions from individual applicants regarding threshold eligibility criteria, administrative issues related to the submission of the application, and requests for clarification about any of the language or provisions in the announcement. Please note that

applicants should raise any questions they may have about the solicitation language to the contact identified in Section VII of this announcement as soon as possible so that any questions about the solicitation language may be resolved prior to submitting a proposal. In addition, if necessary, EPA may clarify threshold eligibility issues with applicants prior to making a final eligibility determination.

Questions about this RFA must be submitted in writing via e-mail and must be received by the Agency Contact identified below by **11:59 PM Eastern Time, Monday, April 4, 2022**, and written responses will be posted on EPA's website at <https://www.epa.gov/dwcapacity/water-infrastructure-improvements-nation-act-wiin-act-grant-programs>. Answers to FAQs are available at <https://www.epa.gov/dwcapacity/water-infrastructure-improvements-nation-act-wiin-act-grant-programs>. EPA strongly recommends interested applicants refer to the FAQs webpage prior to submitting a question.

Applicants deemed ineligible as a result of the threshold eligibility review will be notified within 15 calendar days of the ineligibility determination. Applicants should confirm receipt of their application via e-mail as soon as possible after the submission deadline—failure to do so may result in your application not being reviewed.

**Agency Contact:** Ying Tan

**E-mail:** [WIINDrinkingWaterGrants@epa.gov](mailto:WIINDrinkingWaterGrants@epa.gov)

## **SECTION VIII. OTHER INFORMATION**

### **A. Quality Assurance/Quality Control (QA/QC)**

QA/QC requirements may be applicable to these assistance agreements (see 2 CFR 1500.12). QA/QC requirements apply to the collection of environmental data. Environmental data are any measurements or information that describe environmental processes, location, or conditions; ecological or health effects and consequences; or the performance of environmental technology. Environmental data include information collected directly from measurements, produced from models, and compiled from other sources such as databases or literature. Applicants should allow sufficient time and resources for this process. EPA can assist applicants in determining whether QA/QC is required for the proposed project. If QA/QC is required for the project, the applicant is encouraged to work with the EPA QA/QC staff to determine the appropriate QA/QC practices for the project. Contact the Agency Contact (See Section VII for Agency Contact information) for referral to an EPA QA/QC staff.

### **B. Data Sharing**

All recipients of these assistance agreements may be required to share any data generated through this funding agreement as a defined deliverable in the final workplan.